

Keepers to the Rescue!

Keepers not only spotted shipwrecks off the Cape but were often called on to take a more active role in helping survivors once they made it to shore. Keeper Clinton Honeywell is a good example and was repeatedly recognized by the Lighthouse Service for his efforts.

- In 1913, he brought six survivors of the yacht *Huntress* to the Lighthouse and was awarded the Lifesaving Medal by the Treasury Department.
- Around 1918, he rendered assistance and shelter for the captain and 17 crewmembers of the steamship *Albert Soper* and their cat.
- In 1920, he assisted in beaching a disabled hydroplane and supplied food and shelter to the two occupants.
- On October 22, 1923, he notified the Coast Guard that the Steamship *Mascotte* was sinking, resulting in the rescue of the entire crew.

Although Keepers throughout the years helped shipwreck survivors whenever they could, Lighthouses were few and far between. Sailors may survive the sinking of their ship, but most could not survive the harsh Florida wilderness without help. To care for survivors and help them get back home, 10 Houses of Refuge were constructed along the east coast of Florida between lighthouses from 1876 to 1886. The Chester Shoals House of Refuge was built in 1886 with Orlando Quarterman appointed Keeper. Quarterman served as its only Keeper until it was converted to a Coast Guard Station in 1915. The Refuge ruins are just north of here, beyond Launch Complex 39A on Kennedy Space Center.

Close relationships often existed between the Lighthouse Keepers and the House of Refuge Keepers. Orlando Quarterman was the brother of George Quarterman – Keeper of the Cape Canaveral Lighthouse (1876-1887). Both brothers also married daughters of Lighthouse Keeper Mills Burnham.

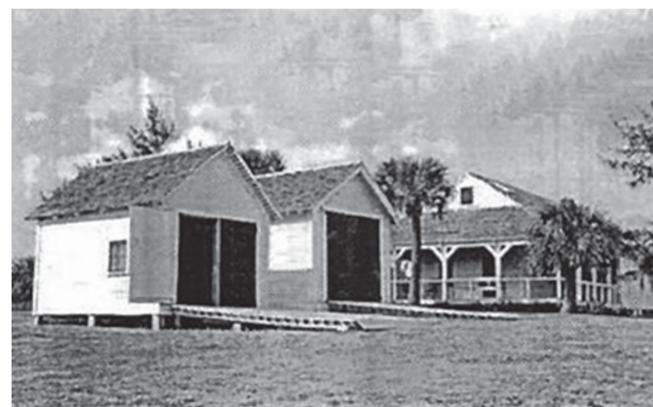
Sometimes other surprising relationships developed. During a hurricane in the late 1880s, a ship captained by Axel Johansen was wrecked offshore near Chester Shoals. After 5 days adrift on a wooden hatch cover, he washed ashore and was found by Orlando Quarterman's two young daughters. He was nursed back to health and briefly continued his maritime career, but he never forgot his experience in Florida. He made his way back to the Chester Shoals House of Refuge, fell in love with Kathleen Quarterman, and married her on June 6, 1898. They became the Keepers at the Gilbert's Bar House of Refuge (near Stuart, Florida).



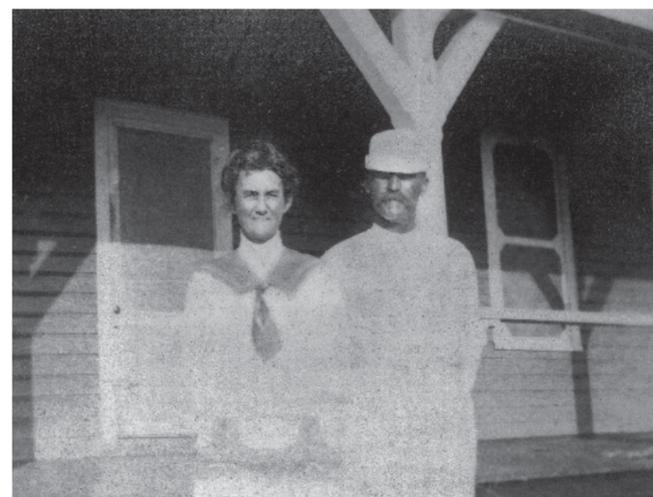
Clinton Honeywell



Captain Pappas & crew of the *Albert Soper*



Chester Shoals House of Refuge



Axel and Kathleen Johansen