



## *U.S. Coast Guard History Program*

# *New Hampshire, 1803*

Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Masters William Parker Adams & Nathaniel Kennard

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A state of the northeast United States between Vermont and Maine. It was admitted as one of the original Thirteen Colonies in 1788. First explored in 1603, it was settled by colonists from Massachusetts during the 1620s and 1630s and became a separate colony in 1741. New Hampshire was the first colony to declare its independence from Great Britain and the first to establish its own government (January 1776). Concord is the capital.

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Builder: Ocracoke, NC

Rig:

Length:

Beam:

Draft:

Displacement:

Cost:

Commissioned: 1807

Disposition: Out of service by 1820

Complement:

Armament:

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### **Cutter History:**

Cutter: On September 27, 1802, the Portsmouth, New Hampshire, customs collector executed a contract with a local shipbuilder to build a cutter. By April 15, 1803, the cutter was completed, named *New Hampshire* and stationed at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The cutter was decommissioned and sold in May of 1816 and little else is known about the cutter's size and rig.

Masters: William Parker Adams was commissioned a master for the State of New Hampshire on May 8, 1810, and took command of *New Hampshire* on May 31, 1810. On May 3, 1812, Nathaniel Kennard resigned his commission as 1<sup>st</sup> mate

of *New Hampshire* due to a disagreement with Adams. By October 1812, the Portsmouth customs collector had dismissed Adams as master; and, on October 30, 1812, the collector recommended Kennard to take command of the cutter. On November 5, Kennard received his commission as master of the cutter and records indicate that he remained in command of *New Hampshire* until it was sold in 1816.

#### War of 1812 Events and Operations:

June 18, 1812. President James Madison signs a declaration of war and the War of 1812 officially begins. The congressional authorization states “*that the President of the United States is hereby authorized to use the whole land and naval force of the United States . . . against the vessels, goods, and effects of the government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the subjects thereof.*”

June 18, 1812. Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin sends a circular to all customs collectors, writing only the sentence: “*Sir, I hasten to inform you that War was this day declared against Great Britain*”. In a separate circular, Gallatin orders the news dispatched to U.S. naval vessels by revenue cutters stationed at Savannah; Norfolk; Charleston; New York; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Wilmington, North Carolina; and Wilmington, Delaware.

August 12, 1812. Crewmembers of *New Hampshire* (William P. Adams) save five out of seven American privateersmen whose longboat capsized in Winter Harbor, Maine, during severe weather.

December 28, 1812. In response to a letter from the Boston Customs Collector, Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin writes, “*A Revenue Cutter cannot be expressly fitted and employed for the purpose of cruising against an enemy except under the 98<sup>th</sup> Section of the collection law in which case the Cutter must be placed under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy.*”

November (early), 1812. Nathaniel Kennard replaces William P. Adams as master of cutter *New Hampshire*.

November 3, 1813. *New Hampshire* (Nathaniel Kennard) operates out of Portsmouth with Commodore Isaac Hull’s flotilla [USS *Enterprise* (12), USS *Rattlesnake* (14) and two navy gunboats] in pursuit of two Royal Navy brigs. The American vessels return to port when the smaller British warships appear to be setting a trap with an enemy frigate.

July 14, 1814. *New Hampshire* (Nathaniel Kennard) and navy gunboat *Number 88* capture a British vessel used as a tender for HMS *Tenedos* (38), and an American prize vessel the tender had captured. The prisoners included three British officers and ten enlisted men.

August 8, 1814. Peace negotiations between the United States and Great Britain begin in Ghent, Belgium.

December 24, 1814. Peace treaty (Treaty of Ghent) signed between representatives of the United States and Great Britain at a ceremony in Ghent, Belgium.

January 4, 1815. In response to the destructive effects of the war on commerce, New England delegates to the Hartford Convention claim that “*Commerce, the vital spring of New England’s prosperity, was annihilated. Embargoes, restrictions, and rapacity of revenue officers, had completed its destruction.*”

January 8, 1815. Americans defeat a British army in the Battle of New Orleans in the last major land engagement of the war.

February 11, 1815. Under the white flag, HMS *Favorite* (18) delivers the peace treaty, Treaty of Ghent, to New York City.

February 16, 1815. President Madison signs Treaty of Ghent officially ending the War of 1812.

February 25, 1815. Treasury Secretary Alexander J. Dallas issues a circular to all customs collectors regarding future policy in light of the conclusion of the war. In the two-page circular, he instructs, “[cutter] *officers and men must be recommended for their vigilance, activity, skill and good conduct.*” Dallas later directs that “*Smuggling, in every form, must be prevented, or punished. And if it be not prevented, the officers of the customs, according to their respective duties and stations, will be held answerable to prove, that there was no want of vigilance on their part.*” In the final paragraph, Dallas lists other duties to be carried out by the customs officials, hence their respective cutters, including “*immediate measures will be taken, for restoring the light-houses, piers, buoys, and beacons, within your district and jurisdiction, to the state in which they were before the war*”.

March 3, 1815. Congress repeals “*the acts prohibiting the entrance of foreign vessels into the waters of the United States*”, thereby repealing elements of the Non-Intercourse and Non-Importation acts.

May 30, 1815. Treasury Secretary Alexander Dallas writes the New York customs collector about building one or more schooner-rigged cutters to replace those lost in the war.

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**Sources:**

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