ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO
SUPERINTENDENT OF LIGHTHOUSES
PORTLAND, ME.

JC..:CP

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
LIGHTHOUSE SERVICE

LIGHTHOUSES
[redacted]

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OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT, 1ST DISTRICT
PORTLAND, ME.

March 15, 1926

r. C. A. E. Long,
Matinicus, Maine.

Dear Sir:

Receipt of your letter of March 8, 1926, is respectfully acknowledged.

The Matinicus Rock Light Station was deeded to the United States jointly by the State of Maine and Commonwealth of Massachusetts November 2, 1826. By an Act of Congress, dated May 18, 1826, the first lights were established in 1827, and consisted of two wooden towers at either end of a cobblestone dwelling. In 1846, Congress appropriated $11,000 for rebuilding the station, and a new dwelling of granite was constructed having granite towers situated similarly to the old wooden ones. In 1857, the towers were again rebuilt and placed 180 feet apart to make them more effective (sensitive) as range lights.

The first fog signal at this station was a bell, afterwards changed to a ten-inch steam whistle. The exact date of this change does not appear in the records of this office, but it is known, however, that the bell was still in commission as late as 1867 and that the steam whistle was in operation as early as 1872; the change taking place sometime between these two dates.

As originally established, there was a fixed white light in each tower, but on July 1, 1883, the light in the North tower was extinguished and that in the South tower changed to fixed red. This characteristic remained until July 1, 1888, when the two fixed white lights were restored. On August 15, 1923, the light in the South tower was permanently discontinued and on August 21, 1923, the fixed white light in North tower was changed to a 43,000 candlepower flashing white light, which is now being shown.

The present fog signal is a five second blast every 30 seconds from a 12-inch air whistle; the steam fog signal having been replaced by an internal combustion engine - compressed air plant on December 1, 1922.

The name of the first keeper at Matinicus Rock Light Station is not known here, but in 1853, Samuel Burgess was appointed keeper and continued in this position until 1861. The following principal keepers succeeded him:

John H. Grant 1861 - 1890, having had a record of thirty-two years service at this station.
William G. Grant 1890 - 1900 (Son of John H. Grant)
James E. Hall 1900 - 1908
-erton E. Tolman 1908 - 1911
Charles C. Dyer 1911 - 1916
Arthur B. Mitchell 1916 - 1919
Frank O. Hilt 1919 - present keeper

Much interesting information relating to this station will be found on pages 113 et seq of Major D. P. Heap's book entitled "Ancient and Modern Lighthouses." (Boston, Mass., Tickner & Co., 1869), which you will probably find in the State Library at Augusta, Maine, and from which certain of the above information has been obtained.

It is hoped the above will be of service to you, and this office will be pleased to offer further assistance if possible.

Respectfully,

C. E. SHERMAN
Superintendent of Lighthouses

JCW:CP

Office of the Superintendent, 1st District,
Portland, Maine, March 15, 1926.

1. Copies to Bureau of Lighthouse for its information and files.

2. The above information is furnished in response to a letter from Mr. Long. (See Bureau endorsement on its letter to him dated March 3, 1926.

S.
SHERMAN
Superintendent