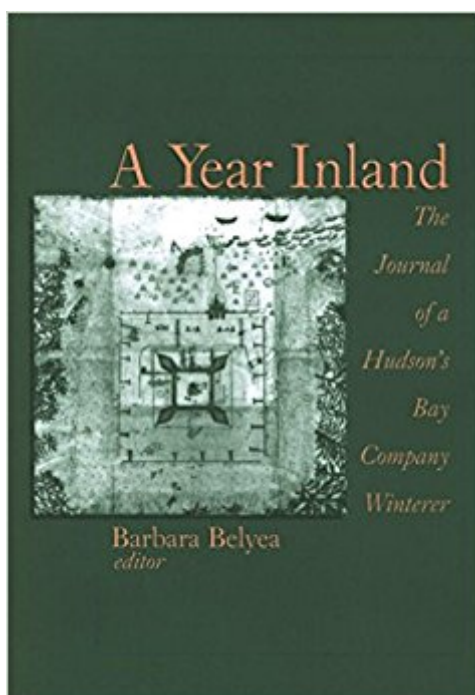


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A Year Inland: The Journal Of A Hudson's Bay Company Winterer



Synopsis

Anthony Henday, a young Hudson's Bay Company employee, set out from York Factory in June 1754 to winter with "trading Indians" along the Saskatchewan River. He adapted willingly and easily to their way of life; he also kept a journal in which he described the plains region and took note of rival French traders' success at their inland posts. A copy of Henday's journal was immediately sent to the company directors in London. They rewarded Henday handsomely although they were uncertain where he had travelled, what groups he had met on the plains, and what success he had in opposing rival French traders. Since then, uncertainty about Henday's year inland has increased. The original journal disappeared; only four copies, dating from 1755 to about 1782, are extant. Each text differs from the other three; the differences range from variant spellings to word choice to contradictory statements on vital questions. All four copies are the work of a company clerk, later factor, named Andrew Graham, who used them to support his own views on HBC trading policies. Twentieth-century scholars have based their claims for Henday's importance as an explorer, trader and observer of Native cultures on a poorly edited transcript of the 1782 text. They have been unaware or careless of the journal's textual ambiguity. *A Year Inland* presents all four copies for the first time, together with contextual notes and a commentary that reassesses the journal's information on plains geography, people and trade.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The four manuscripts [of Henday's journals] are rife with differences and contradictions. Hence,

use of the journal as a source of geographical, ethnographic and economic information must be preceded by a careful evaluation of the variants. Barbara Belyea has accomplished this perceptively and meticulously, according to the highest standards of scholarly editing.... A superb achievement that is unlikely ever to be superseded." (G. Malcolm Lewis *British Journal of Canadian Studies*, 15: 1/2, 2002) "Barbara Belyea's careful presentation of the four copies of Anthony Henday's Journal (June 1754-1755) brings to life not only the ardors of such a journey by canoe and foot, but also sheds light on the nature of the fur trade, the policies of the Hudson's Bay Company in the Northwest and in London, and the exacting task facing an editor endeavouring to reconcile the variations in four manuscripts (1755-c. 1782) based on a missing original text. Belyea is scrupulous in her attention to detail and in pointing out what can and cannot be derived from the copies....Henday's entries...have much to reveal and suggest, and neither they nor Belyea's lucid and thorough consideration offer anything less than a rewarding excursion into the mid-18th century fur trade accounts that are so important in understanding the opening of the Canadian West." (Bryan N.S. Gooch *Canadian Literature*, 183, Winter 2004) "A Year Inland is an excellent piece of scholarship and a valuable contribution to the literature on travel, fur trade, and First Nations of Western Canada; it is also a standard for the critical edition of historical documents." (Gratien Allaire *Canadian Book Review Annual*, 2000) "A Year Inland represents a significant contribution to the study of the HBC's early exploration of the western interior....[Belyea's] presentation of the four versions of Henday's journals will be invaluable to scholars....[Belyea] does not (and does not claim to) represent the last word on Anthony Henday or his fellow winterers. I hope she represents the first word in a new and fruitful dialogue on these men and their journals." (Scott P. Stephen *Canadian Historical Review*, 85:3, September 2004) "For the first time the accounts of this journey have been made accessible, and this edition will be of use to scholars of the Canadian West.... It contains a meticulous bibliographic description of the four manuscripts, and the editor does a fine job of identifying the problematic aspects of the texts, illustrating in particular the way in which their reliability is subverted by omissions, alterations, and contradictions." (Mary Jane Edwards *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 71:1, Winter 2001-2002)

Barbara Belyea has lived, studied and worked in Britain, France and Switzerland as well as in several provinces of Canada. During graduate school she was introduced to editing and medieval literature; her interest in editions of manuscripts, combined with years of hiking and skiing in the Rocky Mountains, led her to edit David Thompson's *Columbia Journals*. She is also interested in Amerindian and fur trade cartography.

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