



## *Perseus*, 1932

WPC-114

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The cutter *Perseus* was named for character of Greek mythology, the son of Zeus and Danae, who slayed the Gorgon Medusa.

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CLASS: 165-Foot (B) Patrol Craft

BUILDER: Bath Iron Works, Inc.; Bath, ME

COST: \$258,000 per cutter

COMMISSIONED: 27 April 1932

DECOMMISSIONED: 26 June 1959; Sold 4 November 1959

DISPLACEMENT: 337 tons

PROPULSION: 2 Winton, 6 cylinder, Model 158 diesels; 1,340 bhp

PERFORMANCE: 16.0 knots maximum; 11 knots, 3,000 mile radius cruising;

LENGTH: 165 feet

BEAM: 25 feet, 3 inches

DRAFT: 7 feet, 8 inches

COMPLEMENT: 5 officers, 39 men (1938); 7 officers, 68 men (1945)

ARMAMENT:

1932-1938: One 3"/23; Two 1-pounders

1941: 1 3"/23; 1 "Y" gun depth charge projector; 2 depth charge tracks

1945: Two 3"/50; Two 20mm/80 (single); 2 depth charge tracks; 2 "Y" gun depth charge projectors; 2 mousetraps (1945)

SONAR: QCO

### **Class History:**

The 165-foot "B" Class cutters, sometimes referred to as the Thetis-Class, were a follow on to the 125-foot cutters. Both types of cutters were designed for the enforcement of Prohibition, but the 165-footers primary mission was to trail the mother ships that dispensed alcohol to smaller, faster vessels well beyond the territorial waters of the U.S. Hence these cutters had to have excellent sea-keeping qualities, good accommodations for the crew, and long range. Although Prohibition ended soon after most entered service, their design nevertheless proved to be adaptable to the many other missions of the Coast Guard.

An article written soon after they entered service noted that: "the new cutters are low and rakish, without excessive superstructure or freeboard. A raking stem, well flared bow and cruiser stern give the appearance of speed as well as contribute to the seaworthiness of the vessels, a quality which has been demonstrated in actual service. . .The new ships are twin-screw driven by two 670 horse power Diesel engines, furnished by the Winton Engine Co. of Cleveland, Ohio. The shafting and propellers are arranged and supported in a novel manner. The ship is equipped with two overhanging rudders on a line with and just aft of the propellers. The rudders are supported by a streamline rudder post at the forward end which is bossed out for a bearing to take a stub shaft which extends through the propeller. This method of arranging the rudders has proved remarkably successful. At full speed, the ships turn a complete circle in two minutes and eighteen seconds, and can be docked with ease under the most difficult conditions. On trial runs, the *Atalanta* averaged 16.48 knots at 468 RPM with practically no vibration and the engine under no evident strain. Due to the arduous service for which these vessels were built, only the finest materials available were used. . .It is interesting to note that genuine wrought iron pipe was used for practically all the services where resistance to corrosion, vibration, and strain was required. The fuel oil, lubricating oil, and water service to the main engines and auxiliaries; the fire and bilge system; and the steam heating system were all installed with genuine wrought iron pipe. At the Lake Union plant this pipe was furnished by the Reading Iron Company through the Crane Company's Seattle office and Bowles Company of Seattle. The new ships are a distinct contribution to modern shipbuilding and should be of great value to the Coast Guard."\*

They certainly did prove to be of great value to the Coast Guard. Most saw service as coastal convoy escorts during World War II and two, the *Icarus* and the *Thetis*, each sank a U-boat. Many saw service well into the 1960s and some still service as tour boats in New York City with the Circle Tour Line, testament to their sturdy and well-thought out design.

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### **Cutter History:**

*Perseus*, built for the Coast Guard by Bath Iron Works, Bath, Me., was delivered 23 April 1932. She commissioned as a large cruising cutter, was assigned permanent station at Stapleton, Borough of Richmond, New York, and commenced local patrol and rescue operations. In 1935 the cutter's permanent station shifted to San Diego, California. She served on the Bering Sea Patrol in 1940.

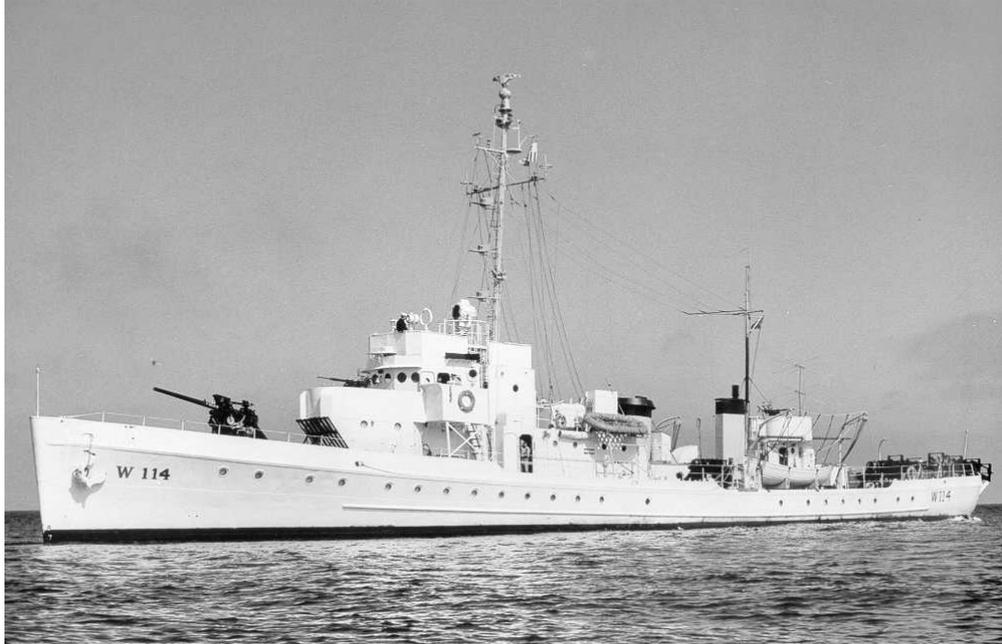
Executive Order 8929 of 1 November 1941 transferred the entire Coast Guard to the Navy. With the outbreak of hostilities *Perseus* was temporarily shifted to Cordova, a coastal base in southeastern Alaska. In December 1941 she was temporarily stationed at Juneau, Alaska. She returned to San Diego in May 1942. She served there as a naval coastal patrol and rescue craft until the end of the war.

Executive Order 9666 returned the Coast Guard to the Treasury Department 1 January 1946. *Perseus* remained active as a patrol craft in the San Diego area until 1959, when she decommissioned and was sold.

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### **Photographs:**





**Sources:**

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Scheina, Robert L. *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters and Craft in World War II*. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1982).

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