The Waglan Island: The Lights, the Elements and the Men

Dr. S.W. Poon & Dr. K. Y. Deng
Department of Real Estate and Construction
The University of Hong Kong
2021
Lighthouse Location 橫瀾島位置
The Two Islands of Waglan
• 19th century named “橫欄洲，如一字橫列”; mid to late 20th century renamed as “橫瀾，橫障波瀾之意”。

• 1932 Bannister book – Chinese name “橫欄洲”
• 1960s? “橫欄局”

• Twin Lighthouse at Dalian Lao Tieh Shan (大连老铁山灯塔) manufactured by French Company Barbier, Benard & Turenne (BB&T) 同樣燈塔由法國公司BB&T製造
Government of China.

KOWLOON DISTRICT.

LOCAL NOTICE TO MARINERS.
No. 2.

Exhibition of Waglan Light.

Notice is hereby given that the Light on Waglan Island was exhibited for the first time at sunset on the 9th of May, 1893.

The illuminating apparatus is revolving dioptre of the first order, shewing double white flashes at intervals of half a minute.

The lighthouse stands on the summit of the island, and the light, which is elevated 225 feet above the level of the sea, should be visible in clear weather at a distance of 22 nautical miles in all directions where it is not obscured by land.

N.B.—For the present the light will only show thirty per cent. of its full power on the landward side; viz.: between the bearings, taken from sou’east, North by East round by East to South-East by South.

The tower is round, of iron, 25 feet high, with a total height from its base to the lantern vane of 52 feet.

The lower half of the tower is painted white, the upper half red, and the lantern white.

The dwellings are white.

Approximate position:

Latitude, .......................... 22° 11' 18" N.
Longitude, .......................... 114° 18' 3" E.

FOG GUN SIGNAL.

The keepers at this station, on hearing a bell, foghorn, steam-whistle, or any other sound during foggy or thick weather, indicating the proximity of a vessel, will fire two guns with an interval of fifteen seconds between them, and, if the vessel’s fog signal—showing that she is under way—continues to be heard, will repeat the firing after an interval of twelve minutes.

J. McLeavy Brown,
Commissioner of Customs for Kowloon and District.

Custom House,
Kowloon, 10th May, 1893.
Design by David Marr Henderson, Engineer-in-chief
Chinese Maritime Customs (1869 – 1898) (SCMP)

Courtesy of Mrs. Felicity Somers Eve
Drawing by Engineer-in-chief (1894)
設計圖則 (英國土木工程師學會)
運送用船舶
Revenue Cruiser 'Likin' in Hong Kong harbour was engaged in keeping up communication with Waglan Island during lighthouse construction
Light first lit on 9 May 1893 by Lady Robinson
The Lighthouse

• First order revolving light
• Double flashing light – characteristic
• 22 nautical miles, seen at 25 miles
• Cast iron tower 25 ft high, dia 17’ 6” at base, 12’ 8” at top
• Lower room for stores, upper for services
• Spiral stair, brass scuttles, ventilators, speaking tubes to dwellings, copper lightning conductor
• Foundation – Green Island cement concrete, tower secured with anchor bolts
燈塔
• 壹等旋轉燈
• 連續兩下閃光, 遠至22海浬可見
• 生鐵塔25呎高
• 下層為儲備室, 上層為設施
• 旋轉型梯級
• 銅製透氣孔, 避雷針
• 地基用青洲英泥建成
• The low wall 7.5’ high of cast iron
• Two doors to the outer gallery, protect the flame from irregular air current
• Lantern has 16 steel standard and three tiers of curved plate glass glazing
• Dome is sheet copper carried on wrought iron rafters, surrounded by a fixed copper cowl and vane
• Ceiling is galvanised sheet iron
• 7呎半高生鉄矮牆
• 外廊有2隻門
• 燈室有16垂直柱
• 熟鉄椽架支撐銅製拱頂
• 天花為鍍鋅鉄片
• The Tower, light and lantern cost 5,092 pounds
• The local expenditure for dwellings etc. = 3,711 pounds
• Derrick crane at the landing place for relief and stores landing
• Fog signalling is carried out with 18-pounder cannon
• Illumination power is equivalent to 45,000 candle power (now 1 million, powered by 12 volt battery)

• 建造費用, 燈塔£5,092, 建築群£3,711
• 霧炮發射18磅炮彈
Typhoon on 29 July 1896
颶風 - 浪花打至燈塔建築群, 及燈室離水面225呎高, 沙石打花玻璃, 吊机被海浪捲走
• The waves dashed over the buildings,
• flooding the fresh water tanks
• and completely carrying away the derrick used for landing stores,
• while the spray reached the lantern, 225 feet above high water,
• pitting the panes with sand and gravel.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of appointment</th>
<th>Annual salary ($)</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<td>1901</td>
<td>Lighthouse Keeper</td>
<td>E. A. Taylor</td>
<td>4th January 1901</td>
<td>$1,620</td>
<td>Allowance for lodging in Hong Kong about $50 per an.</td>
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<td>Senior Assistant Lighthouse Keeper</td>
<td>W. A. Hast</td>
<td>4th January 1901</td>
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<td>6th Lighthouse Keeper</td>
<td>John Johnson (?)</td>
<td>1st May 1905</td>
<td>$160</td>
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<td>7th Lighthouse Keeper</td>
<td>William McVey</td>
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Charles Edwin Nicholas 燈塔總管理員尼古拉斯
Courtesy of Mrs. Heather Williams
The main reason for CEN as a lighthouse keeper was his sentiments about guarding weary hearts of sailors and fishermen, especially as he had grown up with the example of his father who was a missionary to seamen.
橫瀾島圖則及空中照片
(ASD Archives)
European Staff Quarters 外籍管理員宿舍
Hong Kong Observatory Weather Information Collection Centre
香港天文台氣象資料收集中心
Viewing Tower 瞭望塔
Courtesy of Family of Charles Thirlwell
Telecommunication Centre 电訊設備中心
Fog Horn and Machine Room 霧角及机械室
Cannons and Fog Horns
霧炮及霧角
Fog Horns 霧角
Fog Horn and Helipad 霧角室和直升机坪
Work four hours on and four hours off around the clock to

• Keep a 24-hour watch for ships coming to and from HK, log their names and the times they pass the lighthouse

• Pass on those details to the Port Control Communication Centre

• Continuously send out radio beacons to vessels

• Receive message from vessels

• Keep watch for missing vessels

• Report to the Observatory every three hours on weather condition

• Repair and maintain the lighthouse ad surrounding buildings
Transferred to HK Govt in March 1901
1901年移交香港政府管理和運作
Landing by Basket
登陸用吊籃
Waglan Light and Telecommunication Equipment (SCMP)
燈及傳訊儀器
Mr. Luke Yu of C & W Ltd.
Employment Agreement of Charles Edwin Nicholas

whereby it is agreed and entered into the parties hereby as follows:

1. The said Charles Edwin Nicholas (hereinafter called the "person engaged") hereby accepts the post of a Lieutenant for service in the Her Majesty's Lighthouses in the Port of Hong Kong or any other Lighthouse, Lighthouses, and the Government of Hong Kong and the said person engaged, shall for the time being, be under the orders of the Governor and shall be known as the person engaged, and shall be allowed to serve in any other station or service as the Governor shall approve at any time in the course of his commission.
華人燈塔管理員
1920s - 1930s
Chinese Lighthouse Keepers

• In 1930 Wong Kai Chung (黃啟松) became a Second Class at Gap Rock after serving as an Apprentice since 1925. Later he stationed at Waglan.

• In 1933 Mr. Leung Chiu Tung (梁朝棟) started as Apprentice at Gap Rock and was promoted to Second Class in 1934. He was transferred to Waglan in 1935.
Recruitment in 1950 and 60s
Tse Sam (1945) and Watching Station (1951)

[Image of a map]

[Text]

COPY

HARBOUR OFFICE
HONG KONG.
25th October 1965.

Deputy Harbour Master.

Sir,

May I request for permission to re-enter Hong Kong from Macau be obtained for Chinese Lightkeeper Tse Sam (and his family) formerly of Weigan Lighthouses.

He and his family is at present under the care of the British Consulate at Macau.

This man and his family is urgently required to take charge of Kap wing Lighthouses.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
SD. H.C. Brown.
Principal Light Keeper.
Weather Information (HK Observatory)
香港天文台氣象資料收集

• Since 1907, weather observations were made by lighthouse staff and telegraphed to the Observatory.
• A new weather station was operated in 1952 by Observatory’s staff until 1963.
• Lighthouse staff took over the observation from 1964 until an automatic weather station was set up in 1989.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Present weather</th>
<th>Visibility</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Low cloud type</td>
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<tr>
<td>Height of low cloud base</td>
<td>Wind dir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind force</td>
<td>State of sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sea temperature</td>
<td>Screen temperature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather since previous obs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle cloud type</td>
<td>High cloud type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wet bulb temp.</td>
<td>Max. temp.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Min. temp</td>
<td>Rainfall total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attached thermometer</td>
<td>Barometer as read</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barometer as read correction</td>
<td>MSL Pressure</td>
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</table>
1960s
Charles Thirlwell and Assistant 1940 – 1960s
Courtesy of Family of Charles Thirlwell
Since 1950s
Three Lees
Dick, Tom and Henry
as Lighthouse Keepers
新式儀器收集紀錄各類資料

九位職員忍受寂寞時光默默辛勤工作

引退船隻進入港海

新舊水道前線

橫瀾燈塔水域
Waglan Sighting and Message Log
Keepers’ Mind
管理員內心, 孤單, 寂寞, 霧角聲震耳欲聾, 喜愛天和海, 对島嶼有歸屬感, 掛念家人

• Loneliness and monotony
• Deafening noise of the horn
• Charm, solitude, plain and simple peace, quiet
• Lovely sea and sky
• Learn to respect the sea
• Attachment to the island
• Leaving a ship
• Miss family life
燈塔管理員感受

• 飲水及沖洗
• 生存
• 面對強風, 大浪
• 高空作業
• 跌落海裏
• 霧角霧炮響聲
• 海盜
• 二次世界大戰
Keepers’ Life

Communication - Flashing lamps, Morse code, fog horn, guns
Pets - dogs, cats, chicken, snake, fish
Vegetables and flowers
Exercises - swimming, Chinese martial arts
Habit/kill time – fishing, picking sea shells, watching TV
Hygiene - mosquitoes and flies
Religion - Christian
Parents – European father (navy) and Asian mother
岸彼登覺茫茫海浩
績功的塔燈
記問訪塔燈島瀾横
嘉特
本共燈三餘
指導船隻航行
港有塔十座
工作環境寂寞艱苦
ON RETIREMENT

Waglton Lighthouse
Principal Keeper

MR S. F. BAMSEY

A cocktail party was held in the office of the Director of Marine yesterday in honour of Mr S. F. Bamsey, principal keeper of the Waglton Lighthouse, who is on retirement after 30 years' service with the Marine Department.

Mr Bamsey joined the department in 1920. His service was interrupted during the Japanese occupation, when he went to Macao. He rejoined the Government service soon after the war, and was appointed principal keeper of the Waglton Lighthouse in 1944.

Mr Bamsey began his long leave beginning next Monday prior to retiring in November.

Mr J. Jolly, Director of Marine, thanked Mr Bamsey, in a brief speech, for his long and loyal service in the department. He presented Mr Bamsey, as a gift on the staff of the department, with a German radio set.

Mr Bamsey, expressing his thanks, proposed a toast to the prosperity and success of the Marine Department.
感人的往事

在福建龙岩工作的他，虽然身在异乡，却依然保持着对家乡的思念。每当夜深人静的时候，他总会想起那些熟悉的山川和田野。

“断守灯塔数十年，横偢坡下葬故人。”这句话出自一首古诗，表达了他对灯塔守护者的敬仰和怀念。

在灯塔旁，有一位老人静静地站着，他的身影在微弱的灯光下显得格外孤单。他是一名灯塔守护者，为了守护这盏灯火，他已经在这座岗位上守了数十年。每当夜幕降临，他就会走上灯塔，用双手点亮那盏温暖的灯火，为来往的船只指引方向。

这盏灯火，不仅照亮了海面，也照亮了人们的心。它象征着一种坚韧不拔的精神，一种对责任的坚守。无论是风雨交加的夜晚，还是风平浪静的白天，他都坚守在岗位上，用自己的行动诠释了什么是奉献，什么是执着。

在老人的周围，是一片寂静的海面。海浪轻轻地拍打着岸边，发出悦耳的声音。老人的背影在海风中显得格外坚毅，仿佛在诉说着一段段感人的往事。

虽然已经年过古稀，但他的眼神中仍然充满着对未来的期待。在他心中，这片海面就是他的舞台，他要用自己的生命，诠释出一段段感人的故事。

灯塔的灯火，不仅仅是一种指引，更是一种希望。它像一位无声的导师，教会了人们什么是坚持，什么是执着。

在这片寂静的海面，老人的故事如同一首古老的歌谣，在人们心中回荡。它告诉我们，无论何时何地，只要心中有信念，就一定能找到属于自己的那片灯火。
Cast Iron (16m) Tower
Declared a Monument in 2000
宣佈為古蹟建築
Poem Written by Charles Nicholas

尼古拉斯所寫部份詩句

• I am thinking more of you love
• And wishing I was home again.

• But my duty call me here love.
• For to guard the weary hearts
• Of the Fishermen and the Sailors
• Coming home from foreign parts.
Mr. and Mrs. Lai Kwok Keung
Courtesy of the following in using their photos/archives

- Mrs. Felicity Somers Eve
- Mrs. Heather Williams
- Family of Charles Thirlwell
- Mr. and Mrs. Lai Kwok Keung
- Architectural Services department
- Hong Kong Observatory
Members of Research Team

Acknowledgement
Support from The Lord Wilson Heritage Trust