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William N Still

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William N Still : Confederate shipbuilding before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Confederate shipbuilding:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Short, brief, and very narrowly focusedBy N. WallachThe Confederate States of America adopted a defensive strategic posture during the American Civil War because they only needed to make the cost of the war too high for the North to win. Part of that strategy called for the creation of a Navy to help in hindering Federal commerce (increase the cost to the North) and also allow commerce to proceed with the South - despite the Federal blockade of all Southern ports. Since the South did not have a Navy, it launched an effort to create one and build ships and this book looks at what took place and why the South never really got an organized Navy despite its efforts in that direction.This slim volume of just 80 pages long is divided into five chapters and looks into the causes of the failure of the South to build enough ships to become a factor in the war. The summary of the book is "... the facilities that were developed were handicapped by shortages of labor and deficiencies in certain materials, by inadequate transportation, and by the intense competition for the limited industrial facilities, workmen, and materials." In other words, the South did not have much to work with and consequently failed in its mission to create a Navy to affect the outcome of the war.Each chapter takes a look at one of the factors. Starting with what the Confederacy wanted to accomplish and how it set up to do so is the focus of the first chapter. The next three look at the facilities, materials, and labor that were available to the South and discusses what problems the Confederacy had with each. As you read each chapter, the magnitude of the problems become clear and therefore the last chapter offers conclusions that the reader probably already reached - the whole effort was probably doomed form the beginning.My two complaints about this book are the very narrow scope that it has and the high price being charged for such a small

volume. Perhaps the very narrow scope explains the very short length of it, but I would have thought that additional anecdotes and stories from the research that the author undoubtedly conducted would have been presented and would have made the book more "alive" and readable. And to charge \$25 for it seems unseemly. As it is, it is somewhat dry. For these two reasons, I decided to give this book a four star rating. For those of us who are interested in American Civil War history and curious as to why and how the Confederate Navy did what it did, and did NOT do other things, this book provides a brief introduction to this topic. 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Old world delight
By Allen Marino
I found this book a very good reference for the techniques used by the craftsmen of the times. It shows one of the largest factors in building their ships was the limit of raw materials.

This work covers the real grounds for the Confederacy's failure to build a successful navy. The South's major problems with shipbuilding concerned facilities, materials, and labour. Each of these subjects is discussed, and the text concludes by joining these problems to the issues of the Civil War.

"...Confederate Shipbuilding [is] an important contribution to a developed understanding of America's Civil War." -- Proceedings
"Thorough research, especially in manuscripts, sound perspective, and confident narration make Still's work as watertight ... as the C.S.S. Virginia." -- The Courier
About the Author
William N. Still Jr. is professor emeritus of history and former director of the Maritime History and Underwater Archaeology Program at East Carolina University. The Secretary of the Navy's Scholar in Naval History at the Naval Historical Center from 1989-1990, he is the author of *American Sea Power in the Old World: The United States Navy in European and Near Eastern Waters, 1865-1917*; *Iron Afloat: The Story of the Confederate Armorclads*; the editor of *The Confederate Navy: The Ships, Men, and Organization, 1861-65*; and a coauthor of *Why the South Lost the Civil War*.