



The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald

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Peter L. Waters has just finished his first year of law school at the University of Michigan. With the help of Jamie, Peter's bride-to-be, he lands a great summer job aboard the Great Lakes freighter the Edmund Fitzgerald. Determined to give his future bride the wedding of her dreams, Peter decides to skip the fall semester at law school to work aboard the ship. If all goes well, the bonus he'll earn will pay for their wedding and launch their new life in style. The decision will cost him his life. Based on the actual sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald, which occurred on November 10, 1975, the last days and hours of the crew members—including the captain, first mate, cook, a father-and-son engine room team, a lawyer-hating deckhand, and Peter—are imagined in this work of contemporary fiction based on a tragic reality in Michigan's history. The Edmund Fitzgerald slipped below the waves that fateful November night in 1975, and her story remains one of great sorrow and mystery.

The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald Details

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From Reader Review The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald for online ebook

Leah Unger says

A very interest account and theories as to what happened. Read it for yourself and come up with your own conclusion. It is a fascinating tale and I respect the families who still do not know the ending to the story. Many have researched and still no conclusion.

Frederick Stonehouse has done an excellent job of presenting data. I don't believe he did it for exploitation purposes. I believe it was done tastefully to satisfy the reader's interest who has always wondered what happened that frightful night 10 November 1975. It was an event that shook the Great Lakes maritime community and to this day keeps a nation wondering!

justjotter says

Haunted by this shipwreck they happened during my senior year of high school. Then Gordon Lightfoot penned the song, which I played on my guitar ad infinitum. Found this wonderful delve into the mysteries surrounding the incident in a used bookstore. Perfect read for the shore. Great account for recounting all sides, and opinions. We'll never know exactly what happened, but we'll always remember her and the 29 lives lost.

Krusher Basta says

I bought this book years ago, and just never got around to reading it. I am glad I finally did. What makes the loss of the Edmund Fitzgerald so intriguing is that there simply isn't a lot known about what happened on that fateful, final voyage. Stonehouse did a good job of delineating between what was fact, and what was conjecture or speculation. The book includes the final reports from the National Transportation Safety Board and the United States Coast Guard, as well as a rebuttal from the Lake Carriers Association. Expeditions of the wreck site are discussed and the various theories of other individuals and organizations, including one of my Professors from Michigan Tech (I can remember him incorporating the wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald into several of his assignments). Although Stonehouse presents some of his own conclusions, and makes it very clear that they are his opinions and not fact, we will never know for sure exactly what caused the wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald and the loss of 29 soles on November 10, 1975. If you have any interest at all in the Edmund Fitzgerald, I strongly recommend this book.

Maureen says

Detailed account of the Edmund Fitzgerald's history and it's shipwreck and search and rescue efforts. Lots of pictures, radio broadcasts and includes an interview the author gave to a magazine that includes his opinion on the cause of the wreck. It also discusses some previous wrecks in the 1918 time frame. There are many pictures in the book, as well as suggestions ships could do to prevent shipwrecks. There has not been a major

shipwreck on the Great Lakes since the Edmund Fitzgerald went down, so hopefully the procedures put in place since then have helped prevent other tragic and mysterious ship wrecks.

Chris S. says

This is the most scholarly book about this tragedy that I have ever come across. Stonehouse takes great pains to distance himself from the events that took place in the lake they call Gitchee Gumee, and attempts to deal with the subject without bias. He touches on most of the popular theories on why the laker sank, and scalds the Coast Guard presence in the Great Lakes as barely adequate to even keep up pretenses of "Search and Rescue."

That being said, the book is approx. 20% Coast Guard report, 15% NTSB report, 15% encapsulated reviews of studies and diving expeditions, and 10% verbatim transcript of an interview he did with an Arizona newspaper. This ain't "In Cold Blood" here, folks.

Gillian says

Informative, but technical and dry with a surprising amount of typos.

John says

The "SS Edmund Fitzgerald" departed Superior, Wisconsin near Duluth, Minnesota on November 9, 1975 with a load of taconite pellets bound for Detroit, Michigan. On November 10 the 729 foot Fitzgerald lost the struggle to a huge snow storm and finally foundered in crushing seas at the South East end of Lake Superior. The ore steamer broke in two and came to rest in 530 feet of water approximately 17 miles from Whitefish Point and the safe harbor of Whitefish Bay. All 29 crewmen were lost with no distress signal sent, no witnesses, no survivors and no bodies recovered.

Today we are primarily reminded of the event by Gordon Lightfoot's ballad "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald" which is played most often in the month of November. It is an excellent and plaintive tribute to the ship and the seamen who lost their lives on that fateful day. The meaningful lyrics and catchy melody always make the song a worthy listen.

I just recently visited Whitefish Point Bird Observatory -- which is an excellent migrating bird area by the way -- and the Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum where I was able to view artifacts raised from the wreck. Most notable was the 200 pound bell from "The Edmund Fitzgerald" salvaged in 1995 which is a fitting reminder and on permanent poignant display at the Museum. I took a picture of it but not with it.....

This 30th anniversary edition of the book originally written in 1977 gives a good account of the the events leading up to that tragic day and its continuing aftermath.

Jeff Koslowski says

This book is everything you want to know about the Edmund Fitzgerald from a seaman's point of view. If you want the specs and technical elements, Stonehouse gives you everything you could possibly need. If you are looking for elements of legend and how others perceive it, they are kind of included but they are not the main focus.

Lauren Gibbons says

I am very interested in Michigan/Great Lakes history and was excited to read this book for that reason, but I was disappointed overall with this take on the Edmund Fitzgerald tragedy. The formatting and writing style threw me off - it was a technical information overload with few transitions or strong narrative themes beyond what's common knowledge for those who have followed the shipwreck. There are a lot of great primary documents included, but I would have appreciated more focus on the victims and their families and a better organizational flow all around.

Elizabeth Sims says

Even though I was only a baby, I was present at the launch of the Fitzgerald. My dad helped build it at the shipyards in Ecorse, Michigan. The whole family took great pride in the ship, and the day it went down it was like a death among us. I bought and read this book a long time ago, and came across it recently. The underwater photos are haunting.

Jeff Van Valer says

Really one of my favorite books. It has a solid, nostalgic hold on me. Factually good, I have no doubt. Just as a Great Lakes shipwreck buff, I refer to this book often. Written in a passive, bureaucratic way, but hey. I like it anyway. It holds up well to the included Coastguard and NTSB reports. Anyone who wants to know anything about the last few hours of the Edmund Fitzgerald should consider this book the Gold standard.

Martin Gibbs says

This is indeed a great place to start for info on the tragedy of the Edmund Fitz... I like how the author presents both the Coast Guard and the Lake Carrier's Association reports, although sometimes his own opinions slip through and we get a dose of generalization and over-simplification in an otherwise 'unbiased' viewpoint.

It is a very quick, exciting read, and well presented. The last moments of the ship are described by using the known communication between the Arthur Anderson and Fitzgerald (I got goose-bumps this weekend when

the Anderson passed under the lift bridge in Duluth), and it really has a dramatic touch. I cannot imagine what it would be like to slam down into a trough and never recover.

There is a great deal of discussion on safety standards and the over-arching question keeps coming up: How does a modern ship sink so fast? But, to quote Lightfoot, "Superior they say, never gives up her dead," and she doesn't give up many of her secrets, either.

I would have liked to have known more about the crew, as one reviewer pointed out, but this book is still well-written and the information is presented well. This was the 30-year updated version.

Recommended.

Jack Vanmaldegen says

This book was great! After visiting White Point I've always wanted to learn more about this great ship! This book practically covered every bit of information that I wanted to know. I didn't know that at the time this was one of the biggest fresh water ships on the lakes. It's amazing that they never found anyone from the ship, it also amazes me that the bridge door was open and they never found anyone of any sign of life. The ship passed all of its inspections with minor offenses, why did the navigation and radio go out? Why would they even attempt to ship in those seas? It makes you think about life in a different perspective. I highly recommend this to English classes to highschoolers and really any person that's interested in any type of ships, boats, or they just plain like to read about things in history. It's a nice easy to read book with quite a few pictures.

Peggy says

The book was interesting, but it is not a novel. It is factual with regard to the ship, the crew, the winter storm, but suppositional in theory as to what happened to the ship and how it sank.

Stacia says

This book is an interesting, if impersonal, combination of facts, conclusions (reproduces much of the Coast Guard and NTBS reports on the wreck) and the author's opinions of Coast Guard readiness. There's virtually no information about the crew. I think this is a good place to start for anyone who is interested in the fate of the *Edmund Fitzgerald*.
