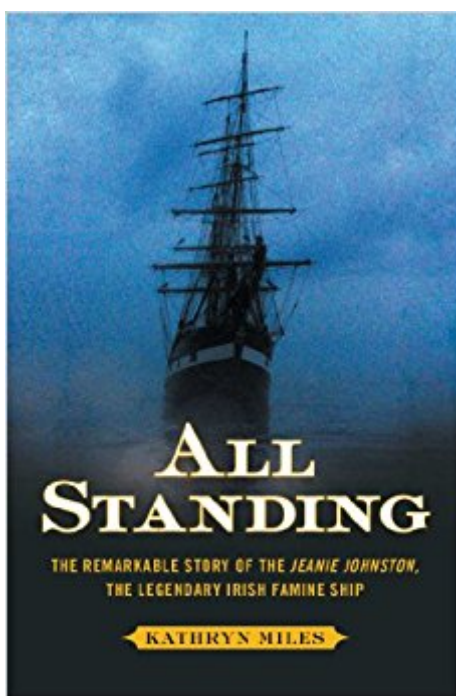


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# All Standing: The Remarkable Story Of The Jeanie Johnston, The Legendary Irish Famine Ship



## Synopsis

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. > recounts the remarkable tale of the > 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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The exodus from the Irish famine of the 1840s prompts Miles’s 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 --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"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."

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Flying back to the United States from Dublin in October 2014, I finished reading the book "All Standing" by Katherine Miles. The author sets the stage and background for the Irish immigration in the mid-1800s. Interestingly, the book starts out in Fergus Falls, Minnesota - "close to home". As we flew, I reflected: -Delta leaving Dublin and arriving 8 hours later in Atlanta. (seven hours crossing the Atlantic) two meals on the plane. -The average "famine ship"... 3 months after leaving Tralee, 50% of passengers have died and been jettisoned. The rest are ambulatory, maybe a dozen able to walk off the ship. I was led to the book by a chance encounter in Dublin. Walking through St. Stephen's Green, we edged into a group on tour being lectured to. (Caught our attention so much we ended up giving the leader a tip) we started listening when gathered around a statue of the men on horseback depicting the 1700s - when "Ireland was flush". Fifty yards away was a group of statues depicting famine 100 years later. The next day I walked down to the river Liffey where a replica "Jeannie Johnson" ship is moored as a museum. Unfortunately, she was in drydock undergoing maintenance. I did witness the famine sculpture remembrance on the bank of the river. Haunting.

This is a remarkable book providing an in-depth look at how one ship provided transportation for the Irish victims of the famine from Ireland to the American continent. While the Captain and crew provided better care for passengers than did most "famine ships", it clearly relates how difficult and, in many cases, horrendous was the struggle for the Irish to survive. The Irish endured a number of terrible years in Ireland as well as many years of hardship and prejudice in the United States and Canada. The author follows a number of families after their arrival on one or another of the ships sailings thus providing a very real picture of their struggles. If the reader has a single Irish ancestor and some 50 million of us do, the book will provide an easy and fascinating read as well as an in-depth understanding of what our ancestors went through and how fortunate we of later generations

are that they had the tenacity to keep working toward success despite the terrible challenges they faced. A short book and worth the time to read

Kathryn Miles' *All Standing* takes us along on the perilous Atlantic journey undertaken by 1 million desperate Irish emigrants in the midst of what has become known simply as "the Famine", (as if there had been only one). Although the story of the famine is one most Americans are familiar with, since it was the impetus of so many of our ancestors, *All Standing: The True Story of Hunger, Rebellion, and Survival* brought to life parts of the story I'd never heard before. The *Jeannie Johnston* was one of the many famine ships that came to be known as coffin ships, due to the high incidence of deaths that occurred among the "huddled masses" in steerage. However, passengers aboard the *Jeannie Johnston* had the miraculous good fortune of voyaging on the one ship that could boast no mortalities on board, in all of her many journeys to ports in Canada. The "miracle" was not the result of dumb luck or divine intervention, but of a combination of a well-planned design by a master shipbuilder in Quebec, the rigid habits of a meticulous captain, and the exceptional medical care of a doctor who somehow kept cholera at bay in horrible conditions at sea. Miles' breathes life into this often told story by taking the reader from the to the shipyards of Quebec and the quarantine hospital on Grosse Isle to the halls of Parliament in England, where English nobility decided the fate of millions of Irish sufferers through their control of the economy. At times the narrative read like a novel. The stories of the passengers didn't end when they reached North America. We learn of their fates as they struggle in logging camps in Canada, or migrate to the United States to be met with signs warning them "Irish need not apply". This story of the unlikely resilience of an entire people against nature, centuries of tyranny, and genocide is one that should be told again and again, and Kathryn Miles does it very well.

After vacationing in Ireland and going on a tour of the *Jeanie Johnston*, I wanted to learn more about this incredible "coffin ship" that made so many trips across the Atlantic during the famine and didn't lose the life of one passenger. The tour guide told me that when I got back to the states I could buy an excellent book by an American author -- Kathryn Miles -- with even more information about the ship and the Great Potato Famine in general. The book was a fascinating read -- there was so much I never knew about the plight of the poor Irish people during that time, as well as the inhumanity of those who could have helped and chose not to. This book doesn't read like a textbook, however. The author paints a vivid picture of several real-life characters that you feel you really "know" by the end of the book -- some you'll respect and admire -- others are despicable and

I'm sure, an embarrassment to their descendants! Highly recommended!

This story is about an exceptional ship designed as a freighter, built by an exceptional man, operated by exceptional administrators, crewed by exceptional men and put to exceptional work carrying freight and people fleeing the Irish potato famine. Thousands died on the dozens of ships in the evacuation effort, but none die on this ship and that is what this story is about. This book gives a glimpse into the lives of desperate people and those who helped them and hindered them in their escape from certain death. This book is worth reading.

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