



training 60,000 coast guardsmen for fighting ships

The job of training about 60,000 green, inexperienced men for sea duty was a gigantic undertaking. Time was all essential, especially in those early days of the war when the large scale training program was launched at Ellis Island, and the job had to be done fast—and reasonably thorough. Crews were needed to man the ever-growing list of large and small ships which the Navy continued to assign to Coast Guard jurisdiction and the main cog in the wheel of assembling ship's companies revolved around the U. S. Coast Guard Receiving Station at Ellis Island.

Handling men was a pre-war activity of the station be-

cause it was used moderately as a combined receiving and training station, but it wasn't until about the middle of 1942 that large scale complements began training at the Island. The first full transport crew to go through the assembly line at Ellis Island was the 303 men of the U.S.S. Bayfield (APA-33) which later distinguished itself in European and Pacific invasions.

Other crews which were assembled and trained on their way to newly commissioned ships were the men of the U.S.S. Cepheus, (AKA-18), U.S.S. Cavalier (APA-37), U.S.S. General William Mitchell (AP-14), U.S.S. General Randall (AP-115), U.S.S. General Meigs (AP-116), U.S.S.