

Stephen Chapin Kinnaman

John Lenthall

The Life of a Naval Constructor

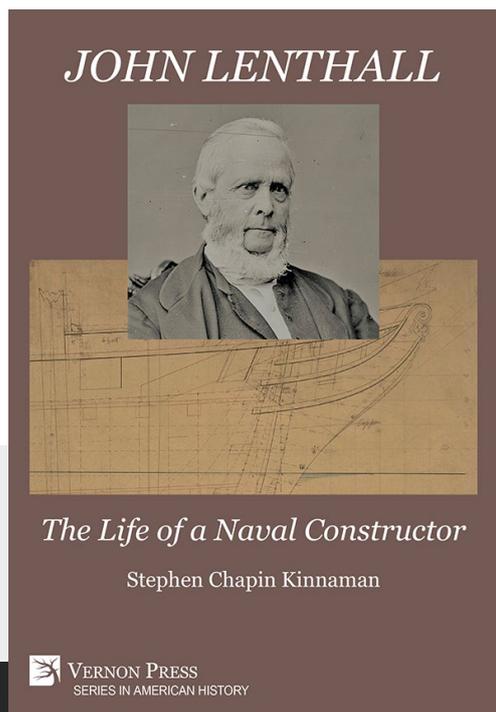
SERIE IN AMERICAN HISTORY

Summary

Stephen Chapin Kinnaman grew up in upstate New York and northern New Jersey. He graduated from the University of Michigan with a B.Sc. in naval architecture and marine engineering and pursued post-graduate research at Cambridge University's Department of Engineering. He is a professional naval architect and has used his understanding of complex technical issues to write the first biography of Constructor John Lenthall. He is the author of another Vernon Press work of American history, 'Merrimack, The Biography of a Steam Frigate'. Stephen Chapin Kinnaman has to his credit numerous public speaking engagements at historical societies, Civil War round tables and the prestigious McMullen Naval History Symposia held at the U.S. Naval Academy. The author and his wife currently reside in Chappell Hill, Texas.

About the author

Many stirring words have been written about the heroic deeds of the officers and men of the U.S. Navy before, during and after the Civil War. But very little has been published about the naval constructors who built the warships that made their exploits possible. Of all of the Navy's constructors from this era, none had more impact than John Lenthall (1807-1882). A native of Washington D.C. and the son of ambitious English parents, young Lenthall's stellar rise through the ranks of naval constructors soon led to his appointment as the chief of the Bureau of Construction, Equipment and Repairs. Now the U.S. government's highest-ranking naval architect, John Lenthall was in charge of designing and constructing the nation's warships. The magnificent Merrimack class steam frigates were one of his first achievements. His stance early in the Civil War on ironclads and coolness toward John Ericsson have been consistently misunderstood—Lenthall accepted the Navy's need for armored warships but objected to a fleet of only brown water-capable monitors. When he retired in 1871, he had been bureau chief for over seventeen years and responsible for the building of nearly all the Navy's ships during an era of unprecedented technological evolution. 'John Lenthall: The Life of a Naval Constructor' is thoroughly documented with previously untapped primary archival source material from Philadelphia's Independence Seaport Museum and the Franklin Institute, and the U.S. Naval Academy Museum. 'John Lenthall' is written by a historian and naval architect who can clearly explain the nuances of ship design. The author's treatment of Lenthall and the legacy of his fellow constructors brings to life a previously untold chronicle of American ingenuity and achievement.



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