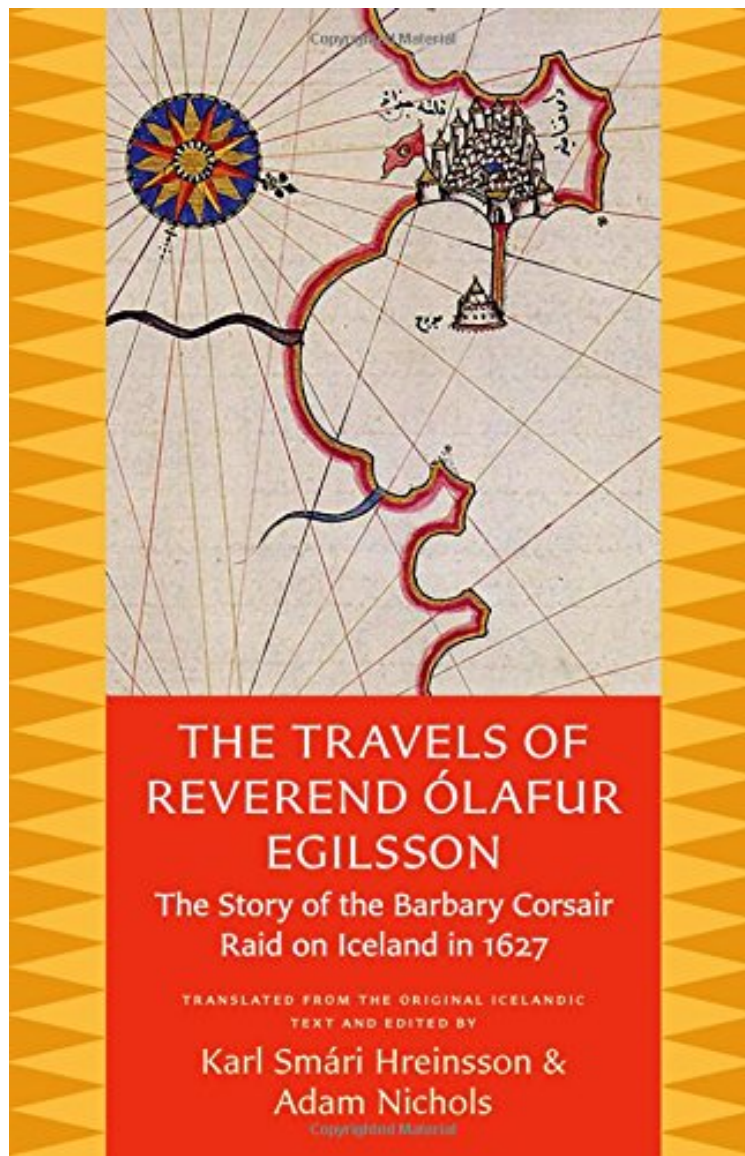


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Olafur Egilsson

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#905027 in Books Olafur Egilsson Karl Smári Hreinsson Adam Nichols 2016-08-25 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.40 x .70 x 5.50l, .0 #File Name: 0813228697248 pages The Travels of Reverend Olafur Egilsson The Story of the Barbary Corsair Raid on Iceland in 1627 | File size: 70.Mb

Olafur Egilsson : The Travels of Reverend Olafur Egilsson: The Story of the Barbary Corsair Raid on Iceland in 1627 before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Travels of Reverend Olafur Egilsson: The Story of the Barbary Corsair Raid on Iceland in 1627:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An incredible tale, beautifully told (and translated.)By Fran Moreland JohnsThis is just a remarkable book. Nichols and Hreinsson have translated the diaries of Rev Olafur -- known to Icelanders (and later, others) over the centuries -- into an easily readable record of a 17th century event that happened in a country now popular with 21st century tourists (and others!) The editor/translators' careful footnoting and explanatory materials at the end of the book give the reader a unique insight into this historical event. time, and country. Spoiler alert: there is at least a small bit of happy ending. If you know anyone who has visited Iceland, or is interested in global history, buy this book for a holiday gift. Not to draw any contemporary parallels -- we trust barbarous pirates will not appear and carry us all off into captivity -- but this 17th century story also highlights the reality that the best and worst of instincts probably exist in all humankind, and we might be well advised to beware of the worst and cherish the best.3 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating chronicle of the invasion, yet not a memoir of the slave experience in AlgiersBy Craig RowlandWhile my library system is on strike I am limiting my books to those for which I already have scans of the covers. I can often find cover images of the books I read somewhere on-line, but the images are not always to my liking when I post my reviews. I use the scanner at work to illustrate my reviews at my blog as well as for reviews I post to my library system's nonfiction book blog.While we are on strike I am getting a lot of reading done after my four-hour picket shift, and the first book I read after my short vacation to Nova Scotia was *The Travels of Reverend Olafur Egilsson: Captured by Pirates in 1627*. Mark and I returned from our trip to Iceland one year ago this month, and I chose this book (and the next) to mark the anniversary. In the summer of 1627 Moorish invaders landed in eastern Iceland and took prisoners, who were to be sold into slavery in Algeria. They continued to sail west along Iceland's southern coast and spotted the Westman Islands, known in Icelandic as Vestmannaeyjar. Olafur Egilsson was 63 years old when he and his young family were abducted from Heimaey and taken to Algiers. This book was his memoir of the invasion, abduction, and his eventual release and quest to return to Iceland. This memoir wasn't translated into English until 2008, so I credit Karl Smri Hreinsson and Adam Nichols for their work on an almost four hundred-year-old text. A reproduction of the original title page was included among the many illustrations.Pirates and warfare at sea were nothing new to Icelanders, so the appearance of the approaching Moorish fleet caused immediate alarm among the small community of the island of Heimaey. The corsairs sailed to the south of the island and did not use the natural harbour to the north, creating an element of surprise in their invasion. Were they landing? Or did they just intend to bypass the island to the south? Since I took a boat tour around Heimaey I saw the spot where the Moors landed. As Mark and I have climbed many of its hills and volcanoes, we had an island-wide perspective of 360 degrees. It must have been terrifying to see the invading fleet approach and land, and have nowhere to run. Olafur described people running for the hills and into caves. Some islanders, but very few, however, did manage to escape for the mainland by boat.Seeing that they were severely outgunned by the Moors' weaponry, the Icelanders sabotaged their cannons and some of their ships so that they wouldn't fall into the hands of the invaders. The Moors were brutal in their invasion, killing those on the spot who were old and infirm and of no use as potential slaves. Olafur described some horrifying massacres. He reported that 242 islanders were abducted and 34 killed. On July 19 the corsairs weighed anchor and left for Algeria. Olafur's second wife, whom he never named, gave birth to a son on July 30 while still at sea. Olafur wrote:"I myself baptized the child as if we were back on land, but my heart was filled with grief."In his descriptions Olafur served as a historian of daily life in Iceland from the early seventeenth century. He also wrote extensively about the fashions and customs of the Moors and Algerian society. For example, women such as Olafur's own wife were given clothing that would be more appropriate and modest for Muslim women in Algiers. He also described the women's and men's clothing from all classes with remarkably elaborate detail.While in northern Africa many Icelanders perished from the heat. Olafur reported that in the first month since their arrival thirty-one of his countrymen had died.Olafur was separated from his family and not long after his arrival in north Africa he was sent on a mission. He was ordered to Denmark where he was to try to raise money from the monarchy as ransom for his wife and children. The rest of his memoir chronicled his quest to Copenhagen and then back to Iceland. I appreciated the maps that were included which marked not only Olafur's journey but also those of the invaders.Upon his return to Iceland,"...the poor people received me as if I had been their own best friend returned again from death."Yet the memoir ended there. Only in the afterword do we learn of the fate of his family:"Reverend Olafur never saw his children again. Ten years after his return, thirty-five Icelanders were ransomed from the 'Turkish' pirates, twenty-seven of whom returned to Iceland. Among those was Reverend Olafur's wife. The two of them were able to live together again for only a couple of years before Reverend Olafur died."The memoir ends with three letters sent to friends and family in Iceland written by those who were kidnapped, and one letter pieced together from eyewitness accounts of people who managed to evade capture.

In the summer of 1627, Barbary corsairs raided Iceland, killing dozens of people and abducting close to four hundred to sell into slavery in Algiers. Among those taken was the Lutheran minister Reverend Olafur Egilsson. Reverend Olafur (born in the same year as William Shakespeare and Galileo Galilei) wrote *The Travels* to chronicle his experiences both as a captive and as a traveler across Europe (he journeyed alone from Algiers to Copenhagen in an attempt to raise funds to ransom the Icelandic captives that remained behind). He was a keen observer, and the

narrative is filled with a wealth of detailsocial, political, economic, religiousabout both the Maghreb and Europe. It is also a moving story on the human level: we witness a man enduring great personal tragedy and struggling to reconcile such calamity with his understanding of God. The Travels is the first-ever English translation of the Icelandic text. Until now, the corsair raid on Iceland has remained largely unknown in the English speaking world. To give a clearer sense of the extraordinary events connected with that raid, this edition of The Travels includes not only Reverend Olafur's first-person narrative but also a collection of contemporary letters describing both the events of the raid itself and the conditions under which the enslaved Icelanders lived. The book has Appendices containing background information on the cities of Algiers and Sal in the seventeenth century, on Iceland in the seventeenth century, on the manuscripts accessed for the translation, and on the book's early modern European context. The combination of Reverend Olafur's narrative, the letters, and the material in the Appendices provides a first-hand, in-depth view of early seventeenth-century Europe and the Maghreb equaled by few other works dealing with the period. We are pleased to offer it to the wider audience that an English edition allows.

About the AuthorKarl Smri Hreinsson is freelance writer and documentary film maker. Additionally he owns and operates Saga Akademia, a language school in Iceland. Adam Nichols is associate professor of English at the University of Maryland.