

the ceremonies continued uninterrupted. The folded flag was presented to Stephens and was then re-hoisted on the flagpole atop the fort.

Following the transfer ceremonies, Rear Admiral J.A. Alger assumed command of the Eastern Area and Third Coast Guard District. Thus, the oldest military installation in continuous service in the United States became the largest Coast Guard base in the world.

Even though the mission of the island had changed drastically with the Coast Guard takeover, physically it remained basically the same. As a spokesman said at the time, "the major change will be more anchors and fewer cannons."

Governors Island became the first installation where the small service would be required to provide all the essentials a community needs to function, such as, police and fire protection, a school, hospital, and places of worship. Support Center New York was commissioned as the land lord of the new base. The other major commands included the now-defunct Third Coast Guard District and Eastern Region, and the Captain of the Port/Group New York.

These commands and their predecessors had been a force in New York since the inception of the nation. In fact, the Coast Guard's origins can be traced to New York.

On Aug. 4, 1790, Congress, pushed by Alexander Hamilton, convened in New York City and passed a bill authorizing construction of ten boats for guarding the coast against smugglers. During the American Revolution, smuggling was regarded as a patriotic business, part of the struggle against taxation without representation.

Respectable citizens such as John Hancock and Samuel Adams had engaged in smuggling. Hamilton, the first Secretary of the Treasury, realized that one of the ways the new nation could rid itself of the debts incurred during the Revolution was to rigidly enforce customs laws and collect the duties rightfully owed to the fledgling country. Through the efforts of Hamilton's ten boats, the \$70 million national debt was repaid in a very short time.

Hamilton became known as "the father of the Coast Guard," and is buried in Trinity Churchyard, a few blocks from the Governors Island Ferry Terminal. (Also buried in the churchyard is former Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin, for whom a modern-day Coast Guard cutter, the Gallatin, is named.)

Also that year Congress passed the Lighthouse Act of 1790, a bill sponsored by Alexander Hamilton and signed by George Washington at a time when the national capital was

New York City. On the New York and New Jersey coastlines stand many historic lighthouses, monuments to early Coast Guard navigation and search-and-rescue history. The Lighthouse Service was eventually incorporated with the Revenue Cutter Service, the Life-Saving Service and several other smaller entities in 1915 to form the modern-day Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard has proudly served in every American war or skirmish except the war with Tripoli. One of Hamilton's first ten boats, the Vigilant, with Patrick Dennis as master, was stationed in New York during the War of 1812. The Vigilant captured the British Privateer Dart in nearby waters. Hand-to-hand combat during the boarding made it one of the most daring captures of the war.

The first overt act of World War I was carried out by boats of the Revenue Cutter Service (the Coast Guard's predecessor) waiting at the docks of Governors Island for Congress to declare war on Germany. Congress declared war on Germany and the central European powers at 3:12 a.m. on April 6, 1917.

Since nightfall of the day before, a battalion of the 22d Infantry had been standing by, under arms in Fort Jay, waiting for the signal from Washington, D.C. that would put the nation on a war footing. When the "flash" came, the men were in ranks almost before the sergeants had finished calling "Fall in!" and in a matter of minutes were running on the double across the island to board the boats. This modest armada closed in on the dark hulks of the ocean steamers of the Hamburg-American and North German Lloyd lines berthed at Hoboken, manned and, for all anyone knew, armed by German crews. Working with the cold efficiency of a disciplined team, the fleet had seized all the German ships and interned their men at Ellis Island before noon. So well had the operation been planned and executed that not a shot was fired in the opening action of the United States in World War I.

The tremendous increase in munitions shipments during the war, particularly in New York, required an increase in personnel to oversee this activity. The term Captain of the Port (COTP) was first used in New York and this officer was charged with supervising the safe loading of explosives. Similar posts were established in other U.S. ports.

During the World War I, Captain Godfrey L. Carden, commander of the Coast Guard's New York Division, was named COTP New York. The majority of the nation's munitions shipments abroad left through New York. For a period of 1 1/2 years, more than 1,600 vessels, carrying more than 345