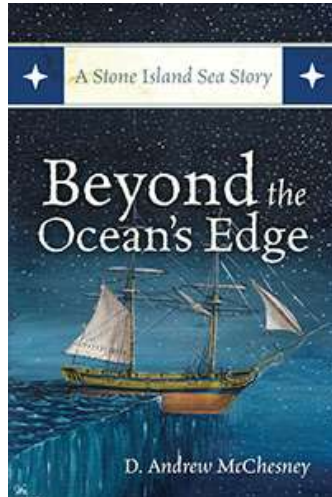


# Beyond the Ocean's Edge: A Stone Island Sea Story



By D. Andrew McChesney

Reviewed by "Nautical Nonsense"

On a misty May morning I sat on my porch in a rocking chair and thought to myself "Hey why don't I give this book a try, I gave Obama a try and look how that worked for me?" Well needless to say this book worked much better than the 2008 vote. D. Andrew McChesney wove a tapestry of wonderful in the first book of the "Stone Island Seastories" " Beyond the Ocean's Edge". The book provides countless parallels to the 1800's but is actually set in the wonderful world of make believe.

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 John H. Manhold

Edward Pierce, a young coachman's son aided in obtaining midshipman's training by the father of his boyhood friend, Isaac Hotchkiss, serves aboard one of His British Majesty's ships with distinction. When peace is declared with the French and much of the fleet is decommissioned, Edward is released on half-pay. However, because of his 'service with distinction' the admiralty suggests he might find employment with Harold Smythe, a man on the Isle of Wight who is preparing a ship to explore for an island that seems to exist only in legend. Edward journeys to meet Smythe, becomes the ship's commanding officer, hires his friend as second officer and they set sail for this mystical island with very specific directions to find their destination, an unusual group of passengers, and important 'rules' for formation of a new colony. The remainder of the story is of the journey, its results and Edward's subsequent activity.

The telling of the tale is by a man with obvious knowledge of sailing and sailing vessels, the story line is smooth, the action fulfilling and the ending unusual so as to leave the reader with an interest in the next 'installment'.

Reviewed by Liolo Joyce

This read was very enjoyable for me. The knowledge about the age of exploration nautical technology and terminology exhibited by the author is striking. His characters are well developed. And I enjoyed the love interest side story. Obviously this is the first of a series of stories he intends to write, since none of the plot threads are resolved. But I am looking forward to his next installment.

Reviewed by Gayle Pace

This is first book of the Stone Island Sea Stories, *BEYOND THE OCEAN'S EDGE*. Set in the early 1800's, this is a sea story. A young coachman's son by the name of Edward Pierce is learning to become a midshipman by the father of his friend, Isaac Hotchkiss, who serves aboard one of His British Majesty's ships with great honor. Edward is released on half pay after peace is declared with the French. When this happened, most of the fleet is decommissioned. His 'service with distinction' the admiralty has a suggestion that he find employment with Harold Smythe, a man on the Isle of Wight. Mr. Smythe is preparing a ship to seek out an island

that seems to exist only in legend. The author tells an action filled, smoothly written tale that shows his vast knowledge of sailing and vessels. The reader is up for an adventure which they will not want to let go. After this Book One, the reader can look forward to Book Two.

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.