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Crooked River Light part of network

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



CROOKED RIVER LIGHT PART OF NETWORK

By HAMPTON DUNN

CARRABELLE --- Peninsular Florida has 8,462 miles of coastline and water traffic is heavy all along it. Hence the U.S. Coast Guard maintains more than 400 lights along the shore. Among these are 18 primary lights that beam out to sea as much as 20 miles. Seamen are familiar with them from Amelia Island near Fernandina at the northeast corner of the state through the Florida Straits down off the Keys and around the Gulf of Mexico coast to Pensacola in the extreme western part.

And most of these interesting structures have a history to tell. Indeed, many have had a role in history itself. One lighthouse, not so historic or so colorful as others, but nevertheless interesting is the Crooked River Light near Carrabelle. Motorists traveling along crooked U.S. 98 just west of the small fishing village of Carrabelle can get a glimpse of the structure by looking on the side of the highway.

The first signal tower in Florida was said to have been built by the Spanish at St. Augustine and was mentioned in the log of Sir Francis Drake when he visited there in 1586.

Prior to Florida becoming a State, a booming, business along the coastline, especially in the rocky Florida Keys, was called "wrecking." This was salvaging and selling goods from wrecked vessels. Some called it piracy, others said it was a legitimate business with a lot of respectable persons engaged in it. When the lighthouses went up, the business was hurt because there were not as many wrecks as before.

