



UNITED STATES REVENUE-CUTTER SERVICE,

REVENUE-CUTTER "Seminole",

Wilmington, N.C.,

November 21, 1909.

Dear Father:

Thank you for your letter of October 26th which I should have answered before but have been too busy to do anything much except what came next. I guess you have learned that I had command when the President visited Wilmington. We took him 22 miles down the river and back without mishap or inconvenience to him.

A party of one hundred committeemen were along as an escort. The President was received by my cordial handshake as he crossed the gangway and I presented him to all the officers who were drawn up on the quarter-deck in accordance with the regulations, the crew being on the opposite side. He requested that no salute be fired. The committee were on the poop deck and before they could swarm down on Taft he had made his way hastily forward to the fore-castle deck. There he cast a furtive glance aft and requested through his aid, Captain Butt, that no one be allowed up there. I stationed a man at each gangway and greatly to the disgust of the committee only two or three got up there to talk to him. Senator Overman, Governor Kitchin, two secret service men and myself were the favored ones. I told the President a humorous anecdote of Uncle Joe Cannon, of whom he had been speaking, and he was good enough to notice me with a wan smile. It looked to the audience

as though we were hob nobbing and had the desired effect of making them duly jealous. Down in the wardroom they were serving drinks of various kinds provided by the committee for its own entertainment and while the place was crowded, and the crowd was just beginning to get a little crowded, or swamped, the vessel, going at about 14 knots, ran close to the bank on a sharp turn and raised a big following wave (I don't know the technical name for that species and do not especially care to become familiar with them) such as rolls up when a fast vessel approaches within a few inches of the bottom. This wave combed nicely into an open air-port in the quadrant room and filled it up to the height of the bulk-head which was some three feet. As soon as it began to run over we shut the port and bailed out the water which gradually ran forward over the wardroom floor and wet some of the feet of some of the committee who were already sufficiently wet elsewhere. The bailing out of this water in the good old fashioned way (Men with buckets and swabs) caused some comment from the unsophisticated North Carolinians but they took it rather good naturedly as soon as they found that the booze could be served on deck just as well and that it came quicker there. The New York World had a scandalous article about the trip and accused the President of being drunk, but he did not take a drink on board the Seminole I am sure.

I will send you a copy of the local paper which will tell you all about the doings and may interest you when you have an idle half-hour. I will also send a picture of Taft and myself on the same Grand Stand. Please save the paper for Mother or send it to her when you are through with it.

I took the SEMINOLE down the river the other night after dark en route to rescue the ELEAZ R W. CLARK, but the vessel had broken up before we left the dock so I could not do anything. We went out before daylight the next morning and found a heavy SW. sea running and some sea from the North.

After searching the shoals and crossing the path of vessels we got a wireless from a steamer which had just passed Frying Pan lightship and went out and took the crew of a shipwrecked Pilot Boat off from her. They had their boat tied up astern of the lightship in the gale and the sea pulled a bitt out)

Then they stood on deck and watched her drift to sea. Soon after they lost her the 25 foot Italian tramp they had been waiting for passed by the lightship and they saw another boat get their pilotage which would have been about \$245.

They were not in cheerful mood at all. I have met Captain Packard of the Carib twice and he spoke of you and said he often saw you in Georgetown. I asked him aboard but he would never come. He was standing on the dock the last time I docked the SEMINOLE and I did not hear him find any fault with the job, though I presume he thinks Revenue-Cutters handle themselves, as he told me about seeing me turn her in the river when we came in once before and said he wished the Carib handled that way. I presume there is some difference in power and there certainly is in length.

Well- I am going to the PAMLICO stationed at Newbern, in a few days if I get my orders. A classmate of mine, Covell who is a real first lieutenant though he has had three years less experience than I have on account of duty at the Department for that time is coming this week to

relieve me and I am going to the PAMLICO as executive there. I do not expect the work will kill me as she has only 34 men where this vessel has 57. She is a dandy little ship but I hate to go there and I have no desire to cruise on inland waters just now. I would rather stay at sea a while and get used to it a bit more.

They have ordered the captain who is now on the PAMLICO to this vessel so I shall lose my command about the 23rd. I have been captain here for about 42 days and have made three trips altogether besides the one I made last spring when I was in command. I am very glad to have had the chance to show myself what I could do because it will probably be some ten years before I ever have another chance and in the meantime I have the satisfaction of knowing that I did do something once without anyone to bother me. Altogether I have had my own way with the SEMINOLE since last April and have had charge much of that time.

She is in about as fine shape as any of our ships that I have ever seen and I feel some pride in turning her over to my successor in that condition. We have the best of conditions here for keeping a ship up, as you know. I hope Mother can come to Newbern this winter as she intended to come to Wilmington and don't believe it is much, if any, of greater distance from Georgetown. Thank you for the account of Tom's wedding which you sent.

I am very sorry that I was unable to go, but it could not be helped.

I shall send this to Georgetown but I don't think you can be there yet. Write me here and it will be forwarded if I have gone.

Grace would join me in sending love only he is not here. She is coming down in about an hour to stay to dinner. I don't get ashore much just now as there are only two deck office attached, myself and one other.

Guess this is letter enough for a while,

Your affectionate son,

W. H. H.