

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

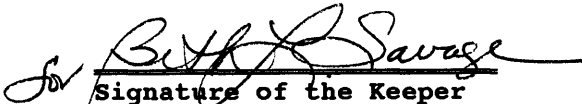
SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 89001475 Date Listed: 05/29/90

Southwest Ledge Lighthouse Middlesex CT
Property Name County State

Operating Lighthouses in Connecticut
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

05/29/90
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

8. Statement of Significance: Level of Significance

All properties included in the multiple property nomination Operating Lighthouses in Connecticut were considered to meet the criteria within a statewide context.

10. Geographical Data: Acreage

The acreage is <1.

This information has been confirmed with John Herzan, National Register Coordinator, CTSHPD, by telephone.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without attachment)

1475

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	AUG 24 1989
DATE ENTERED	

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Southwest Ledge Lighthouse
AND/OR COMMON
Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Southwest end of the east breakwater at the entrance
to New Haven Harbor

CITY, TOWN _____ STATE Connecticut
VICINITY OF New Haven
COUNTY New Haven
CODE _____ CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT _____

2 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS (if applicable)
U.S. Coast Guard Third District, Governors Island

STREET & NUMBER _____
CITY, TOWN New York STATE New York 10004
VICINITY OF _____

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC U.S. Coast Guard Third District, Governors Island

STREET & NUMBER _____
CITY, TOWN New York STATE New York 10004

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE see thematic form

DATE _____
_____ FEDERAL _____ STATE _____ COUNTY _____ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN _____ STATE _____

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Southwest Ledge Lighthouse (Light List #957), established on January 1, 1877, marks a hazardous underwater rock formation on the east side of the main channel into New Haven Harbor. Presently painted white, the eight-sided lighthouse is a one story cast-iron dwelling richly detailed in the Second Empire style with a lantern capping its two-story mansard roof. The foundation, a cast-iron cylinder, is surrounded by riprap, which extends as a breakwater toward the northeast. The breakwater was constructed after the lighthouse was established. The only other structure on the site is a concrete footing for a crane, once used as a landing aid.

The superstructure is built atop a cylinder made of curved iron plates, bolted together through flanges cast into the periphery of the inner surface of each plate. The cylinder rises from a poured concrete base situated within a protective ring of riprap eleven feet below the water. Its interior is filled with stones and concrete, except for a cavity at the top center which houses a square, brick-walled cellar space and a brick vaulted cistern. By 1911 joints in the foundation had opened, and bands and straps were applied at three levels to mitigate the problem.

A projecting square cast-iron platform rests atop the cylinder, providing a gallery around the base of the superstructure. A system of immense cast-iron brackets supports the outer edges of the gallery. At the corners the brackets join, strengthening the transition from foundation to gallery. Edging the gallery are remnants of the original, flat cast-iron, double railing, supported by cylindrical iron stanchions with spherical finials and slender cylindrical intermediate vertical braces.

In plan, the superstructure is a square with beveled corners. It contains three stories, one at main deck level and two beneath the mansard roof. On the roof rests the octagonal lantern surrounded by a gallery with railing and capped with an ogee octagonal roof.

A double-leafed entrance door is located on the west facade. Above the replacement sheet metal doors, a glass transom is flanked by cast-iron consoles which support a molded, flat doorhood with a recessed panel and an axial, round-arched detail. Below the consoles, flanking pilasters rest on plain plinths. Centered on each of the remaining seven sides of the first story is a cast-iron window surround. The shallow pitched

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Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

CONTINUATION SHEET

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peak of its projecting lintel contains a recessed panel, while the lesser projection of the plain jambs ends below projecting sills in a pointed detail. All window openings on the first story are flat-topped. Those on the four principal sides contain six-over-six wood sash, while all others contain four-over-four sash. Each corner of the first story is finished with a cast-iron pilaster with recessed panelling and a molded cap. The pilasters visually support a full entablature which encircles the lighthouse. The entablature consists of a stepped and molded architrave, bracketed frieze, and molded cornice. The brackets, ornamented with rosettes on their projecting faces, continue the recessed panel motif utilized in pilasters and door hood.

The cast-iron mansard roof, detailed to resemble standing seam roof construction, features a gabled dormer centered on each of the four main elevations at the second story level and a bullseye window directly above to light the third story. Detailing on the dormer windows includes a round-arched window opening within a surround featuring a keystone, incised detail, rosettes, a peaked, molded cornice, and footscrolls above projecting sills. The bullseye window surrounds on the third or watchroom level consist of a molded upper half with keystone detail, eared corners, and three drops with rosettes below. A compound molding at the top of the mansard undergirds a cast-iron gallery. The gallery is edged with a double railing of flat section on round stanchions. Although its spherical knobs are now missing, the railing appears original.

The sides of the octagonal lantern are divided in half horizontally. Each of the upper sections contains a pane of glass measuring 39 inches by 34 inches, while each of the lower sections contains a cast-iron panel. At the bottom of each glass pane on the interior is a metal strip containing the original condensation channels. Four of the lantern panels contain round ventilators. The northeast panel is pierced by a set of doors which lead to the lantern gallery. The outer door is metal, while the inner door is wood, matching the beaded board paneling of the lantern interior. The high domed ceiling of the lantern is formed of thick sheet metal. The center hole to the ventilator is covered over. Over each glass pane is a pair of attachments, most likely intended for shutters or curtain rods. The floor of the lantern is composed of four quadrants of cast-iron. One of the quadrants

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Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

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ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

contains a hatch with a single-leaf cover providing access to the watchroom below.

On the interior of the tower, the brick walls of the basement support the iron sills of the superstructure, which are marked "Phoenix Iron Co., Philadelphia." Upper floors are built of wood, supported on wood joists. Straight flights of stairs on the west side of the tower are lighted by west-facing windows on each level. The remaining space is divided into two rooms per story. However, the second story partition is presently removed. Closet space was created adjacent to the staircase or within the rooms. Walls and ceiling are covered with beaded board, tongue and groove paneling, while the interior window jambs, lintels, and projecting sills are cast as part of the iron shell of the structure.

The focal plane of the lighting apparatus is sixty-eight feet, eight inches above high water. At present the lighting equipment within the lantern is automated and electric, housed in a circular-plan lens with diagonal astragals mounted on a pedestal. The fog signal, manufactured by the Pennwalt Corporation, occupies the southwest corner of the first story gallery.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Southwest Ledge Lighthouse
New Haven, CT

Section number 7 Page Amendment

Description (continued):

In 1989, Southwest Ledge Lighthouse was re-photographed and examined in the field in order to bring the National Register documentation fully up to date. Following are the features or characteristics of the lighthouse that differ from its condition and appearance as described in the National Register Inventory/Nomination form prepared in 1985.

The west-facing entry now has a single-leaf, insulated steel door, and the transom is filled with plywood covered by sheet metal.

All window openings are blocked with plywood; most of the sash remains in place behind the plywood, though the glass has been removed. First-floor openings are fitted with large sheet-metal ventilators.

A fuel tank stands on the north side of the main gallery.

The roof of the lantern has been fitted with a solar panel.

Southwest Ledge Lighthouse still retains the requisite degree of integrity for National Register eligibility.

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 checked="" 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 built 1876-1877 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Major George H. Elliot, Engineer-
Secretary for the Lighthouse Board

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Southwest Ledge Lighthouse, established in 1877, is highly significant among Connecticut lighthouses. The superstructure constructed for this site was installed on the grounds of the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876; a lighthouse keeper lived within and tended the lamp which was exhibited nightly from July 4, 1876, until the close of the Exhibition. The pre-fabricated, cast-iron tube foundation "for an iron lighthouse for a marine site on the tubular plan," installed at Southwest Ledge in 1876, appears to be the earliest example of this type of construction remaining in the Third District, if not in the nation. Designed by Major George H. Elliot, Engineer-Secretary for the Lighthouse Board in the early 1870s, the tube foundation was meant for northern underwater sites, where screw-pile lighthouses were menaced by floating ice. This design is considered of great importance in the development of lighthouse engineering. The superstructure of the lighthouse represents a transition; its Second Empire detailing carries on the feeling of the combined dwelling and lighthouse of the 1860s and 1870s, which emphasized the domestic aspect of the structure and reflected the national preference for revival styles. Yet in the utilization of cast-iron as a building material, pre-fabricated and bolted together on the site, the Southwest Ledge Lighthouse ushered in the succeeding period in which conical cast-iron towers gave little outward indication of their use as dwellings. The prototype for the pre-fabricated conical towers seems to have been the Hunting Island, South Carolina, lighthouse. This was a much taller structure, established in 1873, designed for easy disassembly and reconstruction in a new location when erosion threatened the original site. Southwest Ledge is significant as well as a component of the post-Civil War program of improvements to New Haven Harbor.

The harbor improvements undertaken at New Haven after the Civil War included a recommendation from V.C. Houston in 1868 that Southwest Ledge, which impinged on the shipping channel, be blasted rather than marked with a lighthouse. However, after the funding was appropriated suggesting a new type of foundation and tubular pier to support a lighthouse on Southwest Ledge.

At the Southwest Ledge site, as at Stratford Shoal, this new procedure involved forming a ring of riprap, within which cement was poured to level the rock of the ledge. But at Southwest Ledge, Woodruff planned the use of a tubular pier made of curved plates of cast-iron, flanged

See Continuation Sheet

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA see location map

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____
UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING	D	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

see site plan

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Dorothy B. Templeton/Historian

ORGANIZATION

John Milner Associates, Inc.

DATE

October 22, 1985

STREET & NUMBER

309 North Matlack Street

TELEPHONE

(215) 436-9000

CITY OR TOWN

West Chester

STATE

PA 19380

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

[Signature]
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ___ National ___ State ___ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

[Signature]
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 5-29-90

ATTEST:

DATE

[Signature]
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

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toward the interior of the curve for connection with iron bolts and connected into courses or rings which could be bolted together, one atop the other, to form a cylinder. A diving-bell could be used to guide the setting of the lowest horizontal ring of cast-iron tube foundation into position. Filled with rocks and cement, the pier would form a stable base for the superstructure. The superstructure also was to be built of cast-iron plates, bolted together in the form of a Second Empire style house with a steeply pitched mansard roof. Atop the roof would be the lantern.

Ramsey and Carter of Baltimore were granted the contract for the metal work in June 1875. In 1876, they arranged to ship the lighthouse intended for Southwest Ledge to the grounds of the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition for display. In June of that year it was agreed that the identical lighthouse superstructure being manufactured for Ship John Shoal, Delaware, be shipped to New Haven when completed, so that work could proceed at Southwest Ledge. The lighthouse on display in Philadelphia would be shipped to Delaware at the close of the Exhibition.

After completion of Southwest Ledge Lighthouse, the program of harbor improvements continued with both the dredging of channels and the construction of riprap breakwaters. Southwest Ledge Lighthouse became the southwestern terminus of one such breakwater. In 1911, the tubular foundation was reinforced with straps and buckles. During the depression, more than \$13,000.00 was appropriated by Congress for work on Southwest Ledge Lighthouse; riprap was added surrounding the lighthouse, and two boat cranes on concrete pads were installed. Evidence of the cranes remains to the north and south of the lighthouse, on top of the riprap.

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PAGE

1

Barnard, J. G., "Lighthouse Engineering as Displayed at the Centennial Exhibition," American Society of Civil Engineers Transactions, Vol. 8 (March 1879) pp. 55-94.

Civil Engineering Drawings, microfilm, U.S. Coast Guard Academy Library, Reels 5A and 6.

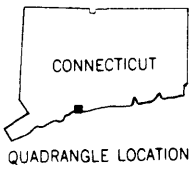
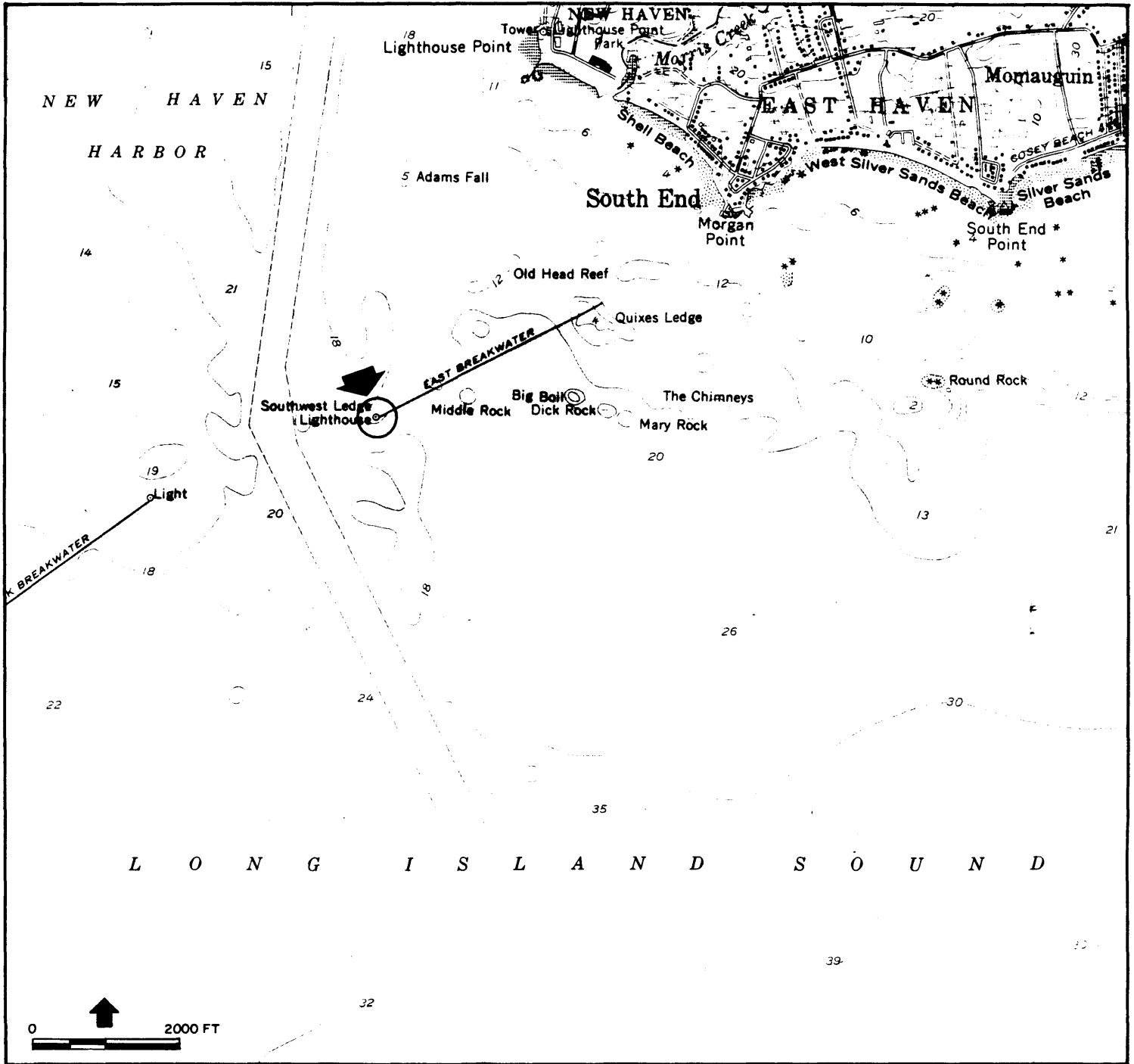
Mystic Seaport Photo Collection, Mystic, Connecticut.

New Haven Historical Society, photo collection, New Haven, Connecticut.

Osterweis, Rollin, Three Centuries of New Haven (New Haven: New Haven Colony Historical Society, 1952).

Plans, Elevations, and Sections, 1874-1875, National Archives, Cartographic and Architectural Branch, 3-22-S, 4-6, 7-17, and 24.

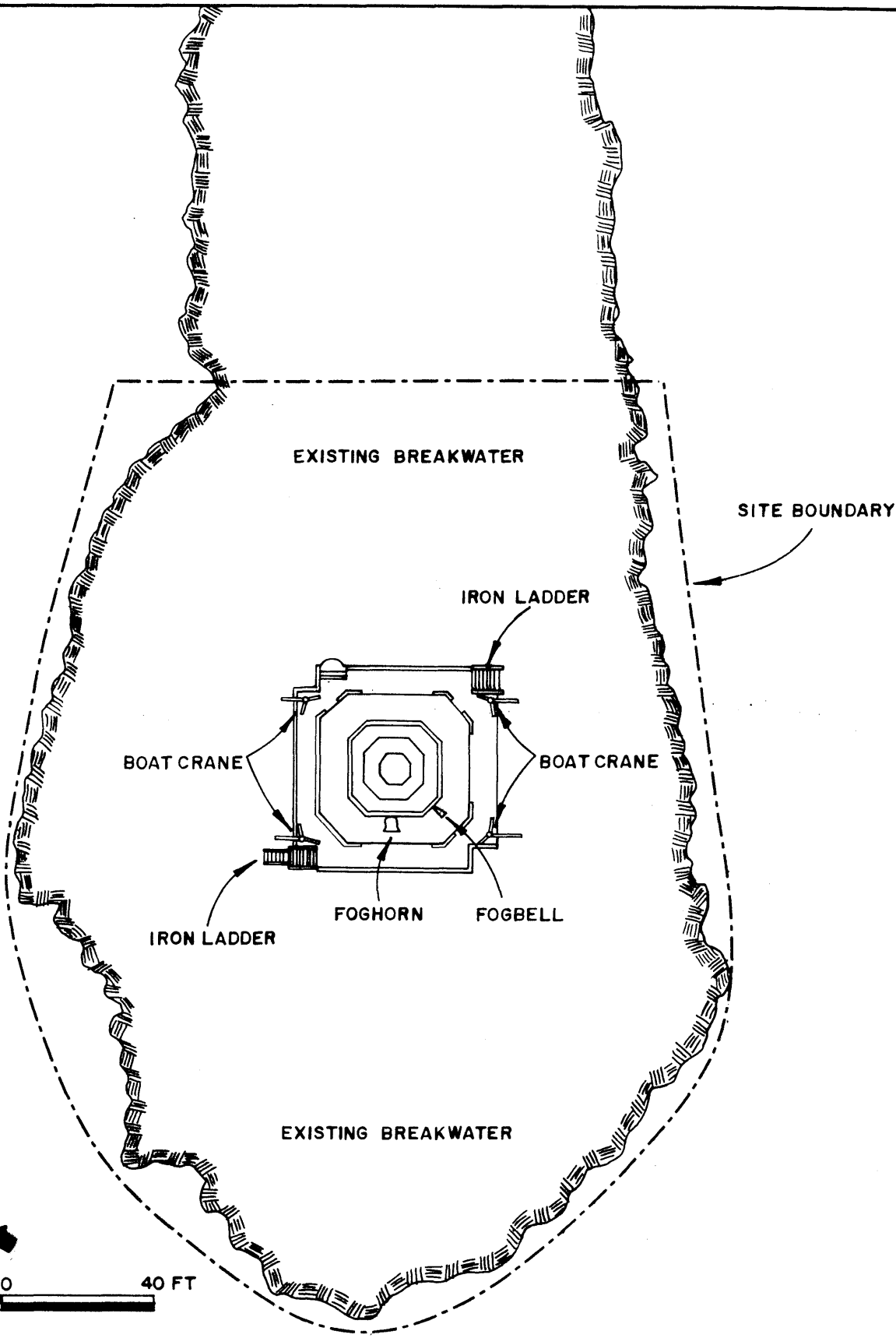
U.S. Lighthouse Board, Annual Report of the Lighthouse Board, 1872, 1874-1881, 1883-1884, 1887-1889, 1892, 1894-1899, 1902 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office).



SOUTHWEST LEDGE LIGHTHOUSE
New Haven County, Connecticut

Woodmont, Connecticut Quadrangle, 1960
1:24000

UTM References:
18.674020.4566300



EXISTING BREAKWATER

SITE BOUNDARY

IRON LADDER

BOAT CRANE

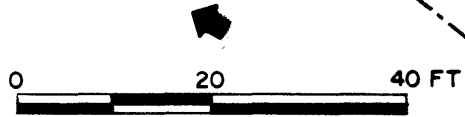
BOAT CRANE

IRON LADDER

FOGHORN

FOG BELL

EXISTING BREAKWATER



SITE PLAN

SOUTHWEST LEDGE LIGHTHOUSE
New Haven County, Connecticut

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
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Southwest Ledge Lighthouse
New Haven, CT

Section number _____ Photographs _____ Page _____ Amendment _____

All photographs:

1. SOUTHWEST LEDGE LIGHTHOUSE
2. New Haven, CT
3. Photo Credit: HRC, Hartford, CT
4. April 1989
5. Negative filed with Connecticut Historical Commission,
Hartford, CT

North and west elevations, camera facing southeast
Photograph 1 of 7

Top of caisson and brackets for main gallery, camera facing north
Photograph 2 of 7

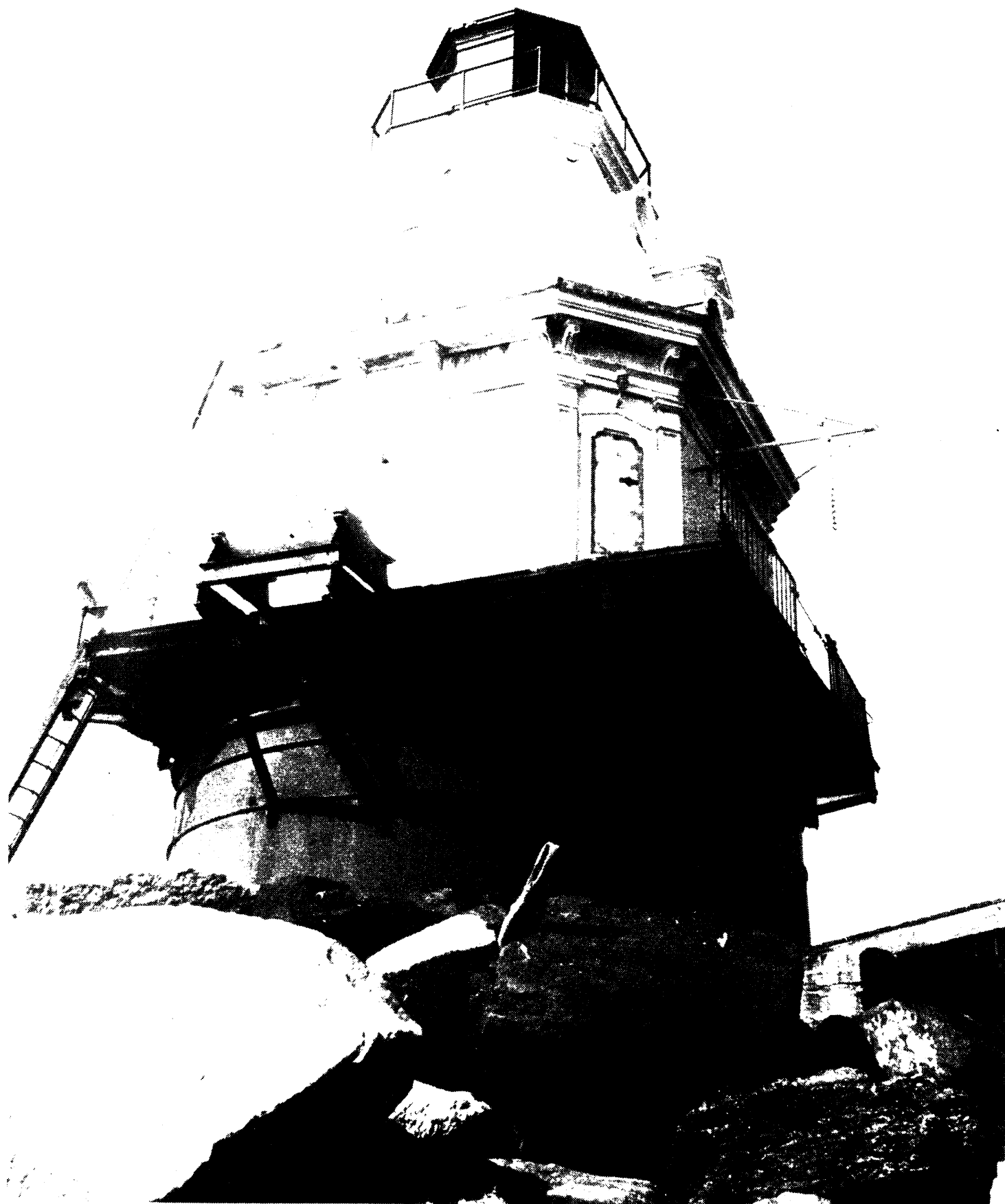
Entry treatment, camera facing south
Photograph 3 of 7

Typical exterior window treatment, camera facing southwest
Photograph 4 of 7

Cornice treatment, camera facing south
Photograph 5 of 7

Interior, second floor, showing beaded-board paneling and
retained sash
Photograph 6 of 7

Interior, third floor, showing wide-board paneling and porthole
window
Photograph 7 of 7



NAME OF PROPERTY: Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

COUNTY WHERE LOCATED: New Haven County, CT

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 1985

NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER: John Milner Associates, Inc.

LOCATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH NEGATIVE: John Milner Associates, Inc.
309 N. Matlack St., West Chester, PA

DESCRIPTION OF THE VIEW: View from northeast.

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER: 1



NAME OF PROPERTY: Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

COUNTY WHERE LOCATED: New Haven County, CT

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 1985

NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER: John Milner Associates, Inc.

LOCATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH NEGATIVE: John Milner Associates, Inc.
309 N. Matlack St., West Chester, PA

DESCRIPTION OF THE VIEW: Window, pilaster and cornice detail, north
elevation. Note breakwater.

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER: 2



NAME OF PROPERTY: Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

COUNTY WHERE LOCATED: New Haven County, CT

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 1985

NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER: John Milner Associates, Inc.

LOCATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH NEGATIVE: John Milner Associates, Inc.
309 N. Matlack St., West Chester, PA

DESCRIPTION OF THE VIEW: Staircase connecting first and second stories.

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER: 3



NAME OF PROPERTY: Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

COUNTY WHERE LOCATED: New Haven County, CT

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 1985

NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER: John Milner Associates, Inc.

LOCATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH NEGATIVE: John Milner Associates, Inc.
309 N. Matlack St., West Chester, PA

DESCRIPTION OF THE VIEW: Interior doorway.

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER: 4



NAME OF PROPERTY: Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

COUNTY WHERE LOCATED: New Haven County, CT

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 1985

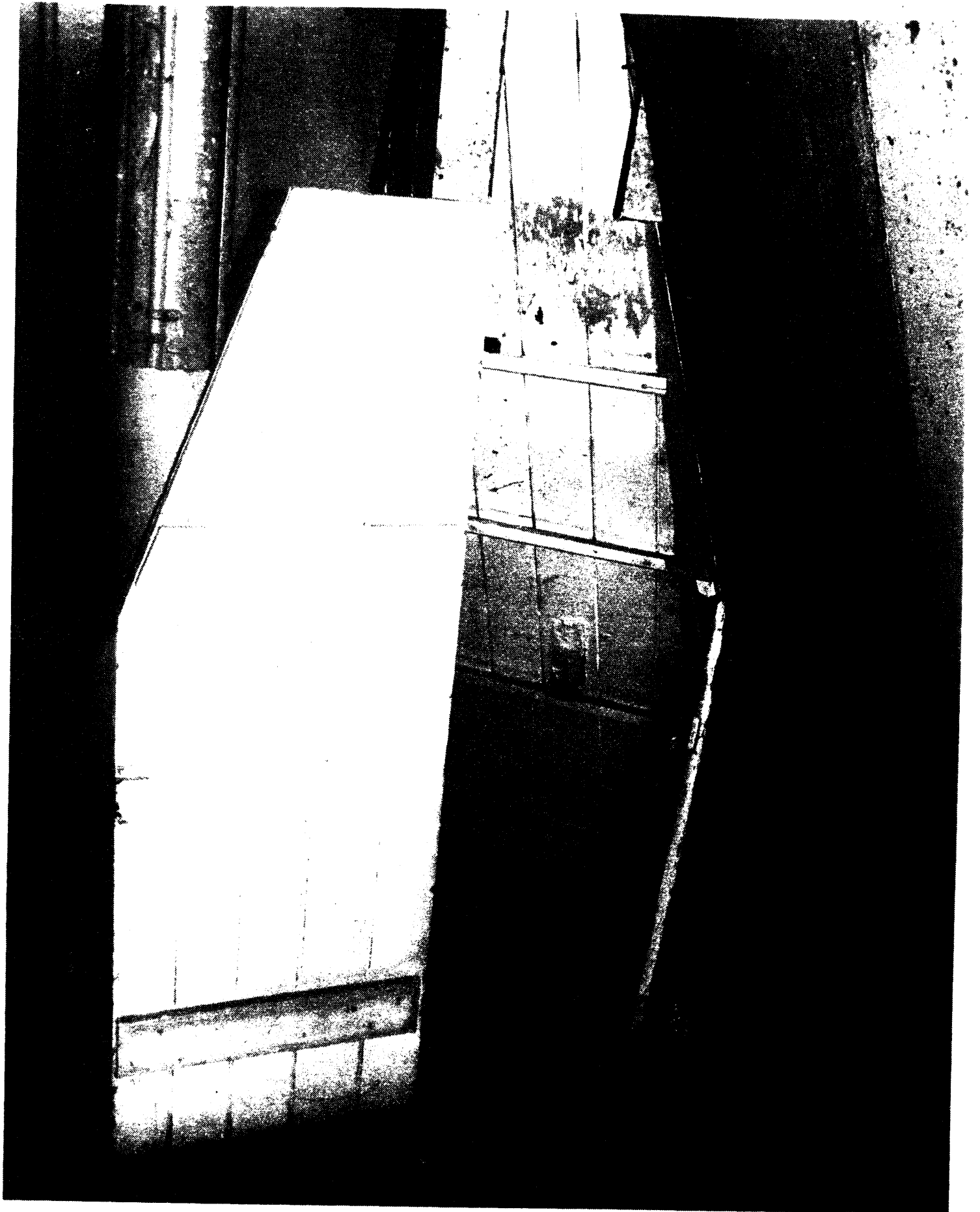
NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER: John Milner Associates, Inc.

LOCATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH NEGATIVE: John Milner Associates, Inc.

309 N. Matlack St., West Chester, PA

DESCRIPTION OF THE VIEW: Interior of dormer window. Note horizontal wooden wall sheathing.

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER: 5



NAME OF PROPERTY: Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

COUNTY WHERE LOCATED: New Haven County, CT

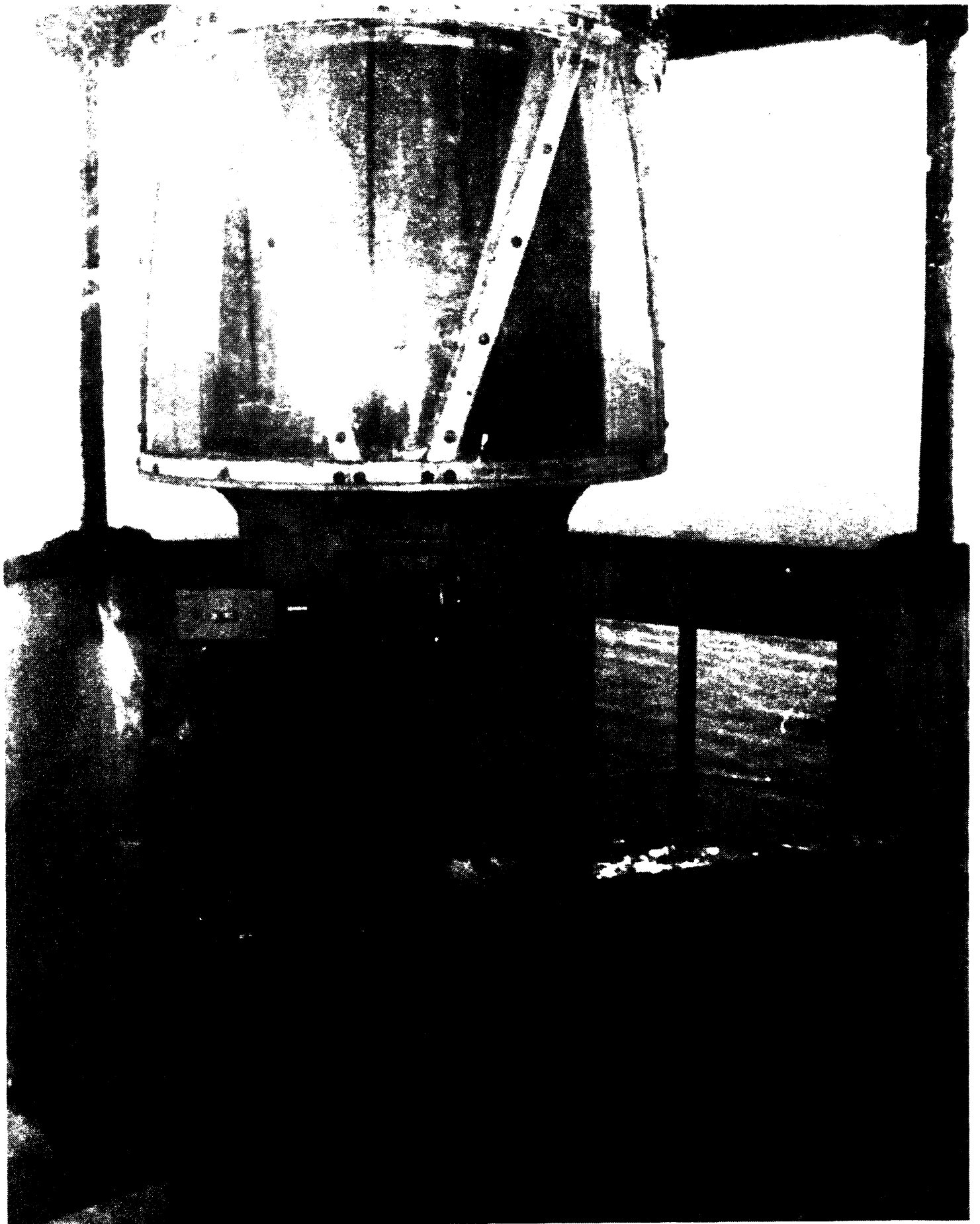
DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 1985

NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER: John Milner Associates, Inc.

LOCATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH NEGATIVE: John Milner Associates, Inc.
309 N. Matlack St., West Chester, PA

DESCRIPTION OF THE VIEW: Closet, watchroom level.

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER: 6



NAME OF PROPERTY: Southwest Ledge Lighthouse

COUNTY WHERE LOCATED: New Haven County, CT

DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 1985

NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER: John Milner Associates, Inc.

LOCATION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH NEGATIVE: John Milner Associates, Inc.
309 N. Matlack St., West Chester, PA

DESCRIPTION OF THE VIEW: Interior of lantern,
view from the southwest.

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER: 7