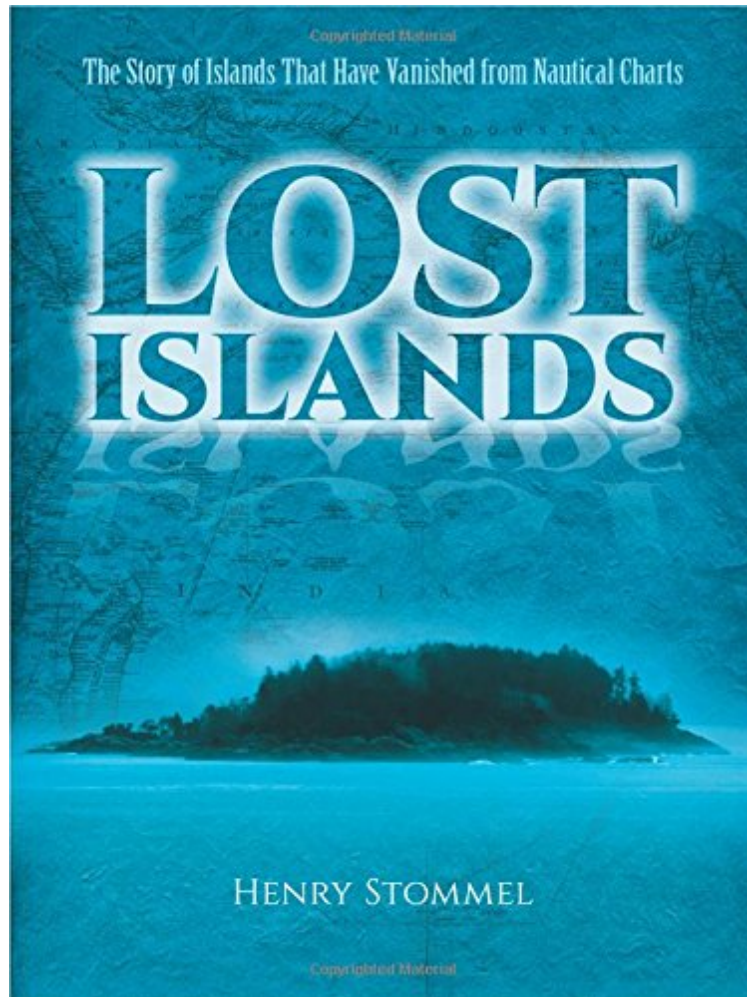


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Lost Islands: The Story of Islands That Have Vanished from Nautical Charts

Henry Stommel

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Henry Stommel : Lost Islands: The Story of Islands That Have Vanished from Nautical Charts before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Lost Islands: The Story of Islands That Have Vanished from Nautical Charts*:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A Sober Scientific Explanation for Mapmaking Errors and Corrections By James J. Bloom If you have read William Babcock's *Legendary Islands of the Atlantic* (reprint of the 1922 original) and were hoping for an update, you will be disappointed. Dr. Stommel, hydrographer of the Woods Hole Institute, limits his examination to those islands that appeared on Admiralty charts, navigational aides drafted by the British Hydrographic Office beginning in 1795. So there is no discussion of legend and lore here, but a scientific examination of illusion and mis-location, and some possible tectonic or volcanic phenomena. As such, it is a nice

complement to Babcock's more imaginative study, showing how even the professional naval officers of the British establishment could be flummoxed by erroneous reports. 8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Interesting and definitive
By Wulfstan
This is a large oversized "coffee table-sized" book, with lots of BW illustrations and charts, including a large fold out map in the back. Note that the list says there are two maps in the sleeve attached to the back cover- and yes there are- one sheet with one chart printed on each side (I thought for a minute that I'd been shorted a map!) There's also a detailed appendix and index.
Henry M Stommel knows his stuff, being an oceanographer for Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, and writer of 4 other oceanographic books. He is also a self-professed "islophile" or lover of islands. This book generally covers islands that have appeared on official charts since 1800, those that were really thought to exist- but (mostly) were found out to be mislaid or never there. Believe it or not, there were something like 200 islands, rocks and etc that were officially charted on generally considered to be reliable charts - that weren't really there at all. And I don't think any of them had anything to do with R'lyeh. This is a quite readable book, with some interesting stories. It also has a personal anecdote of how the author "found" his own "lost island". All that being said, with so many islands to cover, sometimes the book gets a little pedantic and "list-like" and slows to a crawl. Also a warning- many of the used copies out there are ex-library copies. Anyway, this is still an interesting book, and the definitive work on the subject.
0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars
By E Pfeifer
Well Written.

Hundreds of islands that once appeared on nautical charts and general atlases are now known to have vanished or never even existed. How were they detected in the first place? Henry Stommel, an oceanographer and senior scientist at Massachusetts' Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, chronicles his fascinating research in documenting the false discoveries of these phantom islands. British and American Hydrographic Offices compiled lists for navigators of reported dangers corresponding to the islands' supposed locations, which formed the basis for Stommel's surveys. These tales, which unfold according to location, blend historical and geographic background with intriguing anecdotal material. They relate how the small land formations came to be charted, who reported them, who eradicated them, and why some of them endured for so long. The chronicle of navigational errors, optical illusions, wishful thinking, and other mishaps is illustrated by scores of black-and-white images, including two 19th-century Admiralty charts of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, where most of the sightings took place.

About the Author
Henry Stommel (1920-1992) was an oceanographer and senior scientist at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute in Massachusetts. In addition to his many contributions to the field of physical oceanography, he is credited as the creator of the modern field of dynamical oceanography.