



McCulloch (Hugh McCulloch), 1865

Hugh McCulloch was appointed to be the 27th Secretary of the Treasury. He served under President Abraham Lincoln and President Andrew Johnson from March 9, 1865 until March 3, 1869. He also served as the 36th Secretary of the Treasury from October 31, 1884 until March 7, 1885 under Presidents Chester A. Arthur and Grover Cleveland.

As president of the State Bank of Indiana, Hugh McCulloch first came to Washington to protest the National Banking System developed by Salmon P. Chase, the 25th Secretary of the Treasury. Ironically, Chase asked McCulloch to launch the system in 1863 as the first Comptroller of Currency. After some hesitation McCulloch accepted, and the system was largely successful due to his influence with existing state banks.

Immediately confronted with inflation caused by the government's wartime issue of greenbacks, he recommended their retirement and a return to the gold standard. However this would have reduced the supply of currency and was unpopular during the period of postwar reconstruction and westward expansion. Adopted in 1866, the gold standard was abandoned two years later and the battle over its revival raged for the next fifty years. During his tenure, McCulloch maintained a policy of reducing the federal war debt and the careful reintroduction of federal taxation in the South.

McCulloch was appointed to be Secretary of the Treasury a second time in 1884 by President Chester Arthur. During his six months in office at that time, he continued his fight for currency backed by gold, warning that the coinage of silver, used by then as backing for currency, should be halted.

Type/Rig/Class: Schooner/side-wheel steamer; *Chase Class*

Builder: Fardy & Brothers, Baltimore, Maryland

Cost: \$

Dates of Service: 1865 - 1875

Disposition: Sold

Displacement: 500 tons

Length: 178'

Beam: 27' 11"

Draft: 10' 8"

Propulsion: Sail / steam

Machinery: Single walking-beam steam engine; side wheels;

Complement: 40

Armament: 3 x 4-pounders; 1 x 30-pounder; 2 x 24-pounders (*Johnson*, 1889)

Class History:

In 1865 and 1866 five cutters of the *Chase* Class were constructed for the Revenue Cutter Service: *Chase*, *Fessenden*, *Johnson*, *McCulloch* and *Sherman*. They were wooden-hulled side-wheel steamers powered by walking-beam steam engines. Their hulls were constructed with iron diagonal bracing for added strength. They were designed for operations on the Great Lakes, where they were laid up during the winter months, but *McCulloch* served in the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic.

Cutter History:

The revenue cutter *Hugh McCulloch*, also known as simply *McCulloch*, was commissioned on 1 December 1865 after being built in Baltimore. She was the only cutter of her class that did not serve on the Great Lakes. She was first stationed at New Orleans and patrolled the Gulf of Mexico. She made passage to Cuba in 1867 to escort the former revenue cutter *Harriet Lane* back to the U.S. She was assigned to temporary duty at Savannah, Georgia in 1869 and was then permanently transferred to Portland, Maine, later that same year.

She was sold on 17 March 1876 for \$8,400 and became the merchant vessel *John H. Starin*.

Sources:

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