



McCulloch, 1897

Hugh McCulloch was appointed to be the 27th Secretary of the Treasury. He served under President Abraham Lincoln and President Andrew Johnson from March 9, 1865 until March 3, 1869. He also served as the 36th Secretary of the Treasury from October 31, 1884 until March 7, 1885 under Presidents Chester A. Arthur and Grover Cleveland.

As president of the State Bank of Indiana, Hugh McCulloch first came to Washington to protest the National Banking System developed by Salmon P. Chase, the 25th Secretary of the Treasury. Ironically, Chase asked McCulloch to launch the system in 1863 as the first Comptroller of Currency. After some hesitation McCulloch accepted, and the system was largely successful due to his influence with existing state banks. Immediately confronted with inflation caused by the government's wartime issue of greenbacks, he recommended their retirement and a return to the gold standard. However this would have reduced the supply of currency and was unpopular during the period of postwar reconstruction and westward expansion. Adopted in 1866, the gold standard was abandoned two years later and the battle over its revival raged for the next fifty years. During his tenure, McCulloch maintained a policy of reducing the federal war debt and the careful reintroduction of federal taxation in the South.

McCulloch was appointed to be Secretary of the Treasury a second time in 1884 by President Chester Arthur. During his six months in office at that time, he continued his fight for currency backed by gold, warning that the coinage of silver, used by then as backing for currency, should be halted.

Builder: William Cramp & Sons, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Rig: Barquentine, later two "military" masts

Length: 219'

Beam: 33' 4"

Draft: 14'

Displacement: 1,280 tons

Cost: \$196,5000

Commissioned: 12 December 1897

Decommissioned: 13 June 1917 (sank due to a collision; see details below)

Disposition: Sank due to a collision; see details below.

Machinery: Triple-expansion steam, 21 1/2", 34 1/2", and 56 1/2" diameter x 30" stroke; 2 boilers, 200 psi.

Performance: 17 knots at trial

Complement: 130 (wartime)

Armament: 4 x 3"; 1 torpedo tube

Cutter History:

Built by William Cramp & Sons, Philadelphia, the *McCulloch* was the largest cutter built to date. She was of composite construction, having a steel hull sheathed in wood. *McCulloch* was commissioned 12 December 1897 as a cruising cutter for the Revenue Cutter Service under the command of Captain D.B. Hogsdon, RCS, in command.

As the Spanish-American War was about to commence, the new cutter was steaming via the Suez Canal and the Far East to her first station at San Francisco. She was the first cutter to sail through the Suez Canal and the Indian Ocean to this date. Upon her arrival at Singapore 8 April 1898, two full weeks before war was declared, orders directed *McCulloch* to report to Commodore Dewey on the Asiatic station.

Dewey's squadron was composed of cruisers *Olympia*, *Boston*, *Baltimore* and *Raleigh*; gunboats *Concord* and *Petrel*; and cutter *McCulloch*, with her charges, the valuable storeships *Nanshan* and *Zafire*. The squadron stood out of Mirs Bay, China, 27 April and entered Manila Bay the evening of 30 April. By midnight, *Olympia* had stealthily passed into the harbor. Successive ships followed in close order.

Just as *McCulloch* brought El Fraile Rock abaft the starboard beam, the black stillness was broken. Soot in the cutter's stack caught fire and sent up a column of fire like a signal light. Immediately thereafter a battery on El Fraile took *McCulloch* under fire. *Boston*, in column just ahead of the cutter, answered the battery, as did *McCulloch*, and the Spanish gun emplacement was silenced.

Frank B. Randall, R.C.S., Chief Engineer of the Revenue Cutter *McCulloch*, died from the effects of heat and over-exertion while trying to stop the blaze from the smokestack of the *McCulloch*.

As the rock fell astern, Dewey reduced speed to 4 knots so as to reach the head of the Bay in time to join action with the Spanish Fleet at daybreak. His order of battle required *McCulloch* to guard the precious storeships from enemy gunboats. She was also to protect the ships in line of battle from surprise attack, to tow any disabled ship out of range of gunfire, and to take her place in the line.

American present off Cavite that day, long recalled, with satisfaction, that *McCulloch* found no need to tow any warship out of the battleline. During five firing runs, made at close range, the accurate gunners of Dewey's squadron wrought devastation upon the Spaniards. The battle, which began at 0540, was over in 7 hours. All of the Spanish warships were destroyed, and 381 Spanish seamen were killed. No American warship was seriously damaged, and only eight American sailors were wounded.

In a message to the Secretary of the Navy, Dewey commended Captain Hogsdon for the efficiency and readiness of his ship. After the battle, because of her speed, *McCulloch* was dispatched to the closest cable facility, that at Hong Kong, bearing the first dispatches of the great naval victory. [See below for more information.]

McCulloch arrived at San Francisco 10 January 1899 and operated on patrol out of that port, cruising from the Mexican border to Cape Blanco. Designated to enforce fur seal regulations 9 August 1906, she operated in the vicinity of the Pribilof Islands until 1912. During these years of service in the Bering Sea patrol, she was especially well known because of her services as floating court to the Alaskan towns. Upon return to San Francisco in 1912, *McCulloch* resumed patrol operations in her regular west coast cruising district.

McCulloch transferred to the Navy 6 April 1917 for duty during World War I, she continued patrol operations along the Pacific coast. She sank 13 June 1917, three miles northwest of Point Conception, California, after colliding with Pacific Steamship Company's steamer *Governor*.



USRC *McCulloch*; painting, Coast Guard Academy Museum Art Collection.

Onward to a new century. . .the elegant lines of a turn of the century cutter made a fitting nautical subject for this painter. Here *McCulloch*, with her white hull and buff superstructure and stack, makes way under steam and full sail. In the first years of the twentieth century the masts and sails (with a few exceptions), coal-fired boilers, and iron hulls gave way to steel, oil and diesel fuels, and turbine propulsion, closely emulating the maritime technological advancement of the US Navy. Nevertheless, the cutters remained distinctive vessels, easily recognizable from their Navy counterparts due to their "form following function" designs as well as the colors adorning their hulls.



USRC *McCulloch*; "Coast Guard Cutter 'McCULLOCH.' Photo taken before she was reconditioned."; no date; photographer unknown.

Reserve Officers of the *McCulloch* during the Spanish American War:

William P. Elliot, *Lieutenant, U. S. Navy*

Daniel B. Hodgson, *Captain, Revenue Cutter Service*

Daniel P. Foley, *First Lieutenant, R.C.S.*

Walker, W. Joynes, *Second Lieutenant, R.C.S.*
Randolph Ridgely, Jr., *Third Lieutenant, R.C.S.*
William E. Atlee, *Third Lieutenant, R.C.S.*
John Mel, *Third Lieutenant, R.C.S.*
Joseph B. Greene, *Assistant Surgeon, Marine Hospital Service*
William C. Meyers, *First Assistant Engineer, R.C.S.*
William E. MacCoun, *First Assistant Engineer, R.C.S.*
Henry F. Schoenborn, *Second Assistant Engineer, R.C.S.*
George A. Loud, *Acting Paymaster*

Frank B. Randall, R.C.S., Chief Engineer of the Revenue Cutter *McCulloch*, died from the effects of heat and over-exertion when the fleet was coming in through the entrance to Manila Bay, while trying to stop the blaze from the smokestack of his vessel.

Crew of the McCulloch during the Spanish American War

Anderson, Charles, *Seaman*
Anderson, Johan, *Seaman*
Armstrong, Burt, *Second Class Boy*
Bailey, Thomas, *Ordinary Seaman*
Barnes, Frank A., *Second Class Boy*
Beaubrin, Jacob, *Coal Passer*
Benson, Henry, *Coal Passer*
Bryson, John, *Quartermaster*
Burke, John A., *Boatswain* .
Burns, James, *Fireman*
Burwell, Edward L., *Ordinary Seaman*
Carson, Gustav, *Master-At-Arms*
Charles, Bernard, *Ordinary Seaman*
Choy, Ah, *Fireman*
Christie, Henry, *Seaman*
Clark, Charles, *Coxswain*
Clindining, Frank, *Ordinary Seaman*
Craig, F.C., *Ordinary Seaman*
Dirwanger, T.A., *Ordinary Seaman*
Doner, John, *Ordinary Seaman*
Dunseath, William, *Fireman*
Fedoroff, August E., *Seaman*
Fong, Ah, *Fireman*
Forbis, Archie, *First Class Boy*
Hakansson, George .. *Coal Passer*
Hatch, Kimball *Fireman*
Hein, George *Coal Passer*
Hong, Ah, *Fireman* .
Humphrey, F., *Seaman*

Imai, Echi, *First Class Boy*
Johnson, Charlie, *Quartermaster*
Kemer, John A., *Ordinary Seaman*
King, Frank, *Ordinary Seaman*
Klump, David, *Machinist*
Kuhl, A., *Seaman*
Lawrence, John, *Coal Passer*
Long, C. H., *First Class Boy*
Low, Ah, *Coal Passer*
Malitani, Kameo, *First Class Boy* Miller, William E., *Ordinary Seaman*
Mcfarlane, James, *Ordinary Seaman*
Neithercote, H. A., *Bugler*
Ogata, Kuraki, *First Class Boy*
Olsen, Gustav E., *Fireman*
Olsen, Oscar J., *Fireman*
Owens, Paul G., *Ordinary Seaman*
Parovel, Joseph, *Seaman*
Pattison, Joseph, *Seaman*
Persson, Olaf, *Seaman*
Quirk, Patrick, *Ship's Cook*
Rice, Louis M., *Cabin Steward*
Richter, B. C., *Seaman*
Rossin, Peter, *Carpenter*
Sakee, Koudo, *Wardroom Steward*
Sing, Ah, *Machinist*
Sjobug, B. H., *Quartermaster*
Smith, Dennis A., *Ordinary Seaman*
Sutton, William, *Second Class Boy*
Svenson, John, *Coxswain*
Swanson, Olaf, *Coxswain*
Thompson, Harry, *Seaman*
Thompson, N. A., *Seaman*
Timmins, Bernard, *Oiler*
Tubbs, Burt, *Second Class Boy*
Tye, Ah, *Fireman*
Woolford, Nelson, *Gunner*
Yoshi, K., *First Class Boy*
Oshi, K., *First Class Boy*

The Honorable George A. Loud, was Acting Paymaster on board the U. S. Revenue Cutter *McCulloch*.

Press Correspondents

Mr. E. W. Harden, Special Correspondent for the New York *World*, was onboard of the *McCulloch*.

Mr. J. T. McCutcheon, R.F.G.S., Special Correspondent for the *Chicago Herald*, was onboard the *McCulloch*

Naval Battle of Manila Bay, May 1, 1898.

Official Report of the Commanding Officer: U.S. Revenue Steamer *McCulloch*

[Report of engagement at Manila Bay, May 1, 1898]

U. S. STEAMER *McCULLOCH*,
Manila Bay, May 3, 1898.

SIR: Regarding the part taken by this vessel in the naval action of Manila Bay at Cavite, on Sunday morning, May 1, 1898, between the American and Spanish forces, I have the honor to submit the following report:

Constituting the leading vessel of the reserve squadron the *McCulloch* was, when fire opened, advanced as closely as was advisable in rear of our engaged men of war, in fact, to a point where several shells struck close aboard and others passed overhead, and kept steaming slowly to and fro, ready to render any aid in her power, or respond at once to any signal from the *Olympia*. A 9-inch hawser was gotten up and run aft, should assistance be necessary in case any of our ships grounded. At a later hour during the day, just prior to the renewal of the attack by our squadron, I intercepted the British mail steamer *Esmeralda*, in compliance with a signal from the flagship, communicated to her commander your orders in regard to his movements, and then proceeded to resume my former position of the morning, near the fleet, where I remained until the surrender of the enemy. I desire to state in conclusion that I was ably seconded by the officers and crew of my command in every effort made to be in a state of readiness to carry out promptly any orders which might have been signaled from your flagship.

Respectfully, yours,

D. B. HODGSDON
Captain, R. C. S., Commanding

Commodore GEORGE DEWEY, U. S. N.,
Commanding U. S. Naval Force on Asiatic Station

Sources:

McCulloch File, USCG Historian's Office

Appendix to the Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, Annual Reports of the Navy Department for the Year 1898. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898.

Canney, Donald L. *U.S. Coast Guard and Revenue Cutters, 1790-1935.* Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1995, pp. 55-56.

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