

# HISTORY of the COAST GUARD

The U. S. Coast Guard has been serving country and humanity since August 4, 1790, when it was established by the first Congress under the sponsorship of Alexander Hamilton, the first Secretary of the Treasury.

Originally entrusted with enforcement of the young republic's anti-smuggling laws, the new fleet, consisting of ten small cutters, shortly went into action in the undeclared war with France. The cutters gave such an excellent account of themselves they were soon given new responsibilities. The Coast Guard's growth in size and missions has continued unabated.

The oldest continuous sea-going armed service of the United States, the Coast Guard is today our chief agency for promoting maritime safety and for maritime law enforcement. Its duties include an intensive merchant marine safety program; maintenance of a network of more than 40,000 navigation aids from buoys to light-houses and radio-electronic aids; search and rescue; fisheries protection; oceanographic re-

search and marine science patrols; port security; and environmental protection. The Coast Guard also maintains its ships, aircraft and stations in a constant state of military readiness, prepared to operate as a part of the U. S. Navy in time of war or national emergency. During peacetime the Coast Guard remains a part of the Department of Transportation. Its approximately 38,000 officers and men are serving around the world, including the Arctic and Antarctic, the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the Caribbean and the Mediterranean.

The Coast Guard has come a long way since those first small cutters were launched almost two hundred years ago. Long dedicated to the protection of man from the rugged marine elements, the Coast Guard is still changing with the times as it assumes the new role of protecting the marine environment from man. But its spirit is still well said in its motto:

"SEMPER PARATUS—ALWAYS READY!"