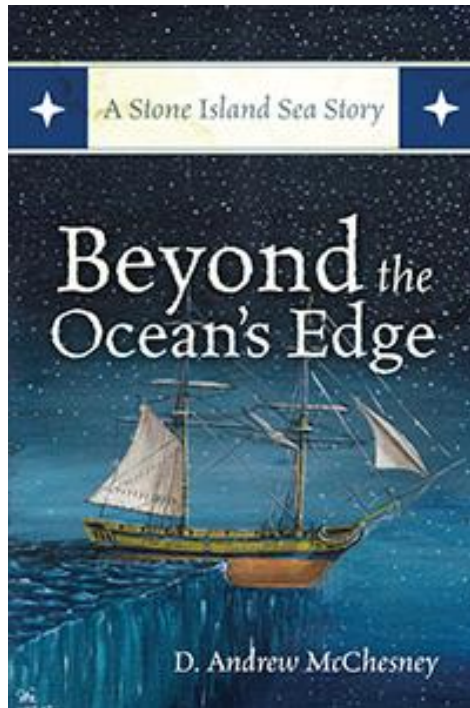


Beyond the Ocean's Edge: A Stone Island Sea Story



By D. Andrew McChesney

Reviewed by James Bartlett Parry

I had never been a fan of books on naval history nor of fantasy... until now. D. Andrew McChesney has made me a believer. *Beyond the Ocean's Edge* is an extremely well-written, fascinating tale about the good ship, *Island Expedition*, its captain, Edward Pierce, and their amazing adventures. This book, my friend, is the work of a professional author – as if Tolkien and Michener had collaborated. McChesney has excellent command of the English language and takes you on an adventure that you'll have a tough time pulling away from. It has just the right amount – and at the right times – of excitement. It's beautifully paced writing. And he does what all good fantasy writers do: He makes the unbelievable, believable.

Beyond the Ocean's Edge is set at the beginning of the nineteenth century just after England and France have agreed to an uneasy peace. Pierce and company set sail toward an island that does not appear on any map; it is found only in legend. They overcome many obstacles, including a ferocious sea battle, as they zigzag their way there. And I'd best not give away any additional parts of the story.

I was all geared-up for a fantastic ending that would blow me away, but then I remembered that this book is Part I of the *Stone Island Sea Stories*, so I'll have to wait till I've finished the last in the series for that fantastic ending. But his writing has left me wanting more. I'm very anxious for that second book to appear. And the third.

If you like a well-written naval history with cannon fire and a little fantasy thrown in, you're gonna love *Beyond the Ocean's Edge* (and, I'm sure, the entire series).

Reviewed by Robert G. Hildahl

Beyond the Ocean's Edge is a very exciting sea story that takes place around the 1800s. It's about Edward Pierce, a young British Navy Lieutenant, who is given command of a sailing vessel to go in search of a legendary island.

He and his crew have many adventures trying to find this island and their lives change dramatically along the way.

Beyond the Ocean's Edge is so well written by McChesney that it keeps you wanting to read every chance you get. As I finished the book, it left me with one question--"When is the sequel coming out?"

Reviewed by Kate Poitevin

Mr. McChesney has a talent for putting his reader in the moment. From the first pages that put me in the middle of a battle at sea, I felt like I was part of the tale.

Written with a mix of action and character development, the story moves along and makes it hard to put down. I loved, or hated, his characters and my heart pounded as they fought their way through storms and skirmishes. It melted at interjections of romance and tapped away in excitement as they found a new world.

The end leaves you wanting more and luckily, I have the second book and was able to read on. I would suggest that anyone who purchases *Beyond the Ocean's Edge* should go ahead and get *Sailing Dangerous Waters* so you don't have to wait for shipping time.

Reviewed by Sue Eller

McChesney instantaneously transports the reader back in space and time to the deck of the *Theadora* in the year 1802. She is a British sailing ship about to do battle with the French, and hero Edward Pierce leads a boarding crew to victory. McChesney's use of nautical terms soon creeps into your own vocabulary, and his descriptions can draw you into the belief that you can smell the salt air and feel the ship roll with the waves beneath your feet. Then the real story begins. After a short stint on land, newly commissioned Captain Pierce and his fine crew set off with a group of would-be colonists in search of the uncharted Stone Island. The quest takes them further from home than they could have imagined, and Pierce even more distant from Evangeline, the woman he loves. The first of a series, *Beyond The Ocean's Edge* will sail you beyond the charted seas and into a fantastic adventure.

Reviewed by Beth Camp

Beyond the Ocean's Edge effectively recreates that time in the early 19th Century when Britain ruled the seas. McChesney's seamanship shows through with impeccable knowledge of the daily routines of men at sea, the storms, the battles, and the very rigid class boundaries that separated everyday sailors from officers.

We follow Edward Pierce, at first a third lieutenant of humble beginnings, as he seeks to improve his skills and as he searches for his brothers who had earlier been impressed into service. Throughout the first half of the book, Pierce seems balanced between two possible worlds, the life at sea and the life on land.

Those two worlds become more tangible (and more fantastic) in the second half of the book. At the end of the Napoleonic War when many sailors were dismissed from service, Pierce has an amazing opportunity to sail a new ship to a mysterious island far from all he knows – except that the voyage will take him back to his first love, the sea.

Pierce's integrity and inner conflicts, his doubts and hopes, his yearning for a relationship, even scenes that reveal him as demanding and irascible, add depth to his quest as he confronts very different cultures and becomes a well-respected commanding officer. A rewarding read well-grounded in history that will require Book 2 to fully resolve the issues raised in Book 1.

Reviewed by Stephen Lalonde

Beyond the Ocean's Edge takes a bit to settle into the language of the mariner events. The ships myriad of parts, and language and behavior of the characters of this book, but, boy is it worth taking the time to do so. The story is fascinating, and the adventure well described. I soon realized that I didn't really have to know the meaning of all the terms and sailing mechanics to understand the course of events. The characters are well and consistently developed along with their growth through the challenges they face, and they do face challenges. I look forward to reading the next book in the series.



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