

million tons of explosives, sailed from the harbor. In 1918, Carden's division was the largest single command in the Coast Guard. It was made up of 1,400 officers and men, four Corps of Engineers tugs and five harbor tugs.

During Carden's tenure, the most dangerous moment occurred when munitions at a rail yard in Morgan, N.J., began exploding and spreading fire into other buildings storing ammunition. Although Carden had no responsibility for accidents ashore, a Coast Guard detachment from Perth Amboy, N.J., reached the scene first with other New York units arriving later.

When the Coast Guard arrived the fire was intense. Exploding shells filled the air with shrapnel. They attempted to control the fire and remove the dead and wounded. A party of Coast Guardsmen learned that some of the cars of TNT lay in the middle of the facility and were in imminent danger of catching fire. Volunteers stepped forward to bring the train to safety. Moving the train was complicated by tracks twisted from earlier explosions.

In the inferno the Coast Guardsmen repaired the tracks and removed the train. During the disaster two Coast Guardsmen died in rescue activities.

New York-based Coast Guard vessels waged Prohibition's Rum War in the 1920s, sinking many cargo ships off the coast of New York and New Jersey carrying illegal "hooch" into New York Harbor.

During World War II, the "Mosquito Fleet" of small Coast Guard and Coast Guard Reserve vessels, many of them converted private yachts, conducted anti-submarine patrols in the seaward approaches to the harbor and the Brooklyn-built 83-foot "Matchbox Fleet" of Rescue Flotilla No. 1 pro-

vided search-and-rescue operations during the invasion of Normandy, saving hundreds of allied soldiers from the deadly inshore waters. Coast Guard cutters based in New York, such as the Tampa, Seneca and Campbell, escorted merchant convoys safely across the Atlantic and along the eastern seaboard. The Manhattan Beach Training Center located in Brooklyn, was the largest Coast Guard basic training camp in the nation.

By 1966, the Coast Guard had become a formidable force in New York Harbor, with search-and-

rescue, aids-to-navigation and merchant-vessel-inspection missions equally represented. The Third District and Eastern Region Command were housed in the Customs House in lower Manhattan while the harbor operations were located at Base St. George in Staten Island. The busiest harbor in the nation required a large Coast Guard presence and the need to centralize the support structure was evident. Governors Island presented a perfect place to

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co-locate. There was also the historical connection between Governors Island and the Coast Guard. Trinity Church, responsible for the construction of the first chapel on the island and long associated with Dr. McVickar, was after all the final resting place of the father of the Coast Guard.

Captain N.W. Allen, a former Support Center commanding officer, observed that history had, in a sense, come full circle when the Coast Guard took control of Governors Island in 1966. In his weekly address to the island in the Governors Island Gazette, Allen reflected, "the town of the birth of the Coast Guard, Trinity Parish, the final resting place of its founder, and the ministry of Governors Island became linked formally."