

## Lighthouse Keeper's Papers 2008.01

### History

A lighthouse existed at Crane Beach in Ipswich from 1837 until 1940, built on four acres of land sold to the U.S. Government by local resident James Lakeman. In the late 1800's the original structure began to be eroded by sand from the shifting dunes and was replaced by a white cast iron lighthouse. By 1940 the problem of drifting sand became such a problem that the lighthouse was moved to Edgartown on Martha's Vineyard. The lighthouse keeper's cottage remained on the site until 1973, when it was destroyed by fire.

The first keeper of Ipswich Lighthouse was Thomas Greenwood, followed by Joseph Dennis in 1842. Benjamin Ellsworth, whose papers form this collection, was appointed keeper by President Lincoln in 1861 and served until his death in 1902 at age 89. Benjamin Ellsworth was aided for many years by his daughter Susan Ellsworth, who lived to be over 100 years old. The last keeper was LeRoy Lane.

### Scope and Content/Series Description

One box (.5 linear feet)

1861 to 2008

The records are divided into two series: Lighthouse Documents and Ellsworth Documents.

The Lighthouse Documents series contains folders on Ipswich Lighthouse, Keeper's Correspondence (1864 to 1962), Keeper's Reports (1873 to 1895), Keeper's Account of Supply Forms (1861 - 1902), Keeper's Receipts (1870 to 1905), and Miscellaneous Documents.\* The Ellsworth Documents series contains folders on Benjamin Ellsworth and Family, Poems and Articles about Ipswich and Vicinity, and Programs to Local Events (1884 to 1942). Most records were donated to Ipswich Public Library in 1975 by Carolyn Eaton, great-granddaughter of Benjamin Ellsworth. Other supplementary documents were added to create a more complete history of the lighthouse.

*\*And "Recollections of a Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter at Ipswich, Lighthouse at Crane Beach," by Virginia Stansfield.*

*Processed and described by Paula Grillo, July 2008*

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**Container List**

**Series 1**

**Lighthouse Documents**

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	1	Ipswich Lighthouse	1993-2008
1	2	Correspondence	1864-1962
1	3	Reports	1873-1895
1	4	Account of Supply Forms	1861-1902
1	5	Receipts	1873-1905
1	6	Miscellaneous Documents	
1	6A	<i>Recollections of a Lighthouse Keeper's Daughter</i>	<i>1934-1973</i>

**Series 2**

**Ellsworth Documents**

1	7	Benjamin Ellsworth and Family	1897-1948
1	8	Poems and Articles about Ipswich and Vicinity	
1	9	Programs to Local Events	1884-1942