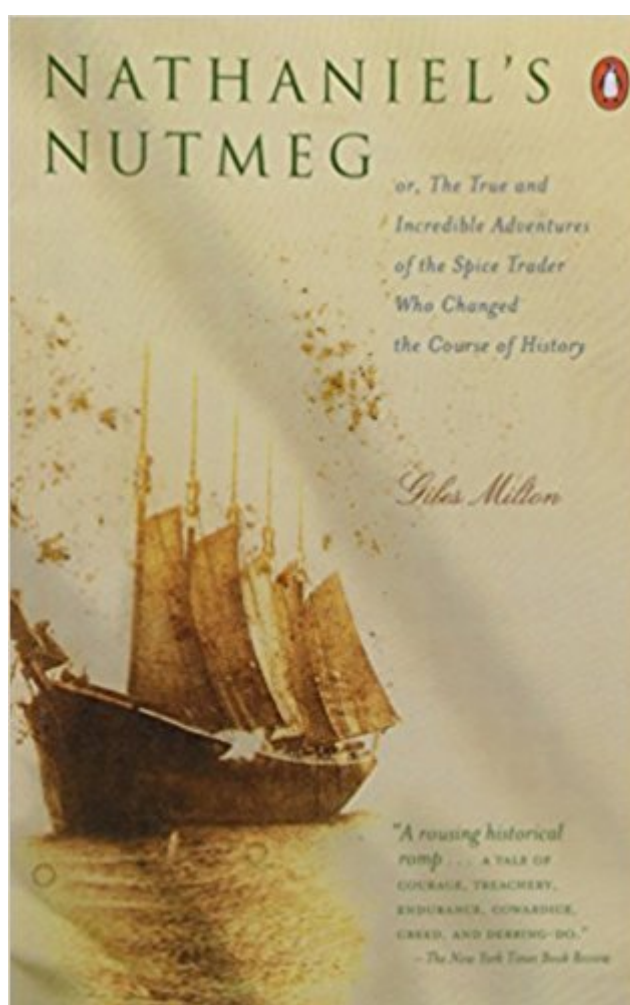


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Nathaniel's Nutmeg: Or The True And Incredible Adventures Of The Spice Trader Who Changed The Course Of History



Synopsis

The tiny island of Run is an insignificant speck in the middle of the Indonesian archipelago--remote, tranquil, and now largely ignored. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, Run's harvest of nutmeg turned it into the most lucrative of the Spice Islands, precipitating a fierce and bloody battle between the all-powerful Dutch East India Company and a small band of ragtag British adventurers led by the intrepid Nathaniel Courthope. The outcome of the fighting was one of the most spectacular deals in history: Britain ceded Run to Holland, but in return was given another small island, Manhattan. A brilliant adventure story of unthinkable hardship and savagery, the navigation of uncharted waters, and the exploitation of new worlds, Nathaniel's Nutmeg is a remarkable chapter in the history of the colonial powers.

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Customer Reviews

"This is high adventure -- pirates and cannons and pieces of eight ... A work of prodigious research, and a fascinatingly seminal tidbit of New York history". -- New York Newsday

The tiny island of Run is an insignificant speck in the middle of the Indonesian archipelago, remote, tranquil, and now largely ignored. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, Run's harvest of nutmeg turned it into the most lucrative of the Spice Islands, precipitating a fierce and bloody battle between the all-powerful Dutch East India Company and a small band of ragtag British adventures led by the intrepid Nathaniel Courthope. The outcome of the fighting was one of the most spectacular deals in history: Britain ceded Run to Holland but in return was given Manhattan. A

brilliant adventure story of unthinkable hardship, savagery, the navigation of uncharted waters, and the exploitation of new worlds, Nathaniel's Nutmeg is a remarkable chapter in the history of the colonial powers.

This book gives an excellent, albeit summary, account of the incredible spice trade that existed in the 16th and 17th century. At the heart of the conflict were two major combatants, England and Holland. At stake was the richest trade in the world, the exotic spices that came from the tiny, primal islands below China and India - the "spiceries" as they were called. This tiny collection of exotic islands, inhabited by stone-age cultures and lush forests, became the grand prize of the day, offering nearly unbelievable riches and a horrifying catalogue of dangers. Nearly all the grand exploration of the time had as its primary goal the discovery of faster routes to these islands, and countries seemed in a nearly constant state of war over them. The author does a good job of describing this long-ago world. He also is good at describing the kind of near hysteria that gripped kings and queens of the day. Literally, the control of these islands, and the trade routes, could bring a country to global dominance. Countries and men leapt at the chance to go there, despite the fact that life expectancy for European's established in these outposts was short (most died very quickly of dysentery or malaria), and the chances of surviving the ocean voyage in the first place was not good. Eventually, Holland won the contest. Brutal ruthlessness was the key to success. While no country proved deficient in these qualities, Holland, through the Dutch East Indian Spice Company, relentlessly and without a trace of mercy showed the severest hand. They were no slouches in the slave trade, either. A very engaging account - brief but very well researched. I recommend it.

It could have been anybody's Nutmeg, Choosing Nathaniel (who didn't show up till two thirds in the book) was as good a choice as any. What I liked was a well told tale of the history of those times and revealing stories of the MANY players named in this book..

Another book that gives you a great glimpse into world history. The one tiny little island where nutmeg originally grew had a massive impact on the world. It started a long conflict between England and the Netherlands and it is fascinating history.

I had just finished reading "In the Heart of the Sea-the Sinking of the Whale Ship Essex" and had enjoyed it so much that I was in the mood for another seafaring adventure. "Nathaniel's Nutmeg" was just as wonderful! If history was taught like this in our schools we would probably have more

students reading and fewer bored to tears over their homework. How is the history of Manhattan, and subsequently the U.S., connected to the fate of a little speck of an island not even found on some maps? And what bravery and courage it took from the explorers (not to mention the greed of the merchants) to bring all the strands of this history together? This book tells a fascinating story and also a very human story. Along the way you get quite a bit of good old fashioned history. Enjoy a good yarn!

This was one of the most remarkable exposes that I have ever read and am grateful it gave me a new approach to Anglo American history. I studied American History many, many years ago and yet had absolutely no idea how the Brits. came to settle New York aka New Amsterdam. A well researched study of events abroad whilst the British were busy changing religion and Royal Dynasties. Highly recommended

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This is a great read and a great history. It tells us about a place and time we know too little about. It tells how central these little islands (south of western New Guinea) were to Europe and to the economy of the time. Most Pacific histories start with Captain Cook. This started over 200 years earlier. Most economic undertakings in the South Pacific were dead losses. This made the Dutch rich. Trips to the Spice Islands frequently killed more than half the crew yet people kept getting on those ships. This made the California gold rush look like a walk in the park. That political deal eventually gave Manhattan to England was interesting, but in fact that is just a fraction of this story. If you have any interest in History, get this one.

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