



Patriarch of Maine Shipbuilding: The Life and Ships of Gardiner G. Deering

Kenneth R. Martin

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In the years following the American Civil War, Yankee sailing ships and shipyards were threatened by foreign competition and modernizing technology. Despite decades of stiff competition, a few builders in Bath, Maine, the City of Ships, persisted in building wooden schooners, modifying and enlarging them to meet the changing times. Gardiner G. Deering (1833-1921) was one of these diehards. Genial and unaffected but driven to succeed, he started at the bottom of the trade and worked himself to the top, building ninety-nine vessels over his long life, dozens of which he personally managed. As this spirited, absorbing study reveals, Deering prospered in the face of ferocious competition and economic gyrations. Through thick and thin, he seemed to enjoy himself immensely. When Gardiner Deering died in 1921, he was widely acknowledged as the last of his breed, the Patriarch of Maine Shipbuilding

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