

# PORT AUTHORITY OF NSW HERITAGE INVENTORY

## State Heritage Inventory

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|--|--------------------------|---|-------------|
| SHI Number: 4560002  |                          | Study Number: 4920039   |             |
| Item Name: Hornby Lighthouse   |                          |   |             |
| Location: Inner South Head, Watsons Bay  |                          |   |             |
| Address: Inner South Head  |                          | DUAP Region: Sydney South   |             |
| Suburb / Nearest Town: Watsons Bay<br>2030   |                          | Historic Region: Sydney   |             |
| Local Govt Area: Woollahra   |                          | Parish: Alexandria  |             |
| State: NSW   |                          | County: Cumberland  |             |
| Other/Former Names: Lower Light South Head, Hornby Light, Inner South Head Light   |                          |   |             |
| Area/Group/Complex: Category 1 navigation aid - Port Safety Operating Licence (SYD-003)  |                          |   | Group ID: 1 |
| Aboriginal Area: Burrowaree or Burra-wa-ra (Inner South Head) <sup>1</sup> , Birrabirragal clan  |                          |   |             |
| Curtilage/Boundary:  |                          |   |             |
| Item Type: Built   | Group: Maritime Industry | Category: Lighthouse Tower  |             |
| Owner: Port Authority of New South Wales   |                          |   |             |
| Current Use: Operating lighthouse (surrounding area and buildings recreation - National Park).   |                          |   |             |
| Former Uses:   |                          |   |             |
| Assessed Significance: State   |                          | Endorsed Significance: State (as part of South Head Cultural Landscape SHR 02071) |             |
| Statement of Significance:<br><br>Hornby Lighthouse is among the oldest extant lighthouses, still in operation in Australia. It is a prominent and picturesque landmark with long historic associations in connection with the operation and management of the Port of Sydney and with important organisations such as the Colonial Architects Office, army and military network and National Parks and Wildlife Service. Hornby Lighthouse is an integral component in a system of lighthouses and other harbour lights that ensure the safe navigation of the Port of Sydney. This system of lighthouses and light towers is collectively of State significance. |                          |   |             |
| Historical Notes or Provenance:<br><br>Hornby Light Station was constructed in response to the loss of ships 'Dunbar', which claimed the lives of all but one of its 122 passengers on 20 August 1857, and 'Catherine Adamson' 10 weeks later. It was then known as the Lower Light, South Head to distinguish it from the Macquarie Light, and was constructed between 1857 and 1858.<br><br>A month prior to the Dunbar shipwreck, the New South Wales Government had established a Light, Pilot and Navigation Board of New South Wales. The board concluded the 'existing lights' were 'not sufficient   |                          |   |             |

<sup>1</sup> Government Architect's Office, 'South Head Sydney Harbour National Park Conservation Management Plan' (Sydney, NSW: NSW Department of Commerce, 1 February 2008), 29.

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| <p>to guide vessels into the harbour in thick or stormy weather’, and as a result recommended a 30-foot stone ‘tower’ be constructed on the Inner South Head ‘to show a fixed white light’, positioned 60 feet above sea level. It was recommended first-class catoptric lanterns be installed.</p> <p>The lighthouse was designed by colonial architect Alexander Dawson and constructed by Mr Donovan. It was named after Admiral Sir Phipps Hornby who was Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Navy’s Pacific Fleet during the 1860s. His daughter, Caroline, was the wife of the Governor of New South Wales, Sir William Denison. Dawson submitted his plans on 28 September 1857 with the cost estimated to be £2,732 and one shilling. Dawson’s letter to the Secretary of Lands also stated the light, ‘now in the colonial store is one purchased in 1853; it is first class catoptric light, and its cost was £2,700’.</p> <p>Tenders for the lighthouse’s construction were called on 2 October 1857 and by 26 November it was reported a ‘solid foundation had been obtained’ and the ‘masonry was already in an advanced state’.</p> <p>The lighthouse was illuminated for a test experiment for inspection by the Pilot Board on 6 May 1858. It was described as being of a ‘cylindrical’ shape standing 30 feet high with a 12-foot diameter, and was painted in ‘vertical stripes of white and red’. It contained a circular gallery at the top with iron railings and measuring 12 feet in height and 10 feet in diameter.</p> <p>The gallery contained a fixed catoptric light of the first class, exhibiting 24 lights in total, which was visible at a distance of 15 miles (over 24 kilometres). The lantern was accessed internally by a ‘strong cast iron spiral stair’. It was fuelled by kerosene, which was changed to incandescent gas in 1905, and then electricity in 1933. In 1948 a single 500mm catadioptric lens of the fourth order, manufactured by Chance Brothers, was installed and given an occulting (flashing) characteristic.</p> <p>Two cottages to the west of the light, designed by the colonial architect in 1858, were originally built for the Head Keeper and Attendant (Sheedy 1975).</p> |  |  |                              |
| Themes:  | National Theme:<br>3. Economy<br>4. Settlement | State Theme:<br>Transport<br>Accommodation | Local Theme:<br>None<br>None |
| Designer: Alexander Dawson, Colonial Architect   |  |  |                              |
| Maker / Builder: NSW Department of Lands and Public Works  |  |  |                              |
| Year Started: November 1857  | Year Completed: May 1858                       | Circa: No                                  |                              |
| Physical Description: A small sandstone lighthouse structure erected in 1858. Constructed of curved dressed sandstone now painted to form a circular tapered tower with glass enclosed lamp above, set approx. 9 metres above ground and surrounded at the light housing level by a delicate nonferrous metal balcony and railing. The Lighthouse is painted in distinctive red and white stripes. It appears to have been painted in distinctive stripes from as early as the 1860s (NPWS 1999). This was to distinguish it from the nearby Macquarie Lighthouse. The light is currently powered by Mains electricity with a white light. Flash rate LFL5sec, 2 on 3 off (Sydney Ports Corporation 2004).   |  |  |                              |
| Physical Condition: Extensive refurbishment works were scoped (Hornby Lighthouse Conservation Technical Specification, Joy Singh Heritage Pty Ltd for Public Works Advisory, December 2021), planned and completed in August 2024 by Port Authority of NSW, following a 12-month restoration project. This included roof and drainage repairs, timber floor framing replacement, repainting stonework, timber and metalwork, stone repointing and desalination.  |  |  |                              |
| Modification Dates:  |  |  |                              |

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| <p>1860 – Construction of outbuildings (lighthouse keepers’ quarters). Also ‘additions, repairs and fittings’ completed for £373, 10 shillings and five pence (Cherry Kemp et al., Heritage Assessment Report Hornby Lighthouse).</p> <p>1861 – ‘Additions’ to the value of £128, 10 shillings and seven pence, which were completed in February (Cherry Kemp et al., Heritage Assessment Report Hornby Lighthouse).</p> <p>1899 – Painting and repairs, tender awarded to James Wilson of Willoughby, NSW for £160 (The Daily Telegraph, 25 April 1899, page 3).</p> <p>1902 – construction of new iron railings to balcony and stairs, tender of Scott, Sibbald and Company Ltd accepted in May for £52 (The Australian Star, 21 May 1902, page 7).</p> <p>1905 – kerosene lamp changed to incandescent gas in August (Sydney Morning Herald, 24 August 1905, page 8).</p> <p>1933 – illuminant was changed to electricity, when it ceased to be a manned light.</p> <p>1948 – the beacon was given an oscillating characteristic (flashing) and a single 500mm catadioptric lens of the fourth order was installed (manufactured by Chance Brothers). The flash occurs 27 metres above sea level and the light is visible for 22 kilometres (Sheedy 1975). A special changeover mechanism brings a new lamp into focus when necessary and in the event of a power failure, the lamp was connected to a battery which could operate for three days.</p> <p>1966 – light upgraded from 100-watt power to 1,000 watts.</p> <p>2024 – extensive refurbishment works were scoped (Hornby Lighthouse Conservation Technical Specification, Joy Singh Heritage Pty Ltd for Public Works Advisory, December 2021), planned and completed in August 2024, following a 12-month restoration project. This included roof and drainage repairs, timber floor framing replacement, repainting stonework, timber and metalwork, stone repointing and desalination.</p> <p>2026 - Works are planned to unblock the existing drainage pipe leading from the lighthouse site and remediate soils in the vicinity of the Lighthouse.</p> |
| <p>Recommended Management: Retain in situ and conserve</p> <p>Preparation of an updated Heritage Interpretation Strategy for the site</p> <p>Preparation of a more detailed and comprehensive SHI form for the site commensurate to the item’s assessed significance, and surrounding context including Aboriginal history.</p>   |
| <p>Management: Statutory Instrument</p> <p>The site is included within State Heritage listing ‘South Head Cultural Landscape (including RMP 9-inch 12-ton gun)’ (SHR No. 02071), subsequently it is subject to the provisions of the NSW Heritage Act 1977, and must be managed accordingly. The site features a number of site-specific exemptions granted under Section 57(2) of the Heritage Act relevant to the future management of the site including works to the Hornby Lighthouse specifically. The full list of these site specific exemptions is accessible by the State Heritage Inventory database entry for the South Head Cultural Landscape (including RMP 9-inch 12-ton gun) (accessed here <a href="https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?id=5066508">https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?id=5066508</a>).</p> <p>The site is also located within the curtilage of the heritage item ‘Hornby Lighthouse group comprising Hornby Lighthouse and interiors; 2 cottages and interiors; gun emplacements and fortifications’ (item no. 462) listed in Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Woollahra Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2014. Further, the site is also located within the ‘Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Area’ (identifier no. C14) listed in Part 2 of the Woollahra LEP 2014. Subsequently, appropriate consideration should be had of the relevant heritage provisions of the Woollahra LEP 2014 in management of the site.</p>  |

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| Further Comments: Port Authority of NSW own the lighthouse building only. NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service own the other buildings and land. Port Authority Category 1 Aid to Navigation under the Port Safety Operating Licence.  |  |  |            |
| Criteria a) The Hornby Light is among the oldest extant lighthouses, still in operation in Australia. It is a prominent and picturesque landmark with long historic associations in connection with the operation and management of the Port of Sydney and with important organisations such as the Colonial Architects office, army and military network and NPWS.<br><br>Hornby Light Station was constructed in response to the loss of ships 'Dunbar' and the 'Catherine Adamson', the Dunbar shipwreck being one of the worst maritime disasters in Australia's history, claiming the lives of all but one of its 122 passengers on 20 August 1857. The lighthouse is connected to this significant event which precipitated substantial evolutions in sea safety and development to assist navigation of Sydney Harbour, and was integral to Australia's maritime, social and economic history. |  |  |            |
| Criteria b) The Hornby Lighthouse has a level of associative significance as a work of Colonial Architect Alexander Dawson, part of a collection of significant buildings designed under the tenure of Dawson including, the Sydney Observatory, Water Police Court, the Old Registry Wing of the NSW Supreme Court, Albury Courthouse, Port Stephens Lighthouse, Nobbys Head Lighthouse and Cape St George Lighthouse.<br><br>The Lighthouse is also associated with Admiral Sir Phipps Hornby, a Royal Naval Officer and Commander in Chief of the British Pacific Fleet in the 1860s, for who the lighthouse is named after.   |  |  |            |
| Criteria c) The dramatic setting of the complex on the extreme southern headland and at the entry to Port Jackson holds a strongly evocative landmark quality visible from a number of vantage points around the Harbour and to those passing through the Heads or on the journey between the City and Manly.   |  |  |            |
| Criteria d) The Lighthouse is part of complex now considered as an important feature in the Sydney Harbour National Park and forms the focal point of the headland appreciated by many local, national and international visitors on land and also from the Harbour and other headlands. The site is significant to a number of groups including the Aboriginal community, former lighthouse keepers and military personnel who have a close association with the complex.  |  |  |            |
| Criteria e) Of significance for its demonstration of mid-19th century navigation technology and design. (Anglin 1990:3006)  |  |  |            |
| Criteria f)   |  |  |            |
| Criteria g) Representative of the collection of lighthouse towers and lighthouses that together comprise the main navigational lights that allow the safe operation of international and local shipping in Sydney Harbour.  |  |  |            |
| Integrity / Intactness:   |  |  |            |
| References:   | Author:                                  | Title:   | Year:      |
|   | New South Wales Government               | 'Light, Pilot and Navigation Board of New South Wales', New South Wales Government Gazette, issue 105, page 1460 | 24/07/1857 |
|   | Light, Pilot and Navigation Board of NSW | 'Parliamentary Papers: Additional Lighthouse for Port Jackson', Sydney Morning Herald, page 3                    | 29/10/1857 |
|   | Light, Pilot and Navigation Board of NSW | Sydney Morning Herald, page 4  | 23/11/1857 |

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|          | Steam Navigation and Pilot Board Office  | 'New Light House on the Inner South Head, at the Entrance of Port Jackson', New South Wales Government Gazette, issue 63, page 761 | 8/05/1858        |               |
|          | Unknown  | 'The Lighthouse on the South Reef', Sydney Morning Herald, page 5  | 7/05/1858        |               |
|          | Unknown  | 'New Public Works', The Daily Telegraph, page 3  | 25/04/1899       |               |
|          | Unknown  | The Australian Star, page 7  | 21/05/1902       |               |
|          | Unknown  | 'The Hornby Lighthouse', Sydney Morning Herald, page 8   | 24/08/1905       |               |
|          | Sheedy, D  | National Trust NSW Classification Hornby Lighthouse Complex  | 1975             |               |
|          | Bayldon, F J   | Pilotage Service of Port Jackson Royal Australian Historical Society Journal Vol 20  | 1934             |               |
|          | Hoey, J  | 'The Hornby Light-Inner South Head', Port of Sydney Journal Vol 2  | 1950             |               |
|          | Maritime Services Board  | Sailing Directions NSW   | 1983             |               |
|          | Thorp, Wendy   | Archival Report: Hornby Lighthouse and Associated Structures South Head, Sydney  | 1983             |               |
|          | Joy Singh Heritage Pty Ltd   | Hornby Lighthouse Conservation Technical Specification `   | June 2022        |               |
| Studies: | Author:  | Title:   | Number:          | Year:         |
|          | Trueman Ludlow Pty Ltd:<br>Howard Tanner and Associates: Prof Ian Jack; W Ashton | Woollahra Heritage Study   |                  | 1984          |
|          | Heritage Group, Dept of Public Works   | NSW Marine Ministerial Holding Corporation, Heritage and Conservation Register   | 4920039          | 1998          |
|          | Graham Brookes and Associates Pty Ltd  | NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, NPWS Lighthouses, Conservation Management and Cultural Tourism Plan                       |                  | November 2001 |
|          | Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy Heritage Consultants                                       | Sydney Ports Corporation Heritage and Conservation Register  | 4560002          | 2004          |
|          | Heritage Group at the Government Architect's Office                              | Stage 1 Conservation Management Plan: South Head Sydney Harbour National Park  | Report no. 07046 | February 2008 |

|                      |  |  |               |              |                       |
|----------------------|--|--|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
|                      | Cherry Kemp et al., Kemp and Johnson Heritage Consultants                      | Heritage Assessment Report Hornby Lighthouse, Cliff Street, Watsons Bay, Inner South Head  |               | 16/02/2021   |                       |
|                      | Christopher Marks for Public Works Advisory on behalf of Port Authority of NSW | Analysis of Historic Colours, Hornby Lighthouse, Inner South Head, Watson's Bay NSW  |               | October 2021 |                       |
|                      | Nicole Cama and Zach Nix, NBRS   | Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register, Port Authority of New South Wales  | 4560002       | 2/11/2022    |                       |
| Parcels:             | Parcel Code:   | Lot Number: 415  | Section:      | Plan Code:   | Plan Number: DP752011 |
| Latitude: -33.833555 |  | Longitude: 151.281009  |               |              |                       |
| Listings:            | Name:  | Title:   | Number:       | Date:        |                       |
|                      | Heritage Act 1977 (NSW): State Heritage Register                               | South Head Cultural Landscape (including RMP 9-inch 12-ton gun)  | 02071         | 20/01/2023   |                       |
|                      | Heritage Act – S.170 NSW State agency heritage register                        | Hornby Lighthouse  | 4560002       | 1/07/2004    |                       |
|                      | Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014 (Schedule 5 - Part 1)                  | Hornby Lighthouse group comprising: Hornby Lighthouse and interiors; 2 cottages and interiors; gun emplacements and fortifications | 462           |              |                       |
|                      | Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 2014 (Schedule 5 - Part 2)                  | Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Area   | C14           |              |                       |
|                      | National Parks and Wildlife Register   |  |               | 16/01/1998   |                       |
|                      | Heritage Study   |  | WB 07         | 1/05/1984    |                       |
|                      | National Trust of Australia Register   |  |               | 5/04/1976    |                       |
|                      | Within a National Trust conservation area                                      | Sydney Harbour Landscape Conservation Area   |               | 5/04/1976    |                       |
|                      | Register of the National Estate  |  | 002517        |              |                       |
| Data Entry:          | Date First Entered: 19/06/2004   | Date Updated: 20/12/2022   | Status: Basic |              |                       |

Image: 1



Caption: Hornby Lighthouse

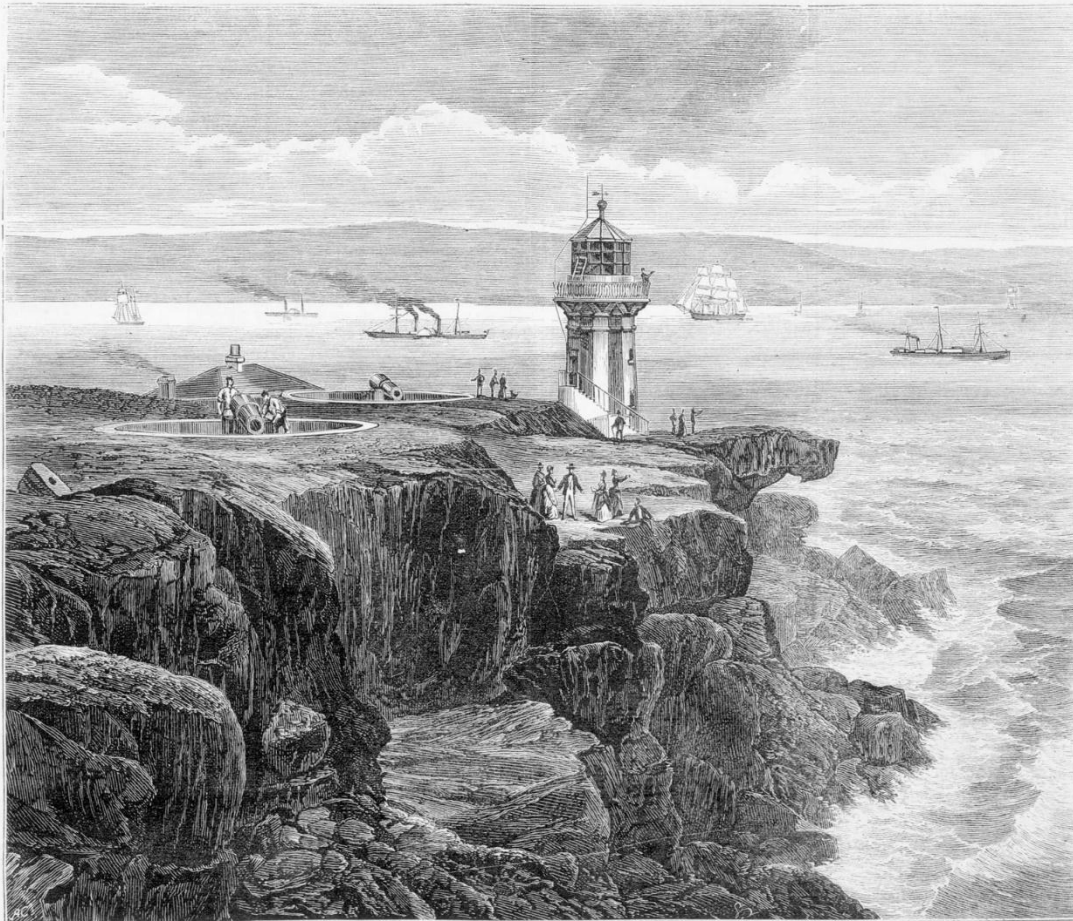
Copyright: Port Authority of New South Wales

Image By: Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy Heritage Consultants

Image Date:

Image File: 4560002b1.jpg

Image: 2



THE INNER LIGHTHOUSE, SOUTH HEAD, PORT JACKSON.

Caption: The Inner Lighthouse, South Head [Hornby Lighthouse]

Copyright: Copyright expired, published in the Illustrated Australian News, 9 August 1875 (Melbourne, VIC: Ebenezer and David Syme), courtesy of State Library of Victoria, IAN09/08/75/117

Image By: Samuel Calvert, engraver, Albert Charles Cooke, artist

Image Date: 1875

Image File: 4560002b2.jpg

Image: 3



Caption: Postcard of Hornby Lighthouse

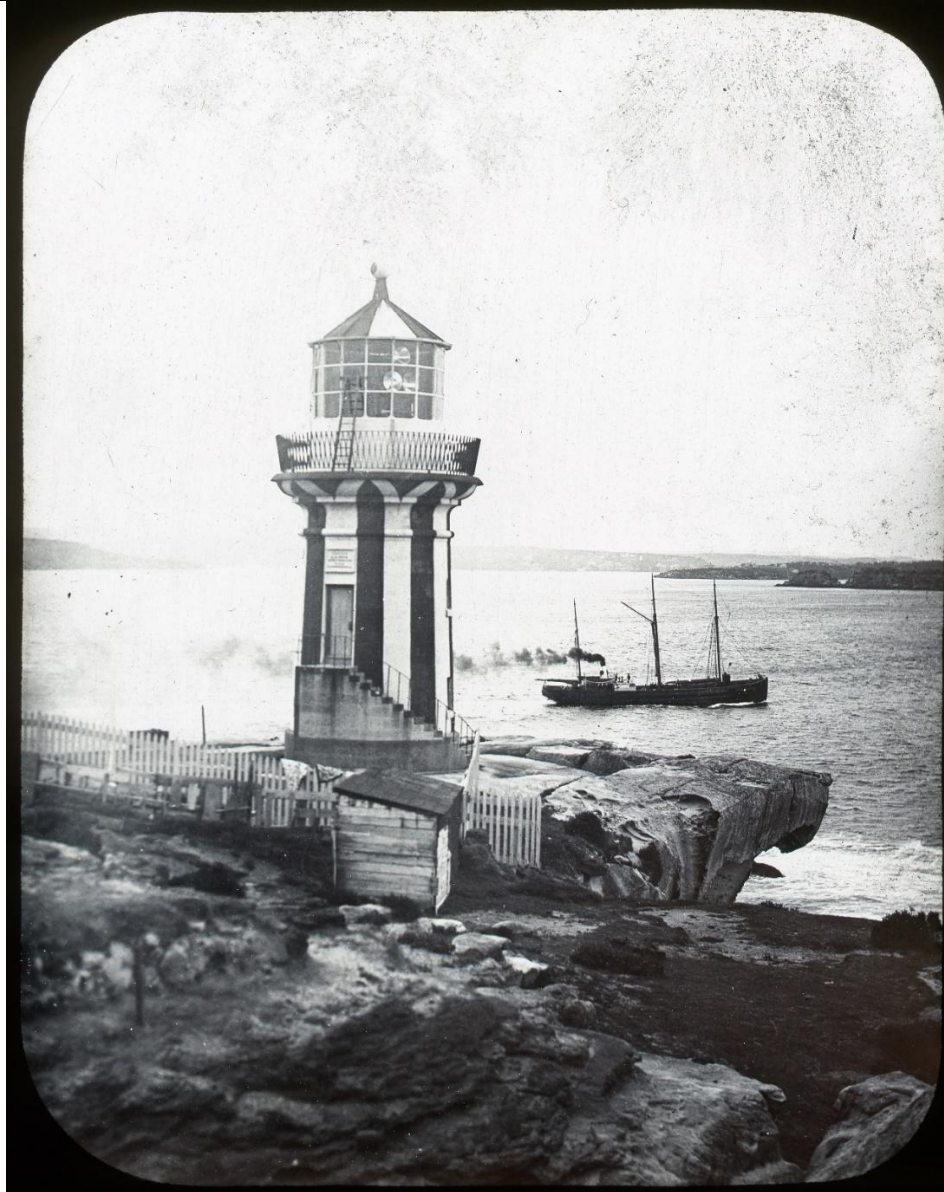
Copyright: Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY), Graeme Andrews Working Harbour Photograph Collection, courtesy of City of Sydney Archives, A-00079036

Image By: Unknown

Image Date: Undated

Image File: 4560002b3.jpg

Image: 4



Caption: Lantern slide depicting Hornby Lighthouse and the ship 'Lass O Gowrie'

Copyright: Copyright expired, courtesy of City of Sydney Archives, A-00034465

Image By: W Harwood

Image Date: 1880s

Image File: 4560002b4.jpg

Image: 5



Caption: Hornby Lighthouse

Copyright: Copyright expired, courtesy of Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, 85/1284-2292

Image By: Kerry and Company, Sydney

Image Date: 1884-1900s

Image File: 4560002b5.jpg