



U.S. Coast Guard History Program

Seminole, 1900



A Native American people made up of various primarily Creek groups who moved into northern Florida during the 18th and 19th centuries, later inhabiting the Everglades region as well, with present-day populations in Oklahoma and southern Florida. The Seminole Wars ended in the removal of the majority of the Seminoles to Indian Territory.

Builder: Columbian Iron Works, Baltimore, Maryland

Length: 188'

Beam: 29' 6"

Draft: 11' 8"

Displacement: 845 tons

Cost: \$141,000

Commissioned: 3 September 1900

Decommissioned: 17 December 1934

Disposition: Transferred to Federal Emergency Relief Administration

Machinery: triple-expansion steam engine;

Performance & Endurance:

Max: 14.7 knots

Cruising:

Complement: 8 officers, 59 enlisted

Armament: 2 x 1-pounders

Call Letters: NRCW

Cutter History:

The steel-hulled *Seminole* was built by the Columbian Iron Works Company in Baltimore, Maryland. She was launched on 18 March 1899 and was accepted for the Revenue Cutter Service by Revenue Captain Russell Glover. She was formally commissioned on 3 September 1900. She was first stationed at Boston, Massachusetts, arriving there on 17 September 1900. She patrolled the New England coast and the North Atlantic. Her winter cruising area included assisting fishing vessels in the ice of Newfoundland.

She transferred to Thompkinsville, Staten Island, New York on 22 May 1904. She transferred yet again on 5 July 1905, this time to Wilmington, North Carolina. Her cruising ground included the waters between Cape Hatteras and the St. John's River with occasional patrols to Jacksonville and Key West, Florida. She served on quarantine duty in the Gulf of Mexico at Gulfport, Mississippi, Key West, and Fort Morgan, Alabama from 8 August to 2 November 1915.

Based out of San Juan, Puerto Rico, she served on Neutrality Patrol from 24 August to 27 November 1915. She was transferred to Navy control on 6 April 1917 after the U.S. declared war on Germany. She remained under naval orders until returned to Treasury Department control on 28 August 1919, operating in primarily as a coastal escort vessel within the Sixth Naval District. While under naval orders, on 30 April 1917, she escorted the seized German freighter *Hohenfeldt* from Savannah to Charleston. In May, 1917, *Seminole* escorted the seized German steamships *Kiel* and *Nicaria* from the Cape Fear River to Charleston. Beginning on 2 December 1917 she escorted 11 British merchant vessels from Norfolk to a position 50 miles off the coast, where it was believed

that submarine attacks were unlikely, and she then returned to Norfolk. In February 1918 she steamed from Norfolk to Cristobal, Panama via Guantanamo, Cuba, to pick up and tow a barge back to Norfolk.

On 4 April 1918 she departed Newport News with the Army transport *Meade* in tow bound for Boston. The tug *Tasco* assisted the cutter on the voyage. They encountered heavy weather on the way off Nantucket Shoals and when the weather threatened to ground the vessels *Seminole* anchored *Meade* and evacuated the transport's crew. The weather cleared on 13 April and after *Seminole* ran short of coal the SS *Germantown* finished the tow to Boston.

Following tours of duty that included New York, she returned to her old cruising grounds and homeport of Wilmington, North Carolina. She transferred to the Great Lakes on 26 June 1929 and was based out of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. She was laid up during the winter months. She remained in service there until she was decommissioned. She was decommissioned on 17 December 1934 and transferred to Federal Emergency Relief Administration.



Seminole in 1901 patrolling the 1901 America's Cup Race.
Library of Congress photo, No. 4a15302.



"REAR RANK, reading from left to right: - Machinist E. F. Rock, Carpenter Wm. Williamson, Third Lieut. C. H. Abel; Third Lieut. T. S. Klinger, Second Lieut. L. T. Chalker, First Lieut. L. C. Covell; First Lieut. of Engineers R. B. Adams, Second Lieut. of Engineers W. M. Prall. Third Lieut. of Engineers C. E. Sugden; Gunner O. Vinje; Boatswain Geo. D'Orange.

FRONT RANK, reading from left to right: - Supt. J. M. Blankenship, Merchant and Miners Trans. Co.; Jos. A. O'Brien, Association of American Underwriters; Captain Godfrey L. Carden, Commanding U.S.R.C. SEMINOLE; President J. C. Whitney, Merchant & Miners Trans. Co; James Sprunt, Esq. Representative of Lloyd's and London Salvage Association."

Wilmington, North Carolina, 20 January 1913; hand-written note on back reads: "Fw photo of Seminole showing plate presented at Wilmington, NC Jan. 20/1913"

Photo No. 993.067-A7; photographer unknown.

Sources:

Cutter History File. USCG Historian's Office, USCG HQ, Washington, D.C.

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).

