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The Adventures and Sufferings of John R. Jewitt, Captive of Maquinna.
Annotated and illustrated by Hilary Stewart.

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been himself, the comparisons and allusions of his journals convey a sense of utter confidence in the all-encompassing, immutable certainty of the early eighteenth century European's Biblical view of the world (There are still plenty of like mind amongst us today, of course). Even the most critical, iconoclastic twentieth-century reader might, however, almost warm to the childlike faith implicit in such statements on the Indians as "It's probable their Government may not be much unlike to those a little after the Flood" (page 63). Herein, perhaps, lies the greatest value of the journals, for in describing the Chickasaws, the Talapoosies, and the others Nairne held up a mirror to his own tribe, the English. *Nairne's Muskhogean Journals* is as much cultural artifact for the anthropology of eighteenth-century Anglo-Americans as it is documentary source for the ethnohistory of Muskhogean nations.

While we must overlook the editor's historical blindness to the present in asserting that Nairne's ethnological information "outlasted the tribes themselves" (page 7) and forgive him his Anglo-chauvinist gushing that Nairne's expedition "rivalled the far-flung exploits of Spanish *conquistadores* and French *coureurs de bois*" (page 7), we must be grateful to Moore for recognizing the importance of the Nairne manuscript, which he encountered "while researching another topic from another era" (page vii), and making the material available to the scholarly world through this little book.

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The Adventures and Sufferings of John R. Jewitt, Captive of Maquinna. Annotated and illustrated by Hilary Stewart. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1987. 192 pages, 170 drawings, maps, bibliography, index. \$29.95 Cloth.

In the summer of 1802, Captain John Salter of the American brigantine *Boston* brought his ship to Hull, England to be outfitted to sail to the Northwest Coast of America, where he planned to trade with Indians for sea otter pelts to resell in China. He often spent evenings with a blacksmith friend, whose nineteen year old son John listened attentively to stories of his world travels.

One evening, Salter asked, in a "rather a jocose manner," whether John would like to accompany him on his immanent voyage. John replied that it would give him "great pleasure," since he had "for a long time wished to visit foreign countries, particularly America" [pages 33–34]. When the *Boston* sailed from Hull, its armourer was the skilled young John Jewitt.

Jewitt hoped to settle on the east coast of America, where wages would be higher than in England. It would be much longer than he could have guessed before he realized this dream. On March 12, 1803, the *Boston* pulled into Friendly Cover near Nootka Sound, the sea otter fur trading hub of the northwest. The ship anchored near the village of the Maquinna, a powerful leader frequently mentioned in the journals of early explorers and fur traders. During the next ten days, the sailors had intermittent contact with Maquinna and his people, exchanging presents and hospitalities. On March 22, reportedly without warning, the villagers attacked.

As a blacksmith, Jewitt had skills important to Maquinna, and the leader wanted to capture him alive. The *Boston's* sail-maker, John Thompson, escaped detection during the battle; Jewitt pretended Thompson was his father and persuaded Maquinna to spare him also. The two sailors lived as slaves of Maquinna, with dwindling hopes of rescue as the seasons passed. They moved with the Indians to winter villages and back to their place of capture in the summers, always hoping for the arrival of another trading vessel, but the fate of the *Boston* deterred other captains from venturing there.

Jewitt and Thompson were expected to work for Maquinna and to participate in warfare, but Jewitt reported that they were generally well cared for. Throughout his captivity Jewitt and Thompson kept track of time, worshipping on Sundays when feasible and observing Christian holidays. Over time Jewitt dispatched sixteen letters via Native friends, hoping one would reach the hands of a sailor. Finally, in July 1805, he got word to the American ship *Lydia*, and—by imploring the captain to take Maquinna as hostage—engineered the release of himself and his companion. The *Lydia* reached the home port of Boston two years later. Thompson died soon after—if not en route—but Jewitt remained in America.

During his captivity Jewitt kept a journal. Thompson volunteered his blood for ink, but Jewitt used vegetable dyes. He

recorded specific information about his experiences, as well as notes relating to the Indians' practices. This journal was published in 1807, shortly after Jewitt reached Boston. Eight years later, a longer narrative was published, written with the established Connecticut author Richard Alsop. Jewitt, who had by that time married and sired several children, spent much of the remainder of his life marketing the book and promoting a stage version of his experiences. He died in Hartford in January 1821 at the age of thirty-seven years.

Jewitt has by no means been unknown to scholars; his journals have been recognized as an important and distinctive early source of information about Northwest Coast Indians and the fur trade. His narrative was recently republished in 1976, which brought it to Hilary Stewart's attention. Stewart, a prolific author and illustrator who has written extensively about Northwest Coast Indians, decided the journal deserved an annotated version embellished with numerous pen-and-ink illustrations, maps and an index.

The result is a very attractive edition that is inviting to read and easy to comprehend. Each page has one column of text from an 1851 version of Jewitt's narrative, reprinted verbatim with original spellings. The majority of each page is reserved for the captioned black-and-white illustrations and the annotations.

The annotations serve multiple purposes: they define archaic terms, add explanatory details about Native customs, correct mistakes Jewitt made in identifying indigenous species, mark place names more specifically, and even compare Jewitt's narrative with his shorter journal, noting discrepancies.

The illustrations are similarly wide ranging, showing Native peoples, their artwork, dress and tools, articles important in maritime exploration and the fur trade, and plants and animals used by the Indians and mentioned in the journal. Stewart derived images of Native peoples from archival photographs, at times taking "liberties . . . removing or substituting clothing or backgrounds not in keeping for the period in question" [page 9]. Drawings of ethnographic and archaeological artifacts and of people have references to archives or repositories. All drawings have captions explaining their significance.

Stewart's annotation helps provide context for the narrative but does not compete with it; the reader's attention is never diverted far from the original text, and the original text is compelling. Unlike Thompson, who reportedly never overcame his initial

hatred of the Indians, Jewitt viewed many with an affection that was evidently reciprocated. In his narrative Jewitt was careful to explain that the attack on the *Boston* stemmed not from capricious violence, but from injustices perpetrated on Indians. He asserted, “. . . I have no doubt that many of the melancholy disasters have principally arisen from the imprudent conduct of some of the captains and crews of the ships employed in this trade, in exasperating [the Indians] by insulting, plundering, and even killing them on slight grounds” [pages 113–114]. One of the most moving passages in the narrative is Jewitt’s description of his leave-taking from Sat-sat-sak-sis, the young son of Maquinna, who “could not bear to part with me” [page 167]. Jewitt was not free from prejudice, but he was remarkably sympathetic to the Indians compared to some other fur traders who left journals during the same era. Jewitt’s narrative is engaging reading not only for the ethnographic details, but also for his portrayal of his lively characterizations of himself, of Thompson, and of individuals in the Native community.

Stewart provides an introduction and conclusion setting historical context, but does not attempt penetrating analysis of Jewitt’s writing. While she comments on the ethnographic value of the texts and notes some errors, she does not include substantial discussion of this issue. Similarly, she points out inconsistencies between Jewitt’s journal and his later narrative—suggesting that events such as his wedding were embellished for dramatic effect in the narrative—but does not suggest whether such discrepancies cast suspicion on the narrative as a whole. She provides heretofore little-known information on Jewitt’s activities after his release, but does not speculate as to whether his unsettled life and his alienation from his English family represented an inability to adjust to his former way of living.

Since the author intends to annotate rather than analyze, these omissions are understandable. Stewart’s considerable contribution is to make an important story all the more compelling, and to help bring it to the attention of a wider scholarly and popular audience. There is much left for future writers to say about the Jewitt narrative; and in part thanks to Stewart, they are likely to say it.

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