

**1841**

# BRIGHT IDEA ON THE PRESQU'ILE POINT

Have you ever tried to walk around your house in the dark? It is very easy to bump into things when you can't see where you are going. Ouch! Now imagine trying to sail a large ship at night. How would you know where to go? In addition to the stars, lighthouses were an aid to navigation.

## Time Line

**1840**

The original lighthouse had an **ARCHED DOORWAY AND WINDOWS**. It also had a lantern house on top.

**1846**

A **HOME** is built nearby for the lighthouse keeper and his family.

**1894**

The lighthouse is clad with wooden shingles. The **ARCHED WINDOWS BECOME RECTANGULAR**.

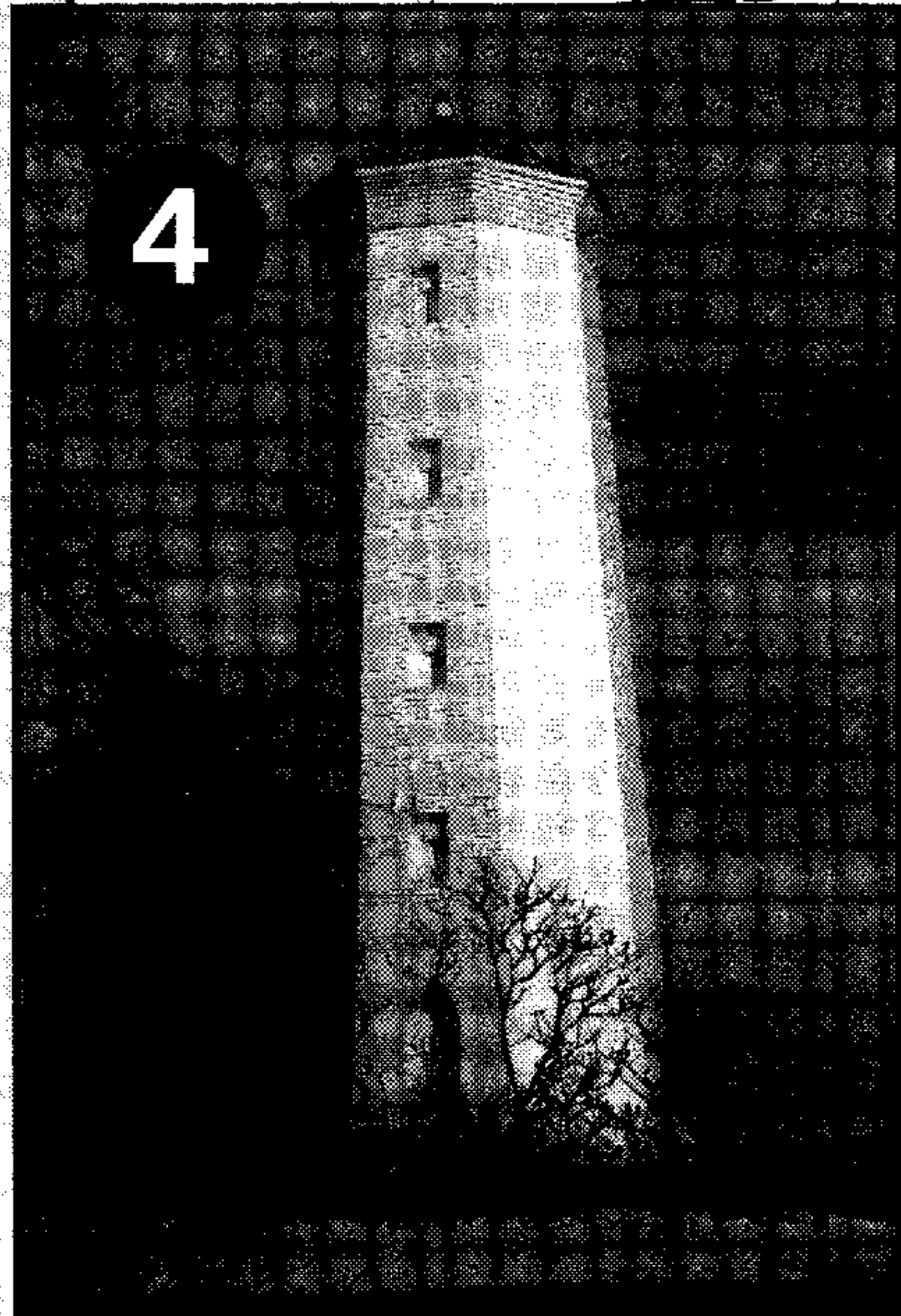
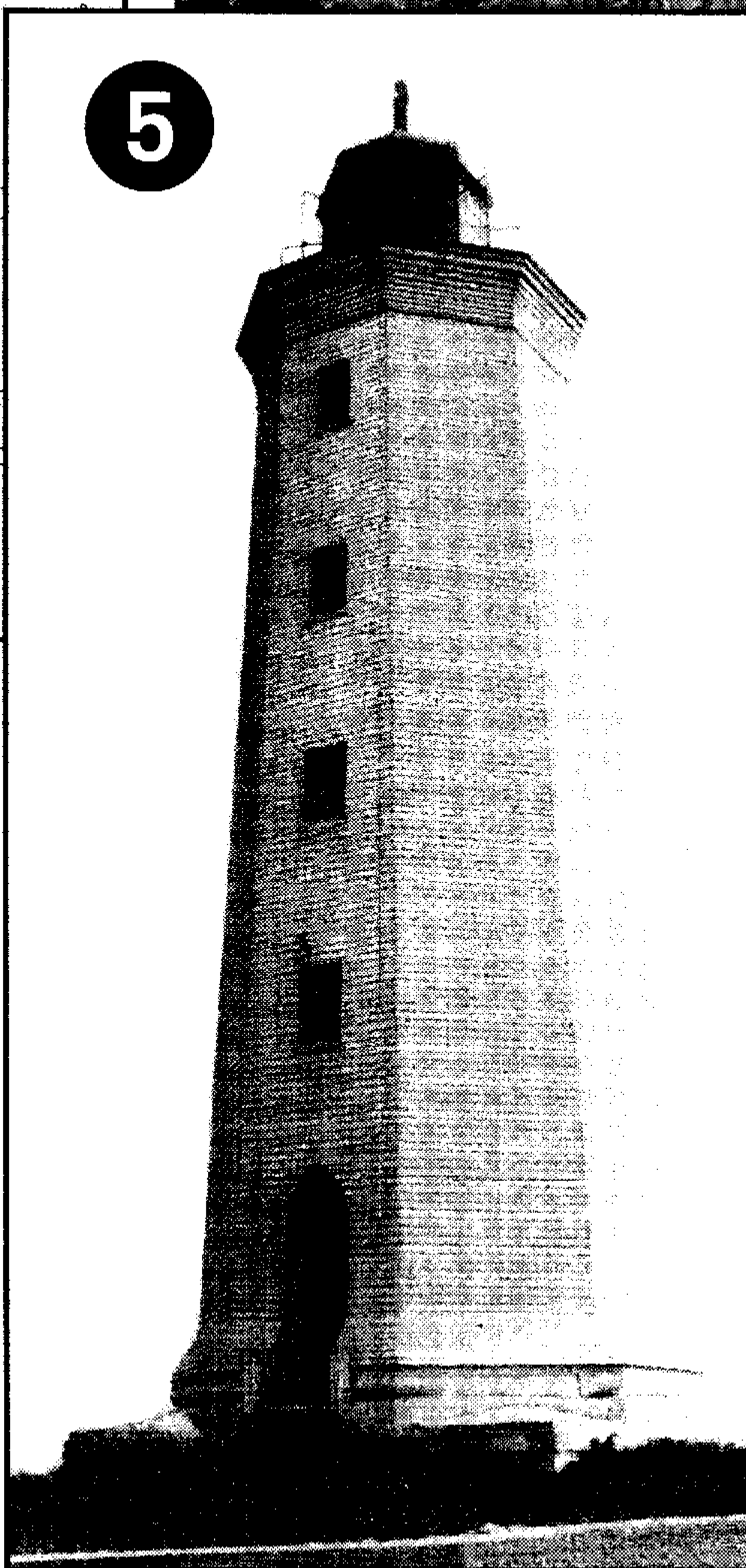
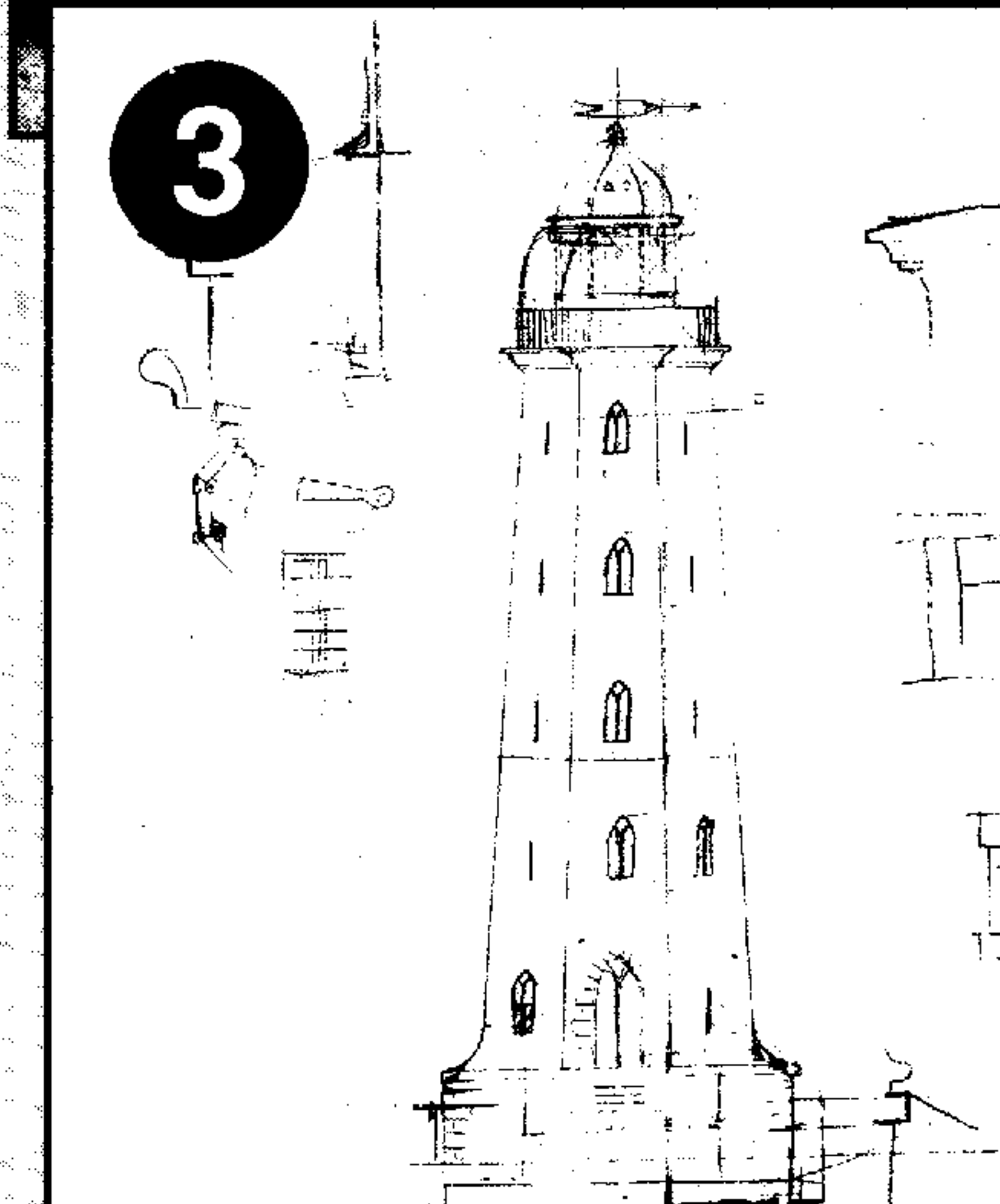
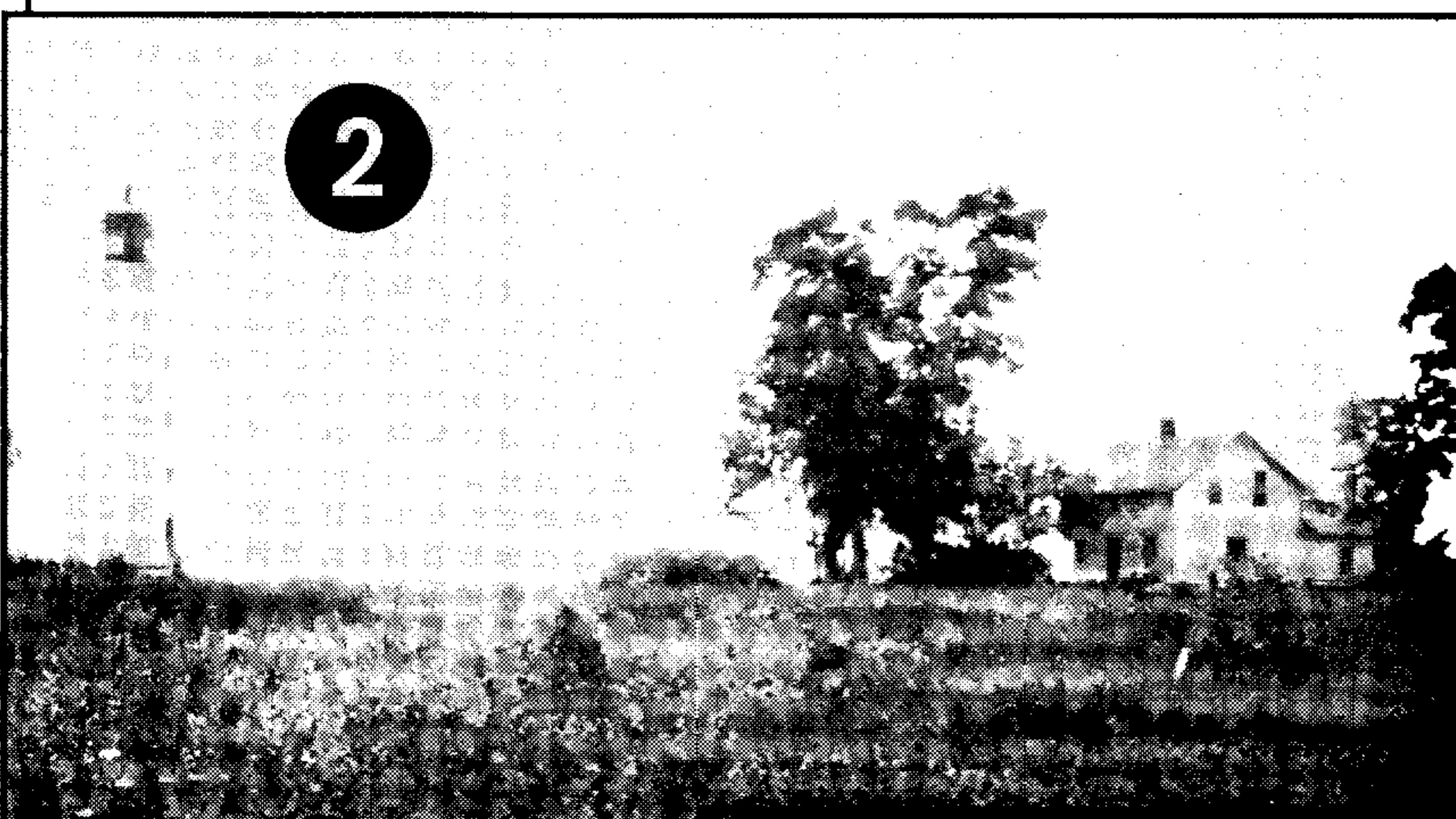
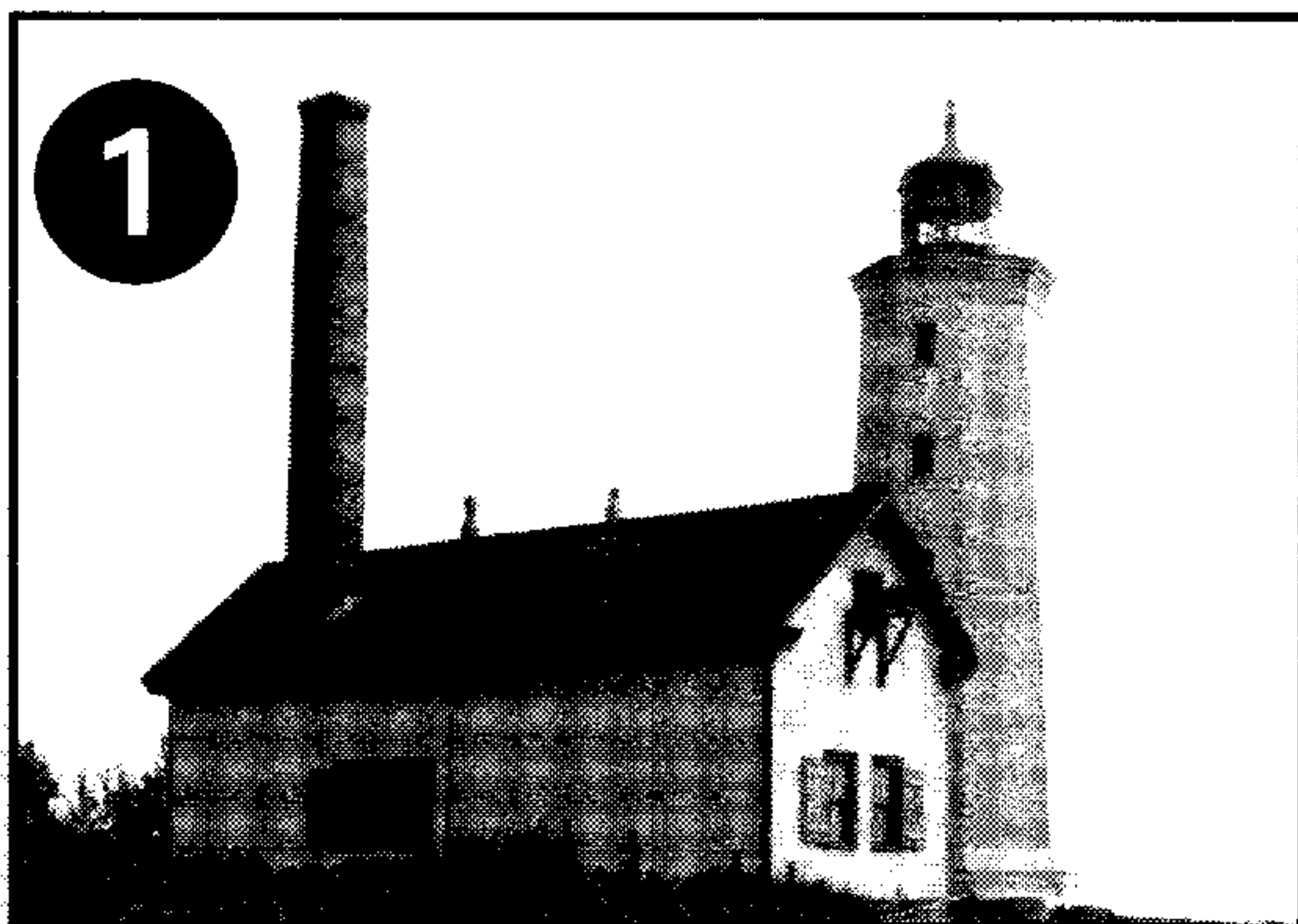
**1906**

A fog station is built next to the lighthouse. The fog station has a **VERY TALL CHIMNEY**.

**1965**

The **LANTERN HOUSE ON TOP IS TAKEN DOWN**. The white light was replaced with a smaller red light.

Before there were railways and good roads, water was the most efficient way to travel. Bateaux, schooners, and steamships all needed help steering through the waters of Lake Ontario. A lighthouse was built on the tip of the Presqu'ile Peninsula in 1840. It took 4 years to build. Its light helped to guide ships into Presqu'ile's sheltered harbour.



## Activity



The lighthouse at Presqu'ile has changed over time. The time line tells us when the changes happened. The pictures show us the changes that took place. Match the pictures with the time line. Write the correct number beside the year that a change took place.

**Present Day:** Go to the Lighthouse. Sketch it as it looks today.

## Ship's Log: 1841

Presqu'ile's Lighthouse was the first light that a ship would see when sailing from York (Toronto) to Kingston.

John Swetman Sr. was the first lighthouse keeper at Presqu'ile. A cottage was built for the Swetman family in 1846. Parts of the cottage can still be seen today.

Lighthouse keepers had the very important job of lighting the lamp at sunset, and putting it out at sunrise. They made sure that the

lamp shone all night long, especially in bad weather. Every time the Presqu'ile light went out, the keeper climbed 80 steps to the top of the lighthouse to re-light it. He could make many trips in a single night.

Ships also needed help finding their way during foggy weather. Fog is dangerous because it blocks light, but it doesn't block sound. In 1906, a fog station was built at Presqu'ile. During foggy periods, the horn blasted for six seconds of every minute. The fog horn was so loud that it could be heard beyond the Town of Brighton.



*Nicol Hugh Baird: Designer of the Presqu'ile Lighthouse*

In 1837, N.H. Baird designed the Presqu'ile Lighthouse. How many sides does it have?

## Activity

# Design Your Own Lighthouse



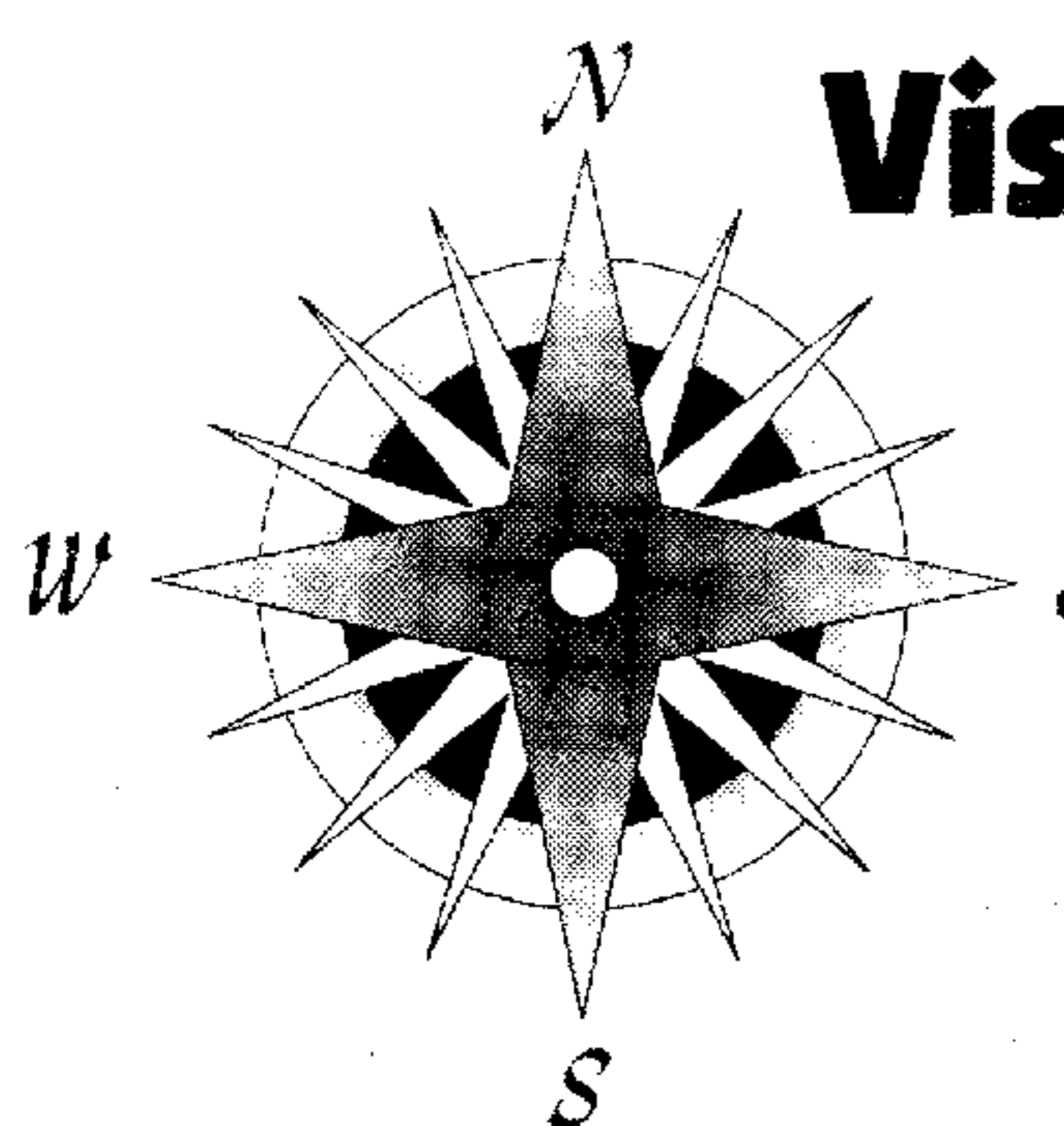
We often think of a lighthouse as a tall, white tower. In fact, there are many lighthouse designs.

A lighthouse may be tall (on flat land), or short (on a high cliff). It could be square, have eight sides, or even look like an upside down ice cream cone.

Now it's your turn to help ships find their way on dark and stormy nights.



Design and draw your own lighthouse here. Where will you build your lighthouse? Why did you choose that spot?



## Visit It Today

The Presqu'ile Lighthouse still shines today. The base of the foghorn station and most of the keeper's cottage can be seen at Presqu'ile Point.