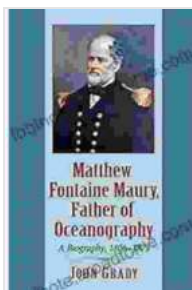


Matthew Fontaine Maury: Father of Oceanography (1806-1873)

Matthew Fontaine Maury (January 14, 1806 – February 1, 1873) was an American naval officer, oceanographer, astronomer, cartographer, and meteorologist. He is considered to be the father of oceanography, a field of science that studies the physical and biological aspects of the ocean. Maury's pioneering work in oceanography and hydrography helped to revolutionize navigation and improve the safety of sea travel.

Early Life and Education

Matthew Fontaine Maury was born in Spotsylvania County, Virginia, on January 14, 1806. He was the eighth of nine children born to Richard Maury and Diana Minor Maury. Maury's father was a planter and a veteran of the American Revolutionary War. His mother was a devout Christian and a strong supporter of education.



Matthew Fontaine Maury, Father of Oceanography: A Biography, 1806-1873 by Songmi Han

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2835 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 264 pages
Screen Reader : Supported



Maury received his early education at home from his mother. He showed an early interest in mathematics and science, and he was particularly fascinated by the ocean. In 1825, Maury entered the United States Navy as a midshipman. He served on several ships in the Mediterranean Sea and the Caribbean Sea. During this time, he continued to study mathematics, astronomy, and navigation.

Maury's Work in Oceanography

In 1834, Maury was assigned to the Navy's Depot of Charts and Instruments in Washington, D.C. He was tasked with organizing the Navy's collection of charts and navigational data. Maury quickly realized that there was a great deal of information available about the oceans, but it was scattered and unorganized. He set out to compile all of this information into a single, comprehensive work.

In 1837, Maury published his first book, *The Sailing Directions*. This book provided detailed instructions for navigating the Atlantic Ocean. It was an immediate success, and it quickly became the standard reference work for mariners. Maury followed up this success with a series of other books and charts that covered the world's oceans.

Maury's work in oceanography was not limited to navigation. He also conducted extensive research on the ocean's currents, winds, and temperature. He was the first to map the Gulf Stream, and he developed a system for predicting the weather. Maury's work helped to make sea travel safer and more efficient.

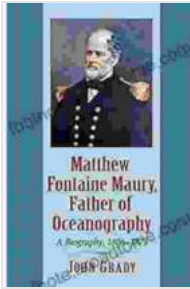
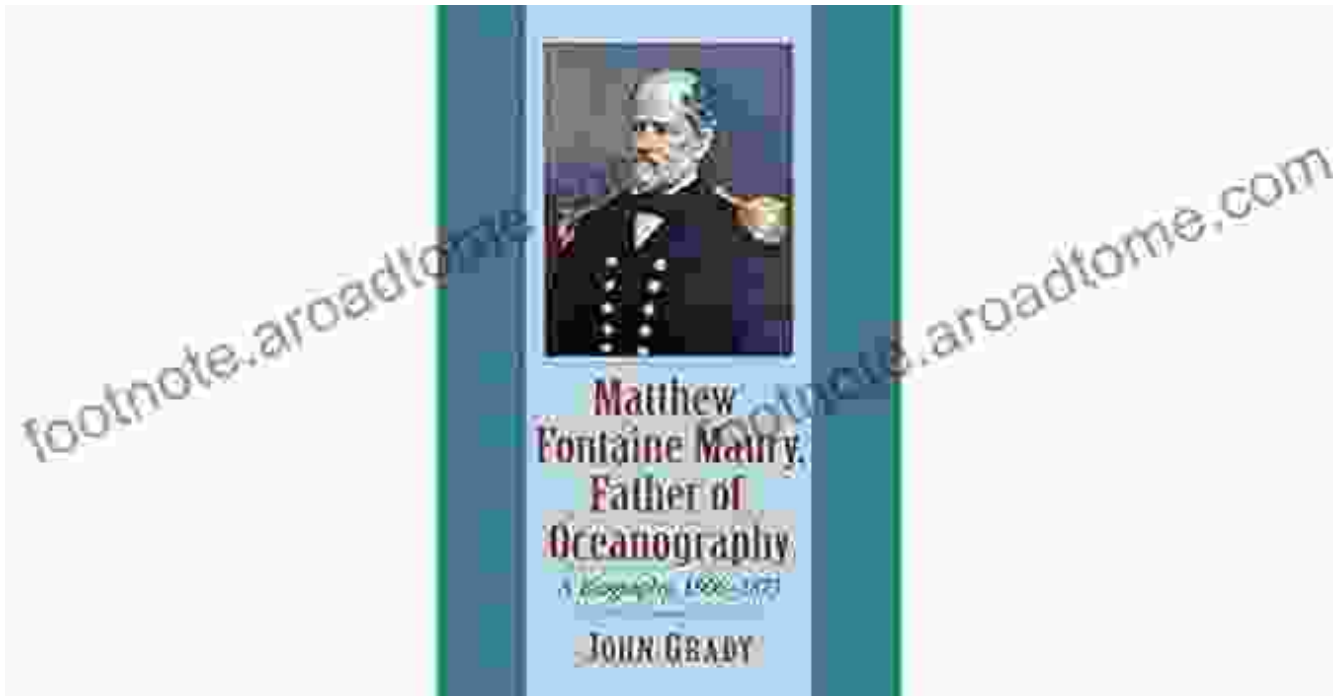
Maury's Legacy

Matthew Fontaine Maury is considered to be one of the most important figures in the history of oceanography. His work helped to establish oceanography as a legitimate scientific discipline. He also made significant contributions to navigation, meteorology, and cartography. Maury's legacy continues to inspire oceanographers and sailors around the world.

In 1861, Maury resigned from the Navy and joined the Confederate States of America. He served as the Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance and Hydrography for the Confederacy. After the war, Maury moved to England, where he continued his work in oceanography. He died in Lexington, Virginia, on February 1, 1873.

Maury's legacy is preserved in a number of ways. The United States Naval Academy has a chair of oceanography named after him. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) operates a research vessel named the R/V Matthew Fontaine Maury. And there are several schools and libraries named in his honor.

Matthew Fontaine Maury was a pioneer in the field of oceanography. His work helped to make sea travel safer and more efficient, and he established oceanography as a legitimate scientific discipline. Maury's legacy continues to inspire oceanographers and sailors around the world.



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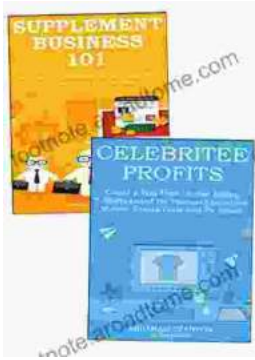
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