



Hercules, 1861

A figure of Greek and Roman mythology. The son of Zeus and Alcmene, a hero of extraordinary strength who won immortality by performing 12 extremely difficult labors demanded by Hera.

Builder: Patapsco Steam Tug Company, Baltimore, Maryland

Length: 100'

Beam: 17' 6"

Draft: 9' 4"

Displacement:

Cost: \$9,000

Commissioned: 11 September 1861

Decommissioned: 1864

Disposition: Sold

Machinery: Direct-acting high-pressure steam engine; 26-inch stroke; 25-inch cylinder; main shaft of 6 3/4 inches; coal-fired boiler.

Performance & Endurance:

Max:

Cruising:

Complement:

Armament: 1 x 12-pdr. rifled cannon; 12 "minnie muskets," 12 pistols, 12 boarding pikes, & 12 cutlasses.

Cutter History:

The *Hercules* was one of three steam tugboats purchased from the Patapsco Steam Tug Company of Baltimore, Maryland, for \$9,000 each. The others were *Reliance* and *Tiger*. Revenue Captain John McGowan took possession of the *Hercules* on 10 August 1861. She was fitted out under his supervision.

The *Hercules* was placed in commission on 11 September 1861 under the command of Revenue Lieutenant Rufus Coffin. She was placed under orders of General Dix at Fort McHenry and operated on the Rappahannock River, Great Wicomico River and the Chesapeake Bay. In 1862 she fired on the town of Urbana, Virginia, without proper authorization by naval authorities. Later, her commanding officer was noted for issuing unnecessary passes for passage to Confederate destinations. She was under enemy shore fire while on the Great Wicomico River on 20 September 1863. She was again under enemy fire in early 1864 and seized the schooner *Ann Hamilton* in February 1864.

She was advertised for sale at Baltimore on 18 May 1864.

Sources:

Donald Canney. *U.S. Coast Guard and Revenue Cutters, 1790-1935*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995.

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U.S. Coast Guard. *Record of Movements: Vessels of the United States Coast Guard: 1790 - December 31, 1933*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1934; 1989 (reprint).

