



Nemaha, 1927

WSC-148

A river in Nebraska.

TYPE/RIG/CLASS: Active Class Patrol Boat

BUILDER: American Brown Boveri Electric Corp., Camden, NJ

COST: \$63,173 each

COMMISSIONED: 19 April 1927

DECOMMISSIONED: 21 July 1947; sold 14 June 1948.

DISPLACEMENT: 232 tons

PROPULSION: Two 6-cylinder, 300 Horse Power engines

LENGTH: 125 feet

BEAM: 23 feet, 6 inches

DRAFT: 7 feet, 6 inches

COMPLEMENT: 3 officers, 17 men

ARMAMENT: 1 3"/27 (1927); in WWII two dc racks were added

Design:

This class of vessels was one of the most useful and long lasting in the service with 16 cutters still in use in the 1960's. The last to be decommissioned was the *Morris* in 1970; the last in service was the *Cuyahoga*, sunk in 1978. They were designed for the outer line of patrol during Prohibition: trailing mother ships. They gained a reputation for durability only enhanced by their reengining in the late

1930's; their original 6-cylinder diesels were replaced by significantly more powerful 8-cylinder units that used the original engine beds and gave the vessels 3 additional knots. All served in World War II, but two (the *Jackson* and the *Bedloe*) were lost in a storm in 1944. Ten were refitted as buoy tenders during the war and reverted to patrol work afterward.

History:

USCGC *Nemaha*, built for the Coast Guard as an *Active* class patrol boat by American Brown Boveri Electrical Corp., Camden, N.J., commissioned 19 April 1927. She was first assigned coastal patrol and rescue operations out of New London, Conn., where she served until July 1931. During this time the patrol boat was occasionally assigned to enforce the Volstead Act.

Nemaha departed New London 9 July and transferred to Pascagoula, Miss. There she assumed patrol operations in Gulf waters, where she operated through 1934.

In 1935 her permanent station was shifted to San Francisco and she performed local patrol and rescue operations in the Bay area until World War II. She proceeded to Ketchikan Alaska just prior to 1 November 1941, when Executive Order 8929 transferred the Coast Guard to the Navy. Most of *Nemaha's* war operations were in the Aleutian Islands, particularly in the area of Dutch Harbor. Her most noteworthy rescue operation took place 2 June 1942, when she rescued Navy Lt. L. D. Campbell and his PBV crew after their plane was forced down about eighty miles off Umnak Island.

When the Coast Guard returned to the Treasury Department 1 January 1946, *Nemaha* remained in an active status and returned to San Francisco, where she continued patrol and rescue duties. Shortly thereafter she decommissioned, went into storage, and was sold for merchant use in 1948. Through 1957 she was active as *Sea Monarch II*, with W. C. Gibson as managing owner and Vancouver, B. C. as her port of registry.

Sources:

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

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships. Washington, DC: USGPO.

Robert Scheina. *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft of World War II*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1982.

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

