

# LIGHTHOUSES OF THE EAST COAST – EAST ANGLIA AND LINCOLNSHIRE

Robin Jones

England's East Coast can be one of great beauty, yet in certain moods it can be treacherous and malign. Shoals and sandbanks along this coast made it dangerous for ships plying their trade both from the north east to London and across to the continent. Consequently, many innovative developments in the history of lighthouses were made here.

Find out about the lighthouse that changed Sir Peter Scott from a fowler into one of the world's leading conservationists, the lightship that was machine gunned by the Luftwaffe during World War Two, the lighthouse that became legendary amongst UFO watchers, the only lighthouse on this coast from where you can see the sunset over the sea, and the curious landlocked inland lighthouse linked to eighteenth-century sex orgies.

Everything from the medieval ecclesiastical lights illuminated in chapel windows to the state-of-the-art Trinity House head-quarters at Harwich, which today runs England's lighthouses by remote control is covered.

From Trent Falls on the Humber to the Thames Estuary and London's East End, this is a definitive guide to the lighthouses and primary lightships of the coast of Lincolnshire and East Anglia and the amazing stories behind them.

Heavily illustrated, it is a fascinating guide which can be enjoyed on the ground – or in the comfort of the armchair!



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robin Jones graduated in English from Birmingham City University and is a former news editor at the *Birmingham Evening Mail* who established *Heritage Railway* magazine in 1999.

A resident of Baston in Lincolnshire, he spends much of his time exploring and photographing the coast with his wife Jenny.

His previous books for Halsgrove include *Lighthouses of the South West*, *Shakespeare's Warwickshire*, *Steam's New Dawn*, *Spirit of Padstow* and *Britain's Bizarre Railways*.

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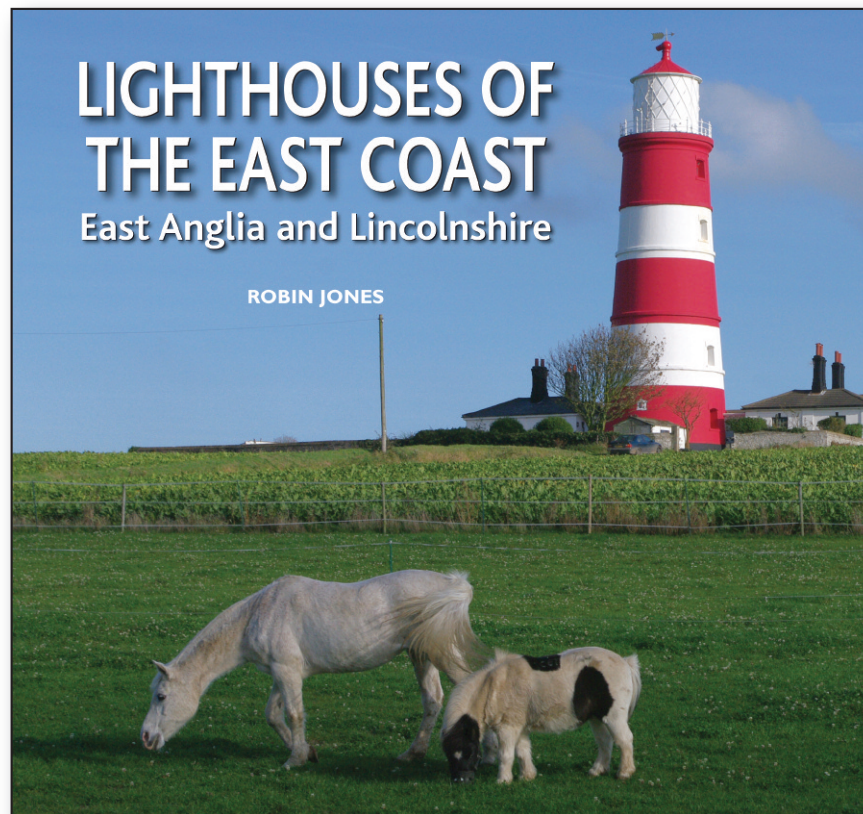
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# LIGHTHOUSES OF THE EAST COAST

## East Anglia and Lincolnshire

ROBIN JONES



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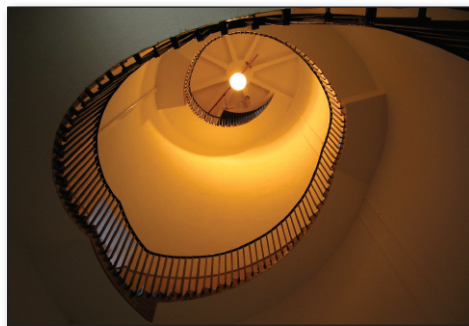
# LIGHTHOUSES OF THE EAST COAST EAST ANGLIA AND LINCOLNSHIRE



The stripy bands of the Happisburgh High Light date from 1883. ROBIN JONES



Radio Sunshine – the pirate ship of the film The Boat That Rocked back home in Harwich. MARIA FOWLER



The 113-step spiral staircase of Southwold lighthouse. ELJAY\*



Orford Ness lighthouse as seen from the air – or from an alien spacecraft? TRINITY HOUSE

Dovercourt's High lighthouse high and dry on the sands. DAVID WHITTLE



**CHAPTER SEVEN  
THE NENE TWINS**

THE PAIR OF LIGHTHOUSES which stand sentinel near the entrance to the River Nene north of Sutton Bridge date from 1827. They were built to compensate the draining of the Great Fens and the mouth of the River Nene following its diversion as part of the land reclamation project.

*The East Beach lighthouse, which one sees from water, sits on the middle of tidal salt marsh, mostly grass.*

In 1827, an Act of Parliament was passed allowing a new channel to be cut and land to be reclaimed on this part of the Lincolnshire fens, an area in the district where had King John lost his crown; baggage trains to the epicentre a few days before his death. Ten years later, another Act permitted the erection of two lighthouses, or beacons, at the seaward end of the new cut, to guide shipping in the ports of Sutton Bridge and Wisbech.

The pair were necessary because the cut entered deep water at a point where the Nene narrows was three miles wide, at the southern end of The Wash. It was feared the ships would easily miss the entrance to the river, even in daylight.

The architect of the lighthouses, which are similar in shape to small windmills, was John Rennie the Younger, the son of a canal and dock builder John Rennie.

The younger Rennie's first major job was overseeing the laying of the foundations of Wainston Bridge in 1813. Two years later he helped his father build Southwold Bridge, and then, along with Philip Richards, designed the Royal William Victualling Yard in Plymouth.

His greatest achievement, however, was the building of London Bridge, for which his father who died in 1821 had drawn plans.

The bridge was opened in 1831, after which he was knighted.

In Lincolnshire, he was responsible for the New River Act which drainage scheme in the north of the county, and with Thomas Bland, the Nene outfall at Wisbech, which was completed in 1851, a year after the East and West lighthouses.

He became president of the Institution of Civil Engineers on 25 June 1844.

The lighthouses were merely daymarks, because although they look the pair, they did not have lights. When built, the western lighthouse lay only a short distance from the land, but the eastern lighthouse was at the end of a three-mile embankment running into the middle of

**THE NENE TWINS**

*The West Beach lighthouse in a previous issue.* ROBIN JONES

*The west Nene lighthouse, the East Beach in the distance and the West Beach in the foreground in the distance.* ROBIN JONES

*The River Nene near 7th WA 64000, JONES*

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Example of a double-page spread.