Guide to the Ida Lewis papers, 1893, 1936

Collection overview:

Title: Ida Lewis papers
Date range (inclusive dates): 1893, 1936
Creator: Lewis, Ida, 1842-1911
Extent: 0.01 linear feet (1 folder)
Abstract: This collection consists of one letter from Ida Lewis (1842-1911), notable lighthouse keeper of Newport, Rhode Island, to Miss Elen F. Finlay. A newspaper clipping regarding Lewis is also included.
Language of materials: English
Repository: Redwood Library & Athenaeum, Newport, Rhode Island
Collection number: RLC.Ms.522

Access and use:

Access to the collection: Access is open to members and researchers at the Redwood Library and Athenaeum.
Use of the materials: This collection is owned by the Redwood Library and Athenaeum. Permission to publish materials must be obtained in writing from the Special Collections Librarian of the Redwood Library and Athenaeum.
Preferred citation: Ida Lewis papers, RLC.Ms.522, Redwood Library and Athenaeum.

Administrative information:

About the collection
Acquisition: Gift of Miss Elen F. Finlay.
Processing information: This collection was initially processed by Aimee Saunders in 2010.

About the finding aid
Author and Encoding: Elizabeth Delmage, 2013 September
Descriptive rules: Finding aid based on Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS)

Additional information:

Sponsor: Funding for processing and cataloging this collection was provided by the van Beuren Charitable Foundation.

Biographical note:

Idawalley Zoradia Lewis (1842-1911), better known as Ida Lewis, was the second child born to Captain Hosea (1804-1872) and Idawalley Zoradia (Willey) Lewis (d. 1879) on February 25, 1842, in Newport, Rhode Island. Captain Lewis was appointed the first keeper of the Lime Rock Lighthouse in the Newport harbor in 1854, but after he was disabled by a stroke in 1857, Ida and her mother took over the lighthouse keeper duties until his death in 1872. Ida's mother was then named lighthouse keeper and remained in the position until her death in 1879, even though Ida continued to do the majority of the work. On January 21, 1879, Ida was officially appointed to the job by the United States Coast Guard. Ida proudly served in this position until her own death in 1911 during which time she was credited with saving eighteen lives, receiving numerous accolade and medals. Ida Lewis died on October 25, 1911, after keeping vigil at the Lime Rock Lighthouse for over fifty years.

In 1924, the Lime Rock Lighthouse was renamed the Ida Lewis Lighthouse and was in active service until 1927. The lighthouse is now the home of the Ida Lewis Yacht Club.

Scope and content note:

This collection consists of a letter from Ida Lewis to Miss Elen F. Finlay on April 1, 1893, in which Lewis answers Finlay's questions about her job as lighthouse keeper. Also included is a newspaper clipping from the St. Petersburg Times on January 8, 1936, regarding Ida Lewis and her career.

Arrangement:

This collection is arranged in chronological order.

Inventory:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manuscripts Box 1</td>
<td>Letter to Miss Elen F. Finlay</td>
<td>1893 Apr 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newspaper clipping</td>
<td>1936 Jan 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Access terms:

Names:
- Finlay, Elen F., fl. 1893-1936

Subjects:
- Women lighthouse keepers--Rhode Island--Newport
- Newport (R.I.)--History

Genre terms:
- Clippings (information artifacts)
- Letters (correspondence)