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Pages from the Past

MANITOU ISLAND



Manitou Island Light Station circa turn of the century. Photo courtesy of the U. S. Coast Guard.

Showed the light on May 12, 1873.

July 24 — U.S. Steamer *Haze* arrived, Cdr. Murray Inspector, new keeper and wife came ashore. Charles Corgan Principal Keeper transferred to Copper Harbor lighthouse per Str. *Haze*.

Sept. 8 — first three masted steam barge passed up.

Sept. 10 — Ass't keeper went to Copper Harbor and came back October 5 accompanied by a young son, "nine pounds of humanity."

June 3, 1874 — U.S. Barge *Warrington*, Capt. Scott commanding, came here at 4:30 p.m. to take dimensions for boat house and run [boat railway] to be built here this season.

June 6 — U.S. Barge *Warrington* came here at 6 a.m. and landed material for boat house & run. Paul Wietzel, engineer, came ashore.

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July 20 — U.S. Supply Steamer *Dahlia* arrived at 3 p.m., Cdr. McAnn Inspector, Capt. Hallareau, sailing master, Inspector Henry Reaney . . . came ashore and made a general inspection and was well pleased with the condition of things except in the case of the coal can in the tower which he ordered to be discontinued and I am glad of it. He highly praised the condition and arrangement of my oil room and said it was the best in the 11th District so far. Cdr. McAnn is the most respected inspector we have had yet since 1866, but is a thorough gentleman and is solicitous for keepers of lighthouse to make a requisition for whatever necessary articles are required to maintain a proper light and keep the L.H. in good order. He is quite conversant and jovial and full of inquiry as to distances, directions, etc. as to surrounding places. He stay three hours and left for Gull Rock at 5 p.m. Wife went to the harbor with the supply steamer. Henry Reaney is a very competent man for the position he occupies having occupied it for several years, has an extra knowledge of the wants of the keepers, and the various kinds of lights and is vested with full culture, delivers supplies taking receipts and condeming worn out or useless articles. Crump the Lampist seems to be a man well posted in his business always willing and gentlemanly and ready to right any wrong to the lamp or fixtures. Gives good suggestions and in a manner that any keeper will find it a pleasure to comply with.

Aug 14 — Tug *Oddfellow* landed a fog signal and party of three men at six o'clock in the morning. They immediately commenced operations in the old engine house on the north side of the tower. The party consists of three men from Detroit; Thos. Millar, Robt. Millar and James Kerr.

Sept 12 — Fog signal completed and everything works well, party will leave tomorrow morning for Outer Island, there to erect another signal.

Sept. 13 — Supply Stmr. *Dahalia* arrived with coal and supplies for fog signal at 3 p.m.

Sept 28 — Boat house and run finished today at 2 p.m. Boathouses seems well enough, but run is but a poor substitute for what ought to be here for hauling boats up.

Oct. 1 — Keeper took boat run party to Copper Harbor and came back Oct. 4, fetched James Twoly along to asst. in running fog signal.

Oct. 23 — Fog signal first used today for five and half hours on account of thick weather occasioned by smoke from the southward.

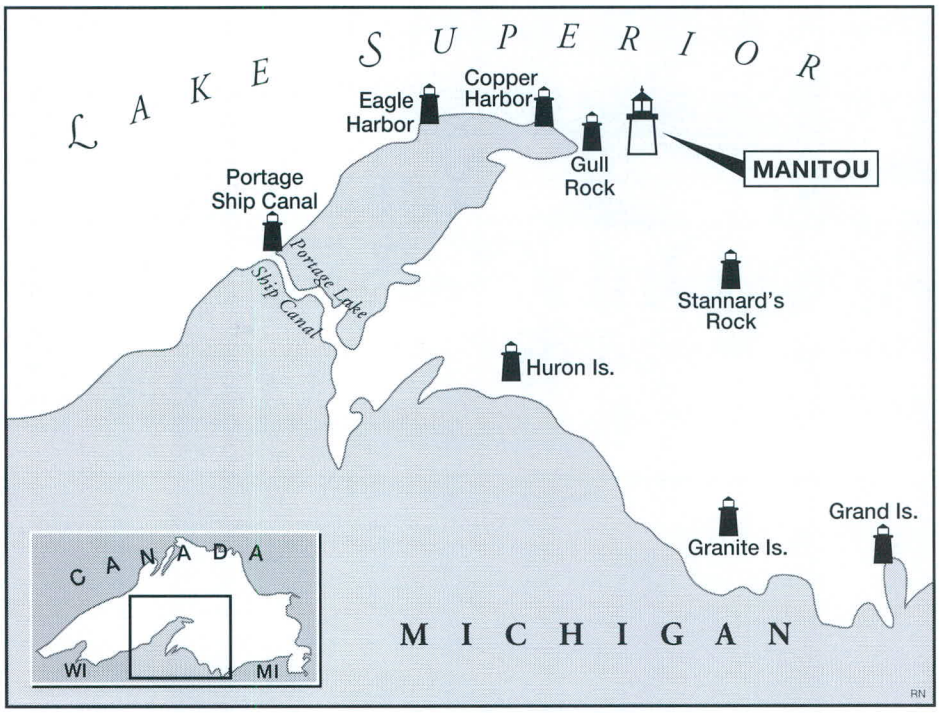
Nov. 25 — Having been an unusually rough fall I closed the light today and left the L.H. with my wife and James Twoly at 3:15 and proceeded to Gull Rock and found that the keeper Stephen Ocking was somewhat ill. However, we launched his steam launch and got started at 10 p.m. with his family for Copper Harbor, my boat being in tow of his. After three hours we landed safe at our destination not sorry for having escaped from Spike Island. We had but 18 lbs. of flour left in store.

I resided in Copper Harbor for the winter of 74 & 75 in same house with Gull Rock keeper. I built me a hull 26' x 7' for a steam launch being my sole occupation for the winter.

Feb. 15 — Made an application and remitted it to the L.H. Inspector to obtain a 2nd Asst. Keeper stating reasons thereof. Obtain notice that another one would be allowed me and requested me to nominate one, which I did (viz). Henry Corgan having heard rumors that he was not appointed nor was he going to be, I wrote the Collector who informed me that the L.H. Board has appointed me Jeremiah Becker. Who he was, or where to be found they knew not.

May 20, 1875 — Left Copper Harbor after long waiting for ice to move today at 5:15 a.m. with wife and Henry Corgan. Not much wind until we got near Horse Shoe Harbor. We encountered a continuous ice field. Icebergs outside the reef 10 feet high, had to haul boat over ice to get her ashore. Landed on Island at 8:45 a.m., latest exhibition of light on record.

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June 9 — U.S. Repair Barge *Warrington* landed paint and oil to paint lighthouse.

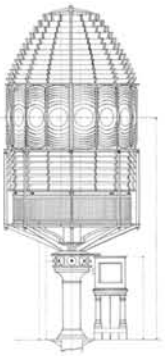
June 15 — Principal keeper went to Copper Harbor and left Henry Corgan in charge of Light. Gone for the purpose of putting an engine in a hull built by himself for the express purpose of using at Manitou Island Lthouse to facilitate and enable him the better to perform his duties at said station.

June 20 — Principal keeper came back with his new steam launch *Little Will*, named after oldest boy. Made the trip in 2 hours & ten minutes.

June 22 — Lighthouse repair party landed at 4:15 a.m. from steamer *Manistee* to paint and otherwise repair lighthouse.

July 15 — Principal keeper and Asst. Corgan started at 8 p.m. in *Little Will* with wife for Copper Harbor in anticipation of having an increase soon after arrival. When 1½ miles east of Horse Shoe Harbor Mrs. Corgan gave birth to a rollicking boy. James Corgan attending physician. Soon made all things lovely. I had everything comfortable aboard in way of bed, etc., etc.

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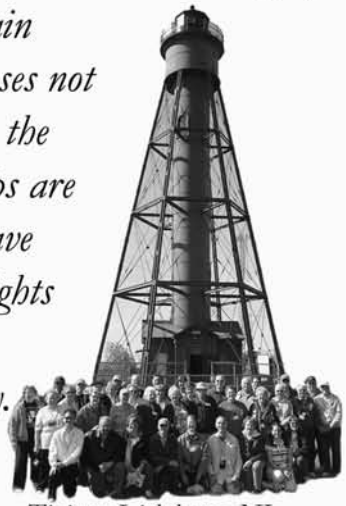
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