CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

The Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson

Mary Rowlandson · *1682 · Rowlandson's English*

The sovereignty and goodness of GOD, together with the faithfulness of his promises displayed: that is how Mary Rowlandson names this narrative of her captivity and restoration. On the tenth of February 1675, the attack comes upon Lancaster; then they beset her own house, and it is the dolefulest day her eyes ever saw. Project Gutenberg #851, 1682. For grades 9–12. Gravity. Do not make a spectacle of the violence. Quote her, not only the title-page clothing.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How should a school read Rowlandson's narrative as she named it—the sovereignty and goodness of God, and the faithfulness of His promises, in a captivity and a restoration—without turning the attack on Lancaster into a spectacle?

"The sovereignty and goodness of GOD, together with the faithfulness of his promises displayed, being a narrative of the captivity and"

Title-page

She commends the narrative, to all who desire to know the Lord's doings to, and dealings with her, especially to her dear children and relations. It is a second addition, written by her own hand, first for private use. On the tenth of February 1675 the attack comes upon Lancaster; then they beset her own house, and it is the dolefulest day her eyes ever saw. The dreadful hour she had often heard of, she now sees. Teach the sovereignty and goodness of God as she frames them, and the captivity with gravity, for grades 9–12. Do not put gore on the map. February 1675 is old style (1676 new style); keep her dating, and explain it if you need to.

KEY CHARACTERS

Mary Rowlandson
Wife and mother, who writes of her captivity and restoration, and of the Lord's dealings with her

Her dear children and relations
To whom she especially commends the narrative

The household at Lancaster
Whose house is beset on the dolefulest day her eyes ever saw

HOW TO READ THIS NARRATIVE

> *"The sovereignty and goodness of GOD, together with the faithfulness of his promises displayed, being a narrative of the captivity and"*
>
> Title-page

> *"At length they came and beset our own house, and quickly it was the dolefulest day that ever mine eyes saw."*
>
> The first remove

Grades 9–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

Sovereignty and Goodness

TITLE-PAGE

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. She names the book before she tells the day.

- Keep this file's "GOD" and "promises displayed."
- Written by her own hand, commended to her children.
- The title says "second Addition [sic]"; do not silently correct it when you describe the edition.
- 9–12.

> *"The sovereignty and goodness of GOD, together with the faithfulness of his promises displayed, being a narrative of the captivity and"*
>
> Title-page

02

The Tenth of February, 1675

THE FIRST REMOVE, OPENING

On the tenth of February 1675, came the Indians with great numbers upon Lancaster: their first coming was about sunrising. The narrative begins on a dated morning.

- Keep her dating: February 1675 (old style).
- Sunrise, and Lancaster, are exact.
- Gravity; do not turn the attack into a spectacle.
- 9–12.

> *"On the tenth of February 1675, came the Indians with great numbers upon Lancaster: their"*
>
> The first remove, opening

03

The Dolefulest Day

THE FIRST REMOVE

At length they came and beset her own house, and quickly it was the dolefulest day that ever her eyes saw. The war has come to the door.

- Keep "dolefulest day."
- Gravity. The file describes the fighting in hard detail; do not put gore on a school map.
- 9–12.
- This is her house, not a later legend only.

> *"At length they came and beset our own house, and quickly it was the dolefulest day that ever mine eyes saw."*
>
> The first remove

04

The Dreadful Hour Come

THE FIRST REMOVE

Now is the dreadful hour come, that she has often heard of (in time of war, as it was the case of others), but now her eyes see it. Hearing gives way to seeing.

- Keep the parenthesis and "now mine eyes see it."
- She had heard of war in others' cases; now it is hers.
- Gravity, not a thrill.
- 9–12.

> *"Now is the dreadful hour come, that I have often heard of (in time of war, as it was the case of others), but now mine eyes see it. Some in"*
>
> The first remove

05

A Restoration, Told with Gravity

THE EDITION

Project Gutenberg #851 is the 1682 narrative. It is a captivity and a restoration, framed by the sovereignty and goodness of God. For grades 9–12. Quote her English. Teach the removes and the return; do not make a spectacle of the violence, and do not skip the Scripture she carries through the story.

- Name 1682, and her own hand.
- Gravity throughout.
- February 1675 is old style.
- Not a later film of the war.

> *"The sovereignty and goodness of GOD, together with the faithfulness of his promises displayed, being a narrative of the captivity and"*
>
> Title-page

The sovereignty and goodness of God

Promises kept in a hard trial

A house beset

Captivity and restoration

A testimony for her children

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 9–12

1. She names the book by the sovereignty and goodness of God, and the faithfulness of His promises.
2. On the tenth of February 1675 (old style) the attack comes upon Lancaster; keep her dating.
3. Gravity: the dolefulest day and the dreadful hour are hers to tell; do not make a spectacle of the violence.
4. For grades 9–12. A captivity and a restoration, in her English, 1682.

Quotations are verbatim from the Rowlandson's English, Project Gutenberg #851, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/rowlandson-narrative-of-the-captivity/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.