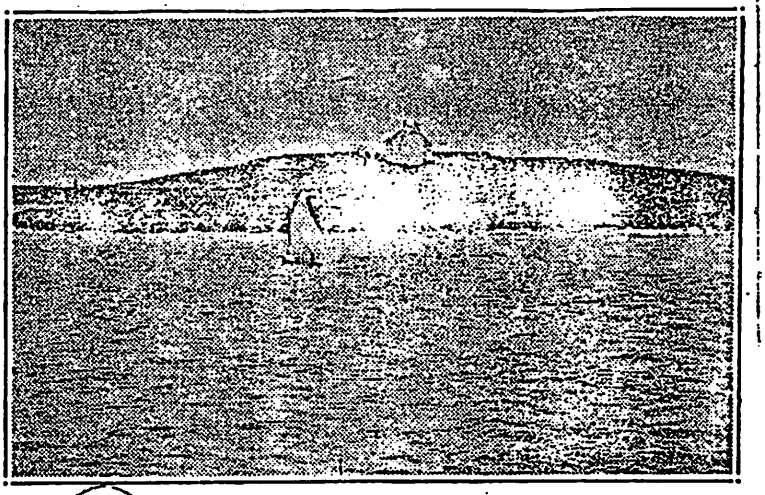
Days Of Economy Having Effect On Many Old Maine Coast Lights

Tenant's Harbor Light Due To Be Extinguished Soon And Replaced By Modern Light And Bell Buoy In New Location



Tenant's Harbor Light Station

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Tenant's Harbor Light Station is to be discontinued and a more modern equipment established in its place as soon as the Government has procured a new invention that will answer the purpose of the present station in a more economical way.

Rumors concerning the discontinuance have been heard frequently in that part of the State and especially at Tenant's Harbor, where Elmer E. Allen, one of the prominent citizens of the town in a message to his neighbors, declared that the lighthouse had given good faithful service to marriners for a long term of years, and that this is not the time to make a change.

It is planned to install a combination light and bell buoy in a good location, so that a captain shaping his course through Muscle Ridges for Tenant's Harbor, or even coming from around Mosquito Island would catch the light more distinct, and hear the bell signal much clearer than at the present location of the lighthouse on the eastern end of Sutton's Island.

The combination light and bell buoy have been great aids to the lighthouse service. The bells weigh about 1,000 pounds and can be distinctly heard many miles, while the light attachment can be easily seen at a distance of 10 to 12 miles.

The reason for the curtailment of many of the smaller lights along the coast is due to the economic plan of the President in curtailing Governmental expenditures. The plans have been thoroughly gone over by the commission and where the combination light and bell buoys can replace lighthouses, this will be done.

The light at Tenant's Harbor during the early part of the 18th century has been very important as large fleets of vessels passed in and out of the harbor. Canning factories, stone quarries and ship building railways gave the town a considerable business, but, in the past few years, this activity has seadily decreased with the result that the coasting trade has practically come to an end. Transportation by water, like that of the old time horse and team and even the later railroad, has been cut into deeply by the modern motor truck.

During the days of the World War, business increased noticeable in the shipbuilding business and many found employment, but with the signing of the armistice, business again repidly declined and the once little flourishing seaport, became quiet again.

To those who live near, or the followers of the sea, it is a sorrowful occasion seeing these familiar old landmarks passing from existence, their lights extinguished, nothing left but memories.

Leonard Dudley, keeper of the Tenant's Harbor station has made many friends during his service, all of whom will regret his being transferred to a new station.

The light on Sutton's Island has a tower 64 feet above high water mark and is a fixed light with a three second flash every 60 seconds. In thick weather, a bell serves as a signal with one stroke, then silent 30 seconds, then two strokes, then silent 30 seconds.

The station was ordered built at the most critical time preceding the Civil War by James Buchanan, 15th President of the United States, often referred to as the "bachelor president." President Buchanan took considerable interest in the coast of Maine and through him the following lighthouses were established or rebuilt: Mount Desert Rock, rebuilt; Deer Island Thoroughfare, established; Eagle Island, rebuilt; Matinicus Rock, rebuilt; Brown's Head, rebuilt; Dice Head, rebuilt; Fort Point, rebuilt; Pemaquid Point, rebuilt; Seguin, rebuilt; Weed Island, rebuilt; Isles of Shoals, rebuilt; Goat Island, rebuilt; Boon Island, rebuilt.

One of the best known of the old time coasters which sailed in and out of Tenant's Harbor frequently was the Merrill C. Hart. It was of the schooner type, built by George W. Polley, one of the largest ship owners at Tenant's Harbor in the old days and who became very successful in coastal trade.

The craft was later purchased by Emerson Gilchrist, who operated the general store at Tenant's Harbor. The schooner under Mr. Gilchrist's ownership was rebuilt, but the merchant preferred to pay for the labor in stock from the store rather than in actual cash. There was a fine argument when the subject was first approached to the men, but they finally decided that it was the best way out of the affair.