

## *U.S. Coast Guard History Program*

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# *Lotus, 1924*

WAGL-229

*ex-Colonel Albert Todd*



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An aquatic plant native to southern Asia, *Nelumbo nucifera*, with large leaves, fragrant pinkish flowers, and a broad rounded perforated seed pod.

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Builder: Fabricated Shipbuilding Corporation and Coddington Engineering Company, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Length: 172'

Beam: 32'

Draft: 11' 6"

Displacement: 1,130 tons

Cost: \$540,000; conversion cost was \$55,481.50

Commissioned: 1919 (U.S. Army); 1924 (USLHS)

Decommissioned: 5 November 1946

Disposition: Sold

Machinery: 2 Allis Chalmers compound, inverted, reciprocating steam engines; 2 Page & Burton watertube boilers; 1,000 SHP; twin propellers.

Performance & Endurance:

Max: 11.0 knots

Cruising: 10.0 knots; 1,800 mile range

Deck Gear: 20-ton capacity boom

Complement: 28

Armament: None; WWII ?

Electronics: None

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### **Class History:**

The *Lotus* was a *Speedwell*-class mine planter originally built for the U.S. Army in 1918 and 1919. Six were transferred to the U.S. Lighthouse Service at no cost in 1922. The original intent was for these vessels to serve a dual purpose: mine-planter in case of a war, and lighthouse tender during peacetime. Unfortunately, this conversion proved to be impracticable and too expensive and they were modified exclusively for service as tenders at a cost of between \$41,022 to \$110,963. Each had a turtleback forecastle installed and their anchors were mounted high to prevent the ship from being hung up on a buoy she was servicing. A steel main deck was added forward; new windows were installed in the pilothouse, and a new refrigerating plant was added. All vessels were then commissioned from 1923 to 1927 with new names.

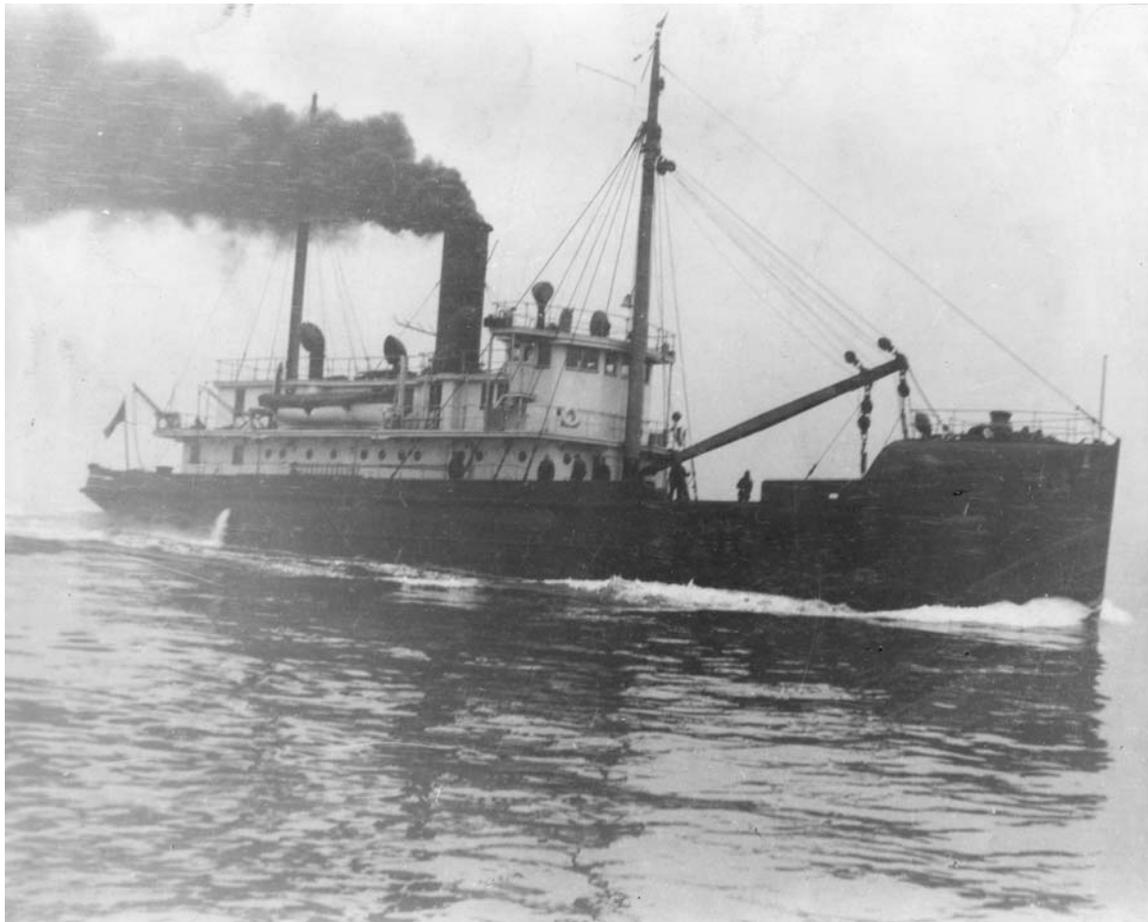
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### **Tender History:**

The *Lotus* was assigned to the 2nd District, replacing the tender *Mayflower*. She was based out of Boston until 1941, when she transferred to Chelsea, Massachusetts. She received the designation and hull number WAGL-229 sometime soon after. On 5 August 1941 she reported for temporary duty with the Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet where she was assigned to lay buoys and antisubmarine nets at Argentia, Newfoundland. She transferred to San Juan, Puerto Rico in the 10th Naval District on orders dated 1 July 1942. She

was armed at the Boston Navy Yard from 20 August to 10 September 1942 before steaming to San Juan. Once there she carried out standard aids-to-navigation work as well as delivering supplies and vehicles between Kingston, Jamaica, Ciudad Trujillo, Guantanamo, Mayaguez, among other ports. But she proved to be somewhat unseaworthy, taking water over her bow, and therefore drawing criticism from her commanding officer as well as District officials. On 6 October 1943 she was transferred to the 5th Naval District and was based out of Norfolk, Virginia for the remainder of the war. On 15 March 1944 she had a radar and gyro compass installed. She spent 1st through the 15th of May, 1944, repairing radar target buoys for the U.S. Army Engineers off the seacoast of Virginia.

She was decommissioned on 5 November 1946 and then sold.



*"Tender Lotus, Aug 1929"  
No photo number; photographer unknown.*

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**Sources:**

Cutter File, Coast Guard Historian's Office.

Douglas Peterson. *United States Lighthouse Service Tenders, 1840-1939*. Annapolis: Eastwind Publishing, 2000.

Robert Scheina. *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft of World War II*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1982.

