

Captain Charles S. Sperry

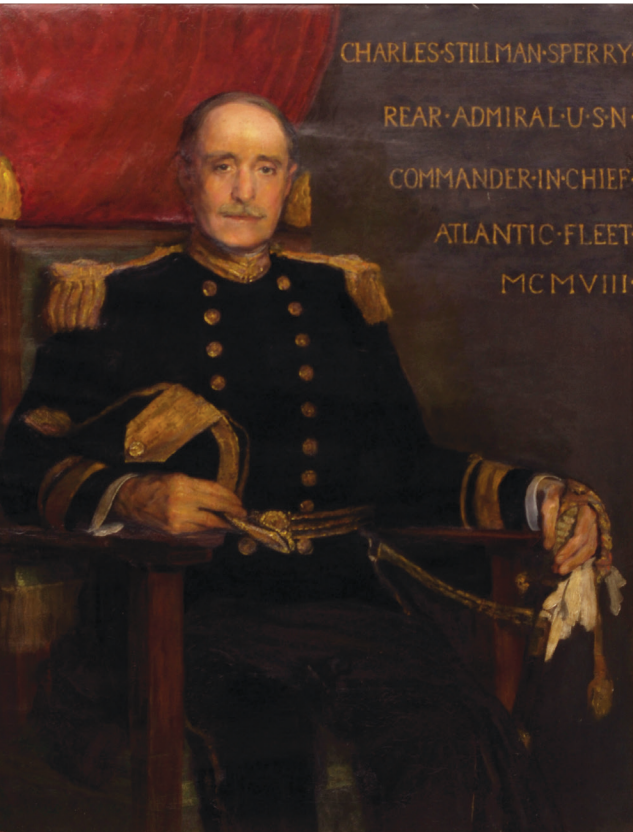
PRESIDENT, 16 NOVEMBER 1903 - 24 MAY 1906

Oil on Canvas

William S. Kendall, 1911

Gift of RADM Charles Sperry, 1910

Ac. 1976.34.01



Rear Admiral Charles Stillman Sperry (1847 - 1911) was the tenth president of the Naval War College (1903 - 1906) and afterward commanded the Great White Fleet on its voyage from California to Australia, New Zealand, Japan, China, across the Indian Ocean, through the Mediterranean, and across the Atlantic to Norfolk, Virginia, in 1908 - 1909.

In 1903, Captain Sperry was ordered to the Summer Course at the Naval War College and on its successful completion was appointed president of the Naval War College, a position he held from 16 November 1903 until 24 May 1906, when he was promoted to rear admiral. During his years at the Naval War College, Sperry developed an extensive knowledge of international law. His first flag assignment was as a delegate to the International Conference to Revise Rules for Treatment of Sick and Wounded in Geneva (June through August 1906). The next year, he was a delegate to the Second Hague Conference on Prize Law (June to November 1907). At the end of the Hague Conference, the Navy Department ordered Sperry to assume command of the Fourth Division, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, just in time to take part in the world cruise of the "Great White Fleet."

The American artist William Sergeant Kendall (1869 - 1938) painted this portrait in 1911. Kendall studied with Thomas Eakins in Philadelphia and is best known for his portraits of women and children. Kendall's work may be found in such collections as The Metropolitan Museum of New York, The Smithsonian Institution, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, The Detroit Institute of Art, and the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco.