

Rear Admiral Thomas H. Robbins

Thomas Hinkley Robbins (1900 – 1972) had many years of service with the Naval War College before becoming the thirtieth president in September 1956. He was a member of the graduating class of 1937, served on the staff 1938 – 1939, was acting president during 1953 – 1954 and chief of staff in 1955 and 1956. Robbins inaugurated the senior foreign officer course, later the Naval Command College, in 1956 and when he left the College in August of the following year, he became Commandant of the Potomac River Naval Command—making him the first president since the Second World War who did not immediately leave active service.

In 1978, Admiral Robbins's widow reported that before his death in 1972, Admiral Robbins had not been happy with his official portrait by Edmond Fitzgerald and wanted it replaced, describing it as a “caricature with exaggerated highlights.” Having admired the “exact likeness” in the portraits that the head of the College's Graphics Department, Tony Sarro, had done of Rear Admiral Richard Bates and Rear Admiral Henry Eccles, Mrs. Robbins commissioned a new portrait to replace the Fitzgerald portrait.

PRESIDENT, 5 SEPTEMBER 1956 – 1 AUGUST 1957

Oil on Canvas

Commander Edmond J. Fitzgerald, USNR, 1957

Naval War College commission

Ac. 1976.36.01



Oil on Canvas

Tony Sarro, 1978

Commissioned by Mrs. Thomas H. Robbins, Jr.; a gift of Mrs. Barbara Armstrong

Ac. 2000.17.01