



UNIVERSALITAS & PERVASIVITAS

IL COSTITUIRSI E DIFFONDERSI DELLA S.J. E SUOI ECHI (1540 - 1773)

di A. Pisani

Schede autori Attività missionarie ed esplorazioni non gesuite

George Anson

George Anson, 1st Baron Anson - 23 April 1697 – 6 June 1762 (aged 65)

Admiral of the Fleet George Anson, 1st Baron Anson PC, FRS, RN (23 April 1697 – 6 June 1762) was a British admiral and a wealthy aristocrat, noted for his circumnavigation of the globe and his role overseeing the Royal Navy during the Seven Years' War. During his time in office Anson instituted a series of reforms to the Royal Navy.

Family and early career

George's father was William Anson of Shugborough in Staffordshire and his mother was Isabella Carrier, who was the sister-in-law of Thomas Parker, 1st Earl of Macclesfield, the Lord Chancellor, a relationship that proved very useful to the future admiral. George Anson entered the navy in February 1712, and by rapid steps became lieutenant in 1716, commander in 1722, and post-captain in 1724. In this rank, he served twice on the North American station as captain of Scarborough and of Squirrel from 1724 to 1730 and from 1733 to 1735. In 1737 he gained the command of the 60-gun ship of the line, Centurion. In 1740, on the eve of the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748), he became commander (with the rank of commodore) of the squadron sent to attack Spanish possessions in South America in the War of Jenkin's Ear.

Voyage around the world

The expedition failed to carry out its original ambitious scheme. Anson's ill-equipped squadron that sailed later than intended, consisted of six warships: HMS Centurion (flagship), Gloucester, Severn, Pearl, Wager, and the sloop Tryal, plus the two store ships Anna and Industry. Successive disasters eventually reduced his force to just Centurion. Two of his vessels, Pearl and Severn, failed to round the Horn and returned home. Wager was wrecked off the coast of Chile. The lateness of the season forced him to round Cape Horn in very stormy weather, and the navigating instruments of the time did not allow for exact observations. By the time Anson reached the island of Juan Fernández in June 1741, only three of his six ships remained, while the strength of his crews had fallen from 961 to 335. In the absence of any effective Spanish force on the coast, he was able to harass the enemy and to sack the small port city of Paita in Peru (13 – 15 November 1741). The steady decrease of his crew by scurvy, and the worn-out state of his remaining consorts, compelled him to collect all the remaining survivors in Centurion. He rested at the island of Tinian, and then made his way to Macau in November 1742. After considerable difficulties with the Chinese, he sailed again with his





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one remaining vessel to cruise in search of one of the richly laden Manila galleons that conducted the trade between Mexico and the Philippines. The indomitable perseverance he had shown during one of the most arduous voyages in the history of sea adventure gained the reward of the capture of an immensely rich prize, Nuestra Señora de Covadonga, possessing 1,313,843 pieces of eight, which he encountered off Cape Espiritu Santo on 20 June 1743. Anson took his prize back to Macau, sold her cargo to the Chinese, and sailed for England, which he reached via the Cape of Good Hope on 15 June 1744. The prize money earned by the capture of the galleon had made him a rich man for life, and it enabled his heirs to rebuild Shugborough Hall, the family estate. Anson's chaplain, Richard Walter, recorded the circumnavigation, which he included in *A Voyage Round the World* published in 1748. It is, "written in brief, perspicuous terms", wrote Thomas Carlyle in his *History of Friedrich II*, "a real poem in its kind, or romance all fact; one of the pleasantest little books in the world's library at this time". Anson was Member of Parliament (MP) for Hedon in Yorkshire from 1744 to 1747. In 1747, Anson commanded the fleet that defeated the French Admiral de la Jonquière at the First Battle of Cape Finisterre, capturing four ships of the line, two frigates and seven merchantmen. In consequence, Anson became very popular, and was promoted to Vice Admiral and elevated to the peerage as Baron Anson of Soberton.

First Lord of the Admiralty

Anson subsequently continued his naval career with distinction as an administrator, joining the Admiralty Board in December 1744, then becoming First Lord of the Admiralty from June of 1751 to November of 1756, and again from June 1757 until his death. Among his reforms were the transfer of the Marines from Army to Navy authority, uniforms for commissioned officers, devising a way to effectively get superannuated Captains and Admirals to retire on half-pay and submitting a revision of the Articles of War to Parliament which tightened discipline throughout the Navy. During Anson's period at the Admiralty they maintained a much larger peacetime fleet than had previously been allowed, largely due to the likelihood of imminent war with France.

Seven Years War - Loss of Minorca

He oversaw the Navy for much of the Seven Years War, and established a permanent squadron at Devonport which could patrol the western approaches to both Britain and France. He was particularly concerned at the prospect of a French invasion of the British Isles^[1] which led him to keep a large force in the English Channel. In 1756 he was criticised for not sending enough ships with Admiral Byng to relieve Minorca because he wanted to protect Britain from a threatened invasion, only to see Byng fail to save Minorca while no invasion attempt materialised. This led to him briefly leaving the Admiralty, but he returned to the post within a few months following the creation of the Second Newcastle Ministry. ^[2] Anson instituted a massive expansion of the Royal Navy, resulting in record numbers of ships and of men.

Planned French Invasion of Britain (1759)

Anson oversaw Britain's naval response to a more serious French invasion attempt in 1759. He instituted a close blockade of the French coast, which proved crippling to the French economy and ensured no invasion fleet could slip out undetected. The British victories at the Battle of Lagos and the Battle of Quiberon Bay destroyed any realistic hope of a major invasion of the British Isles^[3], although a small force landed on the Irish coast.



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Global expeditions

As well as securing home defence, Anson co-ordinated with Pitt a series of British attacks on French colonies around the globe. By 1760 the British had captured Canada, Senegal and Guadeloupe from the French, and followed it up by capturing Belle Île and Dominica in 1761. In 1762 the entry of Spain into the war offered further chances for British expeditions. Anson was the architect of a plan to capture Havana and seize Manila in the Philippines. Anson had been concerned that the combined strength of the French and Spanish navies would overpower Britain, but he still threw himself into the task of directing these expeditions. The British also captured Martinique and Grenada in the French West Indies.[4] By this stage, Anson had grown very ill. He retired to Bath where he died.[5]

Legacy

Seven British warships have borne the name HMS Anson in his honour. Anson, Maine, Anson County, North Carolina, and Ansonborough in Charleston, South Carolina, are named in Anson's honour as well. He also has a school house named in his honour at The Royal Hospital School

In literature

Anson's circumnavigation of the globe is the subject of the novels *The Golden Ocean* and *The Unknown Shore* by Patrick O'Brian. He is also mentioned in Thomas Pynchon's novel, *Mason and Dixon*. An incident on the round the world voyage is the subject of William Cowper's famed poem *The Castaway*. George Anson is mentioned in J.-J. Rousseau's *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) as leading an expedition around the world which the novel's protagonist, St. Preux, is urged to join by his friend, Mylord Edouard (himself a friend of Anson's), so as to separate him from Julie, who is married to Mr de Wolmar. (vol. 3, letter xxv). St-Preux, a neo-romantic hero, will come back (he who wanted to die) after "having much suffered, and having seen even more suffering ..." This tale of thwarted love ("Héloïse" refers to the history of Héloïse and Abélard) was a best-seller at the time, Rousseau's book so scrambled after that it was rented by the hour in the book-shops. So Commodore Anson became known to a multitude of francophone readers, who possibly were enticed to read Walter's account afterwards, enhancing their love for nature and the "mythe du bon sauvage" who lies hidden in its pages. A full-length novel by F. Van Wyck Mason, *Manila Galleon*, (1961) recounts the entire voyage of George Anson's expedition, including his flotilla's harrowing efforts to round the Horn, and the eventual success of *Centurion* in capturing the *Manila Galleon*.

References

- 1 Lambert p.149
- 2 Lambert p.143-45
- 3 Anderson p.381-83
- 4 Corbett p.209-27
- 5 Corbett p.297-98

This article incorporates text from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Eleventh Edition, a publication now in the public domain; Leigh Rayment's *Peerage Page*; *Biography of George Anson* at the *Peerage.com*



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Vedi anche: [profilo biografico di George Anson stilato da Gastone degli Alberti per l'Enciclopedia Treccani](#)

George Benson is a jazz guitarist born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA on 22 March 1943. He started out playing straight-ahead instrumental jazz with organist Jack McDuff. Benson got his first experience playing with his several-year stint with McDuff's group. In 1964, at the age of 21, read more. George Benson is a jazz guitarist born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA on 22 March 1943. He started out playing straight-ahead instrumental jazz with organist Jack McDuff. Benson followed it up with The George Benson Cookbook, also with Lonnie Smith and Ronnie Cuber on baritone and drummer Marion Booker. Miles Davis employed Benson in the mid-1960s, featuring his guitar on "Paraphernalia" on his 1968 Columbia release, Miles in the Sky before going to Verve Records. Benson then signed with Creed Taylor's jazz label CTI Records, where he recorded several albums, with jazz heavyweights guesting, to some success, mainly in the jazz field.