



All Standing: The Remarkable Story of the Jeanie Johnston, The Legendary Irish Famine Ship

By Kathryn Miles

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The enthralling, true tale of a celebrated “coffin ship” that ran between Ireland and America in the 1840s: “By turns harrowing and heartwarming...*All Standing* salvages the treasure of a history lost at sea” (J.C. Hallman, author of *The Devil Is a Gentleman*).

More than one million immigrants fled the Irish famine for North America—and more than one hundred thousand of them perished aboard the “coffin ships” that crossed the Atlantic. But one small ship never lost a passenger.

All Standing recounts the remarkable tale of the *Jeanie Johnston* and her ingenious crew, whose eleven voyages are the stuff of legend. Why did these individuals succeed while so many others failed? And what new lives in America were the ship’s passengers seeking?

In this deeply researched and powerfully told story, acclaimed author Kathryn Miles re-creates life aboard this amazing vessel, richly depicting the bravery and defiance of its shipwright, captain, and doctor—and one Irish family’s search for the American dream.

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Editorial Review

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The exodus from the Irish famine of the 1840s prompts Miles' contribution to the literature of Eire's trauma. It chronicles the 10-year existence of a sailing ship that embarked refugees for North America. Named the Jeanie Johnston, a reconstruction of which is today displayed in Dublin, the ship was purpose-built for the emigration trade by a shipwright, with a captain and a doctor whom Miles portrays as humanitarians; she writes distinctly less enthusiastically of the entrepreneur in the port of Tralee, Ireland, who financed the ship. No matter who merits the credit for the Jeanie Johnston's career, credit there was, for her voyages were distinguished for not losing any passengers; Irish immigrants died in droves on other ships. Offering great detail about the Jeanie Johnston's nautical characteristics, Miles exemplifies the Irish immigrant's transatlantic experience in one family who endured the crossing, passed through quarantine inspection in Canada, and settled in the U.S. Chronicling the Johnston's further journeys and sinking in 1858, Miles, who follows occasional tangents like Queen Victoria's visits to Ireland, ably regales her central story of a remarkable vessel. --Gilbert Taylor

Review

"An enchanting and dedicated historian, Kathryn Miles takes us on a journey from lore to science and back again. By turns harrowing and heartwarming, *All Standing* salvages the treasure of a history lost at sea." -- **J.C. Hallman, author of *The Devil is a Gentleman and Wm & H'ry and In Utopia***

"*All Standing* illuminates a dire period in history I knew little about. Through Kathryn Miles' crisp writing and meticulous research, I gained understanding and insight into this humanitarian crisis, but also was felt as if I was a passenger on the harrowing trans-Atlantic crossing of the *Jeanie Johnston*. Bravo to the author for bringing the story to life and illuminating the best and worst of the people involved." -- **Michael Tougias, author of *A Storm Too Soon, Fatal Forecast, and Overboard!***

"Well-researched and engagingly written, Kathryn Miles' *All Standing* is full of compelling characters--including the Jeanie Johnston herself. The ship becomes a beacon of hope in an age Miles paints with vigor as beset by famine, disease, political callousness and cruelty." --**Ginger Strand, author of *Killer on the Road and Inventing Niagara***

"Kathryn Miles illuminates the true horror of the Irish Potato Famine in the way that only well written and thoroughly researched narrative history can, presenting the story in every instance through the eyes of the people who lived it, making it all the more palpable, the suffering and the glimmers of hope all the more immediate. This is a very well done book about one of the most brutal and shameful episodes in the past three hundred years of Western history." --**James L. Nelson, author of *With Fire and Sword: The Battle of Bunker Hill and the Beginning of the American Revolution***

"This is the story of the miraculous Jeanie Johnston, a ship that defied all odds crossing the Atlantic--but Kathryn Miles delves much deeper, weaving through it the larger stories of deadly sea-faring, rampant epidemic disease, and the disastrous, mass displacement of the Irish. With expert attention to detail and seamless writing, Miles takes you aboard the 'coffin ships' and into the lives of the shipbuilders, captains, maritime physicians, Irish refugees and those remarkable individuals who managed to survive." ---- **Molly Caldwell Crosby, author of *The Great Pearl Heist and The American Plague***

"From moldering black potatoes in the fields of mid-19th Ireland, to hostile "Irish need not apply" signs cropping up across American cities, the story of the great potato blight is neither simple nor direct. Kathryn Miles makes this sweeping, often overwhelmingly sad story both lucid and accessible as she tells the tales of captivating characters, including Quebec shipbuilder John Munn, Irish ship surgeon Richard Blennerhassett, and Reillys, a beleaguered family of immigrants. Miles puts faces on one of history's greatest calamities."
--Wayne Curtis, author of *And a Bottle of Rum: A History of the New World in Ten Cocktails*

"The author's solid research and use of newly available material exposes the truth of the Potato Famine, the barbaric policies that exacerbated it and the incredible will of the Irish people." --*Kirkus Reviews*

About the Author

Kathryn Miles is a professor of environmental writing at Unity College. She is the author of *Adventures With Ari* and dozens of articles that have appeared in publications, including *Alimentum, Best American Essays, Ecotone, Flyway, Meatpaper, and Terrain*. She lives—and sails—in Belfast, Maine.

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