



The World's Lighthouses: From Ancient Times to 1820 (Dover Maritime)

D. Alan Stevenson

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In use since the dawn of recorded history for the guidance of ships at sea, lighthouses have long been a source of inspiration and fascination. Indeed, a lighthouse ranked among the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Lighthouse lovers will welcome this new edition of a classic volume — a superb, profusely illustrated survey of lighthouses from earliest times to 1820. Noted authority D. Alan Stevenson — a relative of Robert Louis Stevenson and member of a clan of lighthouse engineers — drew upon records from the family firm and old books now inaccessible to most readers to write this highly readable, extensively researched account.

Chronicling both the construction of the towers as well as the methods of illumination, the text traces developments from the open fires of thousands of years ago. The introduction of candles and oil lamps, followed by parabolic reflectors and the world's first revolving light in 1871, culminates in the 1819 construction of Bell Rock Tower, the last of the great isolated lighthouses built before steam vessels were available to transport building materials. In addition to a wealth of technical data, the text is enhanced by more than 200 rare illustrations and designs. Depictions include such seamarks as a Venetian oil navigation light (c. 1400), the Pharos of Ostia (c. 1575), the Messina lighthouse (1674), the Dungeness lighthouse (c. 1690), and Australia's Macquarie lighthouse (1817).

Maritime historians, lighthouse enthusiasts, and anyone who has ever felt the romantic lure of these lonely sentinels by the sea will prize this remarkable work.

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