



Nansemond, 1865

Ex-*Joseph F. Freeborn*; Later-*W. H. Crawford*

A county and river in southeastern Virginia.

Builder: ?, New York

Commissioned: 1863 (USN); 22 August 1865 (USRCS)

Decommissioned: 1869

Rig/Type: Side Wheel Steamer

Length: 146'

Beam: 26'

Draft: 8' 3"

Machinery: Beam engine

Displacement: 325 tons

Top speed: 15 knots

Complement: 63 (USN); 38 (USRCS)

Armament: 1 x 30-pounder; 2 x 24-pounders (USN)

History:

The *Nansemond* was a side wheel steamer originally launched in 1862 as the *Joseph F. Freeborn*. She was purchased by the Navy in 1863 for service in the Civil War and was renamed *Nansemond* at that time. She saw active service during the war and was laid up and decommissioned at the Washington Navy Yard on 8 August 1865. She was then purchased for the Revenue Cutter Service for \$18,000 and was commissioned on 22 August 1865. She was initially stationed at Savannah, Georgia, where she operated from until 1869.

In 1873 she was renamed for a third time, this time as *W. H. Crawford* (who served as the Secretary of the Treasury from 1816 through 1825). In 1875 she transferred to Key West and in 1882 she moved to Mobile, Alabama. She was advertised for sale in 1884 but no bid was high enough and she was towed to Baltimore by the Revenue Steamers *Boutwell* and *Forward*, departing Mobile on 10 May 1885, arriving there 24 May. She then underwent repairs at the Columbia Iron Works.

After repairs were completed she was ordered back to Key West for duty, with her cruising grounds extending from Cape Florida to Cedar Keys. The crew of the RC *Ewing* transferred over to *Crawford* on 1 January 1890.

She was placed out of commission and sold 24 April 1897 to Edward D. Booz of Baltimore for \$2,526.

Sources:

Cutter History File, CG Historian's Office.

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