

The original documents are located in Box D13, folder “Grand Haven Coast Guard Festival, August 5, 1949” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Semper Paratus 8/4/49

The United States Coast Guard celebrates today its 159th birthday. It is a day not to be passed over in silence. Too often the services of the Coast Guard have been overlooked, though, to be sure, it came into its glorious own during the war.

But the Coast Guard is primarily a peacetime service, attached to the Treasury Department. It was Alexander Hamilton who gave it its start—as the “Revenue Marine”—back in 1790. Among its duties, pleasant and unpleasant over the years, have been fighting pirates and hostile Indians, protecting the Alaskan seal herds from extermination, and blockading Southern ports in the Civil War.

Today it is charged with enforcement of United States laws on all the navigable waters of this country and, insofar as they are applicable, on the high seas. It conducts the magnificent search and rescue service that at a moment's notice mobilizes ships, aircraft and radio communications to help victims of disaster at sea. It takes care of channel markers, lighthouses and lightships, conducts safety inspections of ships, and fulfills a host of other duties.

Of all these, the one that appeals most to us on this August day is the iceberg patrol in North Atlantic waters. This duty, except for periods during both World Wars, the Coast Guard has accomplished since 1913, a year after the *Titanic* disaster. Actually the iceberg season is over now; it normally lasts from around March to June and this year began in February and ended on June 15. But cuddling up to an iceberg right now seems an ideal way to beat the heat, and we wish the Coast Guard could go out and haul one up the Potomac to celebrate its birthday. It would be most appropriate, we think, since, like an iceberg, only about one tenth of the Coast Guard's activities appear above the surface of our everyday consciousness.

Speech Aug 5th



Grand Haven Coast Guard Festival

I. Introduction

Admiral O'Neil etc.

Hamilton - two policies

II Coast Guard -

"Semper Paratus" (always prepared)

Aug 4, 1949 - 159th birthday

Coast Guard Academy - 1910

Alexander Hamilton - 1790 (Revenue Marine)

Duties -

- 1) Saving of life & property at sea { 300 life saving stations
- 2) International ice patrol { search & rescue service

Not a single life lost from a collision with iceberg since C/G took over following sinking of Titanic Apr. 4, 1912.

- 3) Seal & fishing protection
- 4) Enforces navigation regulations
- 5) Flood relief work

Mississippi 1927 { removed 43,000 persons & saved 11,000 head of cattle.



C/G at Grand Haven

Peer Head Rear Range Light Station - 1839
" " Front " " - 1871

Life Boat Station - 1875

S.S. Henry Cort - Nov. 30, 1934.

C/G Cutter Escanaba permanently stationed
at Grand Haven Dec. 3, 1932. Transferred
to war convoy duty 1942.

Rescued 22 survivors of U.S.S. Cherokee
+ 133 survivors of S.S. Dorchester.

Escanaba sunk by enemy action
(sub) with only 2 survivors out of
105 officers & men. Cutter Tampa
suffered similar fate 1918.

Since Dec. 1917 C/G Cutter Woodbine,
which served with distinction in
WW II, stationed at G/H.

