



Airborne: A Sentimental Journey

William F. Buckley Jr.

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About this title: On a month-long cruise across the Atlantic on his sailboat Cyrano, Buckley logs daily occurrences and reflections, recalls previous sailing experiences as far back as age 13, and considers his success as a seaman and father. A chapter on how to navigate stands out.

Airborne: A Sentimental Journey Details

Date : Published November 1st 1976 by Scribner (first published January 1970)

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Author : William F. Buckley Jr.

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From Reader Review Airborne: A Sentimental Journey for online ebook

Geekonabike says

Very entertaining

Mclaughlin725 says

Though at times his writing style can be overly obtuse, this is an enjoyable read. Makes me want to find someone who I can crew for on a transatlantic. I look forward to reading his later book about his second crossing.

Ian Howe says

As an ex seafarer I just had to read this and glad I did. Brilliant, even though there are pages of digression in my opinion. A very good read. Loved it WFB.

First Last says

I hate sailing. I loved this book.

Win Dunwell says

A great read for the sailor by a man who enjoyed living, friends and family.

Suzanne says

This is one of my favorite sailing books of all time. It is a memoir the late William F. Buckley wrote about his transatlantic sail with dear friends and his beloved son. His wit is just unrivaled. A book to read and then reread.

Michael G says

A great pleasure to be transported by sail along with such wonderful people across the great Atlantic. An ode to sailing, to friends, to family, and to fathers and sons.

Gordon Francisco says

Buckley - the boys - the stories - the wine @ Nevin time - cigars and lots of sailing and weather and editorial side bars make this a very fun read indeed.

Carole says

Sucked back in to plain good non pretentious writing by WFB about sailing. Hilarious, deadly serious, literally, at times but always entertaining. It is seducing me away from the other book I'm reading right now because it is just so much fun. When he writes about his wife, his son & his friends & is unstinting about describing all the mistakes he makes, you can tell this comes from the heart.

Thoroughly enjoyable; even though this voyage was undertaken in a 70ft boat with a professional crew of 4, the other sailors really sail & do participate in whatever discomforts occur, typical breakdown of everything electronic included.

Roger Hallman says

This account was my first read of a prolonged sail. I very much want to do something similar one day.

Jane(Pixie) says

WFB writes and shows his real passions boats, sailing to exotic places He is a man who really values friends, family and an enjoyment for life. I can totally appreciate all exploits with boats. This read rings true. It makes me want to be a better mate, sailor and honor the privilege and comraderie that this life style offers. I will read more of his adventures. Sailors don't miss this read. It still rings for me.

Patrick says

"Airborne" is about William F. Buckley Jr.'s first Trans-Atlantic sailing voyage aboard his beloved cruiser Cyrano. I stumbled on this little jewel in a box free books kindly given to me and thoroughly enjoyed it. Being a huge fan of maritime literature, both fiction and non-fiction, classic and contemporary... I was immediately sold on this book... and it did not disappoint.

All politics aside, William F. Buckley (WFB) was an undeniably brilliant writer and conversationalist. Unknown to some, he was also a highly competent skipper and racer. His mastery of the english language and sharp wit really added to the enjoyment of the book. For those with socio-political hangups with WFB, don't let his infamous über-conservative opinions and well known diatribes steer you away from reading "Airborne"... He keeps it non-partisan and focuses his incredible storytelling and writing skills on his intense passion for sailing, navigating, and wayward adventuring. His love of the sea is apparent in every chapter.

The book has a very pleasant anecdotal tone, which made for a quick and entertaining read. It is as if the reader is having a fireside conversation with WFB as he reminisces about his first Trans-Atlantic sailing voyage and other fond memories of sailing, racing, and the pitfalls of boat ownership and equipment failure. Buckley's wry humor and self-deprecation is present throughout. WFB also peppers in many fascinating asides on the technical aspects of sailing and a few short unrelated asides about famous figures with whom he rubbed shoulders with and often quipped. A definite high point is the chapter devoted to celestial navigation in which it is broken down in layman's terms. WFB was renowned for his mastery of celestial navigation and his ability to explain it in a simple, no nonsense manner. Text is also interspersed with very entertaining ship's log entries by the Captain and numerous members of his crew, which included his youthful son Christopher and other characters who's contributions were colorful (to say the least) and often hilarious. Laughs abound as they recount downright hedonistic "shore leaves" and shipboard pranks, often perpetrated at the Skipper's expense. Though there is plenty of levity, there are deeper introspective moments shared by WFB and crew as well as several edge-of-your-seat moments as they brave the elements and fury of the sea. There are also plenty of great photos, diagrams, and maps throughout.

I highly recommend "Airborne" to the seasoned sailer, layman, adventurer, nautical fanatic, and casual reader. It is a really fine book and great edition to any library. Not knowing much about WFB (politically or otherwise) prior to reading this book, I now count myself among his fans. The world lost a great writer, sailer, humorist, and man when WFB passed away in 2008. This book serves as a testament to his incredible life and contributions to the literary and sailing communities.

I'm looking forward to reading the second book in the WFB series of four sailing books, "Atlantic High" (followed by "Racing Through Paradise" and "Windfall".) I have no doubt the other books will deliver the same enjoyment.

Xdw says

timely read, given WFB's recent passing

Carol says

An early self-improvement project was reading WFB with the intention of expanding my vocabulary. In my fifties I'm much more intrigued by his phrases (e.g. the shoulders of the ocean). The vocabulary is obscure (he'd have said *abstruse*).

Words I learned while I read *this* book:

anfractuosities
billingsgate
lambent
ineluctable
nugatory
thaumaturgical
emetic
tatterdemalion
ocholocracy

sufruct
desuetude

Words I plan to incorporate in my vocabulary:

Okay, maybe *lambent* (glowing, flickering with soft radiance). I wrote down *prestipulated* mispronouncing it mentally as PREST-i-pu-LATED. Than laughed out loud. Pre-stipulated. Got it.

Buckley, his son, his sister-in-law, and friends set sail in the a sixty-foot schooner *Cyrano* from Miami to Gibraltar via the Bahamas and the Azores. I enjoyed reading about the planning, the potential perils, tedium, mechanical failures, a society in miniature, sublime moments and successful completion of their journey.

I enjoyed Buckley's fifteen-page explanation of celestial navigation with a sextant. And chortled at the newest technology brought aboard: *a cassette television cartridge player*. I learned about heaving-to (bringing a sailing vessel to a stop) and knockdowns (boat suddenly goes horizontal); YouTube offers spectacular videos of knockdowns.

Two quotes:

But this is sailing, eh. No matter that nothing works...so what if the electrical system on this boat is a cogent argument for the return to gas and steam; because on a night such as this, your hull buried in the swells and your sails knifing the wind, the only things that matter are a steady helm, a clear head, and a warm jacket. On a night such as this who needs the consolation of philosophy? — from Christopher Buckley's journal

The only female onboard goes by the name Bill. Bill F. is Buckley's wife's sister.

I point out a couple of signals to Bill, one of whose enduring charms is that she is interested in everything, while affecting knowledge of nothing: though she is a grand master as administrator, world champion as friend and counselor.
