

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

LIGHTHOUSE INFORMATION FORM

NUMBER 37

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

Leslie Fox - MHC - 7/1981

1) Brick Tower, entry and granite
piers of former walkway

2) Keeper's house

HISTORIC NAME: Straightsmouth Island Light

TOWN: Rockport

LOCATION: In Harbor SE of entrance

COUNTY: Essex CODE: 009

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: sixth

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Essex County Courthouse

Book 279, p. 68 (1834-Original deed)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The nomination includes the lighthouse
complex on Straightsmouth Island

LAT./LONG.: 42°39'43"N 70°35'19"W

UTM COORDINATE: 19/370/000/4723/900

USGS QUADRANGLE: BOSTON, MA; NH; CT; RI; ME

SCALE: 1:250,000

ACREAGE: 1.8 acres

OWNER(S): First Coast Guard District (light)

Remainder: Mass. Audubon Society

S. Great Road, Lincoln, MA 01773

STATUS: _____

Unmanned/Active

RECORDED BY: N. Salzman

ORGANIZATION: MHC

DATE: July 9, 1981

SKETCH MAP



Straightsmouth Island Light, Rockport

SITE DESCRIPTION: Straightsmouth is an island located southeast of the entrance to Rockport Harbor. The east end of the island consists of flat meadow with shrub, wildflowers, and poison ivy, strewn with rocks and jetsam. The shoreline is made up of granite boulders and fissured ledge which is heavily populated by nesting seagulls. Below the high tide line, the rock is covered with slippery seaweed.

MAJOR ELEMENTS DESCRIPTION: The site includes a lighthouse (1835) with entry, pilings for a granite walkway, a Keeper's House (1835), oil house (1835), and two outbuildings (18 ?).

EXTERIOR: A white cylindrical tower 37" high with a standard octagonal cast iron lens room and attached gabled entry house. A base of five visible strings of granite blocks 8' high supports the brick tower and entry. Access to the entry is up a six rung iron ladder. The door is modern and a window on the left side is closed up. The roof is surmounted by a ball vent and lightning rod.

INTERIOR: The interior is brick with traces of whitewash remaining.

Lamp Room: A single window with granite sill and lintel directly above the entry house in the Lamp Room has been bricked up. An iron ladder leads from below up through a trap door opening into the lens room.

Lens Room: Standard octagonal cast iron structure. The lower portion is cast iron with a scuttle hatch door opening to the balcony.

Balcony: Railing is composed of three horizontal rails with vertical 30" balusters between the bottom and middle ones.

Walkway: An almost intact series of granite posts which supported a covered walkway leads from the house to the light.

Light Characteristics:

Automated 12VDC flasher, 12c6P1, plastic lens

Oil House: Standard gable roofed, brick structure. Small louvre in gable for ventilation.

Keeper's Dwelling: Outstanding example with intact 1 1/2 story wood frame, cross gabled plan. Red with white trim. All windows retain their Gothic hoods.

Side Facade: Facing light - contain series of triple windows: L1 (Level 1) same height, L2 sidelights lower. At the corner junction with the main body of the house is a one story porch, 1 bay by 2 bays; its decorative elements are intact and elaborate; junction of post and cornice contains spandrels formed of an open circle flanked by concave scrolls. Porch posts have pierced quatrefoils, framed by right angled chamfered posts and flanked by elaborate scroll patterns of a different pattern than those at the roof of the porch. At L2 is a small wall dormer with 2/2 window; gables throughout exterior are ornamented with original and elaborate designs.

This facade is balanced by a one bay porch on the right and on the left by a projecting one story rear ell.

Rear Facade: similar treatment. 1 bay X 1 bay rear porch has elaborate ornamentation. A single window at L1 has a Gothic tab hood. The L2 gable is flush with the wall area contains a single window. Other elevations contain one window on each floor. Chimney is located at intersection of gables.

INTERIOR: Not accessible, windows boarded.

OUTBUILDINGS

- 1) small brick gable structure attached to side of house alongside the small rear porch.
- 2) small frame gable structure with window, rear chimney, asphalt shingle roof. Simple cross piece with board acting as kingpost (as on Keeper's Dwelling).

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY:

- 11/28/1834 - Aaron and Solomon Poole sold land to federal government for \$600.
- 1835 - brick tower erected.
- 1835 - standard Gothic Revival L-shaped keeper's house built, 1 1/2 stories with Italianate trim.
- 1835 - oil house built, stone with slate roof (10' X 12")
- 18?? - storage house (attached to house)
- 18?? - frame shed behind house built.
- 6/7/1941 - Glenn Wilson purchases all but Lighthouse, \$3050.
- 19?? - island acquired by Massachusetts Audubon Society as a sanctuary; Coast Guard retains tower.
- 1982 - light tower painted; new windows and door installed.
- 1985 - light converted to solar power.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

Straightsmouth Island Light possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship as well as associations with the development of aids to navigation in Massachusetts. Dating from the 1830s, it provides an early example of a lighthouse complex preserving many unique elements such as the Gothic Revival trim of the Keeper's house and the granite piers which supported the original walkway. Although the outbuildings are in poor condition, the complex meets criteria A and C of the NRHP on the state level as well as survey criteria 1a, 1e, 2c.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received MAY 4 1987
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 2 of 4

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Lighthouses of Massachusetts TR
State MASSACHUSETTS

Nomination/Type of Review

1. Minot's Ledge Light

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Date/Signature

Delores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

2. Nauset Beach Light

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

3. Ned Point Light

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

4. Newburyport Harbor Light

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

5. Newburyport Harbor Front Range Light

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

6. Nobska Point Light Station

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

7. Race Point Light Station

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

8. Sankaty Head Light

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

9. Scituate Light

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

10. Straightsmouth Island Light

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Delores Byers 6/15/87

Attest

87001487

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Straightsmouth Island Light (Lighthouses of
Massachusetts TR)
Essex County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 4628/82
Fed. Reg. Date: 2/2/88
Date Due: 6/18/87
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 6-15-87
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Federal Agency: USCG

- ☒ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Entered in 1988
National Register

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
----------	---------------------------------	----------------------	-------------

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ☐ excellent | ☐ deteriorated |
| ☐ good | ☐ ruins |
| ☐ fair | ☐ unexposed |

Check one

- ☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

- ☐ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title

date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

Straitsmouth

STRAIGHTSMOUTH ISLAND LIGHT
ROCKPORT, MA #38

PHOTO #1 OF 2



by Berkey

JULY 1981



by Berkey



LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

JULY 1981



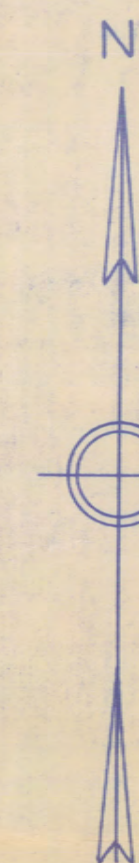
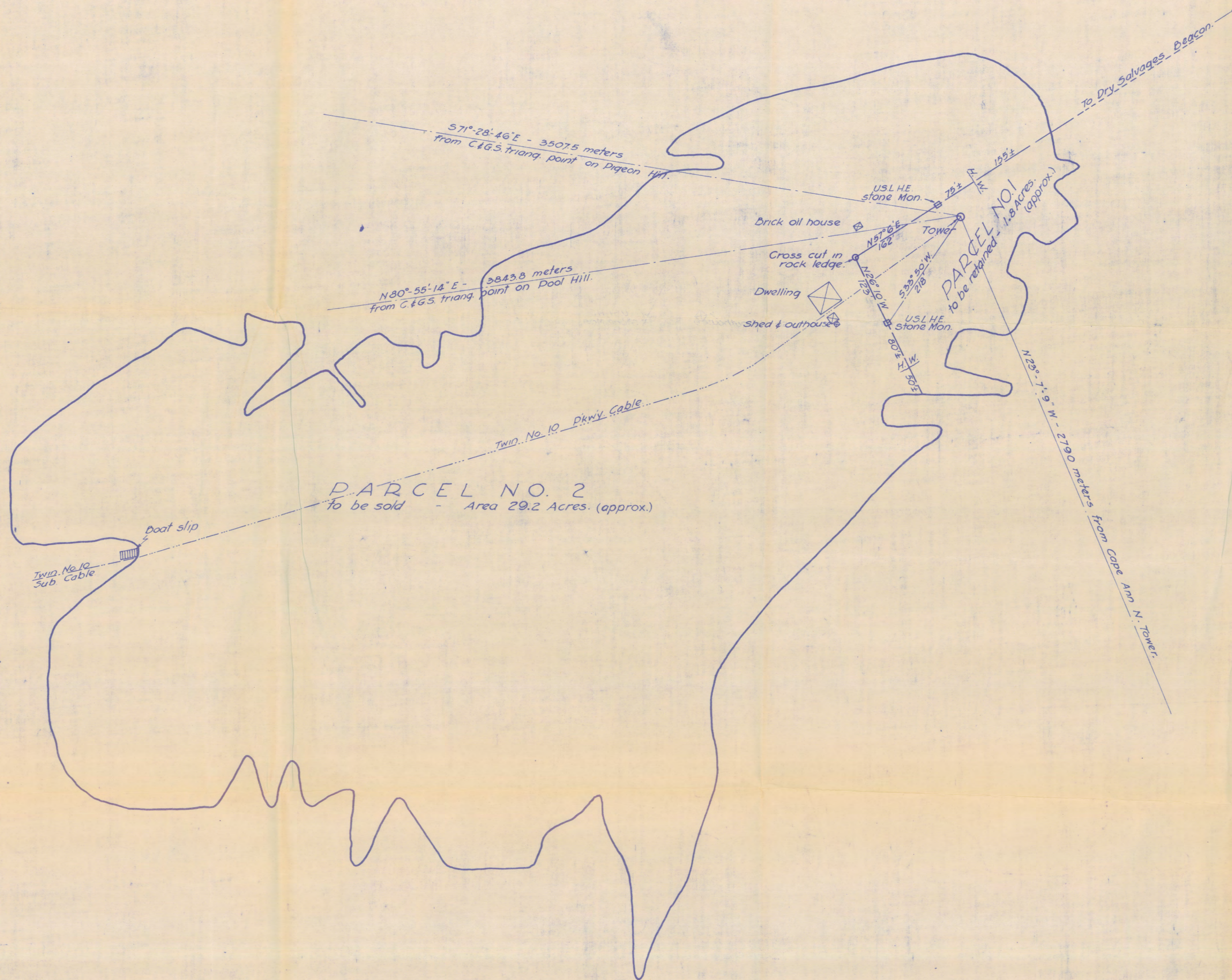
by Bethany

JULY 1981

Straitsmouth

STRAIGHTSMOUTH ISLAND LIGHT
ROCKPORT, MA #38

PHOTO #2 OF 2



NOTE: Outline of Island taken from USC&GS chart 243. Bearings & distances of tower from reference points on Pigeon Hill, Pool Hill & Cape Ann N. are from USC&GS data. All bearings are true.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF LIGHTHOUSES
SECOND DISTRICT CHELSEA, MASS.

STRAITSMOUTH LIGHT STATION.
SURVEY OF PROPERTY TO BE RETAINED.

SCALE: 1"=100 FT.
Legg
ASSOC. L.H. ENGR

APPROVED: 4-15-37
J. E. Eaton
SUPERINTENDENT

DRAWN:
TRACED: ESH
CHECKED: beg

NO. 2314

**LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION**

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000282