



Light in the Darkness: A History of Lightships and the People Who Served on Them

Liam Clarke

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This book examines the origins of the Lightship Service, the obstacles and prejudices that faced originators of the idea and the subsequent development of the vessels and working practices over the years.

Throughout the centuries, this dangerous occupation has claimed the lives of a number of Lightship crews and those who tried to save them. The lives and working conditions of the brave men, who for over 260 years put their lives at risk guiding ships safely to their destinations, has been almost forgotten.

Who were these brave men? Why did they do this vital work? Where did they live and what was the effect upon local communities when these tragedies occurred? Dr Liam Clarke answers these questions with a discussion of local Lightship disasters including interviews with some of those who once served.

The author, born into a family with a long history of Lightship Service, has a deep understanding of the dangerous working conditions and the pressures that this lifestyle had on the men and their families. He uses this to portray a lonely and hazardous life which few now remember, and to illustrate the effects on the men and their families left at home, which has rarely been written about.

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