



Lighthouses: Their Architecture, History and Archaeology

By Douglas B. Hague and
Rosemary Christie
Gomer Press, Wales 1975

Serendipity provided this book for us. We had written to Mr. Hague requesting permission to use one of its many fine diagrams as part of our curriculum kit. In the course of our correspondence we learned no one had "done much with this book in the states." We thought it a loss that no one had, and asked the publisher if we might carry the book. Not only could we, but the accommodating publisher even shipped the books early. Now we have it available for your library.

LIGHTHOUSES: . . . is a labor of love over a twelve year period. The book's ultimate concerns are the lighthouses of the British Isles, but the authors range carefully back through history to trace the development of lighthouses from the Bronze Age to 1975. Mr. Hague had been an investigator of the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments since 1948, later specializing in Industrial Archeology. He was joined by Mrs. Christie on the lighthouse project; she began with surveys and research, and eventually became the co-author.

Meticulously researched and compiled with an archeologist's precise measurement and analysis, this book is carefully assembled with exquisite use of footnotes, appendices, a thorough index and a thirty-eight page bibliography; it is a scholar's delight. Documentation abounds: citations, diagrams of the Classical world, pre- and post- 1792 lighthouse locations of Great Britain, structure drawings, artifact and technical diagrams, photographs, building specification documents, brief biographies of lighthouse builders, and abundant Trinity House material.

Facts and physical evidence are carefully presented in the chapters' organization: History, British Lighthouse Administration, General Design and Construction, Rock Towers, Illumination and Fog Signals, Light-Vessels and Floating aids, Unlit Beacons, Daymarks or Seamarks, and the aforementioned biographies and appendices. The writers' attitude, reasoning and writing style are wonderfully conveyed by the following two sentences, one from a section on 'Ecclesiastical Lights' (pg. 14)—"Many varied branches of the medieval church have been closely associated with the display of early lights for which some documentary evidence can be found supported by a substantial body of tradition which it would be both churlish and unwise to disregard." And from 'The Identifying Characteristics of Lights' (pg. 175)—"Whilst lofty cliffs can be faintly discernible in all but the blackest night and the terrifying sound of surf is reflected far out to sea, the isolated rock or reef rising silently out of deep water emits no message, and has been the cause of wrecks in all weather conditions."

If you are planning a trip to the British Isles, and have a penchant for learning how the lighthouses there came to be and what used to be, this book is for you. Hardcover, 307 pages, 29 page-size diagrams and black and white photographs, 47 in-text figures, and that jewel of a bibliography, \$29.95 + S&H.



Foreign Affairs

Keeper Bob Wilcox, Sonoma, CA sends this:

Keepers vacationing in Newfoundland will be welcomed by Tom Ryan, keeper for the past 23 years of the Point Race Light Station. Allow six hours for the round trip drive from St. John's and be prepared for a 27 mile round trip on gravel road from the settlement of Portugal Cove. Identify yourself as a U.S. Lighthouse Society member and Tom will take you into the harbor and up the 127 feet to view the 1st Order Fresnel lens. Although no longer in use, the lens and its brass clockworks is maintained in pristine condition by Tom. It was Point Race that became famous by receiving wireless information from the TITANIC the night she sank in 1912. Tom can show you the remains of the foundation of that Canadian Marconi Wireless Station.

Happisburgh Lighthouse Saved

Norfolk, England

A friendly Battle Royal recently concluded in England over the preservation of the lighthouse at Happisburgh. In 1988 when local citizens were thinking of a means to celebrate the bicentennial of the lighthouse they learned that Trinity House has declared it no longer needed and announced plans to raze the structure. The locals moaned and groaned and contacted the officials who stated there was nothing to be done, the