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## Erosion has plagued Cape San Blas Lighthouse

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# Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



## EROSION HAS PLAGUED CAPE SAN BLAS LIGHTHOUSE

By HAMPTON DUNN

PORT ST. JOE --- The Cape San Blas lighthouse still guides sailors today, just as it has since its establishment in 1849, but it has had a rough time surviving the gnawing erosion of the sea.

The first structure fell down during a gale in 1851. A new one was completed in 1856. A few months later it was destroyed. "The sea rose so high," the Lighthouse Board reported, "that the waves struck the floor of the keeper's dwelling elevated eight feet above ground, and about 14 feet above the ordinary tides. A lagoon now occupies the site of the lighthouse."

Another lighthouse went up. It was severely damaged by the Confederate forces during the Civil War. The history of this light has been repeated through the years.

At one time, it was decided to move the lighthouse to Black's Island, in St. Joseph's Bay, but this was abandoned after the foundation had been poured. The latest tower was built in 1919.

The light is now in a brown, square skeleton tower, enclosing a stair cylinder with the lantern 96 feet above ground and 101 feet above water. The 200,000-candlepower 3½-order electric light flashes white every 20 seconds and is visible 16 miles. A radiobeacon was established at the station in 1939.

The keepers with the longest period of service at Cape San Blas were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Lupton who were transferred from the Cedar Key Lighthouse to San Blas in 1895 and were stationed there until 1921.

