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Mayos Beach

Entry 17F

Referred to the 5th Auditor

U. S. Revenue Cutter Hamilton
Mouth Bay Augusta 29th 1838

Sir.

I cannot refrain from making a special report to you concerning a Light-house which is erecting at Wellfleet.

Wellfleet is a small place about half way between Barnstable and Provincetown, and stands at the head of a Bay of the same name: This Bay has an island on the west side, ~~crossed~~ close to the main, called Billingsgate island on which there is a Light-house. The moment vessels get within this island they are safe from all winds that do not reach equally to the head of the bay, and are liable to no accidents which could endanger life or more than slightly affect property. From this island to the beach where the new Light is erecting, is 6 miles. The channel is ~~is~~ very crooked so that vessels in navigating the bay, except at high water, could make no use of the Light. There are from 80 to 100 vessels belonging to this port, principally fishermen, the largest of which draw from 7 to 10 feet water. Struck with the appearance of this harbour, I was at a loss to know what possible use they could make of more than the one light on Billingsgate island. On enquiry I found that some of the fishermen professed to have experienced some difficulty in seeing the shore

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after they had arrived at the head of the bay although the land, with the exception of a narrow beach, rises boldly to the view. On further enquiry I found that some of the oldest fishermen of the place considered it perfectly absurd to have a light there, and openly declared that it was not wanted. There are many weeks in the winter when this harbour is not navigable on account of the ice, and at all seasons, with Provincetown only 18 miles off, it is impossible ever to become a place of any resort or of much trade. To add another Light to the one already there seems to me so entirely unnecessary and so little required for the purposes of Commerce and Navigation, that I have felt it to be my duty to make this representation in the hope of arresting a further expenditure of the public money.

I shall have occasion in my General report to propose a small Buoy on a rock, called the Channel rocks, which lies in the way of those craft that have to keep mid-channel at low water.

I have the honor to be,
Respectfully,
Y. Ob't Serv't.
E. McCauley
Lieut. U. S. N.
Surveying 2d Light,
House district.

Col. Levi Woodbury
Sec'y of the Treasury
Washington