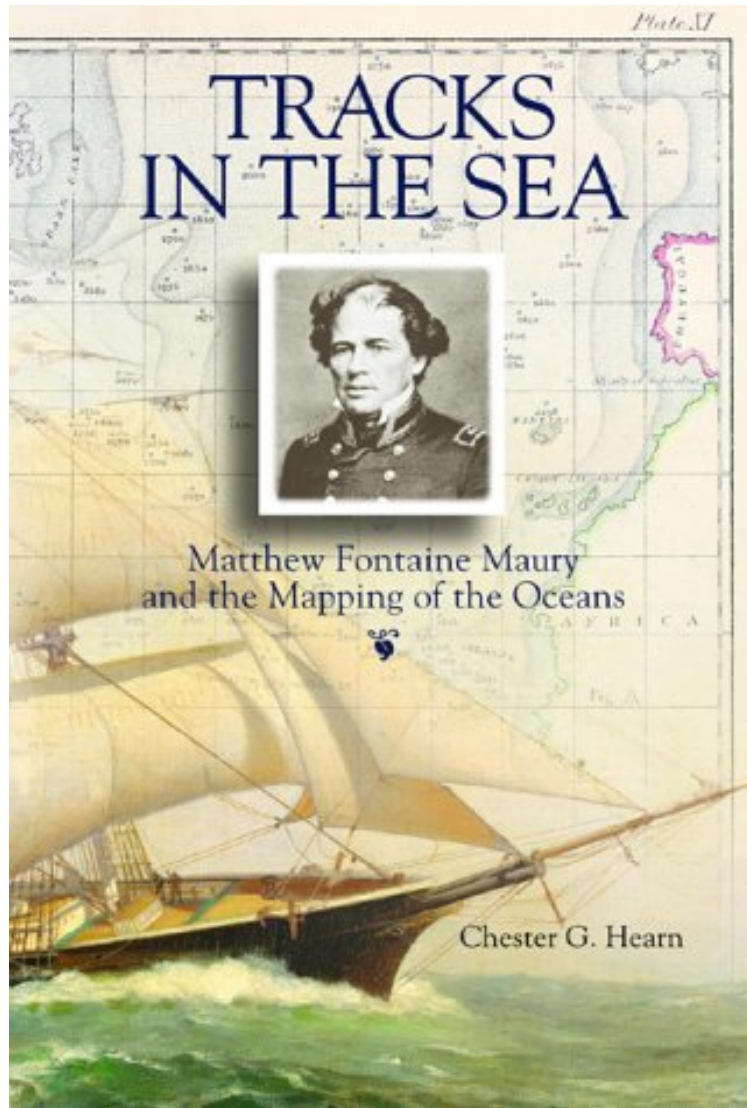


(Read and download) Tracks in the Sea : Matthew Fontaine Maury and the Mapping of the Oceans

Tracks in the Sea : Matthew Fontaine Maury and the Mapping of the Oceans

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Chester G. Hearn, Chester Hearn : Tracks in the Sea : Matthew Fontaine Maury and the Mapping of the Oceans before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Tracks in the Sea : Matthew Fontaine Maury and the Mapping of the Oceans:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful
By Michael E. Fitzgerald
In the days before computers there was Matthew Fontaine Maury. Almost unknown today, Maury was a navigation and sailing genius, a Lieutenant in the US Navy, who was the father of modern navigation and ocean science. He was a land lubber. During the age of sail longitude was an uncertain calculation. As a result, it was often impossible for ships to know exactly where they were. After the invention of the chronometer, things improved, but chronometers being expensive route planning was a hit or miss thing. As a result, for the most part, navigation was anecdotal. There were no highways in the seas, no scientifically determined sailing truisms or protocols, and hundreds of ships were lost each year. Until Maury, knowledge of prevailing winds and currents had advanced little from Columbus. But between 1842 and 1861, he and his staff mapped the ocean's great surface currents and wind systems. They showed ship captains how to shave weeks, even months from voyages. *Tracks in the Sea* is the biography of this self taught, self made man whose remarkable career culminated as head of the U.S. Navel Observatory. In a world interconnected by maritime commerce, Maury's work was critically important, not just to Americans, but to all nations. This is an amazing story. To have compiled the thousands and thousands of ship's logs and sailing observations, drawing trends and systematic sailing instructions, by month, for all the oceans of the world, has to be one of man's most astounding scientific achievements. This is a most remarkable work about a most remarkable American.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful and Brilliant Biography - Maury's Research of the Unkown Currents in the Sea
By Aline D. Coover
A marvelous and inspiring read! After I saw (and read) "In the Heart of the Sea", I wanted to learn more about the Gulf current that circles Norway and England. Matthew Maury had the same idea, however, he actually was able to locate and describe most all of the many sea currents back in the 1800s. He found valuable information from the ship logs of whale boat Captains, who actually sailed the North Pacific from New England to Scandinavia in search of the sperm whale. Although, initially thwarted by the US Navy, he was able to share his knowledge of the ocean currents as well as secure information from unbiased ship captains to provide the most accurate details of the, here to fore uncharted ocean. A most amazing and brilliant man whose ideas helped all men of the sea.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By Baird Risdon
Outstanding biography about a incredible man.

Navigation at sea was a matter of guesswork until well into the 19th century. Changing that became the obsession of Matthew Fontaine Maury. While others built railroads, Maury mapped highways of wind and current over the seas. Hearn uses Maury's career as a window on America's maritime development in the 19th century, including the clipper-ship era of the 1850s, the rise of steam and steel, and the Civil War.

From the Back Cover
The Remarkable Story of a Seafaring Scientist
Tracks in the Sea captures a rich yet little-known chapter in the history of seafaring--the mapping of the oceans by Matthew Fontaine Maury, the father of modern navigation and ocean science. Voyages in the 1800s were risky endeavors. Navigation was uncertain and knowledge of prevailing winds and current had advanced little since Columbus. Hundreds of ships were lost each year; the cost in property and lives was enormous. Maury changed all that. In a brilliant eighteen-year effort between 1842 and 1861--driving himself and his staff with relentless curiosity, ambition, adventurousness, and altruism--he transformed the oceans from trackless hazards into a network of highways marked by dependable winds and currents and showed shipmasters how to shave weeks and even months from voyages. His career coincided with the ascendance of America as a maritime power and with the culmination of the Great Age of Sail. In a world interconnected by maritime commerce, Maury's work was critically important not just to America but to all nations. Now *Tracks in the Sea* resurrects the life and work of this unique and fascinating man. In tracing Maury's intellectual odyssey and the dramatic conflicts of his career, Chester Hearn shows us a pivotal era in seafaring and in the history of a raw young nation.
About the Author
Chester G. Hearn, retired vice president of a subsidiary of Combustion Engineering, is an avid amateur historian and the author of seventeen books about U.S. military history between the American Revolution and World War II.