

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received AUG 13 1985  
date entered SEP 12 1985

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Grand Island North Light Station

and or common Old North Light

2. Location

street & number Grand Island

N/A not for publication

city, town Munising  vicinity of

state Michigan code 026 county Alger code 003

3. Classification (Congressional District Eleven)

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Coast Guard

4. Owner of Property

name Loren R. Graham

street & number 7 Francis Avenue

city, town Cambridge  vicinity of state Massachusetts 02138

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Alger County Register of Deeds

street & number Alger County Courthouse

city, town Munising state Michigan 49862

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Michigan State Survey Data has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1984-85  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Bureau of History

city, town Lansing state Michigan

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Old North Lighthouse, built in 1867, is a brick lighthouse with four surrounding buildings (all restored original buildings on original sites), making up a complete ensemble of a nineteenth-century light station. Besides the lighthouse itself, the buildings include a wooden tool shed, brick fuel storage shed, brick outhouse, and windlass-well and wooden well house. The buildings are constructed on compass-bearing lines, with the light tower on the east end of the main building, and the kitchen on the west end. The ensemble of buildings is located atop a 190-foot cliff overlooking Lake Superior on three sides (west, north, and east) and is in a small clearing surrounded by forest. The closest other building or structure is six miles away.

The lighthouse was built to house a fourth-order Fresnel lens (no longer present). Until 1941 a keeper and an assistant keeper lived there, but in that year the light was automated and converted to battery power. In 1961, the lens was moved outside the lighthouse onto a nearby steel pole, and the lighthouse was abandoned. It was restored in 1972-73, by Drs. Loren and Patricia Graham, both professional historians. Although entirely restored and now in excellent condition, it has not been modernized: the house has never been wired for electricity and has no furnace, indoor bathroom, or telephone. All utilities are still the original ones: kerosene lamps for light, outdoor windlass well and indoor original brick-arched cistern for water, outdoor brick outhouse with removable "honey-drawer" for toilet facilities. Heating is by fireplace and wood-burning kitchen range.

The lighthouse was built to standard U.S. Lighthouse Establishment plans. The date of construction, 1867, is engraved into the lintel stone above the tower door. Construction materials from an off-shore boat were hauled several hundred feet up a steep cliff, using a tramway which was built for this purpose; the original bolts holding the cables in place are still visible at the base of the cliff.

The main building is approximately forty-five feet long (east-west) and thirty feet wide (north-south), and is two stories in height, with three-story tower and one-story kitchen attached. The construction is of brick, with wood roof beams and supports. The roof is double-sloped, using queen-post roof trusses. The roofing material is pressed-tin; while probably not original, it is very old, possibly late nineteenth-century. The spiral staircase (photo enclosed) is of cast iron and is original. Most of the cast-iron shutter hinges are original. The tower contains internal shafts for the pendulum that powered the occulting mechanism (missing) for the light and for storage of cleaning tools. The shaft and storage areas can be opened by means of original doors with brass fittings; these wooden doors are curved to fit the inside surface of the tower. The stairway to the basement is made of stone, with original balustrade with shaped holder for lamp. The foundation is of sandstone.

The external colors of all buildings are yellow, with white trim, the original color scheme found at the time of restoration. The tower is white. The cast-iron deck and light-cupola are black with gold trim and a gold-leaf ball on top. All walls on the inside are of plaster, painted white. All floors are original pine, and have been restored to natural finish.

The lighthouse dwelling contains four bedrooms, a keeper's office, a living room and a kitchen. The basement contains two rooms, including an original storage cabinet. There is one three-flue chimney with a fireplace and five stove holes, only one of which (kitchen) is used.

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National Park Service**

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received

date entered

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

Minor alterations are known to have been made on two occasions. In 1908, approximately, two dormer windows were added. In 1972 a partition was removed to enlarge the living room.

The ensemble of buildings is a striking example of an original light station. With no buildings present other than the original ones, and with no other buildings visible anywhere in the distance, the lighthouse presents today an appearance nearly identical to what it was at the time of its construction. The original entrance to the lighthouse was by path from the tramway down the nearby cliff; although the tramway disappeared years ago, the path is still clearly visible. No paved road has ever been built to the lighthouse, although a jeep trail now provides entrance from the south. No utility or telephone lines lead to the lighthouse.

# 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"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** Built 1867      **Builder/Architect** U. S. Lighthouse Establishment

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Old North Light Station, built in 1867, is the oldest in the Pictured Rocks area of Lake Superior and predates the organization of Alger County, in which it stands, as well as the closest town, Munising, established in 1885. The lighthouse and its surrounding buildings present a strikingly original example of a nineteenth-century light station. Never encroached upon by development and never modernized, it still retains its original form and utilizes the same lighting, heating, water, and sanitation systems as when originally constructed. The building retains many features which were installed for functional purposes: internal shafts in the tower for the pendulum of the occulting mechanism, tool closets with original brass fittings, and massive cast-iron staircase and deck. Illuminated by kerosene lamps and candles, heated by fireplace and wood stove, filled with period furniture of the 1860s, the lighthouse is a lovely place conserving a lost period in American history.

The location of the lighthouse is spectacular, sited atop cliffs of the same colorful appearance as those in the nearby Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore. On a clear day, from the lighthouse tower one can see over one hundred miles of Lake Superior shoreline, all forested, and stretching from the Huron Mountains on the west to Grand Marais on the east. The view is as if nothing had changed in the 118 years since the lighthouse was constructed.

The light station at North Point on Grand Island originated with an appropriation of \$5,000 for a light at "Grand Island Harbor" voted on 3 March 1853 by Congress. The first station, which stood on the same site as the present one, was opened in 1856 and had a kerosene lamp. The original structure was poorly built and needed frequent repairs. In 1867 Congress appropriated \$12,000 to construct a new station. The present structure was completed in 1868 and the lamp first lit on 15 August 1868.

The station was manned by a keeper and assistant. In the early years they remained year-round, despite the fact that the navigation season ran only from April or May to November or December, because of the station's isolation. After Munising was settled in the 1880s, however, the keepers spent only the navigation season at the light.

In 1920 acetylene replaced kerosene as the fuel for the lamp. In 1941 the light was automated, so that a permanent keeper was no longer needed. In 1961 the lamp was moved to a new tower nearby and the old station abandoned. The present owners bought the station in 1972 and have repaired and restored it for use as a vacation home.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See enclosed sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 29

Quadrangle name Wood Island, Mich.

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A 

1	6	5	2	4	1	5	0	5	1	5	5	9	5	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B 

1	6	5	2	4	6	7	5	5	1	5	6	2	0	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

C 

1	6	5	2	4	7	2	5	5	1	5	5	7	5	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

D 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

E 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H 

Zone	Easting				Northing									

Verbal boundary description and justification

See attached sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Loren R. Graham, Professor of History of Science

organization Massachusetts Institute of Technology date January 23, 1985

street & number Bldg. E-51-128 telephone (617) 253-4092

city or town Cambridge state Massachusetts 02139

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Martha M. Bigelow

title Director, Bureau of History date 8/7/85

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered In the  
National Register

date 9-12-85

for Allons Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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

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date entered

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Castle, Beatrice Hanscom, The Grand Island Story, The John M. Longyear Research Library, Marquette, Michigan, 1974, esp. pp. 38, 60, and 105.

Graham Loren R., "Introduction," in Noble, Dennis L. and O'Brien, T. Michael, Sentinels of the Rocks, Northern Michigan University Press, 1979, pp. xv-xviii.

Interviews, Edward Genry and Mary Genry (son and daughter of Old North Lighthouse Keeper George Genry), October 21, 1981; North Light Archive.

"Island, Family History Mingle," Mining Journal (Marquette, Michigan), September 10, 1983, p.1.

"Lake Superior Lighthouse Called Highest in World," The Milwaukee Journal, September 3, 1963.

Letter to Loren R. Graham from Martha Bennett, daughter of Old North Lighthouse Keeper Alf Evenson, December 6, 1984; North Light Archive.

Letter to Loren R. Graham from Carol Verbunker, President, Alger County Historical Society, November 27, 1984.

Logs of Old North Lighthouse, 1876-1927, North Light Archive.

"Mark 100th Year Vacationing Here," Munising News (Munising, Michigan), June 8, 1983, p.1.

Noble, Dennis L., and O'Brien, T. Michael, Sentinels of the Rocks, Northern Michigan University Press, 1979, esp. pp. 17-22.

Photographs of the S. S. Amaranth, lighthouse tender serving Old North Light, of George Genry and Alf Evenson, keepers, and of many scenes around North Lighthouse, dating from 1876 to present; North Light Archive.

Record Group 26 (U.S. Coast Guard), National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Symon, Charles, "Highest Lighthouse," in his Peninsula Portraits: People and Places in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, Mid-Peninsula Library Cooperative, Iron Mountain, Michigan, 1980, pp. 11-13.

"What is it about Lighthouses?" The Sunday Sun (Marquette, Michigan), May 28, 1978, p. 1.

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Page 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

Description: Lot One (1), Section Sixteen (16), Town Forty-eight (48) North, Range Nineteen (19) West, except that 2.84-acre parcel described as follows: Beginning at the NW corner of said Lot 1, Section 16, T48N, R19W, thence south 178 feet (More or less) to the SW corner of the plot, thence north 75 degrees east 655 feet (more or less) to a point 10 feet south of the steel column light structure and southeast corner of the plot, thence north 60 degrees east 663 feet (more or less) to the shore line and northeast corner of the plot, thence northerly, westerly, and southwesterly along the shore to the point of beginning. In all, approximately 29 acres.

Justification: One of the outstanding features of the lighthouse and its surrounding buildings is that they are totally undisturbed by development and have the same appearance today as when constructed. The plot of land immediately around the lighthouse should be preserved in its present wooded state, if possible. By designating this land as a part of the plot listed with the National Register, the chances of preservation are greatly increased.

AENR85171A AENR85171E

REF #  
85002149

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Grand Island North Light Station  
Alger County  
MICHIGAN

AUG 13 1985

Working No. \_\_\_\_\_

Fed. Reg. Date: 2-4-86

Date Due: 9/12/85 - 9/27/85

Entered in ~~the~~ National Register  
Action:  ACCEPT 9-12-85  
 RETURN  
 REJECT

Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for:  technical corrections cited below  
 substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

**8. Significance**

Period \_\_\_\_\_ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates \_\_\_\_\_ Builder/Architect \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of Significance *(in one paragraph)*

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal boundary description and justification

**11. Form Prepared By**

**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

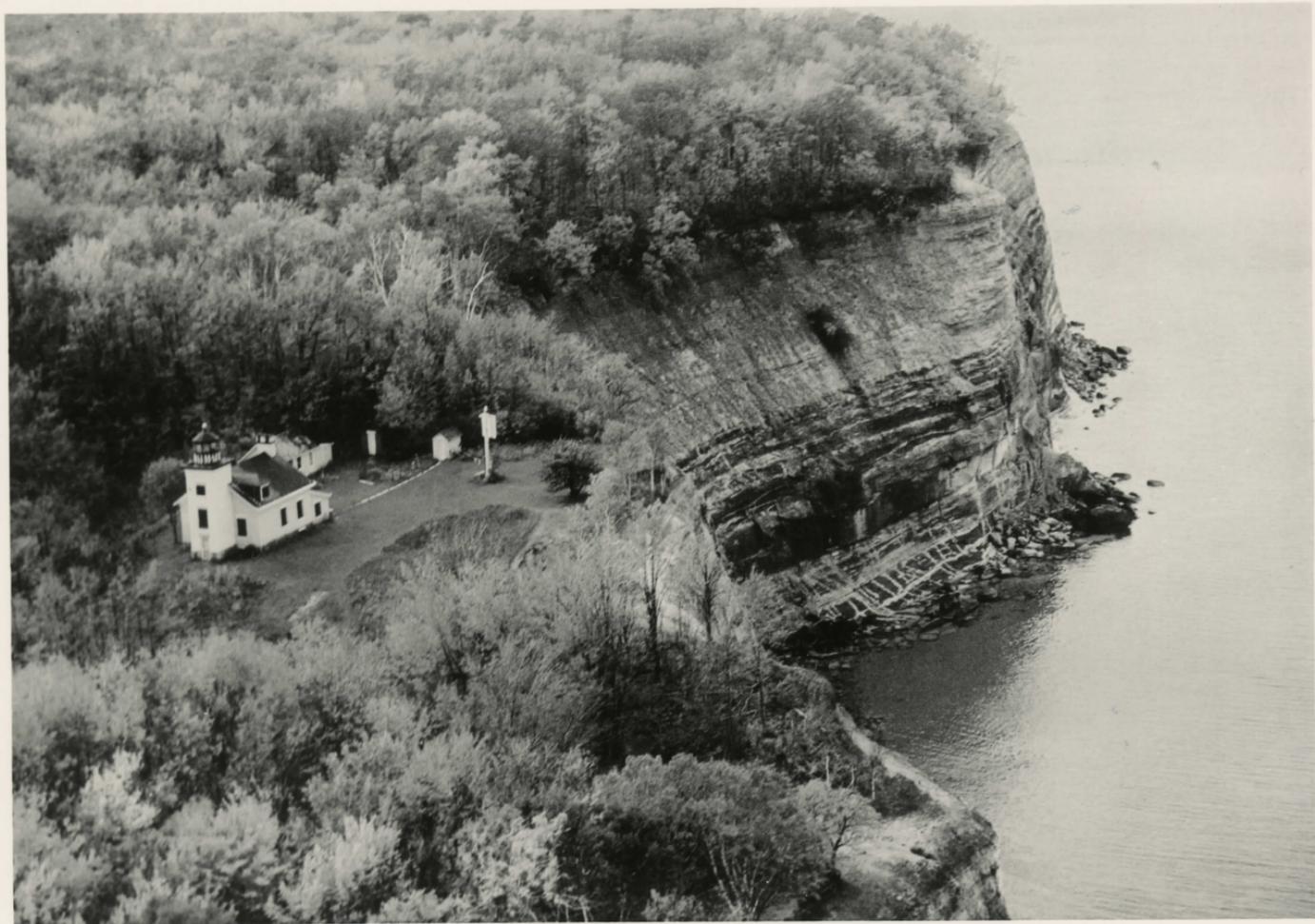
title \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Grand Island North Light Station  
North Point, Grand Island  
Alger County, Michigan

1) Larry Farley 1980  
Neg.: Loren R. Graham  
7 Cambridge Ave.  
Cambridge, MS 02138

Camera facing SW  
Photo 1 of 7



Grand Island North Light Station  
North Point, Grand Island  
Alger County, Michigan

2) Loren R. Graham 1981  
Neg.: Loren R. Graham  
7 Francis Ave.  
Cambridge, MS 02138  
Camera facing SW  
Photo 2 of 7



Grand Island North Light Station  
North Point, Grand Island  
Alger County, Michigan

3) Loren R. Graham 1981  
Neg.: Loren R. Graham  
7 Francis Ave.  
Cambridge, MS 02138

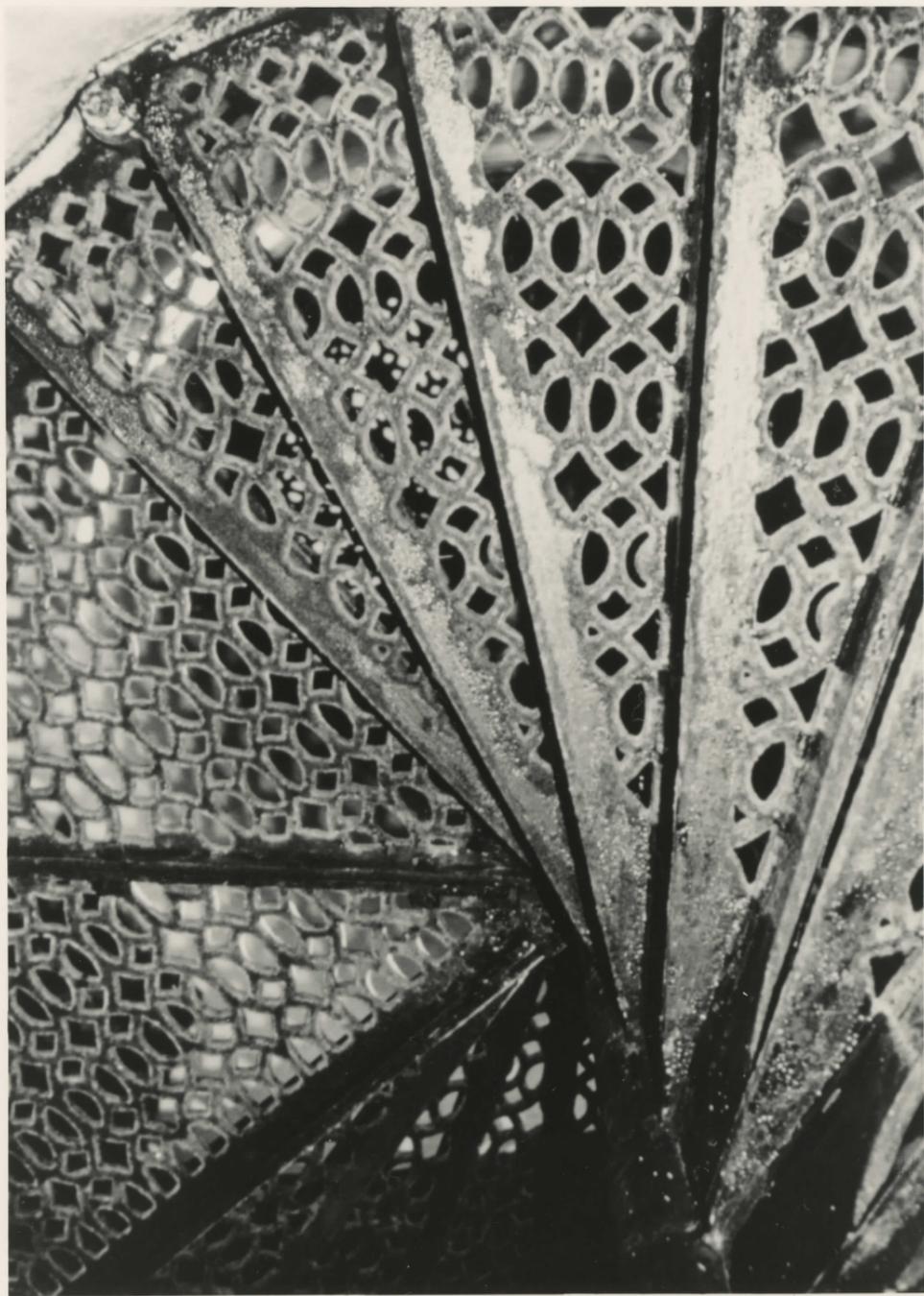
Camera facing E  
Photo 3 of 7



Grand Island North Light Station  
North Point, Grand Island  
Alger County, Michigan

4) Loren R. Graham 1982  
Neg.: Loren R. Graham  
7 Francis Ave.  
Cambridge, MS 02138

Camera facing SE  
Photo 4 of 7



Grand Island North Light Station  
North Point, Grand Island  
Alger County, Michigan

5) Loren R. Graham      1982  
Neg.: Loren R. Graham  
7 Francis Ave.  
Cambridge, MS 02138

Detail of tower staircase  
Photo 5 of 7



Grand Island North Light Station  
North Point, Grand Island  
Alger County, Michigan

6) Loren R. Graham 1981  
Neg.: Loren R. Graham  
7 Francis Ave.  
Cambridge, MS 02138

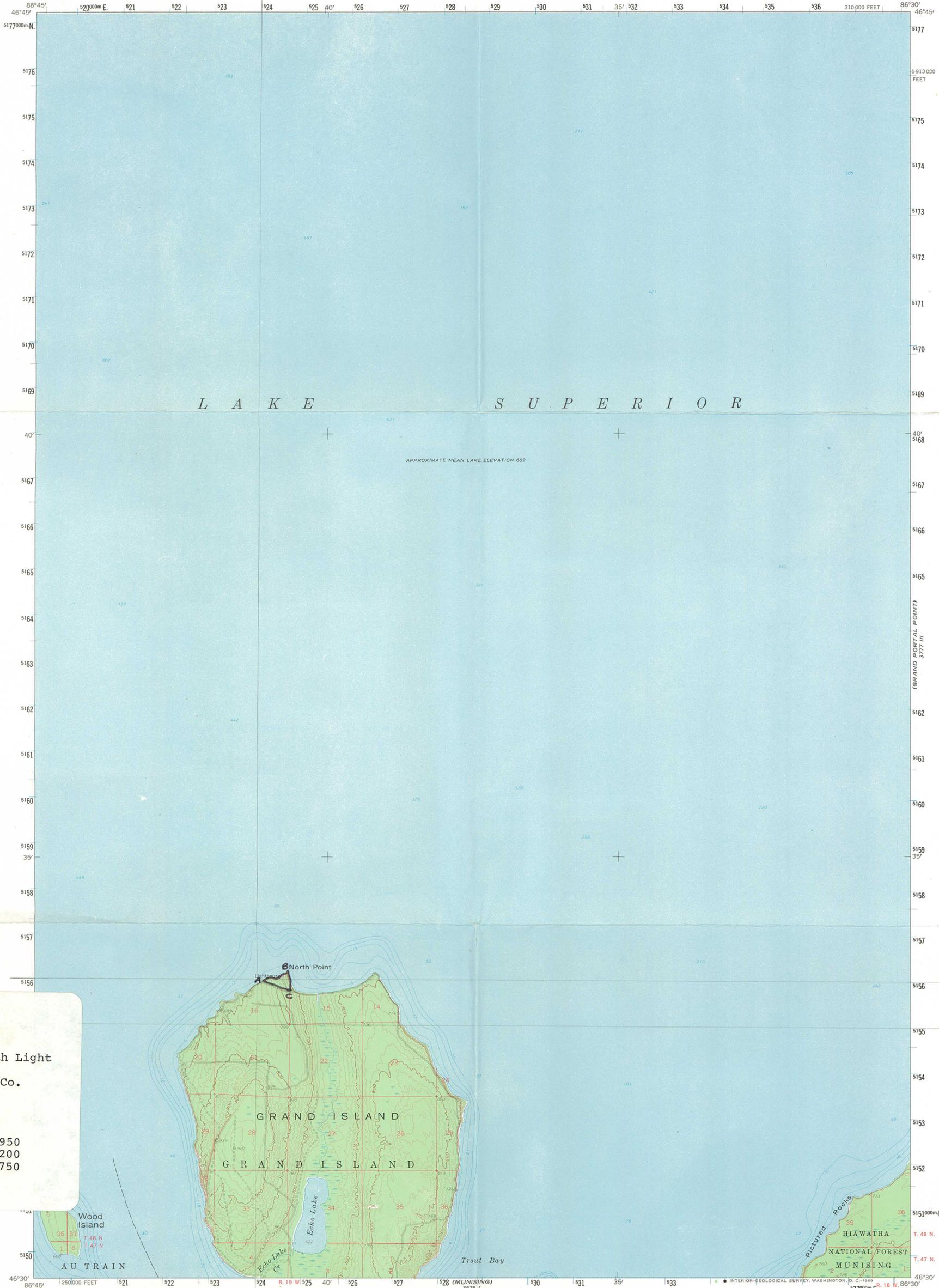
Camera facing SE  
Photo 6 of 7



Grand Island North Light Station  
North Point, Grand Island  
Alger County, Michigan

7) Loren R. Graham 1980  
Neg.: Loren R. Graham  
7 Francis Ave.  
Cambridge, MS 02138

Camera facing NE  
Photo 7 of 7

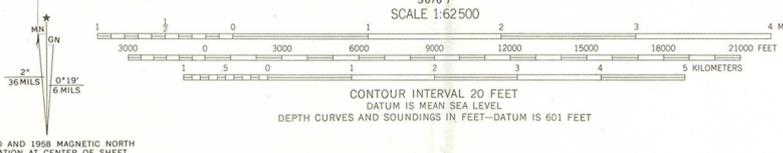


Grand Island North Light  
Station  
Grand Is., Alger Co.  
Michigan

UTM Refs:  
A 16 524150 5155950  
B 16 524675 5156200  
C 16 524725 5155750



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods  
Aerial photographs taken 1953. Field check 1958  
Hydrography from U. S. Lake Survey chart 93 (1955)  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Michigan coordinate system, central zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 16, shown in blue



ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Light-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

WOOD ISLAND, MICH.  
N4630—W8630/15

1958  
AMS 3677 II—SERIES V762

# Alger County Historical Society

P.O. BOX 201  
MUNISING, MICHIGAN 49862

June 30, 1985

906/387-4186

send  
card  
7/10/85  
SJZ

JUL 03 1985

Dr. Martha M. Bigelow  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Bureau of History  
Michigan Department of State  
Lansing, Michigan 48918

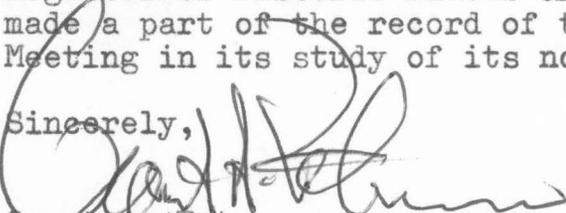
Dear Dr. Bigelow:

The Alger County Historical Society is in receipt of your June 14 letter relative to nomination of the Grand Island North Light Station situated on Grand Island, Grand Island Township, Alger County.

In 1856, a lighthouse was constructed on the north end of Grand Island. That structure was replaced by one of brick in 1867. It is this brick structure consisting of the 25 foot high light tower and adjoining rectangular keepers residence which we understand is being nominated to the National Register. As you are aware, this structure is listed under the Transportation category in the 'Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites' report for the Upper Peninsula of Michigan published in 1978 by the former Heritage conservation and Recreation Service.

The structures --- tower and keepers residence --- have been well maintained by their present owners. Because of their present excellent condition and the historic significance of the structures to the maritime history of the Alger County area of Lake Superior, the Alger County Historical Society strongly endorses listing of these structures on the National Register of Historic Places and we ask that our endorsement be made a part of the record of the July 25, 1985 Review Board Meeting in its study of its nomination.

Sincerely,

  
Grant A. Petersen  
President, ACHS

# MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RICHARD H. AUSTIN

SECRETARY OF STATE



LANSING

MICHIGAN 48918

**BUREAU OF HISTORY**

**ADMINISTRATION, PUBLICATIONS  
ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION**

208 N. Capitol Avenue  
517-373-0510

**STATE ARCHIVES**

3405 N. Logan Street  
517-373-0512

**MICHIGAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

208 N. Capitol Avenue  
517-373-3559

July 30, 1985

Ms. Carol D. Shull, Supervisory Historian  
National Register of Historic Places Branch  
Interagency Resource Management Division  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed are National Register of Historic Places nomination materials for the Grand Island North Light Station in Alger County, Michigan. I certify that the intent-to-nominate notification requirements have been fulfilled. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register. All notarized statements of objection and written comments concerning this nomination submitted to us prior to the submission of this nomination to you are enclosed.

Please direct all questions concerning this nomination to Kathryn Eckert, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer (517/373-0510).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Martha M. Bigelow".

Martha M. Bigelow  
Director, Bureau of History  
and  
State Historic Preservation Officer

MMB/ROC/sl

enc.

AUG 13 1985