

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

PH 0681342

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

AUG 9 1978

DATE ENTERED

APR 20 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Pottawatomie Lighthouse

AND/OR COMMON

Rock Island Lighthouse

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER NW

Northwest Corner of Rock Island

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Washington Island

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Eighth

STATE

Wisconsin 54246

X VICINITY OF

CODE

55

COUNTY

Door

CODE

029

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

\_\_DISTRICT

X PUBLIC

\_\_OCCUPIED

\_\_AGRICULTURE

\_\_MUSEUM

\_\_BUILDING(S)

\_\_PRIVATE

X UNOCCUPIED

\_\_COMMERCIAL

\_\_PARK

\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_BOTH

\_\_WORK IN PROGRESS

\_\_EDUCATIONAL

\_\_PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_RELIGIOUS

\_\_OBJECT

\_\_IN PROCESS

\_\_YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_SCIENTIFIC

\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

\_\_YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_INDUSTRIAL

X TRANSPORTATION

\_\_NO

\_\_MILITARY

X OTHER: navigation

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

U. S. Coast Guard

STREET & NUMBER

400 Seventh Street SW

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

VICINITY OF District of Columbia 20024

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Door County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

138 South 4th Street

CITY, TOWN

Sturgeon Bay

STATE

Wisconsin 54235

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1975

\_\_FEDERAL X STATE \_\_COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Pottawatomie Lighthouse is located at the northwest corner of Rock Island. It is a two-story coursed rubble building with a basement and a small frame addition at the southeast corner of the back wall of the main building. According to U. S. Coast Guard drawings the original building was constructed in 1839. It was rebuilt in 1858.

The outside dimensions for the main building are 33' x 31' with 17'6" x 10' for the frame addition. The exterior of the main building is grey limestone; the addition has vertical board and batten siding. Windows and doors have segmental stone arches.

Both roofs are covered with metal shingles on gable roofs, ridge running approximately North-South. The roof is straddled at the northern third by the square base for the light tower. The actual enclosure of the original light has been removed and an automated light is now located inside the original railing.

The building contains two apartments, one each at the first and second floor; the first floor apartment consists of kitchen, living room and one bedroom; and the second floor provides kitchen, living room and two bedrooms. The interior arrangement is original. Exterior doors lead to the first and basement floors near grade. The building is vacant and boarded up.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

|   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC          | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING     | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC    | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION           | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                    | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE            | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS              | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE           | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION              | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799            | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                    | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING            | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE               | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS         | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)           |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION              |   |  |

SPECIFIC DATES      1839, 1858

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The oldest lighthouse in the Ninth Coast Guard District, which includes the U. S. portions of all the Great Lakes, the Pottawatomie Lighthouse on Rock Island in Lake Michigan was constructed in 1839. It was built on the northwest point of the island because the most used channel of navigation before Chicago and Milwaukee had gained prominence lay north of Washington Island. It was the highest lighthouse on all the inland lakes, its lantern being 137 feet above sea level and visible for twenty miles.<sup>1</sup>

According to the "List of Light Houses and Lighted Beacons of the Coasts of Northern and Northwestern Lakes of the United States," compiled by the secretaries of the Lighthouse Board and dated January 1, 1866, the Pottawatomie Lighthouse was rebuilt in 1858, replacing an earlier light which washed away. The earlier lighthouse is supposed to have resembled the Bailey's Harbor Lighthouse built in 1852 and still standing.

The Pottawatomie Lighthouse is one of the three earliest lighthouses in Door County and marked the passage from Green Bay to Lake Michigan. The light is still in use but is now automated.

1. Holand, Old Peninsula Days, 238

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Adamson, Hans Christian, Keepers of the Lights (New York, 1955), 318, 319
- Conant Eaton Publications: Rock Island, 10
- Conant Eaton Publications: Washington Island, 3
- Holand, Hjalmar R., Old Peninsula Days (Ephraim, Wis., 1925), 238
- O'Brien, T. Michael, Guardians of the Eighth Sea: A History of the U. S. Coast Guard (Ninth Coast Guard District, 1976), 18

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.0

QUADRANGLE NAME Washington Island, Wis.-Mich.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:62500

UTM REFERENCES

|   |      |             |               |   |      |         |          |
|---|------|-------------|---------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 1 6  | 5 1 3 4 2 5 | 5 0 3 0 2 7 5 | B |      |         |          |
|   | ZONE | EASTING     | NORTHING      |   | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C |      |             |               | D |      |         |          |
| E |      |             |               | F |      |         |          |
| G |      |             |               | H |      |         |          |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION A plot of approximately two acres lying within the boundaries of U. S. Government reserve property which coincide with the Lake Michigan shoreline on the west and north, the south section lines of section 14 and 15, T34N, R30E, and the center section line of section 14 on the east.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|       |      |        |      |
|       |      |        |      |

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Horst W. Lobe

ORGANIZATION

DATE

July, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

610 North Walnut Street

TELEPHONE

(608) 263-3012

CITY OR TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE   X  

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Richard M. Hervey*

TITLE Director  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE March 5, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

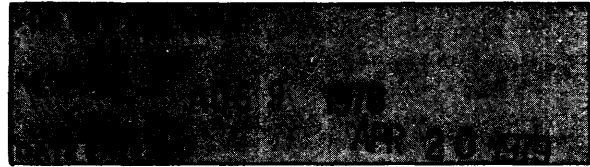
ATTEST: *Charles Johnson*  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
*Lucy B. Franklin*  
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 9.20.79

DATE 4.19.79

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**



Pottawatomie Lighthouse

**CONTINUATION SHEET**

ITEM NUMBER 11 PAGE 1

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Donald N. Anderson, Historian & Registrar, Historic Preservation Division

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

10 May 1978

816 State Street

608/262-0746

Madison

Wisconsin 53706