

Adjutant Anthony and the yellow oared barge are assigned to the use of the Corps of Artillery at this post. For the use of the Infantry are assigned the Green six-oared barge, the whale boat and the seven-oared barges. The four-oared Green boat is reserved for the Gen. Hospital. The 12-oared barge known by the name of General's Barge and the 6-oared Green boat are reserved for the use of the Commandant. No interference is to be made by either Corps with the boats assigned to the other." But even that failed to make smooth sailing for the island navy and it was later necessary to remind the ferrymen that "Neither shore to be left destitute of a ferry boat for more than 20 minutes between the rising and the setting of the sun. Where one boat starts from one shore, leaving no boat there another boat starts at the same moment from the opposite shore, whether with or without a passenger."

In 1821 the local Army headquarters was transferred from New York City to Governors Island and a year later, when Castle Clinton was ceded to New York, the troops stationed in Clinton came over to join the island garrison.

Further importance was given to Governors Island in 1823, when it was designated as one of the signal stations then being established to announce to New York the arrival of incoming ships. This system of visual signals, offering a valuable service to the commercial life of the city in the days before the telegraph, provided for a primary observation post at Sandy Hook to flag the news of incoming vessels to another station on Staten Island. From here the bulletins were relayed to a lookout tower on the ramparts of Castle Williams, and thence sent on to the city's receiving station in a lofty cupola on fashionable Holt's Hotel on Fulton Street, where they were made public.

Two years later one of the ships so reported, brought to New York and to Governors Island, the distinguished person of His Grace, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, and the first of those VIPs, who, from that day to this, have honored the island's hospitality as an enjoyable item on their travel itineraries. (The island guns had previously saluted the Marquis de Lafayette in 1824 as he sailed up the bay to his formal reception at the Battery, but the Frenchman did not visit the post.) His Grace was received with the traditional 21-gun salute. He inspected the 2d Artillery Regiment and was taken on a tour of Fort Columbus and its barracks where, he was pleased to note in his memoirs, "I found a Bible in each room."

Long-needed repairs to various parts of the island fortifications and buildings were begun in 1832, but had to be halted in August of that year

because of an outbreak of cholera among the troops. Fortunately, the epidemic was a light one and work could be resumed in September, when portions of the emplacements were completed and another barracks built to accommodate personnel who had previously been obliged to live in tents around the fort.

The following year the sum of \$30,000 was appropriated for further repairs to Castle Williams and Fort Columbus, which specified sodding all the parapets, installing three new magazines, finishing four cisterns under the ramparts, and grading the approaches to the walls. At the same time, the Ordnance Department of the Army selected Governors Island as the site for one of its most important arsenals and began building operations.

The arsenal reservation occupied about six-and-a-half acres of waterfront area, extending between the present Omaha and Soissons Docks and containing a total of 12 buildings - machine shops, warehouses, and quarters for the ordnance staff. Many of these structures still remain and are easily identified by the beauty of their weathered brick walls, and their perfectly proportioned windows and doors. The former residence of the commanding officer of the arsenal (now Quarters 135) is especially noteworthy because of the fine old ironwork around the porch. This ironwork frames a magnificent vista of the New York skyline that has figured in countless photographic studies. The interior of the house boasts not only fireplaces with black marble mantels in many rooms, but also the only parquet floor on the post. A contemporary historian states that the arsenal had "a charm and beauty all its own," and it retained this agreeable individuality until 1920 when it was consolidated with Raritan Arsenal in Metuchen, N.J., and its grounds and buildings merged with the Army headquarters on the island.

During 1836, Governors Island received an additional grant of \$20,000 to complete its construction program. At the same time, the exclusive occupancy of the Island by artillerymen was rudely disturbed by the arrival of a large detachment of recruits for the 2d Dragoons, whose commanding officer ranked the current post commander. This critical situation was happily cleared up in December, when the artillery was ordered to Florida for the Seminole War and left the "yellow legs" as sole tenants. Their stay, however, was brief, for the 1st Artillery came back to dispossess them in April of 1837, the island thereafter continued its status as an artillery stronghold through 1862, when the War Department designated it as a general recruiting depot.

Also in 1836 the island's Field Music Detachment of 50 drummers and fifes, nicknamed