

## 1842 South Manitou Lighthouse Inspection<sup>1</sup>

Arriving at the island to conduct his annual inspection of Lights in 1842, District Inspector Duane Wilson reported that he found the light was ...

*"... seriously obstructed and its usefulness very much impaired by the trees surrounding it in certain directions."*

After a number of complaints were lodged by mariners complaining of the inconsistent manner in which Burton maintained this important aid to navigation, Stephen Pleasonton<sup>2</sup> took action, and penned a letter to Abraham Wendell, the Mackinac Collector of Customs on July 20, 1842, admonishing him to ...

*"... inform the Keeper if he does not keep a better light, he will have to give place to some person who will. If it should be caused by want of ventilation in the lantern, you will apply the proper remedy. Two of the lamps here throw their light upon the shore, and of course are useless. You will direct the keeper to discontinue them. This keeper it seems lives a mile from the Lighthouse and does his duty by deputy. You will direct him to remove into the keeper's house and execute the duties himself, in default of which he will be removed without hesitation. It is alleged that this light is obscured in one direction by trees that may be removed at an expense of about twenty dollars. You will cause the trees to be removed if you shall find the expense will not exceed twenty or thirty dollars."*

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from "Seeing the Light", Terry Pepper [www.terrypepper.com](http://www.terrypepper.com)

<sup>2</sup> "General Superintendent of Lights" – U.S. Lighthouse Establishment