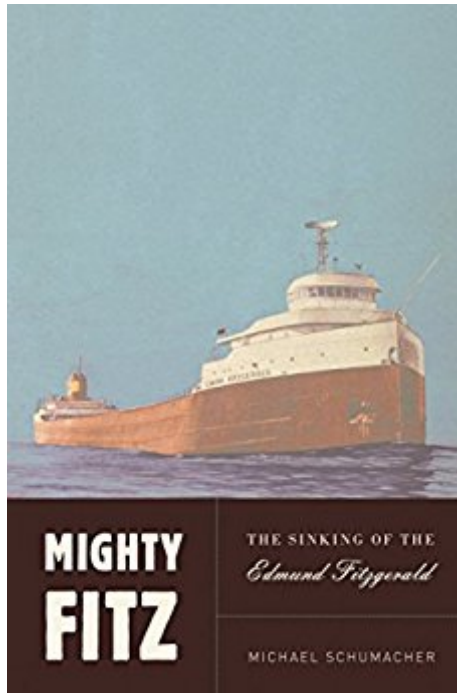




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Mighty Fitz: The Sinking Of The Edmund Fitzgerald



Synopsis

The disappearance of the Edmund Fitzgerald remains one of the great unsolved mysteries in maritime history. Michael Schumacher relays in vivid detail the story of the Edmund Fitzgerald, its many productive years on the waters of the Great Lakes, its tragic demise, the search effort and investigation, as well as the speculation and the controversy that followed in the wake of the disaster. Michael Schumacher is the author of six books. He has written 25 documentaries on Great Lakes shipwrecks, including three about the Edmund Fitzgerald. "In his ballad, Mr. Lightfoot sang about the Fitz's final tense moments, when "the waves turn minutes to hours: Now the hours have lengthened into years and years into decades-but the allure of this doomed ship and its missing men remains as strong as ever."-Wall Street Journal

Book Information

File Size: 1085 KB

Print Length: 258 pages

Publisher: Bloomsbury USA; 1 edition (December 1, 2008)

Publication Date: December 1, 2008

Language: English

ASIN: B002TTIC82

Text-to-Speech: Not enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #76,049 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #1 in [Books > Travel > United States > Michigan > General](#) #1 in [Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > United States > States > Michigan](#) #20 in [Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > World > Transportation > Ships](#)

Customer Reviews

I was a year and 72 days old when the Titanic of the GL sunk, and grade school in the early 80s when I heard Gordon Lightfoot's song. I've had interest in the story since. Mighty Fitz is the only book I've read on the topic and the detail Schumacher goes into almost makes you feel as if you're onboard during the tragic final run. Reading about the sinking gave me an eerie feeling. The book

gives you several conclusions from those who were both there as well as those who investigated, and explored, as to what may have happened, but it's likely to stay a mystery to all but God. Regardless if you're a Fitz buff, *Mighty Fitz* is a good, somewhat haunting read. It gives you a good idea of the terror both the Fitz and the Arthur M. Anderson's crew must've endured 11-10-75.

Even to this day, with no survivors and limited radio and visual contact with the trailing freighter, there is debate on whether the Fitz broke apart on the surface, upon hitting the bottom, and who/what was responsible for her sinking. Was it weather alone (a rogue wave perhaps), the design, the captain, the fact that she was overloaded (certainly she was over the limit she was initially designed for) and were the hatches compromised by 'green' water, did she bottom out in the shoals of eastern Lake Superior thus compromising her hull? So many unanswered questions. The families of 29 sailors endured the pain of losing their fathers, brothers, sons and friends for almost 40 yrs. No bodies were ever recovered, no survivors to tell the tale. If you read this book, be sure to listen to Gordon Lightfoot's spine-chilling "The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald"..."When suppertime came, the old cook came on deck Sayin' 'Fellas, it's too rough to feed ya' At seven PM a main hatchway caved in He said, 'Fellas, it's been good to know ya' The captain wired in he had water comin' in And the good ship and crew was in peril And later that night when his lights went out of sight Came the wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald"

By far one of the better books about the sinking of the S.S. Edmund Fitzgerald. It gave an in-depth look at the chain of events that lead to the ship's sinking. Additionally, it gave a really good account on the post-sinking and recovery of the ship's bell. The author highlighted some of the politics behind dives to shipwrecks and in this case, the Edmund Fitzgerald, which I have not read anywhere else. All in all, this was a really good book on the sinking of the Mighty Fitz and will provide insight to those fascinated by this ship and its loss.

It's a good, solid history of the ship and the region. Having grown up in Northern Ohio, with a father who regularly took me with him when he visited many of the large "ore boats" as part of his job with Mobil, I could relate to most of the towns and ports that were part of the story. Having worked one summer as a deckhand for the Columbia Steamship Division of Ogelsbay Norton (the same company as owned the SS Edmund Fitzgerald -- on the SS Crispin Ogelsbay), I could relate to the ships as well. Having taken one long voyage from Detroit to Green Bay, WI in the midst of a summer storm on Lake Superior, I can attest to the mammoth power of that freshwater lake that is

larger, deeper and more ferocious than many saltwater seas. Yet the idea that a gargantuan vessel like the Mighty Fitz could have been driven under and broken up by wave action is truly astounding.

When the Edmund Fitzgerald went down I was aboard the USS Kittyhawk, a 80,000 ton aircraft carrier, dodging two pacific typhoons. My shipmates had little understanding of the force of the upper great lake storms until i compared the relative movement of a vessel on the Lakes to what we were experiencing. I was a very young child when my Parents and I were up at Duluth-Superior and saw the recently launched Fitzgerald. I still have the 8mm film they shot with a slow pan of the entire length of the ship - a pan that seems to go on forever. The author gives a good description of the continuing debate over how this ship could be claimed by Lake Superior and the controversy over the wreck site. I was not aware of the 'behind the scenes' actions until I read this work so it certainly added a good deal to my knowledge. I would recommend this work to anyone who has an interest in the almost three hundred year history of modern (e.g. European/American vessel) shipwrecks of the Great Lakes.

A great read and good history. Should be of interest to Lake Buffs like myself

Michael Schumacher's "The Might Fitz: The Sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald" is a very good but superficial narrative of the tragic loss of the Edmund Fitzgerald in November 1975 and the subsequent investigations, theories, and activities surrounding its loss. Schumacher does an excellent job in this short, readable book describing the "Edmund Fitzgerald's" last voyage and eventual loss. He never gets bogged down or sidetracked with too many details. He also covers the various investigations that followed the sinking and the competing theories about the cause of her sinking, without pushing any one theory. Finally, he briefly touches on some of the latest efforts to memorialize the "Edmund Fitzgerald," along with some of the legal battles that have arisen over the artifacts at the site. My one criticism is that this book would have been much better with just a few maps, pictures, and charts. Maps are important to explain the location of the ship and its track; pictures to give life to the "Edmund Fitzgerald" and the men who crewed her; and charts to explain the setup of the ship and some of the theories as to why she sank. In the end, though, Schumacher does a very good job bringing this tragedy to life and making the reader feel the loss of the ship and its crew. This is a very good book for someone wanting an overview of the second most shipwreck in modern history, but it is probably too superficial for "Edmund Fitzgerald" aficionados or anyone wanting an in-depth, detailed study of this tragedy.

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