

BA-1555

OLD NORTH POINT LIGHTHOUSE - 1822 - Offshore east of Fort Howard peninsula. The U. S. Lighthouse service built this lighthouse offshore in 1822 from designs by Benjamin H. Latrobe. The light was later abandoned, and a pile of stones about ten feet high stands on a stone pedestal and is visible, well out of the water south of Battery Stricker.

Range-Finding Tower. Concrete column encased in an iron cylinder fell, but survives in the underbrush near the Quarters Building and "concrete building" listed above.

Range-Finding Tower. Foundation survives in undergrowth east of park entrance road and north of Batteries Nicholson and Stricker.

Artillery Pieces. Two 4.7 inch guns mounted on solid-rubber-tired field carriages are located in the picnic area near Battery Harris. They are marked "Watervliet Arsenal-1918". These guns are decorative rather than typical of a coastal installation.

Sea Wall. The waterfront boundary is protected by either concrete seawall or rock rip-rap, in various states of repair.

Azimuth Tower. Located on Denton Cove, well NE of the batteries is one of two azimuth towers, built of brick, that were used in plotting compass bearings on ships in the harbor entrance.

Nearby Sites on U.S. Property (Not included in nomination):

Azimuth Tower. This brick tower, twin of one in county park property, is located south of the hospital building, between the road and the seawall. It was used as a look-out tower for ships during the Spanish-American War in 1898 and again during the War of 1917-18. It also served as a plotting tower to observe the floating mines laid in the channel by Fort-Howard's mine crew. (The Neck, p. 29). The artillery designation for the tower was "M. Prime." The entire tower is covered with ivy.

BA-1555, Old North Point Lighthouse. In 1824, the U.S. Lighthouse Service built a light offshore on the east side of North Point peninsula. It was later abandoned and a pile of stones about ten feet high is still visible above water south of Battery Stricker.

Fort Howard Light. Built off the south end of North Point to replace the lighthouse of 1824, this round, red and white tower on a concrete base is variously called North Point Light, Fort Howard Light, Front Cut Off Light, and Front End Range Light. It marks the channel laid out in 1866-69 by Brigadier General William P. Craighill of the Corps of Engineers.

Torpedo or Mine Storage Building. Brick, one-storey, building on concrete foundation with corrugated iron roof (painted light blue). Seven bays long by two wide with central loading doors on south side. Corbelled brick cornices; brick jack arches over windows; granite windowsills; iron window-shutters. Chimney on west end; various metal roof ventilators. Also patterned-brick ventilators in wall just above the ground level. The mines needed to blockade the harbor entrance were stored here.

Patient's Fishing Wharf. This pier at the foot of Key Street is reserved for the hospital patients. It marks the site of the "Mine Wharf" where the explosives were loaded aboard a vessel for laying in the channel.

Notes:

1. "Fort Howard, Maryland, A Walking Tour of the Endicott Period Fortifications," Committee on Abandoned Military Posts, Arlington, Virginia, 1978, multilithed. (Copies available from Planning Office.)

North Point Range

The first "North Point Ranges," as they were then called, were built in 1822 and were used until 1886. New lights were then built, in a slightly different location, and called "Cut-Off Front and Rear Lights." (The purpose of range lights is outlined in the description of Brewerton Channel lights.)

Benjamin H. Latrobe, the famous architect, was consulted about the design of these lighthouses a few months before he died in 1820. He submitted plans and sections and urged the erection of stone or brick towers rather than wood, pointing out the fire hazards of the latter. Both towers were built in 1822, although they were not lighted until January of the following year.

The Eastern North Point light was the first to be completed. It was located 200 yards from shore, in three feet of water "at common tide," and was 27 feet high and built of stone. A 6-foot-wide footbridge led to shore, where the keeper's house was located. The house was a one-story 34-by-20-foot stone house with an attached kitchen 14 by 12 feet. The cost for the light and the house was \$6,637, and an additional \$850 was paid to Winslow Lewis for installing the nine patent lamps. The naval officer at Baltimore, William P. Barney, who was responsible for supervising the construction, had contracted with Thomas Evans and William Coppuck, the men who built the Bodkin light across the river and whose performance there had left a lot to be desired. The Eastern light was more than a year late in being completed. As a matter of fact, the conduct of Evans and Coppuck during the construction was "so infamous," said Barney, "that it became necessary to employ a person at one dollar per day, to overlook them during the time they were at work."

The Western North Point lighthouse was built later that same year. The advertisement for the contract stated: "Let it be understood that the former contractors having essentially failed to give satisfaction, no proposals from them will be accepted," and the contract was let to Messrs. Freize and Ring. The Western tower, built for \$7,300, plus Mr. Lewis' fee, was located 700 yards to the west of the Eastern light, in five feet of water, 100 yards from shore. It was 35 feet high. One keeper tended both lights, which served as range lights for the ship's channel. The Western light also had nine lamps and through filters showed a "blood-red" light.

The first keeper was a member of the Maryland House of Delegates, and he asked for, and was granted, a leave of absence so that he could attend the session in Annapolis during the early winter of 1823. When the new lights at this location were built in 1886, the stone foundation for the Western light was used as a base for one of the new towers.

de Gast, Robert

1973 Lighthouses of the Chesapeake

Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press





BA-1555
 ADC of Alexandria, Inc., 1993

BALTIMORE (U.S. 40) 6 MI. 27'30"
BATTLE GROVE 1.1 MI.

5762 IV SW
(MIDDLE RIVER)



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BA-1555
Old North Point Lighthouse
 Sparrows Point Quad, 1969, PR 1974

Light
 Howard
 North Pt
 Howard