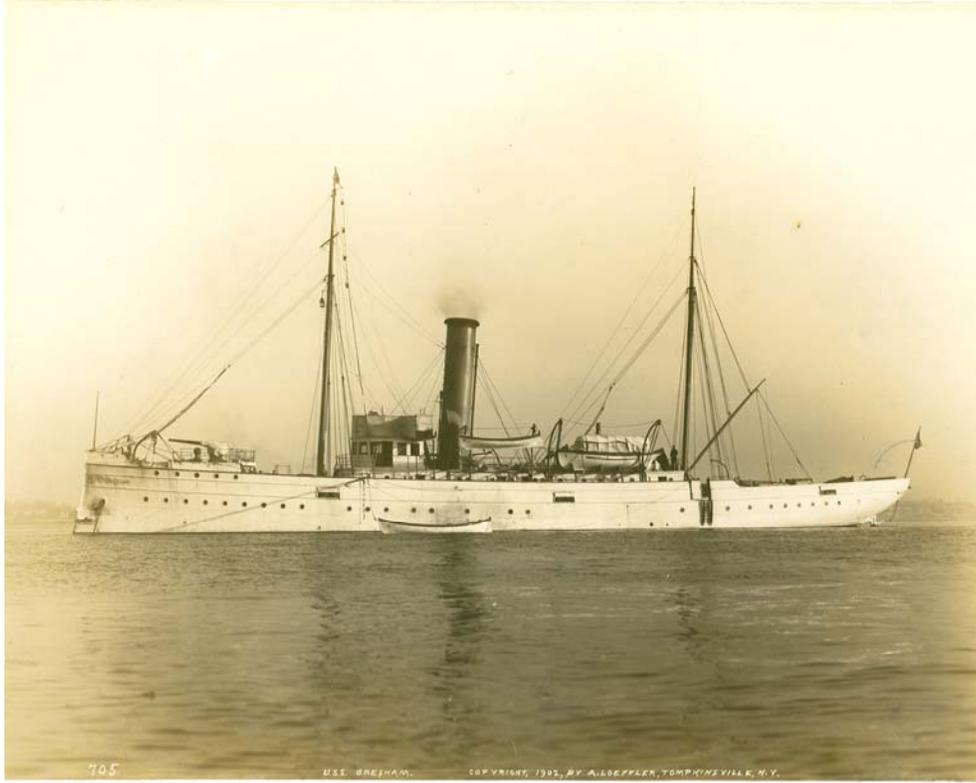


Gresham, 1897

WPG-85



Walther Q. Gresham served as the Secretary of the Treasury Department under President Chester Arthur in 1884 for two months.

Builder: Globe Iron Works, Cleveland, Ohio

Length: 205' 6"

Beam: 32'

Draft: 12'

Displacement: 1,090 tons

Powerplant: Triple-expansion steam engine

Cost: \$147,800

Commissioned: 30 May 1897

Decommissioned: 19 January 1935

Disposition: Sold; brought back into service 23 May 1943; decommissioned and sold once again 7 April 1944

Complement: 9 officers, 63 men

Electronics: 2-KW DeForest spark transmitter with accompanying receiver (installed pre-World War I)

Armament: Bow torpedo tube (as launched); 4 x 3" (1918); 1 x 1-pounder; 2 x 6-pounders; 3 x .50 caliber (1930); 2 x 3"/50, 2 x 20mm/80 (single); 2 x "K" guns; 2 x stern depth charge racks, 2 x mousetraps (1943)

Cutter History:

The revenue cutter *Gresham* was built by the Globe Iron Works Company of Cleveland, Ohio, for service on the Great Lakes. For several years the 205-foot cutter and its near-sisters *Manning*, *McCulloch*, *Algonquin*, and *Onondaga* were the pride of the Revenue Cutter Service. Their design incorporated features that would make them excellent naval auxiliaries and each was equipped with all the most modern features: all steel hulls, electrical generators (the first in the service) to power their lights and call bells, and triple-expansion engines that gave an impressive top speed of 18 knots. The *Gresham* also had a navy-style plow bow fitted with a torpedo tube for wartime operations. But this armament caused a stir among Canadian officials as it was a direct violation of the Webster Ashburton Treaty. But a war with Spain soon after her commissioning provided a solution to this particular problem.

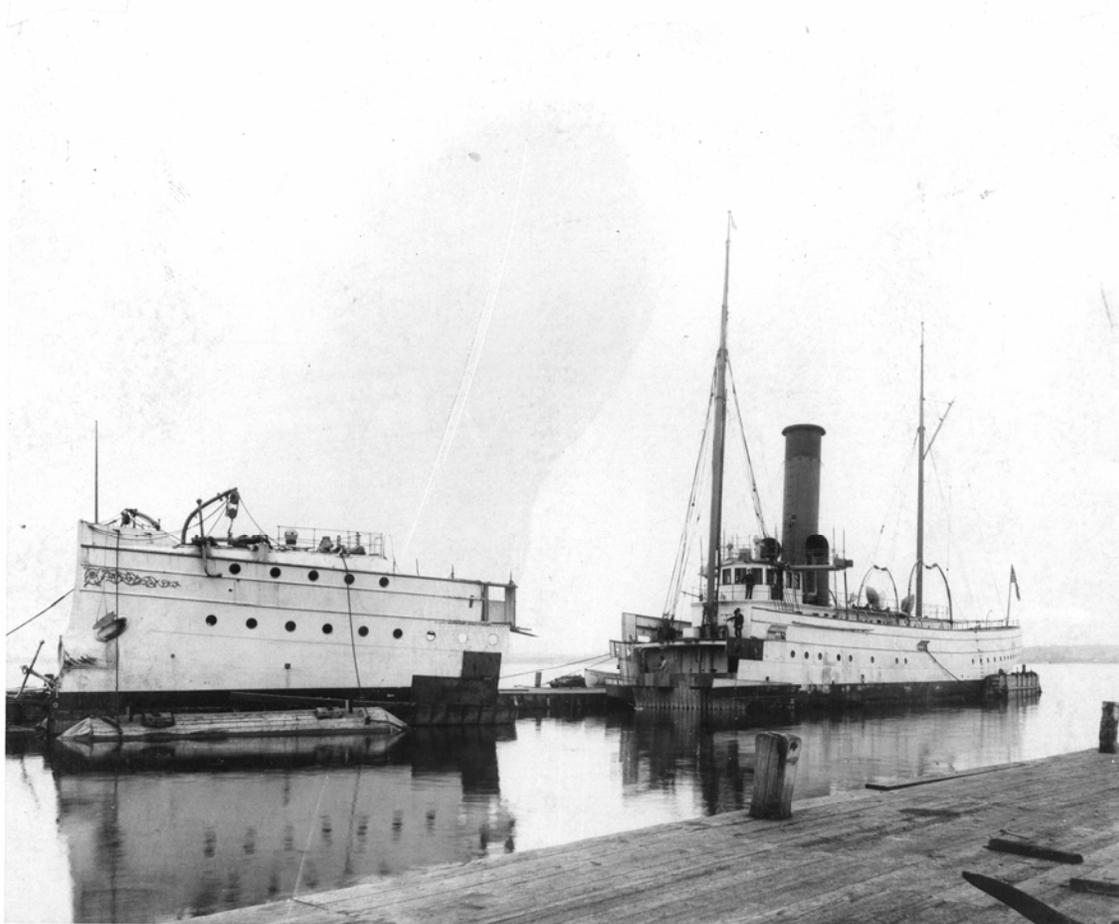
She was accepted by the Government on 10 February 1897 and was placed in commission on 30 May of that same year. Her assigned cruising grounds were to include Lake Michigan and "adjacent waters" and she was home-ported in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She was directed to be at Chicago on 22 July 1897 for the unveiling of the Logan Monument. On 2 December 1897 she was ordered to be laid up for winter quarters at Milwaukee. The following year the United States declared war on Spain, the Revenue Cutter Service was absorbed by the Navy and the *Gresham* was ordered to "cooperate with the Navy by Executive Order." She was then ordered to the Atlantic coast via Ogdensburg, New York where, since her hull was too long to fit in the locks on the St. Lawrence Seaway, the cutter had to be cut in half and shipped through in pieces. The war ended before it could be riveted back together. The *Gresham* never went back to the lakes, but enjoyed a successful career in the Atlantic. Her most famous exploit probably was the rescue of the crew of the foundering steamer *SS Republic* in 1909.

When the United States entered the World War, *Gresham* was transferred to the Navy 6 April 1917. For the duration of hostilities she performed patrol and escort duty in the North Atlantic. After the war ended *Gresham* was returned to the Treasury Department 28 August 1919.

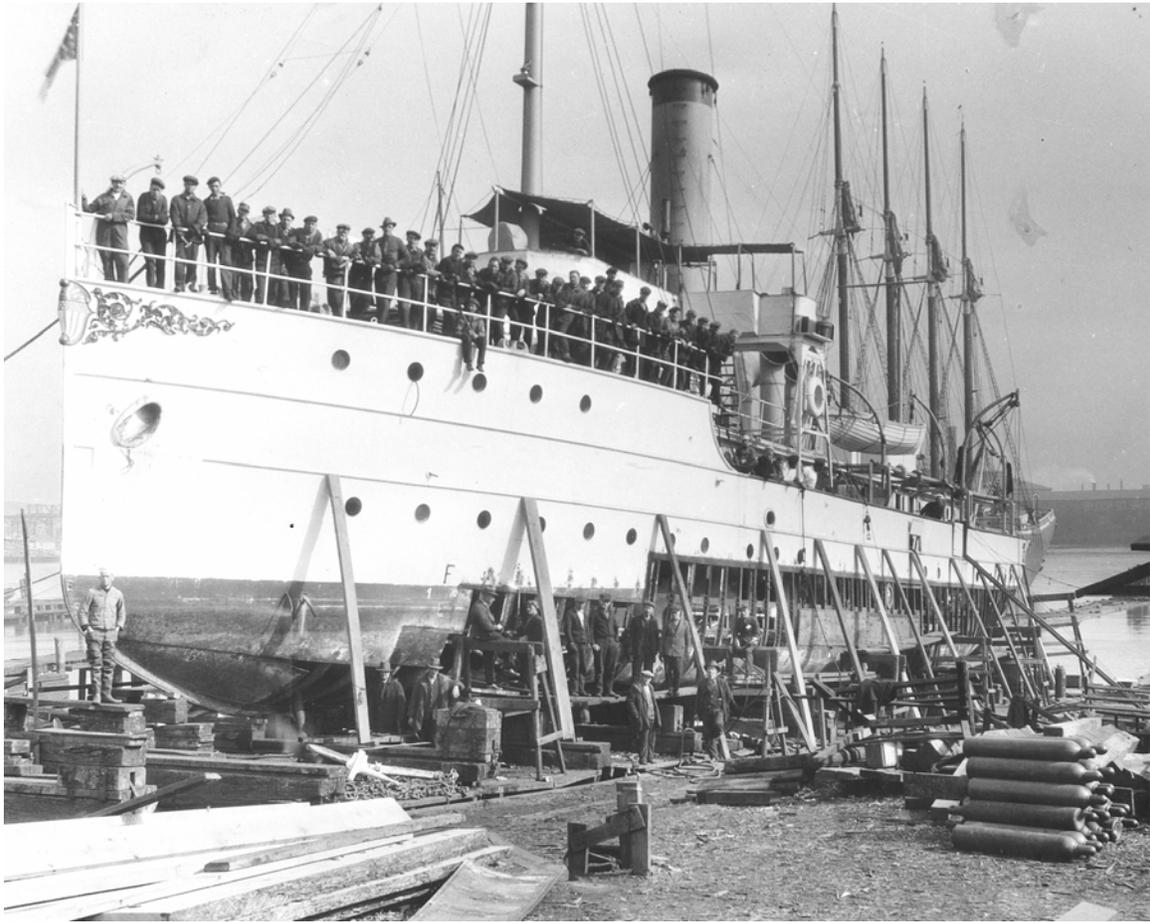
The Coast Guard sold the *Gresham* for scrapping in 1935. The Second World War, however, set the service on a desperate search for any hull that could carry guns and depth charges. In March of 1943 the *Gresham* was reacquired, recommissioned as a Coast Guard cutter, and fitted out as an escort for coastal convoys by the General Ship Repair Company of Baltimore, Maryland. A new superstructure, radar, 3-inch guns, and anti-submarine gear almost let the old vessel masquerade as an up-to-date warship, but not quite. The *Gresham* proved unable to keep up with its convoys, barely able to make eight knots, and was decommissioned for good, before the end of the war.

She was sold and renamed *Tradewinds*. Acquired for use by Haganah, she was renamed *Hatikva*. She embarked 1,414 Jewish refugees and departed Italy for Palestine. She was intercepted and rammed by the destroyer HMS *Venus* on 17 May 1947.

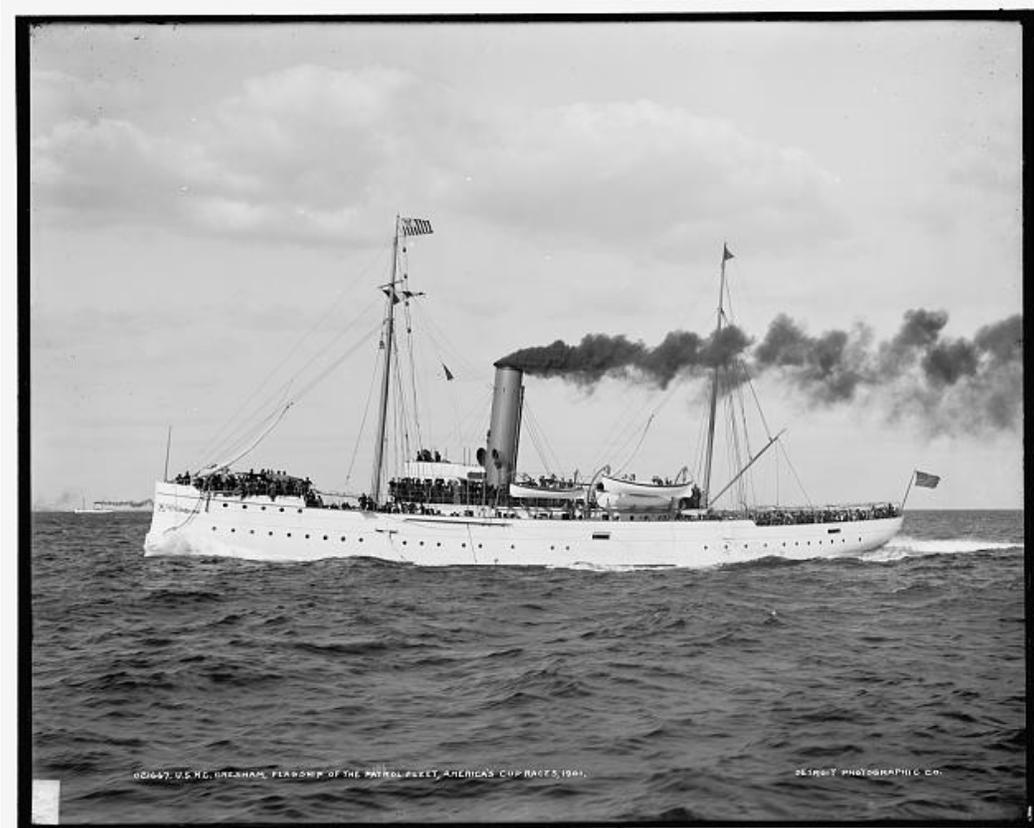
Photographs:



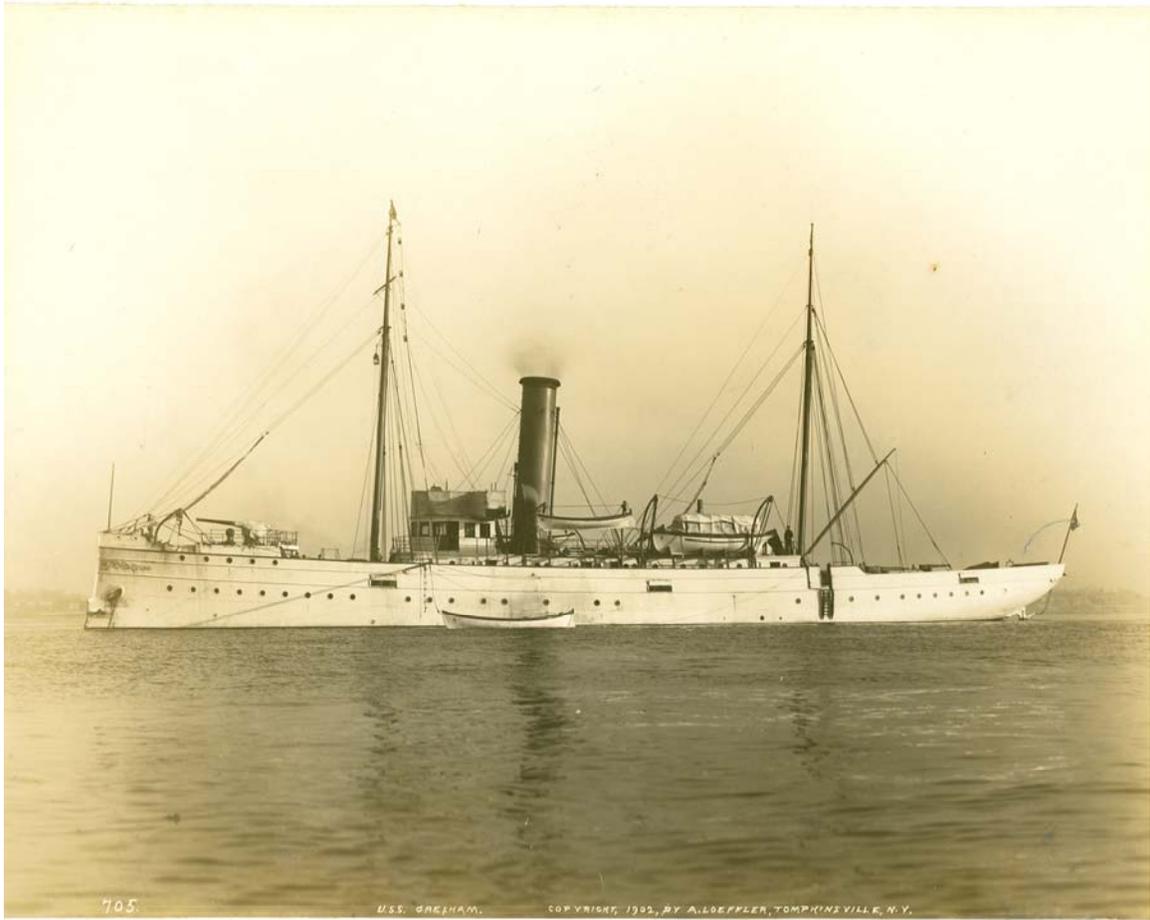
USS *Gresham*, 1898.



USS *Gresham*, no date (1898?)



"Revenue Cutter *Gresham*" patrolling the 1901 America's Cup Race.
Library of Congress Photo, No. 4a15298; Photo By Detroit Photographic Co.



USS *Gresham*, RC, circa 1902;
photo by "A. Loeffler, Tompkinsville, N.Y.",
Photo Number 705.



Gresham crew, circa 1922.



Recommissioned & converted to USCGC

USS Gresham, CG, circa 1943.

Sources:

Cutter History File. USCG Historian's Office, USCG HQ, Washington, D.C.

DANFS.

Paul H. Silvestone's Aliyah Bet Project.

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

