LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

LIGHTHOUSE INFORMATION FORM NUMBER 40

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

V. DiStefano, Martha's Vineyard Commission - 1980

1) south keeper's house: W front, N side

2) north keeper's house: W front, N side

3) boathouse, E side

4) light tower from south

HISTORIC NAME: West Chop Light Station

TOWN: Tisbury

LOCATION: West Chop Road

COUNTY: Dukes CODE: 007

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 10th

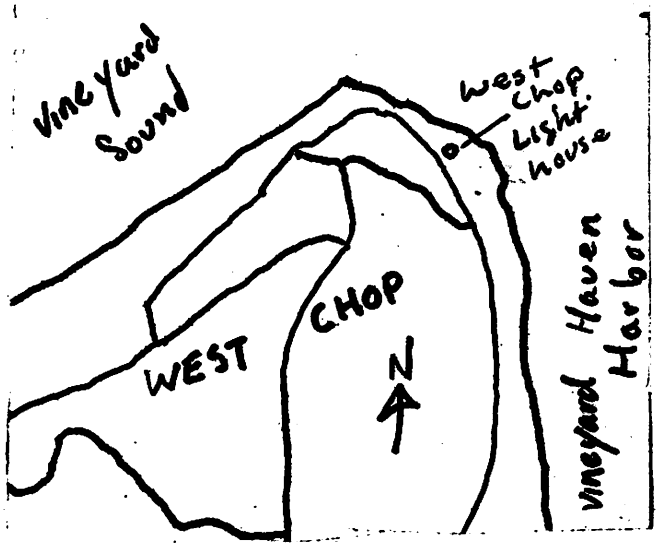
LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Dukes County Courthouse (Book 13, p. 446; Book 31, p. 287)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

See attached sketch map taken from assessor's map.

SKETCH MAP



LAT./LONG.: 41°28'8"/70°36'0"

UTM COORDINATE: 19/366/100/4593/300

USGS QUADRANGLE: Prov., RI., Mass., Conn.

SCALE: 1:250,000

ACREAGE: 4 acres

OWNER(S): First Coast Guard District
408 Atlantic Avenue
Boston, MA 02210-2209

STATUS: unmanned/active

RECORDED BY: N. Salzman/V. DiStefano

ORGANIZATION: MHC/MVC

DATE: 8/26/81

MAY 4 1987

SITE DESCRIPTION
The West Chop Light is located on the west side of the entrance to Vineyard Haven Harbor and covering Squash Meadow and Norton Sound. It is part of a sloping open property between West Chop Road and the Harbor; the light is next to the northernmost dwelling.

MAY 4 198

MAJOR ELEMENTS DESCRIPTION
An extensive site containing a brick tower (1891), two mirror image keeper's dwellings (1881), an oil house (1895), a boat /fog signal house (1881), and a garage (1935); surrounded by a wooden fence, painted white. The West Chop Light was first established at the present location in 1847. A single rubble stone cape style house and round stone tower were constructed. These structures are shown on an 1865 plan. At that time, the tower was a shingled decagon. The existing mirror image keepers' dwellings and fog signal building were constructed in 1881. The brick tower was constructed on the site of the earlier stone tower in 1891.

Tower: 52' high, 13' diameter, 84' above sea level. Brick with attached entry house. Standard iron lens room on top.

EXTERIOR: Three 2/2 windows with granite sills and lintels. Decorative dentil molding of brick below balcony and bracketed supports. Another receding band of brick back to the tower surface. Roof: standard iron with ventilator ball. Lightning rod has "arrow" wind indicator on top. Entry: 13'9" with window. Gable roof. Floor is concrete.
INTERIOR: Walls are sandblasted red brick, floor is concrete. Windows: Entry house window contains 30" x 50" sash with 3 1/2" frame, 4" sill. There are three other windows, at L2, L3, and L4. The stair rail is covered by a molded wooden rail, now painted over in gray.

Lamp Room - 7 1/2' high with brick walls; ceiling is composed of 8 sections of cast iron with a 6' center section and 16" outer rim. Two of the sections are removed to allow entry into the lens room.

Lens Room - The ten sided room is sheathed in vertical wooden boards, painted white. The vents are housed in a recessed square of wood, painted black. In the center is a brass, five ray cover, with a turn-key screwed into the center post. Three of the windows contain 33"x35" panes of plexiglass, with 2 1/4" deep mullions; one contains a wooden panel painted red.

Balcony - diamond pattern cast in floor exterior of lower wall is paneled (as at Brant Point, # 17).

LIGHT CHARACTERISTICS: original 4th order Fresnel lens, 15 mi range, 750 cp., R2400 CG181-12vDC Lightchanger FL1214, 120v-2PL/omni directional lamp 120v-100W,CC8-th. 10" air whistle compressor replaced steam boiler in 1933.

Oil House - 1847 - 9'10" x 13' 1"; brick with slate roof. Unusual louvred cupola (see Nauset, # 27). Also unusual is the building's separate copper strap lightning rod. Interior now used for paint storage.

Garage - 1966, clapboard. No Significance.

Fog Signal Bldg Coast Guard dates construction to 1847; remodeled in 1891. One and a half story wooden clapboard structure, 32'5" square with brick foundation; hip roof with small gable above double doors; 6/6 windows in asymetrical arrangement; small flat triangular window within door gable; concrete floor.

Two Keeper's Dwellings - mirror image structures with some variation in trim

and window treatment. They were built in 1847 and remodeled in 1891; ell shaped; 1 1/2 story with continuation to one story ell in rear. White clapboard with red asphalt shingle roof; chimney centered in short front cross gable at its junction with rear gable. A large pedimented dormer is centered on the rear slope of roof. Porches-front: one bay square at angle of wings; one story high with pitched roof; vertical board and batten in half gables; one corner and two applied sawn spandrels. Rear has same sawn spandrel ornamentation.

In summary, the West Chop Light was established at the present location in 1847. A single rubble stone cape style house and round stone tower were constructed. These structures are shown on an 1865 plan (attached). At that time, the tower was sheathed with a 10-sided shingled facing. The existing mirror image keeper's dwelling and fog signal building were constructed in 1881. The present brick tower was constructed on the site of the earlier stone tower in 1891.

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CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY
4/15/1817 - land purchased from Abijah and Mary Luce for $225. A stone tower was built (25' high, 60' above sea level, 10 lamps in octagonal iron lens room). Lower portion of tower wider. Keeper's dwelling built (5 bay, 1 1/2 story, rubble stone, with chimneys at both ends).

18?? - stone tower leaks and is sheathed in vertical wooden siding.

10/31/1846 - additional land purchased from D.P. and J. West for $225. New Tower built of brick; higher than 25'; $15,000. Twin (mirror-image) keepers dwelling (cross gables, wooden 1 1/2 story with basement) built; $12,000.

1847 - fog signal building (also called boat house; 32'5" sq.) and oil house with slate roof built.

1891 - tower remodeled or rebuilt to 52' height; keeper's dwelling remodeled or rebuilt.

1925 - garage (18' x 19', $300, galvanized metal) built.

1943 - lookout tower (8' square, $950) built; now destroyed.

1966 - garage (wood, one story, clapboard) built.

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LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

The West Chop Light possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship as well as association with the development of aids to navigation in Massachusetts. Dating primarily from 1847, the station consists of a contributing brick tower, double keeper's house, oil house and fog signal building and a non-contributing garage . It meets criteria A & C of the NRHP on the state level as well as survey criteria 2a, 2c.

MAY 4 19

WEST CHOP LIGHT

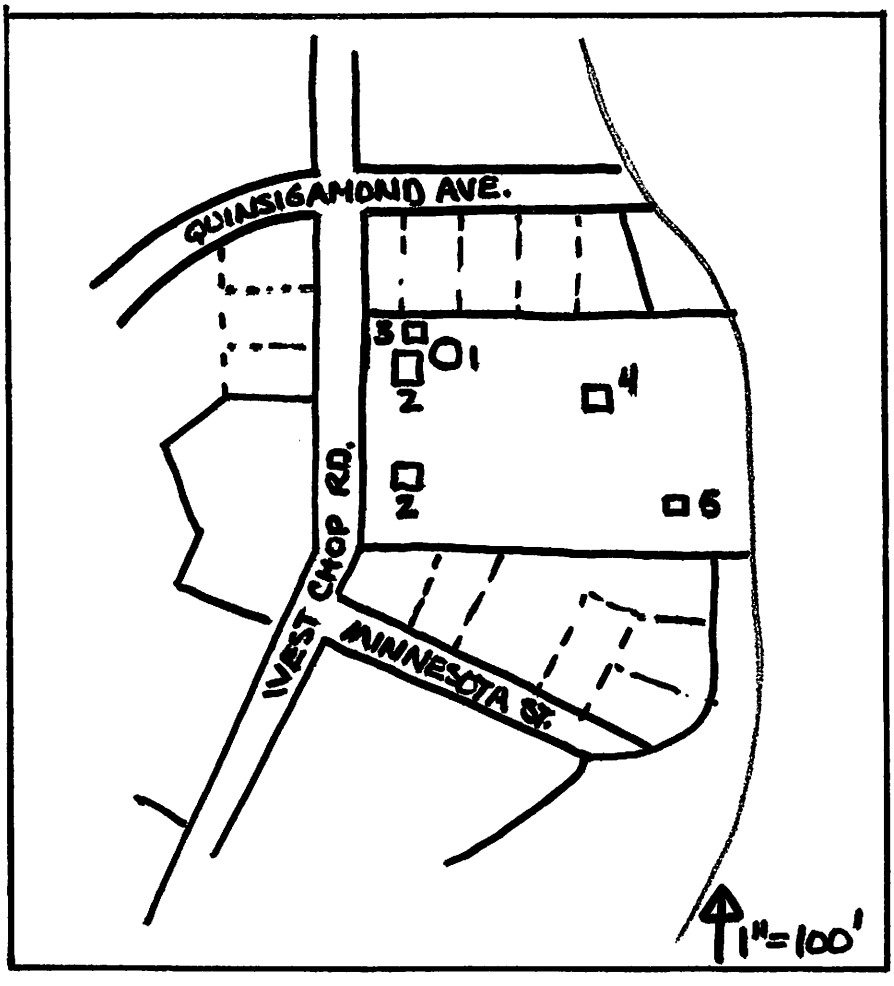
ESTABLISHED 1817
REBUILT 1847, 1891

This inventory was partially revised in 1982. However, the form should be revised throughout to reflect the following information which is believed to be accurate.

The West Chop Light was first established at the present location in 1847. A single rubble stone cape style house and round stone tower was constructed. These structures are shown on an 1865 plan. At that time the tower was sheathed with a 10 sided shingle facade. The existing mirror image keepers dwelling and fog signal building were constructed in 1881. The brick tower was constructed on the site of the earlier stone tower in 1891.

Attachments
Plans for c.1847 Tower and Keeper's Dwelling
Plot Plan for Station Complex

MAY 4 1



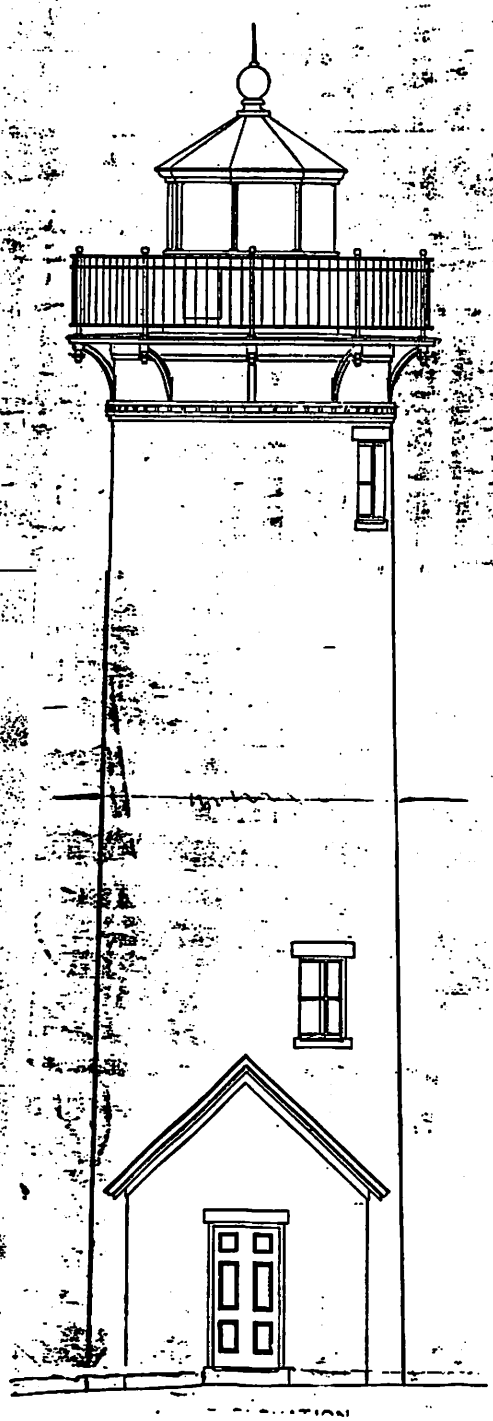
WEST CHOP LIGHT

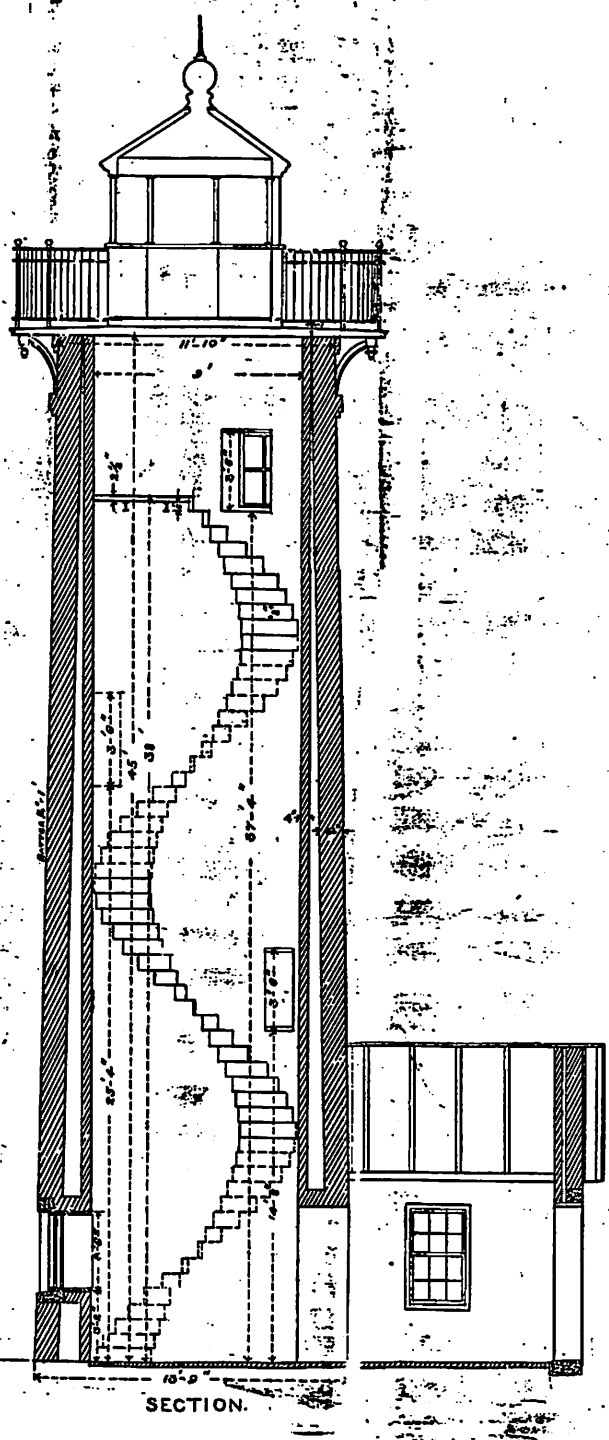
1. Tower
2. Keeper's House
3. Garage
4. Boathouse
5. Oil/Storage House

TOWER AT WEST CHOP

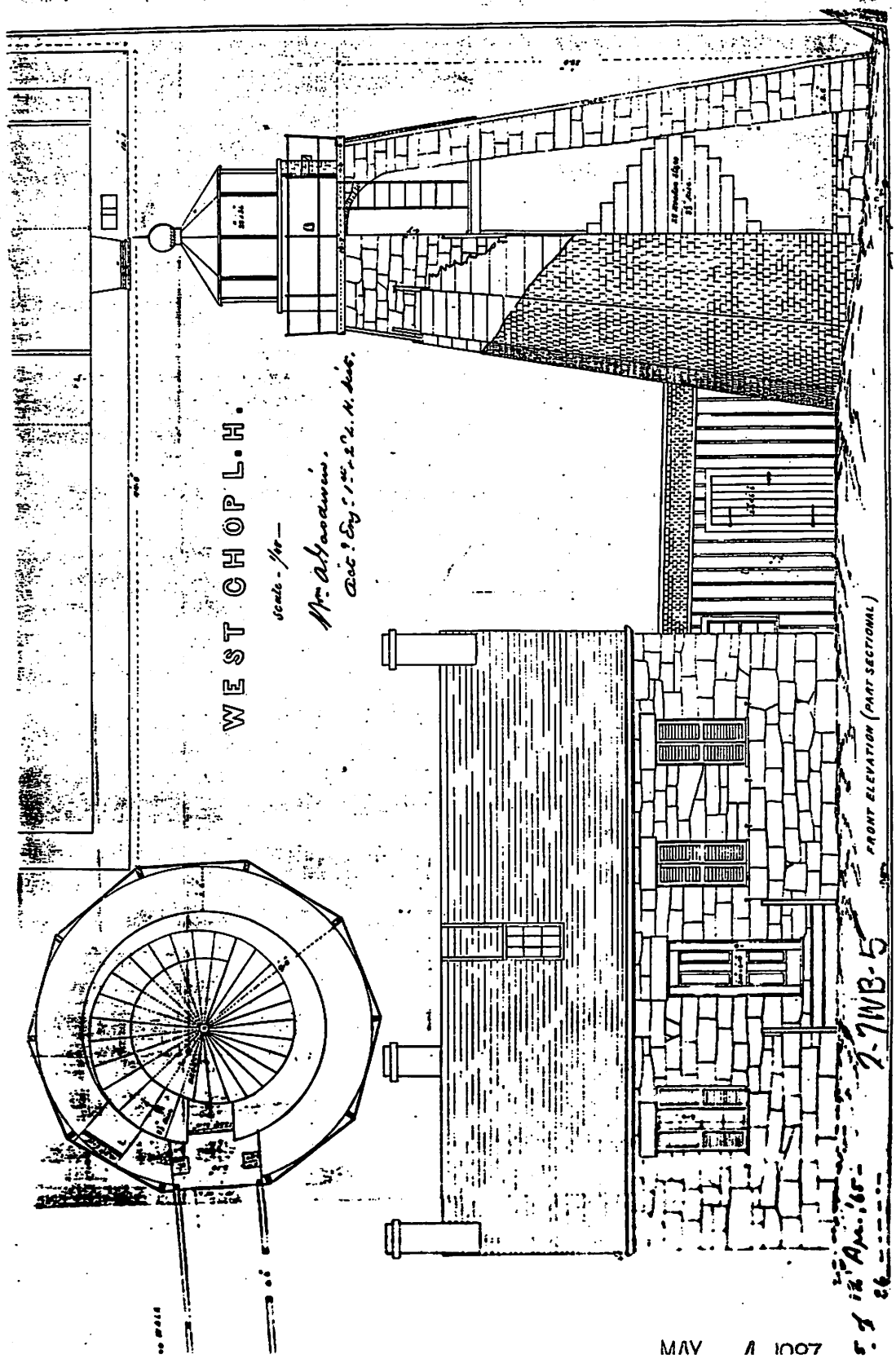
LIGHT STATION MASS.

1891. No 1528





SECTION.



2-7NR-5

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THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION

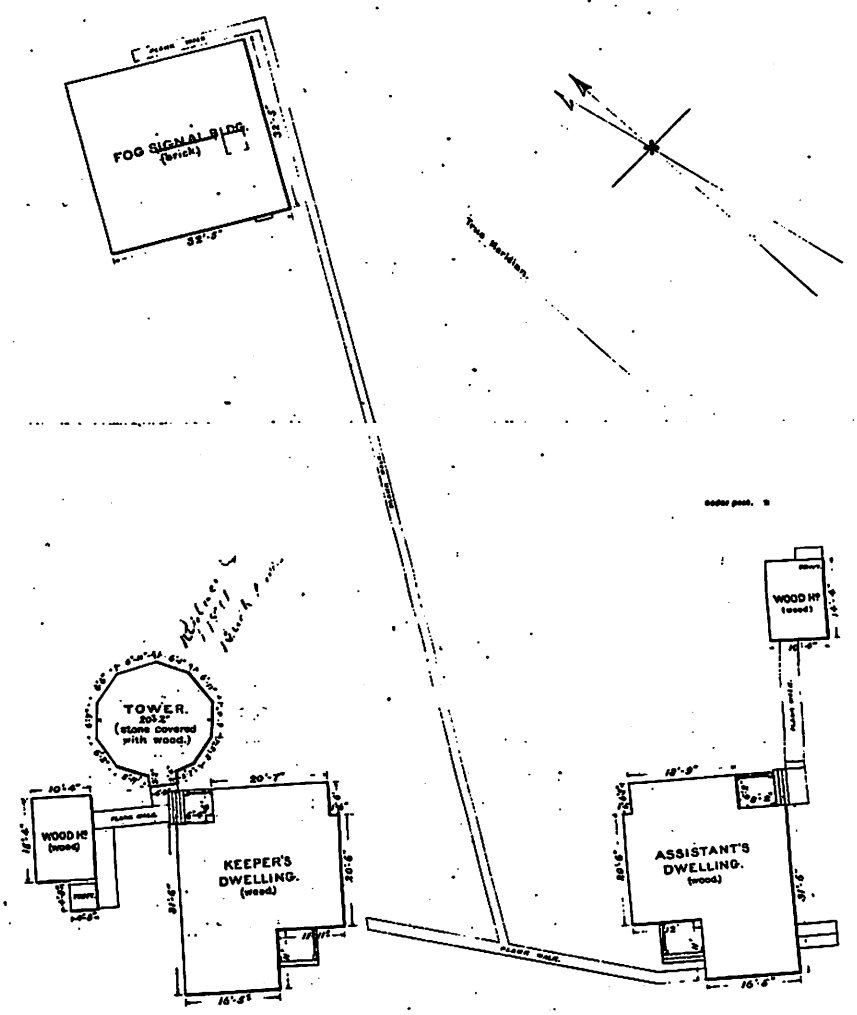
WEST CHOP

LIGHT STATION,

MASS.

Buildings Surveyed — April 24 — 1888 by E.P.ADAMS, C.E., L.H.Surveyor.

Scale, 1/50



U S LHE

E. P. Adams, U.S.E. Maj. of Engrs.
L.H.Surveyor 2d Dists. Engr. 1st & 2d L.H.Dists.

OFFICE OF L.H. ENGR., P.O. BLDG., BOSTON, MASS. — APRIL 12, 1888.

SIZE OF FINISHED SHEET.

No 1522

(No3)U.42

MAY 4 1

LIGHTHOUSES OF MASSACHUSETTS
THEMATIC [illegible]

2ND L.H.DIST.

KEEPERS DWELLING

WEST CHOP L.H.

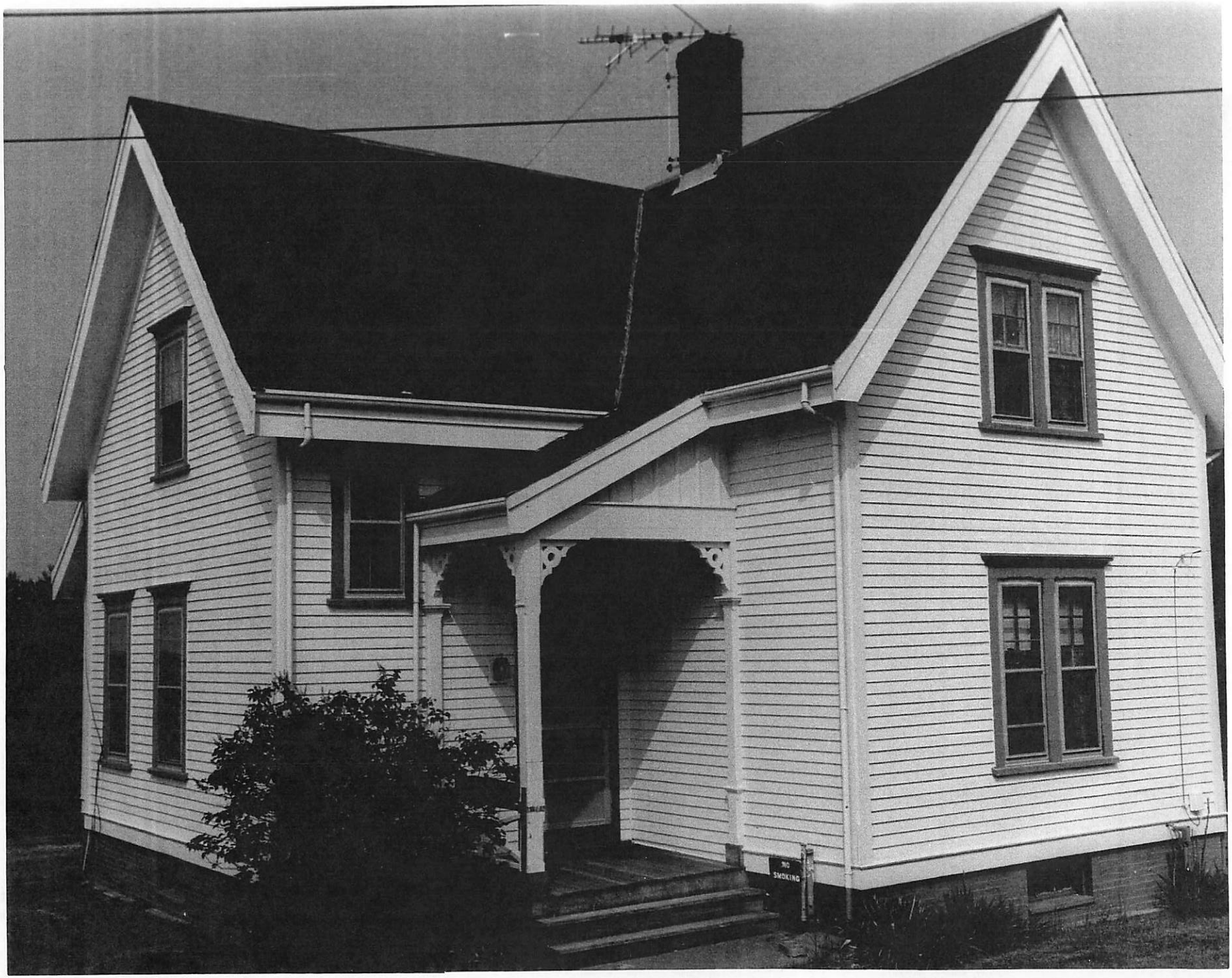
4TH ORDER FW

Scale - 8' to 1"

Erected Dec. 1858.

No 1661

MAY 4 1987


NO
SMOKING


US COAST GUARD
WEST CHOP
LIGHT STATION


1891