

FROM BLACK TO BLUE:
THE COAST GUARD
UNIFORM CHANGE

James M. Cooper

INTRODUCTION

One of the largest changes to affect the Coast Guard over the past few years has been a change from an old tradition (the Navy Blue uniform) to a new one (Coast Guard Blue uniform).

This paper will: 1. travel through time and revisit the old Coast Guard uniforms and follow their passage through history, 2. discuss the evolution and thinking behind the new uniform and 3. present a pictorial history of the evolution of today's Coast Guard Blue uniform.

Coast Guard History Synopsis

August 4, 1790, Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, established the Revenue Marine Service. In 1863, the name was changed to the Revenue Cutter Service (forerunner of the Coast Guard). After more than a hundred years in this service, the Revenue Cutter Service joined forces with the Lifesaving Service in 1915 and became the U.S. Coast Guard. In 1942, women were allowed to join the Reserves of the Coast Guard and in 1972, they were allowed to join the regulars. April 1, 1967, the Coast Guard was transferred from the Department of Treasury to the Department of Transportation.

In 1974, the next major change the Coast Guard was to see was the change to a completely new and distinctive uniform.

HISTORY
AND
EVOLUTION

What little information is available suggests that the first officers of the Revenue Cutter Service dressed much as the officers of the Continental Navy dressed before it was disbanded in 1785. "Ships masters probably wore blue swallow-tailed coats with gold buttons, boots and cocked hats over their hair tied up in short braids. Buttons, arranged in groups of four on lapels, pocket flaps, cuffs, and coat skirts, indicated the rank of sea captain. Sailors wore short blue jackets with brass buttons and bell-bottomed trousers that could be either rolled up or worn over boot tops. Hair hung in pigtails that were tarred for protection against the weather. For dress, a sailor, wore a hard black hat with a flat brim and a pillbox crown. At sea he wore a knitted cap."¹ In 1819 Revenue Service lieutenants wore a blue, double-breasted, swallow-tailed coat with a rolled collar. "A button on each corner of the collar, and six on each lapel with four in the skirts. Epaulettes worn on either shoulder according to rank. Buttons stamped with the armorial bearings of the United States, said to be the same style of the buttons as worn by the staff officers of the Army."² Captains wore epaulettes on both shoulders. If an officer was a first lieutenant, he wore one epaulette on his right shoulder, a second lieutenant wore his on the left shoulder and third lieutenants wore none at all. An 1830 order

¹Interview with Elizabeth A. Segedi, Still Photo Editor, U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D.C., 29 July 1975.

²Gene Gurney, The United States Coast Guard, (New York; Crown Publishers, Inc. 1973) p. 16.

of the Treasury Department prescribed uniform regulations for officers; captains at the period were required to wear "blue dress coats, rolling collar, nine buttons on each lapel, four on each cuff, four on each pocket flap and four on skirts. All seams on coat to be piped with yellow cord. Two plain gold epaulettes. Trousers blue to be worn outside of boots. Vests blue or white with four buttons on each pocket flap. Hat, pattern known as stove pipe, ornamented on left side with a black cockade with brass buttons in center."³

There existed a period of peacetime when naval officers were allowed to accept commissions in the Revenue Cutter Service. This created discontent among both branches of the service and in 1832, Secretary of the Treasury McLane decided that the two services should be kept separate and distinct. During this period, the Revenue Cutter Service abandoned the blue uniform because it too closely resembled the Navy uniform and adopted a dark gray uniform. During the Seminole War (1836), the Revenue cuttermen returned to the blue uniform and with the blue uniform, the officers wore a vest, short boots, cocked hat, and a small sword. Buttons were decorated with the Treasury shield surmounted by a fouled anchor. Seamen wore blue jackets with white collars and white or blue trousers and blue belts.⁴

Until 1970, the fact that the now, Coast Guard, followed was; following the Navy in uniform changes but adapting only

³Stephen H. Evans, Capt, U.S.C.G. The United States Coast Guard, A Definitive History, (Annapolis, Maryland: The U.S. Naval Institute, 1949) p. 7

⁴The Coast Guardsman's Manual, (Annapolis, Maryland: The U.S. Naval Institute, 1949) p. 6

as necessary. In 1970, Admiral Chester R. Bender, became Commandant of the Coast Guard and at a Coast Guard Officers Association luncheon he made a comment that he would like to see a new uniform for the Coast Guard before his tenure as Commandant was over. Not many people took him at all serious, even though a committee was set up to get the "ball rolling" in January 1971. The Coast Guard, not unlike many other organizations, was skeptical of change, so much in fact that it was put out of their minds and considered a passing whim of the new Commandant.

Early in 1971 a questionnaire was distributed to the officer corps of the Coast Guard concerning changes in the enlisted ^{man's} uniform. Approximately a year and a half later, (November 1972), another questionnaire was distributed. With this questionnaire it then became a real possibility that the enlisted uniform would change, but the majority of the officer corps still believed that their uniforms were above attack. In the prelude to the questionnaire Admiral Bender stated, "As you may be aware, I have proposed that a new and distinctive uniform be adapted by the Coast Guard. The results of the Officer Questionnaire in 1971 indicated that the officer corps overwhelmingly supported the concept of a new and distinctive uniform for enlisted (my emphasis) personnel. However, the majority did not favor a change for officers.... Because of the overwhelming support by both the officer and enlisted levels for the new enlisted uniform, I have recently approved its basic style and color.... The procurement process for this uniform is now underway with a target date of 3/1/74

for the initial issue..... The old uniform will be completely phased out by the summer of 1976. As yet no decision has been made concerning a change in the officer uniform. In order that I may consider your opinions and attitudes toward a change in officer uniforms before (my emphasis) making a decision, I request that you complete the attached uniform questionnaire and return it within one week."⁵ At this point in time, very few people remembered the comment Admiral Bender made at the Officers Association luncheon concerning his want of a new uniform for the entire Coast Guard. Therefore, again the majority believed that there was no real possibility for a uniform change, especially after looking at the very ambiguous questions posed by the new questionnaire. It appeared that Admiral Bender had already made up his mind and the questionnaire was "official" garbage that could be used to substantiate the change.

In January, 1973, a uniform board, made up mostly of people already stationed at Coast Guard Headquarters, was established. Their function was to put together a completely new uniform for the entire Coast Guard and have it on the street by April 1974. To round out the uniform board, the main man for the job was brought from Hawaii, Lieutenant Commander Paul Patrinos. Even though he was not the head man, LCDR Patrinos had all the weight on his shoulders to accomplish the task. When he came to his new job, he found that nothing had been done since Admiral Bender had first organized his committee in

⁵ADM C. R. Bender, New Uniforms for Officers, questionnaire: 10 November 1972

1971. No notes, no instruction, no memos; all had to be reconstructed. This meant that LCDR Patrinos had to start from scratch. This shows how seriously the Coast Guard felt about their uniform change. Patrinos was not an expert in making uniforms but he was in the finance and supply field. This meant that he had a few contacts and he could find a place from which to start.

Just designing a new uniform was not the real problem. Some of the basic style from the old uniform was to be used: trousers, shoes, ties, hat, belt; the rest was to be designed by a staff member who worked with the Navy Clothing Development Division at their Clothing and Textile Research Unit in Natick, Massachusetts. The real problems were: in deciding which fabrics were to be used, what weight, what style, who would make the fabrics, the uniforms etc. The fabrics not only had to be decided upon, but they had to be tested, field tested, accepted, approved, uniforms produced and distributed.

The opposition to the new uniform was wide-spread but the majority remained silent. Two District Offices, one in Cleveland and the other in Long Beach, took separate polls within their districts to try and establish a case against the change. The questions posed in their polls were more straightforward than the questionnaire from headquarters. In both districts the results were comparable; approximately 19 percent favored the uniform, while 67 percent favored the old uniform.⁶ The results of these polls were forwarded directly to Admiral

⁶The Navy Times, May 23, 1973

Bender. He stated, "It's a firm decision. We might as well just relax."⁷ These remarks were his first public acknowledgement of a controversy. He conceded that the Headquarters officer uniform questionnaire could have been more definitive. "In spite of this, the answers to two questions gave me adequate information to make a determination." Bender cited the statement, "A new Coast Guard uniform will help identify the Coast Guard as a unique and independent service". To this question 76 percent of the answers agreed; to the statement, "I like the style of the new enlisted uniform.", 56 percent agreed. "The former gets to the heart of the matter.... As for the latter, admittedly the reference was to an enlisted uniform but nevertheless, it was a Coast Guard uniform." Concerning the question, "It is important that officer and enlisted personnel have similar uniforms," 61 percent disagreed. To this Admiral Bender stated, "This is where the officer corps and I part company."⁸ In the end, the move to phase out the old uniform and bring in the new was a command decision. It seems that the questionnaire was for the good of Bender's conscience and nothing else.

The official reason for the uniform change was simply: to follow or not to follow the Navy. The Navy made the move to put their enlisted men in a uniform similar to the officers. The Coast Guard had the option, stay with the old uniform and look more like the Navy, or break with tradition and become

⁷Ibid,

⁸Ibid

distinctive with a completely new uniform. The Coast Guard chose the latter.

The Coast Guard embarked on a program aimed at clearly establishing its own identity. From time immemorial, the Coast Guard has operated as a virtual look-alike of the Navy. The uniforms have been almost identical with the exception of hat bands and a few insignias. With the new uniform change the Coast Guard emerged from the Navy's shadow. The Coast Guard is a proud service and its members are proud of who and what they are. "The important roles played by the Coast Guard personnel deserve a visible and distinctive image. It was felt that in the interest of pride and morale, the men and women of the Coast Guard should have a uniform to reflect their own unique identity."⁹

The Uniform Board working with the Navy Clothing and Textile Research Unit undertook an intensive review of uniform colors, styles and fabrics. In terms of styling, the Uniform Board opted to abandon the square cut, double-breasted look for a more contemporary single-breasted cut with matching trousers. Items that would complete the new Service Dress uniform would include: pale blue long sleeve shirt (short sleeve for tropical uniform), blue necktie, officer combination cap with white cap cover, black shoes and socks. According to LCDR Patrinos, "Fabric selection was a critical consideration. The intent was to fashion a uniform for all-season, all-climate

⁹Interview with LCDR Paul Patrinos, Head of Uniform Logistics, U.S. Coast Guard, Washington, D.C., 29 July 1975

wear. The new Coast Guard blue uniform is going to supplant all the various blue, khaki, and white uniforms we've been wearing. So where we used to change from, say, blue to whites or khakis with a seasonal variation, now we'll be in a single uniform around the calendar."¹⁰ This all-season approach prompted the Coast Guard to decide on a specified fabric blend of polyester fiber and wool. The Uniform Board chose a 9.5 ounce gabardine fabric. Based on the tests, they chose a 55/45 blend of Dacron and wool which, according to the board, proved to be a comfortable fabric in all seasons and climates.¹¹ The tests at the research laboratory proved this combination to be a durable fabric with extremely long wearing properties. The tests also revealed that the Dacron polyester would provide wrinkle resistance and ease of care, an added attraction over the other uniforms.

All of these recommendations were sent to the Commandant, Admiral Bender, who immediately approved them. The phase out period for the old uniforms extended from January 1974 through August 1977. Beginning in March 1974 all the new recruits were issued the new uniform and all enlisted personnel with one year remaining as of July 1974 also received a new uniform. As of July 1, 1975, all officers were required to have at least one set of the new uniform; beginning September 1977, the old uniforms are no longer authorized to be worn. (This has turned out to be a fairly equitable system for those required to

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

purchase their uniforms as it has spread the price out over a years time.)

The initial outlay for the cost of production and distribution of the uniforms was 3.8 million dollars in 1974 for the free issue. For a year's supply to be held as stock, the total ran close to 11 million dollars.¹² The cost of the officers uniform is approximately 100-125 dollars, depending on the rank; for an enlisted man the price range is 60-75 dollars.

An official description of the uniform: "The single-breasted uniform will be worn with a light blue, long sleeve shirt and dark blue tie. Collar devices will be worn by officers and enlisted above E-3. Gold rank stripes to be used on officer coat sleeves. A tropical version, using short sleeve light blue shirt and blue trousers will also be authorized. Collar devices will be worn on the enlisted short sleeve shirt; shoulder boards on the officers. Black shoes and socks, and black web belt will be worn with both uniforms. A combination hat with white cap cover and blue band will be worn by both officer and enlisted. The cap device will not change for the officers and CPO's. A gold and silver replica of the Coast Guard seal will be used as the cap device for E-6 and below."¹³

The men's uniform problems are nearing the end, but they are just beginning for the women. The Coast Guard women (SPAR's) had a basic uniform of Navy blue but the Uniform Board had no idea which way to turn for a design which would

¹²Ibid

¹³Commandant's Bulletin No. 15-73, Supplement 2, 4 Apr 1973

correspond to the new change in the men's uniforms. The first women's uniform was a white blouse with a Navy blue skirt. The only "change" that occurred during the years was the shortening of the skirt. One of the Coast Guard women stationed at Long Beach came upon an idea which turned the tide for the women's uniform. Her idea was for members of the Uniform Board to contact Miss Edith Head, the Hollywood designer. To LCDR Patrinos it was worth a try, so he and CAPT L'Ecuyer, (senior woman officer in the Coast Guard), contacted Miss Head's public relations man. They found out that Miss Head was under contract to Universal Studios. This contract stated that she could do no work for any outside sources. The PR man checked with Universal and it turned out that Miss Head had no pressing jobs, plus, the fact that the Coast Guard had been very generous in providing ships and services, so Universal allowed Miss Head freedom to do the designing for the Coast Guard. With the new designs from Miss Head, there now exists many options; pants suits, dresses, smocks, or combinations between these. As much time is being spent with the women's uniform as for the men's uniforms. Miss Head's designs have been successful, (they are still being field tested), and due to outstanding efforts to effect the Coast Guard female uniform change, she received not only a commendation from the Coast Guard but a letter of appreciation from President Ford.¹⁴

The changes/additions to the male and female uniforms are not yet complete as suggestions are still coming in from

¹⁴Interview with LCDR Patrinos, 27 July 1975

the field about new and different ideas about what to do with the uniform. All of these suggestions/comments go to the Uniform Board for review, evaluation and response. The reaction to the new Coast Guard blue uniform has been "generally speaking, very favorable. Most personnel we've interviewed appreciate the contemporary look and welcome the opportunity of wearing an outfit with distinctive service identity. As human nature would have it, there's some resistance to the change, a reluctance to move away from tradition. But we believe that will evaporate in a short time."¹⁵

The change has been effected, despite much resistance, and it seems to have been a successful change. The military can effect change very well, using its dictator powers, things are suggested and, bingo, they become done. The military has a definite advantage for effecting change. Most of the people in the organization have an obligated length of time to serve in the organization and things can be accomplished with little or no opposition; if any opposition, it is usually kept quite silent.

History has been revisited, evolution has taken place and a change has occurred. To some, it might seem minor, but to the Coast Guard, it affected all of its 38,000 members. What has resulted is a new identity, a new face. Only the future will tell if it will affect the outstanding performance of the past.

¹⁵Ibid

MENS PICTORAL HISTORY

1. Artist's Conceptions of old uniforms.
2. Dress Uniform, Civil War period.
3. Dress Blues for Engineers, 1871.
4. Parade Dress Blues, 1892.
5. Parade Dress Blues, 1907.
6. Dinner Dress Blues, 1903.
7. Dress Blues, 1909.
8. U.S.C.G. Academy Cadet Uniforms, 1906.
9. U.S.C.G. Academy Cadet Drill Uniform, 1900-1915.
10. Dress Blues, 1920's.
11. Surfmen's uniform, 1935.
12. Enlisted Dress Uniform, 1935.
13. Officer Tropical Whites, until 1977.
14. Officer Tropical Khakis, until 1977.
15. Officer Service Dress Blues, until 1977.
16. Enlisted Undress Summer Whites, until 1977.
17. Enlisted Undress Whites, until 1977.
18. Enlisted Dress Blues, until 1977.
19. Enlisted Undress Blues, until 1977.
20. Comparison between old Dress Blues (right) and new Coast Guard Blues.
21. New Officer Coast Guard Service Dress Blues (left), new Enlisted Coast Guard Service Dress Blues (right)



THE AMERICAN TAR.
DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP.

This lithograph by Nathaniel Currier shows how American seamen dressed in 1845, on the eve of the Mexican War.



An artist's conception of how American seamen dressed in 1830.



This illustration of the uniforms worn by United States Navy officers in 1830 was based on Navy orders and contemporary engravings. Revenue Service officers probably wore similar uniforms.



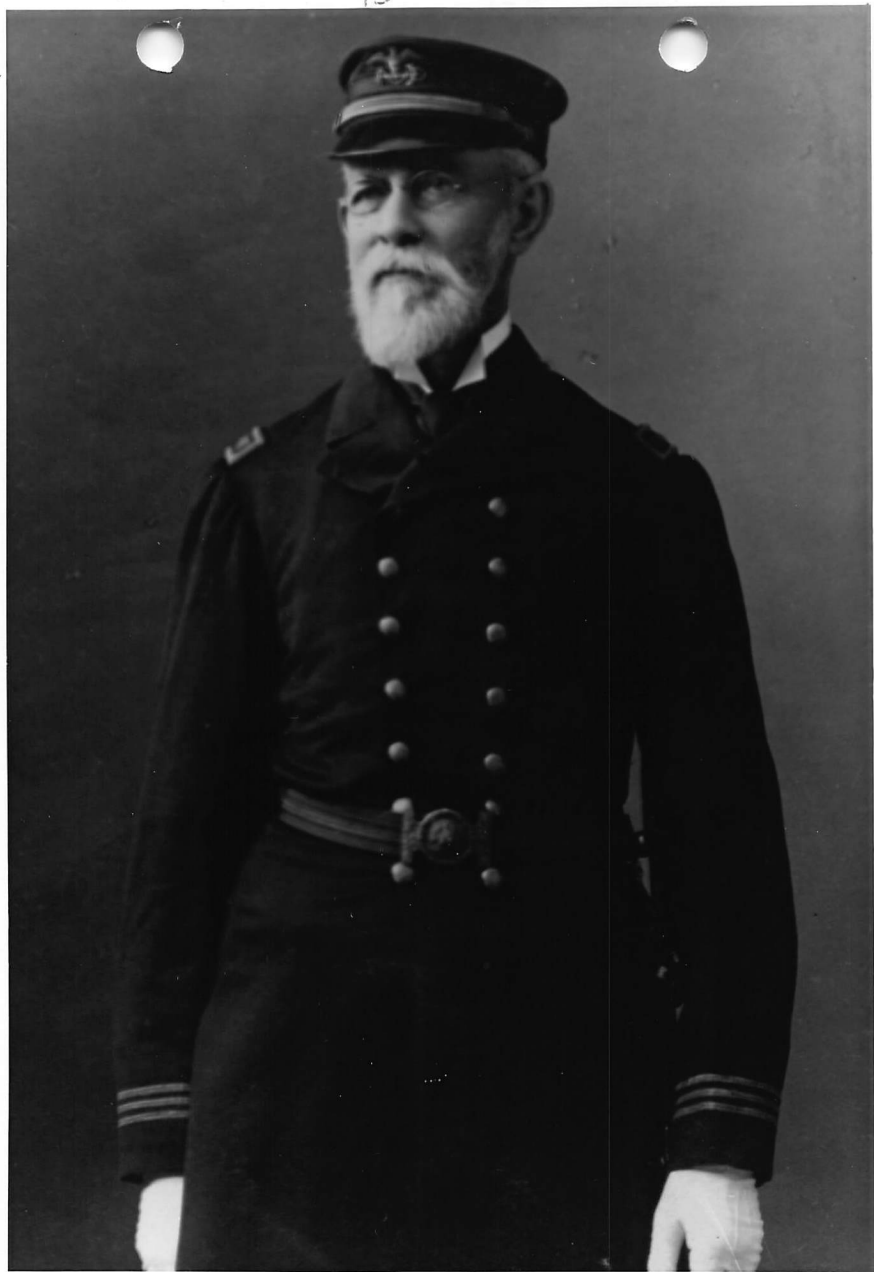
PLEASE CREDIT

OFFICIAL COAST GUARD PHOTO

NUMBER C-1862

FROM: PUBLIC INFORMATION DIVISION
U. S. COAST GUARD DISTRICT OFFICERS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20591

*Civil War Period
3d Lieut. J. K. Whitcomb,
U.S. Revenue Cutter Service*



PLEASE CREDIT

OFFICIAL COAST GUARD PHOTO

NUMBER C-1871

FROM: PUBLIC INFORMATION DIVISION
U. S. COAST GUARD HEADQUARTERS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20591

*Chief Engineer James M. MacDonogh,
U. S. Revenue Cutter Service, in dress
blues of his rank - late 1880's.*



PLEASE CREDIT

OFFICIAL COAST GUARD PHOTO

NUMBER C-1892

FROM: PUBLIC INFORMATION DIVISION
U. S. COAST GUARD PHOTOGRAPHERS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20591

CAPT Robert M. Clark, U.S. Revenue
Cutter Service, in parade dress
blues worn in the late 1800's
and early 1900's.



PLEASE CREDIT

U. S. COAST GUARD OFFICIAL PHOTO

U. S. COAST GUARD

WASHINGTON, D. C., 20590

File No. c 1907 Date _____

Subject: 2nd LT J. A. ALGER,

U.S. Revenue Cutter Service,
Parade Dress uniform
1800's and 1900's

Location: _____

Photographer: _____



PLEASE CREDIT

OFFICIAL GOAST CHASE PHOTO

NUMBER C. 1903

FROM: PUBLIC INFORMATION DIVISION

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20541

And LT John L. Maher, U.S.
Revenue Cutter Service, in
-formal uniform for social
affairs.



PLEASE CREDIT

OFFICIAL WHITE CHART PHOTO

NO. C.1909

FROM: U.S. COAST GUARD DIVISION
U.S. COAST GUARD - BOSTON
U.S. COAST GUARD - BOSTON
U.S. COAST GUARD - BOSTON

D. C. 20521

1st LT Edward S. Addison,
U. S. Revenue Cutter Service
Dress Blues



1129441

From:

Public Relations Division
U. S. Coast Guard
Washington, D. C.

26 CADETS, FOUR OFFICERS SAILED ON TRAINING SHIP IN 1906; EIGHT BECAME COAST GUARD ADMIRALS; THREE COMMANDANTS

The ship's company of the bark SALMON P. CHASE, training ship of the U. S. Revenue Cutter Service, was photographed by H. A. Morton, of Portland, Me. on an Atlantic cruise in 1906. Three of the group were destined to become Commandants of the U. S. Coast Guard, one of them being Vice Admiral Russell R. Waesche, present head of the Service. Eight were to become admirals; one, a commodore. The SALMON P. CHASE was stationed at the School of Instruction, Arundel Cove, Maryland, which is now the Coast Guard Yard at Curtis Bay. In the photograph, the bark's officers are seated and standing behind them wearing white visor caps are the 26 cadets.

Front row, seated, left to right: Second Lieut. Philip H. Scott, later Captain, now deceased; First Lieut. Harry G. Hamlet, later Commandant, retired as Rear Admiral in September, 1938, living in Chevy Chase, Md.; Capt. William E. Reynolds, the bark's commanding officer and superintendent of the school, later Commandant and Rear Admiral, died in January, 1944; Second Lieut. William J. Wheeler, later Rear Admiral, retired in July, 1939, to Norfolk, Va.; Dr. W. H. Frost, U. S. Public Health Service and Marine Health Service.

Cadets, standing, front row, left to right: Paul Henry Harrison, deceased; Chester Hardy Jones, at present, Captain and Chief, U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Division at Headquarters, Washington, D. C.; Gregory Bennett, deceased as cadet; Joseph Raoul Besse, retired; Charles Frederick Seiter, deceased; Edward Joseph Donohue, deceased, brother of Rear Admiral Robert Donohue; Fred Arthur Nichols, at present, Captain and Southern Inspector; David Simeon Combes, resigned as cadet; William Francis Towle, at present, Captain and District Coast Guard Officer, 11th Naval District, Long Beach, Calif.; John Patrick Gray, resigned, later reappointed to the U. S. Coast Guard, Commander, USS CENTAURUS; James Pine, at present, Rear Admiral and Superintendent U. S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, Conn.; John Farrell McGourty, who perished on the CGC TAMPA in the First World War; Michael John Ryan, at present, Captain and District Coast Guard Officer, 6th Naval District, Charleston, S. C.; Louis Leon Bennett, at present, Captain and Commanding Officer, Groton Training Station, Groton, Conn.; Russell Randolph Waesche, at present, Vice Admiral and Commandant of the U. S. Coast Guard; Philip Francis Roach, at present, Commodore and District Coast Guard Officer, 12th Naval District, San Francisco, Calif.; Raymond Lockwood Jack, later Captain,



CADETS, REVENUE CUTTER ACADEMY,
DRILL UNDER ARMS.

PLEASE CREDIT

U. S. COAST GUARD OFFICIAL PHOTO

U. S. COAST GUARD

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

File No. _____ Date: *Before*
1915

Subject: _____

Uniform of Cadets

Location: _____

Photographer: _____



HARRIS & EWING
WASHINGTON, D.C.

PLEASE CREDIT
U. S. COAST GUARD OFFICIAL PHOTO
U. S. COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

File No. _____ Date: *Early 1920's*
Subject: *Uniform*
Capt. John Boedeker USCG,
as a Dist. Comdr.
in early 1920's
Location: _____
Photographer: _____



PLEASE CREDIT
U. S. COAST GUARD OFFICIAL PHOTO
U. S. COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

File No. 04-08-3562 Date: 6. 1935

Subject: UNIFORM OF SURFIEN

Location: CG STATION, BUFFALO, N. Y.

Photographer: _____



PLEASE CREDIT

U. S. COAST GUARD OFFICIAL PHOTO

U. S. COAST GUARD

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

File No. 04-13-35 (4) Date: 4/13/35

Subject: Uniform - Whites
with Blue Collar
and cuffs - Radionan
at USCG Radio Station

Location: Miami, Fla.

Photographer: _____



Address summer white uniform (with hat) with short sleeves worn
by commissioned officers of the U.S. Coast Guard

PLEASE CREDIT

OFFICIAL COAST GUARD PHOTO
NUMBER *APF-1968*

From: Public Information Div.
U. S. Coast Guard
Washington, D. C. 20591

26



Summer dress khaki uniform with short sleeves worn by
Coast Guard officers.

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OFFICIAL U.S. COAST GUARD PHOTO

NUMBER API-1968

From: Public Information Div.
U. S. Coast Guard
Washington, D. C. 20591

27



Public Information Division
U. S. Coast Guard Headquarters
Washington, D. C., 20542

UNIFORMS

1968

OFFICIAL U. S. COAST GUARD UNIFORMS

Dark blue uniform of the rank of U. S. Coast Guard Captain, wings are
included above the ribbon for aviators.

CREDIT - U. S. COAST GUARD UNIFORMS

EAS

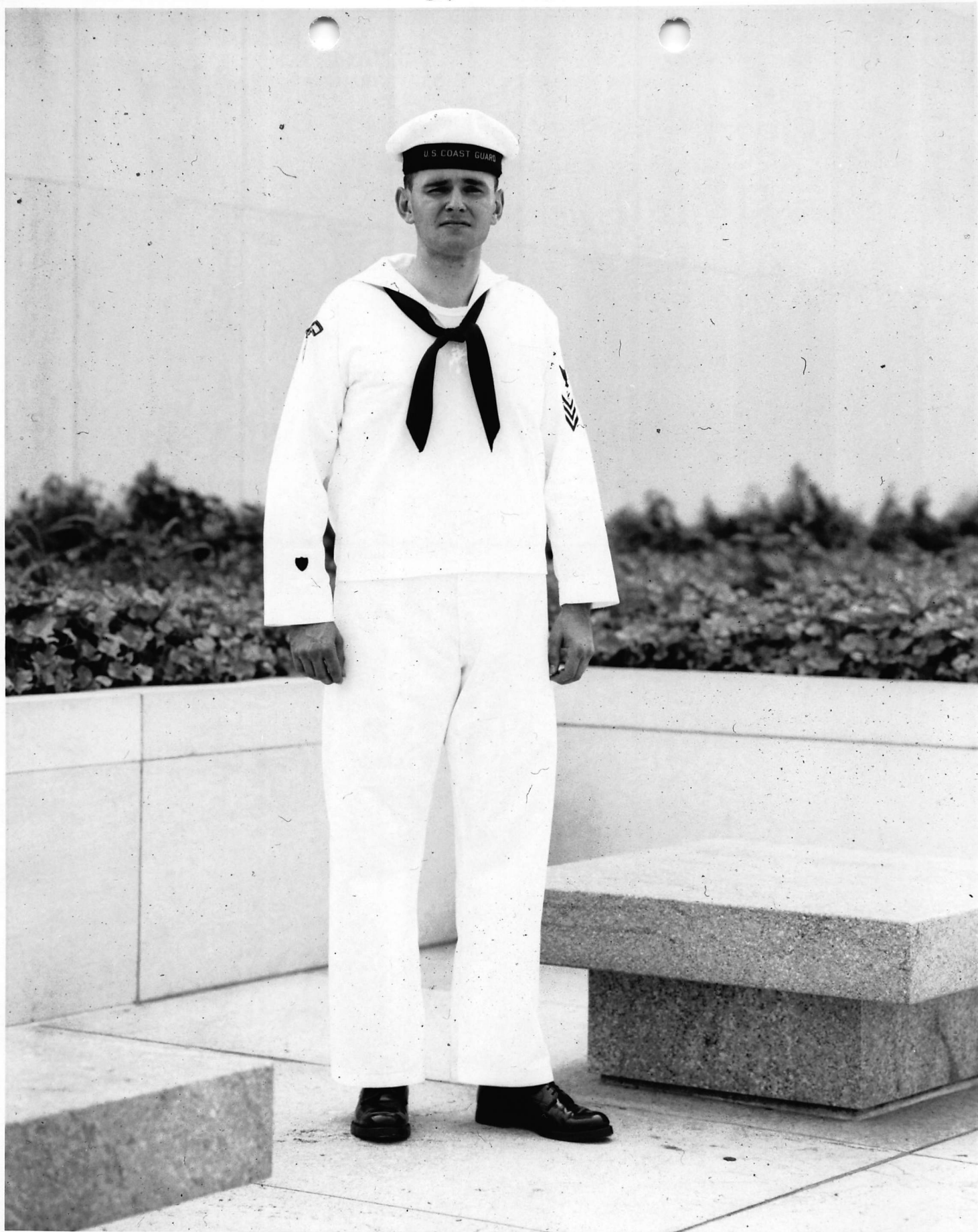


1. Name of the vessel
2. Date of departure
3. Destination
4. Name of the captain
5. Name of the crew member
6. Name of the passenger
7. Name of the ship's agent
8. Name of the ship's owner
9. Name of the ship's operator
10. Name of the ship's manager

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from: Public Information Div.
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Washington, D. C. 20591



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NUMBER

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Washington, D. C. 20591



PIENCE CREW

OFFICIAL COAST GUARD PHOTO
NUMBER

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Washington, D. C. 20591



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OFFICIAL COAST GUARD PHOTO

NUMBER

API-6358

From: Public Information Div.

U. S. Coast Guard

Washington, D. C. 20591



THIS IS THE NEW COAST GUARD DRESS UNIFORM
OFFICER ON LEFT—ENLISTED ON RIGHT

WOMENS NEW UNIFORM PICTORAL

1. Enlisted Work Uniform, pantsuit.
2. Enlisted Dress Uniform.
3. Enlisted Dress Uniform, pantsuit.
4. Officer Dress Uniform.



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U. S. COAST GUARD OFFICIAL PHOTO
U. S. COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20500

File No. _____

Subject: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

Photographer: _____





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U. S. COAST GUARD OFFICIAL PHOTO
U. S. COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20530

File No. -C Date: _____

Subject: _____

Location: _____

Photographer: _____



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U. S. COAST GUARD OFFICIAL PHOTO
U. S. COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20500

File No. _____ Date: 1/1 _____

Subject: _____

Location: _____

Photographer: _____



VI 39
CAPTAINS & COMMANDERS n=150
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

MAILING ADDRESS:
U.S. COAST GUARD (GP-1/73)
400 SEVENTH STREET SW.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590
PHONE: 202 426 0890

. 10 NOV 1972

• From: Commandant
To:

Subj: New uniforms for officers, questionnaire

1. As you may be aware, I have proposed that a new and distinctive uniform be adopted by the Coast Guard. The results of the Officer Questionnaire in 1971 indicated that the officer corps overwhelmingly supported the concept of a new and distinctive uniform for enlisted personnel. However, the majority did not favor a change for officers. Petty officers are also overwhelmingly in favor of a new uniform for enlisted personnel.

2. Because of the overwhelming support by both the officer and enlisted levels for the new enlisted uniform, I have recently approved its basic style and color. With only minor changes, this is the same uniform that was issued to a number of personnel in the field for test wearing. The procurement process for this uniform is now underway with a target date of 3/1/74 for the initial issue. I foresee the initial issue being spread over a two-year period with both the new and old uniforms being authorized during this period. The old uniform would be completely phased out by the summer of 1976.

3. As yet, no decision has been made concerning a change in the officer uniform. In order that I may consider your opinions and attitudes toward a change in officer uniforms before making a decision, I request that you complete the attached UNIFORM QUESTIONNAIRE and return it within one week. This questionnaire is being sent to a wide sample of officers.

C. R. Bender
C. R. BENDER

OFFICER UNIFORM QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Have you seen the new enlisted uniform? (check one)

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
YES	NO

2. Do you feel that you can objectively evaluate the desirability of adopting a new officer uniform?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
YES	NO

ON NUMBERS 3 THROUGH 18, USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE TO INDICATE YOUR ANSWER. PLEASE EVALUATE EACH STATEMENT BY WRITING THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER IN THE BOXES.

5	4	3	2	1	0
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know

3. It is important that officer and enlisted personnel have similar uniforms. ----- ☐
4. It is important that officer and enlisted personnel uniforms be the same color. ----- ☐
5. A new Coast Guard uniform will help identify the Coast Guard as a unique and independent service. ----- ☐
6. A new Coast Guard uniform will help recruiting and retention in an all-volunteer service. ----- ☐
7. There will be a greater "Esprit de Corps" if officer and enlisted personnel have a similar uniform. ----- ☐
8. The cost of a new uniform to the officer corps would not be a significant deterrent if it is phased in over a period of time. ----- ☐
9. If the new uniform were to replace all three of the current officer uniforms (dress blues, whites, and khaki), in the long run, the cost of the new uniform would be less than maintaining the current uniforms or, at least, no more expensive. ----- ☐
10. Since the Navy is phasing out the khaki uniform, a new officer uniform should replace only the dress and tropical khaki uniform with dress blues and whites being retained. ----- ☐

OFFICER UNIFORM QUESTIONNAIRE (con't)

11. The image of the Coast Guard would be helped at official parades if officer and enlisted personnel were in uniforms of the same basic color. ----- ☐
12. We should not lose our close identity with the Navy by adopting a different officer uniform. ----- ☐
13. The Navy is changing its enlisted uniforms to be similar to the officer uniform. In the light of this fact, the current Coast Guard officer service dress blue uniform would more closely identify Coast Guard officers with Navy enlisted personnel rather than with Coast Guard enlisted personnel. ----- ☐
14. The style, tailoring, and color of a new uniform are critical to my acceptance. ----- ☐
15. If the uniform board developed a uniform that I really liked, I would accept its adoption despite the costs involved. ----- ☐
16. It is so important that officer and enlisted uniforms be similar that I would accept the new uniform even though I didn't really like it. ----- ☐
17. I like the color of the new enlisted uniform. (Answer "Don't know" if you have not seen one.) ----- ☐
18. I like the style and tailoring of the new enlisted uniform (Answer "Don't know" if you have not seen one.) ----- ☐

One of the first things that LCDR Patrinos was to do when he came to the job on the Uniform Board was to make a chart from which he could monitor his progress as time went along. This was very important as he was on a strict time schedule; he had to have a complete wardrobe for the entire Coast Guard on the street in fourteen months. It also allowed him to see almost immediately if the progress was becoming hindered anywhere; which then he could make a few phone calls to get the ball rolling or backtrack and try another approach.

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