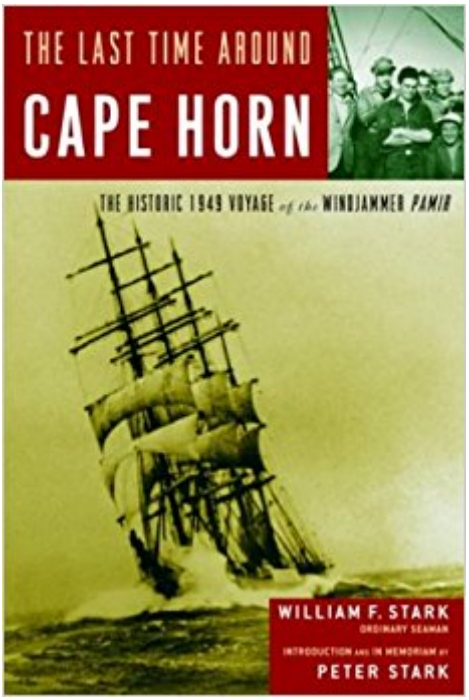
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The Last Time Around Cape Horn: The Historic 1949 Voyage Of The Windjammer Pamir



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Synopsis

In 1949, a young Dartmouth student named William Stark left his study-abroad program in Zurich for a berth as an Ordinary Seaman on a Finnish windjammer that would carry 60,000 sacks of barley 12,000 miles in 128 days from Australia to Europe, around Cape Horn. This is StarkÃ¢â ¬â„¢s engrossing memoir of the end of a long tradition of young men going to sea in the Great Age of Sail, and the final rounding by a commercial sailing ship of fearsome Cape HornÃ¢â ¬â •the veritable Mount Everest of sailing. Stark vividly chronicles the PamirÃ¢â ¬â„¢s journey through the worldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s stormiest seas as he worked brutal four-hour watches on decks awash with the huge swells of the Southern Ocean, and scrambled up ice-coated rigging to manhandle sails on masts that were up to twenty stories high. Stark experienced the shipboard life of the seventeenth century in 1949 on a vessel longer than a football field. Contrasting the romance and realities of life on the sea, and poignantly evoking the passionate love affair he left behind, Stark wrote a thrilling narrative that brings closure to the era of Cape Horn merchant sailors that began more than three centuries before. Pages of memorable photographs are included.

Book Information

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: Carroll & Graf; First American Edition edition (September 23, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0786712333

ISBN-13: 978-0786712335

Product Dimensions: 8.6 x 5.8 x 1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 17 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,678,367 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #85 inÃ Â Books > Sports & Outdoors > Outdoor Recreation > Sailing > Narratives #1285 inÃ Â Books > Engineering & Transportation > Transportation > History > Ships #1444 inÃ Â Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Geography > Regional

Customer Reviews

The year 1949 marked the final journeys of commercial windjammers, huge, steel-hulled, four-masted sailboats carrying cargo halfway around the world. Stark was a sailor on the Pamir, a Finnish ship, the very last windjammer to sail commercially around Cape Horn, and lived to write this romantic tale of adventure and camaraderie tempered by grueling, dangerous work. The author,

who committed suicide earlier this year at age 75 after suffering from depression, had been enthralled with ships and sailing since childhood. He first heard of the Pamir's voyage in a Zurich cafe during a year abroad as a college student in 1947. He quit school to fly to Australia to try to get a job on the ship. That trip, on a tiny, rickety charter plane, was an adventure in itself, as Stark and his seat mate, a charming Frenchwoman en route to Indonesia, were engaged in a brief but passionate affair as they braved hair-raising takeoffs and brushes with guerrilla war in Saigon. Eventually arriving at the Pamir's port, Stark spent months working on the docks, acquiring, at the last minute, a much-coveted berth on the Pamir as an Ordinary Seaman. The four-month voyage across the world's most stormy and dangerous seas, without engines or even a radio, challenged him not only with dangers like furling sails atop 200-foot-high masts in hurricane winds, but also with grinding work and sleep deprivation demanded by four-hour watches. This entertaining memoir seamlessly imparts sailing terms and ocean lore, and will enthrall all who have held romantic notions of life at sea. Maps, photos not seen by PW.Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

In 1949 the Pamir sailed from Port Victoria, Australia, to Falmouth, England, a 16,000-mile, 128-day journey through raging seas. It was the last commercial sailing vessel to round Cape Horn, the storm-tossed tip of South America, and it^B carried 60,000 sacks of barley. On board was Stark, a 22-year-old sailor who worked on the decks along with 33 other seamen. Stark describes his four-hour watches with little sleep (he was fully dressed with clothes perpetually wet with seawater), drinking rum (a time-honored reward for hard work and a job well done), raging gales, torrential tropical rain, the sheer terror of sailing through a hurricane, and floundering around in the fog and calm off the Cornish coast. Stark's son, Peter, wrote the introduction, a loving tribute to his father, who killed himself earlier this year. The book, with 16 pages of black-and-white photographs, is^B

William Stark, a young American with a passion for adventure, pens a story full of surprises from beginning to end.Against the odds, he gives up study in Switzerland to fly on a dubious air service to Sydney and continues on to South Australia to seek a berth on Pamir, a windjammer recently released as a prize of war by New Zealand. Pamir is loading barley for London. The last of the so-called grain races is about to set off under the command of Finish Captain Verner Bjorkfelt.He arrives to discover all berths have been filled but a pub brawl with police provides the opportunity for Stark to join the last journey around storm-tossed Cape Horn by a sailing ship. He was known as `The Yank' amongst his crew mates of New Zealanders, Australians, Finish and British. The voyage is a rough one and Stark's recording of it is skillful. Its hard to put the book down. As a story of the

sea it would be hard to beat.

Fascinating book. Very well-written.

This is a most wonderful Book. My Friend picked up a Jack Reacher Book at the Doctor's office - and we have been reading like crazy. However, as fun as it's been - I like true stories even better. So lately I've become an Armchair Sailor. Of all the book I've read - this has been the best one. I was afraid to suggest it - but my Friend is just loving it. There's nothing like finding a great book.

this is a great book! the detail of the day to day aboard a square rigger bound for cape horn is great reading,but the adventures of the young man detrmined to be on the ship when it leaves port makes this a real fun book and hard to put down.The memoriam makes it a very meloncholy ending to a great story about a adventrous life lived and a grand old ship.highly recommended

As a sailor, I found the book to be truly exciting and interesting. I learned so much about Cape Horn and windjammer boats. The story has me wanting to sail a windjammer around Cape Horn someday!!

Delightful read about sailing round the Horn of South America, the southernmost point of land in the world. Great tale of a bygone era, now that the Panama Canal has made the trade route obsolete.

It is about half way through the book before he actually boards the windjammer; the first bit deals with his adventures on the way to Australia to join the ship. Nevertheless, a good read expecially because the (late) author tells his story frankly and from the heart.

I love Arctic & Antarctic exploration books. This book was as interesting & exciting as most of them. Even the many many technical details were interesting.

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