

To: The South Australian Heritage Committee
From: Senior Historical Architect
Subject: REGISTER NOMINATION -
LOWLY POINT LIGHTHOUSE COMPLEX
Date: 5 April 1982

Summary

This report has been prepared as part of the Heritage Conservation Branch's programme of evaluating National Estate Items. The Lighthouse was deferred at previous meetings held on January 31, 1979, and April 8, 1981, pending a proper definition of the site (see attached site sketch) inspection and documentation.

Historically, the Lighthouse complex is important because it is associated with the early settlement of the 'Iron Triangle' and early maritime history of South Australia.

Architecturally, the item is important because it is an early example of stone construction in the 'Iron Triangle' area, dominated by a circular lighthouse of pleasing proportions.

Environmentally, the complex stands as a prominent historical and visual landmark. Its clarity in design and choice of 'permanent' materials stands isolated along the shack cluttered coastline.

The Integrity of the complex is fair and although the lighthouse is in good condition, the cottages suffer from minor salt damp and some fire damage.

The Lighthouse is included on the National Estate Register and is on the Classified List of the National Trust of South Australia. The associated Lighthouse keepers' cottages are on the Recorded List of the National Trust.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Lowly Point Lighthouse, complex - consisting of the Lighthouse, storeroom and keepers' cottages be included on the Register of State Heritage Items and that the items be categorized A1, A3, H3, 3.2.


Barry G. Rowney

LB:JD

HISTORICAL RESEARCH: LOWLY POINT LIGHTHOUSE, STOREROOM AND KEEPERS COTTAGES

During the 1850s, pastoral leases were taken up in the districts surrounding Spencer's Gulf and the service townships of Port Augusta and Port Pirie were surveyed, with wool ships regularly passing Lowly Point. In 1857 James Chambers took up the country since known as the Point Lowly Station and built a homestead about 8 kilometres north of Lowly Point.

Agricultural advances of the 1870s on the east of the Gulf contributed to Port Pirie's development, which was intensified by the late 1880s when freight to and from the new mines at Broken Hill passed through the Port.

Lowly Point and Weeroona Bay were popular destinations for "marine excursions", picnics and holiday trips made by residents of Port Pirie. The Broken Hill Associated Smelters established a holiday camp for employees at "Weeroona", between Lowly Point and Whyalla (which has since been removed) and the numerous coastal shacks attest to the popularity of the area today.

Other than the pastoral use of the land the main historical uses of the area at and near Lowly Point have been connected with navigation and recreation, both functions having arisen largely as a result of the development of Port Pirie (established around the 1870s) east across the Gulf, and of Whyalla (established around 1900) to the south.

In 1883, the stone lighthouse and lighthouse keeper's cottages were built at Lowly Point for the South Australian Government. Due to the inaccessibility of the area by land, building materials were shipped to the site and the lighthouse became a landmark for shipping from all over the world, as Port Pirie developed into one of Australia's busiest ports at the turn of the century.

As a result of several shipping accidents, the tower was raised by about 25 feet in 1908/9, the extension being made out of concrete. The optical apparatus was however reused and remained in operation until 1973. In January 1973 the light was converted to automatic electrical operation and in February was demanned. The lighthouse keeper's cottages are now owned by the State Government and are leased to the Whyalla Parish of the Uniting Church in Australia. The adjacent beaches and holiday shacks are important and well frequented recreational areas for Whyalla residents. Bookings for the two houses are well advanced, with groups of up to 25 people using them on weekends and school holidays.

Sources:

Verbal communication with Mr. Noel Marchant, Historic Buildings Liaison Officer, Commonwealth Department for Housing and Construction, 10-22 Pulteney Street, Adelaide.

Historical report on Stony Point prepared by Susan Marsden for Social and Ecological Assessment Pty. Ltd., 1980.

Verbal communication with Ms. Lorna Tilley - Commonwealth Department of Transport.

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures						
	Item	LIGHTHOUSE COMPLEX LOWLY POINT.					
Age 1883	Theme		Office 6431-10307				
Period 1852-1883	Subject Transportation - Maritime, Navigational Aid		Region Eyre Peninsula- Far West Coast				
Building Type Lighthouse, Cottages	Style Late Victorian - Functional		Status N.E.R. N. Tr. (CL & RL)				
<u>Qualitative Data</u>			<u>Grading</u>				
Component		Comment	E	VG	AG	FP	NA
<u>History</u>							
1.	Context:	Built in 1883, the lighthouse complex was the 14th major navigational aid built along South Australia's coast. The stone buildings were amongst the first in the "Iron Triangle".		*			
2.	Person/Group:	Not as yet established.					*
3.	Event:	Not as yet established.					*
<u>Architecture/Engineering</u>							
4.	Architect/ Engineer/ Builder:	Architect-in-Chief's Department.		*			
5.	Design:	Circular tower of pleasing proportions. Ornamentation limited to base, window surrounds and cantilevered lantern platform. Two cottages are simple four-roomed houses with front verandah.			*		
6.	Construction:	Lighthouse and cottages of masonry construction. Addition to lighthouse of reinforced concrete.			*		
7.	Interior:	Lighthouse not inspected. Houses are relatively plain.				*	
8.	Representation:	A good example of a mainland lighthouse complex.			*		
<u>Environment</u>							
9.	Continuity:						*
10.	Local Character:	Isolated complex east of shacks. Choice of materials, scale and design isolates the complex from the beach shacks which dominate the area.			*		
11.	Landmark:	Prominent historical and visual landmark.	*				

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures						
	Item	LIGHTHOUSE COMPLEX LOWLY POINT					
Component	Comment		Grading				
	<u>Integrity</u>		E	VG	AG	FP	NA
12. Alterations:	Additions to lighthouse and cottages are clearly evident. New opening has been made to western stone wall.					*	
13. Condition:	Lighthouse in excellent condition. Cottages in reasonable condition with some salt damp. Fire damage to Cottage No. 2.				*		
14. Compatibility:	Lighthouse still used. Cottages used for weekends by Whyalla Parish of the Uniting Church in Australia.		*				
<u>Supplementary Information</u>							
Adaptation:	Complex has moderate adaptation potential.						
Interpretation:	Due to its isolation and continuing use of the lighthouse, the complex has moderate potential for interpretation.						
Current Situation:	The complex is under no immediate threat, and proposals have been made to increase the accommodation on the site for holiday activities.						
Evaluated By	Lothar Brasse Consultant Architect					Date	
Reviewed By	Ivar Nelsen					Date	
South Australian Heritage Committee Categorization						Date	

10307



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TITLE

Lighthouse at Point Lowly, South Australia.

DESCRIPTION

The lighthouse and cottages at Point Lowly, South Australia ph

DATE

1910

Size of Master Image

3016 x 2226 pixels, 6.4 MB



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TITLE

Lighthouse Cottages

DESCRIPTION

Lighthouse cottages at Point Lowly

DATE

1904

Size of Master Image

3372 x 2469 pixels, 23.9 MB

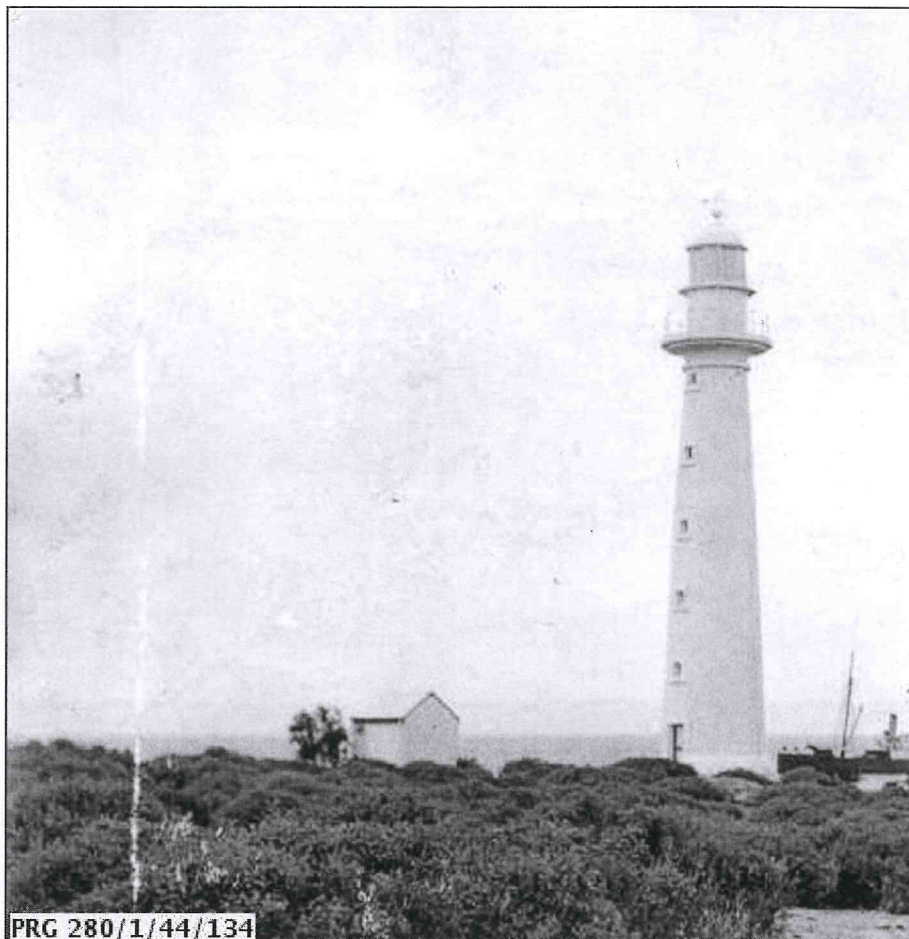


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TITLE

The lighthouse at Point Lowly, South Australia.

DESCRIPTION

The lighthouse at Point Lowly; the South Australian Customs De Musgrave' can be seen in the background.

DATE

1911

Size of Master Image

3076 x 2045 pixels, 6.0 MB

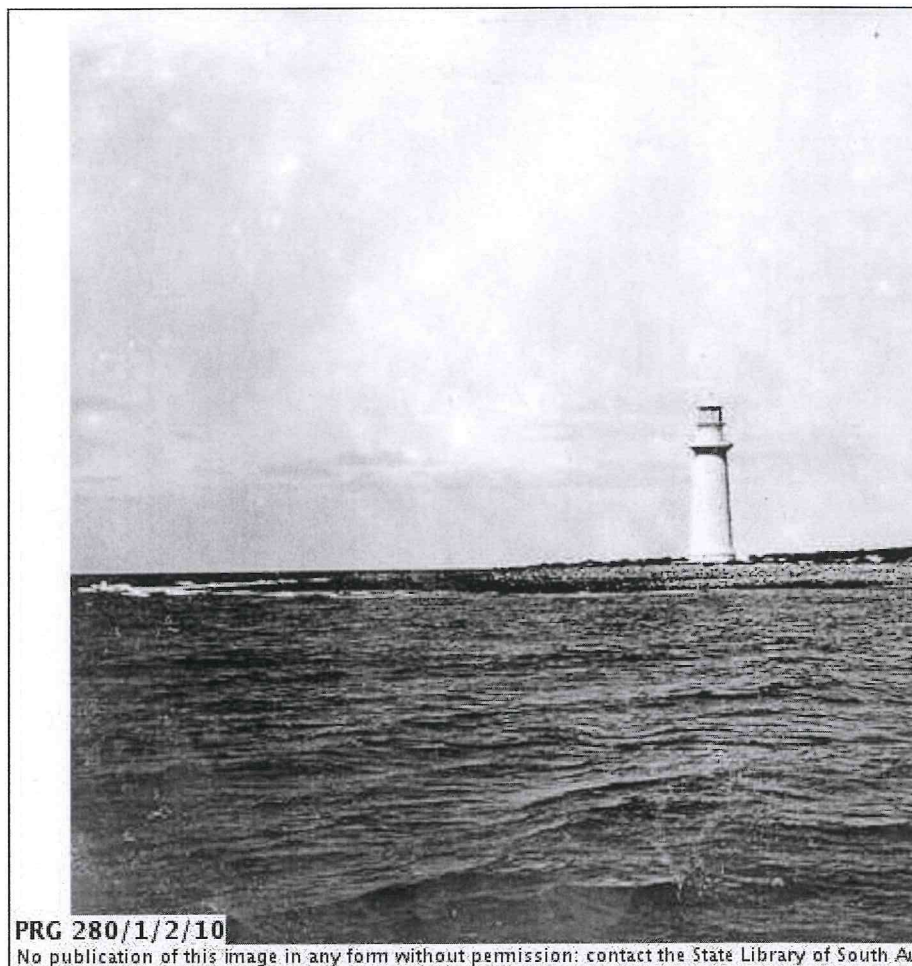


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TITLE

Distant view of Point Lowly lighthouse

DESCRIPTION

Distant view of Point Lowly lighthouse.

DATE

1904

Size of Master Image

3000 x 2191 pixels, 6.3 MB



Image record

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TITLE

DESCRIPTION

DATE

Size of Master Image

Distant view of Point Lowly lighthouse and cottages

Distant view of Point Lowly lighthouse and cottages; a small rowing boat with Captain Weir at the oars and three passengers: Arthur Ros Smedley.

1904

3000 x 2121 pixels, 6.1 MB

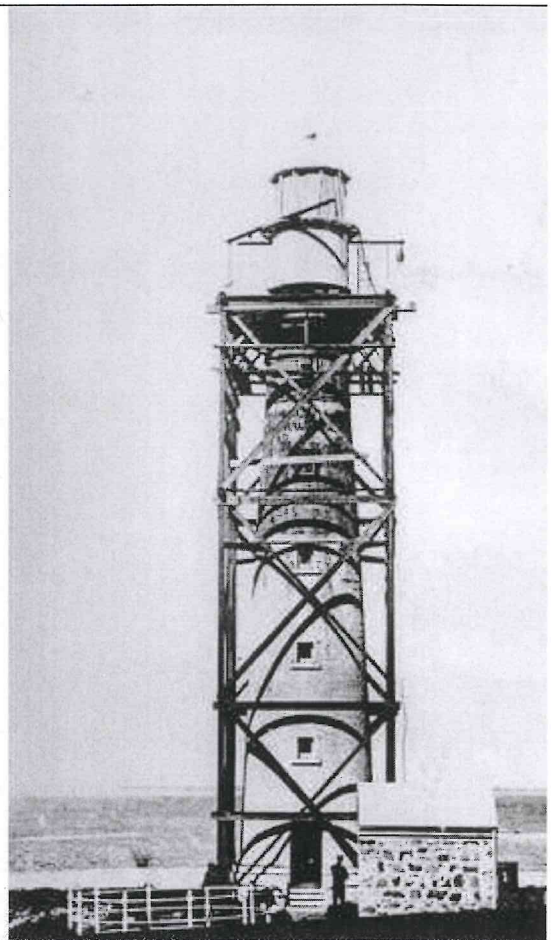


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TITLE

Increasing light power at Point Lowly lighthouse.

DESCRIPTION

Scaffolding erected around the lighthouse at Point Lowly during the light.

DATE

ca.1908

Size of Master Image

2205 x 3144 pixels, 6.6 MB



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B 54780

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TITLE

Lighthouse cottages at Point Lowly.

DESCRIPTION

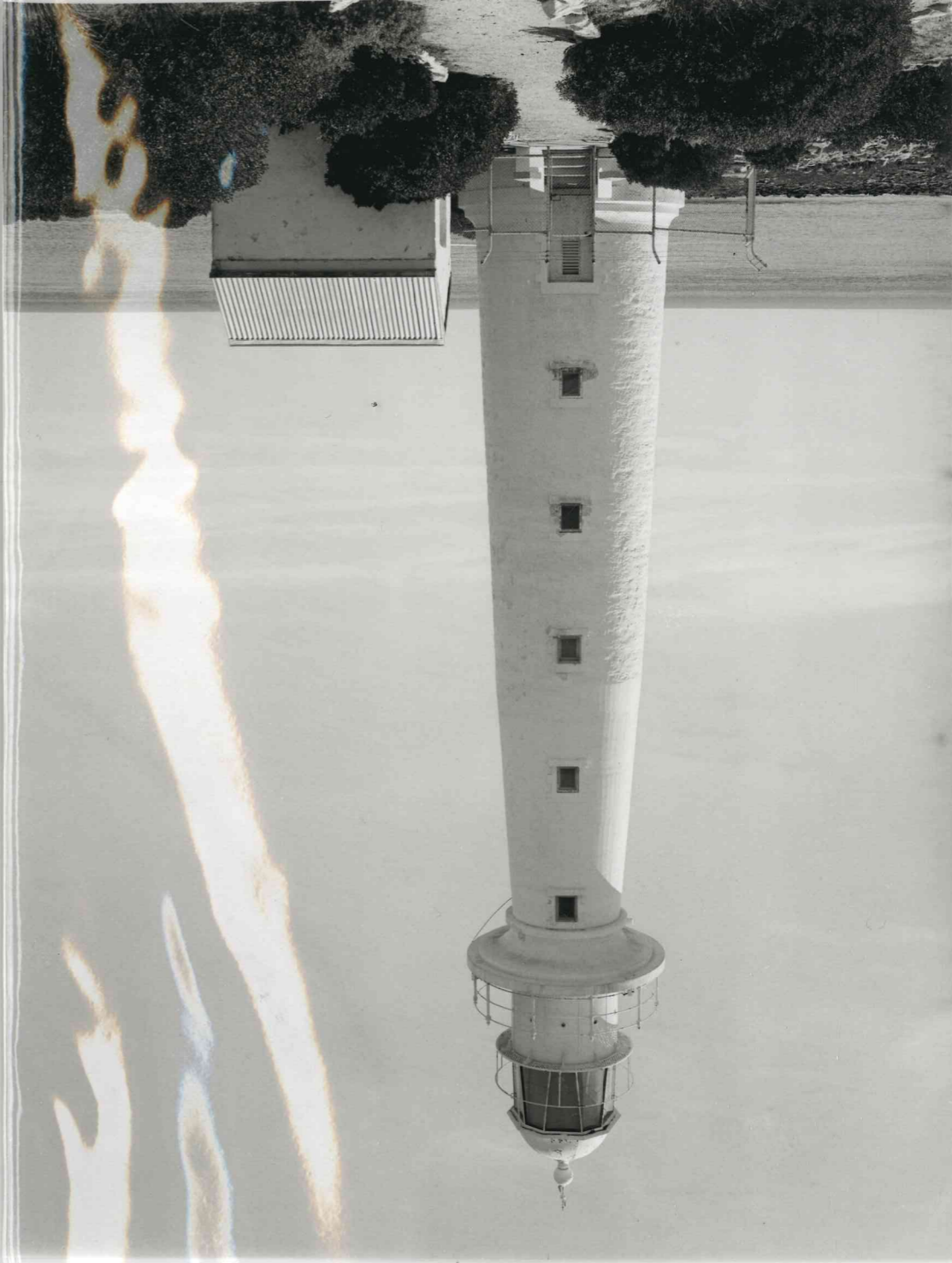
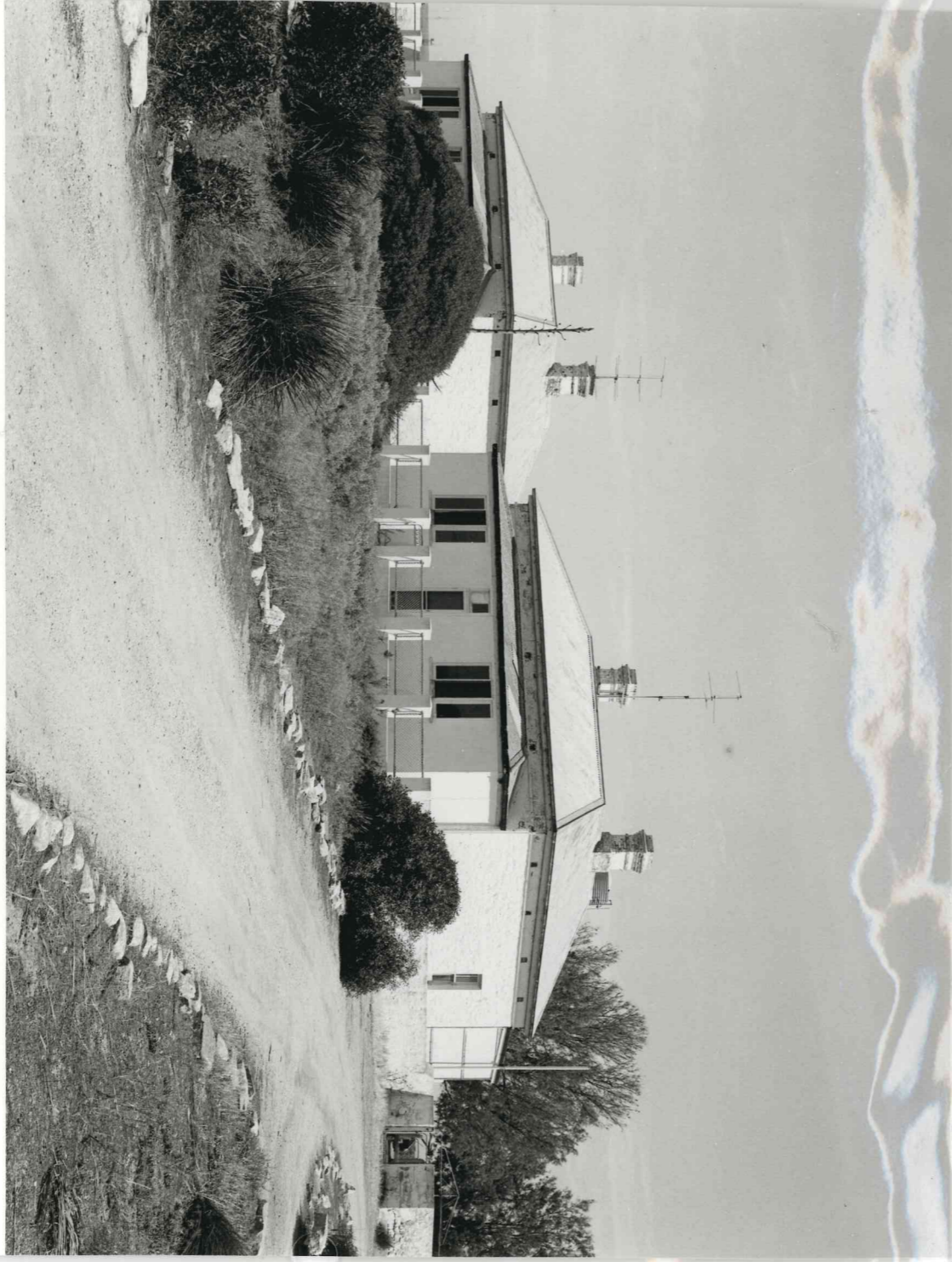
POINT LOWLY: Distant view of the lighthouse cottages.

DATE

ca.1925.

LOWLY NOV 1981

FLINT 404
NEA 1
LOWLY POINT
KEEPERS' COTTAGES



FLINT 403
NEA 7
LOWLY POINT
LIGHT HOUSE

LOWLY NOV 1981