



Morris, 1831

The cutter *Morris* was named for Robert Morris, who was born in Liverpool, England, 20 January 1734. He emigrated to Maryland in 1747. The next year he moved to Philadelphia where, after brief schooling, he entered the service of the Willings, shipping merchants. Rising to partnership in 1754, Morris rapidly attained great power and influence in the commercial and political life of America. Appointed to the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety in June 1775, he was extremely active, arming both Pennsylvanian and Continental forces. Joining the Continental Congress in November 1776, he was a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Morris' key role in the financial affairs of the new nation led to his appointment as Superintendent of Finance in May 1781 and Agent of Marine that September. His extraordinary skill in both offices greatly contributed to American success in the Revolution. A delegate to the Constitutional Convention, Morris served in the U.S. Senate 1789-1795, but declined to stand for reelection. He continued his leadership in business and banking until impoverished when values of his extensive land holdings collapsed. Morris died in Philadelphia 5 May 1806.

Builder: New York Navy Yard

Commissioned: July 1831

Decommissioned: Sold November 1846

Length: 73' 4"

Navigation Draft: 9' 7" (maximum)

Beam: 20' 6"

Displacement: 112 tons

Propulsion: topsail schooner

Maximum Speed: NA

Complement: 20-24

Armament: Much variation, typical was four 6-9 pdrs.

Cutter History:

The *Morris* was one of the 13 cutters of the Morris-Taney Class. These cutters were the backbone of the Service for more than a decade. Samuel Humphreys designed these cutters for roles as diverse as fighting pirates, privateers, combating smugglers and operating with naval forces. He designed the vessels on a naval schooner concept. They had Baltimore Clipper lines. The vessels built by Webb and Allen, designed by Isaac Webb, resembled Humphreys' but had one less port.

The *Morris* began her career on a cruise from Maine to Sabine, Texas. On 20 October 1831 she arrived for duty at Portland, ME. In May 1846, she sailed to Key West to participate in the Mexican War. In 11 October 1846, a hurricane drove *Morris* ashore three miles northwest of Key West. The following month the Key West Collector of Customs received instructions to sell the vessel.

Sources:

Cutter History File.

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).

