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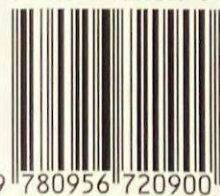
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The world's oldest continuously operational rock lighthouse sits on the Bell Rock eleven miles off Arbroath on the east coast of Scotland. Its bicentenary is marked by this volume. In addition to providing biographies of the eight members of the Stevenson family who, over five generations from 1786 to 1952, contributed significantly to the nation's infrastructure and international lighthouse engineering, the book also sheds new light on the design and erection of the lighthouse and the work of its engineers.

From little-known contemporary sources Professor Roland Paxton provides an authoritative account that clarifies the key roles of the eminent John Rennie and the relatively inexperienced Robert Stevenson. His painstaking investigation reveals that this sustainable marvel of lighthouse engineering was essentially a masterpiece of joint achievement by Rennie and Stevenson in the best tradition of the chief engineer/resident engineer relationship, finally laying to rest the well-known and often bitter nineteenth-century dispute between their respective families.

The final part of the book is a reminder that the Stevenson inheritance lives on, with an up-to-date list of lighthouses the family were responsible for in Scotland and the Isle of Man. Although now unmanned, virtually all of these are still operating from their 18th, 19th and 20th century structures, with 21st century technologies ensuring that the lights still shine.

ISBN 978-0-9567209-0-0



9 780956 720900

£20



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