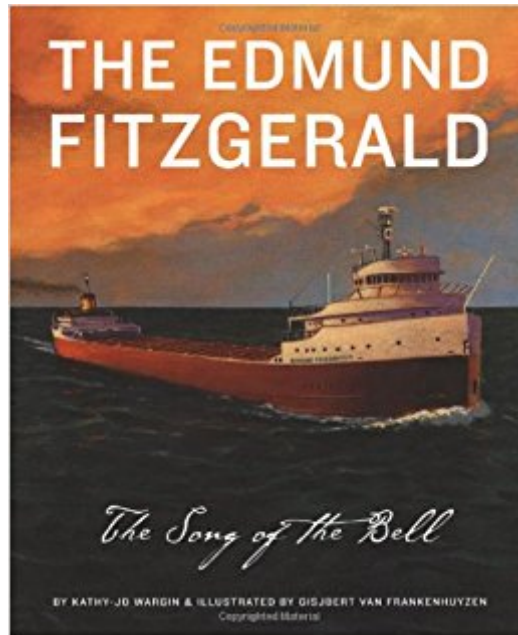


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# The Edmund Fitzgerald: Song Of The Bell



## Synopsis

Leaving port from Superior, Wisconsin on a sunny November day, the crew of the Edmund Fitzgerald is looking forward to a routine crossing of deep Lake Superior. Heading for a port in Cleveland, the giant transport ship is loaded with ore that will be used to build cars. But disaster is building in the wind as a gale storm begins to track after the great ship. This suspenseful retelling of the last hours of the doomed vessel pays homage to all sailors who traverse deep waters, in fair skies and foul. Atmospheric paintings from award-winning artist Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen bring the story to life. The author of the best-selling books *The Legend of Sleeping Bear* and *The Legend of Mackinac Island*, Kathy-jo Wargin aims to help young readers notice the most intricate details of a story by adding the nuances that create magic and wonder in a good tale. She lives in the woods of northern Michigan with her family. *The Edmund Fitzgerald* is her 10th book with Sleeping Bear Press. Born in the Netherlands, Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen, or "Nick" as he prefers to be known, studied at the Royal Academy of Arts in Holland. He immigrated to the United States in 1976. *The Edmund Fitzgerald* is Nick's 13th children's book with Sleeping Bear Press. *The Legend of Sleeping Bear* was Nick's first book and has sold more than 200,000 copies.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 48 pages

Publisher: Sleeping Bear Press; 1st edition (September 1, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1585361267

ISBN-13: 978-1585361267

Product Dimensions: 11 x 1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 26 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #213,293 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #77 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > State & Local](#) #113 in [Books > Children's Books > Cars, Trains & Things That Go > Boats & Ships](#) #193 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > 1900s](#)

Age Range: 5 - 8 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 4

## Customer Reviews

Kindergarten-Grade 3--A picture book about the sinking of the cargo ship Edmund Fitzgerald during

a storm on Lake Superior in 1975. The vessel's bell, which eventually became a memorial to the lost sailors, is the focal point of the narrative. Tension builds steadily as the story unfolds. Members of the crew are introduced by name, and the fictionalized dialogue makes the story more immediate and true to life. Conversation, largely between Captain McSorley and the captain and first mate of the Arthur M. Anderson, another ship on the lake at the time, is undocumented. A poem interspersed throughout the text creates a sentimental, disjointed effect. Endpapers list names, positions, and hometowns of the men, and an afterword by the Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society describes how the bell was retrieved and became a memorial. Paintings show the movement and danger of the lake, and different angles are used to capture the drama of the tragedy. This title should be considered an additional purchase where there is regional demand.--Debbie Stewart, Grand Rapids Public Library, MI Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Gr. 2-5. This handsome picture book draws on history to tell the story of the last voyage of the Edmund Fitzgerald, a ship that sank in a Lake Superior storm in 1975. All 29 crew members drowned. The text combines prose paragraphs with rhymed couplets, a device that works fairly well, as the book both tells the tale and laments those who drowned. Wargin uses the ship's bell as a unifying focus for the story. When the ship was at sea, the bronze bell clanged every four hours to signal the watch change, and later, "The battered bell rang as the storm held its grip-- / It rang for the men at the heart of the ship." Finally, it was retrieved from the sunken vessel and replaced with a replica inscribed with the names of those who perished. The dark, dramatic paintings expressively illustrate the somber story with respect for the men and for the danger of the treacherous storm, which is vividly portrayed. Carolyn Phelan Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

"The 'Edmund Fitzgerald' Song of the Bell" by Kathy-Jo Wargin is a rather unusual entry in the vast array of books on the sinking of the "Edmund Fitzgerald." It is a generally accurate account of the November 1975 accident that claimed the lives of 29 sailors on Lake Superior, but what distinguishes this book is that it's specifically aimed at children and is beautifully illustrated with paintings by Gijsbert van Frankenhuyzen. The text is largely in well-written prose, though the "Song of the Bell" angle, despite making it into the title, is a bit unwieldy. Essentially the story is told in prose with intermittent couplets sprinkled throughout which serve to tell the story a second time poetically (e.g. "The battered bell rang as the storm held its grip / It rang for the men as the heart of

the ship.") I think it would have worked better to feature the poem on a single page as an introduction rather than distributing it throughout the book in italics, as the net effect is to make the text seem a bit disjointed. Despite the stylistic issues, I think the book works very effectively as a children's introduction to the sinking of the "Fitzgerald," and the paintings are truly excellent, especially for a book with this intended audience. For those with children interested in dramatic stories, ships, The Great Lakes, maritime tragedies, or ore processing and transportation this is an excellent choice.

While this is an awesome book on a subject I love learning more about. We found out upon delivery that it was definitely a kids book. Haha! Our fault for not reading more closely but it is an overall well written book based on factual information from the incident.

My 5 year old son had taken on some sort of obsession with this tragedy ever since I played the song for him on the anniversary. He loves this book and shows everyone that comes around. It's a wonderfully drawn book and tells the story in a beautiful way.

Good book for little kids. I bought it for my 8 year-old and it's slightly below his reading level, but that's ok. He loves the pictures. Drawings are great!

My 8 year old grandson loved this book and the details of the ship itself. Being in Michigan made it even more special.

Our Grandson (to whom this was a gift) is fixated on the Edmund Fitzgerald! He can sing the Gordon Lightfoot song from beginning to end...

My five year old is obsessed with the Edmund Fitzgerald, this book was perfect for him and the illustrations are breathtaking.

My 8 year old grandson discovered his love for ore boats. Books on this subject are hard to find. I was very excited to find this nicely written and illustrated book.

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