

Ashes Under Water: The SS Eastland and the Shipwreck That Shook America

Michael McCarthy



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Ashes Under Water: The SS Eastland and the Shipwreck That Shook America Michael McCarthy It was the summer that broke America's heart.

In 1915, Chicago commuters were horrified to see the *SS Eastland*, a massive Lake Michigan steamship, flip over while tied to its dock. More than eight hundred poor factory workers and their children drowned. Twenty-two whole families perished. The nation cried out for justice. Drawing on previously unpublished evidence from the National Archives, *Ashes Under Water* is the untold story of a mysterious industrial atrocity and how the prosperous, guilty *Eastland* owners tried to shift the blame to the whistleblower and one true hero on the ship, Engineer Joseph Erickson, a working class immigrant. Against all odds, an attorney down on his luck at the time then stepped in to save him: Clarence Darrow, the future legal star. A national tragedy, Chicago politics, corrupt businessmen, a courtroom drama-all woven into one spellbinding narrative. Author Michael McCarthy takes us back one hundred years to the gritty streets of Chicago and the throaty blast of steamship whistles, unveiling the full story of the tragedy--and its incredible

aftermath--for the first time.

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