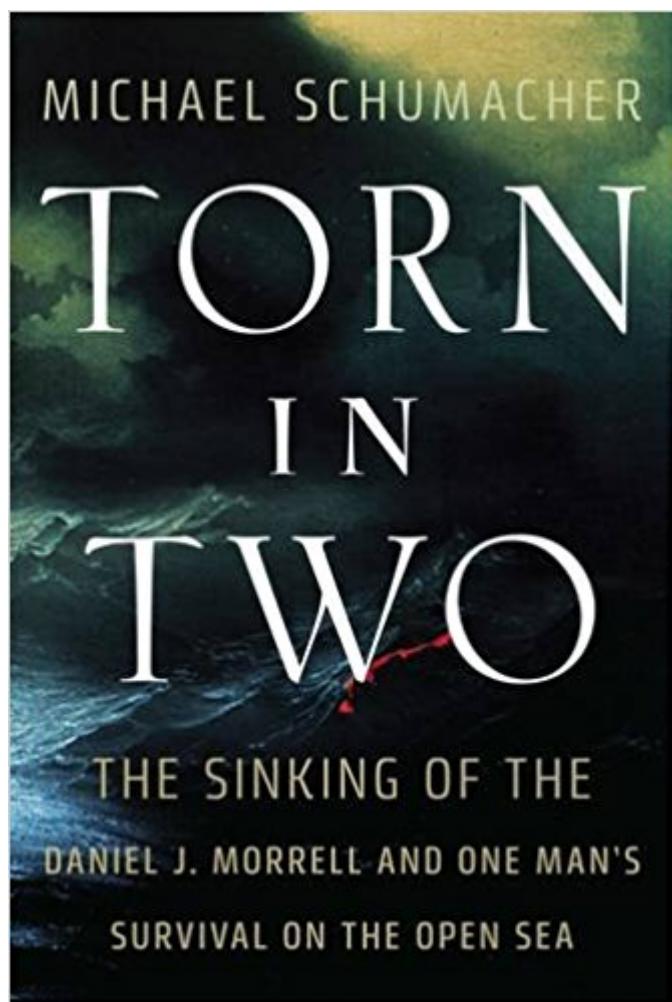


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# Torn In Two: The Sinking Of The Daniel J. Morrell And One Man's Survival On The Open Sea



## Synopsis

Dennis Hale reached the dock just in time to see the Daniel J. Morrell heading out to open waters, a 600-foot freighter that had plied the waters for sixty years, carrying ore from Minnesota's Iron Range to steel firms around the Great Lakes. The twenty-six-year-old watchman had, quite literally, missed the boat—which meant scrambling to rejoin the Morrell at its next stop or forfeiting a good chunk of his pay package. Seventy-two hours later, Hale would find himself clinging to a life raft alongside the frozen bodies of his crewmates in the violent waves of Lake Huron. The boat would not be reported missing for another twenty-seven hours and by the time the life raft was found, Dennis Hale would remain as the sole survivor of the wreck of the Daniel J. Morrell. This is life-and-death drama on the inland sea as only Michael Schumacher can tell it. In *Torn in Two* the great Lakes historian recreates the circumstances surrounding the terrible storm of November 29, 1966, that broke the mighty freighter in half, sending twenty-five of the Morrell's twenty-nine-man crew to their deaths and consigning the surviving four to the freezing raft where all but Hale would perish. At the heart of *Torn in Two* are the terrible hours spent by Hale on the life raft with his crewmen, clinging to life for thirty-eight hours in freezing temperatures and wearing only a peacoat, life jacket, and boxer shorts. The fight to save Hale and find the others, the Coast Guard hearings into what happened, the discovery of the wreckage—Schumacher's vivid narrative captures every harrowing detail and curious fact of the Morrell's demise, finally doing justice to this epic shipwreck fifty years past.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Michael Schumacher's latest book is tragic, gripping, and hard to put down. He captures the fury of the Great Lakes as a winter storm rips a steel hull in two and tosses the crew into the lake's cold, dark maw. What happens next is a true survival tale." •Cary Griffith, author of *Savage Minnesota* and *Lost in the Wild*"Schumacher provides depth and reality to the story that he tempers with engaging writing." •Great Lakes Echo"For wreck junkies, this is a treasure trove." •Star Tribune"This remarkable and tragic true story will be appreciated by those who enjoy Great Lakes history." •Green Bay Press-Gazette

Michael Schumacher has published three previous books about the Great Lakes: *Mighty Fitz*, about the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald; *The Wreck of the Carl D.*, about the loss of the Carl D. Bradley; and *November's Fury*, an account of the Storm of 1913, the deadliest in Great Lakes history. *Dharma Lion* •his acclaimed biography of Allen Ginsberg •will be reprinted by the University of Minnesota Press in 2016. He recently edited *The Essential Ginsberg* and is currently writing an account of the 1968 presidential election, also to be published by Minnesota. He lives in Wisconsin.

Needed more back ground info on the crew and especially the survivor. Also more information on his life after he was saved. It needed more discription of the storm. Disappointing.

Good story, but half of book is a coast guard report. Just page fillers

Son in law intrigued

The massive ore boats of the Great Lakes are quite a sight to behold, and I remember watching for them while vacationing on the shores of Lake Superior in Upper Peninsula Michigan. So to read about a ship being torn completely in half and killing all aboard but one was quite remarkable. It details the history of disasters on the lakes, the conditions for such a calamity, sole survivor Dennis Hale's traumatic ordeal, and the ensuing investigation. It's not a long read, but the Morrell's fate is related in great detail. The final third of the book is supplementary material including the reports by various agencies. It was a decent account of the biggest shipwreck prior to the famous Edmund Fitzgerald sinking. I received a complimentary copy of this book from the publisher.

This is the second book on this topic I have read. First was Sole Survivor. This was more in depth. Pardon a horrendous pun. For those who love Great Lakes and freighter tales. Well done. I learned about the Townsend. I was unaware of that. Other facts I was unaware of, too. Not riveting, another bad pun, but for those who love the lakes, the ships and the courageous men and women who ply them, this book's for you. I feel for Mr. Hale. Quite a story. Quite a life. Worth your while. Not terribly long and an easy read.

Great book about the Great Lakes ships and men who sail them in very dangerous waters. A brief history of several shipwrecks from years ago with a detailed account of the sinking of the DJ Morrell with loss of all hands but one, the late Dennis Hale who adds his memories to the book. The last portion of the book contains information including the official report of the US Coast Guard. Several USCG Cutters involved in the search and rescue operation are mentioned with pictures of the ships and a few crewmembers...of which, I was one.

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