



## 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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**Bibliography**

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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 Schlupe

Review

*The Bounty*

"Hampton Sides has written a dazzling page-turner. Full of unforgettable characters and vividly described scenes, *In the Kingdom of Ice* breathes fresh, exuberant, and very personal life into the polar adventure story that once riveted the world."

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

"This is an astonishingly good story, told by one of the best storytellers of our age. Alone, the tale of the USS *Jeannette* is darkly gripping. In the hands of Hampton Sides, it is impossible to put down, packed with irresistible characters and incredible moments of horror and heroism. As soon as I finished it, I flipped to the first page and began reading it again."

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

"Hampton Sides masterfully recounts one of the greatest and most harrowing adventures of all time. *In the Kingdom of Ice* is a spellbinding tale not only of a journey into the Arctic but also into the very nature of man."

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

"Hampton Sides is a master storyteller, and here he has delivered a stunningly vivid account of perhaps the most dramatic polar mission you never heard of. Once you start, you won't stop."

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

"Read this book in two ways-- fast, for the hair-raising excitement of what happens to the brave men of the *Jeannette*, and then slowly, to take in the clarity of the writing and the unshowy elegance of the structure.

The grand disaster that befell this expedition, and the heroic, truly Siberian sufferings of Captain De Long and his comrades, have found a brilliant chronicler in Hampton Sides.”

- **Ian Frazier, National Bestselling author of *Travels in Siberia and On the Rez***

"With colorful characters and rich research distilled into gripping suspense, *In the Kingdom of Ice* gives us a fascinating but little-known slice of American history that resonates strongly amid our contemporary discussions of climate change. Here is 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***

"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*. *In The Kingdom of Ice* is far more than the tale of a polar expedition gone awry. Sides has brought together an absolutely marvelous cast of characters – daring and dangerous and more than a little preposterous – to tell not just a classic adventure story, but to shine a fine light on that bizarre American era known as the Gilded Age. All works of history should be half this much fun."

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

"Hampton Sides has written an arctic thriller, an authentic narrative masterpiece that I put down only reluctantly and willingly gave up sleep in order to finish. I *had* to find out what happened to these remarkable men in that wide and desolate sea of ice.

- **S.C. Gwynne, New York Times bestselling author of *Empire of the Summer Moon* and *Rebel Yell***

"Hampton Sides' many gifts include his ability to make readers feel the bracing cold of Arctic winds and the smoldering heat of separated lovers. This extraordinary book overflows with heroic characters and bursts with insight into a young nation flexing its ambitions on a global scale. The result is narrative nonfiction history at its very best. *In the Kingdom of Ice* has earned a place among the great sea adventure stories."

- **Mitchell Zuckoff, New York Times bestselling author of *Frozen in Time* and *Lost in Shangri-La*.**

“Another crackling tale of adventure from journalist/explorer Sides...this one focusing on a frigid disaster nearly 150 years ago... A grand and grim narrative of thrilling exploration for fans of *Into Thin Air*, *Mountains of the Moon* and the like.”

- **Kirkus (Starred Review)**

"With its western frontiers explored and the idea of Manifest Destiny still beckoning, the U.S. in the Gilded Age looked to the North Pole for adventure and conquest... In July 1879, the USS *Jeannette* set sail with a crew of 32 men for uncharted waters. It was an extraordinary expedition... Sides (*Hellhound on His Trail*)tapped amazing archival material, including diaries, letters, and the ship logs, to render a completely thrilling saga of survival in unbelievably harsh conditions."

- **Booklist (Starred Review)**

"Compulsively readable, *In the Kingdom of Ice* brilliantly recreates a world, invites us to enter it and to experience the isolation, fear and hope of the people in it, and leads us back to our world with a clearer understanding of what motivates those who undertake daunting but heroic challenges."

- **Bookpage**

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:**

#### **Colby Tapia:**

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#### **Cynthia Kipp:**

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#### **Joshua Hsu:**

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