

PH0503975

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 15 1977
DATE ENTERED MAR 29 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC **
Cape Hatteras Light Station (HS-4A, HS-4A1, HS-4B, HS-4C, HS-4D)
AND/OR COMMON
Same (Museum of the Sea, Cape Hatteras Lighthouse)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
On access road one mile south of junction with N.C.12. NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN
Buxton, N.C. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
First
STATE CODE COUNTY CODE
North Carolina 37 Dare 055

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable) Southeast Regional Office
National Park Service, Cape Hatteras National Seashore
STREET & NUMBER
Route 1, Box 675 1895 Phoenix Blvd
CITY, TOWN
Manteo, Atlanta VICINITY OF GA 30349 STATE
North Carolina 27954

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Dare County Courthouse, Register of Deeds
STREET & NUMBER
Courthouse Building
CITY, TOWN
Manteo, STATE
North Carolina 27954

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN STATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Cape Hatteras Light Station consists of 10 acres of an L-shaped configuration of five structures bounded on the east by barrier dunes and the Atlantic Ocean, on the west by Buxton Woods, on the north by the Hatteras Naval Facility, and on the south by dunes and open beach. The original site consisted on 4 acres and then 48 acres by the mid-19th Century. The present boundaries are arbitrarily drawn based upon modern intrusions and a changing shoreline. The complex consists of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse (HS-4A), brick oil house (HS-4A1), ruins of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse (HS-4B), frame double keepers quarters (HS-4C), and brick principal keepers quarters (HS-4D).

Cape Hatteras Lighthouse (HS-4A) towers 208 feet from its base, making it the tallest lighthouse in the United States. The conical brick shaft is painted in a distinctive black and white striped spiral pattern. The shaft stands upon a floating foundation of cross laid layers of yellow pine timbers. Above the timbered courses rest, the cut stone foundation laid in an octagonal pattern with granite groins. At the top of the shaft occurs an iron nicking with a wide corbel cornice, which supports a balustraded balcony. Above that, a second catwalk encircles the cupola which houses the light. The circular roof is crowned by metal spike atop a spherical finial.

The shaft contains nine openings (seven windows and two doors). The lintels and sills are of stone. A spiral staircase of 268 steps winds from the base to the light which has a focal plane of 191 feet above mean high water. The staircase has seven semi-circular landings.

The present lighting device, installed in 1972, consists of a rotating beacon with two 1000 watt lamps, visible in clear weather for around 20 miles.

^{Built in 1870}
The tower has changed little over the years, but the light mechanism has changed several times. A fresnel lens with oil lamps lighted the tower in 1870. To rotate the lens, a weight descended slowly from the top of the tower, engaging a series of gears which turned the beacon. In 1913, an incandescent oil vapor lamp replaced the old lamps. In 1934 electricity replaced the rotating power and an astronomic time switch turned the light on and off. A new lighting device was installed in 1950. Although the mechanism has changed, the light has remained white.

In 1870 the tower stood 1500 feet from the ocean. By 1935 erosion had progressed to the point where waves washed around the base of the tower. The tower was abandoned and replaced with a skeleton steel tower a mile to the northwest. The erosion trend reversed in the late 1930's and erosion control work by the Civilian Conservation Corps and NPS permitted the return of the light to the lighthouse on January 23, 1950.

An iron picket fence built upon the base survives today.

The brick oil house (HS-4A1) stands 65 feet to the north of the lighthouse tower. Built in 1892 of red brick it is 15 feet 6 inches by 13 feet 6 inches in plan; with walls 8 feet 6 inches high; and a gable roof four feet high, covered by a turned beam metal sheathing. Originally intended to house oil drums for the light, it now houses an auxiliary generator for the beacon.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1803, 1854, 1870, 1871, 1892 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Lighthouse Board, Henry Dearborn, Dexter Stetson

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cape Hatteras Light Station contains the tallest brick lighthouse in America. The light station was one of the first (conceived in 1794 and placed in operation in 1803, it was the first light station south of Cape Henry) and one of the most important links in the lighthouse chain. The Cape Hatteras Lighthouse is the primary navigational aid for mariners rounding the treacherous Diamond Shoals.

Cape Hatteras Light Station stands on a spot of eastern North America most dreaded by sailors since the 16th Century when European ships began regularly coasting the Atlantic Seaboard. Clashing air and water currents causing frequently tempestuous waters and weather, extensive shoals, lack of landmarks on the lowlying, sandy Outer Banks, and other environmental factors all combine to make the seas off Cape Hatteras some of the most naturally hazardous in the world. Yet, paradoxically, some of these same factors (winds and currents) made the Carolina coast a major maritime transportation route.

A warm offshore current, the Gulf Stream, flows north at about 4 knots and veers eastward north of Cape Hatteras. Spanish treasure fleets made good use of this current on their voyages to Spain. Southbound vessels followed an inshore counter current of colder water, the Virginia Coastal Drift. These currents became busy coastal highways, but at Cape Hatteras the Gulf Stream pinches down on the inshore current and forces southbound ships into a narrow passage around Diamond Shoals, shallow sand bars that jut more than 10 miles out from Cape Hatteras. Several hundred ships, trying to find their way around or through the shoals, have foundered near Cape Hatteras earning for the area its reputation as the "Graveyard of the Atlantic". The absence of natural landmarks along the Carolina coast added to the mariners' risks as they were drawn dangerously close to shore to get a bearing.

Recognizing the real danger to coastal shipping, the Congress in 1797 authorized the construction of a permanent lighthouse at Cape Hatteras. On October 26, 1798, the Federal Government purchased 4 acres of land at Cape Hatteras from Christian Jennett, Thomas Farrow, and Joseph Farrow for a price of \$50.00. A problem arose over a proper contractor to build the lighthouse. Henry Dearborn, Congressman from Massachusetts, submitted the low bid for construction. Dearborn received a contract for \$38,450.00 to build both the Cape Hatteras Light Station and the Shell Castle Beacon in Ocracoke Inlet. He did not complete the Cape Hatteras light until October 1803.

Adam Gaskin was appointed first keeper of the Cape Hatteras Light on December 29, 1802, and received a yearly salary of \$333.00.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Holland, F. Ross, Jr., "A History of the Cape Hatteras Light Station", U.S.N.P.S., Washington, D.C., 1968.
- Holland, F. Ross, Jr., "Keepers Dwelling: Cape Hatteras Light Station", NPS Structures Report, Part I, Washington, D.C., 1968.
- Stick, David, "Outer Banks of North Carolina", University of N.C. Press, 1958.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 10
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 8	4, 5, 2	6, 8, 8, 0	3, 9, 0, 1	3, 0, 0	B	1, 8	4, 5, 2	5, 8, 0	3, 9, 0, 0	9, 6, 0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	
C	1, 8	4, 5, 2	4, 7, 0	3, 9, 0, 1	2, 9, 0	D					
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The station consists of an L-shaped zone bounded on the east by barrier dunes and the Atlantic Ocean. on the north by the Hatteras Naval Facility, on the west by Buxton Woods, and on the south by dunes and open beach. The zone lies one mile southeast of the junction of the park access road with North Carolina State Route 12 in Buxton, North Carolina.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Ronald G. Warfield, District Interpreter

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service/Cape Hatteras National Seashore

DATE

03/10/77

STREET & NUMBER

Route 1, Box 675

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Manteo,

STATE

North Carolina 27954

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE Deputy Assistant Secretary

DATE SEP 6 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST

Walter C. Cole

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

3-29-78

DATE

3-15-78

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Ruins of the original 1803 Cape Hatteras Lighthouse (HS-4B) sit atop a sand hill 600 feet south of the present tower. The ruins consist of a semi-circular remainder of masonry wall about four feet high. This original tower was blown up in 1870 upon completion of the new tower.

The tower constructed in 1799-1803 by Henry Dearborn was stone octagonal and brick structure 90 feet high plus a 12 foot lantern. In 1854 a brick addition raised the tower so that the focal plane of the light was 150 feet above sea level. A first order Fresnel lens was installed in the lantern. The tower was whitewashed for the first 70 feet and the remainder painted red. The light was removed by the Confederates in 1861 and replaced in 1862 by Union forces. A new Fresnel lens was installed in 1863. Erosion and time plagued the tower until Congress authorized its replacement in 1867.

A Frame Double Keepers Quarters (HS-4C) was ^erected in 1854. The original structure rested upon masonry piers and was of frame construction, whitewashed. A one story porch faced the south side. Two brick chimneys pierced the wood shingled gable roof. In 1892 one of the kitchens forming the wings of the dwelling was moved to the rear and it was adapted for use of two families. The main building was extended on its front and back lines about 16 feet east, the enclosure constituted an addition 16x20 feet in plane and two stories in height. Thus the structure housed three families. In 1954 the structure's interior was converted for use as a museum with exhibits and office and modern lavatory facilities replacing the old rear kitchen. German siding and metal and lexan storm windows are the only exterior changes to the 1892 structure. Brick cisterns remain at each end of the building. Five outbuildings present in 1893 do not survive. They were: a summer kitchen; three store houses; and a privy. All were frame construction on wood foundations. Two store houses had canvas roofs, the others had shingle roofs. A board fence enclosed the dwelling in 1893, but it does not survive. A brick walkway ran from the porch to the light tower.

A short distance east of the Double Keepers Quarters the Brick Principal Keepers Quarters was constructed in 1871. Originally the structure was a story and a half brick structure with a one story kitchen ell to the east. The kitchen opened off the living room located at the south end of the structure. A bedroom on the north end was separated from the living room by a central stair hall running east and west. Two bedrooms were located on the second floor.

Water from the roof was collected in a brick cistern on the north end of the structure. There were two wood porches, one at the south entrance door and the other off the stair hall on the east.

The structure has been altered and enlarged to function as a guest house. A small one story frame extension was added to the east end of the kitchen. A two story frame addition was built in the ell of the old structure to provide a larger living room on the first floor and a large bedroom on the second floor. To the east of this addition a one story

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porch was constructed to line up with the kitchen addition. An exterior stairway leads to a landing and a doorway cut in the wall leading into the interior main stair. The walls and ceilings have been lined with beaded pine panelling so little of the original interior can be seen. The roof is covered by wood shingles. The entire exterior is painted white. The four outbuildings present in 1893 were of wood, two were store houses, one a summer kitchen and a privy. They do not survive. The structure and its outbuildings were within the eastern half of a half acre compound surrounded by a board fence (now gone). A brick walk runs from the dwelling to the light tower.

Currently, a large visitor center parking lot intrudes on the old lightstation. Originally this area was sandy, flat, periodically flooded. The old quarters area was surrounded by a white wooden fence, now gone. While the station was originally bordered on the north by woods, dunes and open beach, today a naval facility intrudes upon the scene. Where now the station is separated from the ocean by barrier dunes built in the 1930's, the original station sat on a gently sloping, wide beach. The second floor of the Double Keepers Quarters (Museum of the Sea) houses offices for the District Ranger and Maintenance personnel.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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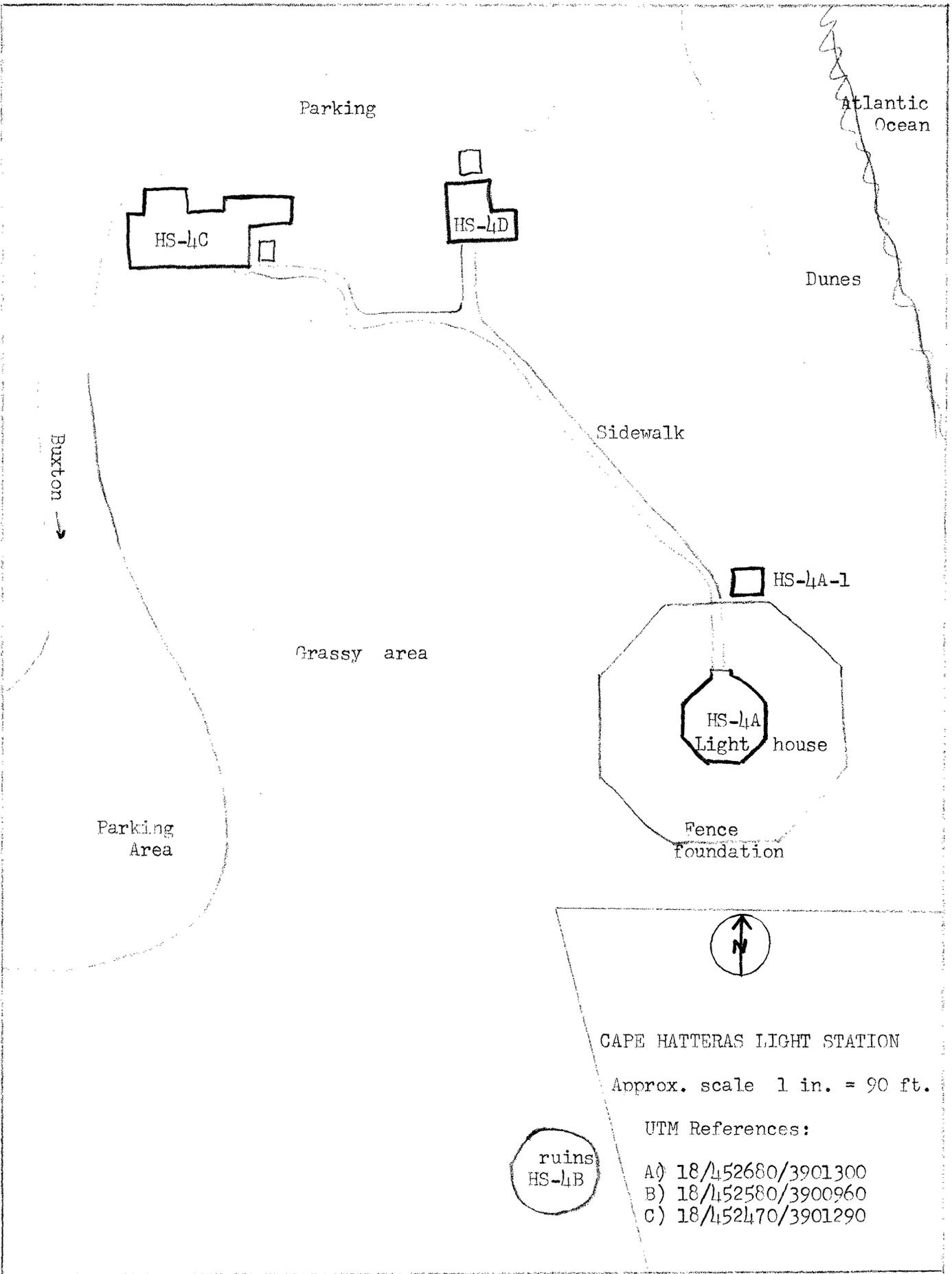
From the start, a major problem was illumination; the small lamp fueled by sperm whale oil and porpoise oil did not penetrate the darkness beyond the shoals. Storms and flocks of geese shattered the windows and broke the lamps, putting the light out for days at a time. Complaints were numerous and vocal. In effect, complaints were saying that what should have been the best light on the coast was indeed the worst.

Problems of poor lighting and erosion continued. Finally the Lighthouse Board made a decided improvement in the conduct of all U.S. lighthouse operations. Their first corrections included raising the tower from 90 to 150 feet and installing a new lighting device--a first order revolving Fresnel lens. The improvements made Cape Hatteras light one of the most dependable on the coast.

The Civil War caused the light to be extinguished in 1861. Confederate forces tried to destroy the lighthouse to deprive Federal vessels of the beacon. Union forces managed to save the tower, but retreating Confederates took the Fresnel lens with them. The light was re-exhibited around June 1, 1862, but the tower needed extensive repairs. Congress appropriated \$75,000 to reconstruct the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse in 1867. The new tower was constructed in 1869-70 by the Lighthouse Board with Dexter Stetson as foreman. The new tower was erected on a site 600 feet north of the original because of erosion threats at the old site. The land for the station, acquired in 1828, from Pharoah Farrow, consisted of a parcel of 40 acres more or less for which a sum of \$200.00 was paid. The new light was exhibited for the first time on December 16, 1870. In 1873 the Lighthouse Board recognized that the lighthouse should be a practical daymark, so it authorized the spiral black and white striping, which turned the structure into the most striking structure on the Outer Banks.

The National Park Service acquired ownership of the Light Station when it was abandoned in 1935. In 1950 when the structure was again found safe for use, new lighting equipment was installed. The U.S. Coast Guard continues to operate the lighting equipment while the National Park Service keeps the tower open to the public. Time has eroded the iron balcony so it is now inaccessible.

The Museum of the Sea, located in the old Double Keepers Quarters, elaborates on the Cape Hatteras story: Cape Hatteras Light Station has played a pivotal role in the development of aids to navigation on one of the most dreaded shores of the Atlantic Coast. The lighthouse stands as a symbol of the humanitarian efforts of a young nation, and still serves as a functional warning device.



Parking

Atlantic Ocean

HS-4C

HS-4D

Dunes

Sidewalk

Buxton →

HS-4A-1

Grassy area

HS-4A
Light house

Parking Area

Fence foundation



CAPE HATTERAS LIGHT STATION

Approx. scale 1 in. = 90 ft.

UTM References:

- A) 18/452680/3901300
- B) 18/452580/3900960
- C) 18/452470/3901290

ruins
HS-4B

CAPE HATTERAS LIGHT STATION

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

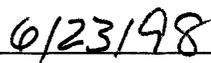
Section number _____ Page _____

Cape Hatteras Light Station, Dare County. NORTH CAROLINA

PROPOSED MOVE APPROVED



for Keeper of the National Register



Date

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Cape Hatteras Light Station Dare County, NORTH CAROLINA

PROPOSED MOVE APPROVAL

Keeper Amy Federman 1/10/90