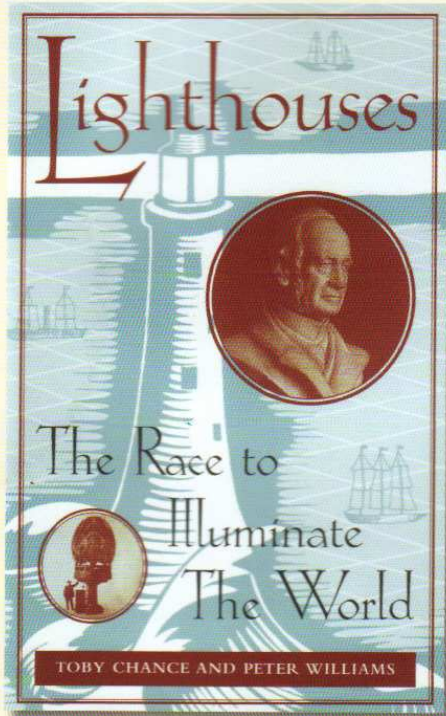


Lighthouses: The Race to Illuminate The World

by Toby Chance and Peter Williams published by New Holland Publishers (UK) Limited, London, 272 pages, hardback, price £17.99. ISBN 978 1 84773 174 6.

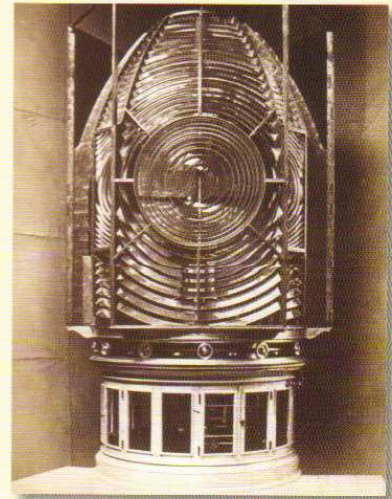


around the globe from the Clipper path to the Far East and to the New World emigrant route.

The story places James Chance and Chance Brothers against the backdrop of a stage on which lighthouse manufacture was transformed from a craft into a scientific high-precision industry. As a tool for globalization and with immense strategic and economic value, lighthouses have helped to establish a network of communications that transformed the trade maps of countries and empires.

There is no doubt that lighthouses fascinate people for the often incredible feats of engineering and building skill involved in their construction, the romance of their association with shipwrecks, disaster and tales of heroism, the loneliness and dedication of lighthouse keepers and the beauty of their locations. The majority of writers and historians have tended to neglect the story providing the very reason for their existence, the need for a high intensity light providing a guide for the mariner, reliability of character and, often, considerable grace.

The Chance family tree is given and is a useful introduction, along with two pages of key characters to the eight chapters on the Chance business. Unforgettable names such as Argand, Dalén, Douglass (Sir James), Fresnel, Pintsch and the Stevensons (Alan, Robert and Thomas).



The First Order, 920mm focal length optic manufactured for Hartland Point Lighthouse and commissioned in 1874.

Fourteen drawings are provided and 16 plates.

Toby Chance is James Chance's great-great-grandson and grandson of Sir Hugh Chance, the last Chairman of the independent Chance Brothers. Today he works in event management and communications and has spent the past three years researching the family history.

Peter Williams is an established writer on lighthouse matters and founded the journal *Leading Lights* for which he serves as a consultant editor. He is Attendant at St Ann's Lighthouse which has a First Order Chance lens constructed in 1868.

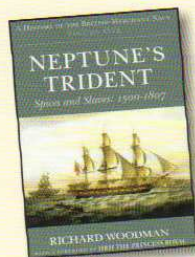
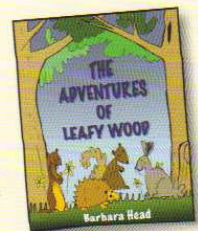
We should all be familiar with the name of Chance Brothers whose great optics have been in our lanterns for generations and whose products have lighted the seaways of the oceans. We have one example of the product, that from Hanoi, mounted for display at the eastern end of the ground floor corridor of Trinity House. The maker's mark 'Chance Brothers of Smethwick, near Birmingham' is unforgettable.

Records show that James Chance, of the glass making firm Chance Brothers, demonstrated a new lens at the Great Exhibition, in the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park in 1851. It was not known at the time but this optical apparatus would revolutionise lighthouse production and propel the family business into the position of world leadership and with a result would save countless lives and have far-reaching consequences for trade, Empire & the map of the world.

Lighthouses is the true-life story of one man and his family's unexpected role in an exciting race to perfect this technology against European rivals and colleagues, as they strive to regain for Britain the leadership in this branch of science the nation had lost to France in the 1820s. With the support of scientists such as Michael Faraday (Scientific Advisor to Trinity House from 1836 to 1866) Chance Brothers' lenses helped light shores

The Adventures of Leafy Wood

Barbara Head, formerly Head Office Receptionist and now enjoying retirement has had her children's book, *The Adventures of Leafy Wood*, published by Athena Press and due to be available on amazon.co.uk and amazon.com at the end of 2008, priced at £5.99. This eagerly sought after, colourful A5 collection of short stories introduces the antics in the course of a year of Simon Squirrel, Harry Hedgehog, Rosie Rabbit and countless other woodland creatures. Apparently it had been well tried out to the satisfaction of her five grandsons.



Neptune's Trident is the first volume of a five volume history of the Merchant Navy written by Captain Richard Woodman, published by The History Press in November, and priced at £30.00 in hardback. Sub-titled *Spices and Slaves: 1500 - 1807*, this is an account of a forgotten aspect of British history and encompasses risk, adventure, heroic action, exploitation and piracy from the Tudors to the passage of an Act for the abolition of slavery. The other four volumes will bring the history up to 2005.