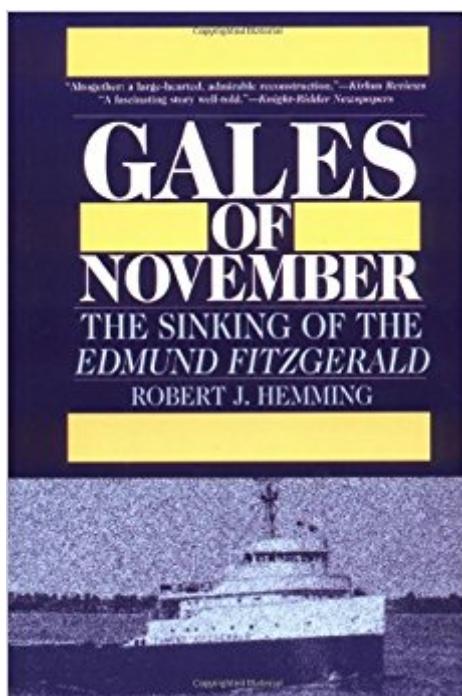


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Gales Of November: The Sinking Of The Edmund Fitzgerald



Synopsis

Immortalized in song by Canadian balladeer Gordon Lightfoot and still argued over by Great Lakes experts, the fate of the Edmund Fitzgerald and its crew has attracted more widespread attention than other thousands of shipwrecks recorded on the Great Lakes. The 729-foot ore freighter and its entire crew mysteriously and suddenly disappeared during a violent November storm on Lake Superior in 1975. The reader is taken through a "you are there" experience, including the increasing foreboding of the crew members. A haunting and informative book for anyone fascinated by the lore of sea and ships.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Robert J. Hemming has been a life-long resident of the Great Lakes region and a recreational sailor of its waters. A reporter and newspaper editor himself, he makes his home in Toledo.

I have read most of the books published about the "Edmund Fitzgerald" and her tragic demise. Of that number, several are more informative and up to date, but in "Gales of November" Robert J. Hemming takes another approach to the sinking: he focuses on the crew. The book is nicely refined and ultimately readable prose that is more captivating than most books. The down side, which Hemming acknowledges at the outset, is that since the ship sank so quickly and without survivors, the onboard activities and conversations after the "Fitzgerald" left Superior, Wisconsin are informed speculation. I normally dislike conjecture in nonfiction accounts, but as with "The Perfect Storm" and other examples where nobody survived the accident, it is nearly impossible to avoid if the focus is

on the human experience involved. The book as a whole is taut and well-paced, with the ambiance of an exciting novel (albeit one where the final outcome is already known.) Of all the books on the "Fitzgerald," this book contains by far the most detailed and finely written character studies of the 29 men who sailed on her, and was particularly strong in providing information on Captain Ernest McSorley, and his close friend First Mate John McCarthy. Hemming clearly has an opinion on why and how the ship foundered, and presents that as the single narrative plot of the book. He is a strong proponent of the shoaling school of thought (which I admit does make a great deal of sense to me, too.) The book is a real pleasure to read until the concluding chapters when Hemming bristles at the conclusions of the Coast Guard and the NTSB investigations, making the final portion of the book more tedious. The book contains some errors. On p. 212 Hemming says the ship's bell was not found in examinations of the wreck: not only was it found, it was later raised for museum display and replaced with a duplicate with the 29 crewmen's names engraved on it. In fairness this was written before all the later expeditions were made to the ship. There are other small errors as well. For instance, on p. 234 Hemming refers to the then-new navigation system LORAN-C, which he calls "Lorain C." That's admittedly fairly trivial, but should have been caught by having a professional mariner proofread the manuscript. Despite the occasional misstep, I still truly enjoyed reading "Gales of November." If you can accept the speculative nature of the narrative in chapters ten, eleven, and twelve, the book is a captivating account of the human side of the tragedy of the "Edmund Fitzgerald."

Second one purchased. Great story of the Lady of the Lakes. I painted a 24" by 36" oil on canvas picture of the "wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald" after reading this book, In Paradise Michigan at the Real Estate Office it puts you right on the Lady and in the minds of the men who lost their lives on that fateful night. We were at Reed City Mich that night, milking cows. the wind howled so bad the cattle were moaning.

This book was very informative and told a good story. You get to know the personal stories and biographies of the doomed crew. At times I didn't want to put the book away for the night! There are questions that simply can't be answered but this book I believe gives an honest and comprehensive look at what became of the Big Fitz.. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in great lakes freighter and the history of the great lakes

as good as it gets...

Another great read as it relates to the treacherous waters on the Great Lakes of Michigan during the month of November. Another true novel which depicts the tragic story of 29 men lost in an unforgiving angry storm. I would recommend this book to anyone captured and mesmerized by this historic tragedy.

Excellent read even for those who have read other books on this topic. Gives more personal accounts of the people.

I received this book in record time and am extremely satisfied with it. Thank you.

all good

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