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THE BOOK OF KESSINGLAND

THE MOST EASTERLY VILLAGE IN ENGLAND

REPRINT

Maureen and Eric Long

This large Suffolk village, the most easterly in England, has a long and varied history. Stone Age implements have been dug up here, from the days when the area was part of mainland Europe. Kessingland was once a large and vibrant port that paid annual taxes of 22,000 herrings to the Crown. There was a thriving harbour and the village prospered in medieval times, but was decimated by the Black Death. It gradually sank into obscurity when tides and storms caused the harbour to silt up, preventing large vessels from trading.

Fishing became a family affair in small boats launched from the beach until Lowestoft Harbour was built and the herring bonanza began, making the village the richest in the land. By the mid-1900s both fishing and farming were in decline, but the growing tourist trade made Kessingland a popular resort with three holiday camps, a heritage coast and important wildlife. Eminent writer Sir Henry Rider Haggard had a second home here.

With an influx of residents from London, Essex and Hertfordshire, there is now a mix of longstanding village families and those who have retired to the area. Kessingland's rich history has caused it to diversify and adapt to each situation, rising to new challenges with the help of its enduring community spirit.

Editors and compilers **Maureen and Eric Long** ran a business in Kessingland for over 30 years. Maureen has written a variety of short stories, poems, articles and books, including a series on Suffolk village signs and other local interest publications. She also runs the village magazine. Maureen is a member of the Association of Christian Writers, the Village Sign Society and the Maritime and Art Society of Kessingland (MASK), for whom she and Eric supervise a shop as a tourist outlet and village heritage point. They enjoy ten grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, are church leaders and Maureen is a LIFE counsellor.

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