



Baker Island Light Station

Acadia National Park, Maine



Historic Structure Report

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By

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I. INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Abstract

This Historic Structure Report documents the history and development of the Baker Island Light Station, describes its existing physical appearance, identifies historic character-defining features, and makes general recommendations for treatment. The U.S. Department of Treasury constructed the first light station on Baker Island (then known as “Baker’s” island) in 1828. A newly appointed Light-House Board described these stone structures in 1853 as “entirely worthless” and “old and leaky,” finally replacing them in 1855 with a brick light tower and wood-framed keeper’s dwelling. Other buildings were a boat house, barn, and privy. A brick oil house was added in 1895, a signal station in 1898, a fuel house in 1905, and a watch tower and wood-framed garage around 1942.

The U.S. Coast Guard transferred the 10-acre light station to the National Park Service in 1958, not including the light tower. A work room connecting the light tower with the keeper’s dwelling had been demolished by 1965, and a chain-link fence installed around the tower. Only four structures remained by the mid-1970s: the now detached light tower and keeper’s dwelling, oil house, and garage. These were recorded in photographs and drawings by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1976. The National Register of Historic Places listed the light station as part of a thematic nomination in 1987, and individually in 1988 with a

defined period of significance of 1855 to 1939. The National Park Service acquired the light tower in 2011, although the U.S. Coast Guard continues to maintain the light as an active aid to navigation. The National Park Service is now considering a lease of these historic buildings, which have sat mostly vacant since the mid-1950s.

Scope of Work

The project to prepare a Historic Structure Report for the Baker Island Light Station is described in PMIS #17698 as follows:

A historic structure report (HSR) would be completed for the National Register of Historic Places-listed Baker Island light saving station. The largely intact ca. 1855-1910 complex includes the keeper’s house, lighthouse, fuel house [sic: garage], and oil house/barn. Since 2008, two non-profit organizations have expressed informal interest in exploring a historic lease and the park requires an HSR in order to have baseline treatment information to meet the requirements of both a historic lease and compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. An architectural historian/conservator would be contracted to complete the HSR according to NPS-28 guidelines (Chapter 8).

The potential for a historic lease partnership to restore and offer public access to the light station would greatly enhance visitor enjoyment and would provide for long-term care of the structures, which require rehabilitation and maintenance.

The “Scope of Work and Project Agreement” dated April 30, 2012, agreed to produce a Part-I Historic Structure

Report, to include the following sections: Historical Background, Documentation of Existing Conditions, Identification of Character-Defining Features, and General Recommendations. The level of research was to be “limited,” defined in NPS-28 as consulting information available in published sources and readily accessible primary sources.

Research Methodology

Documentary and physical investigations of the Baker Island Light Station were carried out in 2012. Various interruptions carried the project into the following year, with this Historic Structure Report finally completed in 2013.

Site Visits

Architectural Conservator Barbara Yocum made two site visits to Acadia National Park to conduct archival and physical research for the Baker Island Light Station Historic Structure Report. The first visit was the week of June 11, 2012, and the second visit the week of August 6, 2012. Rebecca Cole-Will, the park’s Cultural Resources Program Manager, provided invaluable assistance both in the archives and on the island. Eric Breitzkreutz, Chief of the NPS Historic Research and Documentation Branch, and Lance Kasparian, NPS Historical Architect, shared their expertise during the second visit in August.

Documentary Research

The archives of Acadia National Park contain much accumulated information on the cultural resources of the park such as Baker Island Light Station. Information on the light station includes correspondence dating to the 1950s, maps, architectural drawings, historic and contemporary drawings, research notes and copies of materials in the National Archives, and books on the lighthouses of Maine. Most challenging was the lack of complete citations for excerpted information, requiring additional sleuthing to verify sources.

Digitized materials available on the world-wide web were also reviewed, such as the annual reports of the Light House Board, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary of Commerce. See the Bibliography for a complete listing of sources.

Architectural Investigation

The four remaining buildings of the Baker Island Light Station were examined for this Historic Structure Report: the 1855 light tower, 1855 keeper’s dwelling, 1895 oil house, and the circa-1942 garage (also mistakenly known as the 1905 fuel house). The physical investigation of the unoccupied structures was accomplished in four short days in June and August 2012 due to limited site accessibility. Existing conditions were recorded using written descriptions and digital photographs, which are included in this report.

Background Information

The Name “Baker Island”

Baker Island was known as “Baker’s” Island from as early as 1765 through 1887, according to early maps and historical documents. The “s” had been dropped and the island renamed “Baker” by 1891. In this report, the historically appropriate name “Baker’s” will be used when quoting original sources; otherwise “Baker” will be employed.

Lighthouse Administration

The United States government assumed responsibility for the building, staffing, and upkeep of maritime aids to navigation beginning in 1789. An understanding of this administrative structure was essential to locating the early records of the Baker Island Light Station. Annual reports of the lighthouse agency were sometimes published separately or incorporated into the annual reports of the U.S. Treasury Department or the U.S. Department of Commerce.¹

U.S. Light-House Service: 1789-1852

Congress authorized the creation of the U.S. Light-House Service within the U.S. Department of Treasury by Act of August 7, 1789. The Atlantic Coast was divided into six districts in 1838, with the State of Maine located in District 1.

U.S. Light-House Board: 1852-1910

The U.S. Light-House Board replaced the U.S. Light-House Service by Act of Congress on June 7, 1852. It was transferred from the U.S. Treasury Department to the U.S. Department of Commerce on July 1, 1903.

U.S. Bureau of Lighthouses: 1910-1939

Congress replaced the Lighthouse Board with the Lighthouse Bureau by Act of July 1, 1910. The bureau remained under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Commerce, where a fire destroyed some of the lighthouse records in 1921.

U.S. Coast Guard: 1939-Present

President Franklin D. Roosevelt transferred the functions of the Lighthouse Bureau to the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Department of the Treasury, on June 7, 1939. The U.S. Coast Guard was later moved to the newly formed U.S. Department of Transportation in 1967, and thereafter to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in 2002.

¹ Information for this section was obtained from the following sources: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, *The United States Lighthouse Service, 1915* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office (GPO), 1916), 14; *Chronology of Aids to Navigation and the Old Lighthouse Service, 1716-1939* (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Division, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), 1974), 22, 29 and 39; and Ross Holland, *America’s Lighthouses: Their Illustrated History Since 1716* (Brattleboro: The Stephen Greene Press, 1972), 37, 38 and 225.

Lighthouse Number

Numbers assigned to lighthouses were cited in both annual reports and published lists of aids to navigation that were available to mariners as early as 1838. These numbers were not permanent but changed over the years. Those assigned to the Baker Island Light Station in Light House District 1 for the years 1838 through 1905 were as follows:

<u>Number</u>	<u>Date</u>
16	1838
12	1859-61
10	1866-69
14	1872
12	1874
14	1875-85
16	1888-90
17	1891
18	1893-1905

Recommendations

Treatment

It is recommended that any treatment of the Baker Island Light Station follow the guidance provided by the 1992 *General Management Plan* for Acadia National Park, the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000, and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. Every

effort should be made to *preserve* historic character-defining features of the light station's three contributing historic properties: the 1855 light tower, 1855 keeper's dwelling, and the 1895 oil house. This study determined that the circa-1942 garage, previously thought to date to 1905, is not a contributing historic structure. For treatment details, see the Conclusions section of this report.

Update National Register Documentation

The 1988 nomination of the Baker Island Light Station to the National Register of Historic Places (#88000046) should be updated to include new scholarship on the light station, such as this report. This should include a more accurate description of the garage constructed by the U.S. Coast Guard circa 1942, which is misidentified in the nomination as a 1905 "Fuel House-Contributing Building."

Update List of Classified Structures

The National Park Service List of Classified Structures should be updated to include the 1855 light tower of the Baker Island Light Station, which was transferred from the U.S. Coast Guard in 2011.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

General Information

Baker Island is a small island located four miles south of Mount Desert Island, at the entrance to Frenchman Bay, in Hancock County, Maine.² It is one of five islands comprising the Town of Cranberry Isles.³ The entire island, with the exception of three inholdings, is owned by the U.S. Government and administered by Acadia National Park. This includes the 10-acre Baker Island Light Station, which was acquired from the U.S. Coast Guard in two parcels in 1958 and 2011. The Coast Guard retains an easement to maintain the light within the tower as an active aid to navigation. Baker Island has no dock, restricting access to small craft. Visitor amenities are primitive, lacking both plumbing and electrical service. Guided tours of the island are offered by the National Park Service and vendors during the summer season.

Acadia National Park

Acadia National Park was originally established as Sieur de Monts National Monument by Presidential proclamation in 1916. The name was later changed in

² The size of the island has been described as 120 acres in 1824, 197.23 acres in 1854, 160 acres in 1992, and 170 acres in 2008.

³ The five islands are Great Cranberry Island, Little Cranberry Island, Sutton Island, Bear Island, and Baker Island.

1919 to Lafayette National Park and in 1929 to Acadia National Park. It is distinguished as the first national park established in the east, the first seacoast national park, and an area of great natural beauty and historic significance.⁴

National Register of Historic Places

Baker Island Light Station was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1987 as one of 37 representative “Light Stations of Maine,” a multiple-property nomination. For the purposes of comparison, the light stations were placed into four general periods of construction: 1790-1852, the 1850s, 1870-1880, and 1880-1910. Baker Island Light Station is one of 15 properties in the 1850s category, characterized as a time “when a remarkable number of stations were newly established or older ones wholly or partially rebuilt.”⁵ Of these 1850s stations, nine (including Baker Island) were constructed with brick towers and wood houses, while the other six stations used more traditional granite.

The National Register subsequently listed “Baker Island Light Station” as an individual nomination (#88000046) in 1988. This establishes the station’s significance as statewide, with a period of significance encompassing the years of federal lighthouse management from 1855 to 1939, and a significant date of 1855

⁴ Deborah Wade, “Interpretation at Acadia National Park (NP),” Jan. 1988, and “General Management Plan, Acadia National Park” (Boston: National Park Service (NPS) North Atlantic Region, 1992), 1.

⁵ “Light Stations of Maine,” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form,” Section F, 1987.

when the tower and keeper's dwelling were reconstructed. Areas of significance are in the categories of architecture, engineering and transportation under criteria A and C. Criterion A is for its "association . . . with Maine's critical reliance on maritime transportation and the aids that made navigation possible," and criterion C for its "distinctive character that primarily embodies mid-nineteenth century light station design and construction." Contributing historic structures were identified as the 1855 light tower and keeper's house, the 1895 oil house, and the 1905 fuel house [sic: ca.-1942 garage].

List of Classified Structures

The List of Classified Structures (LCS) is an evaluated inventory of all historic and prehistoric structures that have historical, architectural, and/or engineering significance within parks of the National Park System in which the National Park Service (NPS) has, or plans to acquire, any enforceable legal interest. Three buildings of the Baker Island Light Station are included in the LCS: the lightkeeper's quarters, oil house, and garage. Not yet listed is the light tower, which was recently acquired by the National Park Service from the U.S. Coast Guard in 2011.

Lightkeeper's Quarters

LCS ID: 005432

Structure number: Building 158
Construction Period: Built 1855
Function: Single-family dwelling
Use: Vacant (not in use)
Condition: Poor in 2010
Legal Interest: Fee simple
Management Category:
"Should be preserved and maintained"

Ultimate Treatment: Rehabilitation
FMSS Record Number: 62406

Oil House

LCS ID: 041068

Structure number: Building 163
Construction Period: Built 1895
Function: Fuel storage site
Use: Vacant (not in use)
Condition: Good in 2008
Legal Interest: Fee simple
Management Category:
"Should be preserved and maintained"
Ultimate Treatment: Stabilization
FMSS Record Number: 62408

Fuel House (Garage)

LCS ID: 041066

Structure number: Building 162
Construction Period: Built 1905 [sic]
Function: Fuel [sic] storage site
Use: Vacant (not in use) [sic]
Condition: Good in 2011
Legal Interest: Fee simple
Management Category:
"Should be preserved and maintained"
Ultimate Treatment: Stabilization
FMSS Record Number: 62407

Related Studies

Several reports produced by, or for, the National Park Service over the last 23 years have addressed the cultural and natural resources of Baker Island. These include:

- 1990 Frank Briscoe, "Condition Assessment Report: Baker Island Lightkeeper's Quarters, Acadia National Park" (Boston: Building Conservation Branch, Cultural Resources Center, North Atlantic Region, NPS, 1990).

- 1992 “General Management Plan, Acadia National Park” (Boston: NPS North Atlantic Region, 1992).
- 1994 Candace Clifford and Kevin J. Foster, *Inventory of Historic Light Stations* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, History Division, 1994).
- 1995 “Management Alternatives for Baker Island, Acadia National Park” (National Park Service, 1995).
- 1996 Isabel Mancinelli, “Draft Baker Island Cultural Landscape Report” (Bar Harbor: Acadia National Park, 1996).
- 2008 Ehrler, Marilou, “Existing Condition Report” and “Field Report: Baker Island Light, 23 June 2008; final “Existing Condition Report” is undated (Philadelphia: National Park Service, Northeast Region, 2008).
- 2008 Peter Morrison, “Changes on the (Is)land: Baker Island, Acadia National Park, Maine, Archaeological Reconnaissance” (Freeport and Bar Harbor: Crane & Morrison Archaeology, in Association with the Abbe Museum, 10 Oct. 2008).
- 2009 Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, “National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Inventory, Baker Island, Acadia National Park” (Bar Harbor: Acadia NP, 2009).
- 2009 Franklin H. Price, Joshua Daniel, Kristen Chasse, and John Stallings, “Acadia Maritime Cultural Resources Inventory Final Report” (Unpublished document, Jan. 2009).
- 2011 “Baker Island Keepers Garage,” completion report, 2011 (Bar Harbor: Acadia National Park, Maintenance Division, 2011).

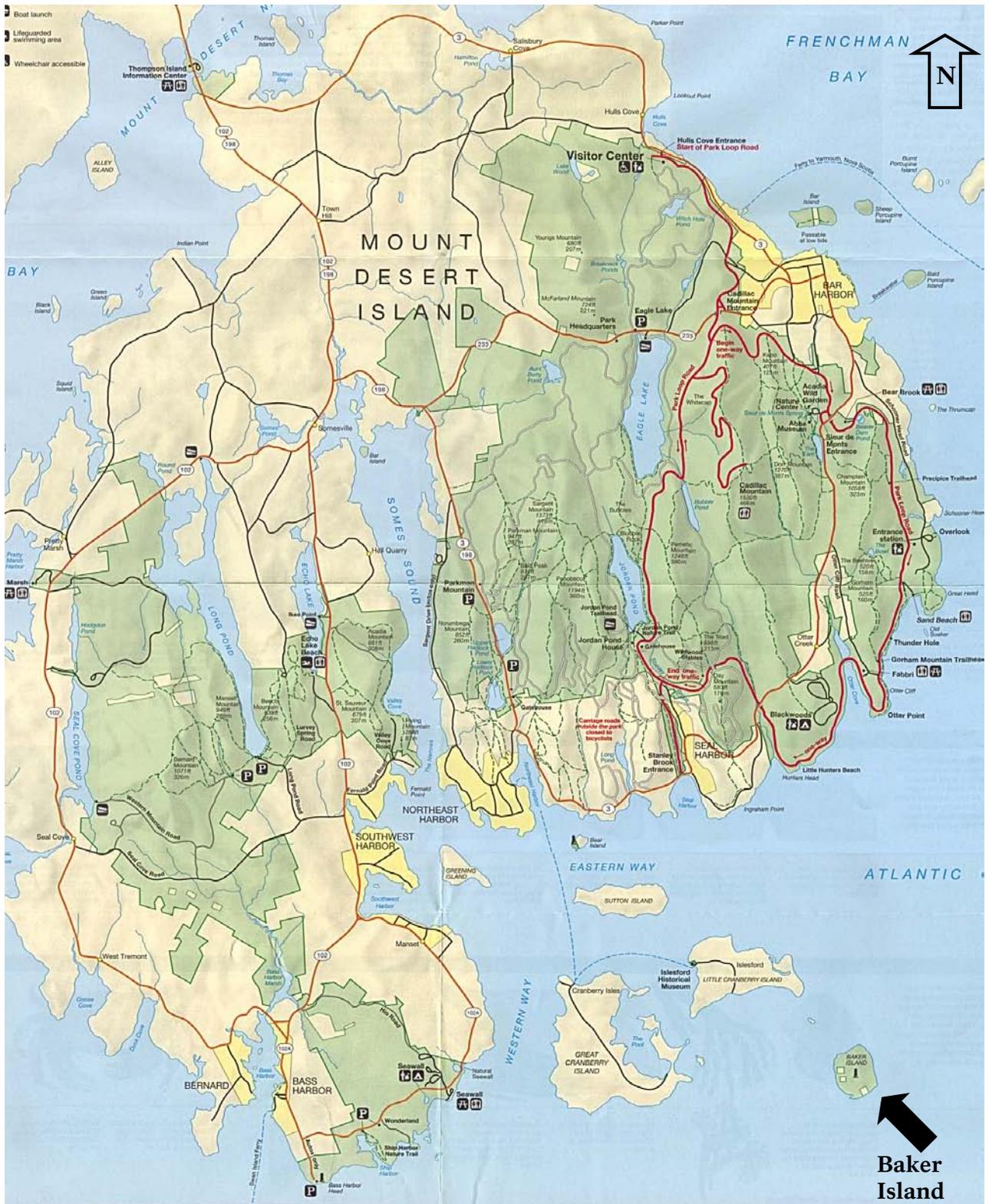


Figure 1. Map of Acadia National Park and vicinity showing the location of Baker Island (at arrow).

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Early Residents of Baker Island

Baker Island is a small island located four miles south of Mount Desert Island, at the entrance to Frenchman Bay, in Hancock County, Maine. Early maps and other documents indicate the island was known as “Baker’s” from as early as 1765 through 1887, and later changed to “Baker” by 1891.⁶ The origin of this moniker, possibly referring to an early land holder, is unknown.

No permanent settlements of Native American Wabanaki, or French and English colonists, have been identified on Baker Island. Possible explanations are the island’s remote location, its small size, or the rocky terrain, that made it unable to sustain a large population.⁷

The earliest known occupants of Baker Island were William Gilley, Jr., his wife Hannah Lurvey, and their children, who moved to the island around 1805.⁸ William Gilley had worked as a mariner, a fisherman, and maintained a small farm.⁹ He was later appointed as the first keeper of the Baker Island Light Station (1828-49). Hannah was the sister of Rachel Lurvey,

⁶ Details of maps from ca. 1776 to 1983 are included in fig. 3 of Peter Morrison’s report, “Changes on the (Is)land: Baker Island, Acadia National Park” (Freeport & Bar Harbor, 2008), 11 and 16.

⁷ Ibid, 15- 16.

⁸ A handwritten obituary for 90- year- old William Gilley dated 17 Sept. 1872, says he “moved to Bakers Island ... about the year 1805, and was the first settler on that Island....” Acadia NP Archives.

⁹ Morrison, “Changes on the (Is)land” (2008), 17- 18.

who married Captain John Carroll of nearby Southwest Harbor.¹⁰

Detailed tax records for 1810 indicate the Gilley family farm grew wheat, potatoes, hay, flax, and vegetables on Baker Island. They also raised poultry, cows, oxen, cattle, sheep and hogs, and harvested wild berries, fish and birds (such as ducks). Surplus items were bartered or sold to off-island customers, including eggs, butter, dried and smoked fish, and feathers.

The Gilley’s first abode was a log home near the north shore. They later moved to another house father inland. William and Hannah had 12 children between the years 1803 and 1827, some of whom settled on the island. A cemetery near the site of the Gilley’s first log home contains the graves of 13 Gilley descendents.¹¹ The population on the island peaked around 1860, when the Gilley and Stanley families were both in residence.¹²

New Light Station, 1828

Baker Island and its adjacent tidal sand bar have been described as a “ship trap,” jutting out into the sea as a potential hazard to mariners headed for Frenchman Bay, Southwest Harbor, or the Cranberry Islands.¹³ Maritime traffic included steam-powered passenger vessels that were in service as early as 1816, connecting coastal river towns. Sailing vessels associated with fishing and the shipbuilding industries also plied the coastal waters, becoming more numerous following Maine’s admission to the Union in 1820. Other 19th-century

¹⁰ The home of John and Rachel Carroll, the Carroll House, is now part of Acadia NP.

¹¹ Morrison, “Changes on the (Is)land” (2008), 17-23, and Acadia NP Archives.

¹² Note from Hugh Dwelley to Rebecca Cole-Will, 3 Aug. 2009, Acadia NP Archives.

industries in Maine that depended on water transportation for shipping were commercial lumbering, granite, lime, ice, and bricks. Visiting vacationers to Mount Desert and vicinity later added pleasure craft to the busy waters.¹⁴

A proposal to install a navigational aid on “Baker’s” Island was funded in March 1823 with a congressional appropriation of \$2,500 to the Secretary of the Treasury’s U.S. Lighthouse Service. Additional appropriations in 1825, 1826, and 1828 brought the total to \$7,600, although actual expenditures for the new light station amounted to \$3,798.26.¹⁵

Congress initiated the purchase of Baker Island in 1824 with an Act to cede jurisdiction of the entire island to the United States of America in 1824:

Section A: Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives, in Legislature assembled, that there be, and hereby is ceded to the United States of America, the jurisdiction of Baker’s Island so called, in the State of Maine, near Mount Desert, containing about 120 acres, for the purpose of erecting a light-house and dwelling house thereon. . . . Passed and approved Feb. 20, 1824.¹⁶

Isaac Ilsley, Superintendent of Lighthouses in the State of Maine, coordinated acquisition of the island from the trustees of the estate of William Bingham, deceased.¹⁷ It was finally purchased on December 8, 1827, for \$300, according to the property deed of that date. Bingham was not a resident of Maine, but described as “formerly of Philadelphia.”¹⁸ What arrangement he had, if any, with island resident William Gilley, Jr., and his family is not known.

Superintendent Ilsley next coordinated the construction of a stone light tower and keeper’s dwelling on Baker’s Island, which were completed by July 24, 1828.¹⁹ For details, see the “Architectural History” chapter of this report.

One of the earliest descriptions of the light at Baker’s Island (“No. 6”) is found in a list of navigational aids for mariners published in 1838. This records the location of the light as 43° 42’ 00” latitude and 68 09’ 00” longitude. A lantern with 10 lamps and a 15-inch reflector was elevated 46 feet above the sea, enabling it to be seen for a distance of 27 miles.²⁰

¹³ Franklin H. Price, Joshua Daniel, Kristen Chasse, and John Stallings, “Acadia Maritime Cultural Resources Inventory Final Report” (unpublished document, Jan. 2009), 11- 12.

¹⁴ Kirk F. Mohny, “Light Stations of Maine” National Register Multiple Property Nomination (20 July 1987), Section E, 2- 3.

¹⁵ *Statement of Appropriations and Expenditures for Public Buildings, Rivers and Harbors, Forts, Arsenals, Armories and other Public Works, from March 4, 1789 to June 30, 1882*. Transmittal letter by the U.S. Secretary of Treasury (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1882).

¹⁶ Lighthouse Site Files, 1799- 1939, Box 63, Textual Records, Records of the USCG Lighthouse Service, RG 26; National Archives

and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, DC.

¹⁷ The letters of Isaac Ilsley to Stephen Pleasonton of the U.S. Treasury, dated 19 Sept. 1823 and 20 Feb. 1824, are in Miscellaneous Records, 1817- 1929, Box 8- Entry 16, Textual Records, Records of the USCG Lighthouse Service, RG 26; NARA, Washington, DC.

¹⁸ Records of the USCG Lighthouse Service, RG 26; NARA, Washington, DC. Copy of the deed is in the Acadia NP Archives.

¹⁹ See footnote 16.

²⁰ Charles W. Snell research notes, 2 Dec. 1974, Acadia NP Archives; original source: *The Lighthouses, Beacons, and Floating Lights of the United States for 1838* (Washington, DC: 1838), 2.

Early Lighthouse Keepers

William Gilley, Jr. (1782-1872), accepted the position of first keeper of the Baker Island Light Station, serving from 1828 to 1849. He was informed of his appointment by U.S. President John Quincy Adams in a letter penned by Superintendent Ilsley, on June 19, 1828:

I have the pleasure to inform you that, the President has appointed you to be the Keeper of the Light-House on Baker's Island, near Mount Desert, with a salary fixed at three hundred and fifty dollars, per annum.

It will be necessary for you to reside and be steadily in the House provided for the Keeper.

Messrs. Cornelius Grinnell Jr. & Co. will furnish the establishment with oil, tube-glasses, wicks, buff skins and whiting; and when the buildings are finished and the Light-House fitted up and furnished, you will have the Light-House lit up during the nights. Further instructions in relation to your duties, with the forms of accounts and returns will be sent to you, as soon as they can be prepared.

Mr. Ilsley the agent will deliver over to you the buildings and appurtenances, for which you will give him your receipt. Please to acknowledge your acceptance of the appointment, and inform me of the night you intend first to light up the lantern.

Isaac Ilsley
Superintendent of Light Houses in
Maine²¹

²¹ A copy of this letter from Isaac Ilsley to Mr. William Gilly [sic: Gilley] dated 19 June 1828 is in the Acadia NP Archives.

Gilley kept the light burning on Baker's Island for more than 20 years, finally departing in 1849. His removal as keeper was later described by local historian Mrs. Seth Thornton in 1938:

When the Whig Party came into power in 1849 a new keeper was appointed and Mr. Gilley, who had bought Great Duck Island in 1837 with the idea of raising cattle and sheep on a large scale, went to that island, built a house, and lived there almost alone for many years. His wife remained at Baker's or lived with some of her children, who had homes on Great Cranberry, making occasional visits to her husband on his lonely island.²²

William Gilley was succeeded as keeper by John Rich (1849-53), and next by Joseph Bunker (1853-1860).

Ownership Dispute

Elisha and Joseph Gilley were two sons of William and Hannah Gilley who remained on Baker Island following their father's departure in 1849. The brothers and Elisha's son, Alfred, vehemently disputed the government's ownership of the island by harassing the new keeper and his family. Lighthouse inspector William B. Franklin described the problem in a letter to the Light House Board dated December 10, 1853:

It has become necessary for me to call the attention of the Board to the fact that Baker's Island in this state [Maine] which is owned by the United States as a light house site is now occupied by two men named Gilley, and that the

²² Mrs. Seth Thornton, *Traditions & Records, Southwest Harbor and Somesville, Mount Desert Island, Maine* (Private printing, 1938).

light house keeper is almost debarred from the use of the land, and from free access to his landing place, and that quarrels are continually taking place between him and these men. Each one of them has a house on the island and lately a third family has moved there. They allow cattle to graze there, and receive money for the use of the land which the light keeper is entitled to if any one is. They have been ordered to leave repeatedly but have always refused to go threatening to use force, and are very abusive.²³

The Light-House Board commissioned a detailed survey of Baker's Island as a result of this dispute (fig. 2). The final plan, dated November 29, 1854, recorded the island as 197.23 acres covered with trees of "chiefly White Pine." A wide clearing extending from the north boat landing to the center of the island is shown with three houses (one labeled "Keeper's House"), three barns, and two fenced areas enclosing 17.55 acres and 1.84 acres. The keeper's house and nearby barn were located farthest from the landing and downhill from the lighthouse that perched on the island's highest point.²⁴

The government's attempt to evict the Gilleys failed, but a compromise was eventually negotiated. In an agreement dated September 19, 1855, representatives of the government were allowed a 10-acre parcel, a right-of-way from the landing to the "Light House and buildings of said United States," and the right of "pasturage

on any and all the lands on said Island now used and suitable for pasturage, as fully as we now enjoy the same."²⁵

The Circuit Court of the United States for the District of Maine later finalized the real estate claims of the United States on the island in 1909 by confirming the fee-simple ownership of the 10-acre parcel and restating the previous easements. It also added the fee-simple ownership of the land upon which the boathouse sat and an easement for the common use of the boat landing.²⁶

Keepers' Duties

The duties of a lighthouse keeper were well defined and routine. Their primary purpose was to maintain a good light for mariners from sunset to sunrise. To that end, keepers received the following instructions from the lighthouse administration:

[T]o maintain the lighting equipment in good shape: clean and polish the lens, clean and fill the lamp, dust the framework of the apparatus, trim carefully the wicks of the lens lamp, and if required, put new ones in . . . , clean the copper and brass fixtures of the apparatus as well as the utensils used in the lantern and watchroom, clean the walls, floors and balconies, or galleries of the lantern, and sweep and dust the tower stairways, landing, doors, windows, window recesses, and

²³ "History of Baker Island, Maine, Light Station," Mar. 1954. Clipping file, RG26, NARA; copy at Acadia National Park.

²⁴ "U.S. Coast Survey, Baker's Island, Maine," by W.E. Greenwell, Assistant, U.S.C.S., 29 Nov. 1854. Lighthouse Site Files, 1790-1939, Box 63, Textual Records, Records of the USCG Lighthouse Service, RG 26; NARA, Washington, DC. Copy in Acadia NP Archives.

²⁵ Letter dated 8 Oct. 1855, from W.B. Franklin, Light-House Inspector, to Joseph Bunker, Keeper of Baker's Island Light, transmitting "a copy of an agreement upon which the suit against the Gilleys has been discontinued by the United States." USCG Lighthouse Service, RG 26; NARA, Washington, DC.

²⁶ Deed Book 459, pp. 186- 190, Hancock County Registry of Deeds, Maine.

passageways from the lantern to the oil storage area.²⁷

Major repairs were usually undertaken by a work force supervised by a district engineer and funded by appropriations from Congress.²⁸

Light Station Reconstructed, 1855

A great expansion of lighthouses occurred along the coastal waters of the United States following the reorganization of the Lighthouse Service in 1852. This began with the creation of a nine-member Lighthouse Board by Congress on October 9, 1852. The newly assembled board of engineers and scientists studied lighthouse technology and made significant recommendations for improvements. Twelve lighthouse districts were created, each assigned an inspector and an engineer. The district inspector was a naval engineer who supervised the keepers and coordinated disbursement of funds, salaries and supplies. The district engineer was an army officer who oversaw repairs of existing light stations and supervised the building of new light stations.²⁹ The board also produced a report in 1853 that evaluated the country's existing lighthouses. One recommendation was to replace the then "worthless" and "unhealthy" structures on Baker's Island in District 1.³⁰ Congress appropriated \$5,000 for this venture in 1854, enabling complete reconstruction of the Baker Island Light Station in 1855. For details of

²⁷ Francis Ross Holland, *America's Lighthouses: Their Illustrated History Since 1716* (Brattleboro, VT: The Stephen Greene Press, 1972), 43 and 45.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 45.

this work, see the "Architectural History" chapter of this report.

Lighthouse Keepers, 1860-1953

The resident keeper at the time the Baker's Island Lighthouse was rebuilt in 1855 was Joseph Bunker, who served from 1853 to 1860. An incomplete list of other keepers, assembled from various sources, worked at this light station from 1860 to 1953:

John Bunker (1860-61)
Freeman G. Young (1861-67)
Alden H. Jordon (1867-83)
Roscoe G. Lopaus (1883 -88)
Howard P. Robbins (1888-1902)
George Connors (ca. 1912 - ?)
Vurney L. King (ca. 1912 - ?)
Joseph Muise (? - ca. 1936)
F. Faulkingham (ca. 1935)
Wayne Edson Holcomb (1944-45)
Ernest Mathie (ca. 1950)
_____ Clements (ca. 1953)
_____ Coleman (ca. 1950)

Annual Reports, 1855-1905

Annual reports published by the Lighthouse Board record significant improvements and repairs that were made

²⁹ Holland, *America's Lighthouses*, 36.

³⁰ "Appendix to Report of Light- House Board," *The House of Representatives, During the First Session of the Thirty- Third Congress* (Washington, DC: A.O.P. Nicholson, Printer, 1854), 218- 19. The Lighthouse Board operated from 1852 to 1910.

to the Baker Island Light Station for the years 1855 to 1905. The reports also document a change in the name “Baker’s” Island to “Baker” sometime between 1885 and 1891. Excerpts for Baker’s/Baker Island are transcribed below. Annual reports after 1905 were more general, lacking the details provided in previous years.

1855. Baker’s Island and Franklin Island light-houses have been rebuilt, and are ready for the lighting apparatus, which in both is to be a fourth order lens, showing a fixed light, varied by flashes.³¹

1865. [Expenditures of the Lighthouse Board curtailed due to the Civil War.]

1867. [Annual Report introduction]: The substitution of lard oil for that of sperm has been completed. . . . At Baker’s island, outside of keeper’s dwelling repaired, revolving machinery cleaned, and wickholders repaired.³²

1868. 10. *Baker’s island*.-- Dwelling painted outside; new door furnished to boat-house; cooking stove and fixtures supplied; ventilator for lantern and smoke-pipe provided; seven panes of glass set; inside woodwork of tower painted; two lens covers supplied; illuminating apparatus examined.³³

1869. 10. *Baker’s Island*.--Burners have been refitted with new tubes, oil

butts repaired, glass supplied, and a cast-iron smoke pipe provided for the lantern.³⁴

1870, 1873, & 1874. [Baker’s Island is one of several light stations in the First District in which there have been unspecified] repairs and renovations more or less extensive during the last year. [Listed as light station No. 11 in 1870, no number in 1873, and No. 12 in 1874.]³⁵

1875. 14. *Baker’s Island* ... The roof of the keeper’s dwelling has been reshingled, and other general repairs have been made about the station.³⁶

1878. 14. *Baker’s Island* ... The exterior walls of the dwelling were repainted with two coats of white paint, and the cellar floor was cemented.³⁷

1881. 14. *Baker’s Island* ... Five storm-doors were furnished for the

³¹ “Report of the Light-House Board,” 31 Oct. 1855, in *Report of The Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year Ending June 30, 1855* (Washington, DC: Beverly Tucker, 1856), 290.

³² “Report of the Light-House Board, 2 Nov. 1867,” in *Report of The Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1867* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1868), 194 & 197.

³³ “Report of the Light-House Board,” 6 Nov. 1868, in *Report of The Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1868* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1868), 315.

³⁴ “Report of the Light-House Board,” 10 Oct. 1869, in *Report of The Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year 1869* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1868), 411.

³⁵ “Report of the United States Light-House Board,” 31 Oct. 1870, in *Annual Report of The Secretary of the Treasury of the State on the Finances for the Year 1870* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1870), 331; “Report of the United States Light-House Board,” 1873, in *Annual Report on the State of the Finances to the 43rd Congress, First Session, Dec. 1, 1873* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1873), 598; and *Annual Report of the Light-House Board of the United States to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1874* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1874), 16.

³⁶ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Year 1875* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1875), 13.

³⁷ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1878* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1878), 11.

dwelling and the boat-slip was rebuilt.³⁸

1882. 14. *Baker's Island* . . . The interior plastering of the dwelling was repaired.³⁹

1884. 14. *Baker's Island* . . . [Listed under general "Repairs."]⁴⁰

1885. 14. *Baker's Island* . . . The roof of the kitchen was renewed, the chimney was rebuilt, the roof of the work-room was resingled, and other repairs were made.⁴¹

1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, & 1893. *Baker's Island* [spelled "Baker" beginning in 1891, is listed under general "Repairs." It is labeled as station number 16 in 1888, 1889, and 1890; No. 17 in 1891; and No. 18 in 1893.]⁴²

1895. 18. *Baker Island* . . . An oil house was built. Minor repairs were made.⁴³

1896. 18. *Baker's Island* . . . [Listed under general "Repairs."]⁴⁴

1898. 18. *Baker Island* . . . A telephone line to connect this station with Northeast Harbor, Maine, was being constructed by hired labor at the close of the fiscal year and will be completed in July, 1898. The cost of this line is to be paid from the appropriation for national defense.⁴⁵

1899. 18. *Baker Island* . . . A telephone line to Northeast Harbor was completed. Various repairs were made.⁴⁶

1900 and 1901. 18. *Baker's Island* . . . [Listed under general "Repairs."]⁴⁷

1903. 18. *Baker Island* . . . The light tower was reinforced by a 4-inch brick wall built around the outside; one end of the dwelling was renewed; and the revolving clock and boat slip were repaired.⁴⁸

1905. 18. *Baker Island* . . . A fuel house was built. Various repairs were made.⁴⁹

³⁸ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1881* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1881), 12.

³⁹ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1882* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1882), 12.

⁴⁰ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1884* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1884).

⁴¹ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ended 1885* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1885), 19.

⁴² *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ended 1888* [also 1889-1891 and 1893] (Washington, DC: GPO, 1888-1891 and 1893).

⁴³ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1895* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1895), 45.

⁴⁴ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1896* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1896), 43.

⁴⁵ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1898* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1898), 50.

⁴⁶ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1899* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1899), 36.

⁴⁷ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1900* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1900), 43; and *Annual Report of the Light-House Board for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1901* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1901), 51.

⁴⁸ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1903* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1903), 11.

⁴⁹ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of Commerce and Labor June 30, 1905* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1905), 28.

Lighthouse Descriptions

Descriptions of the Baker Island Light Station are also found in listings of navigational aids for mariners published from 1859 through 1958. Some identifying characteristics included the type of light, the height of the lantern and its tower, and the general appearance of the tower and dwelling.

Baker Island light was described from 1859 through 1948 as a fixed white beacon that flashed every 90 seconds, provided by a 4th order Fresnel lens (fig. 4). The light was estimated to be visible from a distance of 15 to 17 nautical miles. The height of the lantern above the sea was noted to be 105 feet, contained within a tower that measured 37 feet from base to focal plane.

The brick tower containing the light was described as “white,” with a reference to “whitewash” finish in 1872 and 1874. A wooden dwelling, rising a story-and-a-half tall, was first mentioned in 1872, noted as “painted brown” through 1874. It was later recorded as “white” beginning in 1881. The dwelling was connected to the tower by a “work room,” mistakenly described as “wooden” in 1874. A “red oil house” located 100 feet northwest from the tower was first identified in 1909, although it had existed as early as 1895.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Charles W. Snell, copy of typewritten research notes dated 1974 describing aids to navigation for mariners for Baker Island Lighthouse, are in the Acadia NP Archives. For a list of Snell’s original sources, see the Bibliography at the end of this report.

Early Photographs, Circa 1869 and 1897

The U.S. Lighthouse Board documented its lighthouses with black-and-white photographs in the late 1860s and 1897. This valuable collection includes the earliest known views of the Baker Island Light Station (figs. 5 and 7-10).⁵¹ The photographs show the 1855 light tower with attached keeper’s dwelling, a nearby privy, a brick fuel house constructed in 1895, along with a notable absence of trees. They also document the transformation of the keeper’s house from a brown-painted building with board-and-batten siding to a white-painted structure with clapboard siding.

Automation and Deaccession, 1955-58

The U.S. Coast Guard, which assumed responsibility for the U.S. Lighthouse Service in 1939, deactivated the Baker Island light in November 1955. The keeper was most likely dismissed, leaving the keeper’s dwelling vacant for the first time since its construction in 1855. Plans were begun to deaccession a portion of the light station, as delineated in a sketch plan dated December 1955 (fig. 23).. Two years later, the Coast Guard reestablished the light as an “Unattended Fixed Aid to

⁵¹ Prints/Photographs of Lighthouses 1855 to 1933, District #1, Avery Rock to Burnt Coat Harbor, Box 1, Records of the USCG Lighthouse Service, RG 26; NARA, Cartographic and Architectural Records, College Park, MD.

Navigation” in April 1957.”⁵² A detailed survey prepared in August of that year described the 10-acre parcel as 50% wooded, 25% with rock outcropping, and 25% cleared. Existing structures and site features included a “Dwelling and Attached Light Tower”; “Paint Locker”; “Outhouse”; “Lookout Tower”; “Garage & Storage Loft”; “Oil House”; “Flag Pole”; “Walkways, Landings & Stairs”; and a “Boathouse.”⁵³

The Baker Island Light Station was finally transferred to the National Park Service in December 1958, along with an easement to access the parcel and its buildings from the boat landing. Not included in the conveyance was a 20-square-foot plot on which the light tower stood, which continued to be serviced and maintained by the U.S. Coast Guard. The transfer further stipulated that:

...no construction or natural growth is permitted on the land herein conveyed which will obstruct the view of the Aid to Navigation by the mariner from the sea.⁵⁴

⁵² Email from Rose Marques to Becky Cole-Will, 25 Nov. 2008; original source: “Proceedings of a Board of Survey,” U.S. Dept. of Treasury, 2 Aug. 1957.

⁵³ U.S. Coast Guard, “Proceedings of a Board of Survey: Baker Island Light Station, Hancock County, Maine,” 2 Aug. 1957. Original in the National Archives; copy obtained from Chris Morrison 13 May 2013. For detailed descriptions, see the “Architectural History” chapter of this report.

⁵⁴ “Land Ownership Record, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service,” Jan. 1959.

Land Acquisitions by the National Park Service, 1967 and 1983

The National Park Service acquired most of the remainder of Baker Island’s acreage in two large parcels. The western portion of the island (Tract 14-107), encompassing 74.7 acres, was transferred by the Nature Conservancy in 1967. This parcel had been acquired by the Conservancy the previous year from Florence P. Underwood. The eastern portion of the island (Tract 14-116), encompassing 77 acres, was transferred by the National Park Foundation in 1983. This parcel had been acquired by the Foundation in 1976 from Winifred and Edna Coulter, heirs of William and Hannah Gilley’s son Joseph.⁵⁵

Historical Recognition and Documentation, 1976 and 1987-88

The historical importance of Baker Island Light Station was recognized in 1976, when it was recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). Documentation included measured drawings of the “lightkeeper’s house,” and black-and white photographs of the house, light tower, oil house, and barn [sic: garage] (figs. 27-35).⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Deed Book 1031, p. 196, 2 Feb. 1967; and Deed Book 1484, p. 242, 12 Dec. 1983; Hancock County Registry of Deeds, Maine.

⁵⁶ Historic American Buildings Survey, ME-172, 1976; Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Note that HABS incorrectly describes the 1855 light tower as “wooden” on sheet 1 of the architectural drawings.

The National Register of Historic Places listed Baker Island Light Station as part of a multiple nomination in 1987, and as an individual nomination in 1988. For additional information on the National Register listings, see the “Introduction” section of this report.

Maintenance Upkeep by the National Park Service

Acadia National Park has been responsible for the maintenance upkeep of the vacant Baker Island Light Station buildings (not including the light tower) since its acquisition of the property in 1958. Some ancillary structures have been removed, such as a privy, 1905 fuel house (later called the paint locker), and circa-1942 watch tower.

For an accounting of repairs made to the light station’s four remaining buildings (the 1855 keeper’s dwelling, the 1895 oil house, and the circa-1942 garage) see the “Architectural History” section of this report.

Light Tower Deaccessioned, 2011

The U.S. Coast Guard disposed of the light tower of the Baker Island Light Station in 2011, 53 years after relinquishing its other buildings and acreage to the National Park Service in 1958. Deaccession of the tower was initiated with a “Report of Excess Real Property” submitted to the General

Services Administration on August 9, 2002, with the following explanatory remarks:

The First CG [Coast Guard] District has determined this site to be “excess to its needs. The lighthouse will remain as an active Federal Aid to Navigation. The CG will retain all easements necessary to serve the needs of the ATON [Aid to Navigation]. The ownership of the site will be transferred in accordance with the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000, P.L. [Public Law] 106-355.⁵⁷

The National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act (NHLPA) of 2000 is an amendment to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The Act provides a mechanism for the disposal of historic light stations, allowing transfer at no cost to various local, state, and federal agencies. Requirements of the NHLPA include financial ability to maintain a historic light station while abiding by the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. Commercial activities are disallowed, but public access is to be provided for education, recreation, and cultural or historic preservation purposes.

Four eligible parties expressed an interest in the historic Baker Island light tower, including Acadia National Park. The park’s application of December 7, 2009, outlined the park’s plans for preservation and maintenance, along with its proposed use, funding, and management of the historic property.⁵⁸ The General Services Administration awarded stewardship to

⁵⁷ “Report of Excess Real Property” submitted by the USCG in Warwick, RI, to the General Services Administration in Boston, MA, 9 Aug. 2002.

⁵⁸ “Application to Obtain Historic Light Station Property,” Acadia NP, 7 Dec. 2009, Acadia NP Archives.

Acadia National Park in a letter dated March 28, 2011, which was accepted August 19, 2011.⁵⁹

Historic Lease

Acadia National Park is now exploring the possibility of leasing Baker Island Light Station to a responsible party. Eligibility criteria of applicants is similar to those of the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act, described in the previous section. The purpose of this Historic Structure Report is to document the four remaining buildings of the Light Station prior to issuance of a lease.

⁵⁹ Letter dated 28 Mar. 2011 from John E. Kelly, Director Real Property Utilization and Disposal Division, U.S. General Services Administration, to Sheridan Steele, Superintendent Acadia NP, Re: "Transfer of Baker Island Light Tower, Baker Island, Town of Cranberry Isles, Hancock County, Maine," accepted and signed 19 Aug. 2011 by Rachel McManus, Acting Realty Office, NPS. There is no deed for this transaction because the property is still held by the United States of America.

III. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

1828: First Light Station

Introduction

The U.S. Light-House Service constructed the first light station on Baker Island (then called “Baker’s” Island) in 1828. This was the culmination of five years of planning that began with an initial Congressional appropriation of \$2,500 for the venture in 1823. A Congressional Act to cede jurisdiction of Baker’s Island to the United States of America was passed in 1824, enabling purchase of the entire island for \$300 from the estate of William Bingham in 1827. The final total cost for the new light station was \$3,798.26.⁶⁰

Specifications

The U.S. Treasury Collector’s Office, District of Portland and Falmouth Maine, solicited proposals for building the “Light-House and Dwelling house on Baker’s Island” in a newspaper posting dated March 5, 1824. Both structures were to be constructed of split undressed stone. Detailed specifications were included in this solicitation, which was signed by Isaac Ilsley, Superintendent of Light-Houses in Maine. These are transcribed in their entirety below, since they provide a valuable record of the now missing buildings:

COLLECTOR’S OFFICE

*District of Portland and Falmouth,
March 5, 1824*

Proposals will be received at this office for building a Light-House, and Dwelling house on Baker’s Island in the State of Maine, of the following materials, dimensions and description:--

[LIGHT-HOUSE TOWER]

The tower to be built of split undressed stone; the form round; the foundation to be sunk as deep as may be necessary to make the whole fabric secure; all to be laid in good lime mortar—the height of the tower to be twenty-five feet from the surface of the ground:--diameter at the base twenty feet, and at the top ten feet. The thickness of the walls at the base to be three and one half feet and to be uniformly graduated to two feet at the top, where an arch is to be turned on which is to be laid a Deck of Soap Stone, eleven and a half feet diameter, four inches thick. On one side of which to be a scuttle twenty-four inches by twenty to enter the lantern; the scuttle door to be an iron frame, covered with copper as well as the rabbit [sic: rabet] it shuts into.

The walls of the tower to be well pointed and white-washed twice over, outside and inside. There are to be three windows in the tower of twelve lights each, seven by nine glass, in strong frames, and a door five feet by three feet made of double inch boards, cross nailed, with strong hinges, lock and latch. The door frame and sill to be of hammer dressed Stone. The ground floor of the Light-house to be paved with Brick or Stone.

Sufficient number of circular stairs to lead from the ground floor to within six feet of the lantern, connected with a centre post guarded by a good hand railing; the stairs, summers and floors to be made of hard pine, clear of sap, the stairs and floors to be two inch plank, seasoned and planed. From the

⁶⁰ For source citations, see the “Historical Background” section of this report.

top of the stairs to the entrance of the scuttle to be an iron Ladder, the steps two and one half inches by half an inch. On the top of the tower to be an iron Lantern of an octagon form, the post to be two inches square to run down into the stone work four feet, and secured with anchors. The height and diameter of the Lantern to be sufficient to admit in each octagon an iron sash to contain twenty-one lights twelve by eleven, to be glazed with glass of double thickness from the Boston Glass Manufactory, the lower tier to be filled with copper, the rabbits [sic: rabbets] of the sashes to be three quarters of an inch deep. In one of the octagons to be an iron framed door covered with copper, four feet by two feet in the clear, to shut tight into rabbits [sic: rabbets] with strong iron hinges and turn buttons.

The top to be a dome formed by sixteen iron rafters concentrating in an iron hoop five inches wide and nine inches diameter, covered with copper thirty two ounces to the square foot, which is to come down and rivet into the pieces that forms [sic] the top of the sash which are to be three inches wide.

On the dome to be a traversing ventilator, thirty inches long and fifteen inches diameter, on which is to be secured a Vane three feet long and twenty inches wide. The ventilator and vane to be framed with iron and covered with copper. Around the lantern to be an Iron Railing, the posts of which to be one and three eights inch square connected by three iron railings one inch square; The railing posts to run up parallel with the eaves of the lantern and the upper railing to be four feet from the deck.

The woodwork of the tower, the lantern, ventilator and vane to be painted twice over, all the iron and copper work black, the putty on the sashes and wood work white.

The Light-house to have one complete electrical [i.e., lightning] conductor

made from copper three quarters of an inch diameter with points and painted.

[DWELLING HOUSE]

The Dwelling-house to be built of split undressed stone, thirty four feet by twenty, one story, eight feet in the clear, the walls to be eighteen inches thick. A cellar seven feet deep under the whole floor of the house, and a drain sunk to lead off the water. All the stone work to be laid in good lime mortar. The roof to be rectangular, the house to be divided into two rooms with a chimney in the middle and an entry six feet wide in front of the chimney, a door into each room and an out door; a fire place in each room, and closets with shelves and doors back of the chimney. Stairs to lead from the entry into the chambers which are to be partitioned off, one door in each, lathed and plastered, and double floors well nailed. The inside walls of the room entry and ceiling to be lathed and plastered, double floors well nailed, three windows in one room and two in the other, to contain twenty-four lights each seven by nine glass and one window of the same size in each chamber.

There are to be cellar doors and stone steps to enter the cellar from the outside, and an entrance to the cellar and stairs from one of the rooms inside—at each end of the cellar to be a small window glazed.

Attached to the house to be a porch or kitchen ten feet by twelve feet in the clear, the walls the same as the dwelling house, double floors, the walls and ceiling lathed and plastered, one window of twenty four lights, seven by nine glass, two doors, one to lead into the rooms in the house and the other outside—a chimney with an Iron Crane, Trammel and Hooks—on one side an oven of middling size with an iron door, on the other side a sink with a gutter to lead through the wall out of the house—the roofs of the house and the porch to be covered with good

seasoned boards and shingles, the boards to the jointed and halved—all the doors to be four pannelled [sic], substantial iron hinges and latches, the outside doors to have strong locks, and hammer dressed stone door sills, all the windows to have suitable shutters, hinges and fastenings, iron mantel piece to the fire places and oven, chimneys collared with sheet lead. Gutters on both sides of the house, with spouts to lead off the water; all the wood work inside and out to be painted twice over, including floor, the walls of the house and cellar to be well point and white washed twice over.

The whole to be completed in a workmanlike manner by the thirty first day of [illegible].

[LIGHT-HOUSE TOWER EQUIPMENT]

Separate proposals will be received for fitting up the said Light-house, within fifteen days after it shall be built, with ten patent lamps and ten sixteen inch reflectors in butts for keeping oil, and all necessary apparatus, in the same manner as the Light-houses of the United States have been fitted up by Winslow Lewis, with the addition of Black's patent apparatus for conducting the heat of the lamps to the oil therein. The whole to be approved by the Superintendent of Light-houses in Maine, or such other persons as may be designated by him. Persons disposed to contract, will be pleased to transmit their proposals to the Collector of the Customs at Portland, on or before the twenty sixth day of March inst.

ISAAC ILSLEY,
*Superintendent of Light-Houses in
Maine, Portland, March 5, 1824.*

Construction

Superintendent Isaac Ilsley received two civilian bids for constructing the light tower and dwelling house on Baker Island in 1824: one from a Mister Lewis, the other from Humphrey & Thayer. The latter submitted the lower bid, estimating construction of the light house and keeper's house at \$3,000, and fitting up of the light house at \$359, for a total cost of \$3,359. Ilsley delayed awarding of the contract to Humphrey & Thayer until 1828, however, pending acquisition of the island by the U.S. government in December 1827.⁶¹

Construction began in the spring of 1828, according to a letter from Superintendent Ilsley dated May 1, 1828, soliciting the services of a Captain Hadlock as temporary on-site supervisor:

Messrs. Humphrey and Thayer will in a few days commence building the Light House and Keepers House on Baker's Island and I have not yet appointed any person to overlook the buildings while they are progressing.

If convenient to you, I shall be much obliged if you would attend to that business until some other person may be appointed. It will be proper and necessary that the workmen should be overlooked while they are preparing the foundations of the buildings, particularly the lower, to see that the rocks are brought down to a horizontal level, so that the weight will not occasion any part of the foundation to

⁶¹ Letter dated 16 Feb. 1828 from Isaac Ilsley, Superintendent of Light-Houses in Maine, to Stephen Pleasonton, Fifth Auditor and Acting Commissioner of the Revenue, re: bids for building a "Light House on Bakers Island." Correspondence 1824-28 in Miscellaneous Records, 1817-1929, Box 8-Entry 16, Textual Records of the USCG Lighthouse Service, RG 26; NARA Washington, DC.

slide out or give way, to see that the joints and crevices between the stones are filled up with small stone and mortar, and generally that the whole buildings are done agreeable to contract The compensation will be one dollar per day for overlooking the work.

Isaac Ilsley,
Superintendent of Light-Houses in
Maine⁶²

The stones used to construct the tower and dwelling may have been obtained from Baker Island itself, judging by the remnants of a small quarry found near the existing lighthouse in 2008. These stones were most likely the pink-hued, medium-grain granite that comprises the bedrock of the island.⁶³

Work progressed swiftly, as suggested in a letter from Superintendent Ilsley dated June 19, 1828, notifying island resident William Gilley, Jr., of his appointment as “Keeper of the Light-House on Baker’s Island.” This missive also mentions Messrs. Cornelius Grinnell Jr. & Co., who were furnishing the lighthouse with “oil, tube-glasses, wicks, buff skins and whiting”—most likely under subcontract with Humphrey & Thayer.⁶⁴

The near completion of the project was announced in a letter dated July 24, 1828, from Superintendent Ilsley to Stephen Pleasonton, Fifth Auditor and Acting

⁶² Letter dated 1 May 1828 from Isaac Ilsley, Superintendent of Light-Houses in Maine, to Capt. Hadlock, Correspondence 1824-28 in Miscellaneous Records 1817-1929, Box 8-Entry 16, Textual Records of the USCG Lighthouse Service, RG 26; NARA Washington, DC.

⁶³ Morrison, “Changes on the (Is)land” (2008), 10 and 12.

⁶⁴ A copy of this letter from Isaac Ilsley to Mr. William Gilley [sic: Gilley, Jr.] dated 19 June 1828 is in the Acadia NP Archives.

Commissioner of the Revenue, U.S.
Department of the Treasury, in
Washington, DC:

I have to inform you that the Light House on Baker’s Island is finished and fitted up, and that William Gilley [sic: Gilley] has accepted the appointment of Keeper, and taken charge of the establishment and will have the Light House lit up when Messrs. Grinnell & Co. shall have furnished the oil, tube glasses & c., which probably will be done in the course of this week. . . .

The whole expense of building and fitting up the Light House, having exceeded the amount appropriated, I have charged the bill of Jeremiah Ilsley, for superintending the building of the Light House, in the general account of disbursements to Light Houses.⁶⁵

Enclosed with the letter was “the abstract of expenses for building and fitting up the Light House,” which has been unfortunately separated and subsequently lost.⁶⁶

Appearance

No sketches, architectural drawings, or photographs are known to exist of the first Baker Island Light Station. Its stone tower

⁶⁵ Letter dated 24 July 1828 from Isaac Ilsley, Superintendent of Light-Houses in Maine, to Stephen Pleasonton, Correspondence 1824-28 in Miscellaneous Records 1817-1929, Box 8-Entry 16, Textual Records of the USCG Lighthouse Service, RG 26; NARA Washington, DC. Jeremiah Ilsley, who replaced Capt. Hadlock as building superintendent, was the older brother of Isaac Ilsley (Birth and Death records, www.Ancestry.com).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

and dwelling house survived for only 27 years, from 1828 until 1855. Our best documentation is provided by the detailed specifications transcribed on the previous pages. Also useful is a survey of the island made in 1854 that shows three structures associated with the light station: a “Lt. Hs.,” “Keeper’s House,” and “Barn” (fig. 2). The light tower is depicted in the

center of the island on its highest knoll, the keeper’s house a short distance away to the north, and the barn between the two. These structures were occupied by three keepers: William Gilley, Jr., from 1828 to 1849; John Rich, from 1849 to 1853; and Joseph Bunker, from 1853 to 1855. (Bunker remained as the first keeper of the rebuilt light station from 1855 to 1860.)

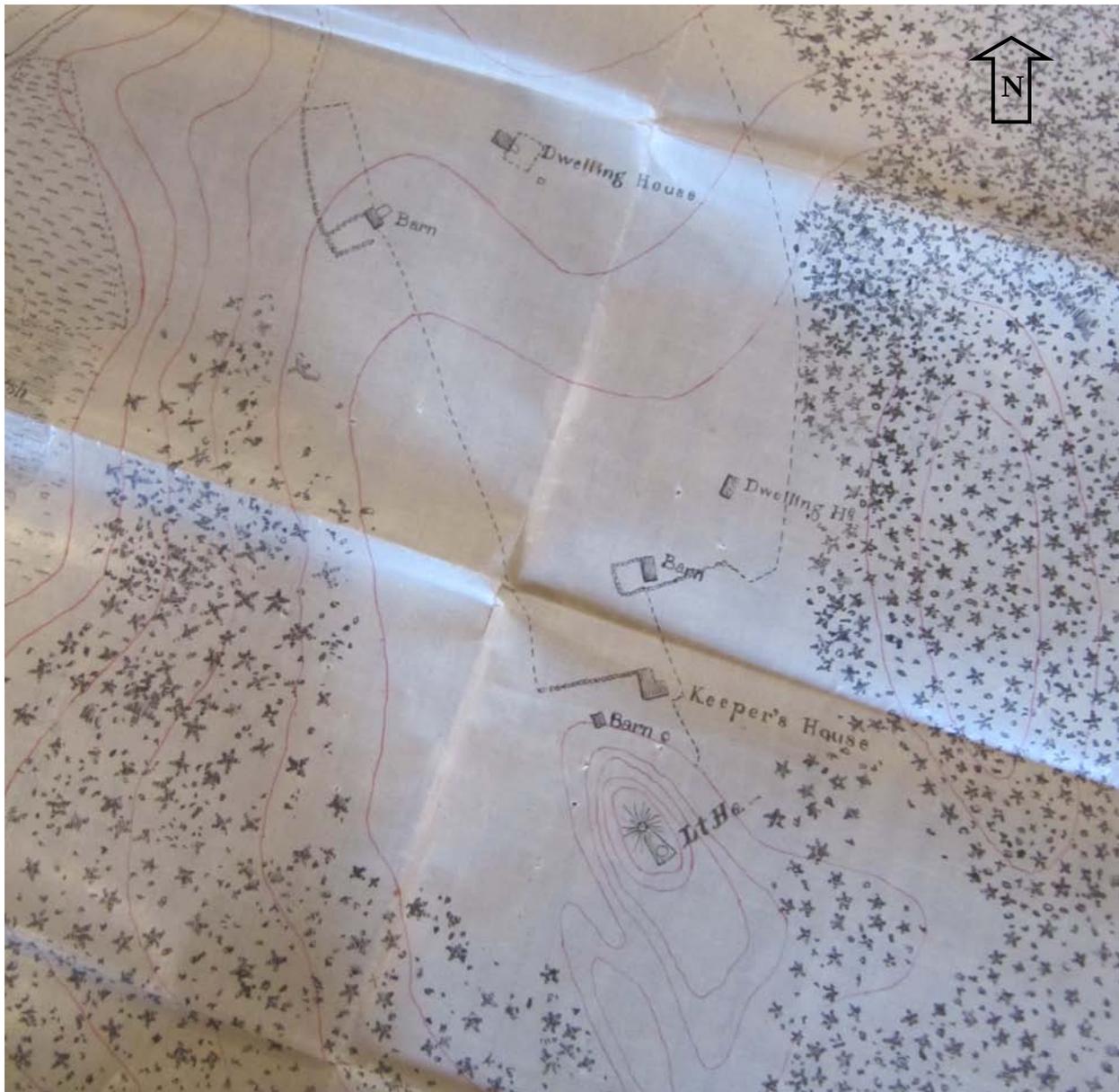


Figure 2. Detail of the 1854 “U.S. Coast Survey [of] Baker’s Island, Maine,” showing the inhabited portion of the island including the 1828 lighthouse, keeper’s house, and barn. The “Boat Landing” (not shown in this detail) is on the north shore.

1855: Reconstructed Light Station

Decrepit Structures

The buildings of Baker Island and Franklin Island Light Stations were in a poor state of repair by November 1853, as described by a newly appointed Light-House Board in a report to Congress:

[District] No. 1. *Baker's island light-house and Franklin island light-house.* These are secondary lights. The towers of both are entirely worthless, the lanterns are worn out, and the keepers' dwellings are so old and leaky that they are unhealthy. I recommend that both be rebuilt and fitted up with Fresnel lens lights of the fourth or fifth order. For this purpose, an appropriation of \$10,000 will be required.

I select these two lights, not because they are absolutely the worst on the coast, but because a beginning must be made in rebuilding nearly all the lights of this class on the coast; and these are important lights and, and are as bad as any.⁶⁷

Congressional Funding

Congress appropriated \$5,000 for rebuilding the Baker Island Light Station in August 1854. The old stone structures were demolished and a new light tower

⁶⁷ "Appendix to Report of Light- House Board," *The House of Representatives, During the First Session of the Thirty- Third Congress* (Washington, DC: A.O.P. Nicholson, Printer, 1854), 218- 19. The Lighthouse Board operated from 1852 to 1910.

and keeper's dwelling constructed the following year at a cost of \$4,963.07.⁶⁸

Construction Documents

A one-page architectural drawing titled "Plan Sections and Elevation of the Light House and Keeper's Dwelling Proposed for Erection at Baker's Island, Me" provides a valuable record of the new construction (figs. 3a and 3b). This color-washed depiction was signed on February 1, 1855, by William B. Franklin, Lighthouse Inspector for the First District based in Portland, Maine, who was also a member of the Corps of Topographical Engineers.⁶⁹ Hand-written notes in pencil indicate the plan or project had been "adopted" as early as March 19th, 1853, and that the light was to be equipped with a "4th order" Fresnel lens (fig. 4). Specifications that presumably accompanied this drawing are unfortunately missing today.

The light tower is shown in the drawing as a round, brick structure, approximately 45-feet tall, connected to a keeper's dwelling by a one-story brick room. Both the tower and house sit on stone foundations. The brick structures are a simple design with no stylistic embellishments. The tapered walls of the tower consist of two rings of brickwork separated by a center shaft. Three windows light the interior, each with a

⁶⁸ *Statement of Appropriations and Expenditures for Public Buildings, Rivers and Harbors, Forts, arsenals, Armories and Other Public Works from March 4, 1789, to June 30, 1882* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1882), 379.

⁶⁹ "Report of the Light- House Board," 31. Oct. 1855, in *Report of The Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year Ending June 30, 1855* (Washington, DC: Beverley Tucker, 1856), 254.

stone sill, lintel, and paired 3-light casement sashes. A lantern topping the tower has eight large windows and a metal deck, railing, tall chimney, and bell-shaped roof. Access to the tower is through the lower room equipped with three doorways: an exterior opening in the front façade with 4-panel door, and two interior openings providing a covered connection between the house and tower. A spiral stairway with center pole leads to an interior landing below the lantern deck, commonly used for storing supplies.

The keeper's dwelling is shown in the drawing as a small, 1-½ building with gable roof, a single brick chimney, and no back wing. It can best be described as a "cottage" design, made popular in the mid-19th century by architect A.J. Downing. A long entrance hall on one side opens onto two equal-size rooms in the first story, with a similar layout in the second story. Stylistic details of the dwelling include board-and-batten siding, curved hoods over windows with 6-over-6 sashes, and a front doorway featuring a lunette transom over a Greek-Revival-style, 2-panel door.

Laborers

No documentation has survived regarding the men who reconstructed the Baker Island Light Station in 1855. Whether or not the work was let to a private contractor, or carried out by workers employed by the Light-House Board, is unknown. William B. Franklin, Light-House Inspector for the First District and engineer, would have no doubt overseen the project.

Completion

Reconstruction of the light station on Baker's Island had been substantially completed by the fall of 1855. The Light-House Board reported the following in its annual report to Congress dated September 30, 1855:

Baker's Island and Franklin Island light-houses have been rebuilt, and are ready for the lighting apparatus, which on both is to be a fourth order lens, showing a fixed light, varied by flashes.⁷⁰

By the end of October 1855, both lighthouses were noted to have been "rebuilt and refitted with suitable lens apparatus."⁷¹

Location and Exterior Appearance

The rebuilt Baker Island Light Station was placed on the island's highest point, facing the boat landing to the north. How close the new complex was to the site of the original light tower is not known. Stones salvaged from the original tower and keeper's dwelling may have been reused in the foundations of the new buildings.

The new station differed only slightly from the designs as depicted in the previously described architectural drawing (figs. 3a & 3b). This is known from the earliest photograph of the station taken around

⁷⁰ "Report of the Light-House Board," Appendix No. 1 dated 30 Sept. 1855, in *Report of The Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year Ending June 30, 1855* (Washington, DC: Beverley Tucker, 1856), 290.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 254.

1869 (fig. 5). While similar in general design and massing to the drawing, selected details are notably different. These include placement of the windows in the tower and installation of 4-over-4 double-hung sashes. Bricks were used in the upper foundation of the house, and a transom omitted from the front doorway. Bracketed, rather than curved, hoods were installed over the windows. The brick chimney of the house was a simple design, with no side vents or cap. Absence of a back wing on the house is confirmed by physical evidence preserved in the attic of the existing kitchen wing (fig. 70).

The roof of the lighthouse appears to have been some type of metal. The roof of the house was covered with wood shingles, remnants of which are preserved today in the attic of the later kitchen wing.

The exterior brick walls of the tower and connecting “work” room were “whitewashed,” and the dwelling “painted brown,” according to descriptive listings of lighthouses for the years 1872 and 1874. This is confirmed by the circa-1869 photograph that shows a light-color tower and connector, and a dark-color house. This was also most likely the case in 1855, when earthen colors were considered appropriate for cottage-style dwellings.

Interior Layout and Finishes

The light tower and keeper’s dwelling of the rebuilt Baker Island Light Station were conveniently joined, greatly facilitating access to the tower during inclement weather. A connecting room between the house and tower, referred to as the “work room” in the light lists of 1872 and 1874, most likely held tools and cleaning equipment used by the keeper to service and maintain the station’s light. Supplies

and fuel were also stored on the lower deck of the lighthouse below the lantern. The tower interior was simply finished, with exposed brick walls and no casings at the window openings. Curved, cast-iron stairs were a notable exception, with their decorative scrollwork designs and grillwork treads. Applications of white paint (most likely whitewash) lightened the exposed brick walls, while coatings of darker oil paints protected the metal components of the lighthouse interior.

The original layout of the keeper’s dwelling differed from its current appearance today. The kitchen was then the back room of the main house, a straight stair and hall occupied the west side, and two spacious bedroom chambers were in the second story. The rooms were simply, yet stylishly, outfitted. Floorboards covered the floors, and plaster was applied to sawn lath on the walls and ceilings. Wainscot finished the lower walls of the rooms in the first story, with narrower baseboards installed at the lower walls of the second story. Molded casings framed the doorways and windows of the formal front parlor only; other openings had plain-board casings. Four-panel doors, with brown-glazed “mineral” knobs, were hung on closed-butt hinges made of cast iron. Windows were enclosed with double-hung, 6-over-6 sashes. A fireplace in the front parlor had a simple, wooden mantel.

Heating, Lighting and Plumbing

The primary source of heat in the 1855 keeper’s dwelling was most likely a cast-iron cooking stove in the kitchen, then the back room of the main house. The necessities of meal preparation and warming of water would have generated

heat all year long. A small fireplace in the front parlor also warmed that room. Metal grates in the ceilings of the first-story rooms would have provided passive heat to the upper chambers.

The light tower may have also been equipped with a small warming stove to maintain proper viscosity of fuel during cold winter months. The stoves in the tower and dwelling most likely burned wood in 1855, which was later replaced by coal around 1920.

The Light-House Board supplied sperm-whale-oil to the light stations in 1855 for use in the lighthouse lamps. The new 4th-order Fresnel lens installed at Baker-Island light optimized this lamp light, enabling it to be seen from as far away as 15 to 17 nautical miles. Whale oil may also have been used in smaller table lamps and portable lamps to light the keeper's house and work spaces. New lamps designed to burn lard oil were later installed by 1867, which were in turn replaced with mineral-oil lamps (aka, kerosene) by the 1880s.

Domestic plumbing in 1855 included a cistern in the basement that collected rainwater channeled from the roof. Water pumped to a dry sink in the kitchen would have simply drained to the outside through a pipe in the wall. Bathing was typically a weekly event that used a portable metal tub filled with water warmed on the stove. A small outhouse, or privy, was located behind the house, the roof of which can be seen in the earliest-known photograph taken around 1869 (fig. 5).

Circa 1868: New Kitchen Wing

A new wing for the kitchen was built on the back (south) side of the house around 1868. That this wing is a later addition is suggested by the original plans for the house that show no such appendage (figs. 3a and 3b). This is confirmed by physical evidence on the main house that includes remnants of original wood roofing shingles, and nail holes in the rafter tails for a former cornice and gutter, that are now covered by the wing (fig. 70). While there is no explicit documentation of the wing's construction, a notation for supplying a "cooking stove and fixtures" in 1868 may have been for the new addition.⁷² The wing definitely existed by the time of the earliest-known photograph of circa 1869 (fig. 5). This shows the east elevation of the wing with dark board-and-batten siding and two openings, a doorway and window, with bracketed hoods matching the main house. The foundation of the new wing abutted a slope to the west, enabling a walk-out cellar on the back side (fig. 27).

Alterations were also made to the main house to accommodate the new wing. In the south elevation, one window was converted to an interior doorway, and a second window relocated closer to the light tower. In the east elevation, an exterior doorway was converted to a window. Window and doorway elements that had been removed were undoubtedly reused, given the challenge of transporting such materials to the island.

⁷² "Report of the Light-House Board," 6 Nov. 1868, in *Report of The Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the Year Ending 1868* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1868), 315.

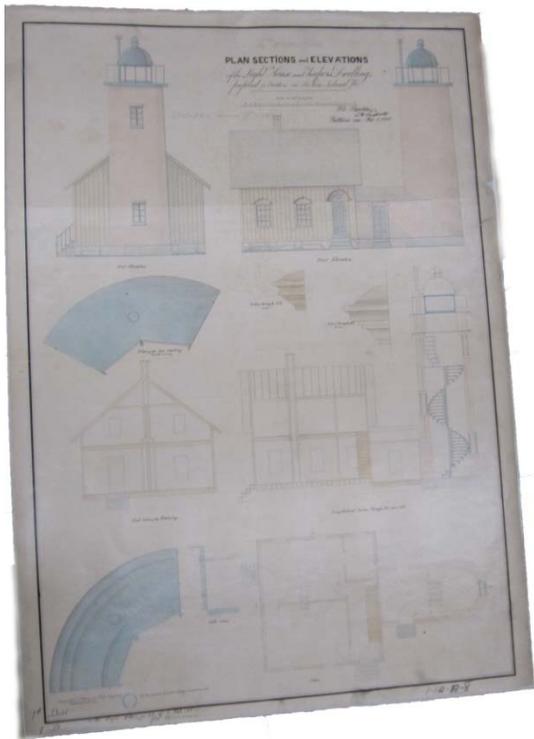
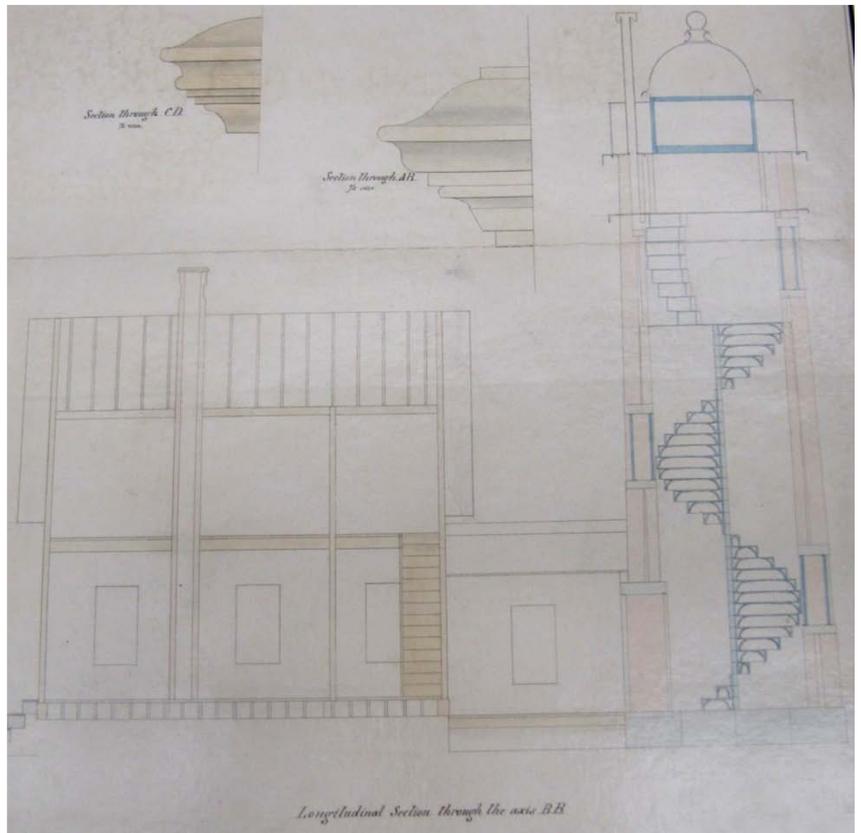
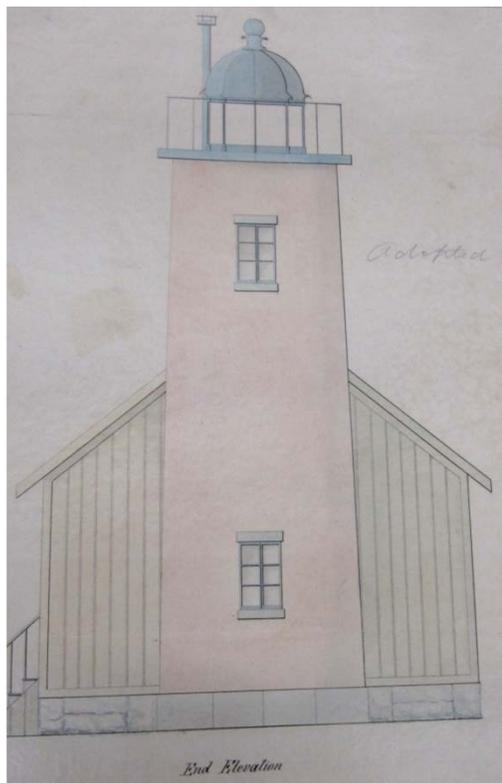


Figure 3a. Details from the original drawing (upper left) for the lighthouse and keeper's dwelling at Baker Island, Maine, signed by Lighthouse Inspector W.B. Franklin, Feb. 1, 1855.



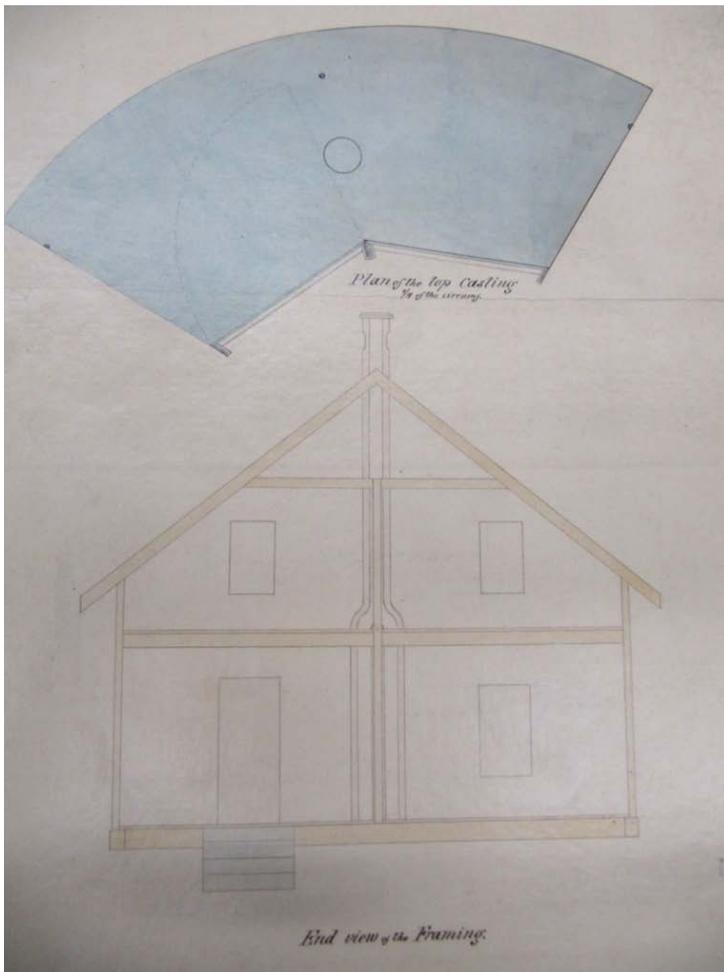
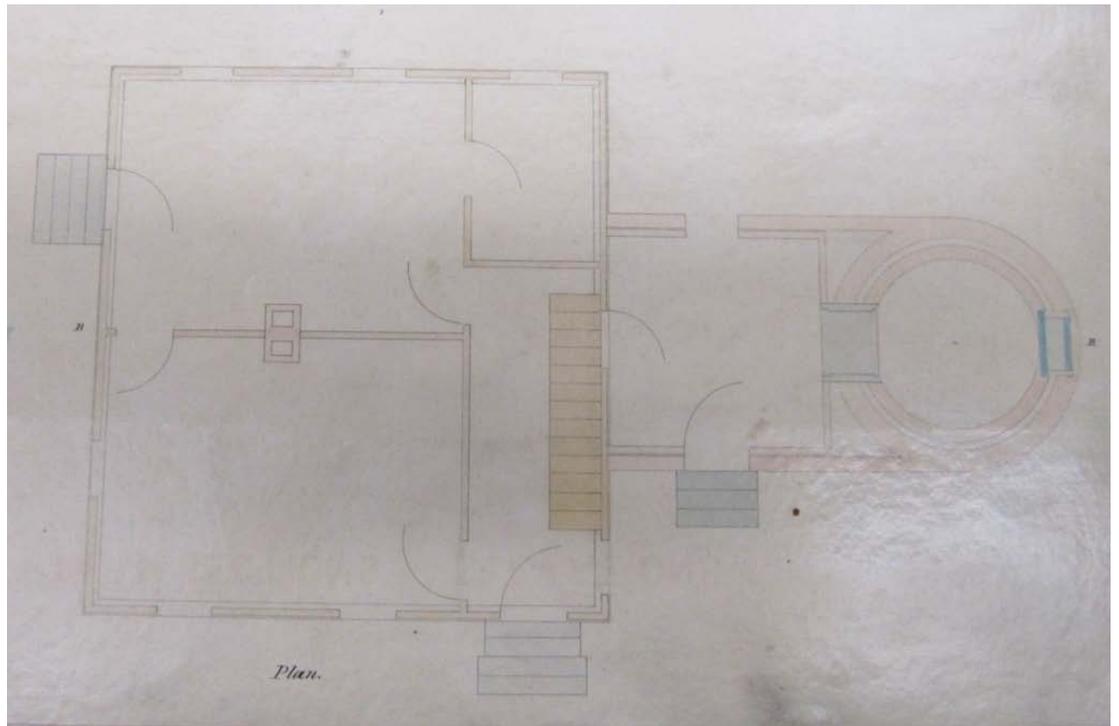


Figure 3b. Additional details from the original drawing for the lighthouse and keeper's dwelling at Baker Island, Maine, signed by Lighthouse Inspector W.B. Franklin, Feb. 1, 1855.



VERTICAL SECTION
OF
FOURTH ORDER LANTERN.

Scale 4b.

Fig 14

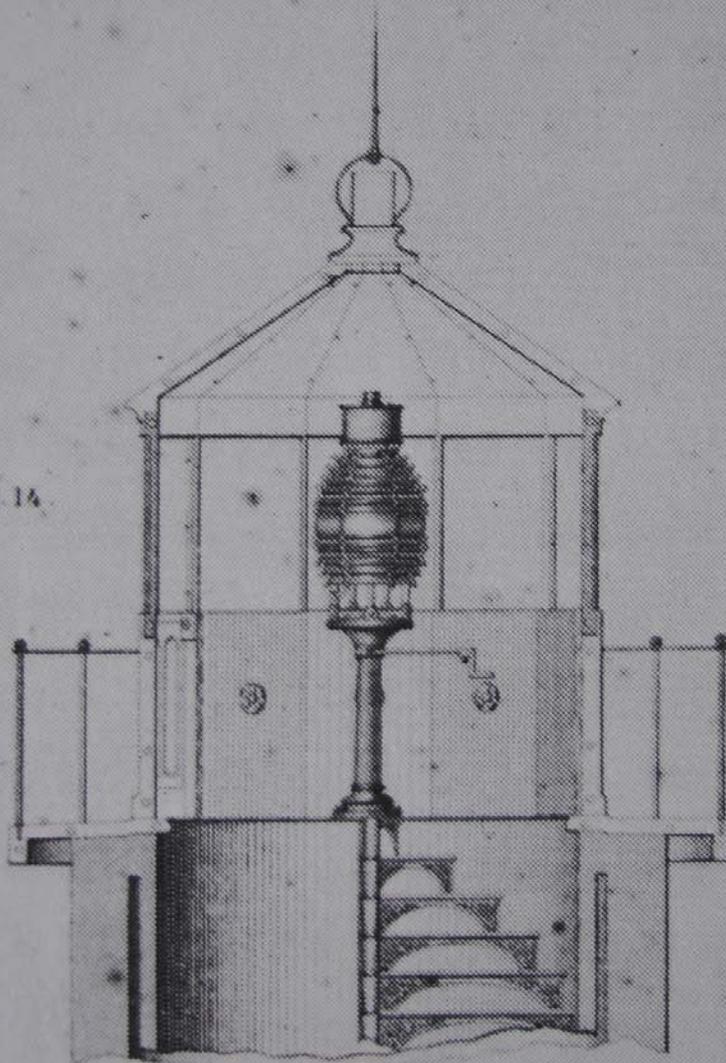


Figure 4. A similar fourth-order Fresnel lens was installed in the Baker Island Light in 1855.



Figure 5. Earliest-known photograph of the Baker Island Light Station, circa 1869.
Note the two-bay wing on the back side of the house.

Other work undertaken in 1868 included furnishing a new door for the boat house, a ventilator and smoke-pipe for the lantern of the lighthouse, supplying two lens covers for the illuminating apparatus, painting the interior woodwork of the tower, and setting seven panes of glass in an unspecified location.⁷³

1874-97: Exterior Alterations

The painted siding of the keeper's dwelling was changed from brown to white sometime between circa 1874 and 1877. The light list for 1874 described the dwelling as a "wooden building, painted brown."⁷⁴ The Light-House Board subsequently reported that "the exterior walls of the dwelling were repainted with two coats of white paint" in fiscal year 1878 (June 30, 1877 to 1878).⁷⁵ Less clear is when clapboards replaced the original board-and-batten siding. This may have coincided with the change of paint colors, or may have occurred at a later date. It had definitely been completed by 1897, based on photographs showing the house covered with white-painted clapboards trimmed with dark-color paint (figs. 8-10).

Five storm doors were furnished for the dwelling in 1881, according to the annual report for that year. The new doors are

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ "Baker's Island Light, Maine," *List of Beacons, Buoys, Monuments, and Other Day Markers in the First-Light District, Corrected to January 1, 1874* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1874), 26.

⁷⁵ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1878* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1878), 11.

shown in 1897 photographs as board-and-batten design (figs. 8 and 9).

1877-78: Cellar Floor Cemented

The Light-House Board reported that "the cellar floor [of the dwelling] was cemented" in fiscal year 1878 (June 30, 1877 to 1878).⁷⁶ No other details are provided.

1895: New Oil House

The Light-House Board built a separate oil house at the Baker Island Light Station by 1895. This new building is documented by the annual report of the Light-House Board for fiscal year 1895, and by a standard plan for oil houses in the First and Second Lighthouse Districts also dated 1895 (fig. 6). The plan was for small, gable-roof building measuring 10' wide by 12' long, with brick walls, a single glazed doorway, no windows, and a louvered ventilator in each gable end. Inside was a single fireproof room paved with bricks laid in cement mortar. Its intended use was to store oil used in the lighthouse lamp. The oil supplied to lighthouses in 1895 was mineral oil (aka, kerosene), which had replaced lard oil in the 1880s.⁷⁷ As

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ The conversion from sperm oil to lard oil had been completed by 1867. "Report of the Light-House Board," 2 Nov. 1867, in *Report of the Secretary of the Treasury on the State of the Finances for the year 1867* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1868), 194.

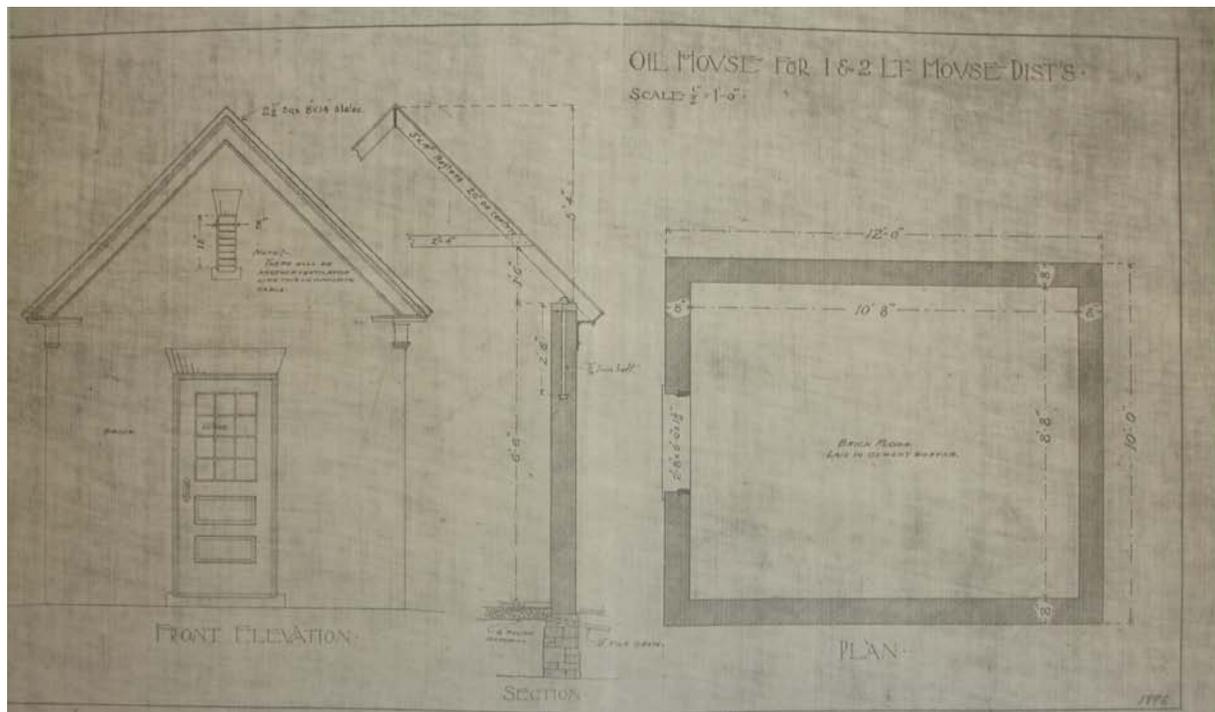


Figure 6. Plan for an “Oil House for 1 & 2 Lt. House Dist’s,” 1895.



Figure 7. New brick oil house at Baker Island Light Station, 1897.

constructed, the Baker Island oil house differed slightly from the standard design by having a transom window instead of a glazed door, and a rooftop ventilator (figs. 7 and 8).

1897: Documentary Photographs

Photographs taken of the Baker Island Light Station in 1897 provide valuable documentation of the station's late-19th century appearance (figs. 8-10). The lighthouse and its attached keeper's dwelling are shown perched on an open, rocky landscape that is mostly devoid of trees. The original dark board-and-batten siding of the house had been replaced by clapboards painted white to match the lighthouse by this time. Board-and-batten storm doors installed in 1881 cover the two north doorways of the house and attached work room. A rare view of the back wing shows the openings in the west elevation at a lower level than exists today (fig. 9). Other buildings depicted in the photographs are a privy behind the house, a barn of unknown date with shed roof, and a brick oil house recently completed in 1895 (fig. 8).

1898: Telephone and Signal Station

National awareness provoked by the Spanish-American War resulted in a U.S. Army Signal Corps installation at the Baker Island Light Station in 1898. The Light-House Board also installed a pole-

mounted telephone line at this time that would have been available to the Signal Corps, as noted in its annual report for 1898:

A telephone line to connect this station [Baker Island] with Northeast Harbor, Maine, was being constructed by hired labor at the close of the fiscal year and will be completed in July, 1898. The cost of this line is to be paid from the appropriation for national defense.⁷⁸

The telephone line connected to the northeast corner of the keeper's dwelling, according to a map dated July-August 1900 and later photographs (figs. 11, 17, and 19).

Associated U.S. Signal Service structures included a building southwest of the lighthouse and an adjacent flag staff, both shown in a plan dated 1900 (fig. 11). No photographs of these have been found. Previous studies have described the barn north of the lighthouse as a Signal Service building, although this is known from photographs to have existed as early as 1897. Its identification on the map of 1900 as a "Barn U.S." simply distinguishes it as government property associated with the light station.

⁷⁸ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of the Treasury for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1898* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1898), 50.

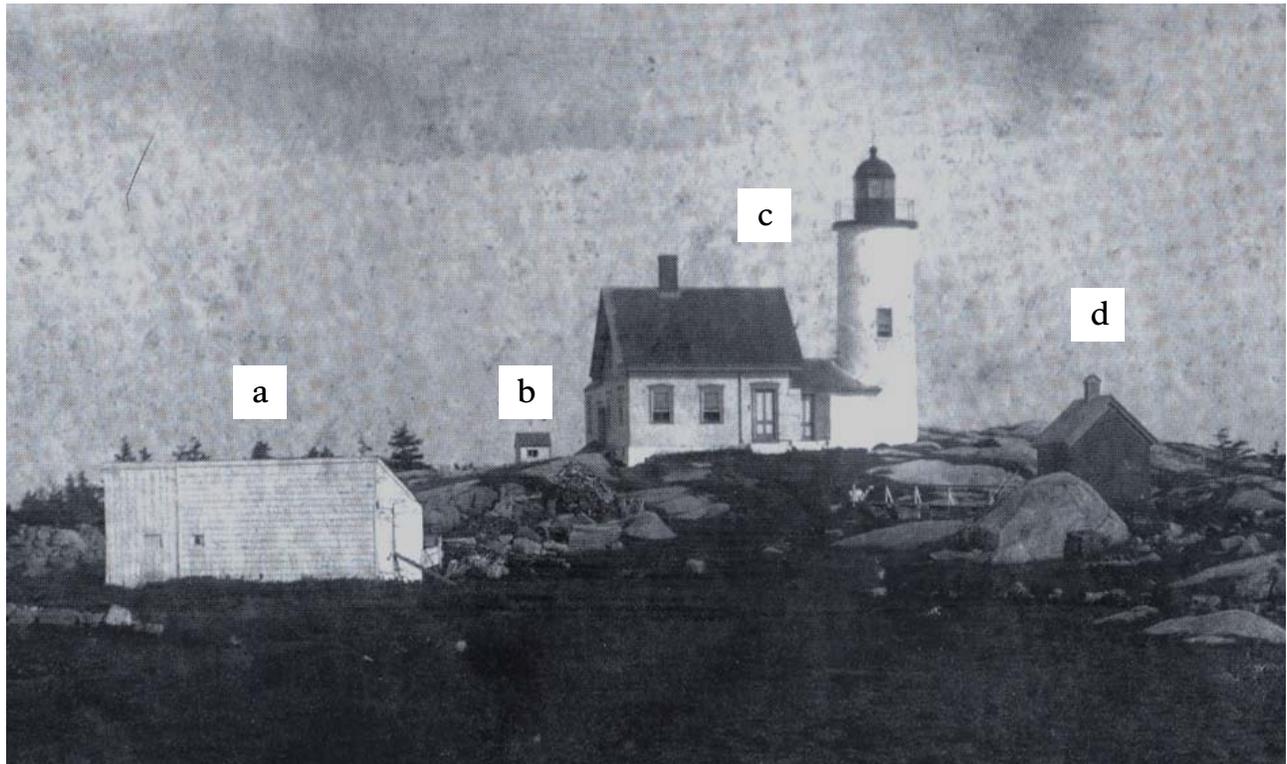


Figure 8. Baker Island Light Station in 1897, showing the following structures: (a) barn, (b) privy, (c) keeper's dwelling with attached light tower, and (d) oil house.



Figure 9. Closer views of Baker Island Light Station, Maine, 1897.



Figure 10. Distant views of the Baker Island Light Station, 1897.

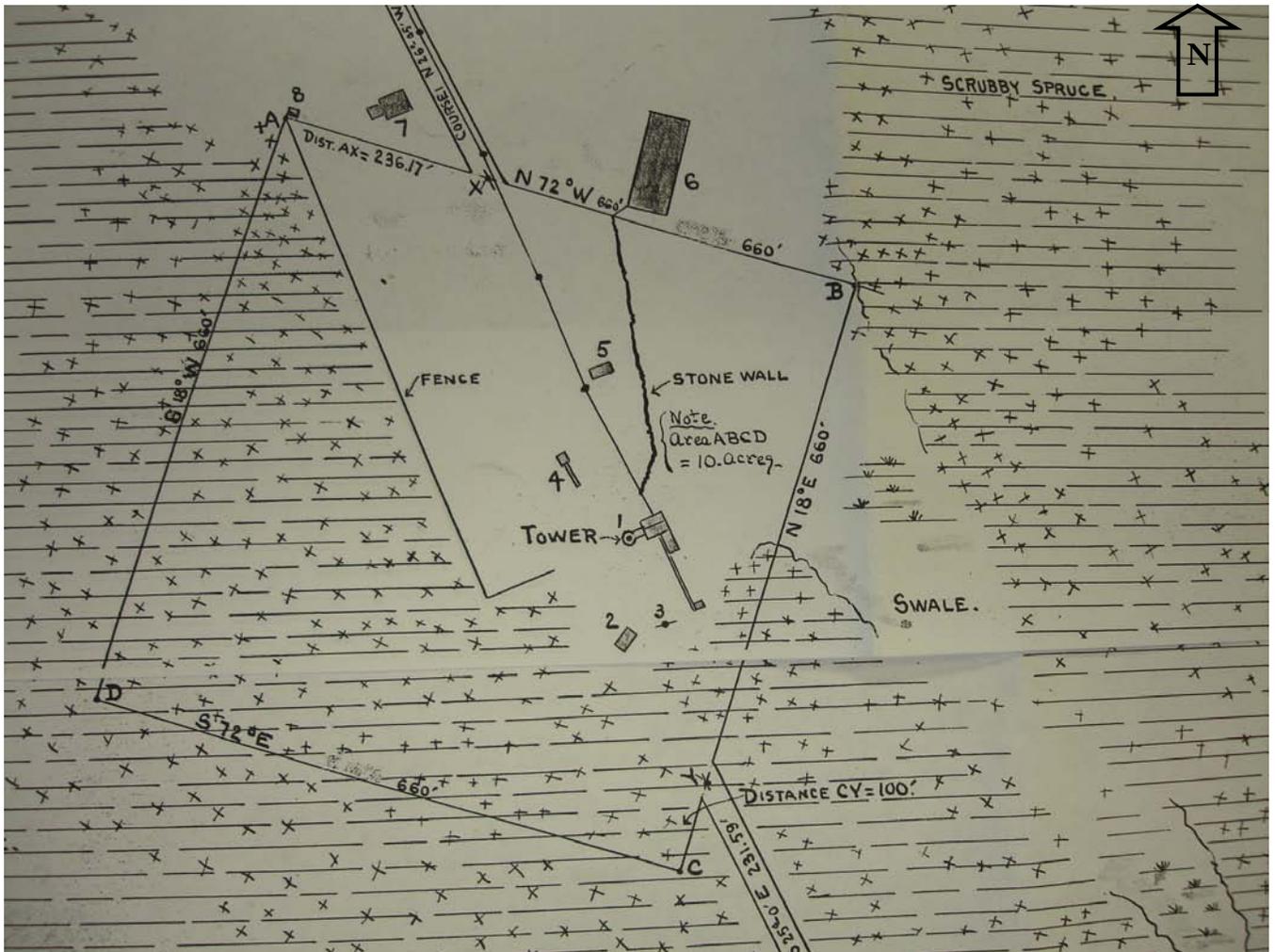


Figure 11. Detail showing the 10-acre Light House Reservation on Baker Island, Maine, July-August, 1900. Key: (1) Light House Tower and Dwelling, (2) U.S. Signal Service Building, (3) U.S.S.S. Flag Staff, (4) Oil House, and (5) Barn U.S. A line running northwest from the dwelling is a “Telephone Line to N.E. Harbor via Bear Isl[and].” Buildings located outside the reservation are (6) House and Barn, Chas. A. Gilley Owner; (7) House, Wm F. Stanley; and (8) Hen House. Related light-station structures not shown on this detail are (15) “Boat House U.S.L.H. Est.” on the north shore, and (20) “Fog Signal Reservation” on the south shore.

1903: Light Tower and House Renovations

The Light-House Board completed significant alterations of both the Baker Island light tower and keeper's dwelling in 1903. This coincided with the administrative transfer of the Board from the Department of the Treasury to the Department of Commerce and Labor. The work was succinctly described in the 1903 annual report as follows:

The light tower was reinforced by a 4-inch brick wall built around the outside; one end of the dwelling was renewed; and the revolving clock and boat slip were repaired.⁷⁹

No other documentation of the tower reinforcement, such as drawings or specifications, has been found. Nor is it known who supplied and laid the new bricks. That the work was actually done is evident from subsequent historic photographs (figs. 16-18) and the existing appearance of the tower today. Photographs show the north window now recessed, with new a brick sill and arched lintel. In addition, a vertical line is evident at the intersection of the tower with the attached work room, indicating that the tower only had been sheathed with new brickwork.

Work on the dwelling is documented by a set of three plans showing its "present arrangement" and "proposed alteration" (figs. 12-15). Curiously, the rear kitchen wing of the present arrangement is incorrectly depicted on the front (north) side of the house—a configuration that never existed. The plan is nevertheless

valuable as the earliest known record of the interior layout. This shows the front doorway opening onto a long stair "hall," with doorways accessing a front "living room" a rear "parlor," and a "work room" connecting with the lighthouse. A "pantry" in the back corner off the parlor suggests the original use of the parlor as a kitchen. The back wing is divided into two rooms: a "kitchen" with a large closet next to the chimney, and a "fuel" room with an exterior doorway. The second-story layout reflects that of the first story with two bedroom "chambers" over the principal first-story rooms and two large closets at either end of the stair hall.

The proposed alteration of the dwelling, as shown in the drawings, included replacement of the straight stair with a U-shaped stair. New partitions created a closet next to the pantry, and a third bedroom chamber and closet on the back side of the house. Two new dormers, on the front and back sides of the main roof, provided the second-story chambers with more light. These changes were made, except for the first-story closet, based on existing conditions today. Other work that is not documented may have included reinforcement of the interior cellar walls with brickwork, which exists today.

⁷⁹ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1903* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1903), 11.

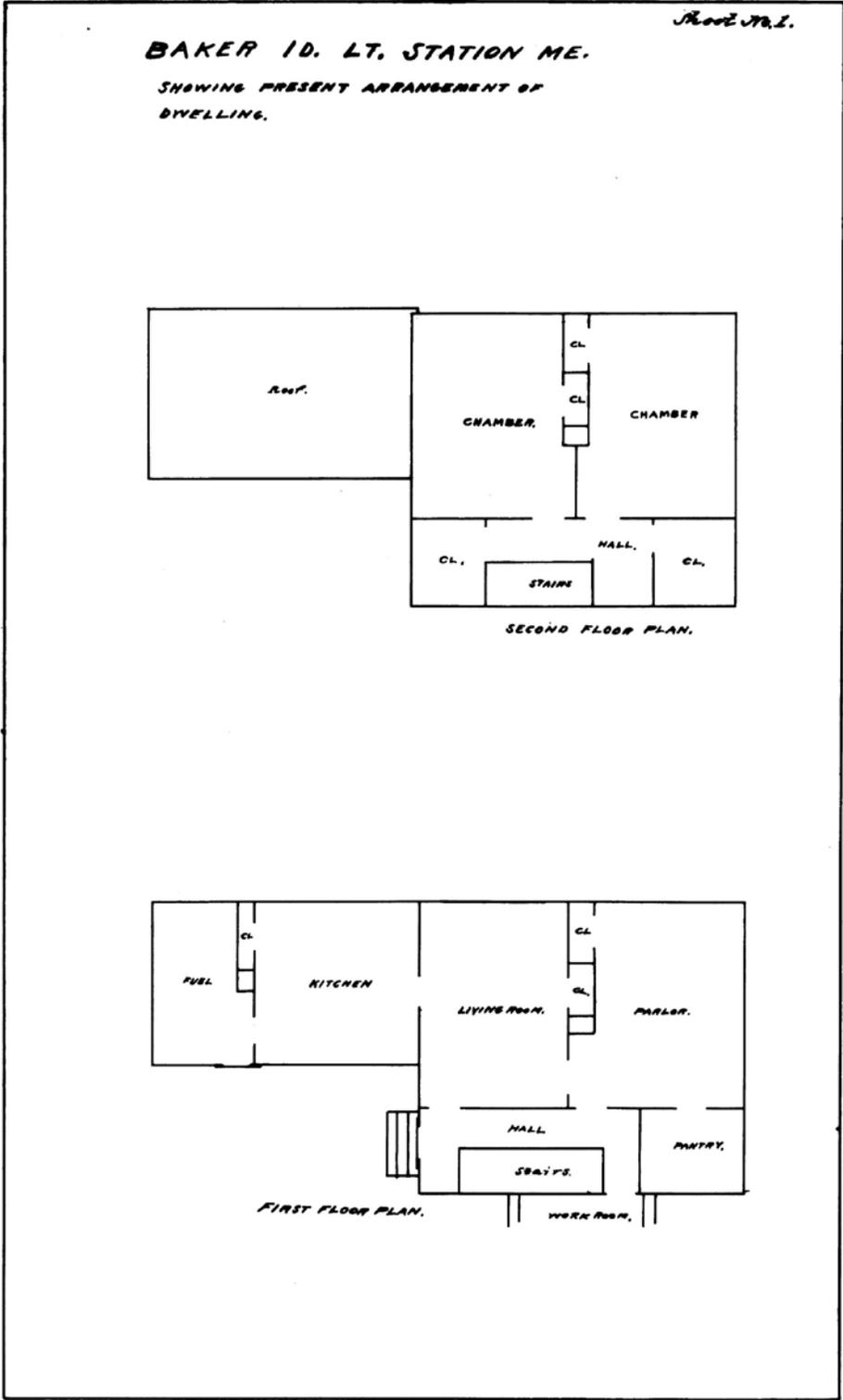
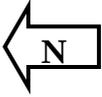


Figure 12. First- and second-floor plans of the “Baker Id. Lt. Station ME, Showing Present Arrangement of Dwelling,” circa 1903. (Sheet 1 of 3.) Note the incorrect placement of the kitchen wing on the north side of the house.

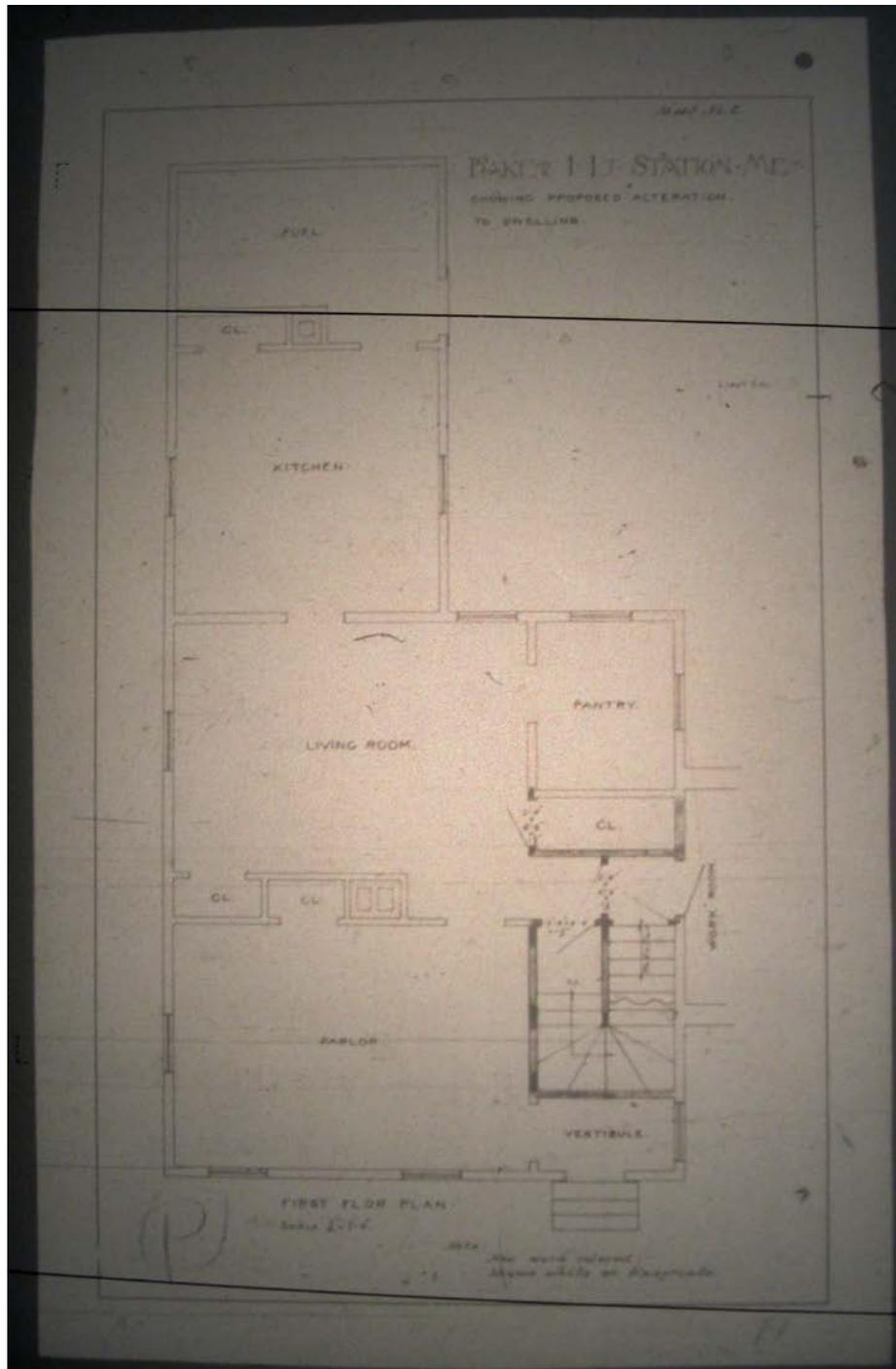


Figure 13. First floor plan of the “Baker I. Lt. Station ME, Showing Proposed Alteration to Dwelling,” signed by Lieut. Col. W.S. Stanton, circa 1903 (Sheet 2 of 3). Print is from microfilm in the National Archives.

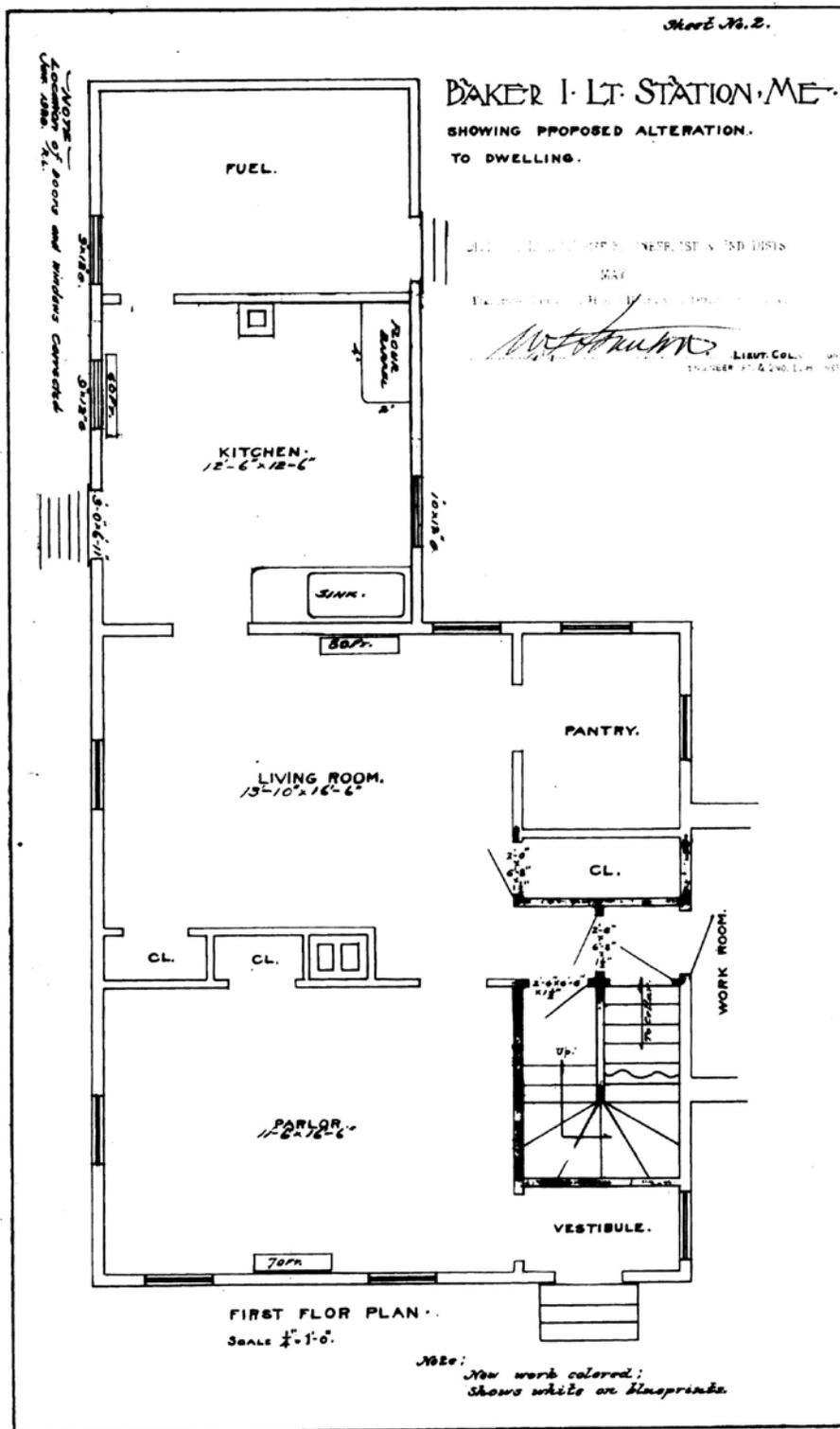


Figure 14. First floor plan of the “Baker I. Lt. Station ME, Showing Proposed Alteration to Dwelling,” signed by Lieut. Col. W.S. Stanton, circa 1903 (Sheet 2 of 3); annotated in January 1920 with alterations to kitchen openings, room dimensions, and radiator locations.

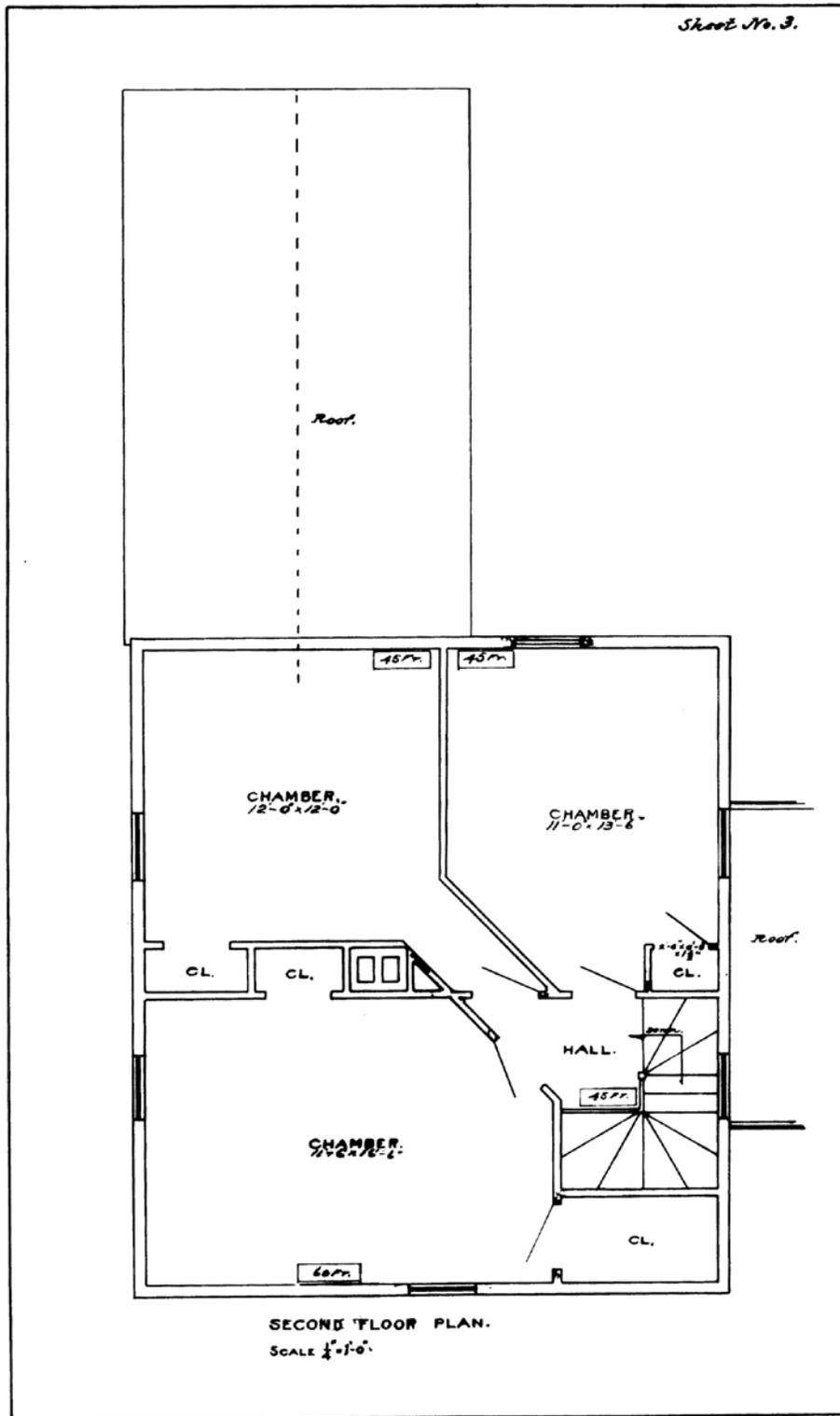


Figure 15. Second-floor plan of the Baker Island Light Station, showing proposed alteration to the dwelling, circa 1903 (Sheet 3 of 3); annotated in January 1920 with room dimensions and radiator locations.

1905: New Fuel House

Construction of a new outbuilding at the Baker Island Light Station is recorded in the annual report of the Lighthouse Board for 1905 that notes: “A fuel house was built. Various repairs were made.”⁸⁰ This new structure most likely provided covered storage for wood and/or coal used in the cast-iron stoves of the dwelling, supplementing an existing fuel room off the kitchen (figs. 12-14). This new building is shown in circa-1930s photographs as a wood-framed structure with gable roof located directly behind the keeper’s dwelling (figs.16 and 17). By the early 1950s the structure had a new use as a “Paint Locker” and “Work Shop” (figs. 19, 20 and 23).

Circa 1920: Heating System and Remodeling

A hot-water heating system with cast-iron radiators was installed in the keeper’s dwelling of the Baker Island Light Station around 1920. It is also likely that the kitchen wing was remodeled at this time to accommodate a coal bin in the cellar of the kitchen wing; a coal-fueled boiler was located in the main cellar. That a significant renovation was undertaken is suggested by comparison of a photograph taken in 1897, showing the west and south elevations of the wing (fig. 9), with existing conditions today. Work entailed elevating the stone foundation of the wing, raising and substantially replacing the framing of the first floor, and repositioning (raising) the doorway and window openings in the

⁸⁰ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of Commerce and Labor, June 30, 1905* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1905), 28.

first story. A new window may have been added to the east wall of the kitchen at this time and the two rooms updated with new woodwork and kitchen cabinets.

A publication of the United States Lighthouse Service noted the following about heating systems for the light stations in 1915:

In all new dwellings hot water or steam heat is provided in climates requiring it, as well as sanitary plumbing with water-supply and sewerage systems; these features are also being added to older dwellings not so equipped, as circumstances allow.⁸¹

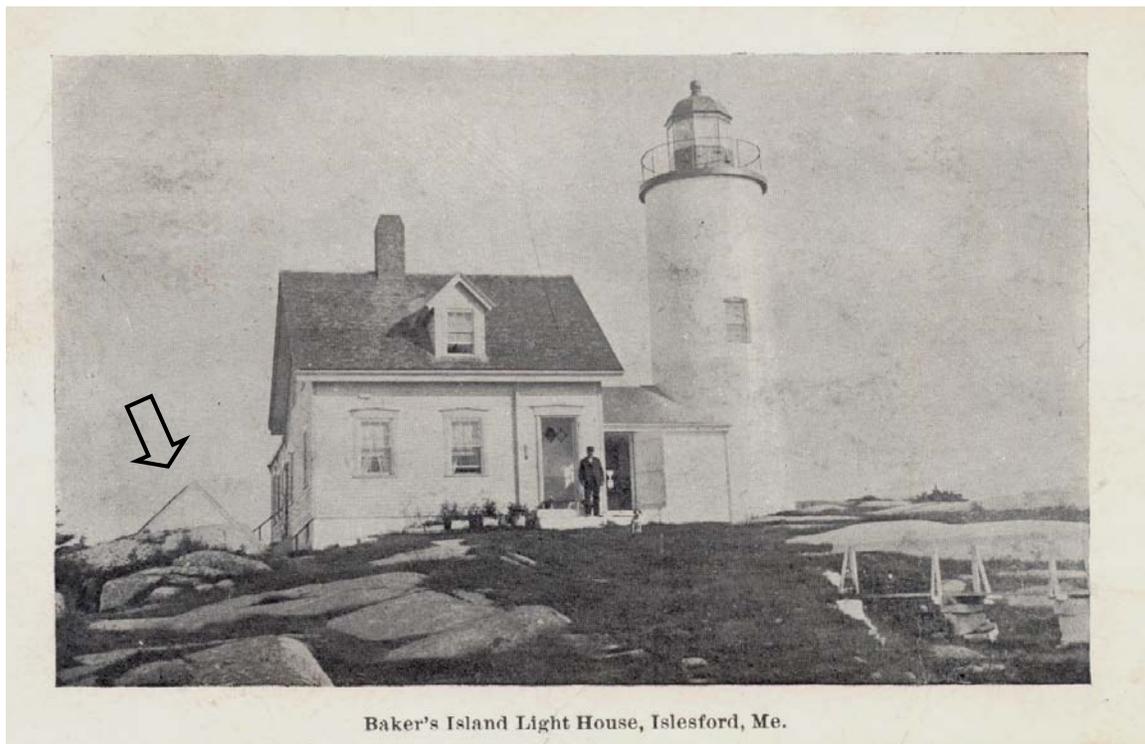
Although it is not known exactly when this heating system was installed at the Baker Island Light Station, annotations showing radiator locations and sizes were added in January 1920 to the earlier floor plans of circa 1903 (figs.14 and 15).⁸² These also show the kitchen as enlarged and remodeled by reconfiguring the location and openings of the south wall, relocating an exterior doorway in the west wall, installing a new window in the east wall, and adding a flour barrel and kitchen sink.

⁸¹ U.S. Department of Commerce, *The United States Lighthouse Service, 1915* (Washington, DC: GPO), 1916, 78.

⁸² A similar heating system was approved for installation at the nearby Bear Island Light Station in September 1927, judging by floor plans “Showing Location of Proposed Radiators for Keeper’s Dwelling at Bear Island Lt. Sta.” (Portland: Superintendent of Lighthouses Office, First District., approved 22 Sept. 1927); copy in the Acadia NP Archives.



Figure 16. Circa-1930s photographs of Baker Island Light Station showing a dormer installed on the roof of the keeper's dwelling circa 1903, and the gable end of a fuel house built in 1905 (at arrows).



Baker's Island Light House, Islesford, Me.



Figure 17. Baker Island Light Station, circa 1938.



Figure 18. Visitors at Baker Island Light Station, 1938.

1942: U.S. Coast Guard Structures

The U.S. Coast Guard constructed a watch tower in the vicinity of the former U.S. Signal Corps station in 1942,⁸³ shortly after assuming responsibility for the nation's light stations in 1939. This World War II-era structure rose 35 feet tall, incorporating an enclosed room with windows on an open framework of stilts. A nearby garage appears to have been built about the same time judging by its construction characteristics, although the 1988 National Register nomination misidentified the building as an earlier "fuel house" constructed in 1905. The earliest known view showing both structures is an aerial photograph of Baker Island taken around 1951 (fig. 19).

1954: Electrification

Electrification of the Baker Island Light Station by the U.S. Coast Guard is documented by three drawings dated April 21, 1954 (figs. 20-22). These are wiring diagrams for the light tower, keeper's dwelling, "work shop" (the former fuel house), and privy. The oil house was adapted as a "generator house," with an underground wire connecting to the cellar of the dwelling. The old Fresnel lens of the lighthouse was retrofitted with a single 94-watt light bulb. Ceiling lights operated by convenient wall switches were installed in the keeper's dwelling, and a fuse box located in the basement.

⁸³ U.S. Coast Guard, "Proceedings of a Board of Survey: Baker Island Light Station, Hancock County, Maine," 2 Aug. 1957. The date of the "lookout tower" is listed as 1942.

1957: Fresnel Lens Removed and Survey

The U.S. Coast Guard disestablished the Baker Island light in November 1955, only one year after installing generator-powered electrical service. Plans were begun shortly thereafter for disposing of the property (fig. 23). The lighthouse appears to have sat dark for the next two years until 1957, when it was updated with an automated mechanism that required only occasional maintenance. This may have included removal of the historic Fresnel lens, which resides today in the collection of The Fishermen's Museum at Pemaquid Point Lighthouse in Bristol, Maine.⁸⁴

A survey of the light station by the U.S. Coast Guard in August 1957 included the following detailed descriptions of existing buildings, site features, and conditions:

DWELLING AND ATTACHED LIGHT TOWER:
Dwelling, 46 x 24'; 2 story frame construction; 6 rooms, no bath; brick and stone foundation, basement with water cistern, coal fired steam furnace an approx. 4 tons coal; but excluding Light Tower, approximately 40' high, brick masonry. Dwelling in fair to good condition. Date: 1828 [sic].

PAINT LOCKER: 18 ½ x 16 ½' frame single-story storage bldg; wood deck, wood shingles roof and siding, stone foundation.

⁸⁴ New England Lighthouses: A Virtual Guide, Pemaquid Point Light, Bristol, Maine: <http://lighthouse.cc/pemaquid/history.html>.

Condition: Poor to fair. Date: After 1900.

OUTHOUSE: 5 x 6', frame, wood shingle roof and siding. Condition: Fair to good. Date: Included with Item 2 [Dwelling and Attached Light Tower.]

LOOKOUT TOWER: Approx. 35' high, 12 x 12' skeleton timber structure. Condition: Poor to fair. Date: 1942.

GARAGE & STORAGE LOFT: 20 x 14', frame, 2 story, wood shingle roof & siding, wood post foundation. Condition: Fair. Date: Unknown, after 1900.

OIL HOUSE: 11 x 9 (ft), brick structure with concrete foundation, cement-asbestos roof shingles. Condition: Fair. Date: Prior 1900.

FLAG POLE: Steel, 40' high. Condition: Rusted & very poor. Date: 1937.

WALKWAYS, LANDINGS & STAIRS: Approx. 150 lin. Ft. total. Timber supports & wood runners & hand rail. Condition: Poor to fair. Date: Unknown.

BOATHOUSE: 30 X 12', wood foundation, frame & siding, asbestos roof shingles, hand operated launchway winch, including only land on which boathouse rests; also the launchway, structure, wood rail on wood posts, approx. 100 ft. long, which structure rests on public landing area. [Condition]: Poor. Date: Prior 1853.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ U.S. Coast Guard, "Proceedings of a Board of Survey," 2 Aug. 1957.

The U.S. Coast Guard transferred 10 acres of the former light station to the National Park Service in December 1958, not including the light tower. The same buildings recorded by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1957 were also noted in a "Land Ownership Record" prepared by Acadia National Park in January 1959:

One 2-story dwelling containing light tower ; one paint locker; one outhouse; one lookout tower; one garage with storage loft; one oil house; one boat house not on government land.⁸⁶

It is evident from this description that the dwelling was then still attached to the light tower.

Circa 1965: Work Room Removed

The brick work room connecting the keeper's dwelling and light house had been removed by 1965, when the U.S. Coast Guard installed a chain-link fence around the tower.⁸⁷ No documentation of this demolition has been found, which may have been a collaborative effort between the National Park Service and the U.S. Coast Guard. The earliest photograph showing the newly detached structures is dated circa 1971 (fig. 24).

⁸⁶ In the archives of Acadia NP.

⁸⁷ "SAM Shore Facility Inventory Report, Baker Island Light." Islesford: USCG Base, 21 Aug. 2007.

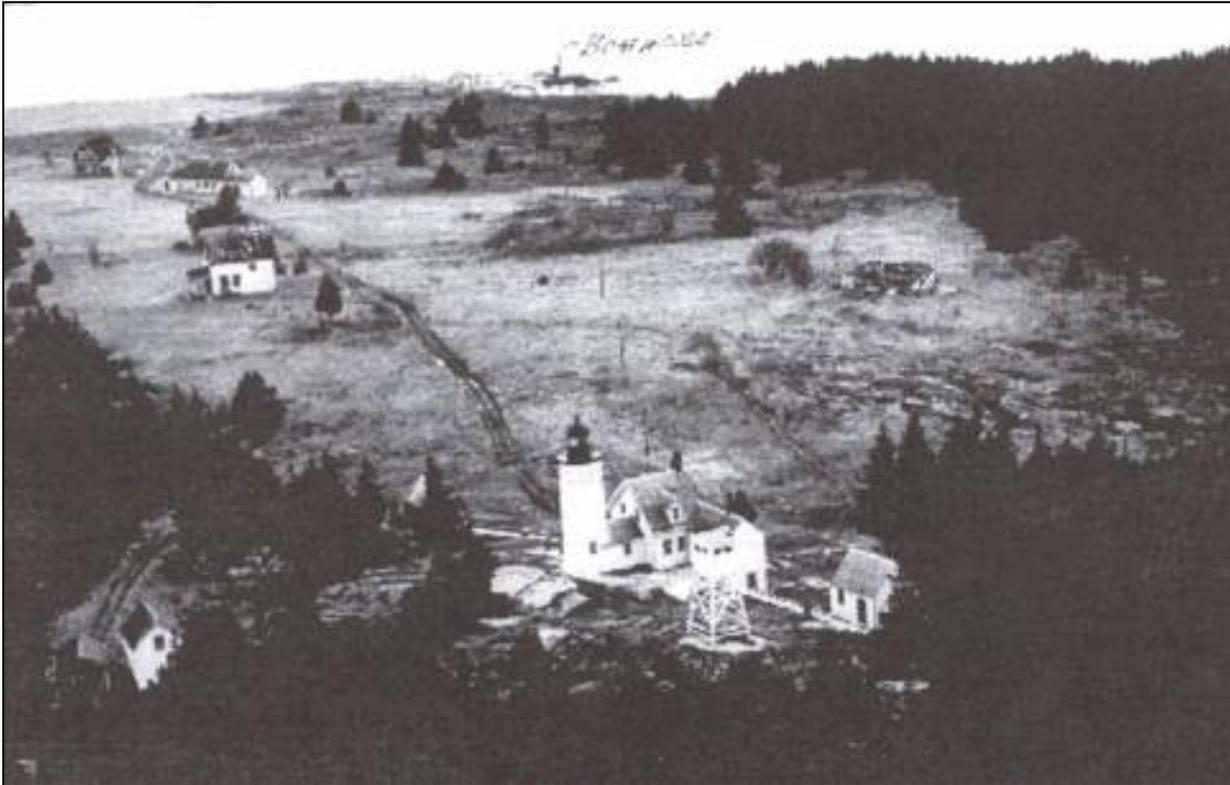
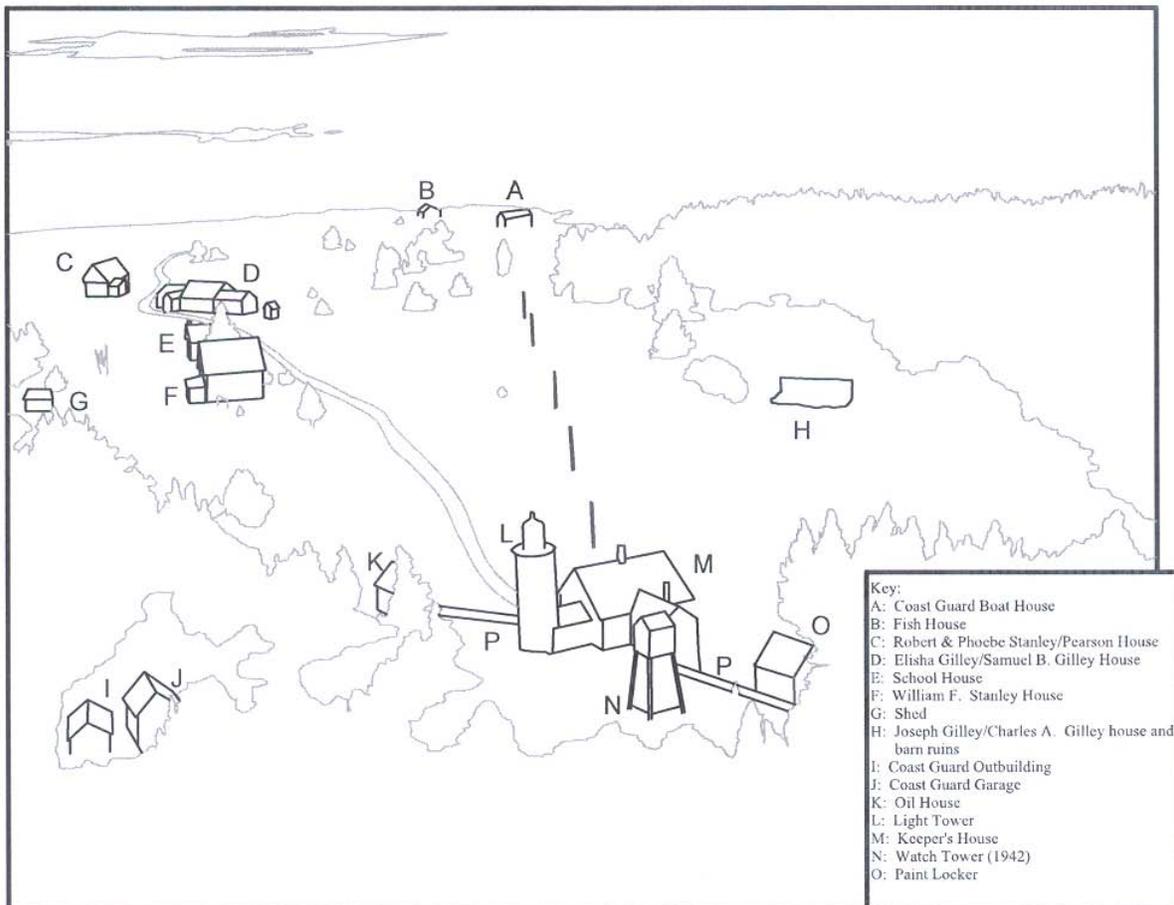


Figure 19. Aerial view and key of Baker Island structures, circa 1951.



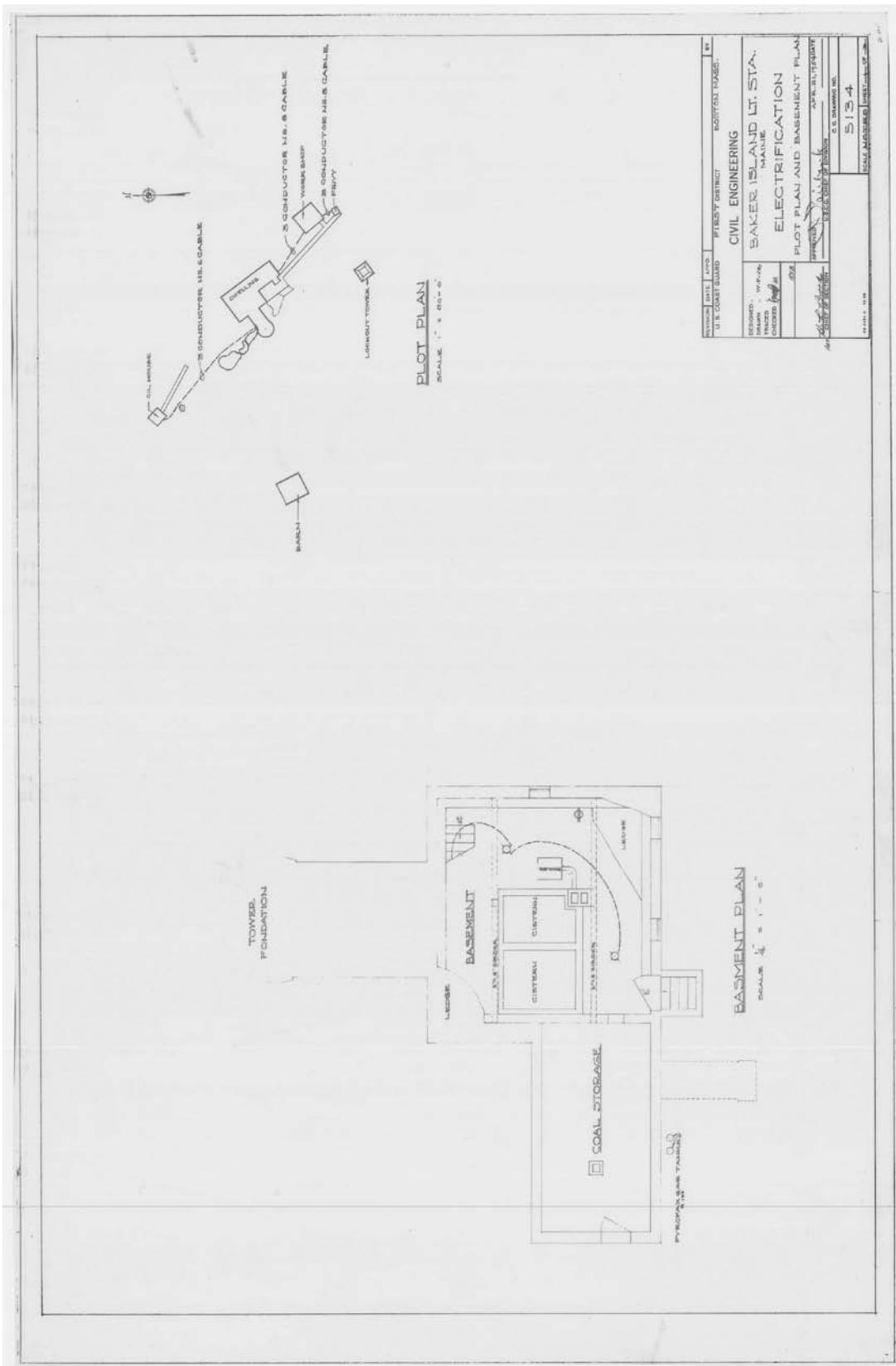


Figure 20. Sheet 1: "Baker Island Lt. Sta., Maine, Electrification: Plot Plan and Basement Plan," April 21, 1954.

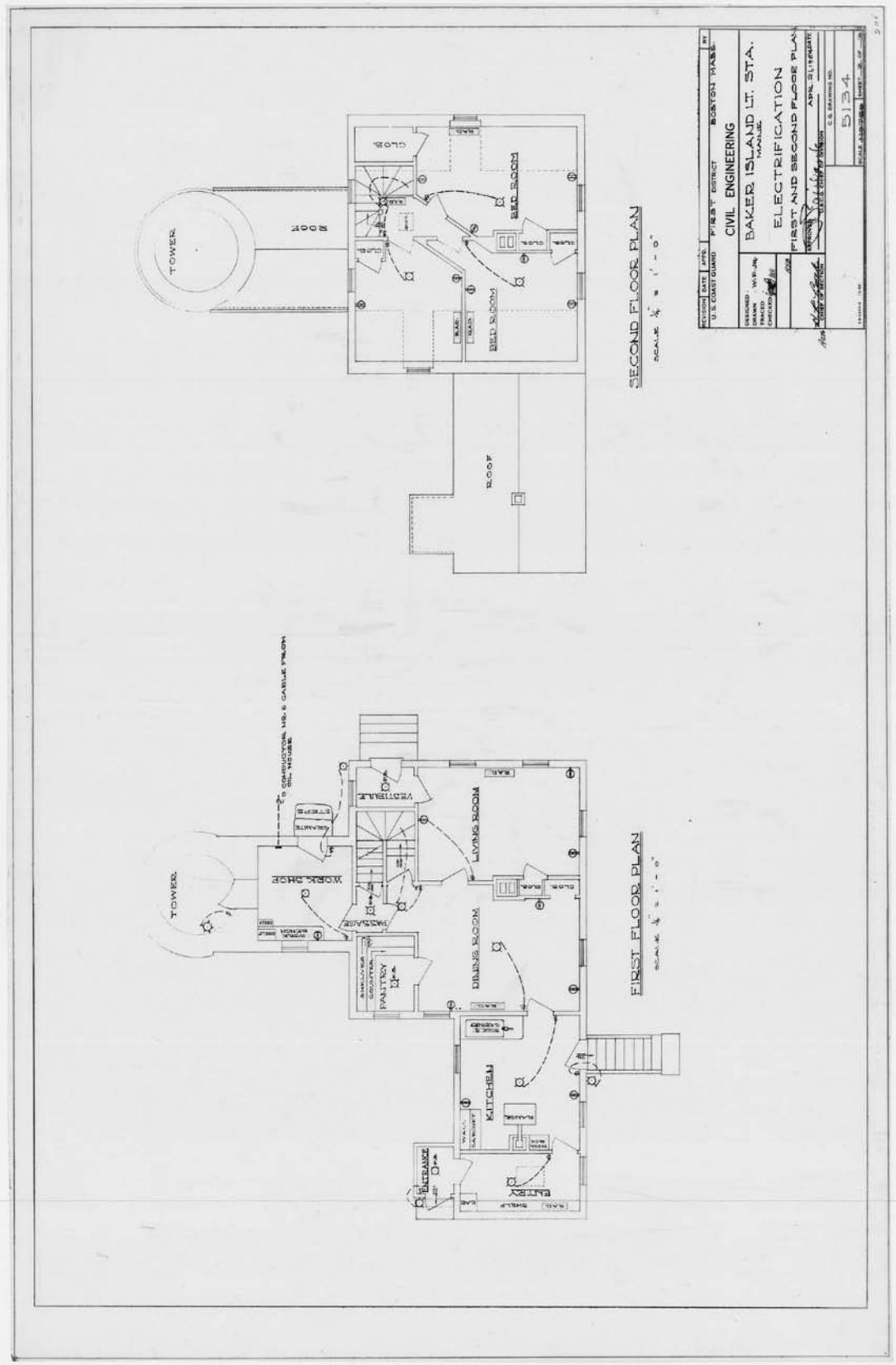


Figure 21. Sheet 2: "Baker Island Lt. Sta., Maine, Electrification: First and Second Floor Plan," April 21, 1954.

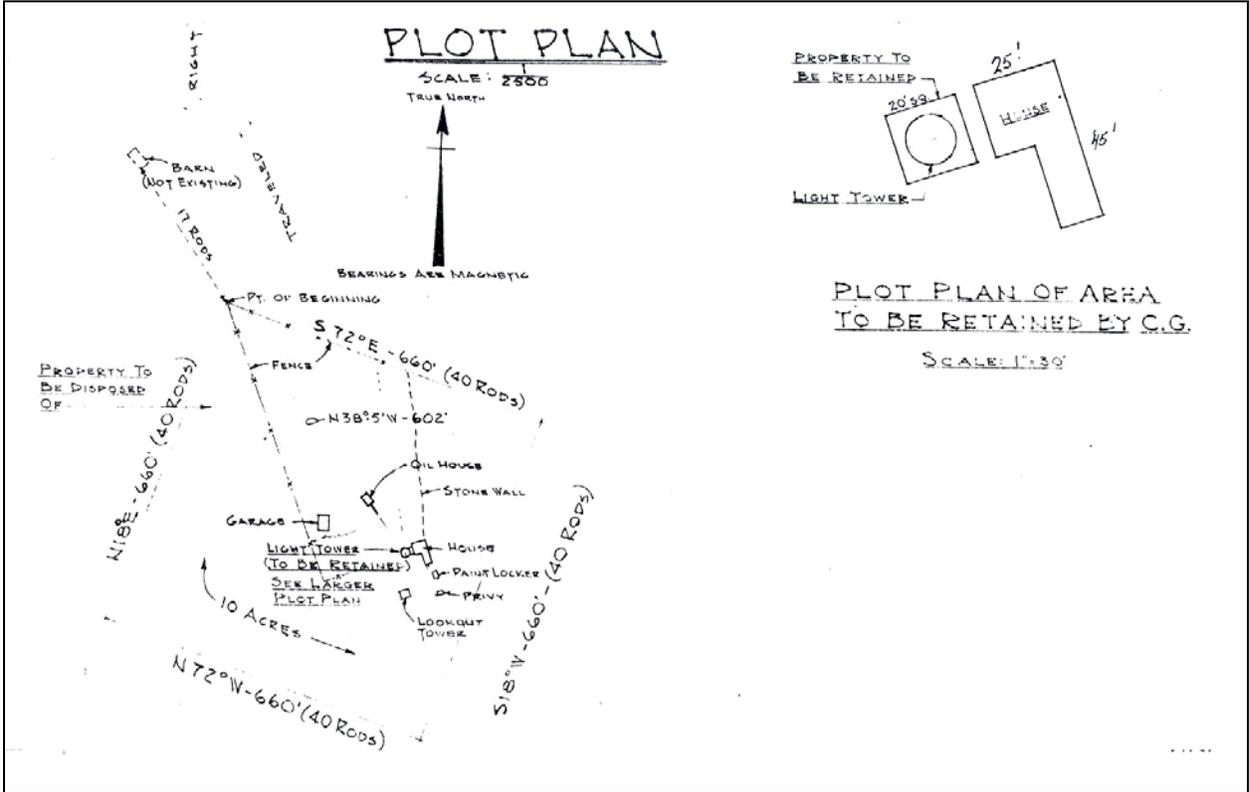


Figure 23. Detail of "Baker Island Light Sta., Maine, Sketch Plot Plan," Dec. 1, 1955.

1959-90: National Park Service Maintenance, Repairs and Documentation

Few maintenance records were found for the vacated buildings of the Baker Island Light Station for the early years of National Park Service ownership, 1959-75. Photographs taken around 1971 (figs. 24 and 25) show wooden shutters installed over the windows of the keeper's dwelling and light tower, and a chain-link fence enclosing the now free-standing tower. The former ca.-1855 privy, 1895 oil house, 1905 fuel house, and 1942 watch tower, and garage still existed, and a wooden walkway on the west side of the house was in a state of disrepair. The exterior siding of the house was repainted white in 1974 (fig. 26), and new wood roofing shingles replaced existing asphalt or asbestos shingles in 1976.⁸⁸

General clearing of the site appears to have taken place between 1971 and 1976, removing all the decking and outbuildings except the oil house and garage.⁸⁹ The Historic American Buildings Survey recorded the surviving structures in 1976 with a combination of measured drawings (keeper's dwelling only) and large-format photographs (figs. 27-35).⁹⁰

A conditions assessment of the keeper's dwelling was undertaken in 1990 by the Building Conservation Branch of the

⁸⁸ Trip Report from E. Blaine Cliver, Regional Historical Architect, to Acadia NP, 31 Aug. 1976.

⁸⁹ No documentation of this demolition work has been found.

⁹⁰ Drawings were produced for the "lightkeeper's house" only.

North Atlantic Region, National Park Service. It concluded that "the overall condition of the structure was found to be surprisingly good, especially considering that it has been unoccupied for many years."⁹¹

1959-96: Light Tower Repairs

The U.S. Coast Guard continued to maintain the tower and light of the Baker Island lighthouse as an aid to navigation during the years 1959 to 1996. Although a diligent search was made for maintenance and repair records, few were found for this time period. A chain-link security fence was installed around the tower in 1965, according to a later inventory report.⁹² Photographs indicate that glass blocks replaced early window sashes, and a solar panel had been installed on the upper deck, sometime between 1971 and 1976 (figs. 26 and 33). The exterior bricks were blasted with "black beauty" glass beads and a coating system was applied to the exterior bricks in the 1980s or 1990s.⁹³

⁹¹ Frank Briscoe, "Condition Assessment Report: Baker Island Lightkeeper's Quarters, Acadia National Park" (Boston: Building Conservation Branch, Cultural Resources Center, North Atlantic Region, NPS, 1990), 8.

⁹² "SAM Shore Facility Inventory Report: Baker Island Light" (Islesford: USCG Base, 21 Aug. 2007).

⁹³ The 2007 "Inventory Report" identifies this work as having been done "in the 1980s," although significant brick repairs were also planned in 1996, according to a letter from C.W. More, USCG to Superintendent Paul Haertel, Acadia NP, 30 Aug. 1996. Abrasive glass beads still litter the ground at the base of the tower today.



Figure 24. Views of the keeper's dwelling and light tower (above), and the paint locker and privy (below) from the lookout tower, circa 1971.





Figure 25. Watch tower (above) and garage (below) at Baker Island Light Station. circa 1971.



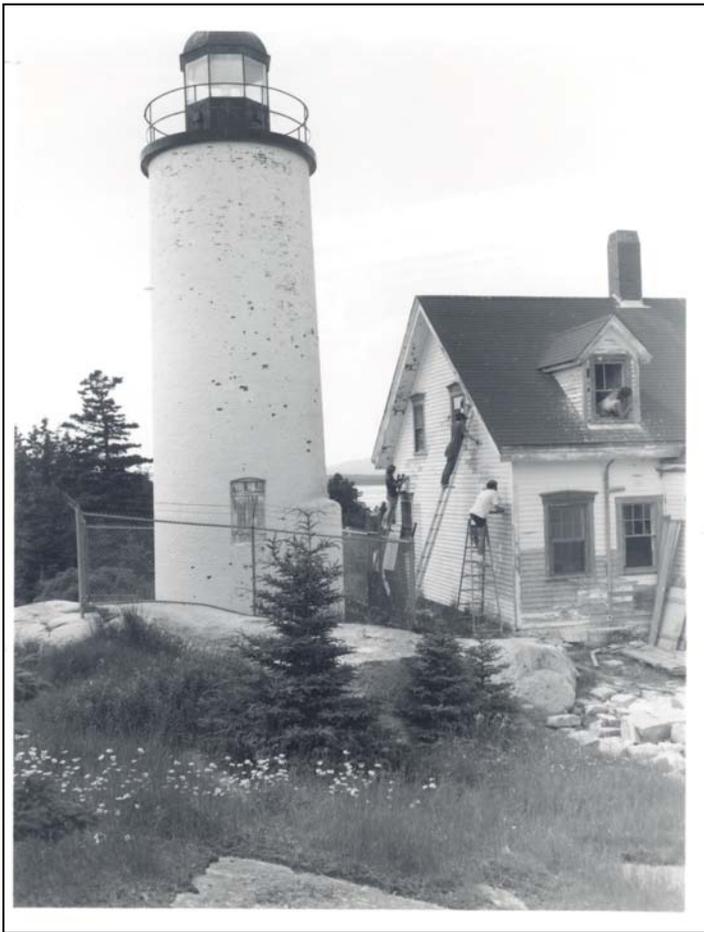


Figure 26. Exterior repair of the keeper's dwelling, by the National Park Service, 1974.

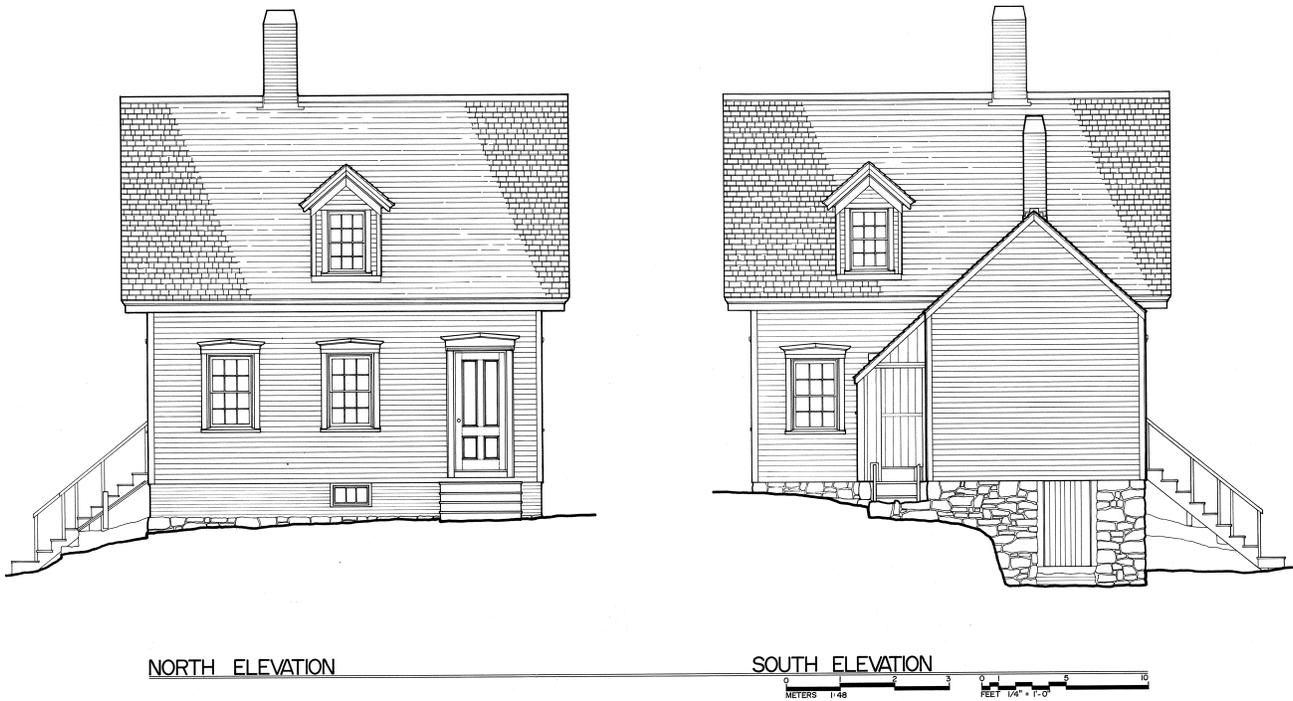
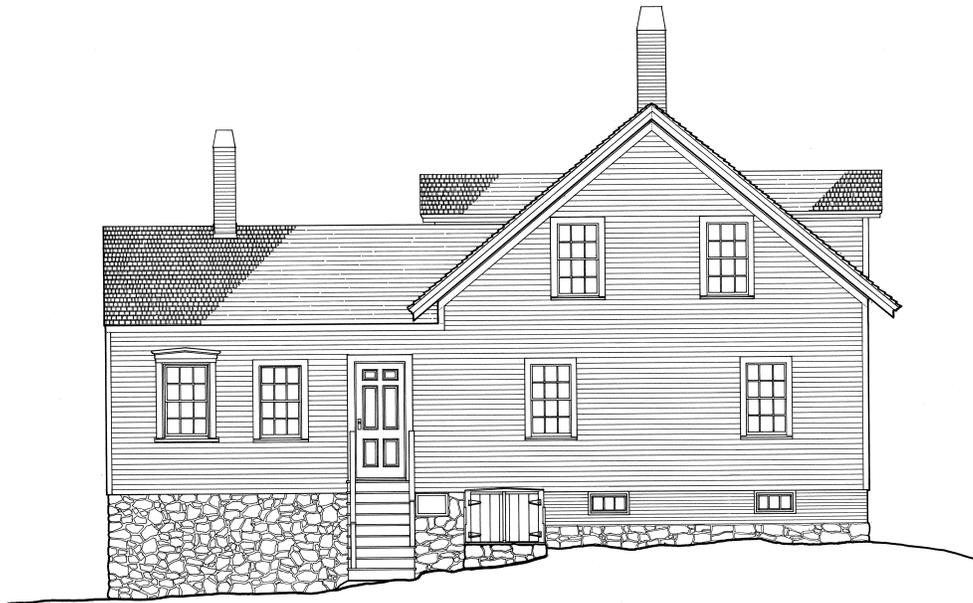
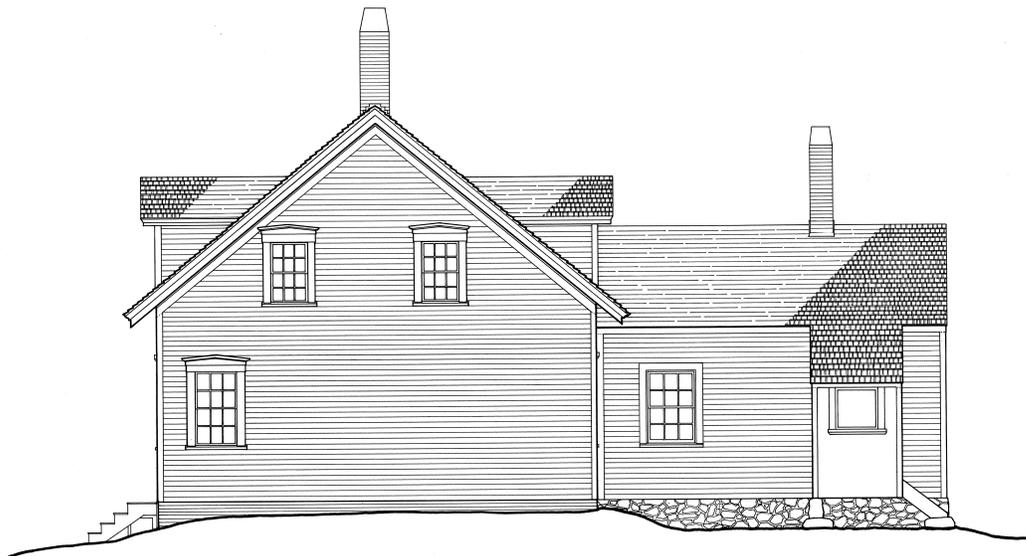


Figure 27. North and south elevations of the keeper's dwelling, Baker Island Light Station, Maine. Drawings by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1976.



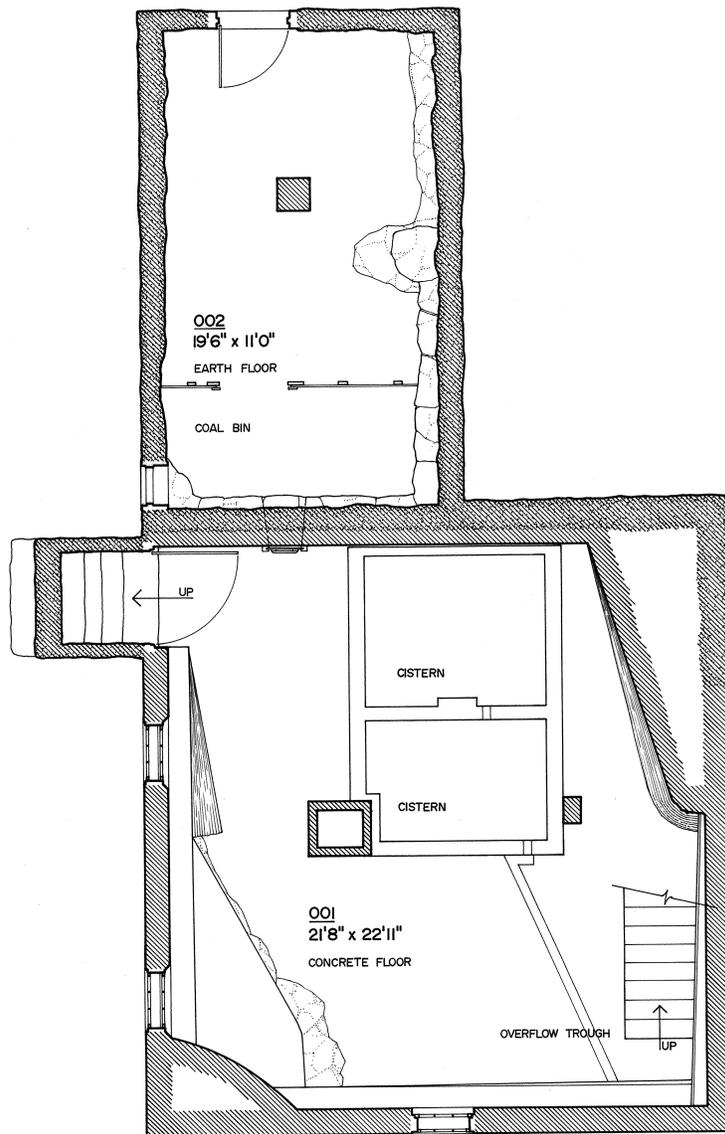
EAST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



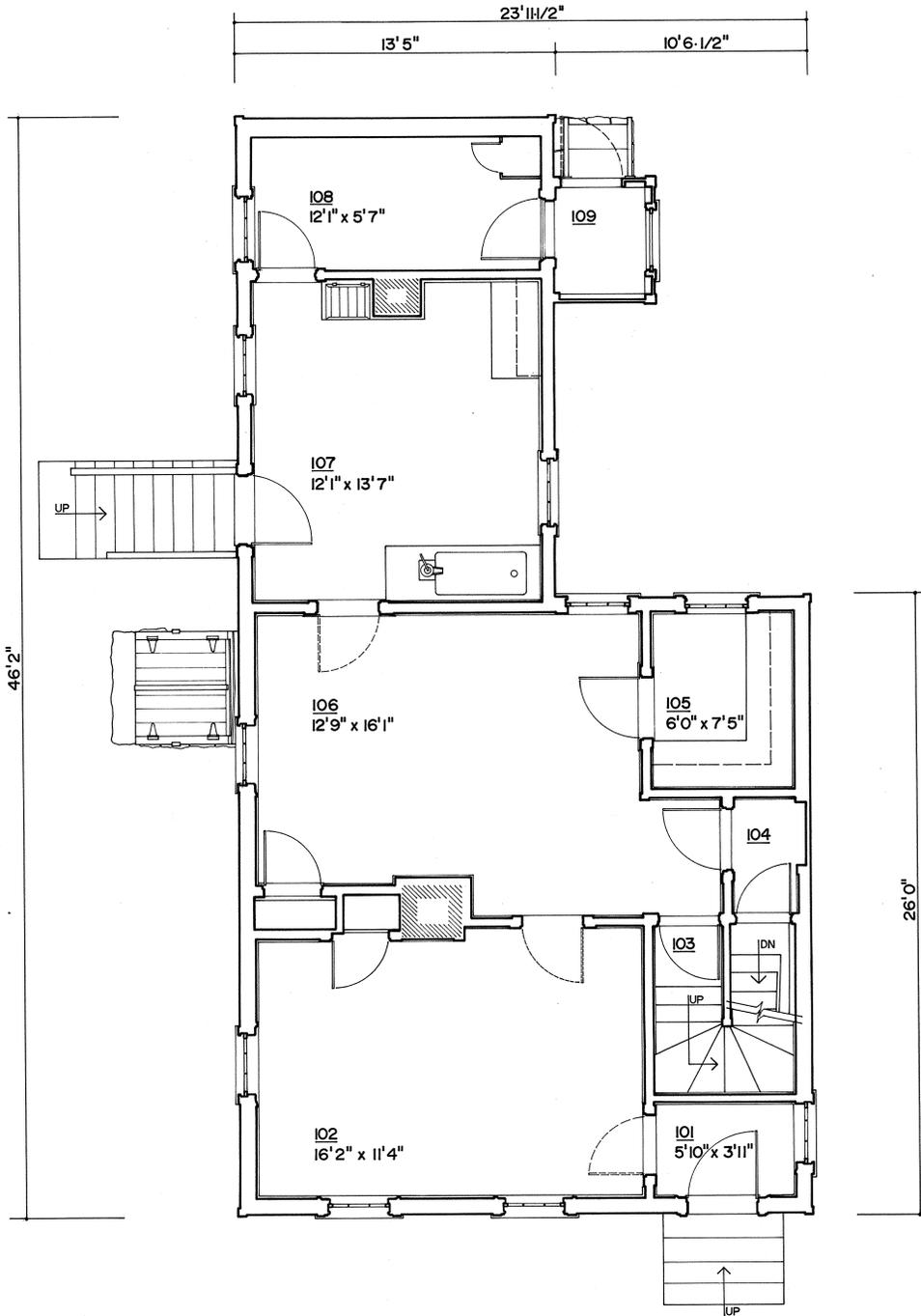
Figure 28. East and west elevations of the keeper's dwelling, Baker Island Light Station, Maine. Drawings by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1976.



BASEMENT PLAN



Figure 29. Basement plan of the keeper's dwelling, Baker Island Light Station. Drawing by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1976.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



Figure 30. First-floor plan of the keeper's dwelling, Baker Island Light Station. Drawing by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1976.

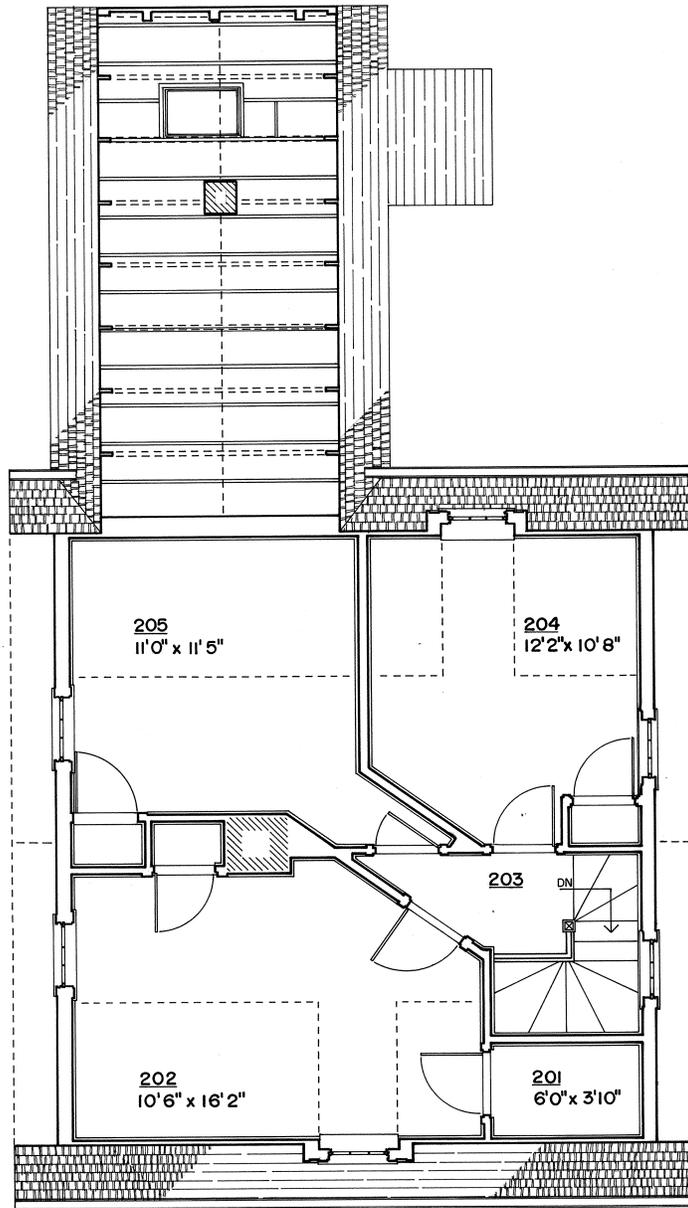


Figure 31. Second-floor plan of the keeper's dwelling, Baker Island Light Station. Drawing by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1976.



Figure 32. Front façade (above) and east elevation (below) of the keeper's dwelling, Baker Island Light Station. Photographs by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1976.





Figure 33. Rear view of the keeper's dwelling (above), and west elevation of the dwelling and lighthouse (left), Baker Island Light Station. Photographs by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1976.



Figure 34. North exterior elevation (left) and interior stair (below) of the light tower at Baker Island Light Station. Photographs by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1976.



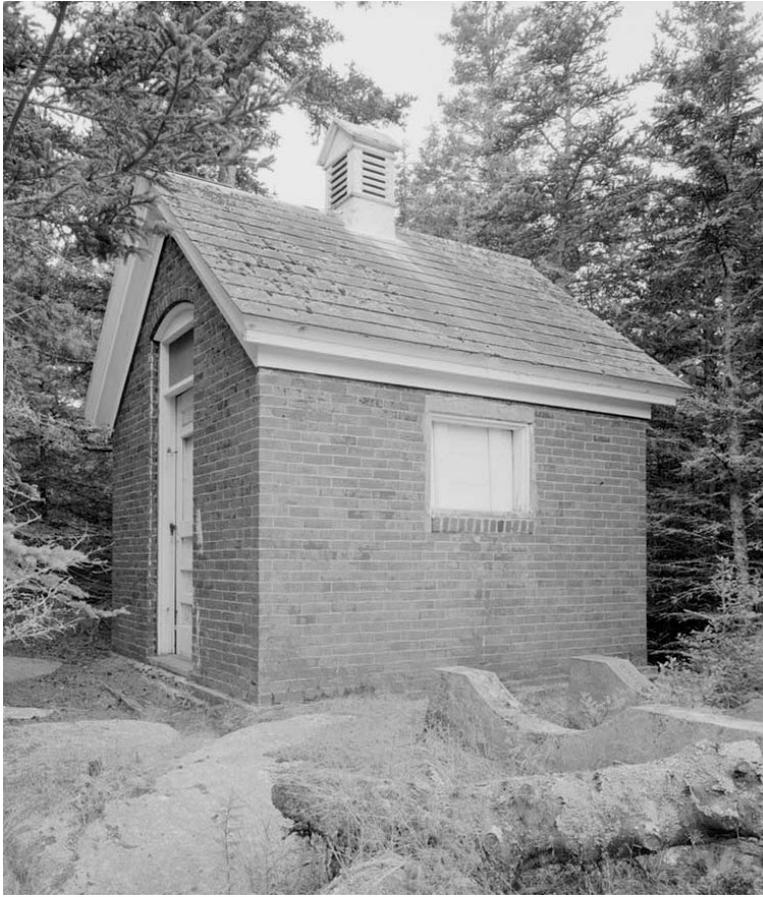


Figure 35. Baker Island oil house (left) and garage (below). Photographs by the Historic American Buildings Survey, 1976.



1996-2011: National Park Service Maintenance and Repairs

Recent repairs of the keeper's dwelling and outbuildings of the Baker Island Light Station have been carried out by maintenance staffers of Acadia National Park. This work can be generally characterized as replacement in kind. The keeper's dwelling was repainted and window openings fitted with new ventilated window shutters in 1998 (fig. 36). Existing wood roofing shingles (dating to 1976) were replaced in 2002 with clear white cedar shingles installed over ice and water shield. The job was completed with new copper flashing and wood gutters (fig. 37).

Repair of the circa-1942 garage was undertaken in 2011 by National Park Service maintenance workers Stuart Williamson, Tim Higgins, and Shane Wallace (fig. 38). Details of this work were documented in a completion report, summarized as follows:

Lifted west side of building 3.5 inches.

Lifted east side of building to replace sill and reset stone.

Replaced 14 linear ft.[of] rotten sills, north side.

Replaced 20 linear ft. of rotten sills, east side. All sill lumber was new and old was treated with Cuprinal.

All sill to floor joist nails had rusted off.

All sill to floor joist connections were remade with 3/8 x 6? Galvanized lag bolts.

Rebuilt rubble/stone foundation on entire perimeter.

While working on sill at north side of building, a missing hinge bracket for the upper window was found in the dirt. Bracket was cleaned, painted and reinstalled.

Replaced ramp north entry.

Replaced stairs at south entry.

Replaced [lower wall] sheathing, shingles, and repainted.⁹⁴

No work is known to have been done on the 1895 oil house in the last 20 years.

⁹⁴ "Baker Island Keepers Garage" completion report (Bar Harbor: Acadia National Park Maintenance Division, 2011), copy in Acadia NP Archives. White acrylic latex stain was used on the shingle siding, and green latex enamel paint on the trim (Stuart Williamson to Barbara Yocum, Aug. 8, 2012).

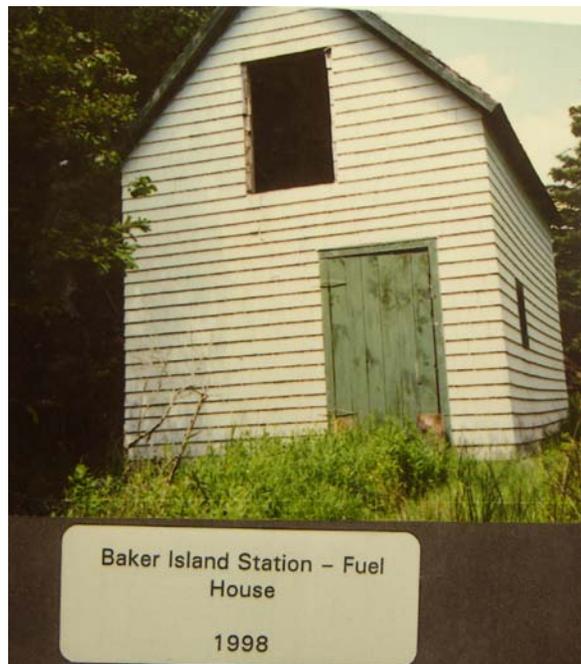
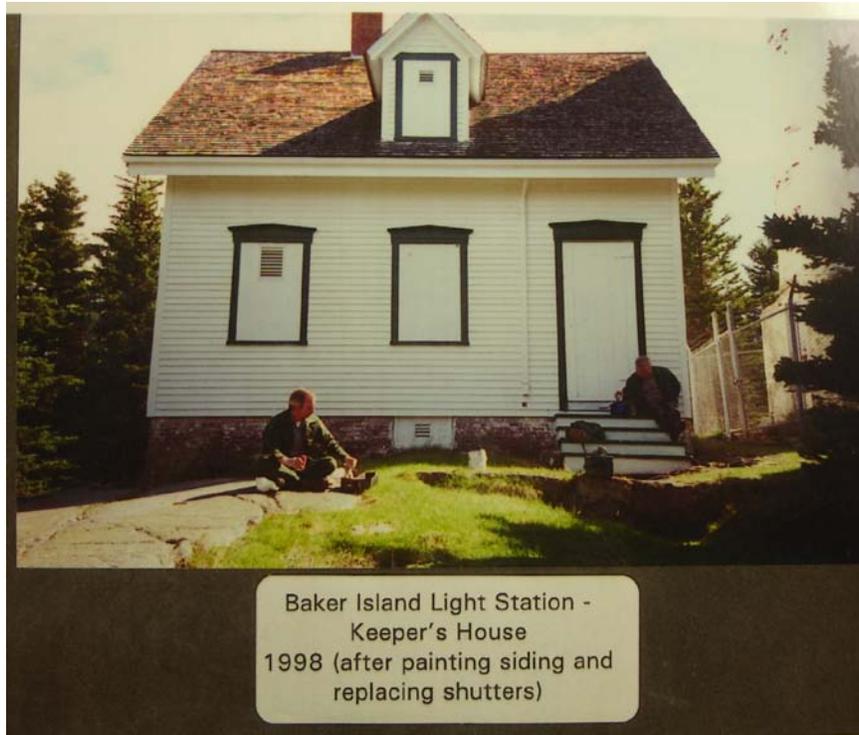


Figure 36. “Keeper’s House” and “Fuel House” [sic: garage] at Baker Island Light Station, 1998.



Figure 37. New wood shingle roofing for the keeper's house, 2002.



Figure 38. Repairs to the east and west sills of the garage, 2011.

2007-08: Light Tower Conditions Assessments

Two conditions assessments were undertaken of the Baker Island light tower prior to its transfer to the National Park Service in 2011. The first, carried out by the U.S. Coast Guard in 2007, made the following observations:

Baker Island Light is in poor condition with failed coatings both inside and outside. The exterior coating system was applied in the 1980s [sic: see footnote 82]. The brick masonry was sand blasted [sic: glass beads were used] at this time which removed the hard outer layer of the bricks. The masonry was repointed with hard cement based mortar and coated with a similar material. This system has allowed the moisture to accumulate in the outer portions of the bricks where it can freeze and crack the bricks. The failed coating is now littering the ground around the tower. The structure is also deteriorating due to failed masonry and water infiltration in the area of the lantern deck. The light is near the center of the island and is now surrounded by trees that are blocking the visibility of the light from nearby waters. Unless the trees are cut back, the light is of very little use as an aid to navigation.⁹⁵

A \$100,000 project to address these repairs had been formulated by the U.S. Coast Guard in 2005, but was never funded.⁹⁶

Similar concerns were documented in a second conditions assessment by National Park Service Historical Architect Marilou

⁹⁵ "SAM Shore Facility Inventory Report: Baker Island Light" (Islesford: USCG Base, 21 Aug. 2007).

⁹⁶ Ibid: Project 01-P4148, "Repair Baker Island Light."

Ehrler in 2008 (fig. 39). Recommendations for repair/restoration included the following:

Immediate (within 1 year)

- Cut back all vegetation.
- Remove exterior paint coatings. Method of removal to be established by testing.
- Remove all loose mortar.
- Repoint with compatible mortar.
- Removal of coatings will likely result in an uneven surface. Recoating with a compatible stucco or lime wash will likely be required.
- Remove the glass block insert and install an operable louver in the lowest level window.

Short Term (within 3-5 years)

- Remove all glass block window inserts.
- Replace with new wood windows to match original sash.
- Install new humidity controlled ventilation system.
- Restore lantern and railing, removing all rust and repainting as required.
- Complete subsurface investigation of the imbedded metal supports including stair anchors and lantern deck. Repair and replace deteriorated anchors and deck as required.⁹⁷

Of these recommendations, only clearing of vegetation/trees from around the light tower has been carried out (in June 2012).

⁹⁷ Marilou Ehrler, "Existing Condition Report" and "Field Report: Baker Island Light" 23 June 2008; final "Existing Condition Report" is undated (Philadelphia: NPS, Northeast Region, 2008), 6.



Figure 39. Deteriorating brick conditions recorded by an assessment of the lighthouse in 2008.

IV. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTIONS

Introduction

The entire 10-acre Baker Island Light Station is under the jurisdiction of Acadia National Park today, having been acquired from the U.S. Coast Guard in two parcels in 1958 and 2011. The Coast Guard has an easement to maintain the light in the light tower.

Seven structures existed on the property in 1958 including the 1855 light tower, keeper's dwelling, and privy; a 1905 fuel house (then called the "paint locker"); an 1895 oil house; and a circa-1942 lookout tower and garage. Of these, only four structures survive today: the light tower and keeper's dwelling, oil house, and garage.

This section provides physical descriptions of the Baker Island Light Station's four remaining structures, along with a brief accounting of missing buildings and walkways. This is not a conditions assessment, but rather a record of building fabric and its historic integrity. This was achieved by researching the historic evolution of the property and by physically examining the existing structures. The following written descriptions are accompanied by digital photographs taken in 2012.

1855 Light Tower

Historical Summary

The Baker Island Light tower has served as an active aid to navigation since 1828, except for a short time in the 1950s (1955-57) when it was temporarily decommissioned by the U.S. Coast Guard. The United States Light-House Board

replaced the light station's original stone tower with the existing white-painted brick tower in 1855. It was connected by a brick appendage to a wood-framed keeper's dwelling.

Various repairs and alterations have been made to the tower and its light over the years by the Light-House Board (1855-1910), the Light-House Bureau (1910-1939), and the U.S. Coast Guard (1939-2011). An exterior layer of bricks strengthened the tower in 1903. The U.S. Coast Guard electrified the light station, including the tower, in 1954. The light was decommissioned the following year, but was reinstated in 1957 with an automated beacon. A work room connecting with the keeper's dwelling was demolished around 1965, creating an exterior entrance to the tower that was secured by a perimeter chain-link fence. The lantern's original fourth-order Fresnel lens was replaced by a solar-powered lamp, and window sashes by glass blocks, sometime between 1974 and 1976. The exterior walls were most recently cleaned, repointed, and coated with a thin pargette in the 1980s-90s.

The deteriorated condition of the light tower's brick walls and deck railing were documented in two condition-assessment reports prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard in 2007 and by the National Park Service in 2008. The U.S. Coast Guard transferred ownership of the light tower to Acadia National Park in 2011, but retains an easement to maintain the light as a nautical aid to navigation.

Exterior Descriptions

Foundation

The foundation of the light tower is not visible above grade today. This is

presumably stone, as shown on the 1855 elevation drawing of the tower (fig. 3a).

Walls

Historical accounts record the tower's brick shaft as 37 to 40 feet tall. The brickwork consists of three concentric rings, the inner two dating to 1855 and the outer ring to 1903. Of the 1855 brickwork, the inner circle of bricks is separated from the outer tapered circle by a narrow air shaft, with each circle comprised of two wythes of bricks. Reinforcing brickwork added to the tower in 1903 was described by Light-House Board in its annual report as a "4-inch [i.e., two-wythe] brick wall built around the outside."⁹⁸ Two projecting brick buttresses, one on either side of the exterior doorway in the first story, may be the remnants of a brick-walled work room that was removed around 1958.

The original lime mortar of the 1855 brickwork has been substantially replaced by Portland-cement mortar in various repointing campaigns, the most recent in the 1980s-90s. A thin coat of cement pargette applied to the exterior bricks also dates to this time.

Lantern

The lantern is the upper portion of the light tower that is supported by the brick walls of the tapered shaft. Components of the lantern include a glazed octagonal room topped by an iron dome and ringed by an open deck with an open iron railing, all dating to 1855. A hinged iron door in the lower sheet-iron wall below the windows provides access to the deck, enabling the lighthouse keeper to easily clean the exterior sides of the window glass.

⁹⁸ *Annual Report of the Light-House Board to the Secretary of Commerce and Labor, June 30, 1905* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1905), 28.

Doorway

The entrance to the lighthouse is through an exterior ground-story doorway on the east side of the shaft (fig. 40). This opening was originally covered by a connecting work room that was removed by the U.S. Coast Guard around 1965. A heavy, cast-iron door hung on two strap hinges is an original feature dating to 1855, as is the granite sill. A stainless-steel door on the exterior side of the opening was installed by the U.S. Coast Guard sometime between 1958 and 1976.

Windows

There are three window openings in the brick shaft of the light tower dating to 1855. These are in the north, west, and south elevations. The exterior granite sills and lintels of these openings are mostly covered by later exterior brickwork laid in 1903. Glass blocks installed by the U.S. Coast Guard sometime between 1974 and 1976 replaced early double-hung sashes. These 4-over-4 wooden sashes existed as early as circa 1869 (fig. 5) and are presumably original, differing from the 6-light sashes shown in the design of 1855 (fig. 3a). The sashes are stored in the cellar of the keeper's dwelling today (fig. 54).

Eight large windows set in iron frames are located in the lantern of the light tower. Each has a single stationary pane of glass, as shown in the 1855 drawing (fig. 3a). This was a considerable improvement over the 1828 light tower that specified 21 individual lights for each sash, made possible by advances in glass technology.

Roof

The cast-iron roof of the lantern is a bell shape composed of eight pie-shaped wedges. It is topped by a round iron

ventilator. Both the roof and ventilator are original elements of the lantern that were built according to the design of 1855 (fig. 3a).

Lightning Rod

A lightning rod is mounted to the iron ventilator on the roof of the lantern. While the exact date of the existing lightning rod is unknown, it was a typical feature of tower lanterns (fig. 4). One is clearly shown in the earliest known photograph of the 1855 tower taken circa 1869 (fig. 5). An “electrical conductor” made of copper had also been specified for the earlier light tower constructed in 1828.

Painted Finishes

The exterior paint scheme of the light tower is white and black, with the brick shaft painted white and all elements of the iron lantern painted black. Light lists confirm that the tower and its now missing work room were “white” as early as 1859, more specifically described as “whitewashed” in 1872 and 1874. The earliest photograph of circa 1869 shows the lantern also painted white (fig. 4), which had been changed to a dark color by 1897 (figs. 8-10). It is not known for certain if this dark color has always been black, since all early photographs of the light tower are black-and-white images. Early use of black paint is found in the 1824 specifications for the island’s original light tower, which was to have two coats of “black” paint applied to its metalwork elements.

Missing Work Room

A one-story brick appendage containing a “work room” (later called the “work shop”) was appended to the east side of the light tower for more than 100 years, from

1855 to circa 1965. It is documented in the 1855 plan (figs. 3a and 3b), various photographs of the light station, and the electrification plan of 1954 (fig. 21). These document the space as a single room that connected the light tower with the keeper’s dwelling, and also had an exterior doorway. The room had been outfitted with a work bench and adjacent shelves by 1954, according to the plan of that date. The room undoubtedly held tools and other items used by the keeper in the execution duties to maintain the light and make minor repairs. It also provided a covered passage to the light tower that was protected from the weather, unlike the 1828 tower that was some distance from the keeper’s dwelling (fig. 2).

Interior Descriptions

Layout

The interior of the light tower is divided into three spaces. Occupying the most room is a stairway that rises from the ground story to a landing just below the lantern. This landing was most likely used for storage by the keeper for such things as oil, lamp wicks, tools to trim the wicks, and cleaning supplies. At the top of the tower is an enclosed room, called the lantern, which contains the lens and light.

Floors

The ground-story floor of the tower is concrete today, most likely covering an original paving of bricks (as seen at the threshold of the exterior doorway, fig. 41). The floors of the upper landing and lantern are the original cast iron dating to 1855 (fig. 45).

Walls

The interior walls of the tower's shaft are the original exposed brickwork dating to 1855. Three arched niches in the ground-story wall may have held reserves of lamp oil and wood to fuel a small warming stove (see "Stove" and fig. 43).

The octagonal walls of the enclosed lantern consist of eight sheets glass above a wainscot of sheet iron, also of 1855 vintage. Four vents in the lower walls are also presumably original, based on their appearance of the earliest-known photograph of circa 1869 (fig. 5).

Stair

A circular, cast-iron stair rises from the ground story of the tower to the upper landing and a scuttle in the floor of the lantern (fig. 44). This is a decorative, cast-iron stair with open-grille treads that is supported by a center pole and at the side walls. It is an original feature of the light tower dating to 1855.

A rope railing on the exterior side of the stair is supported by rusting iron anchors of unknown date embedded in the brickwork (fig. 42). Such a railing has been in use since at least 1976 (fig. 34).

Stove

Aligned holes in the stair treads and at the upper landing were most likely for the smoke pipe of a small ground-story stove. A warming stove was necessary in early years to maintain the proper viscosity of the sperm lamp oil in cold weather. It had the added benefit of warming the keeper, who made frequent nighttime visits to maintain both the fire and the light. The upper smoke stack is documented by the 1855 plan and circa-1869 photograph (figs. 3a and 5). The annual report of the Light-House Board also noted that a "cast-iron

smoke pipe" had been provided for the lantern in 1869, perhaps replacing another pipe. Exterior photographs of 1897 indicate the pipe had been removed by that time.

Windows

Three original window openings dating to 1855 survive in the shaft of the light tower (fig. 42). The windows retain their granite sills and lintels. All other historic elements of the windows (sashes and casings) were removed sometime between 1974 and 1976, when the existing glass blocks were installed by the U.S. Coast Guard. The sashes are stored in the main cellar of the keeper's dwelling today (fig. 54d).

The large windows of the lantern are held in place by a simple iron framework dating to 1855. These are stationary windows with no decorative casings on the interior side.

Doorways

Two doorways in the tower provide access to the exterior: one at the base of the tower and the other in the lantern leading to the deck. Both are original features dating to 1855, although the base doorway originally opened on to a work room. The lower doorway retains its original cast-iron door hung on strap hinges and plain iron casing (fig. 41). The upper doorway is a hinged cast-iron panel in the lower wall of the lantern, also dating to 1855.

Light and Lens

The existing light in the tower is a solar-powered Maxlumina Marine Lantern, Model ML-300, Series E, made by the Tideland Signal Corporation of Houston,

Texas (fig. 46). The light sits on a pedestal that is presumably contemporary. The solar panel is mounted to the west side of the exterior deck (fig. 40). The date of the existing lighting equipment is not known, although solar technology has been used to power the light since the mid-1970s. The light is currently maintained as an active guide to navigation by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The lantern's original fourth-order Fresnel lens was removed by the U.S. Coast Guard around 1957. All that remains of this early equipment today is the ventilation pipe in the ceiling of the lantern. The lens was preserved and is on display in the Fisherman's Museum in the keeper's dwelling at Pemaquid Point Lighthouse in Bristol, Maine. It had been retrofitted over the years with various lamps to accommodate different types of fuel, including sperm oil (1855-1867), lard oil (1867-circa 1885), and mineral oil (aka, kerosene, circa 1885-1954). The oil lamp was replaced by an electric light bulb in 1954, which was most likely powered by battery when the light was automated in 1957.

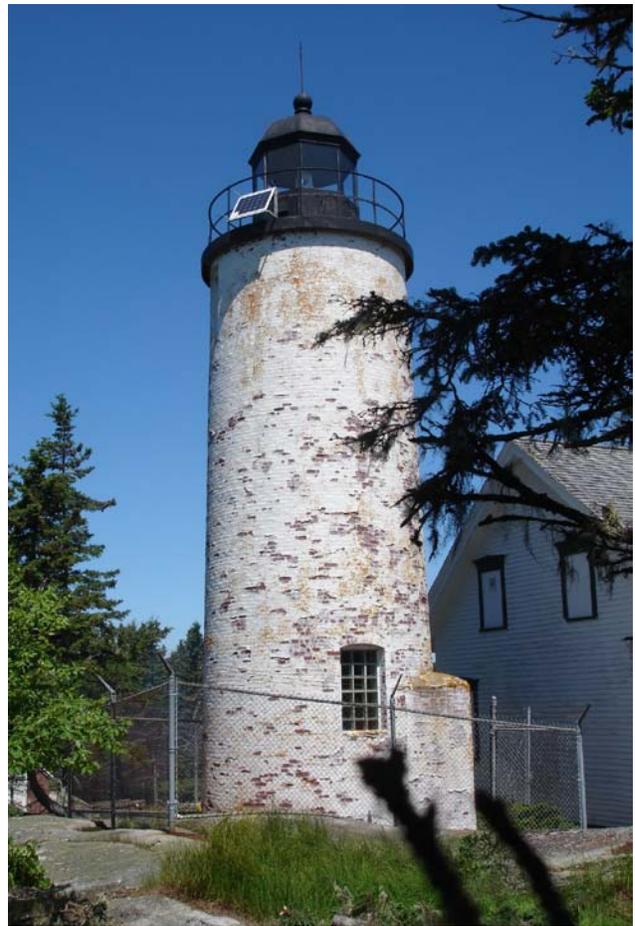
Painted Finishes

The interior of the light tower is painted white and red today (figs. 41-45). White paint is applied to the interior brick walls of the shaft and the metal walls and ceiling of the lantern. Red paint finishes the concrete and metal floors, the exterior door and casing in the ground story, the spiral stair, and a band of brickwork adjacent to the stair. No information has been found documenting the historic interior painted finishes.



Baker Island Light Tower

Figure 40. Exterior views of Baker Island Light tower, 2012.





Baker Island Light Tower

Figure 41. Doorway of the light tower showing the exterior stainless-steel door (left), and interior iron door (below), 2012.





**Baker Island Light
Tower**

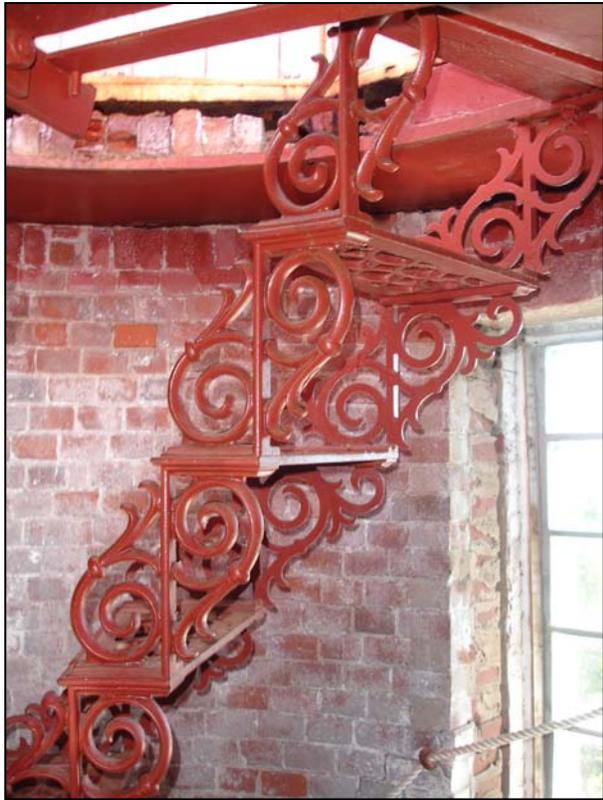
Figure 42. Interior
windows of the light
tower, 2012.





Baker Island Light Tower

Figure 43. Interior storage
niches at the base of the
light tower, 2012.



Baker Island Light Tower

Figure 44. Cast-iron spiral stairway of the light tower, 2012.



Baker Island Light Tower



Figure 45. Sheet-iron lantern deck (above), and deck below the lantern (below), within the light tower, 2012. Note the former stove-pipe hole in the deck below the lantern.



Baker Island Light Tower



Figure 46. Solar-powered lamp of the light tower, 2012.

1855 Keeper's Dwelling

Historical Summary

The United States Light-House Board constructed a new dwelling for the keeper of the Baker's Island Light Station in 1855, replacing a dilapidated stone house built in 1828. The new house was a cottage-style, 1-1/2-story building with dark board-and-batten siding that was connected to the brick light tower by a brick work room. William Gilley, Jr., was the first keeper of the Baker Island Light Station, serving from 1828 to 1849. Joseph Bunker was the first occupant of the existing keeper's dwelling, whose tenure ran from 1853 to 1860.

Various changes and improvements have been made to the keeper's dwelling over the years. A wing appended to the back side of the house around 1868 accommodated a larger kitchen and convenient fuel room. The siding color was changed to white by 1877, and clapboard siding was installed by 1897. Concerns over national security were the impetus for the installation of a telephone line connecting with Northeast Harbor in 1898. An interior remodeling of the main house in 1903 changed the stairway, added a third bed chamber, and two roof dormers. A hot-water heating system was installed in the 1920s, most likely coinciding with a remodeling of the kitchen wing to accommodate a coal bin in the cellar. A generator installed in the oil house in 1954 provided electrical service to the house, light tower, and nearby outbuildings. Plumbing remained a crude affair, however, with a hand-pump at the kitchen sink and a privy located behind the house as late as the 1950s.

It is not known exactly when the last keeper left Baker Island. This may have occurred when the light was decommissioned by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1955, or when it was automated in 1957. The house has sat vacant since its acquisition by the National Park Service in 1958. A brick work room connecting with the light tower was removed around 1965. The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) recorded the dwelling with measured drawings and photographs in 1976.

Exterior Descriptions

Massing

The keeper's dwelling consists of a 1-1/2 story main house constructed in 1855, with a later 1-story wing dating to circa 1868. A U.S. Coast Guard survey in 1957 described the dwelling as measuring 46' x 24'. Missing today is an original (1855) one-story brick appendage formerly connecting the dwelling with the light tower that was removed around 1965.

Foundations

The 1855 main house sits on a masonry foundation that extends one story below grade to accommodate a full cellar. The foundation is composed of two materials: stones and bricks, as noted in the 1957 survey by the U.S. Coast Guard. The lower walls are composed of rubble stones reinforced on the interior cellar side with bricks. Bricks also comprise the upper walls where they are exposed above grade on the north, east and west sides. Some of these bricks may have been reused from the chimney(s) of an earlier building, judging by black charring visible in the cellar.

The foundation of the circa-1868 rear wing is constructed entirely of stone. This wing has a walk-in cellar, the exterior walls of which are exposed on the south and east sides. The lower walls of this wing are rubble stones that are contemporary with the circa-1868 wing. The upper walls (12" high) are cut stones believed to date to 1920, when the first floor of the wing was elevated to accommodate a coal bin for a new heating system.

Multiple episodes of repointing with cement mortars have mostly replaced the original lime mortar in the foundations of the main house and wing.

Siding

Wooden clapboards with plain corner boards cover the 1855 main house and its circa-1868 rear wing. These clapboards date to the last quarter of the 19th century (circa 1877-97), when they replaced original board-and-batten siding, based on archival and photographic documentation. Selected repairs to the siding over the years, such as those undertaken by the National Park Service in 1974 and 1998, can be characterized as replacement in kind.

Doorways

The keeper's dwelling has five exterior doorways today: two in the 1855 main house, and three in the circa 1868 rear wing. Each is described below.

Main Entrance. The main entrance of the house is in the front (north) façade of the main house, offset to the west side. This 1855 opening retains its original 4-panel door hung on closed-butt hinges with mortised door latch. A board-and-batten door on the exterior side of the opening

may date to 1881, when the Light-House Board furnished five storm doors for the dwelling. A similar storm door definitely existed by 1897, based on photographic documentation. A pedimented exterior casing matching the front windows is contemporary with the circa 1877-97 clapboard siding. Three original stone steps were replaced by wooden steps sometime between 1938 and 1976 (figs. 5, 16-18, and 32); the displaced stones are located nearby in the yard.

Bulkhead Entrance. An exterior doorway to the main cellar is in the east elevation of the main house, offset to the back (south) side. This opening may be an original feature, judging by stone retaining walls and steps at the opening. Board-and-batten style doors at the cellar opening and in the wooden bulkhead appear to be of later vintage.

Kitchen Entrance. A separate entrance to the kitchen is in the east elevation of the rear wing. This doorway is an original feature of the circa-1868 rear wing, as seen in a photograph taken shortly after its construction (fig. 5). The existing 6-panel door is later, having replaced an earlier door sometime before recording of the house by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1976 (fig. 28). A circa-1881 board-and-batten storm door covers the exterior side of the opening. A casing made of plain boards is contemporary with the circa 1877-97 clapboard siding. Wooden steps accessing the doorway were removed by the National Park Service sometime after 1976.

Rear Entry. A doorway in the west elevation of the circa-1868 wing provides access to the former fuel room off the kitchen. This circa-1868 opening retains its original 4-panel door hung on closed-butt hinges; the existing mortised door latch appears to be later. A casing made of plain boards is contemporary with the

circa 1877-97 clapboard siding. An enclosed vestibule covering the entrance was added sometime between 1897 and 1954, based on a historic photograph and drawings for electrification of the light station in 1954 (figs. 9, 20, and 21).

Back Cellar Entrance. A doorway accessing the cellar beneath the wing is located in the south stone foundation. The opening was heightened circa 1920 when a coal bin was installed in the cellar. The existing board-and-batten door hung on strap hinges, and plain-board casing, most likely date to this change.

Windows

There are 19 windows in the keeper's dwelling: 16 in the main house and three in the back wing. Of these windows, three are in the cellar story, 10 are in the first story, and 6 are in the second story. One window in the cellar story retains a 3-light sash. Windows in the first and second stories have 6-over-6 double-hung sashes in various states of repair. Window casings are of two styles, pedimented and plain-board, most dating to the residing of the house circa 1877-1897. There are no shutters today, nor have the windows ever had shutters historically. Wood boards have covered the window openings since as early as 1970; boards were outfitted with ventilator grilles by 1976.

Most windows in the main house date to 1855, with the following exceptions. Two windows in the original kitchen (Room 106) may be related to changes associated with the new wing circa 1868. These include an original exterior doorway converted to a window in the east wall, and a center window relocated farther west in the south wall (fig. 3b). Two other windows were installed in dormers added to the roof of the house circa 1903: one in

the north elevation, the other in the south elevation.

The window in the west elevation of the circa-1868 wing appears to have been heightened, and a new window added to the east elevation around 1920 (compare figs. 9 and 33). There is a good likelihood that existing window elements were reused at this time, as may also have been the case in the main house. Recycled window elements most likely included window frames, casings, and sashes.

Roofs

The keeper's dwelling has two gable roofs: one over the main house dating to 1855, the other over the circa-1868 back wing. Both roofs have rafters that meet with miter joints at the roof ridge, wide sheathing boards, and wood roofing shingles. The wing's roof and other framing elements were assembled with reused building materials, based on remnants of white paint preserved on selected framing members (fig. 70).

The existing wood-shingle roof on the keeper's dwelling was installed by the National Park Service (NPS) in 2002, replacing a deteriorated wood-shingle roof also installed by the NPS in 1976. Ice and water-shield applied to the sheathing boards was covered by clear white-cedar shingles in 2002, along with new copper flashing and wood ridge boards. Use of wood shingles was based on fragments of the original (1855) shingles preserved on the south side of the main-house roof, beneath the roof of the circa-1868 wing (fig. 70). Wood shingles were presumably also used for reshingling of "keeper's dwelling" in 1875, and the "kitchen" and "work room" in 1885, although this material was not specifically noted in the annual reports of the Light-House Board

for those years. Wood shingles continued to be used through the early 20th century, based on a photograph taken in 1938 (figs. 17 and 18). Dark asphalt shingles eventually replaced the wood shingles, as seen in photographs taken in the early 1970s (figs. 24 and 26).

Chimneys

The keeper's dwelling has two rooftop chimneys made of red brick: one on the 1855 main house, the other on the circa-1868 kitchen wing (figs. 51 and 52). Repairs have been made to the chimneys over the years, including rebuilding of the kitchen-wing chimney in 1885, according to the annual report of the Light-House Board for that year. A study of historic photographs also reveals changes to the chimney tops. The 19th-century chimneys were straight with a projecting upper course; tapered caps replaced the projecting course by 1938 (figs. 16-18). This cap remains on the back chimney today, but disappeared from the main-house chimney sometime between 1974 and 1976 (figs. 26 and 32).

Gutters

The main house of the keeper's dwelling is equipped with gutter equipment today, as it has been since 1855. These include wooden gutters attached to the rafter ends at the north and south elevations, and metal leaders. While the existing gutters and leaders are replacements installed by the Park Service in 2002, they nevertheless replicate the materials and placement of the historic equipment. The original purpose of the gutters was to capture rainwater and channel it to a cistern in the cellar of the main house. While these interior pipes still exist, the water drains to the outside today.

Painted Finishes

The exterior of the keeper's dwelling is painted white and green today. These colors presumably replicate those that were on the building when it was transferred to the National Park Service from the U.S. Coast Guard in 1958. White paint is applied to the siding, cornice, front storm door, cellar bulkhead, boards over the windows, and gutters and downspouts. Remnants of white paint are visible on the brick and stone walls of the foundations. Green paint is used on the other doors, casings of the doorways and windows, and window sashes.

Lightening of the dwelling's original brown paint color occurred around 1877, possibly coinciding with replacement of the board-and-batten siding with the existing clapboards. Documentary photographs taken in 1897 show the brick foundation, siding, and window sashes a light (presumably white) color, with a contrasting darker color used on the corner boards, cornice, doorway and window casings, and stiles and rails of the 4-panel doors (figs 8-10). By 1938, the trim color had been lightened and the front door painted a monochromatic white (figs. 17 and 18). Adoption of the existing white-and-green paint scheme commenced after acquisition of the property by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1939.

Walkways

Wooden walkways on the west side of the kitchen wing provided a level walking surface that connected with a 1905 fuel house and circa-1855 privy located behind the dwelling. The walkways appear to have been installed sometime 1897 and 1900, based on a photograph and plan of those dates (figs. 9 and 11). The "walkways, landings & stairs," were

described in a 1957 U.S. Coast Guard survey as then encompassing 150 lineal feet with timber supports, wood runners, and hand rails. They were reported to be in poor to fair condition, and had been completely removed by 1974 (figs. 24 and 26).

Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling



Figure 47. Exterior north and west elevations of the keeper's dwelling, 2012.



Figure 48. Exterior south and east elevations of the keeper's dwelling, 2012.

Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling



Figure 49. South elevation of the keeper's dwelling, 2012.



Figure 50. East elevation of the kitchen wing of the keeper's dwelling, 2012.

Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling



Figure 51. Roof and chimney of the main house, keeper's dwelling, 2012.



Figure 52. Roof and chimney of the kitchen wing, keeper's dwelling, 2012.

Interior Descriptions

Introduction

Original floor plans and section-elevation drawings of the keeper's dwelling dated 1855 are in the National Archives (figs. 3a and 3b). The Historic American Buildings Survey later documented the interior in 1976 with floor plans of the cellar and first and second stories (figs 29-31). No historic photographs have yet been found of the interior rooms. The house has sat vacant and unused since 1955-57. It was described in a survey by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1957 as having 6 rooms, no bath, a cellar water cistern, and coal-fired steam furnace [sic: hot-water boiler].

Layout

The existing interior layout of the keeper's dwelling reflects changes that were made to the main stairway and second-story rooms of the 1855 main house around 1903 (figs. 12-15), and alterations to the circa-1868 kitchen wing around 1920. The main house consists of a cellar, two full stories of living space, and an unfinished attic. The back wing is one story and also has a cellar and unfinished attic. Detailed descriptions follow.

Main Cellar. A cellar in the lower story of the main house is an original feature of the keeper's dwelling dating to 1855. The cellar is accessible by an interior wooden stair at the west wall and an exterior bulkhead entrance at the east wall. Stone outcroppings in the northeast and southwest corners are testament to the difficulties that must have been encountered when excavating this subterranean space. Two rainwater cisterns made of brick occupy

approximately 1/3 of the cellar at the south wall. A circa-1920 coal-fired boiler for the hot-water heating system that is missing today once vented to the chimney on the east side. This was inaccurately described in a 1957 survey by the U.S. Coast Guard as a "steam furnace."

First Story. The first story of the main house contains an entrance vestibule offset to one side, two principal rooms, a smaller pantry, and stairway with U-shaped stair. The existing vestibule and stairway replaced an original hall and straight stair, as seen in remodeling drawings prepared around 1903 (figs 12 and 13). The vestibule opens onto a "parlor" that is little changed from its original appearance in 1855. In back of the parlor is a "living room" that may have also served as a dining room, given its proximity to the adjacent pantry and kitchen. This room was most likely the original kitchen before construction of the back wing around 1868. Doorways in the northeast corner of the living room lead to the main stair connecting with the cellar and second story. This was also the former location of a doorway to the now- missing "work room" that connected with the light tower until its removal in 1958.

Second Story. The second story of the main house contains three bedroom chambers off a small center hall that is accessed by the stairway in the northwest corner. This layout dates to circa 1903 when the original two chambers, stairs, and hall were replaced by the existing configuration. Three of four existing closets are original, having been retained during the early 20th-century remodeling.

Back Wing. The main floor of the circa-1868 back wing is divided into two rooms: a kitchen on the north side and a wide entry hall on the back (south) side. The back hall was originally used to store "fuel" for the parlor fireplace and stoves,

as shown on floor plans drawn around 1903 (figs. 12 and 13). The current configuration of the two rooms dates to around 1920, when the kitchen was enlarged to its present size by moving the south partition to the back side of the chimney (figs. 14 and 30). The floor was also raised to be level with that of the adjacent living room in the main house.

Back Cellar. A walk-out cellar beneath the circa-1868 kitchen wing is an original feature of the wing. Access to the cellar is through an exterior doorway in the south foundation. The ceiling of the cellar was heightened around 1920, most likely to accommodate an existing coal bin at the north wall. Approximately 4 tons of coal were on hand in August 1957, according to a survey by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Attics. Unfinished attics comprise the upper stories of the 1855 main house and the circa-1868 back wing. Both attics are accessed through a hatch in the ceiling that requires the use of a ladder. The hatch for the main-house attic is in the second-story hall, and the hatch for the wing attic is in the back hall. This difficult access, combined with an absence of windows, makes it doubtful that these spaces were used for more than dead storage.

Floors

The floors of the keeper's dwelling are an assemblage of flooring materials dating to various periods of construction and remodeling. These are described below:

1855 Wood Floorboards. Original flooring in the main house consists of a single layer of random width boards, measuring approximately 3 ½" to 5 ½" wide. These boards are supported on joists spaced approximately 23 ½" on center in the first story, as may be seen in the cellar. Original

floorboards survive throughout the house today, but are visible in the second-story bedroom closets only. Elsewhere in the main house, the early floorboards have been covered by later flooring materials (see "Later Floorboards in Main House" and "Resilient Flooring").

1878 Concrete. Concrete covering the floor of the main house cellar most likely dates to 1878, based on the annual report of the Light-House Board for that year that notes, "The cellar floor was cemented" at the dwelling of the Baker's Island Light House.

Later Floorboards in the Main House. Narrow floorboards installed over the original floorboards are exposed in the entry vestibule, parlor, and north bedroom (Rooms 101, 102, and 202). These may date to the renovations of 1903. The floorboards measure 3 1/8" wide in the first story and 3 ¼" wide in the second story.

Later Floorboards in the Circa-1868 Wing. Floorboards 3 ½" wide are exposed in the back hall of the kitchen wing (Room 108). These are believed to date to the elevation and complete reconstruction of that floor around 1920. Other components of the floor include a subfloor of random-width boards supported by modern floor joists spaced 16" on center.

Resilient Flooring. Sheet linoleum and vinyl tiles conceal the floorboards in many rooms of the house. These materials predate disestablishment of the light station in November 1955. Linoleum is found in the first-story rooms, including the cellar stair hall, pantry, living room, kitchen, and back hall (Rooms 104, 105, 106, 107, and 108). Vinyl tiles are in the following second-story rooms: the center hall, southwest bedroom, and southeast bedroom (Rooms 203, 204, and 205).

Modern Cement Slab. The floor of the cellar beneath the back wing is concrete. This appears to have been poured sometime after 1976, when the Historic American Buildings Survey noted the floor to be “earth.”

Walls and Ceilings

The walls and ceilings of all the rooms in the first and second stories of the keeper’s dwelling are finished with lime plaster on sawn lath. This plaster presumably dates to 1855 in the main house, except at newer partitions and dormer windows that were installed circa 1903. Likewise, the plaster in the back wing is assumed to be contemporary with that circa-1868 structure, although the circa-1920 remodeling undoubtedly included some new plaster work. The plaster ceilings in four rooms (102, 106, 107 and 202) are covered with acoustical tiles on wood battens. Plaster repairs have also been made over the years, such as reported by the Light-House Board in 1882.

Unfinished spaces of the keeper’s dwelling include the two cellars and attics, where the walls and ceilings are exposed masonry and framing. The walls of the 1855 main-house cellar are lined with brick, while those of the circa-1868 wing are stone. Stonework projecting from the center of the wing’s west wall was initially thought to be evidence of an earlier, shorter wing. However, upon closer inspection, it appears to be a buttress stabilizing the wall.

Doorways

All doorways in the keeper’s dwelling are single, outfitted with paneled doors with mortised latches hung on two hinges. In the main house, the original doors date to

1855, with a selected few doors reused during the remodeling of circa 1903. All doors have 4 panels, with two long panels over two short panels. Door knobs are brown or white glazed-clay type. Doors in their original locations are hung on closed-butt hinges. Most doors that were moved and reused circa 1903 have newer loose-pin hinges. Two of these early detached doors are stored in the main cellar.

The doorway connecting the kitchen with the back hall (Rooms 107 and 108) dates to circa 1920, when it replaced a closet (figs. 13 and 14). The existing 2-panel door may date to that time.

An interior doorway that is missing today formerly connected with a work room on the west side of the house. This provided an interior connection with the nearby light tower prior to demolition of the work room around 1958. All that remains today is the framed opening and casing at the west wall of the cellar hall (Room 104).

Windows

Multiple window openings provided abundant natural light in the main cellar and interior rooms of the keeper’s dwelling. All of these openings are historic, dating to 1855, circa 1903 and circa 1868/heightened circa 1920. Today, however, the interior is darkened by boards that have been installed on the exterior sides of the openings since the 1970s.

Woodwork Trim

Woodwork trims the interior first-and second-story rooms of the keeper’s dwelling, with the most elaborate woodwork in the original parlor (Room

102). This woodwork, dating to 1855 and circa 1920, includes the following:

Wainscot. Wood wainscot finishes the lower walls of most of the first-story rooms, including the entry vestibule, parlor, pantry, living room, and kitchen (Rooms 101, 102, 105, 106, and 107). This wainscot dates from two periods: 1855 and circa 1920. The 1855 wainscot is located in the first-story rooms of the main house. It is approximately 2' 7" high and made of wide horizontal boards capped with an upper molding. Some early boards also appear to have been reused at the south wall of the entry vestibule (Room 101), when that space was reconfigured circa 1903.

The circa-1920 wainscot is located in the kitchen (Room 107). It is approximately 3' high and made of narrow beaded boards installed vertically. This wainscot appears to be contemporary with built-in kitchen and pantry cabinets, the lower portions of which are made of the same beaded boards. The "circa-1920" date corresponds with a remodeling of this wing that included elevating the floor and the doorway and window openings.

Baseboards. Plain boards trim the lower walls of the back entry hall (Room 109), and the second-story hall and bed chambers (Rooms 202, 203, 204, and 205). These baseboards date to three time periods: 1855, circa 1903, and circa 1920. The earliest (1855) baseboards are in the second-story bedrooms at the exterior walls and interior chimney partitions. The circa-1903 baseboards are also in the second-story, trimming new walls that were added to create a center hall and a third bedroom. The most recent baseboards are in the back entry hall (Room 108), and are contemporary with the remodeling of the kitchen wing circa 1920.

Doorway and Window Casings. Plain boards trim the interior doorways and windows of the keeper's dwelling, with the exception of the more formal parlor (Room 102, where molded stock was used). These casings date to three time periods: 1855, circa 1903, and circa 1920. Casings in the main house are original (1855), except in association with circa-1903 alterations that changed the main stairway, added a third bedroom, and two new dormer windows. Most doorway and window casings in the back kitchen and entry are thought to date to the remodeling of the wing circa 1920.

Mantels. A small wooden mantel dating to 1855 is at the south wall of the parlor (Room 102). This is a neoclassical design, with a Doric pilaster on one side supporting a wide architrave and shallow shelf. Brickwork enclosing the fireplace opening today was most likely added when a stove was added to the room, as evidenced by an existing stove-pipe hole above the mantel.

Stairways

There are two interior stairways in the northwest corner of the house: one leading to the cellar, the other to the second story. Both stairs date to a remodeling circa 1903 that replaced the original (1855) stairs and stair hall (figs. 3b and 12-15). Physical evidence of the earlier straight-run stair to the second story is still visible today at the west wall of the cellar stairway (fig. 53a). The cellar stair is made of wood and features a closed stringer, steps, and risers. There is no hand railing. The cellar stair is located at the west wall beneath the main stair to the second story (fig. 53). The stair to the second story is located in an enclosed stairway (Room 103) off the living room. It is a U-shape stair featuring wedge-shaped steps, enclosed risers, a

simple baseboard, and no railing. The opening in the second story has a railing with jigsaw balusters supported by a newel with hipped cap. (Figs. 58a-b and 66b-c).

Paint and Wallpaper Finishes

The interior walls, ceilings, and most woodwork of the interior rooms of the keeper's dwelling are finished with paint, presumably dating to the 1950s when the house was last occupied. The walls and ceiling of the main cellar are painted with whitewash, and rooms in the first- and second stories with oil-based paints that may contain lead. Wallpaper of circa-1903 vintage with a wide border is preserved in the closet of the southeast bedroom (Room 205—fig. 68a).

Heating Equipment

The dwelling house was originally heated with a parlor fireplace and cooking range, later with wood-burning stoves, and most recently with a hot water central-heating system. Remnants of each of these remain in the house today.

1855 Fireplace and Kitchen Range. The dwelling's original fireplace mantel remains in the parlor today, as does a stove-pipe opening for a former cooking range located in the adjacent back room (now the living room, Room 106). The fireplace opening is bricked in today.

19th-Century Stoves. Stoves to heat individual rooms were most likely introduced sometime in the 19th century, perhaps as early as circa 1868 when the cooking range was moved to a new kitchen wing. Holes for stove pipes are in five rooms today: the parlor, living room, kitchen, northeast bedroom, and northwest bedroom (Rooms 102, 106, 107,

202, and 205). The stoves themselves are missing today.

Circa-1920 Heating System. A central hot-water heating system fueled with coal was installed in the house around 1920. It was incorrectly described by the U.S. Coast Guard in a 1957 survey as steam-heating system, with approximately 4 tons of coal on hand. Remnants of this system include a flue opening in the main-house chimney for the now-missing boiler, a coal chute at the south wall of the main cellar, and a coal bin in the cellar of the kitchen wing (figs. 54c and 55c). Hot-water radiators cast with the name "Gurney" are in the rooms of the first and second stories (figs. 63b and 63d). A tank for maintaining water pressure is also concealed in a closet of the northwest bedroom (Room 202). The system was presumably disabled when the house was vacated around 1955-57.

Electrical Equipment

Electrical wiring and fixtures in the keeper's dwelling presumably date to 1954, based on three sheets of drawings to electrify the Baker Island Light Station in April of that year (figs. 20-22). A generator to power the system was located in the oil house, with a primary conductor cable connecting to the now-missing work shop. The system appears to have remained in operation for only a short time, since the light station was deactivated in 1955 and automated in 1957. Surviving electrical equipment in the house includes wiring in flexible metal conduit for wall outlets, ceiling lights, and wall-mounted light switches. The fixtures themselves (wall receptacles, lights, and switches) are missing.

Plumbing Equipment

The keeper's dwelling does not have, nor has it ever had, an indoor toilet room or bath room. Instead, it was equipped with an outdoor privy (missing today) that was located a short distance behind the house.

The only source of water was at the kitchen sink that retains a cast-iron hand pump made by The Deming Company of Salem Ohio (1890-2006). This circa-1920 pump is cast with model number "AA3987," and adorned with a hand-painted tea pot on a kitchen stool (fig. 62a). It pumped water from a rainwater cistern in the cellar below. Water drained from the kitchen sink through a pipe in the west exterior wall of the house.

Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling Main Cellar



Figure 53. Main cellar of the keeper's dwelling at the interior stairway, 2012: (a) view of the stairwell from the first story, showing physical evidence of original stair to the second story at the west wall (at arrow); (b) view looking up from the cellar; and (c) wooden stair at the northwest corner of the cellar.

Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling Main Cellar



Figure 54. Main cellar of the keeper's dwelling, 2012: (a) bulkhead entrance in the southeast corner, (b) east wall looking south, (c) coal chute and cistern at the south wall (c); and east wall at the northeast corner.

Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling Kitchen-Wing Cellar



Figure 55. Unfinished cellar of the keeper's dwelling beneath the kitchen wing, 2012: (a) entrance doorway at the south wall, (b) remnant of former end wall (at arrow) at the east wall, and (c) coal storage bin at the north wall.



**Baker Island
Keeper's Dwelling**

Room 101



Figure 56. Room 101 (vestibule) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012: (a) front doorway at the north wall, and (b) circa-1903 partition at the south wall.



**Baker Island
Keeper's Dwelling**

Room 102



Figure 57. Room 102 (parlor) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012:
(a) southwest corner, (b) northwest corner, (c) northeast corner, and
(d) southeast corner.



Figure 58. Room 103 (circa- 1903 stairway) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012: (a) lower run of the stair, and (b) upper run of the stair, both looking north.

Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling

Rooms 103 & 104



Figure 59. Room 104 (side entry) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012: (a) blocked doorway in the west wall, and (b) flooring and threshold at the blocked doorway.

**Baker Island
Keeper's Dwelling**

Room 105



Figure 60. Room 105 (pantry) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012:
(a) southwest corner, and
(b) northwest corner.

Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling

Room 106

Figure 61. Room 106 (living room) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012: (a) plaster ceiling with wood strapping, (b) north wall, (c) east wall, (d) west wall, and (e) south wall.

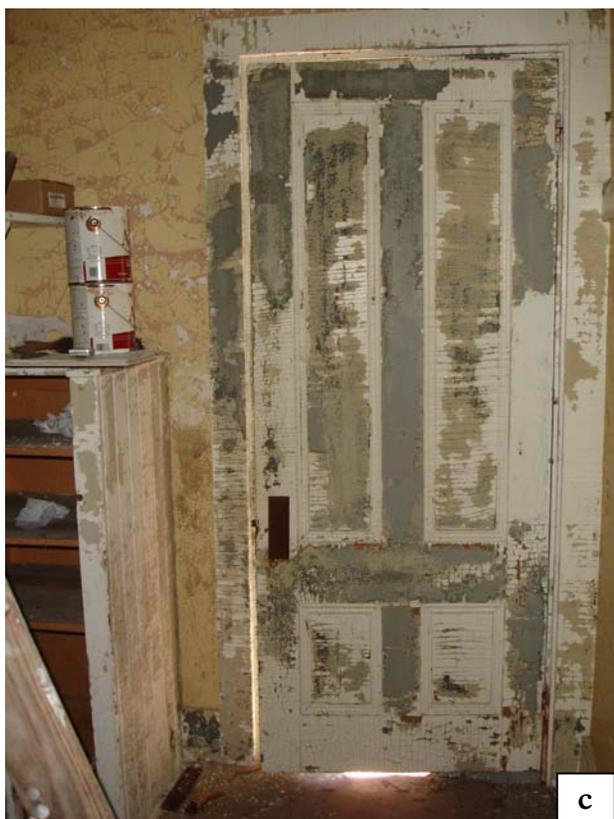
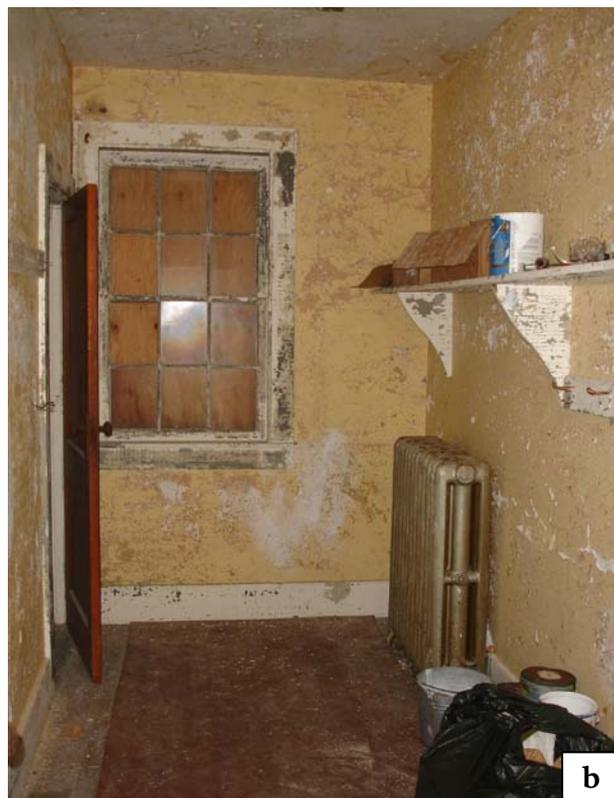


Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling

Room 107

Figure 62. Room 107 (kitchen) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012:
(a) hand pump at the sink,
(b) northwest corner,
(c) northeast corner,
(d) southeast corner, and
(e) southwest corner.





**Baker Island
Keeper's Dwelling**

Room 108



Figure 63. Room 108 (back hall/former “fuel” room) of the keeper’s dwelling, 2012: (a) ceiling and hatch, (b) east wall, (c) west wall, and (d) “Gurney” hot-water radiator.



Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling

Room 109

Figure 64. Room 109 (west vestibule) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012: (a) west wall, and (b) & (c) doorway in the east wall.

Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling

Rooms 201 & 202

Figure 65. Rooms 201 & 202 (north chamber and closet) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012: (a) west wall, (b) north wall, (c) large closet (Room 202), (d) east wall, and (e) south wall at the small closet.



**Baker Island
Keeper's Dwelling**

Room 203



Figure 66. Room 203 (upper hall) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012: (a) ceiling and hatch, (b) northwest corner, and (c) stair railing.



**Baker Island
Keeper's Dwelling**

Room 204



Figure 67. Room 204 (southwest chamber) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012:
(a) north wall, (b) south wall, and (c) east wall.



Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling

Room 205

Figure 68. Room 206 (southeast chamber) of the keeper's dwelling, 2012: (a) circa-1903 wallpaper in the closet, (b) northwest corner, (c) northeast corner, (d) southeast corner, and (e) southwest corner.



Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling Main Attic



Figure 69. Main attic of the keeper's dwelling, 2012, showing the brick chimney and roof rafters (above), and flexible electrical conduit between floor joists (below).



Baker Island Keeper's Dwelling Kitchen-Wing Attic



Figure 70. Kitchen attic of the keeper's dwelling, 2012. Note the original exposed roof and rafter ends at the north wall (above), and reused painted lumber at the west wall (below).



1895 Oil House

Historical Summary

The oil house of the Baker Island Light Station is a small brick structure constructed by the U.S. Light-House Board in 1895 to store flammable mineral oil (aka kerosene) used by the lamp in the light tower. The design, with some modifications, was based on a drawing of an oil house prepared for the First and Second Light-House Districts (fig. 6). Completion of the new oil house on Baker Island was recorded in the *Annual Report of the Light-House Board* for 1895. The earliest known photographs of the structure are dated 1897 (figs. 7 and 8).

The oil house achieved its present appearance following alterations to convert it to an electrical-generator house in 1954 (figs. 20-22). Two side windows were most likely added at that time, along with asbestos roofing shingles, interior concrete paving, and an exterior concrete cradle to support two large fuel tanks. The generator may have been removed in 1955, when the light station was deactivated. The “oil house” was described by the U.S. Coast Guard in a 1957 survey as a brick structure measuring 11’ x 9’ with concrete foundation and cement-asbestos roofing shingles. It is furnished today with a small display of artifacts and open seasonally to visitors.

Exterior Descriptions

General

The oil house is a small brick structure with gable roof measuring approximately

12 feet long by 10 feet wide by one-story tall. It is located a short distance to the northwest of the light tower and keeper’s dwelling. This structure is only slightly changed today from its original appearance as constructed in 1895.

Foundation

The oil house sits on an original (1895) granite foundation. The stones are covered with a pargette of concrete mortar. This pargette is pigmented red and has white lime inclusions, similar to the mortar in the upper brick walls, suggesting that it may be an original feature. Use of cement in 1895 is documented in the architectural drawing of that date that specified use of “cement mortar” for the interior brick floor (fig. 6). The concrete pargette definitely existed by 1957, when the U.S. Coast Guard described the oil house as having a “concrete foundation.”

Walls

The brick walls of the oil house are two wythes thick, laid in an all-stretcher bond. Mortar between the bricks is pigmented red and has white lime inclusions .

Doorway

There is one doorway centered in the south façade of the oil house. Surviving original (1895) features of this doorway include the opening, upper arched transom, and 2-light transom sash. The original 4-panel door is missing, most likely replaced by the later paneled door in 1954.

Windows

The oil house has two windows: one in each of the side walls. These are later openings thought to date to the remodeling of the building as an electrical-generator house in 1954. Sashes are missing from both windows; boards cover the openings today.

Roof

The oil house has a gable roof covered with asbestos roofing shingles applied to wide sheathing boards. The asbestos shingles may have replaced earlier wood shingles when the building was outfitted as an electrical-generator house in 1954, and were described by the U.S. Coast Guard in a 1957 survey.

Cupola

A rooftop cupola is an original feature of the oil house dating to 1895, judging by an early photograph taken in 1897 (fig. 8). This cupola facilitated passive ventilation of interior heat and fumes. Features of the cupola include its wooden construction, louvers on all four sides, and gable roof. It was installed in place of wall ventilators, which were specified in the architectural drawing of 1895 (fig. 6).

Gutters

There are no gutters on the oil house, nor has the building ever been equipped with gutters.

Painted Finishes

Most wooden elements of the oil house are painted white today, except a wood board

covering the transom sash that is green. Remnants of red paint are also evident on the exterior brick walls. Painting of the exterior walls was most likely a later practice, since the use of red-pigmented mortar suggests the walls were originally unpainted.

Interior Descriptions

Layout

The interior of the oil house is one room, uninterrupted by partition walls. This is an original feature of the building, as shown on the floor plan of 1895 (fig. 6).

Floor

The floor of the oil house consists of concrete applied over brick paving. Bricks laid on rough aggregate were specified on the 1895 drawing; the concrete coating may be later.

Walls

The interior walls of the oil house are the original exposed brickwork, except at the later (circa-1954) window openings where some new bricks have been installed.

Ceiling

The ceiling of the oil house is exposed roof framing and the undersides of the roof sheathing boards. An opening in the center is an original (1895) feature that connects with the louvered rooftop ventilator.

Doorway

One doorway centered in the south wall is an original (1895) feature of the oil house. As mentioned previously, original elements of this doorway are the opening, upper transom, and 2-light transom sash; the door is later. Plain-board casing on the room side of the opening has a simple bead detail on the interior side.

Windows

Window openings dating to circa 1954 are crudely cut in the two side walls of the oil house. The openings have wooden window frames but no casings, and gray Portland-cement mortar is slathered on the adjacent brickwork.

Woodwork Trim

The oil-house interior is mostly devoid of woodwork trim, except for the previously described casing at the doorway.

Painted Finishes

White paint of unknown date finishes the interior brick walls, doorway and window casings, and later door of the oil house interior. The exposed rafters and sheathing boards of the ceiling are unpainted, with no traces of earlier finishes.

Building Systems

The oil house has never had heating or plumbing systems. No components of the electrical generator installed in 1954 remain today.

Baker Island Light Station Oil House



Figure 71. Oil House of the Baker Island Light Station, 2012: south and east elevations (above), and north and west elevations (below).

Baker Island Light Station Oil House Interior

Figure 72. Interior views of the oil house, 2012: (a) ceiling, (b) northwest corner, (c) northeast corner, (d) southeast corner, and (e) boarded window at east wall.



Circa-1942 Garage

Historical Summary

The U.S. Coast Guard constructed a wood-framed garage at the Baker Island Light Station around 1942. The earliest documentation of this building is an aerial photograph taken around 1951 (fig. 19). It was subsequently identified by the U.S. Coast Guard as a “garage” in a plot plan dated 1955 (fig. 23). A U.S. Coast Guard survey prepared in 1957 described the building as a 2-story “garage & storage loft” measuring 20’ by 14’, with wood-post foundation and wood-shingle siding and roofing. The National Park Service also referred to the building as a “garage with storage loft” when it acquired the light-station property in 1958.

It was not until 1988 that the garage was misidentified as the station’s 1905 “fuel house” in a nomination of the Baker Island Light Station to the National Register of Historic Places. This misinformation was subsequently repeated in the National Park Service’s List of Classified Structures and in later reports. The garage is used today to store mowing equipment and tools by the National Park Service and Keepers of Baker Island. It was most recently stabilized by the National Park Service in 2011.

Exterior Descriptions

General

The garage is a 1 ½ story, wood-framed structure with gable roof, measuring 20’ 6” long by 14’ wide. It is located to the west of, and down-hill from, the light tower,

keeper’s dwelling, and oil house. Nails used in the construction of the garage are a wire type post-dating 1890.

Foundation

The garage sits on a foundation of dry-laid rubble stones that may have replaced an earlier “wood-post” foundation. The foundation walls and sill plates were most recently repaired, and some replaced, by the National Park Service in 2011 (fig. 38).

Walls

The wood-framed walls of the garage are covered with wood shingles applied to wide sheathing boards. Selected shingles on the lower walls are white-cedar replacements installed by the National Park Service in 2011.

Doorways

There are two principal doorways in the gable ends of the garage. The largest is in the first story of the front (north) façade, equipped with a pair of side-hinged doors. A smaller back doorway with single door is offset to the east side of the south elevation. Two loft openings with single doors are also located above the first-story doorways. All of the garage doors are board-and-batten type with strap hinges; casings are plain boards. Only the north loft door has metal louvers for ventilation.

Ramp and Steps

A wooden ramp at the north doorway, and wooden steps at the south doorway, are new replacements installed by the National Park Service in 2011.

Windows

There are two small windows in the garage: one in the east elevation, the other in the west elevation. Both are offset to the back (south) side of the building. Each opening has an interior side-hinged shutter; there are no sashes. Casings are plain boards.

Roof

The gable roof of the garage is covered with white-cedar shingles on sheathing boards. The shingles were installed by the National Park Service in 2002. These replaced existing white-cedar shingles, according to NPS Maintenance Worker Stuart Williamson.

Gutters

There are no gutters on the garage today, nor does it appear that the garage has ever had gutters.

Painted Finishes

The exterior of the garage was most recently painted white and green by the National Park Service in 2011. White acrylic-latex stain was applied to the shingle siding, and green latex-enamel paint was used on the trim.

Interior Descriptions

Layout

The garage has two stories of open space, connected by a ladder stair at the north end of the east wall.

Floors

The floor of both the main and loft stories are covered with wood floorboards that are presumably original (circa 1942). Floorboards in the main story measure 8 ½" wide, while those in the loft are variable widths.

Walls

The interior walls of the garage are unfinished, with exposed wood studs and the horizontal sheathing boards of the exterior siding. Knee walls on the east and west sides of the loft provide additional headroom.

Ceilings

Like the walls, the ceilings of the garage are unfinished. The ceiling of the main story consists of exposed floor joists, bridging, and undersides of the floorboards in the upper loft. The ceiling of the loft is the exposed rafters and sheathing boards of the gable roof.

Doorways

Two doorways provide exterior egress in the garage, including a wide opening in the front (north) side, and a smaller opening in the back. Two small openings in the gable ends of the loft also facilitate use of the second story as storage space. All doors are board-and-batten type; there are no casings.

Windows

Two small windows are in the side walls of the main story. These have side-hinged interior shutters of board-and-batten design, no sashes, and no casings.

Painted Finishes

The interior of the garage is unpainted.

Building Systems

The garage has no heat, electrical, or plumbing systems.

Baker Island Light Station Garage



Figure 73. Garage of the Baker Island Light Station, 2012: (a) front (north) façade, (b) west elevation, and (c) south and east elevations.

Baker Island Light Station Garage Interior



Figure 74. Main story of the garage, 2012: views looking northwest (above), and southeast (below).

Baker Island Light Station Garage Loft



Figure 75. Loft of the garage, 2012: views of the north gable end.

Missing Buildings and Walkways

Barn

A barn was an essential building that housed the keeper's livestock and farming/gardening tools. The light station's original (1828) barn was in the vicinity of the existing 1895 oil house (fig. 2). It had been replaced by 1897 by a barn located north of the 1855 light tower, in the approximate location of the former keeper's dwelling (figs. 8 and 11). A photograph taken in 1897 shows this as a wood-framed, shed-roofed structure. The barn was removed sometime between 1900 and circa 1951 (figs. 11 and 19).

Boat House

A boat provided the keeper with essential access to and from the island to the mainland. A building to shelter the boat historically sat on the north shore of Baker Island. Such a building definitely existed by 1868, based on an entry in the annual report of the Light-House Board for that year that mentions furnishing a new door for the "boat-house." A survey later prepared by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1957 described the boat house as a wood-framed structure measuring 30' by 12' with a wood foundation, wood siding, asbestos roofing shingles, hand-operated launchway winch, and 100-foot wood rail on wood posts. The boat house was abandoned sometime after 1957 and was no longer standing by 1984, according to an inventory of that date. All that remains today are a hand-powered winch and a line of drilled stones that formerly supported a marine railway. No

photographs of the boat house have been found.

First Keeper's Dwelling

The first keeper's dwelling was built of split undressed stone in 1828, as detailed in specifications dated 1824. It was detached from, and located to the north of, the light tower (fig. 2). The specifications described a 1 ½ story house measuring 34' by 20', with an attached 10' by 12' kitchen or porch. A full cellar was beneath the main house, two rooms with fireplaces and iron mantels were in the first story, and two bedroom chambers were in the second story. Windows with 24-lights each provided natural light to rooms finished with double floors and plastered walls and ceilings. The kitchen was similarly finished and equipped with a cooking fireplace, side oven, and a dry sink that drained through the wall. Whitewash was to be applied to the exterior stone walls of the house and the interior cellar walls.

This structure was in decrepit condition in 1853, and was most likely demolished when the Light-House Board constructed the existing dwelling in 1855. The stone foundation of the early keeper's dwelling may survive, recorded in an archeological survey in 2008 as an "unidentified house and barn complex." This site is in the vicinity of a later barn that is also missing today (see "Barn"). It was described in 2008 as follows:

Site Number ME 107-047: This site is marked by stone foundation walls and cellar adjacent to the east side of the road 35 meters northwest of the lighthouse and keepers house; this foundation appears to be that of a dwelling. The main part of the foundation is built of dry laid split and dressed granite blocks. The interior is

filled with a jumble of similar stones, and the original depth of the cellar could not be estimated. A line of undressed granite fieldstones wraps around the north and partially around the east side of this structure and might show where a porch once stood. The structure also had a small ell on the east side, marked by another foundation of split and dressed granite blocks. In this case, there was no cellar, and the interior of the foundation is filled with small stones. This ell might have housed a kitchen. Finally, this complex of buildings also included a fourth section, less visible and less carefully built, which lies east of the ell. This probably marks the site of an attached barn. A stone-lined well lies 5.5 meters north of the house.⁹⁹

First Light Tower

Like the first keeper's dwelling, the original light tower on Baker Island was constructed of split undressed stone in 1828. A survey map dated 1854 shows it on the highest point of the island, similar to the existing light tower constructed in 1855. The 1824 specifications described the stone tower as round in form, with a diameter of 20' at the base, 10' at the top, and 25' high. The tower supported an iron lantern of octagonal shape with eight sashes, each containing 21 lights. The lantern was topped by a copper-clad dome with a ventilator and weather vane. Inside, circular stairs made of hard pine provided access to the lantern equipped with 10 whale-oil lamps. A black-and-white paint scheme was specified for the tower, with black paint to be used on the iron and copper work, white paint on the sashes and woodwork, and whitewash on the exterior and interior stone walls.

The exact location of the original tower remains unknown. Stones from the old tower may have been reused in the foundation of the new brick tower, which was both smaller at the base and taller than its stone predecessor.

Fuel House/Paint Locker

There has been much confusion about the fuel house (later called a paint locker), which was constructed at the Baker Island Light Station to provide covered storage for fuel. This "fuel" was most likely either wood or coal that was burned in the stoves of the keeper's dwelling. The fuel house was a wood-framed building with gable roof conveniently located behind the dwelling, as seen in photographs dated 1938, circa 1951, and circa 1971 (figs. 16, 17, 19, and 24). The U.S. Coast Guard referred to the building as a "fuel house" in a "Real Estate Questionnaire" dated 1930, and a "work shop" in electrification plans dated 1954 (fig. 20). It was later called a "paint locker" in a 1957 U.S. Coast Guard survey that described the building as a one-story, wood-framed storage building measuring 18 ½' by 16 ½', with a stone foundation and wood-shingle siding and roofing.

The National Park Service also called the building a "paint locker" in a 1958 "Land Ownership Record." The building was removed sometime between circa 1971 and 1976. The name was resurrected in 1988, when the National Register nomination for the Baker Island Light Station mistakenly identified the existing circa-1942 garage as the "fuel house."

⁹⁹ Ibid, C14.

Privy

A privy, or outdoor toilet, was an essential outbuilding at the Baker Island Light Station, from its installation in 1828 until deactivation in 1955. A new privy undoubtedly replaced an earlier privy when the keeper's dwelling was relocated to its new position adjacent to the light tower in 1855. The earliest documentation of the privy is found in photographs taken circa 1869 and in 1897. These show a small wood-framed structure with gable roof located a short distance behind the dwelling (figs. 5, 8, and 10). The U.S. Coast Guard described the privy in a 1957 survey as a wood-framed outhouse measuring 5' x 6' with wood-shingle siding and roofing. The privy was removed sometime between circa 1971 (fig. 24) and 1976. Remnants of the privy were described in 2008 as "marked by [a] small stone foundation segment on the edge of a steep bedrock declivity."¹⁰⁰

U.S. Signal Service Building

A building constructed by the U.S. Army Signal Corps in 1898 was located southwest of the Baker Island light tower and keeper's dwelling. It was built in response to heightened national awareness provoked by the Spanish-American War. A plan dated 1900 shows an associated flag staff located east of the signal service building (fig. 11). The U.S. Coast Guard later replaced this building with a watch tower around 1942.

Watch Tower

A watch tower was constructed southwest of the light tower and keeper's dwelling in 1942. This World War II-era structure was an enclosed room with windows supported on an open framework of stilts (figs. 19, 23, and 25). The U.S. Coast Guard described the structure in a 1957 survey as a 35' "lookout tower," with a 12' by 12' room supported by skeletal timbers. It was later removed by the National Park Service sometime in the early 1970s. Two vertical iron bars set in bedrock are all that remains of this structure today.¹⁰¹

Walkways

Walkways made of boards provided an even walking surface over the rocky terrain of the Baker Island Light Station. These appear to have been first installed sometime between 1897 and 1900, based on a photograph and later plan of those dates (figs. 9 and 11). The board walks provided links between the oil house, keeper's dwelling, and nearby privy. They were described by the U.S. Coast Guard in a 1957 survey as "walkways, landings & stairs," measuring approximately 150 lineal feet with timber supports, wood runners, and hand rails. The walks were in poor to fair condition in 1957-71, and had been completely removed by 1974 (figs. 24 and 26).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 54 and C15.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

V. CONCLUSIONS

EXISTING INTEGRITY FOR 1939

The Baker Island Light Station retains a moderate degree of historic integrity for the year 1939, the last year of the 1855-1939 period of significance as defined by the 1988 individual nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The light station in 1939 was a complex of buildings that included an 1855 light tower with attached keeper's dwelling, nearby privy, barn, and boat house. Other buildings added over the years were a brick oil house in 1895 and a fuel house in 1905. A signal station erected in 1898 may have still been standing in 1939, along with an associated flag staff and poles carrying a telephone line. Of these, only three buildings remain today: the 1855 light tower and now-detached keepers dwelling, and the 1895 oil house. Individually, these retain a high degree of historic integrity for the year 1939, with a few notable exceptions. The U.S. Coast Guard electrified the light station and installed two windows in the oil house in 1954, replaced the light tower's original Fresnel lens with an automated light around 1957, and removed the brick connector between the light tower and keeper's dwelling around 1958.

Other alterations to the light station since 1939 include construction of a watch tower and a wood-framed garage around 1942. Of these, only the garage remains today. In addition, an abundant growth of spruce trees has almost completely obscured the view of the lighthouse from the sea.

CHARACTER- DEFINING FEATURES (CDFs)

Definition

Character-defining features (CDFs) are defined in the National Park Service's D.O./NPS-28: *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* as follows:

A prominent or distinctive aspect, quality, or characteristic of a historic property that contributes significantly to its physical character. Structures, objects, vegetation, spatial relationships, views, furnishings, decorative details, and materials may be such features.¹⁰²

By this definition, a CDF can date from any period in the history of the property. In the case of the Baker Island Light Station, this spans the time period from its reconstruction in 1855 to the present day.

A more restrictive explanation is cited in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, in which CDFs are tied to the "historic character" of a building or structure:

Character-defining features . . . [are] those architectural materials and features that are important in defining the building's historic character and detailing of exterior materials, such as

¹⁰² Director's Order (D.O.)/NPS-28, *Cultural Resources Management Guideline*, Release No. 5 (U.S. Dept. of the Interior, NPS, History Division, 1997), Appendix A, 178.

masonry, wood and metal; exterior features, such as roofs, porches, and windows; interior materials, such as plaster and paint; and interior features, such as moldings and stairways, room configuration and spatial relationships, as well as structural and mechanical systems.¹⁰³

“Historic character” is thereby tied to historical significance, which D.O./NPS-28 defines as “the meaning or value ascribed to a structure, landscape, object, or site based on the National Register criteria for evaluation. It normally stems from a combination of association and integrity.”¹⁰⁴ The aspects of integrity including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.¹⁰⁵

Historic Character-Defining Features

Virtually all the existing building fabric and features of Baker Island Light Station’s 1855 light tower, 1855 keeper’s dwelling, and 1895 oil house, can be considered historic. This amazing state of preservation can be attributed to the deaccessioning of the keeper’s dwelling and oil house by the U.S. Coast Guard in 1958, the relative inaccessibility of the

¹⁰³ Kay E. Weeks and Anne E. Grimmer, *The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* (U.S. Dept. of the Interior, NPS, Cultural Resource Stewardship and Partnerships, Historic Preservation Services, 1995), 63.

¹⁰⁴ D.O./NPS-28, Appendix A, 193.

¹⁰⁵ National Register Bulletin 15: *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (U.S. Dept. of the Interior, NPS, Interagency Resources Division, 1990, revised 1991), 44-45.

island, low usage of the structures, and responsible stewardship by the National Park Service. All existing elements and features of these three structures should therefore be considered as historic and character-defining unless specifically mentioned in the following section. This includes significant alterations described in this report made to the light tower and keeper’s dwelling in 1903 and the 1920s.

Non-Historic Character-Defining Features

The following are character-defining features (CDFs) of the Baker Island Light Station that are *not* historic. These features do not contribute to, and in some cases detract from, the *historic* character of the light station. As such, they could be removed with no adverse effect on the historic character of the structures. For the purposes of this discussion, “non-historic” is defined as post-dating 1939.

1855 Light Tower

- Chain-link fence at the base of the tower (1965).
- Absence of a one-story connection between the tower and keeper’s dwelling (removed circa 1958).
- Stainless-steel exterior door (circa 1958-76).
- Glass window blocks (circa 1974-76).
- Solar-powered light (replaces the 1855 4th-order Fresnel lens circa 1957).

1855 Keeper's Dwelling

- Absence of a one-story connection between the tower and keeper's dwelling (removed circa 1958).
- Wooden steps at the front doorway (replaced historic granite steps circa 1958).
- Absence of steps at the east kitchen doorway (removed after 1976).
- Absence of boardwalks on the west and south sides of the house (removed in the early 1970s).
- Absence of buildings behind the house (privy and fuel house removed early 1970s).
- Wooden shutters covering the windows (by 1970).
- Existing linoleum and vinyl tiles on the first and second floors of the keeper's dwelling (circa 1950s).
- Acoustical ceiling tiles on wood battens in Rooms 102, 106, 107, and 202 (circa 1940s-50s).
- Existing 6-panel door at the exterior east doorway (by 1976).
- Electrical wiring and fixtures (1954).

1895 Oil House

- Concrete cradles on the east side of the oil house (1954).
- Existing wood door (replaced the original 4-panel door circa 1954).
- Side windows (circa 1954).
- Asbestos roofing shingles (circa 1954).

Circa-1942 Garage

- The entire garage is considered to be a non-historic character-defining feature because it post-dates 1939.

TREATMENT

Introduction

Acadia National Park commissioned this Historic Structure Report to document the Baker Island Light Station and guide its future treatment in preparation for leasing to a private party. Treatment of the light station has previously been addressed by the park's 1992 General Management Plan, which placed it in a "Cultural Zone" and a "Preservation/Adaptive Use Subzone," Management emphasis of these zones was defined as follows:

Cultural Zone: Manage areas to preserve, protect, and interpret cultural resources and their settings, and for their use and enjoyment by the public.

Preservation/Adaptive Use Subzone: Use, with necessary modifications, of historically significant structures for leasing, public activities, or administrative activities and functions that perpetuate the characteristics that qualify these resources for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.¹⁰⁶

Treatment of the individual buildings of the light station is also addressed in the National Park Service List of Classified Structures (LCS), which lists the management category as "should be preserved and maintained." Ultimate treatment is "stabilization" for the oil

house and garage, and "rehabilitation" for the keeper's dwelling.

The light tower has not yet been added to the LCS. Its use and treatment are, however, dictated by the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000. This disallows commercial activities but encourages public access for education, recreation, and cultural or historic preservation purposes. Maintenance of the light tower is to abide by the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. These define the proposed treatments of preservation and adaptive use (also known as rehabilitation) as follows:

Preservation is . . . the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.

Rehabilitation is . . . the act or process of making possible a compatible use for a property through repair, alterations, and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values.¹⁰⁷

Two treatments that have not been recommended for the Baker Island Light Station are restoration and reconstruction:

¹⁰⁶ *General Management Plan, Acadia National Park, Maine* (Boston: North Atlantic Region, NPS, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Oct. 1992), 58.

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/>

Restoration is . . . the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

Reconstruction is . . . the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.¹⁰⁸

General Treatment

Any treatment of the Baker Island Light Station should follow the guidance provided by the 1992 *General Management Plan* for Acadia National Park, the National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000, and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* described in the previous section. Every effort should be made to *preserve* historic character-defining features of the light station's three contributing historic properties: the 1855 light tower, 1855 keeper's dwelling, and the 1895 oil house. Note that all existing features and materials of these three structures are considered to be historic and character-defining, except those listed

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

in the section "Non-Historic Character-Defining Features." Note also that this study has determined that the garage post-dates 1939 and therefore should not be considered as a contributing historic structure.

Any work on the light tower, keeper's dwelling, or oil house should be photographically documented and included in the park's building files. Extensive work should be documented by both photographs and a written completion report. Every attempt should be made to replicate the size, scale, and other details of original deteriorated materials ("replacement in kind"). Representative samples of historic materials should be saved, cataloged, and placed in the building's artifact collection. New replacement materials should also be date-stamped so as to distinguish them from surviving historic building fabric.

Specific Treatments

The following specific treatment options for the Baker Island Light Station are in accordance with *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.

Preservation

Preservation would sustain the historic structures of the Baker Island Light Station in their current appearance and configuration. The security and passive ventilation of vacated buildings would be maintained. Ongoing maintenance and repair would continue, emphasizing the retention of historic character-defining features.

More extensive work would follow the philosophy of replacement-in-kind, with some exceptions. For example, an assessment of the deteriorating brickwork of the light tower has implicated the existing hard cement mortar, which should be replaced with a softer lime mortar. The exteriors of the light tower and keeper's dwelling should maintain their historic white-painted finishes with dark-color trim; historic trim colors could be identified with paint analysis.

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation would adapt the historic structures of the Baker Island Light Station to a new, compatible use. This is the most lenient treatment, allowing alterations and additions that are both respectful of, and preserve, historic character-defining features. Current site conditions make development of a new use challenging, however. These include an absence of functional electrical, heating, or plumbing systems. At a minimum, some provisions would need to be made for potable water and a nearby privy/outhouse. Safety hazards would also require mitigation, such as the deteriorated railing on the upper deck of the light tower, and presence of lead paint, asbestos, and unstable plaster in the keeper's dwelling.

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The U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office transferred these reels to the Cartographic Section of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). It is believed that these reels were shot during the World War II period when the Coast Guard was under the authority of the U.S. Navy. The Navy has had a long standing program of filming its plans and drawings and disposing of the original. Therefore, as far as our staff and the staff of the U.S. Coast Guard can determine the original plans on these reels no longer exist, and this film is the record copy.

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The U.S. Coast Guard Historian's Office transferred these reels to the Cartographic Section of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). It is believed that these reels were shot during the World War II period when the Coast Guard was under the authority of the U.S. Navy. The Navy has had a long standing program of filming its plans and drawings and disposing of the original. Therefore, as far as our staff and the staff of the U.S. Coast Guard can determine the original plans on these reels no longer exist, and this film is the record copy.

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