



U.S. Coast Guard History Program

Chase, 1968

WHEC-718

Motto: "Semper Paratus" (Always Ready), "Nullum Opus Nos Superat" (There Is No Work Better Than Ours)

Call Sign: NLPM

Nicknames: "Cha-Zea"; "RONC Proud Mary V" ("RONC" stands for "Republic of Nantucket Cutter")

Source of Name

WHEC-718 was named in honor of Salmon Portland Chase, Secretary of the Treasury under Abraham Lincoln and sixth Chief Justice of the United States.

Salmon Portland Chase (1808-1873):

Salmon Portland Chase served as U.S. senator from Ohio and the 23rd governor of Ohio; as Secretary of the Treasury under Abraham Lincoln; and as the sixth Chief Justice of the United States.

Chase was born in New Hampshire and raised by his uncle in Ohio after his father died. He attended Cincinnati College and graduated from Dartmouth College. He was admitted to the bar in the District of Columbia in 1829, returned to Cincinnati and quickly became a prominent jurist and political figure. His wife's death in 1835 triggered his spiritual reawakening and devotion to social causes, including legal defense of fugitive slaves. He became a Free Soil advocate.

During his six years in the Senate (1849-1855), Chase opposed extending slavery. In 1855 he was elected governor of Ohio. He pursued the Republican nomination for president in 1860. When Abraham Lincoln won the nomination, Chase supported him and was elected again to the U.S. Senate, but three days after taking office resigned to become Lincoln's Secretary of the Treasury. He served in that office until 1864. During that period he was at the center of major changes in American financial policy, including replacing tariffs with internal taxation, establishing a national banking system and

issuing paper currency. Those changes created an immediate market for government bonds, permitting the Union to sell debt to pay for the war. The first “greenbacks” were printed in 1861-1862 and are the basis for today's paper currency.

During his term as Treasury Secretary, Chase was building political support to run for president in 1864. He also tried to pressure Lincoln by repeatedly threatening resignation, which would have eroded Lincoln's Radical Republican support. In June 1864, after Lincoln secured his re-nomination for president, he surprised Chase by accepting his fourth offer of resignation.

To placate the radical wing of the party, Lincoln nominated Chase to succeed Chief Justice Roger B. Taney when he died in October, thus replacing a slavery supporter with an emancipation supporter as Chief Justice. Chase held the office from 1864 until his own death in 1873.

Chase died in New York City. He was interred first in Washington, D.C., and later re-interred in Cincinnati. Chase Hall, the main barracks and dormitory at the Coast Guard Academy, is named for Chase in honor of his service as Secretary of the Treasury. Chase Hall at Harvard Business School and the Salmon P. Chase College of Law at Northern Kentucky University are also named after him.

Earlier Ships of the Name:

Five earlier vessels bearing the name “Chase” figure in Coast Guard history. Three of them were named for Salmon P. Chase:

The schooner *Chase* was built for a private party in 1856, purchased and commissioned in 1861. It served in the fifth and sixth lighthouse districts. (Portions of this area were Confederate during the Civil War and were not served by the Lighthouse Board.) *Chase* was declared unseaworthy in June 1867 and sold. Given the service dates and the area served, it is possible it was named for Samuel Chase, a member of the Continental Congress from Maryland and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, or had an entirely different source.

The revenue cutter *Salmon P. Chase* (1865), also known simply as *Chase*, was a schooner-rigged side-wheel steamer commissioned on 9 October 1865. She was first ordered to Ogdensburg, N.Y., via the St. Lawrence River, then to Oswego. She was sold at auction in 1875 and became the merchant vessel *Admiral*.

The school ship *Salmon P. Chase* (1878), also known as *Chase*, was a three-masted barque with accommodations for a dozen Revenue Cutter cadets and clipper lines. *Chase* was built as a school ship and went into service in the summer of 1878, sailing from New Bedford, Mass. on cadet cruises to Europe, the Azores, the West Indies, and along the U.S. eastern coast. In 1890 *Chase* was de-commissioned for four years when the Revenue Cutter Service filled its officer corps ranks from Annapolis graduates. In 1895 *Chase* was taken into dry dock, cut in half, and lengthened forty feet to accommodate a total of twenty-five cadets. Training cruises continued for two more decades. Its last official function was a visit to Hampton Roads, Va. for the Jamestown

Tricentennial celebration of 1907. *Chase* then went into the U.S. Marine Hospital Service as a quarantine vessel, then later refitted and reclassified a detention barge.

Chase (1934) CG-9277 (ex-*Kirk and Sweeney*, ex-*George and Earl*) was a rum-runner originally built as the *Kirk and Sweeney* in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, in 1921. She was renamed *George and Earl* and then captured by the Coast Guard on 7 December 1934 and seized under the Volstead Act. Like some other serviceable vessels seized during Prohibition, she was taken into Coast Guard service for a time. She served as a training vessel at New London, Ct., until damaged in a 1938 hurricane, and then sold in 1939. Without her sailing rig she served in the lumber trade on the Chesapeake Bay. She became part of a breakwater at Rock Hall, Md., in the 1950s.

USS *Samuel Chase*, AP-56 / APA-26, a troop transport, was commissioned by the Navy in 1942 with an all-Coast-Guard crew and nicknamed "*Lucky Chase*" after landing thousands of invasion troops in North Africa, Sicily, Salerno, Anzio, and Normandy (D-Day) without suffering any damage or shipboard casualties. *Chase* went on to Navy service in the Pacific and post-war troop movements.

Coast Guard High-Endurance Cutter WHEC 718:

This *Chase* was the fourth cutter of the Hamilton class.

"High endurance" cutters of the Hamilton class (designated WHEC) succeeded cruising cutters. The basic criterion for a high-endurance cutter was the ability to operate continuously at sea for 30 days or more, so that they could perform established ocean and weather station missions as well as coastal missions. At the time the new WHECs were designed, the Coast Guard had been relying on cruising cutters converted from U.S. Navy vessels since 1944.

The Hamilton class of twelve WHEC cutters met added design criteria to establish interoperability with Navy warships, including weapons systems and speed. They achieved the speed by using CODOG (combination diesel or gasoline) technology which permitted them to cruise at economic speeds under diesel power or pursuit speeds using gasoline-fueled aircraft turbines for power. At the time they were built only one class of warship in the world used a similar system, a West German frigate design. This technology has since become standard for high performance vessels.

In addition to the main propulsion system, this class was designed with a retractable, fully rotatable General Electric bow thruster which boosted their maneuverability and permitted them to operate at up to five knots without using the main propulsion system.

Other design features included large and more comfortable living spaces to permit longer times at sea; a hull design that drew on the British-favored V cross section rather than the U cross-section then favored for U.S. Navy vessels; and wet and dry labs to support oceanographic and meteorological research while on station. Longer sea-time capability was expected to enhance the value of cutters as ocean navigational aids and

weather stations and the new hull design was the result of extensive tank testing of four 20-foot wooden hull models which led to a hull expected to survive and stay afloat longer after suffering damage. The original design also included an 80-foot landing pad that could accommodate the large boat-hulled amphibious helicopters then used by the Coast Guard for air-sea rescues and equipped with a balloon shelter which also served as a “nose shelter” for the large helicopters.

In order to maintain their inter-operability with U.S. Navy warships the entire class underwent FRAM (Fleet Retention and Maintenance) renovation after two decades, which increased their Coast Guard service life to 44 years and added aviation, electronic and gunnery capabilities. One aviation modification is visible in profile in the expandable hangar that rolls out to permit today’s smaller helicopters to be completely sheltered from heavy weather and to be maintainable at sea, shortening the usable length of the landing pad. Another visible change was the enclosure of the sixth bay of the open walkways, that originally stretched from just aft of the bridge to the afterdeck to give the Hamilton class as originally built their sleek lines. Other visible changes in profile included the elevation of the forward gun platform and the later addition of the Phalanx CIWS mount at the stern rail.



Chase before FRAM modifications
(Note original six-bay walkway)



Chase as configured after FRAM and installation of Phalanx CIWS on stern

The first two of the cutters of this class retired from service (*Hamilton* and *Chase*) have been commissioned in the Philippine and Nigerian navies respectively as frigates.

Builder: Avondale Shipyard (Northrop Grumman), New Orleans, La.

Launched: 20 May 1967

Commissioned: 11 March 1968

Decommissioned: 29 March 2011. Sold to the Nigerian Navy and recommissioned as NNS *Thunder* (F90), a frigate.

Length: 378' overall, 350' waterline.

Beam: 42'

Draft: 13'6" (design)

Displacement: 2,716 tons (approx.)

Hull: V-shaped bow design, aluminum superstructure with welded steel hull, two compartment floodable length and anti-rolling tank

Speed: Maximum sustained, 29 knots; cruising 20 knots, minimum, all speeds down to 0 knots

Endurance: 2,000 miles at 29 knots; 9600 miles @ 20 knots

Range at 20 knots: 12,000 nautical miles

Power: 36,000 shaft horsepower

Fuel capacity: 732 tons diesel, 18 tons JP5 (aviation)

Fresh water capacity: 16,000 gallons; 7,500 gallons/day evaporation
Auxiliary power generator 3 @ 500 KW each

Main propulsion: Two controllable pitch propellers; diesels, 3,500 hp per shaft; gas turbines, 18,000 hp per shaft

Control: Pilot house, engine room control booth, and local

Armament: pre-FRAM – one 5-inch/38 caliber dual-purpose gun forward; two Mk 67 20mm cannons; post-FRAM – one Otobreda 76 mm (3-inch) cannon on an elevated platform, two 25 mm Mk 38 anti-aircraft cannons; later addition -- one stern-mounted Mk 15 20 mm Phalanx Close In Weapons System (CIWS), a radar-guided anti-ship-missile “Gatling gun”

Crew capacity: 15 officers, 149 enlisted; later increased to a total of 173.

History:

Originally homeported in Boston, Mass., *Chase* served on Atlantic ocean stations Echo, Delta and Bravo before being ordered to the Western Pacific in November 1969 to join *Hamilton* (WHEC 715), *Dallas* (WHEC 716), *Mellon* (WHEC 717), and *Pontchartrain* (WMEC-90) as Coast Guard Squadron Three, fifth deployment. Squadron Three's duties included participation in the Navy's Market Time operation, consisting of coastal surveillance and at least twelve naval gunfire support (NGFS) missions. *Chase* participated in underway replenishment operations with Navy supply vessels, an unusual maneuver for Coast Guard cutters, and replenished smaller Coast Guard vessels operating in the theater both by helicopter and conventional alongside operations. Its personnel also participated in medical civilian assistance programs (MEDCAPs). After ten months in the Vietnam theatre, *Chase* returned with a Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation along with its Vietnam Service Medal.

Between September 1970 and December 1972, *Chase* performed ocean station duties at various times on the Charlie, Delta and Echo stations. In 1972 *Chase* first crossed the Arctic Circle, and then made port calls in Norway, Denmark, England and Portugal. Between the years of 1970 and 1974, *Chase* conducted an average of more than three search and rescue (SAR) cases a day while on various ocean station duties.

In 1973, *Chase* also participated in Operation Seaconex, an exercise with a screen of seven destroyers and an amphibious assault ship, helicopter (LPH) carrying anti-submarine warfare (ASW) helicopters and Harrier vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) jets protecting a convoy from air, subsurface and surface threats.

Between the years of 1974 to 1978, *Chase* continued to patrol Atlantic and Mediterranean waters. In 1976, while on a cadet cruise, *Chase* was ordered to join operation Fluid Drive and, along with the attack carrier *America* and landing ship dock *Spiegel Grove*, evacuated American nationals from the beach after the assassination of two U.S. officials in Beirut, Lebanon. In 1977 *Chase* was among the cutters assigned to protect a part of the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) created as a result of passage of the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, protecting the area from Cape May, N.J. to Cape Hatteras, N.C. from foreign encroachment.

In 1981 *Chase* participated in the Mariel boatlift, rescuing Cuban civilians, for which all crew members received humanitarian medals. The same year, 57 illegal Haitian refugees were saved from their sinking vessel. In the period from 1981 through 1987 *Chase* interdicted ten smuggling vessels, seizing over 66 tons of marijuana. Between January 1985 and March 1988 *Chase* repatriated more than 338 migrants during the Haitian Migration Interdiction operations (HMIO).

In 1982-1983 *Chase* participated in exercises Safe Pass, United Effort and Ocean Safari with the U.S. Navy and NATO units, testing their ability to participate under wartime conditions with naval forces from other countries. Then from October 1983 to July 1984, *Chase* served in Operation Urgent Fury, the U.S. invasion of Grenada. For this service, *Chase* received the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.

In May of 1985 an engine room fire broke out while *Chase* was cruising off Cape Cod, disabling the cutter, damaging the propulsion plant and killing one crewman. Cutter *Chilula* (WMEC 153) was dispatched to tow *Chase* into Boston.

In 1989, *Chase* was temporarily de-commissioned to undergo Fleet Renovation and Modernization (FRAM) at Bath Ironworks in Maine. Approximately seventy five percent of the shipboard electronics were changed out or modified, a third of the engineering systems were overhauled or replaced and there was major reconfiguration of the living spaces in addition to changes in the weapons systems and flight deck area.

On March 22, 1991, *Chase* returned after completing FRAM, and was re-commissioned. In July 1991, when returning from refresher training (REFTRA) the cutter struck a whale, damaging a screw, and was left dead in the water about 70 miles off Cape Cod. Cutter *Harriet Lane* (WMEC 903) answered the call for a tow and brought *Chase* into port for repairs.

Chase was in the process of preparing for a major change. With the discontinuation of ocean station missions in the Atlantic, the decision had been made to transfer all but two of the Hamilton class cutters to Pacific ports because they were better suited for the greater distances involved in protecting Pacific fishing grounds under severe weather conditions. *Chase* arrived at her new homeport of San Pedro, Cal., on November 15, 1991. Within a year, on 22 September, 1992, *Chase* was in Vladivostok, representing the United States at the historic re-establishment of the United States consulate there.

In 1994, *Chase* led U.S. forces into harbor at Port-au-Prince, Haiti, where the Coast Guard established the first Harbor Defense Command in foreign waters. During this period, *Chase* participated in operations Able Manner and Able Vigil in which *Chase* interdicted 130 asylum seekers from Cuba. Back in the Pacific in 1995, *Chase* boarded motor vessel *Xin Ji Li Hou* off Baja California, Mexico, and interdicted 150 Chinese migrants.

From April to June 1997, *Chase* was the first Coast Guard cutter to participate in Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT 97) in Southeast Asia, where *Chase* worked with the Royal Thai Navy and visited various Thai ports. Vice Admiral Card presented *Chase* with the Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Commendation for the boarding and custody exchange of the high seas driftnet vessel *Cao Yu*.

In 1998, *Chase* departed with Navy guided missile ships *Russell* (DDG 59), *Crommelin* (FFG 37) and *O'Brien* (DD 975) for military interdiction operations (MIO) in the Persian Gulf. During this operation, *Chase* assisted in diverting four vessels violating United Nations sanctions against Iraq, reported a spill of 1,527,740 gallons of fuel oil, and participated in 85 gunnery exercises.

In 1999, *Chase* seized seven metric tons of cocaine, then the second largest cocaine seizure in Coast Guard history.

In August 1999, *Chase* transferred to its third home port, San Diego, Cal. While there, *Chase* earned an overall Excellent during its Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA), and received the Distinguished Coast Guard Battle "E" Ribbon. It continued to perform search and rescue (SAR), international training exercises, and global Navy operations. After 2001, homeland security was added to its missions.

On 28 and 29 March 2011, in ceremonies at San Diego, *Hamilton*, the name ship of the class, and *Chase*, the fourth of the Hamilton class, were decommissioned from the Coast Guard and transferred to Philippine and Nigerian crews.

In his Alcoaasts announcement of *Chase's* decommissioning in 2011, after 44 years of service, Commandant Papp concluded with this summary:

ON 29 MARCH 2011, AFTER 43 YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE TO OUR NATION, WE WILL DECOMMISSION CUTTER CHASE. THE COAST GUARD MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED IN CUTTER CHASE, PAST AND PRESENT, DID SO WITH THE UTMOST DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO THEIR MISSION AND TRULY PERSONIFIED CHASES MOTTO "THERE IS NO WORK BETTER THAN OURS."

. . . CGC CHASE, COMMISSIONED IN MARCH 1968, WAS THE THIRD CUTTER NAMED IN HONOR OF SALMON PORTLAND CHASE, PRESIDENT LINCOLNS SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY. CGC CHASES FIRST HOMEPORT WAS IN BOSTON, MA. SHE WOULD LATER CHANGE HOMEPORTS TO SAN PEDRO, CA, IN 1991, AND SAN DIEGO, CA, IN 1999.

. . . CUTTER CHASE SAILED IN THE ATLANTIC, PACIFIC AND INDIAN OCEANS, IN SUPPORT OF VIRTUALLY EVERY ONE OF THE COAST GUARDS CHALLENGING MARITIME MISSIONS. MOST NOTABLY, DURING THE VIETNAM WAR, CGC CHASE SERVED IN OPERATION MARKET TIMES COAST GUARD SQUADRON THREE (RONTHREE), PROVIDING NAVAL GUNFIRE SUPPORT TO OPERATIONS ASHORE, AND LOGISTICS SUPPORT TO COAST GUARD AND NAVY PATROL BOATS. FOR THESE

EFFORTS, SHE WAS AWARDED THE NAVY MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION AND VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL.

... TO CURRENT AND PAST CREW OF CHASE, PLANK OWNERS, SHELLBACKS - GOLDEN, HORNED, EMERALD, OR OTHERWISE, SUBJECTS OF THE GOLDEN DRAGON, BLUE NOSES, AND EVEN POLLYWOGS, WELL DONE. THERE TRULY IS NO WORK BETTER THAN YOURS. YOUR 43 YEAR LEGACY OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE HONORS OUR PROFESSION BY EPITOMIZING THE DEDICATION AND PROFESSIONALISM THAT ARE HALLMARKS OF THE COAST GUARD. ONCE A CHASER, ALWAYS A CHASER. BRAVO ZULU.



Chase Crest courtesy of Military Heraldry Office

Sources:

Cutter History File, U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office

Scheina, Robert. U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft, 1946-1990. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1990.

