

MARTIN REEF — LIGHTSHIP TO LIGHTHOUSE

By John J. Sellman
Reviewed by Wayne Wheeler

We recently came across a charming little book about the construction of the Martin Reef Lighthouse in Northern Lake Huron. Author John J. Sellman's father, John, was the general foreman of the project to construct the Martin Reef Lighthouse which was finished in 1927. His father was also involved with the construction of the Poe Reef (1929) and Fourteen Foot Shoal (1930) Lighthouses. All three were crib style structures and all are located at the northern end of Lake Huron.

The primary emphasis of the book is on the construction of the Martin Reef Lighthouse, but a few pages at the back of the book provide information and photos about the construction of the Poe Reef and Fourteen Foot Shoal structures.

One of the biggest assets of the book are the photographs which were taken at various stages of the construction by John father. The story of the construction of the lighthouse stems mostly from John's memory as a ten year old who accompanied his father on the project. He has also researched the project for certain details.

The 71 page book is a quick read which clearly illustrates the construction of a crib style lighthouse. The photos not only show the various stages of construction, but workmen, Lighthouse Service vessels and, occasionally, a ten year old boy 'supervising'

the men. It's a charming snapshot of a construction project in the 1920's in a remote part of America.

Soft Cover — 5 1/2 by 8 1/2, 71 pages, 64 black and white photographs and a few drawings. The book may be obtained by writing the Les Cheneaux Historical Association, P.O. Box 301, Cedarville, MI 49719. The cost is \$7.50 plus \$2.50 S & H.

BIRDIE'S LIGHTHOUSE

By Deborah Hopkinson
Reviewed by Lisa M. Truesdale

Moving to a windy, desolate island and leaving your beloved cat behind would be difficult for any ten year old.

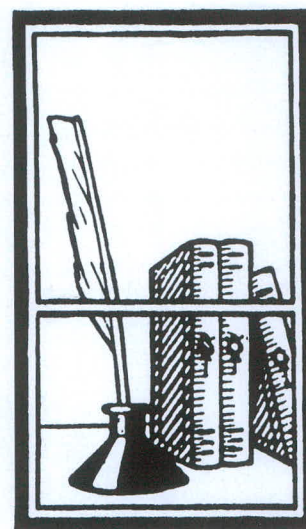
Little Bertha Holland, affectionately known as "Birdie," has one small comfort, a new diary in which she chronicles one year of her life as a lighthouse keeper's daughter.

Told through the diary entries, this novel details Birdie's lonely life on Turtle Island and how she faithfully and expertly tended the light when her father was ill for a few weeks. It explains much about lighthouse life, including how the fourteen lamps at this particular light had to be refilled with whale oil each day, how the family had to depend on the supply boat to bring their food, and how the sea "sometimes roars so loud it drowns our voices." Adding an authentic touch is the 1850's language, like "Mama gave me an extra dollop of syrup on my fritters."

I think children will appreciate the "Author's Note" at the end, which gives a short history of a few famous women keepers like Ida Lewis and Abbie Burgess, because it relates to the fictional story to the real-life people.

Although this is a heartwarming book that I'm sure children will enjoy, I wanted more. There is often a month or more between diary entries, and I found myself wondering why Birdie didn't have more time to write in her diary. Kimberly Buicken Root's pen-and-ink and watercolor illustrations beautifully compensate for the lack of diary entries, however.

Hardcover, 32 pages. Available from the Keeper's Locker for \$15.00 plus \$4.00 S & H.



NANTUCKET LIGHTS: AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE ISLAND'S LEGENDARY BEACONS

By Karen T. Butler
Reviewed by Lisa M. Truesdale

When I first saw this oversized, hardcover book with thick, glossy pages, my first thought was that it must be another beautiful coffee table book about lighthouses.

Karen T. Butler writes in her acknowledgments that "...if they could speak, each of Nantucket's beacons would tell a unique and wonderful story." Luckily, Butler is able to speak for them, with lively, engaging writing that takes the reader on a historical journey to the three lighthouses and one lightship. She also weaves in lots of interesting details about the island itself.

Also included are over 100 black-and-white and color photos, many of them taken by the author herself, plus engravings, line drawings, and maps. I especially enjoyed the poems, quotations, and log excerpts, which accompany the text beautifully by adding a personal touch to all the facts.

Butler's many summers spent on Nantucket did not go to waste — her commitment to solid research and her love for the island show through in this wonderful volume that will be a welcome addition to any lighthouse lover's coffee table.

Hardcover, 134 pages. Over 100 photos and illustrations. Available from the Keeper's Locker for \$44.95 plus \$4.00 S & H.