

The United States Naval Academy, 1845–2020

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U.S. Naval Academy



Selecting the Site of the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, 1845. Oil on canvas by Jes W. Schlaikjer. Signed and dated by the artist, 1941. It depicts U.S. Navy officers and civilian officials examining the terrain in the vicinity of Fort Severn, which is visible in the left background. The original painting is in the U.S. Naval Academy Museum, Annapolis, Maryland. It was donated by the Alco Division, Publications Corporation in 1942 (NHHK KN-10950).

The year 2020 marks the 175th anniversary of the establishment of the United States Naval Academy. As an institution, the academy is dedicated to the recruitment, education and training of talented young adults for service in defense of the nation. With a long and rich history, the United States Naval Academy both reflects back to draw on decades of experience and projects forward to meet the new challenges of the 21st century.

Revolutionary Times

Congress founded the Continental Navy on 13 October 1775 and the Marine Corps on 10 November of the same year. The qualified seamen with leadership abilities necessary to man the new navy came from merchant ships as well as from those with prior service in the Royal Navy. This practical “school of hard knocks” served the emerging nation well and produced such leaders as John Paul Jones, John Barry, Thomas Truxtun, Edward Preble, and—later—Stephen Decatur and Oliver Hazard Perry.

Before the Academy: 1787–1844

When a young man entered the Navy as a prospective officer, he was assigned to a ship, and it was the responsibility of the officers of that ship to train, educate, and prepare him for advancement. These young men were called “midshipmen.” The term referred to one of their duties, i.e., being placed amidships or abreast the mainmast to act as messengers from the officers on the quarterdeck to the seamen at the forecastle. After 1819, in order to become a junior officer, all midshipmen were required to pass an advancement examination that covered a variety of topics. A number of attempts were made to found a naval academy to educate and prepare midshipmen for their advancement examination. Commodore John Paul Jones, who is buried in the crypt of the Naval Academy’s main Chapel, was one of the earliest proponents of providing a structured officers’ education. He wrote to Minister of Marine Robert Morris:

My plan for forming a proper corps of sea officers, is ... that fleet of frigates ... on board of each I would have a little academy, where the officers should be taught the principles of mathematics and mechanics, when off duty. When in port, the young officers should be obliged to attend at the academies established at each dockyard, where they should be taught the principles of every art and science that is necessary to form the character of a great sea officer. And every commission officer of the Navy should have free access and be entitled to receive instruction gratis at those academies ... In time of peace it is necessary to prepare and be always prepared for war by sea.

Alexander Hamilton, serving as inspector general for the War Department in 1799, submitted a plan for a comprehensive national military education system to the Secretary of War with a copy to former Commander in Chief George Washington. It called for four schools, one for “the fundamentals,” another for engineers and artillerymen, another for cavalry and infantry, and a fourth

for the Navy. Among his last actions before he died, Washington penned an endorsement of Hamilton's plan. From this plan, Congress established only one school, for engineers and artilleryists at West Point, New York, on 16 March 1802.

Meanwhile other avenues to improve the knowledge of midshipmen were pursued. Naval regulations issued by command of President Jefferson on 25 January 1802, stated that a chaplain "*shall perform the duty of a school-master; and to that end he shall instruct the midshipmen and volunteers, in writing, arithmetic and navigation, and in whatsoever may contribute to render them proficient.*" A few qualified and energetic chaplains of the U.S. Navy created schools at the Washington Navy Yard, aboard the *USS Guerriere* at Norfolk, at New York, at Boston, and aboard ships on assignments at sea. However, attending classes offered by the chaplains was voluntary and was at times opposed by a ship's commanding officer, who wanted to use the young men for other duties. No standard curriculum was followed and few of the chaplains were qualified to teach all the necessary professional subjects thoroughly. By 1831, the Navy was authorized to have 377 midshipmen and they could be assigned to some 22 ships and to nine Navy yards and stations. There were only nine chaplains.

Presidents and Secretaries of the Navy attempted to get a single, more comprehensive school for midshipmen approved by the Congress over the decades. In 1839, a midshipmen's school was opened at the Naval Asylum in Philadelphia (a retirement home for aged sailors). Still, the process for appointment as a midshipman required no standardized training or evaluation of students with access being more important than qualifications or character. It meant that individuals could be admitted into the system and cause damage to the institution of the Navy. The fallout from this system came to a head with the Somers Affair of 1841. While at sea, the officers of *USS Somers* discovered one midshipman and two senior enlisted sailors were plotting a mutiny to take over the ship. An immediate court-martial was held on board, the three plotters were found guilty, and they were hanged from the yardarm. When the *Somers* docked at the New York Navy Yard, the mutiny and punishment became widely known and shocked the nation. The executed midshipman, Philip Spencer, was the son of the currently serving Secretary of War John C. Spencer. Investigations revealed that he had been a truant and delinquent, put into the Navy by his family in hopes of rehabilitation. The debates that followed the Somers Affair not only resulted in improvements in the admission system of military and naval officers, they caused momentum toward the establishment of a proper naval school.

A second critical development related to technology propelled the Navy to establish a school for midshipmen: the innovation of steam-powered ships. The use of steam for propulsion began in the first two decades of the 19th century and would accelerate the necessity of an educational system capable of producing junior officers with knowledge of engineering and physics, among other topics. The time for the "school of hard knocks" had passed.

Founding the Academy, 1845

No person deserves more credit for the founding of the United States Naval Academy than then Secretary of the Navy George Bancroft. An alumnus of Harvard with a doctorate from the University of Göttingen in Germany, Bancroft had already helped to found a school in his home state of Massachusetts. He was a student of American history and knew prior attempts to get a naval academy established through congressional action were unsuccessful. Bancroft developed a plan to establish the school using his prerogatives as Navy Secretary and his existing budget, and then present Congress with a *fait accompli*. He was Secretary of the Navy for only 18 months, but he was able to accomplish what none of his predecessors had been able to achieve.

Within weeks of assuming his office in March 1845, Bancroft reviewed a plan submitted by Professor William Chauvenet, who taught at the Philadelphia Asylum, which had been accepted and then rejected by his predecessor. The plan would take midshipmen who had served four years at sea and provide them a mandatory two-year course in studies at the Naval Asylum in Philadelphia. The plan was repudiated when officers argued that midshipmen could not be spared for two years from their critical duties aboard ships. Bancroft liked Chauvenet's plan since it aligned with his belief that a combination of instruction aboard ships and at shore schools was necessary in the fast changing world of naval technology. He learned that the facility at Philadelphia could not accommodate the number of students involved if the school were made mandatory. Therefore Bancroft asked the annual Board of Examiners to consider alternative sites and curricula approaches for the proposed school.

The board recommended that midshipmen be provided a two-year course of study at a school, followed by three years at sea and a final year aboard a practice ship at the school before being examined for promotion. Further, the board endorsed the transfer of the U.S. Army's Fort Severn at Annapolis, Maryland, to the Navy as the site for the school. Fort Severn occupied about 10 acres of land on a promontory jutting into the confluence of the Severn River with Spa Creek and the Chesapeake Bay. The federal government had acquired the land in 1807 for the purpose of building the fort. For nearly 40 years, Fort Severn had defended the water approaches to Maryland's state capital with a battery of 10 guns. The battery never fired a shot in anger, but it was continually manned and likely prevented raids on the city during the War of 1812. The recommended location would allow close oversight by the Secretary of Navy from Washington, DC, and was an attractive option since there was no money in the budget to purchase a new property. Additionally, the small town atmosphere in Annapolis was assessed as a positive trait, thought to reduce temptations and distractions for the midshipmen.

On 15 August 1845, Fort Severn was officially transferred on paper from the War Department to the Navy Department, and Commander Franklin Buchanan was selected to be the first superintendent of the school. In early September, he assumed command of Fort Severn and met with members of the staff and faculty, most of whom had transferred from the Philadelphia Asylum.

They included Professors Henry H. Lockwood and William Chauvenet, Lieutenant James H. Ward, and Passed Midshipman (passed exams but not yet commissioned) Samuel Marcy. Lieutenant Ward also served as Buchanan's executive officer, a position expanded and re-titled Commandant of Midshipmen in 1850.

When the Navy took over the fort, the existing buildings were converted to the uses needed for the naval school. Commander Buchanan moved into the commandant's house, while six of the faculty moved into the row of adjacent officer's quarters. The mess hall, with two recitation rooms upstairs, was placed in a barracks on the other side of the Superintendent's house. Another barracks building, the hospital, sutler and blacksmith's shops, and the bake house all became dormitories for midshipmen. Among the first civilian employees of the school were three free African Americans: Darius King, Moses Lake, and Edwin Dennis. King was the cook in charge of the mess hall and worked at the school for the first five years. Lake was the barber who also had a shop in town. Dennis was a handy man and grounds keeper, who would remain an employee until his retirement in 1910. He holds the record (65 years) for the longest period of service to the U.S. Naval Academy.

On the morning of Friday, 10 October 1845, at 11:00 A.M., Commander Franklin Buchanan, the faculty of seven, and about 50 midshipmen gathered in the recitation building for the formal opening of the Naval School at Annapolis. Buchanan read a letter from Secretary Bancroft, as well as the rules and regulations he had written "for the internal government of the Naval School." He informed the midshipmen:

The Government in affording you an opportunity of acquiring an education, so important to the accomplishment of a naval officer, has bestowed upon you all an incalculable benefit. The regulations of the Navy require you to pass through a severe ordeal before you can be promoted; you must undergo an examination on all the branches taught at the Naval School before you are eligible for a Lieutenancy; your morals and general character are strictly inquired into. It is therefore expected that you will improve every leisure moment in the acquirement of knowledge of your profession; and you will recollect that a good moral character is essential to your promotion and high standing in the Navy.

The daily routine in the earliest days of the Naval School included classes from 8:00 A.M. to noon and from 1:30 to 4:30 P.M. Meals and recreation lasted from noon to 1:30 P.M. and from 4:30 to 6:00 P.M. Study time was from 6:00 to 10:00 P.M.; lights out was at 10:30 P.M. There were two classes of midshipmen: oldsters (defined as individuals who had already served at sea) and youngsters (newly appointed midshipmen). They were taught French or Spanish by Professor Arsène Girault, whose father had served under Napoleon. Mathematics and navigation were taught by Professor Chauvenet, assisted by Passed Midshipman Marcy. Natural philosophy (sciences) was

taught by Professor Henry Lockwood, and history and English composition by Chaplain George Jones. Lieutenant James H. Ward taught ordnance, gunnery, and steam, while Surgeon John Lockwood taught chemistry. Each student was required to give daily recitations, for which they were graded on a scale from 1–10. Weekly grades and merit standings were reported to the superintendent, and quarterly reports on each midshipman were forwarded to the Secretary of the Navy.

Living conditions were meager: iron camp beds, simple pine tables, and chairs were provided. The midshipmen were expected to furnish their own bureaus, candles, and also to pay for the wood or coal used to heat the rooms out of their \$350 annual pay. After many complaints, in the second year the government began paying for the fuel. Permission was required to go into town, but it was a matter of simply signing oneself out. Over-consumption of alcoholic beverages in the taverns of Annapolis caused most of the first dismissals. On 15 January 1846, the school hosted its first Naval Ball in the old mess hall with guests from Annapolis, Baltimore, and Washington dancing to music provided by the U.S. Marine Corps Band. The January ball became an annual tradition held for many years.

Secretary Bancroft persuaded the Congress to approve \$28,200 for repairs, improvements, and instruction at the new school. John Rainbow, the school's carpenter, began construction in 1846 on the first major building to be added to the school. It was here that the entire school could be gathered for chapel services and other general meetings. The mess hall was on the ground level while the library and lyceum were located on the second floor. The library collection was inaugurated by a request from Bancroft to various Navy yards and ships for donations of books. The library was overseen by Professor Chauvenet and grew to over 2,000 books by 1850. Chaplain George Jones managed the Naval School Lyceum and in 1849, President James K. Polk signed an executive order transferring the Navy's collection of historic and captured "trophy" flags for care and exhibition at the school.

Early Years of the Academy: 1846–61

The outbreak of the Mexican War in May 1846 produced dramatic effects at the Naval School. Commander Buchanan immediately volunteered for sea duty. Shortly after his departure, the government purchased Buchanan's Annapolis house along with two adjacent properties for the first land expansion of the school. Navy Secretary Bancroft, who desired a diplomatic post, departed for London in the fall of 1847. Ninety midshipmen, mostly oldsters from the school and fleet, saw service in the war. Four midshipmen died in the line of duty: Henry R. Clemson, John R. Hynson, Wingate Pillsbury, and Thomas B. Shubrick. None of the four had attended the school in Annapolis; however, a monument was commissioned to honor them that still stands in the center of the Yard today. It was initially known simply as the Midshipmen's Monument and today is known

as the Mexican War Monument. It is the only physical feature on campus that survives from the early years of the Academy.

By 1850, five years after its establishment, the Naval School at Annapolis had been reorganized into the routine that remains to this day: a four-year academic program with summer training cruises. It had been officially renamed the United States Naval Academy and Millard Fillmore became the first President to visit the school in 1852. Captain George S. Blake took command of the school on 15 September 1857. He would become the Academy's longest-serving superintendent, in office for eight years, less six days. At the beginning of his third academic year, in the fall of 1859, so many midshipmen reported that the plebe class had to be quartered aboard the training sloop *Plymouth*. The following year, a larger, but much older ship, the frigate *USS Constitution* ("Old Ironsides") was brought to Annapolis for training midshipmen.

Flight to Newport: The Civil War Period 1861–65

The shelling of Fort Sumter on 12 April 1861 marked the beginning of the American Civil War: 156 officers resigned from the U.S. Navy and of those, 142 served in the Confederate Navy. Forty-eight officers born in Confederate states remained on duty with the U.S. Navy and approximately 400 alumni served during the four years of the war. There was a clear possibility that Maryland could secede from the Union given southern sympathy throughout the state. Additionally, the southern end of the Chesapeake Bay formed the boundary with the Confederate States of America. Therefore, it was decided to evacuate the Naval Academy from Annapolis to Newport, Rhode Island. On 20 April, a large steamer carrying the 8th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment under General Benjamin F. Butler arrived in Annapolis. Blake received orders from Washington "*to defend the Constitution at all hazards. If it cannot be done, destroy her.*" The ship was saved and used to help evacuate the midshipmen from Annapolis on 26 April. Several days later the steamer *S.S. Baltic* carried the remaining staff, faculty, the band, and their families, along with the school's library and what laboratory and classroom equipment could be loaded, to Newport. Left behind were the recently erected Herndon and Tripoli Monuments, now surrounded by hundreds of troops from Massachusetts and New York. The grounds of old Fort Severn were reassigned to the War Department and used for the landing of troops and supplies to secure Maryland and to defend the nearby Union capital in Washington.

The Classes of 1861, 1862, and 1863 were ordered to active duty, leaving only the plebes for education. In June, the new Class of 1865—a record-setting 203 students—reported for duty and were quartered aboard the frigate *Constitution*. The Atlantic House hotel in downtown Newport was leased and used to billet the Class of 1864 and staff, and to hold classes. Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's famous blue banner, containing the immortal words "Don't give up the ship," which had been preserved since the War of 1812, now graced a wall in an old hotel in the late Perry's hometown. By the end of the Civil War, the Naval Academy had graduated 768 students. A total of

25 alumni were killed in action during the war, 19 for the Union and six for the Confederacy. Graduates fought in all the major naval battles from Cape Hatteras to New Orleans to Mobile Bay, and at the capture of Fort Fisher.

Return to Annapolis: 1865–94

The midshipmen left for their summer training cruises from Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay in 1865 and ended them on the Severn River at Annapolis. Rear Admiral David Dixon Porter was assigned as the sixth Superintendent on 9 September 1865. From a distinguished naval family, he was the son of the Barbary Wars and War of 1812 hero Commodore David Porter, as well as foster brother of America's first admiral, David Glasgow Farragut. Porter himself had compiled an outstanding record in the Civil War, helping to secure the Mississippi River with General Ulysses S. Grant and leading forces in the capture of Fort Fisher, North Carolina. The dynamic Admiral Porter would become one of the most significant and well-known leaders in the history of the Naval Academy.

Arriving in Annapolis in the late summer of 1865, Porter found the facilities and grounds in a disastrous state. Troops and horses had ruined the landscape, and buildings had not been properly maintained. When he first threw open the door of the colonial-era Dulany House, the superintendent's residence, he found a billiard table and empty beer bottles littering it. He immediately set about having the area cleaned up, repainted, and replanted, and plans drawn up for new buildings. During his four-year tenure, these included a large dormitory, a chapel, and academic buildings for science, steam engineering, chemistry, and a huge hospital. The latter was used only for a few months due to midshipmen complaints about the distance required to travel to access the hospital and administrators' complaints about its cost of operations. It was abandoned, used only for storage for years, and became known as "Porter's folly." Porter had the federal government purchase the original Maryland governor's mansion, which was converted into the school's library and offices for the superintendent and his staff. He also oversaw the acquisition of a large tract of land, 113 acres, across Dorsey (now College) Creek, known as the Prospect Hill and Strawberry Hill farms.

Having learned important lessons in the war as to what skills a successful junior officer required, Porter revitalized the academic curriculum to support operational excellence. He appointed numerous naval officers to the faculty, restoring the balance between civilian instructors and military officers. The first detachment of United States Marines was assigned to the Academy to help set an example in military deportment and to provide security. He made steam engineering a separate academic department headed by a chief engineer, and instituted a separate two-year engineering major. From his experience in the war, he knew young officers had to be in good physical shape and therefore inaugurated organized athletics and sports competitions. Following graduation exercises in the chapel in 1866, a baseball match was held between the first and second

classes. Porter introduced baseball, boxing, crew racing, and gymnastics. He had the interior of the gun battery of old Fort Severn converted into a gymnasium, encouraged regular Saturday-afternoon baseball games between the classes, and held Thanksgiving athletic carnivals. During the practice cruise of 1868, the midshipmen made their first organized visit to West Point, where they challenged the cadets to baseball and rowing contests.

The Midshipmen Battalion was commanded by a cadet lieutenant commander and was organized into four companies, each commanded by a cadet lieutenant. In 1867, Porter began a competition between the four companies during graduation week for the honor of carrying a special flag that was to be awarded during a special parade. It became known as the Color Parade and remains among the oldest traditions at the Academy. Also that year, the figurehead of ship-of-the-line *Delaware*, a carved wood bust of the Native American Chief Tamanend from the Delaware tribe, arrived and was mounted on a brick pedestal between the Seamanship Department and the Lyceum, or old chapel.

The traditions of first class colors and class crests were begun and, in 1869, the class ring was introduced. The graduating class gave the first ring to Admiral Porter. Weekly hops were held in the Lyceum and special occasions always included formal balls in the gymnasium. There was so much dancing that the school became known locally as "Porter's Dancing Academy." A whole week of festivities, ceremonies, and athletic events was instituted and culminated with the graduation ceremony. It was dubbed "June Week." President Ulysses S. Grant attended the graduation exercises in 1869 and he assisted his Civil War comrade in distributing the diplomas. The President, his cabinet members, important members of Congress, and their wives, along with 4,000 other guests from New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, gathered that evening in the gymnasium for a magnificent farewell ball given in honor of Mrs. Porter.

In subsequent years, the Navy as a whole was downsized in the aftermath of the Civil War. This had a significant impact on the academy. Only 25 students graduated in 1872 and only eight of these officers would have full careers. Congress reduced the status of midshipmen and extended their service at sea before their commissioning. Morale fell in the brigade and hazing became so ruthless, particularly between the third and fourth classes, that Congress passed an anti-hazing law in 1874. The law made hazing a court-martial offense and authorized the superintendent to dismiss all found guilty of it. The first African American midshipman, James Conyers, arrived in September 1872. The officers who had fought to free his race from slavery a few years earlier went out of their way to protect him, particularly from peer-to-peer hazing. Despite their efforts, he was mistreated. Conyers left the academy the following November with the official reason being stated as deficiency in mathematics and French. Two other Black midshipmen came and went in short order. It would be another 70 years before the first African American would graduate from the Naval Academy, Wesley A. Brown, Class of 1949 (the Wesley A. Brown Field House was dedicated in May 2008 with Lieutenant Commander Brown and his wife in attendance).

As the United States prepared to celebrate its centennial in 1876, its naval college graduated its 1,301st midshipman. Further changes in the school curriculum included a new department in mechanics and applied mathematics, and the establishment of the first course in the United States in mechanical engineering. This revised system of education was recognized internationally in 1878, when the Naval Academy was awarded a gold medal for academics at the Universal Exposition in Paris.

New quarters for the superintendent, a huge, red-brick Victorian Queen Anne–style house, was completed and 12 acres of land were purchased along Dorsey (later College) Creek, making possible the construction of a series of new, red-brick family quarters on what would become Upshur and Rodgers Roads. The football season was instituted and expanded to six games, including plans to play the United States Military Academy. The Navy prevailed (24–0) in the first Army-Navy football game, held at West Point, New York, on 29 November 1890. In the run-up to the game, a captured goat became the academy mascot and the Navy “N” athletic letter was introduced. “Navy blue and gold” became the official school colors and the first *Lucky Bag* yearbook was published.

An Academy Reborn: 1895–1913

In 1895, the Board of Visitors’ annual report condemned the existing facilities as poorly built hazards, inadequate to the future needs of the Navy. Sanitation conditions were bad, with a slaughterhouse on lower Tabernacle Street (now College Avenue) just outside the wall in Annapolis. Blood from its work drained through the academy grounds and into the creek. Medical reports on the school were highly critical of these conditions. The classrooms, laboratories, and dormitories of the Naval Academy had to be modernized.

The Board of Visitors recommended that Navy Secretary Hilary A. Herbert appoint a Navy board of survey to inspect and report on existing conditions and render a second opinion. By January 1896, the board of survey reported their agreement regarding existing conditions and recommended the installation of a seawall and the erection of new fireproof buildings, “*properly arranged and situated, to be convenient, healthy, and thoroughly adapted to the requirements of an institution that is to last for all time.*” The explosion aboard battleship USS *Maine*, which sank the ship in Havana harbor on the night of 15 February 1898, thrust the Navy into the national limelight and the nation into war with Spain. On 4 May, just three days after Commodore George Dewey had won a smashing victory at Manila Bay, Congress appropriated \$1 million for the construction of a new armory, boathouse, powerhouse, and a portion of a new seawall at the Naval Academy. The following March, construction began on the armory (now Dahlgren Hall), the first structure of the new Naval Academy.

As the evaluation of the campus proceeded, Robert Means Thompson, USNA ’68, the highly successful President of the Orford Copper Company and an important member of the Board of Visitors, personally engaged the architect Ernest Flagg (1857–1947) to draw up plans for a new

Naval Academy. Flagg had studied architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, and today the Naval Academy represents the largest group of Beaux-Arts buildings in America. The influence of the buildings of the Paris Exposition of 1889, in progress while Flagg was a student, can be found in the granite towers, massive arches filled with glass, and wrought iron in both Dahlgren and Macdonough Halls. Ernest Flagg not only designed the new buildings for the Naval Academy, but he laid out a new topography for the Yard. He located the new chapel on the highest elevation facing the Severn River. From the chapel steps, facing the river, he placed the midshipmen's new dormitory, Bancroft Hall (affectionately nicknamed "Mother B"), to the right. The academic complex centered on a new library with a clock tower, Mahan Hall, which was placed on the left. The central part of the Yard became a beautiful, tree-shaded quadrangle park.

In his original plan, the dormitory was flanked on either end by an armory and a boathouse. Interested in historic preservation, Flagg had hoped to save the colonial-era Maryland governor's mansion, used since 1868 as the academy's library, and convert it back into a residence for the superintendent. He also wanted to save the old battery of Fort Severn, dating from 1808, which housed the gymnasium. He had to change these plans and the old library/mansion gave way to Dahlgren Hall. The last remnant of Fort Severn was torn down in 1909, a year after Flagg's new academy was completed.

Ernest Flagg's plan initially called for buildings of red brick trimmed with limestone to complement old Annapolis on the other side of the wall. The powerful New England granite lobby in the Congress required the substitution of Maine granite for red brick to secure their votes for funding. To solve the problem of a transition from the monumental new granite buildings of the academy to the smaller red-brick structures outside the wall, Flagg added a row of more modest, gray-brick duplex family houses, Porter Road, between the two elements. On 7 June 1900, Congress approved an additional \$8 million for the buildings and seawall in his plan. In the first academic year of the new Naval Academy, 1907–08, Bancroft Hall had to house 854 Midshipmen, almost double its original capacity.

The crown jewel of Flagg's plan was the Main Chapel. Designed to the form of a Greek cross with equal transepts, it was based on Jules Hardouin Mansart's military church in Paris at the Hôtel des Invalides. That church was built in the late 17th century and contains the marble tomb of Napoleon Bonaparte. Using this as a model, Flagg conceived the Naval Academy Chapel as a final resting place for naval heroes. When the remains of Commodore John Paul Jones, the great naval leader of the American Revolution, were rediscovered in an abandoned Paris cemetery, the Chapel became the natural choice for the location of his final internment. The casket containing Commodore Jones' remains arrived in Annapolis from France on a hot summer afternoon, 22 July 1905. A small, temporary, above-ground brick vault had been built in the Yard to accommodate the casket since the Chapel was still under construction. On 24 April 1906, the anniversary of Jones' victory over HMS *Drake* during the American Revolution, his casket was carried into the new armory

(Dahlgren Hall). Ceremonies were held, including a speech by President Theodore Roosevelt before a host of dignitaries, the Brigade of Midshipmen, and thousands of guests. Afterward, the casket was carried into Bancroft Hall, where it remained under the staircase in the steerage area for seven years. Finally, in 1911, Congress appropriated an additional \$75,000 and architect Whitney Warren was hired to design the crypt. The French government donated beautiful black and white marble for the sarcophagus and columns. On 26 January 1913, the midshipmen carried the casket and placed it in this impressive new receptacle. Jones remains the only naval hero so honored, the hero fulfilling Ernest Flagg's original concept for his "Cathedral of the Navy."

Flagg had originally designed the Chapel to be built entirely of granite, but building costs had escalated so much since funding appropriation that he had to change to the more economical use of reinforced cement and concrete with gray-brick facings. The Chapel became one of the first major buildings in America with a skeletal frame made of concrete. The cornerstone of the Chapel was laid by Admiral of the Navy George Dewey, Class of 1858, during June Week 1904. It was dedicated in a service held on 28 May 1908. Although Flagg had wanted to cover the entire massive dome (185 feet above the ground at its peak) with gold leaf, he had to settle for less-expensive, terra cotta military emblems. These were made of poor-quality material and became damaged by weather and lightning. They were removed in 1928, and a simple copper sheathing roof was installed in the 1930s. In the interior, the huge organ with over 6,000 pipes became the focus, along with several magnificent stained-glass windows designed by Frederick Wilson and Louis C. Tiffany. The windows were dedicated to such naval luminaries as Admirals David Dixon Porter, David Glasgow Farragut, and William T. Sampson. Alumni of the Naval Academy commissioned and paid for all but one of the original windows.

The enormous bronze doors of the Chapel entrance were designed in a contest sponsored by the National Sculpture Society. When the unsigned winning entry was revealed to be from a 28-year-old woman sculptor, Evelyn Beatrice Longman, some of the gentlemen of the selection committee wanted to change their votes. However, Robert Means Thompson, USNA '68, who was paying for the doors as a memorial to his class, insisted that the Longman design was final.

When the auditorium in Mahan Hall was completed, the midshipmen theatrical group was formally organized as the Masqueraders and began to produce a series of original musicals. Bandmaster Charles A. Zimmermann arranged the music, and the faculty and midshipmen wrote the words. Zimmermann, the son of a Naval Academy Band member, followed his father into the band in 1884 and became its director three years later. He had been offered John Philip Sousa's job as conductor of the United States Marine Corps Band when Sousa retired, but he decided to remain in Annapolis. In the 1890s, Zimmermann began composing a new piece of music for each graduating class. His most famous composition was *Anchors Aweigh*, which he had composed for the Class of 1907. It has become famous as a march, representing the entire United States Navy.

During this period, Naval Academy varsity athletics expanded and became nationally recognized. The Naval Academy Auxiliary Athletic Association, fostered by alumnus Robert Means Thompson, had been established in 1891. Thompson donated a beautiful silver trophy cup, the Thompson Trophy, which has been awarded each year since 1895 to the outstanding midshipman athlete. At the turn of the century, Navy participated in four varsity sports: baseball, crew, fencing, and football. Track and rifle were added in 1904; basketball in 1907; tennis in 1909; wrestling in 1910; swimming in 1911; and gymnastics in 1912. By 1916, 452 of the 918 midshipmen were participating in intercollegiate sports.

In 1910, an epidemic of typhoid swept the Naval Academy. Following the inspection of local dairy farms, it was believed that the source of the disease was the milk supply. Contracts with local farmers were cancelled, and dairy cows were acquired and pastured across College Creek and across the Severn River at Greenbury Point. Three years later the government purchased the Hammond manor and estate in Gambrills, Maryland, and Paymaster Samuel Bryant was assigned to develop a dairy farm. Within a few years, Bryant had done such an excellent job that Swiss farmers were visiting to examine its operation. For many generations, the midshipmen had fresh milk, cheese, and great ice cream produced especially for them.

The Two World Wars

As the war began in Europe in 1914, the Brigade of Midshipmen was reorganized and renamed the Regiment of Midshipmen, consisting of four battalions with three companies each. (In 1946, the regiment would become a brigade again, which it has remained ever since.) With mounting unrestricted aggression by German submarines against neutral shipping and in anticipation of the United States taking more direct naval action, the Congress authorized an increase in the total number of midshipmen from 1,094 to 1,746. The Class of 1917 was graduated on 29 March, just a week before the United States officially entered the war. At evening roll call on 6 April, the superintendent, then-Captain Edward W. Eberle, posted the message: *"The President has signed an Act of Congress, which declares that a state of war exists between the United States and Germany."*

Because of the war, the curriculum was reduced to three years by eliminating the second class or junior year. At the time, all midshipmen took the same courses. There were no electives or majors. The Naval Academy Class of 1918 was graduated on 28 June 1917. Joining 744 new plebes in July was the first class of reserve officers sent to Annapolis for a 10-week course, later expanded to 16 weeks. The reserve classes were housed in temporary quarters erected on the tennis courts between Stribling Walk and Dewey Basin. The first reserve officer class numbered 200; by the end of the war, nearly 2,300 reserve officers had graduated from the academy. The officer corps of the entire Navy rose from 4,293 in 1916 to 32,474 in November 1918. Although the U.S. Navy had fought in no large sea battles during the war, it had escorted millions of tons of supplies and over two million soldiers of the American Expeditionary Force to Europe without loss of a single man to

enemy action. Only about 8 percent of the naval officers in World War I were academy alumni, but they provided an invaluable core of professional knowledge, leadership, and continuity.

When the midshipmen arrived back from their 1918 summer cruise, reports of an influenza pandemic almost immediately followed; it became known as the “Spanish flu.” Superintendent Eberle imposed a quarantine on 26 September as there were already a few cases on campus. Of 2,118 midshipmen, at least 1,100, or 53 percent, contracted the disease. In early October, 10 midshipmen and 18 members of the staff and faculty perished. Classes continued, but all other activities (athletic, social, and religious) were canceled. The city of Annapolis was virtually shut down as well. By 26 October, the cases of flu had abated and the quarantine was lifted. Monday, 11 November 1918, was Armistice Day, marking the end of the war. Classes and drill were cancelled and the upper classes were given town liberty to celebrate.

There were now 2,250 midshipmen, a 300 percent increase in less than three years. The Class of 1920 graduated on the three-year schedule in June 1919. It was decided to graduate the upper half of the Class of 1921 in 1920 and to put the lower half of the class back on the normal four-year course of study. During this post-war period, there were mounting problems with hazing and discipline. The paddling of plebes and other forbidden practices brought on a congressional investigation. As a result, the plebes were removed from each company and segregated on the upper floors in two wings of Bancroft Hall. Separate liberties during Thanksgiving for the firsties and plebes were ordered. These measures caused the upperclassmen to hold a sit-in demonstration in the mess hall and to throw their ceramic washbasins and pitchers out the windows of Bancroft Hall, smashing them on the courtyards below in protest. Eventually, upper class midshipmen promised not to haze and the fourth classmen were reinstated into each company.

In July 1921, Rear Admiral Henry B. Wilson, USNA '81, the highest-ranking officer to date to assume the helm of the Naval Academy, became superintendent. His record of accomplishments in Annapolis rivaled those of Admiral David Dixon Porter in the post-Civil War period. Wilson worked diligently on character development and introduced the school's first course in leadership. Among his credos was this:

Intellect alone is not enough to make a good leader. Most important is character—those instructive qualities of devotion to duty, of loyalty to a cause, of capacity to resist criticism and to do the right thing regardless of personal consequences.

Admiral Wilson strove to make the Naval Academy more humane and more livable, but at the same time he was a tough disciplinarian and did not hesitate to dismiss a midshipman for an infraction of an important regulation. He introduced Christmas and Easter leaves and wrote to parents that the academy would keep its dormitory and mess hall open during these periods in case their sons could not afford to travel home. He promoted the family support system through frequent communications with parents. Liberty was extended to the first class to travel as far as Baltimore

and Washington when they were not involved in academics. Card playing, smoking, and newspaper privileges were given as matters of individual choice. Groups of midshipmen were invited to small, intimate receptions to learn social graces held by Admiral and Mrs. Wilson in the superintendent's quarters. The custom of the second class June Week Ring Dance was begun. The admiral wrote and had printed pamphlets for the midshipmen on how to prepare for and to take examinations, how to live within one's means and stay out of debt, and other words of advice. He brought distinguished speakers for special Friday night lectures, and extracurricular activities such as a radio club and the Trident Society were established. Superintendent letters of commendation were given to the top six students each year. The standard dress uniform was changed, providing an open-breasted jacket in place of the closed jacket with a stiff, standing collar. During Wilson's tenure, the Department of Physical Training was established. The academy now participated in 15 intercollegiate sports. In 1923–24, the midshipmen were national champions in boxing and gymnastics, and played the national champion University of Washington to a 14–14 tie in the New Year's Day Rose Bowl football classic. President and Mrs. Warren G. Harding, along with West Point Superintendent Brigadier General Douglas MacArthur, attended the annual Army-Navy baseball game in 1922. Wilson left the Academy in 1925 upon reaching mandatory retirement age.

Academic innovation became increasingly important during this period. Daily, graded student recitations, required since the founding of the school, gave way to lectures followed by discussions. The Class of 1929 captured six of 12 Rhodes Scholarships awarded and the following year, the Association of American Universities granted accreditation to the United States Naval Academy, entitling the school to award Bachelor of Science degrees to its graduates. The October 1929 stock market crash, the resulting economic depression, and a slump in naval ship construction had telling effects on morale, recruitment, and retention. Some midshipmen had to resign and return home to help their families survive.

By 1930, the wooden figurehead now known as Tecumseh (placed at end of Stribling Walk in 1917), had become so deteriorated that it was decided to replace it with a bronze replica. The replica was unveiled on a new granite platform in front of Bancroft Hall on Memorial Day and inside were placed a Class of 1891 ring (the class that funded the project), documents, and a piece of the original wooden figurehead.

With the nation deep in the Depression and the Navy downsizing its officer corps, the school faced numerous challenges. It was decided to commission only the top half of future graduating classes. Although the entire Class of 1933 received their diplomas and degrees during June Week, the lower half of the class were not immediately commissioned. The policy was dropped the following spring through the efforts of the new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and most of the alumni of '33 who had not been commissioned returned to active duty. Additionally, Congress voted to award Bachelor of Science degrees to all living alumni. President Roosevelt delivered the 1938 commencement address in Dahlgren Hall.

On 1 September 1939, World War II began in Europe with Germany's invasion of Poland. The following summer, with German air attacks on Great Britain and its submarine activities in the Atlantic, the Naval Academy went to a war footing. The three-year course of study used during World War I was adopted again, and along with courses taught in the summer, 88 percent of the curriculum was delivered in three years. Civilian faculty members were given reserve officer status. Reserve officer training was again begun at the Academy with the first 583 new ensigns commissioned in May. Emphasis was placed on survival tactics and new technology, particularly for anti-submarine warfare and radar. Additional emphasis was given to physical development and therefore a new athletic field (later Sherman Field) was created by filling in nearly 22 acres off Hospital/Cemetery Point.

Alumni from 54 graduating classes served in the war—from the Class of 1892 and from every class between 1894 and 1946. Academy alumni comprised 5 percent of the officer corps during the war and suffered an overall casualty rate of 6 percent. The Class of 1936 had the highest loss at 16 percent. Twenty-seven alumni were awarded the Medal of Honor for various actions in the Pacific theater. On VJ Day, 15 August 1945, the midshipmen dragged the Japanese Bell to the center of Tecumseh Court in front of Bancroft Hall and beat the "hell" out of it with two bowling pins while throwing rolls of toilet tissue in a grand celebration.

Changes and Challenges

The Naval Academy celebrated its centennial in October 1945 with a week of special parades and activities on the Yard, and a centennial–World War II victory exhibition of its finest art treasures held in New York City. The naval services had over five million men and women in uniform during World War II. At the end of the war, it was determined that the Navy would require an officer corps totaling 50,000 for its future needs. The Navy Department appointed a board to ascertain the most efficient process to source such a large number of officers. Rear Admiral James L. Holloway, Jr., USNA '19, headed the study team that identified three options: establishment of a two-year postgraduate school for candidates educated at civilian colleges; a second Naval Academy on the West Coast; or continuation of the existing Naval Academy four-year program combined with an expansion of the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) at civilian colleges. The third recommendation was accepted by the Secretary of the Navy and enacted by the Congress.

With the establishment of the Department of Defense in 1947, another debate ensued on the future of military and naval education generally, and specifically whether or not there should be one unified military school for all branch services. The Service Academy Board, also known as the Stearns-Eisenhower Board after its chairman and vice chair, was appointed to study the matter. Admiral Holloway served on the board and provided the pivotal arguments for preserving the integrity and service identity of the existing academies based on their records of over a century of success in providing the nation with quality officers and leaders. Congress established the Air

Force as a separate service at this time, and eventually the Air Force Academy was formed and graduated its first class in 1959.

On 25 June 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea. Although the Navy had 1.5 million men and women in uniform for the Korean War, there were a sufficient number of officers on active duty and in the reserves, so it was not necessary for the Naval Academy to return to a three-year wartime academic schedule. The midshipmen began to study nuclear physics, jet propulsion, and new electronics. With the cessation of hostilities in 1953, the academy experienced a post-war slump in recruitment. A program was launched to have midshipmen speak at their former high schools and to youth groups while they were home on leave.

By this time, the Flagg-era buildings were over 50 years old and Bancroft Hall now had about 4,100 residents in a complex designed for 3,100. The Board of Visitors endorsed a new master plan that included new wings for Bancroft Hall, a new auditorium, a new academic building, and expansion of the Yard by in-fill with a new seawall. "The land fill of the Dewey Basin and Farragut Field altered the intimate relationship of water, land and buildings, and the unique characteristic of the Naval Academy was changed forever." In 1954, Congress approved additional funds for an athletic facility and the following year ground was broken for Halsey Field House. The Naval Academy Athletic Association took on the job of raising funds for a new football stadium with construction underway by summer 1958. This major building program ensured that the Naval Academy would remain competitive with other universities in recruiting top-quality students.

Innovations were launched in admission standards and in the academic program that would bring dramatic changes over the next 20 years. In place of the Naval Academy-administered entrance examination, it was decided to use the National College Entrance Examination Board scores employed by most colleges. Extracurricular activities and leadership potential factors were added to admission considerations. Both internal and external curriculum review groups were established. The external group called for revisions in the core curriculum to emphasize principles and analytic methods instead of techniques. The course validation concept was introduced, as were additional elective courses for the 1959-60 academic year, resulting in over 40 course offerings. The tradition of marching to class in formation was ended, except during plebe summer. A computer center and subcritical reactor became important educational resources. In March 1960, the Secretary of the Navy approved a mission statement for the Naval Academy:

The mission of the United States Naval Academy is to develop Midshipmen morally, mentally, and physically and imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor, and loyalty in order to provide graduates who are dedicated to a career of Naval service and have potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship, and government.

Changes were coming to the ranks of the faculty as well as the midshipmen. Most faculty would be required to have advanced degrees before teaching at the school. The position of Academic Dean was established and Dr. A. Bernard Drought, the Dean of Engineering at Marquette University, was hired for the position. Midshipmen for the first time began studying under a curriculum consisting of 75 percent required core classes and 25 percent elective courses, the equivalent to a minor in a field of study.

In early 1962, a special advisory commission appointed to examine the future development of academic facilities submitted its report. Chaired by Admiral Ben Morrell, father of the Navy's Seabees, among its considerations had been the acquisition of 27 acres in the city of Annapolis between King George Street and the existing academy wall along Hanover Street. The three-block area was covered by private residences, among them a number of historic importance, and several large apartment buildings outside Gate 3. When word of this consideration was leaked, a strong public protest arose, led by the leaders and members of Historic Annapolis, Inc., the local preservation society. Expansion plans were shelved and the following year, the United States Naval Academy itself was designated a National Historic Landmark.

By 1964, the architectural firm of John Carl Warnecke and Associates of San Francisco had been contracted to develop a new facilities master plan. This included a new mathematics and science complex, a new library, an auditorium, and an enlisted personnel barracks. The subsequent construction of Michelson (1968) and Chauvenet (1972) Halls and Nimitz Library (1973) changed the Yard with massive modern buildings fronting the water and encapsulating the Flagg-era buildings. The brigade was expanded at this time from 24 to 36 companies. The nation began to engage more heavily in the conflict that became known as the Vietnam War. This war would produce many academy heroes, particularly among the Navy airmen shot down who became prisoners of war and Marine Corps officers who led ground troops. The war claimed 172 alumni killed in action and many more missing in action.

In 1966, Dr. Samuel P. Massie, the school's first African American professor, joined the Chemistry Department. By 1968, the number of academic offerings increased to 366, and the number of faculty grew accordingly. The 1969 fall semester launched the academic major's program, allowing midshipmen to major in one of 18 fields. The distribution of majors was set according to the needs of the Navy, allowing for 40 percent of graduates to obtain engineering degrees, 30 percent mathematics and sciences, 20 percent humanities, and 10 percent management.

On 8 August 1973, in a seismic shift for the academy, Congress authorized women to attend all the service academies beginning with the 1976–77 academic year. Although the process for admittance, additional programs for women's athletics, and some changes in Bancroft Hall had to be considered, the biggest hurdle was overcoming the prevailing negative attitude toward the acceptance of women into the all-male bastion. Superintendent Admiral Kinnard R. McKee, USNA

'51, provided superb leadership in setting the standards for respect and dignity. The first 81 female midshipmen were inducted five days after the nation celebrated its 200th birthday. The brigade now included over 200 African American and Native American midshipmen and in 1976, Midshipman Mason Reddix became the first African American brigade commander. With the introduction of a new academic schedule that included a first semester beginning in August, final exams before Christmas leave, and a second semester ending in early May, graduation now fell in May. Therefore, the traditional "June Week," a term in use for over 110 years, became known as "Commissioning Week" in 1979. On 28 May 1980, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Thomas B. Hayward, USNA '48, handed Midshipman Elizabeth Anne Rowe her diploma during ceremonies in Navy-Marine Corps Stadium. The Naval Academy had graduated its first female officer. Midshipman Kristine Holereid, USNA '84, became the first woman of all the service academies to graduate first in her class.

Updating and Innovating

In May 1983, the academy graduated its largest class up to that time, 1,079 members strong. The school sorely needed a new auditorium to accommodate the enlarged brigade. For years, the only indoor facilities where the entire brigade could be seated for a superintendent's call, a lecture, or a cultural performance was the mess hall (King Hall) or Halsey Field House. An agreement was struck with the Alumni Association to raise funds to pay for at least half the cost of what was then known as the Brigade Activities Center. Although the schedule for other additional and improved facilities would be slowed or shelved as a result of the end of the Cold War, construction on this facility continued. The new auditorium was a state-of-the-art 6,500-seat arena in the round for major events, including 800 chairs in the ceiling that could be mechanically lowered into the center court for additional seating, and a huge stage and backdrop at one end. The performance area was named in honor of Bob Hope for his decades of service to the military and he attended the dedication. Because more than half the cost of the facility was raised by the Alumni Association, the new building was named Alumni Hall and was first used for Induction Day in July 1991. A \$350 million renovation of Bancroft Hall and all its support structures was conducted in the 1990s and early 2000s, and included the installation of air conditioning for the first time.

As the last two decades of the century unfolded and a new century dawned, more innovations were at hand for the academy. In 1998, a capstone experience that marked the end of Plebe Year was introduced for the Class of 2001. Dubbed "Sea Trials," this 32-hour, team-based physical challenge was developed by upperclassmen and modeled on the Marine Corps' end-of-boot camp tradition of "The Crucible." Technology emerged as a major new component of the educational system with the advent of email and the internet. Beginning in 2003, midshipmen could earn their Bachelor of Science degree in information technology. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 resulted in the deaths of 14 alumni in New York, Washington, DC, and on Flight 99 over Pennsylvania. This new asymmetrical global conflict made the entire military establishment reassess current capabilities

and the need for future competencies. Language majors were added in Arabic and Chinese. The Cyber Warfare Center was established at the academy in 2009, and the first degrees in cyber operations were awarded in 2016. That same year, ground was broken for the large new building dedicated to cyber operations. Completed in 2020, it is named for Rear Admiral Grace M. Hopper, the legendary computer scientist who served in the Navy for 42 years, and is the first building on the Yard honoring a female officer. For years, women had been making strides in the greater military community, and the lifting of the combat exclusion policy in 2013 marked the final turning point for equality. Of equal importance was the 2011 repeal of the “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” policy that officially opened the academy (along with the rest of the armed forces) to all individuals wishing to serve without regard to sexual orientation. In combination with the long-standing 1948 order from President Harry S. Truman to integrate all service branches, the Naval Academy finally truly reflected the nation it serves.

Of special importance to the academy, given its location, is the challenge posed by sea-level rise. In 2003, Hurricane Isabel struck Annapolis with a seven-foot storm surge that flooded numerous buildings, destroyed laboratories and power plants, and caused over \$30 million in damage. By 2018, scientific modeling showed that sea level in Annapolis would likely rise between 0.6 and 3.6 feet by 2050. The academy leadership responded with a policy dubbed “Armor, Adapt, Abandon.” Going forward, the academy will adapt and armor the buildings it can, and abandon the ones it must. In March 2020, the academy shuttered its doors for the first time in history in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. After a semester of remote learning, the Class of 2020 graduated on time in May. In place of the traditional I-Day, the Class of 2024 reported over a four-day period and commenced a 14-day restriction of movement, or ROM, as a precautionary measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Two oath-of-office ceremonies were held to commemorate the official start of their Plebe Summer on July 18. The remainder of the brigade reformed in August, and on-campus activities resumed under new health and safety restrictions to comply with local, state, and federal health directives in order to protect the Naval Academy family and the surrounding community.

Thinking strategically and innovating continuously, the Naval Academy (officers, faculty, staff, and midshipmen) will face the challenges of the next 175 years as it has faced the last, and will continue to develop and deliver the leaders of tomorrow to protect and defend the nation.