



# In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette

By Hampton Sides

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## **In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette** By Hampton Sides

***New York Times* bestselling author Hampton Sides returns with a white-knuckle tale of polar exploration and survival in the Gilded Age**

In the late nineteenth century, people were obsessed by one of the last unmapped areas of the globe: the North Pole. No one knew what existed beyond the fortress of ice rimming the northern oceans, although theories abounded. The foremost cartographer in the world, a German named August Petermann, believed that warm currents sustained a verdant island at the top of the world. National glory would fall to whoever could plant his flag upon its shores.

James Gordon Bennett, the eccentric and stupendously wealthy owner of *The New York Herald*, had recently captured the world's attention by dispatching Stanley to Africa to find Dr. Livingstone. Now he was keen to re-create that sensation on an even more epic scale. So he funded an official U.S. naval expedition to reach the Pole, choosing as its captain a young officer named George Washington De Long, who had gained fame for a rescue operation off the coast of Greenland. De Long led a team of 32 men deep into uncharted Arctic waters, carrying the aspirations of a young country burning to become a world power. On July 8, 1879, the USS *Jeannette* set sail from San Francisco to cheering crowds in the grip of "Arctic Fever."

The ship sailed into uncharted seas, but soon was trapped in pack ice. Two years into the harrowing voyage, the hull was breached. Amid the rush of water and the shrieks of breaking wooden boards, the crew abandoned the ship. Less than an hour later, the *Jeannette* sank to the bottom, and the men found themselves marooned a thousand miles north of Siberia with only the barest supplies. Thus began their long march across the endless ice—a frozen hell in the most lonesome corner of the world. Facing everything from snow blindness and polar bears to ferocious storms and frosty labyrinths, the expedition battled madness and starvation as they desperately strove for survival.

With twists and turns worthy of a thriller, *In The Kingdom of Ice* is a spellbinding tale of heroism and determination in the most unforgiving territory on Earth.

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### Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

**An Amazon Best Book of the Month, August 2014:** In the last few decades of the 19th century, the world looked very different from the way it does now. Parts of the map were unfilled--chief among those spaces was the North Pole, which many believed contained warm currents that might provide safe passage. Enter James Gordon Bennett, the wealthy and eccentric owner of the *New York Herald*. Bennett--who was responsible for sending Stanley in search of Livingstone--wanted to produce another thrill for his readers, so he funded a naval expedition to reach the pole. Captained by George Washington De Long, the U.S.S. *Jeannette* shipped out in 1879 toward glory and parts unknown. The *Jeannette* became encased in ice, but the adventure was only just beginning. Author Hampton Sides does a masterful job of setting up the voyage against the backdrop of the Gilded Age, developing fascinating characters along the way, and delivering a true triumph of narrative nonfiction. Drawing on journal entries, letters, and eventually his own visit to the region, Sides paints a vivid, moving, and breathless portrait of the crew of the *Jeannette*. How could a book about this much snow and ice be this good? --Chris Schluep

Review

"**Enthralling...** *In the Kingdom of Ice* is a **brilliant explosion of narrative non-fiction**: detailed, moving, harrowing, **as gripping as any well-paced thriller but a lot more interesting because it is also true...** Too often American heroism is presented at one-dimensional success against the odds... This is a much more subtle and rewarding book, an account of magnificent disaster, of courage devoted to attempting something that could not be done."

--*The Times of London*

"As our knowledge of the world increases, it must be difficult for audacious explorers to find terra incognita to match their passion. Surely the same frustration holds true for writers in that worthy genre, exploration literature: Haven't all great stories been told? Never underestimate the ingenuity of a first-rate author. Hampton Sides's *In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette*, which recounts the astonishing tribulations of a group of seafarers determined to be the first men to reach and reconnoiter the North Pole, is a **splendid book in every way**... It would be malicious to ruin the suspense about the fate of the *Jeannette*'s crew... **The book is a marvelous nonfiction thriller.**"

--*The Wall Street Journal*

"**Compelling...**Sides spins a **propulsive** narrative from obscure documents, journals and his own firsthand visits to the Arctic regions visited by the *Jeannette* and its crew. *In the Kingdom of Ice* makes for **harrowing** reading as it recounts the grim aspects of the explorers' battle for survival: illness, crippling frostbite, snow-blindness and the prospect of starvation. As grisly as the details are, you **keep turning pages** to find out how DeLong and his men pull themselves past each setback — even though there's always another one looming ahead."

--*USA Today*

“[Sides] brings vividness to *In the Kingdom of Ice*, and in the tragedy of the Jeannette he’s found a story that epitomizes both the heroism and the ghastly expense of life that characterized the entire Arctic enterprise...With an eye for the telling detail, he sketches the crew members as individuals...The bare facts of what happened to the Jeannette’s crew are easily Googleable, but if you don’t already know the story, *In the Kingdom of Ice* **reads like a first-class epic thriller**. De Long and his companions became explorers of not only unknown geographical territory but also extremes of suffering and despair. **In his stoic endurance of disappointment and pain, De Long rivals Louis Zamperini, the hero of Laura Hillenbrand’s *Unbroken*...**”

--Lev Grossman, *Time Magazine*

“**First-rate polar history and adventure narrative...wonderfully evocative....** Sides vividly recounts the horrors [of the voyage]. *In the Kingdom of Ice* is **a harrowing story, well told.**

--*The New York Times Book Review*

“**Unforgettable...a pulse-racing epic of endurance set against an exceedingly bizarre Arctic backdrop...**[Sides’] descriptions of the physical challenges the men face and the eerie landscape that surrounds them are masterful. As De Long and his crew attempt to save themselves, the story grows in suspense and psychological complexity...More strange and fantastic turns follow, involving uncharted and uninhabited lands, and it pains me that I cannot describe them without spoiling the pleasure of those who have not yet read *In the Kingdom of Ice*. Sides’ book is **a masterful work of history and storytelling.**”

--*The Los Angeles Times*

“America’s own brush with epic polar tragedy, the subject of Hampton Sides’ **phenomenally gripping** new book, is a less well-known affair...What ensued — a struggle to survive and a nearly 1,000-mile trek across the Arctic Ocean and into the vastness of Siberia — stands as one of the most perilous journeys ever. Sides works **story-telling magic** as he evokes the pathos and suffering of what unfolded: De Long and his crew endured hardships that boggle the mind. But there is also beauty here... [Sides] writes superbly on the geography of Siberia and the Arctic, and the abundant bird and animal life the explorers encountered on their travels, which took them across ice, storm-tossed seas, treacherous tundra, rocky seacoasts, and volcanic islands.”

--*The Boston Globe*

“...harrowing and impeccably paced.”

--*The New Yorker*

"A dazzling page-turner...."

--Nathaniel Philbrick, *New York Times* bestselling author of *In the Heart of the Sea*, *Bunker Hill* and *Sea of Glory*

“[A] stunningly vivid account....”

--Mark Bowden, *New York Times* Bestselling author of *Black Hawk Down*

“An astonishingly good story....”

--Candice Millard, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Destiny of the Republic* and *The River of Doubt*

"Hampton Sides conjures the doomed *USS Jeannette* and her courageous crew with haunting power...."

--**Caroline Alexander**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Endurance* and *The Bounty*

"A spellbinding tale...."

--**David Grann**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Lost City of Z*

"Hampton Sides is one of America's most expansive and engaging storytellers, and he proves it again with the incredible saga of the *USS Jeannette*...."

--**Scott Anderson**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Lawrence in Arabia*

"A vivid tale of exploration set in a howling, deadly wilderness."

--**T.J. Stiles**, *Pulitzer Prize* winning author of *The First Tycoon: The Epic Life of Cornelius Vanderbilt*

About the Author

HAMPTON SIDES is an award-winning editor of *Outside* and the author of the bestselling histories *Hellhound on his Trail*, *Blood and Thunder* and *Ghost Soldiers*.

## Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Matthew Waddell:**

The book *In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette* make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You can use to make your capable much more increase. Book can for being your best friend when you getting anxiety or having big problem along with your subject. If you can make studying a book *In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette* to get your habit, you can get a lot more advantages, like add your current capable, increase your knowledge about many or all subjects. It is possible to know everything if you like wide open and read a guide *In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette*. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science publication or encyclopedia or some others. So , how do you think about this reserve?

**Rodney Mitchell:**

The feeling that you get from *In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette* will be the more deep you digging the information that hide in the words the more you get considering reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to comprehend but *In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette* giving you enjoyment feeling of reading. The article author conveys their point in certain way that can be understood by anyone who read the idea because the author of this book is well-known enough. This book also makes your vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We propose you for having this specific *In the Kingdom of Ice: The Grand and Terrible Polar Voyage of the USS Jeannette* instantly.

**Nancy Jones:**

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