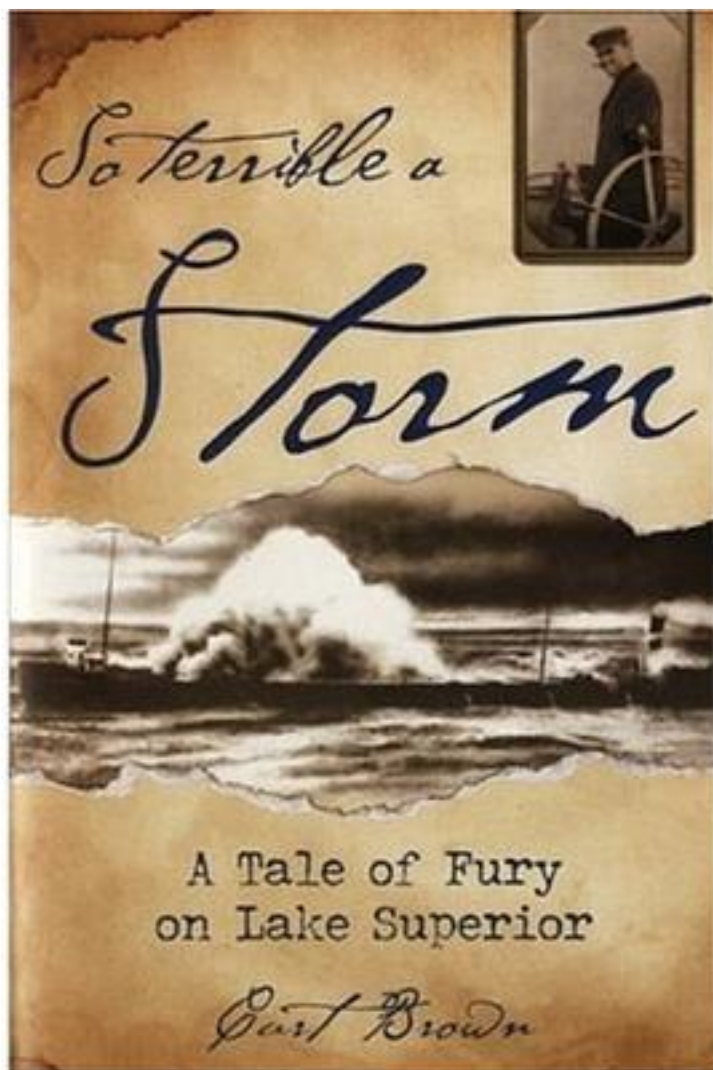


So Terrible a Storm



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It was Thanksgiving 1905 and thirty-one ships were on Lake Superior, making the season's last run. What none of the sailors knew till it was far too late was that they would soon face the worst storm ever to hit the Great Lake, a storm that nearly half of their number would not survive. This is the story of that fateful storm, and of one of the worst shipping disasters in the nation's history. Combining temperatures of -24 Centigrade, driving sleet, hail, rain in winds of sixty miles an hour, this terrible storm came from nowhere, with no warning, and battered at Lake Superior and the ships on her: the iron-carrying barge Edenborn, broken in two with the loss of 19 lives in a few moments; the Ira H Owen, driven onto rocks and relentlessly pounded to pieces; the Mataafa, smashed against the wall of the harbor she was trying to enter, driven aground, and torn into three broken segments. Altogether, over twenty commercial ships and smaller boats were destroyed, many of them still preserved at the bottom of the lake, in the worst storm to visit its wrath in this part of the world. It is a tale of people pitted against the elements, of a disaster so extreme that, in its wake, weather forecasting, navigation, shipbuilding, and compass-reading in light of the Iron Range's magnetism were forever changed.

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