



Marion, 1825

Later-Madison

The cutter was named for Francis Marion, who was born in 1732 at Winyah, a plantation in St. John's Parish, Berkeley County, S.C., near Georgetown. He gained his first military experience fighting Cherokee Indians in 1759 and 1761, during the French and Indian Wars. Elected to the South Carolina Provincial Congress in 1775, he was soon commissioned captain and helped defend Patriot positions in Charleston Harbor in 1776. Marion participated in the unsuccessful American campaign to take Georgia in 1779. When the British took Charleston in the following year and overran most of the State, Marion was commissioned a brigadier general and distinguished himself in organizing and leading a guerrilla band which soon won fame harassing British units and intimidating Tories. When the perplexed red coats sent their reliable troubleshooter Colonel Tarleton in pursuit of Marion, the crafty American won the sobriquet, "the Swamp Fox," by slipping through the Carolina marshlands. He subsequently joined General Green and assisted in the skillful series of tactical maneuvers which exhausted the British Army under Cornwallis, ultimately causing him to abandon the Carolinas and head toward his doom at Yorktown.

After peace returned, Marion served in the State senate until retiring from public life in 1790. He died 27 February 1790.

Builder: Baltimore, Maryland

Commissioned: 1825

Decommissioned: N/A

Disposition: Transferred to the Coast Survey, 1850

Cost: \$15,000

Rig: Schooner

Length: 78' 8"

Beam: 19' 6"

Draft: 9' 6"

Displacement: 115-tons

Propulsion: Sail

Performance:

Max:

Economic:

Complement:

Armament: 6 x 12-pounders

Cutter History:

The *Marion* was one of two *Marion*-class cutters, the other being *Pulaski*, that entered service in 1825. Their construction was supervised by Revenue Captain Isaiah Doane. Both were elaborately decorated vessels. The *Marion* was first stationed at Charleston, South Carolina, under the command of Revenue Captain Doane. She cruised to the Bahamas in 1826. On 24 June 1826 the *New York Evening Post* reported that she seized the wrecker sloop *Brilliant* for not having a license off the Bahamas. The sloop was ordered to St. Augustine, Florida, for adjudication. In 1827 she cruised to Cuba. In 1829 she sailed on a cruise to search for pirates, returning to Savannah, Georgia, on 30 March 1829. During the cruise, while under the command of Revenue Captain John Jackson, according to the 7 April 1829 *New York Semi-Weekly Post*: "The MARION had been cruising in quest of a piratical schooner having on board 40 men and 2 six-pounders, which vessel had taken four American vessels and murdered their crews. She apparently was unsuccessful in locating and capturing this "piratical schooner."

She transported John James Audubon during his study of the birds of Florida in 1832. She was repaired at the Washington Navy Yard from 1832 to 1833. She was renamed *Madison* during this time and was then ordered to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. She cooperated with the Navy off Florida between 1837 and 1838 and again between 1841 and 1842. She later served out of New London, Connecticut and Norfolk, Virginia.

She was transferred to the Coast Survey in 1850.

Sources:

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

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).

