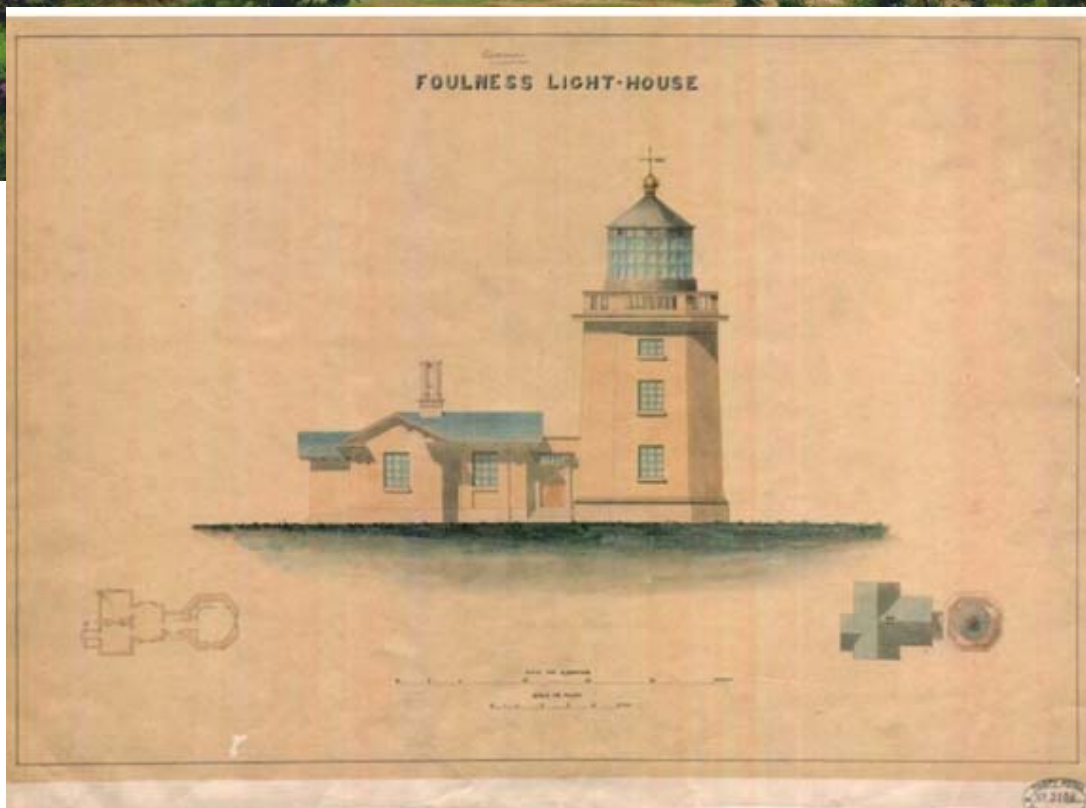




U.S. Lighthouse Society ~ Lighthouses of the United Kingdom

Cromer Lighthouse (Cromer, Norfolk)



A NON-PROFIT HISTORICAL & EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY



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History

Before the erection of a lighthouse at Cromer lights for the guidance of vessels were shown from the tower of the parish church, these were small, but served a useful purpose for many years. A number of ecclesiastical lights such as this were exhibited around the coast in medieval times.

During the first twenty years following Charles II's restoration in 1660 many proposals were put forward for lighthouses on all parts of the coast. One of the petitioners, Sir John Clayton, suggested no less than five lighthouses on four different sites - at the Farne Islands off Northumberland, Flamborough Head in Yorkshire, Foulness at Cromer and Corton near Lowestoft.

Despite opposition to his schemes Sir John, together with a George Blake obtained a comprehensive patent in 1669 and at a cost of £3,000 erected towers at each of the four sites. The patent would last for 60 years and specified rates of dues to be paid (voluntarily) by the owners of passing vessels.

Unfortunately the cost of maintenance was high and many of the ship owners were unwilling to pay the dues required so that Clayton could not afford to kindle fires in the tower at Cromer. However the unlighted tower served as a beacon and together with the other towers are marked definitely as lighthouses on sea charts after 1680 with references such as "a lighthouse but no fire kept in it".

The owner of the land at Foulness, Nathaniel Life, considered that the situation required a lighthouse and it is said that he built a tower in 1717 hoping to be granted a patent for the light. It is more likely, however, that Life merely took steps for lighting the shell of Clayton's tower. Assisted by Edward Bowell, a Younger Brother of Trinity House, he persuaded the Brethren to apply for a patent. They obtained it in 1719, the dues to be ¼ penny per ton of general cargo and ½ penny per chaldron (25 cwt) of Newcastle coal. Life and Bowell jointly received a lease at a rental of £100, on Life's undertaking that the tower with one acre of ground should pass to Trinity House when the patent expired in 61 years.

The patentees exhibited a coal fire enclosed in a lantern on 29th September, 1719. In 1792 Trinity House, now in possession, fitted here its second flashing light; 5 reflectors and argand oil lamps on each of the 3 faces of a revolving frame. The frequent and rapid eclipse of the light annoyed some of the seamen, who described it as an "ignis fatuus" or will'-o-the-wisp.

J Saxby Wryde writes that the first keepers were two young women who together received a pound a week for wages with certain perquisites. However the sea encroached rapidly; in 1799, 1825 and 1852 immense masses of the cliff slipped down into the sea with the building finally being destroyed by a landslip in 1866.

The present lighthouse, a white octagonal tower standing about ½ mile from the cliff edge, was built in 1833 and converted to electric operation in 1958. In June 1990 the station was converted to automatic operation and is now monitored from the Trinity House Operations and Planning Centre at Harwich.



Established	1680 (Present Tower 1833)
Height Of Tower	18 Metres
Height Of Light Above Mean High Water	84 Metres
Electrified	1958
Optic	3rd Order Catadioptric Drum
Lamp	150W 230V metal halide lamp mounted on LC45 lamp changer
Character	1 flash every 5 seconds
Intensity	294,000 Candela
Range Of Light	23 nautical miles



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Holiday Cottages

Cromer Lighthouse has two self catering holiday cottages, *The Link* and *Valonia*. Both are semi-detached former lighthouse keeper's cottages.

The Link and *Valonia* Cottage are 1 mile from the traditional North Norfolk town of Cromer. A 10 minute stroll along the coastal path will take you into town where you can explore shops, pubs and sample local seafood.

Cromer is a popular holiday destination for families and has a sandy beach, pier and excellent crab sandwiches. Only 500 yards from the cottage are steep steps to a sandy beach below. The cottages make a perfect Norfolk retreat for golfing breaks.

The property is adjacent to The Royal Cromer 18-hole golf course where non-members with a handicap are welcome.

Book This Cottage

Bookings are handled by Rural Retreats

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