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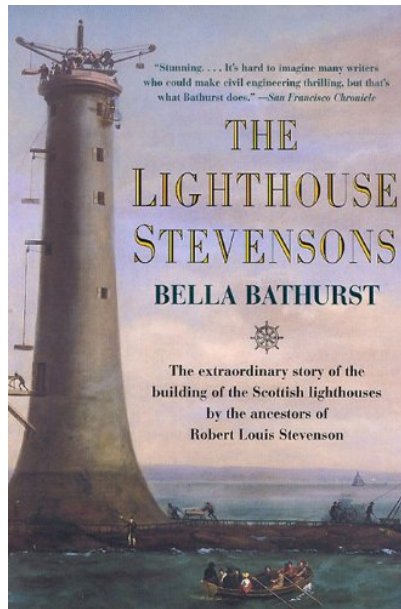
Présentation de l'éditeur For centuries the seas around Scotland were notorious for shipwrecks. Mariners' only aids were skill, luck, and single coal-fire light on the east coast, which was usually extinguished by rain. In 1786 the Northern Lighthouse Trust was established, with Robert Stevenson appointed as chief engineer a few years later. In this engrossing book, Bella Bathurst reveals that the Stevensons not only supervised the construction of the lighthouses under often desperate conditions but also perfected a design of precisely chiseled interlocking granite blocks that would withstand the enormous waves that batter these stone pillars. The same Stevensons also developed the lamps and lenses of the lights themselves, which "sent a gleam across the wave" and prevented countless ships from being lost at sea. While it is the writing of Robert Louis Stevenson that brought fame to the family name, this mesmerizing account shows how his extraordinary ancestors changed the shape of the Scotland coast against incredible odds and with remarkable technical ingenuity.

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2 internautes sur 2 ont trouvé ce commentaire utile.
A fascinating subject brought to life. Par Ned Middleton
As a scuba diver who is always looking for the more remote locations, I often find myself in some wilderness area surrounded by the sea. Quite frequently, there is a lighthouse nearby and I always seem to be made aware of those that were "British Built." What I had not realised before reading this book, was that the famous Robert Louis Stevenson came from a long line of Stevensons who were expert lighthouse builders. Indeed, he is quoted in the book as having said; "Whenever I smell salt water, I know I am not far from the works of my ancestors." This is a fascinating work which has been brought to life by an author who has done a really good job. Having been brought up in an age where electricity was used to power lighthouses from before I was born, photographs and accounts of how coal was hoisted to the top of these mammoth structures in earlier days is both a revelation and education in itself. Containing portraits of various notable engineers in addition to the different lighthouses they built, I was impressed by the inclusion of a painting of one light by the legendary J. M. W. Turner, no less, the comparable sizes of different lights and sectional drawings showing how the brickwork was interlaced in order to withstand the fiercest storms. An excellent book and one which will allow me to tell my fellow travellers something about whatever remote lighthouse we end up climbing at some time in the future. NM

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