

# WHITLOCK'S MILL LIGHTHOUSE

Kathy Wingate did some great research into the origins of US Lighthouse #1, the Whitlock's Mill Lighthouse on the St.Croix River, in Calais, Maine. The following article is based on the information that Kathy uncovered.

The lighthouse was built in 1892 to replace a tree lantern and the government rebuilt it in 1910. The current structure dates from that period. The original lens was installed in 1892 and the current lens was installed in 1969. At 25 feet high, with the light positioned at 32 feet, the lighthouse is fairly. The tower is built of brick on a stone and timber base. There is a wooden pyramidal tower also built in 1910 that houses a bell. Other buildings include the keepers quarters, a Dutch Colonial cottage and small oil storage house and storage building. The property is privately owned and despite being much photographed it is not open to the public.

The St.Croix river forms the border between Maine, USA and New Brunswick, Canada and is navigable for several miles inland by ocean going ships. As early as the arrival of the Loyalists in 1794 the river was used as the principle method of moving goods inland as well as transporting lumber and sawmill products produced on the banks of river. By 1803 there were boat building operations and in that year the *Liberty* was launched from the boatyard of Jarius Keene. About three miles below Calais the river narrows, just near where the Whitlock Mills stood. Vessels are required to turn when leaving or entering this stretch of the river. A large ledge juts out in the river and the channel swings to the Canadian side at this point. Due to the risk of vessels hitting the submerged ledge the owners of Whitlock Mills hung a lantern in a tree at the rivers edge to warn ships of this hazzard. This area was also known at "the quarantine" as it was here, just before passing the Whitlock Mills that vessels would wait for docking space before proceeding up river to Calais or St.Stephen.

The inadequacy of the lantern in the tree lead to the construction of the first lighthouse in 1892. This also proved not adequate for the job and in 1910 the government constructed the current lighthouse.

On June 7,1977 the 1.6 acres of lighthouse property were deeded to the Washington County Vocational Technical Institute to be used for seminars, conferences and student recreation.

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The owner of Whitlock Mills mentioned above was Colin Campbell Whitlock (1859-1939) whose family is detailed at the end of the WHITLOCK57 chart. His great grandparents, Thomas Whitelock and Ann (Taylor) Whitelock came from Philadelphia to St. John, New Brunswick as Loyalists in 1783. Colin Campbell Whitlock was born July 23,1859 in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, the eight child of Samuel Hallett Whitlock and his wife, Margaret Campbell. In 1883 he married Annie Inches the daughter of Col. James Archibald Inches and settled in Milltown. With his brother Robert Watson Whitlock he established a grocery business and in 1886 moved to Calais. The C.C. Whitlock Grocery store on Whitlocks Corner of Main Street, Calais became a thriving established business. Concurrent with the grocery business Colin Campbell Whitlock also established and sawmill and lumbering operation on the St.Croix River. It was at this location that the government built the Whitlock Mills Lighthouse to replace the red light Mr. Whitlock hung in a tree. Local stories have been handed down that Mr. Whitlock was known to take a drink and from time to time Mrs. Whitlock was obligated to light and hang the lantern in the tall pine as a beacon for passing ships.

Sources: R2056; R2420; R2750; X4776