

the challenges faced in locating and identifying the wreck, including the complexities of underwater excavation in zero-visibility conditions and the need for cultural sensitivity. The successful identification of the *Clotilda* in 2019 stands as a testament to the perseverance of researchers and the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration. Complex archeological methodologies are explained in accessible language, ensuring that the work remains useful to scholars and approachable to general audiences. The inclusion of photographs (some in color), maps, and diagrams further helps to visualize both the human story and the archaeological processes involved. A glossary of technical terms is a useful addition.

Ultimately, this is an important book that bridges the gap between archaeology, historical scholarship, and public history. The narrative plumbs the broader implications of *Clotilda*'s place within the transatlantic slave trade while emphasizing its significance in contemporary discussions about race, memory, and justice. The authors argue that the ship's discovery offers an opportunity for reflection, urging readers to confront the enduring impact of slavery on American society and engage honestly with our past. In the current climate, this message is all the more powerful and more urgent.

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**Elliott, Richard V. *The Boats of Summer*. 2 vols.  
Schiffer Publishing, 2024**

Vol. 1: 304 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index  
ISBN 9780764367403 (hardcover) US\$59.99

Vol. 2: 272 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index  
ISBN 9780764367410 (hardcover) US\$59.99

The two volumes of *The Boats of Summer* might appear to be typical coffee-table books with their beautiful historical illustrations. But, while the two volumes certainly have all the qualities of a good coffee-table book, they are also an important contribution to historical research.

The late Richard V. Elliott grew up near the Hudson River and became an expert on the passenger steamships navigating the Hudson River and New York Harbor. The two volumes now published are the result of Elliott's lifelong research on the subject and are edited by Elliott's widow Linda Elliott.

The volumes tell the history of these excursion boats by focusing on individual histories of famous and lesser-known ships. The first volume details

the histories of 35 nineteenth-century vessels and the second volume focuses on 28 twentieth-century vessels. While the first volume exclusively covers steamships, the second volume also includes some diesel boats.

Each of the meticulously researched accounts of individual ships provides the operational history of the respective vessel, which would be reason enough for a highly positive review. But the books are a most valuable read because of the grand picture resulting from the compilation of the individual stories. They tell the story of the rise, the heyday, and the decline of excursion-boat tourism on the Hudson River and in New York Harbor, explaining how excursion boats developed into one of the most important leisure industries prior to the age of the automobile and individualized leisure activities. At the same time, the two volumes explain how the maritime industries were deeply integrated into the leisure activities of the ever-growing metropolitan New York City population and how the owners and operators responded to the increasing demand for day trips on the river in a way that can easily be compared with the modern-day cruise industry's catering for mass tourism that has led to increasing passenger numbers on cruise liners.

The range of the individual stories spans from ships with successful but unremarkable service histories to ships whose stories ended in catastrophe. For example, when the *General Slocum* caught fire and sank on 15 June 1904, more than 1,000 passengers died, making it one of the worst maritime disasters of the twentieth century. But Elliott also provides a vivid picture of a historic tourism industry characterized by large numbers of people enjoying a day on the water, with some of the vessels having a passenger capacity of several thousand people. Competition between the individual ships resulted in the vessels becoming more luxurious over time. Elliott successfully manages to tell the story of early mass-tourism in an elegant yet accessible way that shows how many of the economic and cultural structures that characterize the modern cruise industry could be found on the Hudson River prior to 1900.

Each of the individual chapters are beautifully illustrated with historic photographs, postcards, and other contemporary illustrations like advertisements or timetables. Modern paintings by William G. Muller complete the high-quality illustrations, making the two volumes a visual feast.

The two volumes can easily be recommended for anyone with an interest in the history of the Hudson River and New York Harbor or to readers with an interest in beautiful illustrations and photographs of historic excursion steamboats. The books can also be recommended for the serious historian interested in the development of the modern leisure and cruise industries. It might be argued that the two volumes lack the analytical depth of an academic

maritime history publication, but such a critique would be somewhat unfair as the author did not aim to provide an analytical book; instead he presents a descriptive and highly visual history of a maritime industry that no longer exists. Nevertheless, even for the analytical maritime historian, the two volumes are of substantial value as they provide a starting point for future work on the subject. Both volumes include an index and a bibliography, adding to the utility of the books for future historical research.

The publisher should be lauded for the high quality of the reproductions and especially for not shying away from reproductions of black and white photographs that include real black and white rather than shades of grey. With a retail price of US\$59.99 per volume, each of which is a 9-inch by 12-inch hardback volume with more than 280 illustrations, the books are reasonably priced. Even if a maritime historian may not be interested in steamships or navigation on the Hudson River and in New York Harbor, *The Boats of Summer* will make a good summer read that helps to illustrate that mass tourism on the water is by no means a phenomenon unique to the early twenty-first century.

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**Gibson, James R. *Otter Skins, Boston Ships, and China Goods: Voices of the Maritime Fur Trade of the Northwest Coast, 1785-1841*. Revised edition. McGill-Queen's Indigenous and Northern Studies Series, no. 106 McGill-Queen's University Press, 2024**

[xvii] + 511 pp., maps, illustrations, plans, tables, bibliography, notes and index

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This, the seventh volume in McGill-Queen's Indigenous and Northern Studies Series, tells the history of the Indigenous people of the West Coast of North America in the critical first years of contact through the contemporary accounts of seafarers and traders. The objective is to bring alive the voices of the fur trade. The work is a compilation of extracts from logbooks, letters, and other primary documents in the vernacular English of the often semi-literate seafarers and traders. Author James Gibson admits that important voices are missing, including the Indigenous people who are the primary subject of the story and the Chinese people at the terminal point of the trade in furs. Interspersed is the author's commentary on all aspects of life and especially trade, including controversial matters like violence and slavery.