Portsmouth New Hampshire

October 1. 1792.

On the Cession of the New-Hampshire Lighthouse to the United States the same management was continued with regard to supplies and attendance, as when under the jurisdiction of the State. — It was found by Observation and enquiry, that the Light was not so good as in other lighthouses in this Vicinity. — This defect was imputed to the use of Fish Oyl, therefore a Quantity of Spermacete Oyl was procured with an intention of improving the light by the use of it. — On tryal, the first night the Oyl took fire — and the lighthouse was in great danger of burning. — The Vessel containing the Oyl is an open copper pan about 20 inches square and 4 or 5 inches deep — this is suspended at a proper hight in the Lantern; the wicks are rested on one plate or strip of Iron laying a cross the pan, and sunk in the Oyl, or to a level with the surface of it, — These being lighted as usual, to the Amount of 7 wicks, on the each suspending plate of iron, it is supposed so effectually heat the Irons & consequently the whole quantity of Oyl, exposed on a surface of 400 Square inches and two inches only, deep; that the Oyl, being of a quality free to burn, caught fire which the ordinary Oyl heretofore in use would not — hence it was necessary — to lay aside the free-burning Oyl, and resume the use of that before employed — till such new-construction of lamps or other improvements should admit of the use of the best Oyl with safety. —

Encl. 5

Portsmouth, New Hampshire
October 1st 1792.-

Account of an attempt made
to introduce Spermaceti Oil
in lieu of Fish Oil into the Light
House at New Hampshire.