

General Gordon (AP-117), U.S.S. General Richardson (AP-118), U.S.S. General Weigel (AP-119), U.S.S. Sheliak (AKA-62), U.S.S. Theenim (AKA-63), U.S.S. General Breckenridge (APA-176) and the U.S.S. Monticello (AP-61).

Many hundreds of other Coast Guard ships received replacements from Ellis Island including large transports, DE's, LST's, LCI's, FS's minesweepers, patrol boats, tankers, etc. All in all, the station was a beehive of activity in preparing blue jackets for sea duty.

Let's turn back the clock a couple of years and take a look at a newly formed ship's complement in the process of being fitted and trained at Ellis Island. This could be any of the large transports which assembled crews on the island.

Generally the first report of a new ship's company being formed would come from one of the early arrivals at the station. From all over the country, men were selected to make up complements and usually it took from two to three weeks to get all of the men together. It was, of course, important that all necessary rates were represented to man all the duties and during the ten to twelve weeks that the men were stationed at Ellis Island, there was a continual stream of men being sent to various specialized schools in the area.

Most all of the men were required to take gunnery training, generally anti-aircraft fire and many of them were sent to Price's Neck, Rhode Island for two weeks.

Others were transferred to Advanced gunnery schools at Washington Navy Yard and Dam's Neck, Virginia. Many were sent to Small Arms instructions at Sea Girt, N. J. and anti-aircraft school at NAGG, South Ferry.

Seamen were thoroughly indoctrinated in use of telephones at Battle Telephone School, N. Y. Navy Yard; Swimming instruction for one week at Hotel Sutton, N. Y.; Cargo loading at Staten Island docks, Lookout instruction at ASW Center, Staten Island and Fire fighting at Brooklyn, N. Y. It was a common sight to see blue jackets coming back to the island at night, completely covered with black soot, after an all day session fighting the flames.

Machinist's Mates and other "Black Gang" men were schooled at the Steam Turbine & Fuel Oil Pump at DeLaval Steam Turbine Co.; Oil Burner Institute at Philadelphia Navy Yard; Boiler Feed Pumps at Worthington Pump Co., New Jersey; Sperry Gyroscope Co., Brooklyn, N. Y., practical engine room training aboard a liberty ship and later given engine room instruction aboard an APA at Newport, R. I.

Other schools which Islanders were sent to prior to checking out on their way to board a newly commissioned ships included evaporator and distiller instruction at Foster Wheeler Corp., N. Y.; Damage control at Baltimore, Md.; Electrical welding training at Navy Receiving Barracks, Brooklyn; Breakdown and assembly of all types of gunnery also at Navy Receiving Barracks, Ioran and radar training at Brooklyn; transport quartermaster training at Camp Bedford, Va., and unexploded ordnance training at Lido Beach, N. Y.

Combining this specialized training with a regular program at Ellis Island necessitated a full speed ahead order for all hands. The individual complements were treated as a separate unit while at Ellis Island and were under the jurisdiction of their own officers. Such routine maneuvers as boat drills, semaphore and blinkers, lectures, billeting, motion picture instructions and other necessary training programs were carried out on the Island.

Probably more men have passed through the Ellis Island Coast Guard training program on their way to sea than any other Coast Guard unit and the distinguishing records made by the many Coast Guard manned vessels during the war is a fine tribute to the officers and men who were trained at Ellis Island in preparation for their war time job.



Smoke mask is adjusted for smoke drill.