

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson

****A Narrative of the Captivity Mary Rowlandson: Exploring One of Colonial America's Most Famous Captivity Stories****

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson is a gripping and historically significant account that offers a unique window into early American colonial life and Native American relations. Written by Mary Rowlandson herself, this narrative details her harrowing experience as a captive during King Philip's War in 1675-1676. More than just a personal memoir, it became one of the first bestselling books in America and a foundational text in the captivity narrative genre. Today, it continues to be studied not only for its historical content but also for its literary and cultural significance.

Understanding Mary Rowlandson's story gives us insight into the complexities of colonial and Native American interactions, the role of faith during times of crisis, and the resilience of the human spirit amid adversity.

Background of Mary Rowlandson and King Philip's War

Before delving into the narrative itself, it helps to know the context in which Mary Rowlandson's captivity took place. Mary was the wife of Reverend Joseph Rowlandson, a Puritan minister in Lancaster, Massachusetts. The time was one of tense and often violent conflict between English settlers and Native American tribes, especially as colonial expansion encroached on indigenous lands.

King Philip's War, named after the Wampanoag chief Metacom (known as King Philip), erupted in 1675 and became one of the deadliest conflicts in American history relative to the population size. The war was marked by brutal raids, sieges, and widespread fear on both sides. It was in this fraught environment that Mary Rowlandson was taken captive during a raid on Lancaster.

The Capture and Initial Ordeal

In February 1676, a group of Native Americans attacked the settlement of Lancaster. Mary, along with her three children, was taken hostage. Tragically, one of her children died during the captivity, underscoring the brutal conditions she endured. Her narrative vividly recounts these moments of terror, loss, and uncertainty.

Her captivity lasted for about 11 weeks, during which she was moved from place to place with her captors. The journey was grueling, filled with hunger, harsh weather, and physical exhaustion. Yet, through it all, Mary's narrative reveals her deep reliance on her Puritan faith, which she credited with sustaining her through the ordeal.

Key Themes in “A Narrative of the Captivity Mary Rowlandson”

Mary Rowlandson's account is rich with themes that resonate far beyond her personal experience. Exploring these themes helps readers appreciate why this narrative has endured for centuries.

Faith and Providence

One of the most prominent themes is Mary's unwavering faith in God. Throughout her captivity, she frequently interprets her suffering as a test from God, often citing scripture to make sense of the events. This spiritual lens is central to the narrative, reflecting Puritan beliefs about divine providence and the idea that hardships serve a higher purpose.

Her reflections on faith offer modern readers an understanding of how religion shaped colonial life and provided comfort during times of crisis. For students of American literature and history, this spiritual dimension adds depth to the captivity story.

Cultural Conflict and Perception of Native Americans

“A Narrative of the Captivity Mary Rowlandson” also reveals much about 17th-century colonial attitudes toward Native Americans. Mary's descriptions are a mixture of fear, misunderstanding, and occasional admiration for the survival skills of her captors. However, the narrative largely portrays the Native Americans as hostile and savage, reflecting the tensions and prejudices of the period.

Modern readers and scholars often analyze the text to explore how captivity narratives shaped colonial views of Native peoples and contributed to long-standing stereotypes. It's a vivid example of how literature can both document history and influence cultural perceptions.

Survival and Resilience

Beyond the religious and cultural aspects, Rowlandson's story is fundamentally one of survival. Her ability to adapt, negotiate for her release, and maintain hope in dire circumstances highlights human resilience. The narrative details moments where she barter for food, endures physical hardship, and navigates complex social dynamics within her Native captors' group.

This theme of endurance resonates universally, making the narrative compelling even to readers far removed from its historical context.

Literary Significance of the Captivity Narrative

Mary Rowlandson's account is often credited with establishing a new literary genre in early America: the captivity narrative. These stories, which recount the experiences of colonists captured by Native Americans, became wildly popular in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Why "A Narrative of the Captivity Mary Rowlandson" Stands Out

What sets Rowlandson's narrative apart is its detailed, first-person perspective combined with its publication shortly after the events occurred. It was one of the first memoirs by a colonial American woman to be widely circulated, making it a pioneering work in American literature.

The narrative's structure—a blend of personal reflection, religious meditation, and vivid storytelling—helped it appeal to a broad audience. It inspired subsequent captivity stories and even influenced later American literary traditions, including themes of frontier life and cultural encounter.

Influence on American Identity and Storytelling

This narrative also contributed to shaping early American identity by highlighting themes of struggle, faith, and survival in a new and challenging land. It framed the colonial experience as a spiritual and physical journey, emphasizing perseverance against adversity.

In classrooms today, "A Narrative of the Captivity Mary Rowlandson" is studied not only for its historical content but also as a foundational text in understanding how early Americans narrated their experiences and constructed their cultural identities.

Insights on Reading and Analyzing the Narrative Today

When approaching a historical text like Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative, it's helpful to consider both its historical context and its broader literary and cultural implications.

Tips for Modern Readers

- **Consider the author's perspective:** Mary Rowlandson wrote from her Puritan worldview, which influences how she interpreted her experience. Being aware of this helps readers critically assess the narrative.
- **Understand the historical background:** Familiarity with King Philip's War and colonial-Native American relations deepens appreciation for the events described.
- **Reflect on the narrative's impact:** Think about how captivity narratives shaped colonial attitudes and American literature.
- **Look for themes of faith and resilience:** These universal themes transcend the specific historical moment and connect with readers on a human level.

Using the Narrative in Educational Settings

Educators often use this narrative to explore a variety of topics, from colonial history to literary analysis. It can serve as a springboard for discussions about cultural conflict, gender roles in early America, and the power of storytelling in shaping historical memory.

Integrating primary sources like Mary Rowlandson's account alongside modern interpretations helps students develop critical thinking skills and a nuanced understanding of early American history.

Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative remains a powerful testament to the complexities of colonial America and the enduring human spirit. Its blend of personal experience, religious reflection, and cultural commentary continues to captivate readers and scholars alike, making it a vital piece of America's literary and historical heritage.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson' about?

It is a firsthand account by Mary Rowlandson describing her capture by Native Americans during King Philip's War in 1675, her experiences in captivity, and her eventual release.

Why is Mary Rowlandson's narrative considered significant in American literature?

The narrative is one of the earliest and most influential captivity narratives in American literature, providing insight into colonial and Native American relations and reflecting Puritan beliefs and values.

How does Mary Rowlandson portray Native Americans in her narrative?

Rowlandson often depicts Native Americans as both brutal captors and as complex individuals, reflecting the tensions and prejudices of her Puritan background.

What themes are prominent in Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative?

Major themes include survival, faith and providence, cultural conflict, and the struggle between captivity and freedom.

How does Mary Rowlandson use religion in her narrative?

Rowlandson frequently interprets her captivity through a Puritan religious lens, viewing her ordeal as a test of faith and evidence of God's providence and mercy.

What impact did Mary Rowlandson's narrative have on later literature and culture?

Her narrative popularized the captivity narrative genre, influenced American perceptions of Native Americans, and contributed to discussions on cultural identity and colonialism.

Additional Resources

A Narrative of the Captivity Mary Rowlandson: A Historical and Literary Examination

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson remains a pivotal work in early American literature, offering a profound glimpse into the experiences of colonial captivity during King Philip's War. This 1682 captivity narrative not only documents Mary Rowlandson's harrowing ordeal among Native Americans but also serves as a foundational text for understanding the cultural, religious, and political tensions of 17th-century New England. As one of the earliest and most widely read captivity accounts, its significance extends beyond mere storytelling, providing scholars and readers with invaluable insights into early colonial perspectives and intercultural dynamics.

The narrative, often studied in the context of Puritan ideology and colonial conflict, blends personal testimony with religious reflection, making it a rich subject for historical and literary analysis. In this article, we delve into the complexities of Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative, exploring its historical context, thematic elements, and enduring impact on American literature and cultural memory.

Historical Context of Mary Rowlandson's Captivity

Mary Rowlandson's narrative is set against the backdrop of King Philip's War (1675-1678), one of the most devastating conflicts between Native American tribes and English settlers in New England. This war arose from escalating tensions over land, resources, and cultural misunderstandings between the colonists and indigenous peoples. The war's violence culminated in numerous raids and kidnappings, with Rowlandson's capture during the Lancaster Raid of 1676 becoming emblematic of the era's brutal realities.

The narrative recounts her capture by a group of Nipmuc warriors and her subsequent 11-week captivity. During this time, Rowlandson was separated from her family and subjected to the hardships of life on the move with her captors. Her account provides a first-person perspective on Native American life and the psychological trauma experienced by colonial captives, while also reflecting the Puritan worldview that interpreted suffering as a test of faith.

Puritanism and Religious Interpretation

A defining feature of a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson is its integration of Puritan religious ideology. Throughout the text, Rowlandson interprets her experiences through a Calvinist lens, emphasizing God's providence and the redemptive value of suffering. Her narrative is punctuated with biblical quotations and prayers, reinforcing the notion that her survival was contingent upon divine intervention.

This religious framing served several purposes. It provided Rowlandson and

her contemporaries with a means of making sense of trauma and loss. It also functioned as a didactic tool, illustrating the virtues of faith and perseverance to a colonial audience. This intertwining of personal ordeal and spiritual reflection has made the narrative a seminal example of Puritan captivity literature.

Literary Significance and Narrative Structure

From a literary standpoint, a narrative of the captivity Mary Rowlandson is notable for its straightforward, chronological structure and vivid descriptive passages. The narrative's clarity and emotional immediacy helped it achieve widespread popularity in colonial America and beyond. It was among the first American bestsellers, reprinted multiple times in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The text's narrative arc follows a classic captivity story framework: capture, endurance, negotiation for release, and eventual freedom. However, Rowlandson's account distinguishes itself by its nuanced portrayal of her captors and her complex psychological responses. While the text often depicts the Native Americans as "savage" in line with contemporary colonial rhetoric, it also includes moments of empathy and humanity, reflecting the ambiguous and often contradictory nature of intercultural encounters during the period.

Key Themes Explored in the Narrative

Several thematic threads run through Mary Rowlandson's captivity narrative, contributing to its richness and depth:

- **Survival and Resilience:** The narrative highlights Rowlandson's physical and emotional endurance, chronicling the challenges of scarcity, displacement, and fear.
- **Faith and Providence:** Her reliance on scripture and prayer underscores the centrality of religion as a source of comfort and explanation.
- **Cultural Otherness:** The depiction of Native Americans oscillates between demonization and reluctant respect, reflecting the colonial mindset and the complexities of intercultural contact.
- **Identity and Transformation:** Rowlandson's captivity forces a reevaluation of her identity, as she navigates life between two worlds.

Impact and Legacy in American Literature

A narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson has had a lasting influence on the genre of captivity narratives, which flourished throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. It set a precedent for personal accounts of abduction and survival that often combined adventure with moral and religious instruction.

Moreover, the narrative provides a valuable historical document illuminating the fraught relations between European settlers and Native Americans. Modern scholarship has revisited Rowlandson's text with a critical eye, acknowledging its biases while also appreciating its literary craftsmanship and historical detail.

Comparative Perspectives

When compared with other captivity narratives, such as those of John Williams or Mary Jemison, Rowlandson's story stands out for its early publication date and religious emphasis. Later captivity accounts sometimes present more complex or sympathetic portrayals of Native Americans, reflecting evolving colonial attitudes.

Furthermore, contemporary Indigenous scholars have critiqued captivity narratives for perpetuating stereotypes and justifying colonial expansion. These critiques invite readers to approach Rowlandson's narrative not only as a personal testimony but also as a product of its time, shaped by power dynamics and cultural conflict.

Relevance in Contemporary Discourse

Today, a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson continues to be studied in academic settings, from history to literature and cultural studies. Its exploration of trauma, identity, and intercultural contact resonates with ongoing conversations about colonialism, memory, and reconciliation.

Educators often use the text to illustrate early American history and Puritan culture, while encouraging critical discussions about representation and bias. Digital editions and annotated versions have made the narrative more accessible, allowing a wider audience to engage with this foundational work.

In the broader context of American narratives, Rowlandson's captivity story contributes to an understanding of how early colonists perceived themselves and others, shaping collective memory and national identity.

In tracing the contours of Mary Rowlandson's captivity through both

historical and literary lenses, it becomes clear that her narrative occupies a complex space within American cultural heritage. It is at once a personal chronicle, a religious testament, and a document of colonial encounter. The enduring interest in this text underscores its multifaceted nature and its role in shaping the story of early America.

A Narrative Of The Captivity Mary Rowlandson

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a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson Mary Rowlandson, 2017-10 Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson....Mary (White) Rowlandson was a colonial American woman who was captured during an attack by Native Americans during King Philip's War and held ransom for 11 weeks and 5 days. After being released, she wrote A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson, also known as The Sovereignty and Goodness of God. On the tenth of February 1675, came the Indians with great numbers upon Lancaster: their first coming was about sunrising; hearing the noise of some guns, we looked out; several houses were burning, and the smoke ascending to heaven. There were five persons taken in one house; the father, and the mother and a sucking child, they knocked on the head; the other two they took and carried away alive. There were two others, who being out of their garrison upon some occasion were set upon; one was knocked on the head, the other escaped; another there was who running along was shot and wounded, and fell down; he begged of them his life, promising them money (as they told me) but they would not hearken to him but knocked him in head, and stripped him naked, and split open his bowels. Another, seeing many of the Indians about his barn, ventured and went out, but was quickly shot down. There were three others belonging to the same garrison who were killed; the Indians getting up upon the roof of the barn, had advantage to shoot down upon them over their fortification. Thus these murderous wretches went on, burning, and destroying before them.

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson Mary Rowlandson, 2018-01-23 Narrative of The Captivity and

Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson (published in 1676) by Mrs. Mary Rowlandson. Mary (White) Rowlandson was a colonial American woman who was captured during an attack by Native Americans during King Philip's War and held ransom for 11 weeks and 5 days. After being released, she wrote *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*, also known as *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*. It is a work in the literary genre of captivity narratives. It is considered to be one of America's first bestsellers, four editions appearing in 1682 when it was first published. On February 10, 1676, the settlement of Lancaster, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, was attacked by Native Americans. The Native Americans burned down houses and opened fire on the British settlers, killing several of them and wounding more. They took many of the survivors captive, including Mary Rowlandson and her three children. Mary and her youngest child are among the injured, while others of her family, including her brother-in-law, are killed. The Native Americans lead the captured survivors from their settlement into the wilderness. Rowlandson and her youngest, Sarah are allowed to stay together, but her two oldest, Joseph and Mary, are separated. After spending a night in a nearby town, the Native Americans with their captives head further into the wilderness. Being injured, the journey is difficult for Rowlandson and her daughter. They reach an Indian settlement called Wenimesset, where Rowlandson meets another captive named Robert Pepper who tries to help the new captives. After staying in Wenimesset for about a week, Rowlandson's injured daughter, Sarah, dies. Rowlandson is sold to another Indian who is related to King Philip by marriage. They bury Rowlandson's dead daughter, and she is allowed to visit her oldest daughter Mary who is also being held in Wenimesset, and her oldest son who is allowed to visit from a nearby Indian settlement. Author Mary Rowlandson, née White, later Mary Talcott (c. 1637 - January 5, 1711) was a colonial American woman who was captured by Native Americans during King Philip's War and held for 11 weeks before being ransomed. In 1682, six years after her ordeal, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God: Being a Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* was published. This text is considered a seminal American work in the literary genre of captivity narratives. It went through four printings in 1682 and garnered readership both in the New England colonies and in England, leading it to be considered by some the first American bestseller. Mary White was born c. 1637 in Somerset, England. The family left England sometime before 1650, settled at Salem in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and moved in 1653 to Lancaster, on the Massachusetts front. There she married Reverend Joseph Rowlandson, the son of Thomas Rowlandson of Ipswich, Massachusetts, in 1656. Four children were born to the couple between 1658 and 1669, with their first daughter dying young. At sunrise on February 10, 1675, during King Philip's War, Lancaster came under attack by Narragansett, Wampanoag and Nashaway/Nipmuc Indians. During the attack, which was anticipated by residents including Mary's husband, Joseph, the Native American raiding party killed 13 people, while at least 24 were taken captive, many of them injured. Rowlandson and her three children, Joseph, Mary, and Sarah, were among those taken in the raid. Rowlandson's 6-year-old daughter, Sarah, succumbed from her wounds after a week of captivity. For more than 11 weeks, Rowlandson and her children were forced to accompany the Indians as they travelled through the wilderness to carry out other raids and to elude the English militia. In Rowlandson's captivity narrative, the severe conditions of her captivity are recounted in visceral detail.

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson Mary White Rowlandson, 2016-11-01 Mary White Rowlandson was a colonial American woman who was captured during an attack by Native Americans during King Philip's War and held ransom for 11 weeks. After being released, she wrote *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*, also known as *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*. It is a work in the literary genre of captivity narratives. It is considered to be one of America's first bestsellers, four editions appearing in 1682 when it was first published.

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson MARY WHITE. ROWLANDSON, 2025-03-28 Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson offers a gripping firsthand account of survival and faith amidst the turmoil of

King Philip's War. Mary Rowlandson, a Puritan woman, recounts her harrowing experience as a captive of Native Americans in this seminal captivity narrative. Captured during a raid on her village, Rowlandson details her trials, tribulations, and unwavering reliance on her religious beliefs throughout her ordeal. A significant historical document, this narrative provides a unique perspective on the complex relationship between early American colonists and Native American tribes during a period of intense conflict. Captivity and Restoration remains a powerful testament to the resilience of the human spirit and a valuable resource for understanding colonial American history and the history of Native Americans. It offers a personal glimpse into the fears and beliefs of 17th-century New England, making it a compelling and enduring read for anyone interested in colonial America and the challenges faced by its inhabitants. This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important, and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it. This work is in the public domain in the United States of America, and possibly other nations. Within the United States, you may freely copy and distribute this work, as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work. Scholars believe, and we concur, that this work is important enough to be preserved, reproduced, and made generally available to the public. We appreciate your support of the preservation process, and thank you for being an important part of keeping this knowledge alive and relevant.

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson (Dodo Press) Mary Rowlandson, 2009-04-01 Mary White Rowlandson (1637-1711) was a colonial American woman who was captured by Native Americans during King Philip's War. After her release, she wrote a book about her experience, Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson, considered a seminal work in the American literary genre of captivity narratives. Her book earned Rowlandson an important place in the history of American literature. It became one of the era's best-sellers, going through four editions in one year. The tension between colonists and Native Americans, particularly in the aftermath of King Philip's War, was a source of anxiety. People feared losing their connection to their own society. They had great curiosity about the experience of one who had been over the line, as a captive of American Indians and returned to colonial society. Many literate English people were already familiar with captivity narratives by British sailors and others taken captive at sea off North Africa and in the Middle East. Finally, in its use of autobiography, Biblical typology, and homage to the Jeremiad, Rowlandson's book helps the reader understand the Puritan mind.

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson Mary Rowlandson, 2015-02-10 Also known as The Sovereignty and Goodness of God.

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reunited with her husband and children. The memoir is considered a captivity narrative and is an important piece of American literature.

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson Mary Rowlandson, 2014

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson Mary Rowlandson, 2019-07-25 Mary (White) Rowlandson was a colonial American woman who was captured during an attack by Native Americans during King Philip's War and held ransom for 11 weeks and 5 days. After being released, she wrote A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson, also known as The Sovereignty and Goodness of God. It is a work in the literary genre of captivity narratives. It is considered to be one of America's first bestsellers, four editions appearing in 1682 when it was first published.

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: The Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson Mary White Rowlandson, 1682-01-01

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: Narrative of Captivity and the Restoration of Mary Rowlandson Mary Rowlandson, 2018-01-12 Mary (White) Rowlandson was a colonial American woman who was captured during an attack by Native Americans during King Philip's War and held ransom for 11 weeks and 5 days. After being released, she wrote A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson, also known as The Sovereignty and Goodness of God. It is a work in the literary genre of captivity narratives. It is considered to be one of America's first bestsellers, four editions appearing in 1682 when it was first published.

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson (Annotated) Mary Rowlandson, 2020-12-23 The sovereignty and goodness of GOD, together with the faithfulness of his promises displayed, being a narrative of the captivity and restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson, commended her, to all that desires to know the Lord's doings to, and dealings with her. Especially to her dear children and relations. The second Addition [sic] Corrected and amended. Written her own hand for her private use, and now made public at the earnest desire of some friends, and for the benefit of the afflicted. Deut. 32.39. See now that I, even I am he, and there is no god with me, I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal, neither is there any can deliver out of my hand...

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a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: *Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Rowlandson* Mary White Rowlandson, 2018-09-22 - Mary ROWLANDSON, born White, later Mary Talcott, was born in 1637 and died in 1711 (at age 74), is an American and was captured by Native Americans for almost three months. In 1682, six years after her ordeal, she published *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God - Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*. This story is considered a work in the literary genre of captivity narratives. It is one of the first American best sellers. Around 1650, his family left England and settled in Salem, then in 1653 in Lancaster, Massachusetts. In 1656, she married Reverend Joseph Rowlandson. On February 10, 1675, Lancaster was attacked by Amerindians, 13 were killed and 24 prisoners were taken captive, including Mary and her three children, Joseph, Mary, and Sarah. A week or so later, her 6-year-old daughter Sarah succumbed to her injuries. For three months, Mary and her children were forced to walk through the wilderness in harsh conditions. On May 2, 1676, Mary was released following a ransom. In 1678, his first husband, Mr. Rowlandson died. In 1679, she married Captain Samuel Talcott and took his last name. Mary and her children moved to Boston where she reportedly wrote her captivity story. In 1682, his account of captivity was published in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and in London the same year. - *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*

a narrative of the captivity mary rowlandson: *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God : a Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* Mary Rowlandson, 2017-09-30 Mary (White) Rowlandson was a colonial American woman who was captured during an attack by Native Americans during King Philip's War and held ransom for 11 weeks and 5 days. After being released, she wrote *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*, also known as *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*. It is a work in the literary genre of captivity narratives. It is considered to be one of America's first bestsellers, four editions appearing in 1682 when it was first published. Plot summary : On February 10, 1676, the settlement of Lancaster, in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, was attacked by Native Americans. The Native Americans burned down houses and opened fire on the British settlers, killing several of them and wounding more. They took many of the survivors captive, including Mary Rowlandson and her three children. Mary and her youngest child are among the injured, while others of her family, including her brother-in-law, are killed. The Native Americans lead the captured survivors from their settlement into the wilderness. Rowlandson and her youngest, Sarah are allowed to stay together, but her two oldest, Joseph and Mary, are separated. After spending a night in a nearby town, the Native Americans with their captives head further into the wilderness. Being injured, the journey is difficult for Rowlandson and her daughter. They reach an Indian settlement called Wenimesset, where Rowlandson meets another captive named Robert Pepper who tries to help the new captives. After staying in Wenimesset for about a week, Rowlandson's injured daughter, Sarah, dies. Rowlandson is sold to another Indian who is related to King Philip by marriage. They bury Rowlandson's dead daughter, and she is allowed to visit her oldest daughter Mary who is also being held in Wenimesset, and her oldest son who is allowed to visit from a nearby Indian settlement. The Indians give Rowlandson a Bible in which she finds a great deal of hope. After attacking another town the Native Americans decide to head north, and Rowlandson is again separated from her family and friends she has made. The Native Americans, along with Rowlandson, began to move quickly through the forest, as the British army was nearby. They come to the Baquaug River and cross it with the British soldiers close behind. However, the British are not able to cross, and Rowlandson and the Indians continue northwest. They reach the Connecticut River and plan on meeting King Philip, but English scouts are present so they must scatter and hide. Rowlandson and the Indians soon cross the river and meet King Philip. At this settlement, Rowlandson sews for the Indians in return for food. Rowlandson wants to go to Albany in hopes of being sold for gunpowder, but the Indians take her northward and cross the river again. Rowlandson starts hoping she will be returned home, but now the Indians turn south continuing along the Connecticut River instead of heading east towards civilization. The Indians continue their attacks, and Thomas Read joins Rowlandson's group. Read tells Rowlandson that her husband is alive and well, which gives her hope and comfort. Rowlandson and her group finally start

to move east. They cross the Baquaug River again where they meet messengers telling Rowlandson she must go to Wachuset where the Indians will discuss her possibility of returning to freedom. Rowlandson eagerly heads toward Wachuset, but the journey wears her down and she is disheartened by the sight of an injured colonist from a previous Indian attack. She reaches Wachuset and speaks to King Philip, who guarantees she will be free in two weeks. The council asks how much her husband would pay for her ransom and they send a letter to Boston saying she will be freed for twenty pounds.

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