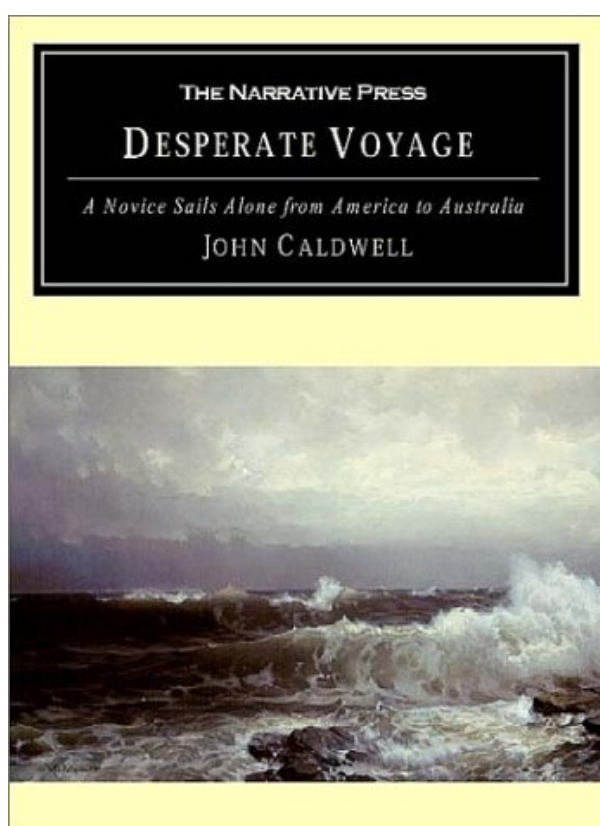
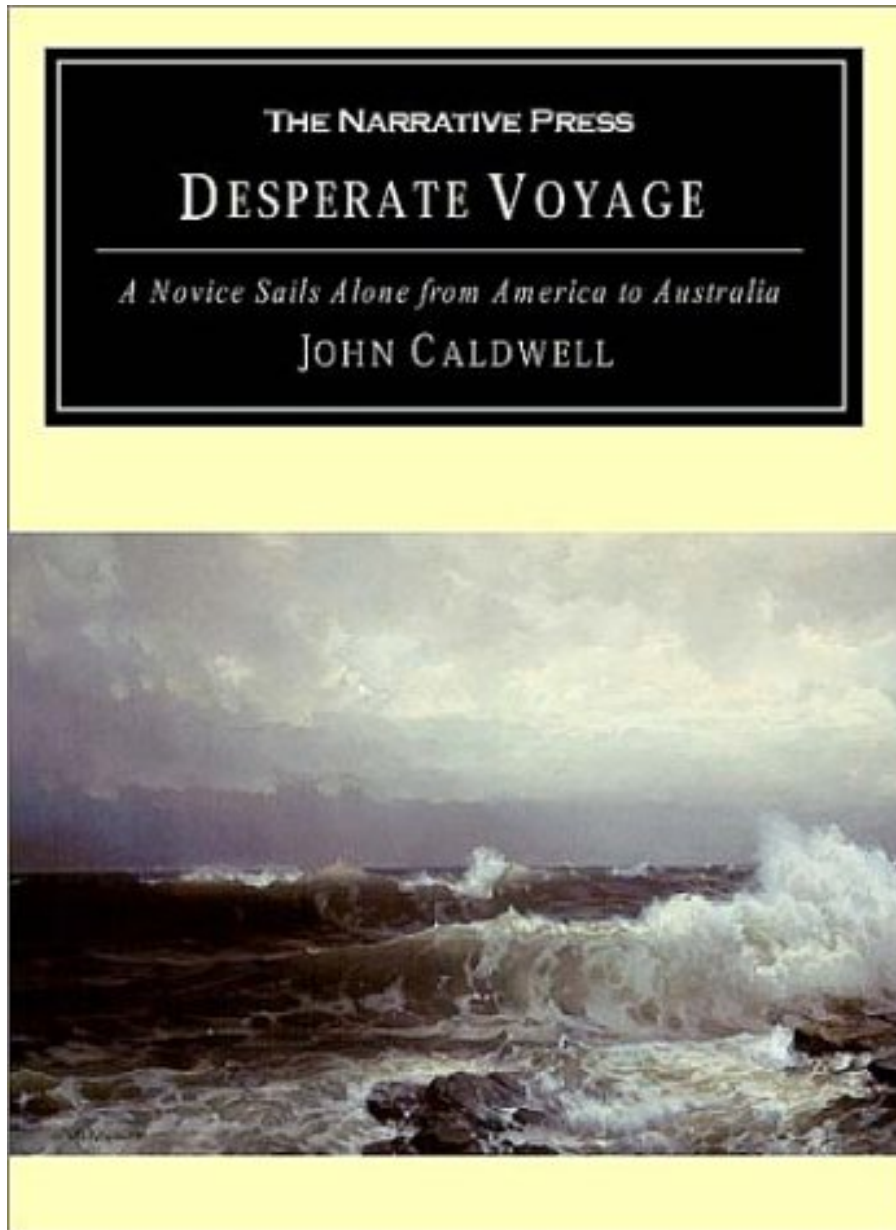


**DESPERATE VOYAGE: A NOVICE SAILS
ALONE FROM AMERICA TO AUSTRALIA
BY JOHN CALDWELL**



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Review

A must read for all would-be voyagers. (Latitude 38)

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"I longed to see my bride again. However, I must admit, as sailing time neared I was gripped more and more with a fever for what was ahead. The adventure of it drew me on like a magnet. In three years of sailing on heavy freighters and oilers in the Merchant Marine, I had never been so taken with the romance of a sea voyage. Suddenly I was rapt in the prospect; my own boat to command at my own will on the southern seas."

Surprisingly enough for a Merchant Marine, Caldwell had no firsthand knowledge of sailing - he did have a

copy of How to Sail which he read everyday and "mentally practiced the ritual of getting under sail." He name his ship the Pagan, and with twin kittens as crew, he set off:

"I decided on the spur of the moment not to use the sails since the engine performed so agreeably. I lashed the tiller, and sprang to the bow to ready the anchor in case I needed it. It was tangled with its chain, which was strewn across the fore scuttle.

"I took up the anchor, heaved back on the folds of chain to clear them, and made to lay the anchor beside its hawsehole. The deck tilted ever so slightly I stubbed against the traveller. My foot slipped. I went over, back first, clawing upward. I was under in a second, dragged by the anchor. I dropped it, and groped to the surface. When I could see again, Pagan was a length away, sliding eagerly on toward the moored yachts. The anchor chain was rattling through the hawse..."

In a flash the ship turns on its anchor chain and heads straight for him...

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It's the end of WWII, the author is stranded in the United States, and he wants to return to his wife in Australia. So he buys a 27 foot cutter and sets sail across the Pacific. He survives 8,500 miles of variable seas, reefs, tropic islands, crossing the equator, languishing in the doldrums, and thrashing through hurricane seas - all single-handed. A charming (and terrifying) book.

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- Published on: 2001-06-01
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- Number of items: 1
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- Binding: Paperback
- 325 pages

Features

- Used Book in Good Condition

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Most helpful customer reviews

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

Rivetting! A wonderful tale of one man against the sea!

By Roger J. Buffington

This is a true story that is more engrossing than pretty much any novel you are likely to find. After the end of the Second World War, the author's Australian wife is ten thousand miles away, and it is impossible for him to book passage from the States to Australia, what with the war just having ended and available shipping tied up for years. So he decides to do a solo sail in a small sailboat from Panama to Sydney.

Therein lies a tale of hardship, resourcefulness, courage, and (may I say it) at least one part bad judgment, as

the author single-handedly crosses the better part of the Pacific Ocean in a small and primitive, but plucky sailing vessel. I am sure that I am not giving anything away when I tell you that the author stares death and starvation in the face on more than one occasion.

The author knows how to tell a good story, and I was unable to put this one down once I got past about the first chapter. I was up until 3 in the morning trying to finish it, unable to put it down or go to sleep. This is a terrific story with equal parts humor, desperation, and audaciousness.

This is a classic mariner's tale that anyone who loves boats or the ocean will want to read, own, and read repeatedly. Highly recommended.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

One of the craziest survival stories ever!

By CWW

Every bit as incredible a survival story as Shackleton is. Starts a bit slow, but by the time he hits the hurricane, its an irresistible page-Turner!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

What one man will do for love

By Steve Petito

I first read this story as a twelve-year old in high school, and was fascinated by the amazing adventure undertaken by one man as he strove to cross the largest ocean on Earth against almost insuperable odds. At that age, I was thrilled by the dangers and daring involved.

Stumbling across the book again forty-five (yes, forty-five) years later, I was delighted to find the tale just as exciting as it had been so long ago. However this time, I was much more impressed not by the author's hair-raising adventures, but by the amazing love he must have had for his wife to embark on such an epic voyage. All in all, it is great read for both young and old!

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