



## Moccasin, 1865

ex-Hero; later-George M. Bibb

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A soft leather shoe or boot with the sole brought up the sides of the foot and over the toes where it is joined with a puckered seam to a U-shaped piece laying on top of the foot; of Algonquian origin, as Narragansett *mocussin* and Massachuset *mohkisson*, meaning shoe.

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Builder: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Length: 104' 5" (1864); 128' (1882)

Beam: 22' 3"

Draft: 9'

Displacement: 192 tons

Cost: \$

Commissioned: 1864 (USN); 1865 (USRCS)

Decommissioned: 12 August 1865 (USN); 22 November 1890 (USRCS)

Disposition: Sold

Machinery: Vertical, direct-acting steam engine; 1 propeller

Performance & Endurance:

Max: 10 knots

Cruising:

Complement:

Armament: 3 x 12-pounders

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## Cutter History:

The first *Moccasin*, a wood screw tug, was built as *Hero* in 1864 at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She was purchased by the Navy on 11 July 1864 from S. & J. M. Flanagan at Philadelphia and commissioned 14 July 1864 at Philadelphia Navy Yard, Acting Ens. James Brown in command.

Assigned to the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron, on 25 July *Hero* was renamed *Moccasin*. She acted as guard boat off Fort Delaware, Pea Patch Island, Del., until 13 August when *Moccasin* joined tug *Aster* and brig *Yantic* in pursuit of blockade-runner CSS *Tallahassee*. The two tugs cruised as far north as Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, before returning to Philadelphia 19 August. *Moccasin* resumed patrol off Fort Delaware into early 1865.

On 13 March 1865 *Moccasin* was ordered to St. Inigoes, Maryland, for duty with the Potomac Flotilla under Comdr. Foxhall A. Parker. Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox 9 April, but the news was slow in spreading. With half of the flotilla released from service in May, *Moccasin* continued operations in the Potomac River. On 30 July ferry boat *Wyandank* took *Moccasin* in tow for Norfolk, where the tug debarked patients from the Washington, D.C., naval hospital.

Upon return to Washington, *Moccasin* was decommissioned 12 August and sold for \$14,000 on 18 September 1865 to the Treasury Department for use as a revenue cutter. She was converted for such use at Baltimore and was ordered for duty at Norfolk, Virginia. The following year she transferred to Wilmington, North Carolina. In 1869 she was ordered to Philadelphia for repairs and then was assigned to Newport, Rhode Island until 1872. She was then ordered to Charleston, South Carolina.

On 30 April 1881 Captain James H. Merryman was directed to prepare specifications for general repairs, including lengthening of vessel and raising of her main deck. She was towed by the *Ewing* to New York, arriving there on 8 July 1881. She was turned over to Slater and Reid who undertook the conversion. She was put back into service on 10 April of the following year. In December, 1881, while still under conversion, her name was changed to *George M. Bibb*.

She was then assigned to duty on the Great Lakes where she operated from Duluth, Minnesota, Detroit, Michigan, and Ogdensburg and Oswego, New York. During the winter months she was laid up at Ogdensburg.

She was decommissioned on 22 November 1890 and was then sold at Buffalo, New York, for \$2,500 on 24 October 1891.

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