



U.S. Coast Guard History Program

Amaranth, 1892

WAGL-201

A legendary plant whose flowers are supposed never to fade, even when cut.

Builder: Cleveland Ship Building Company, Cleveland, Ohio

Commissioned: 14 April 1892

Decommissioned: 29 September 1945; sold on 19 October 1946.

Length: 166'

Beam: 28'

Draft: 14'

Powerplant: 1 compound inverted reciprocating steam engine with 2 Scotch-type boilers, coal-fired, producing 600 horsepower.

Complement: 1 officer, 17 men (1907)

Armament: None

History:

The contract for the construction of *Amaranth*--a schooner-rigged, twin-screw wooden steamer authorized on 30 August 1890--was signed on 10 May 1891. The tender cost \$74,993.70. Launched on 18 December 1891, the lighthouse tender was accepted by the United States Lighthouse Service on 14 April 1892 and operated on the Great Lakes from her base at Detroit until the United States entered World War I.

She was originally assigned to duty on Lake Superior and served there until transferred to the operational control of the U.S. Navy. Transferred to the Navy by the Executive order of 16 April 1917 which placed the Lighthouse Service under the control of the Navy Department, *Amaranth* was assigned to the 9th Naval District, but continued to serve much as she had done before the war. Following the armistice, she was returned to the jurisdiction of the Department of Commerce with the rest of the Lighthouse Service under an Executive order of 1 July 1919.

On the morning of 23 July 1920, while supplying Passage Island Light Station, Lake Superior, Michigan, struck the rocks under water at the extreme southwesterly point of the island, breaking the shoe and rudder, with the total loss of the latter. Repairs were made by the Port Arthur

Shipbuilding Company, Port Arthur, Ontario. She also received new boilers and then returned to service.

In 1939 President Franklin D. Roosevelt merged the Lighthouse Service into the Coast Guard which, on 1 November 1941, was ordered to ". . . operate as a part of the Navy." *Amaranth* was stationed at Duluth, Minnesota, throughout World War II, and maintained navigational aids on Lake Superior. Following the return of peace, she was decommissioned on 29 September 1945 and sold on 19 October 1946. She served as the privately-owned freighter *South Wind* until being laid up in 1954.

Sources:

Cutter History File, Coast Guard Historian's Office.

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, Vol. I, Part A, p. 236.

Douglas Peterson, *U.S. Lighthouse Service Tenders, 1840-1939*, (Annapolis, Maryland: Eastwind Publishing, 2000), p. 63.

