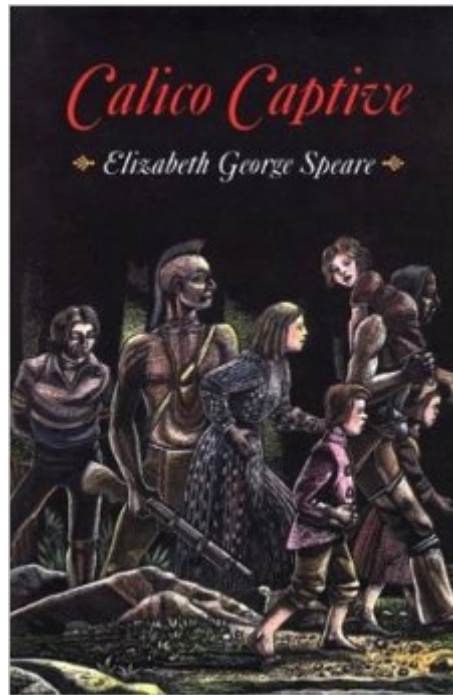


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# Calico Captive



## Synopsis

In the year 1754, the stillness of Charlestown, New Hampshire, is shattered by the terrifying cries of an Indian raid. Young Miriam Willard, on a day that had promised new happiness, finds herself instead a captive on a forest trail, caught up in the ebb and flow of the French and Indian War. It is a harrowing march north. Miriam can only force herself to the next stopping place, the next small portion of food, the next icy stream to be crossed. At the end of the trail waits a life of hard work and, perhaps, even a life of slavery. Mingled with her thoughts of Phineas Whitney, her sweetheart on his way to Harvard, is the crying of her sister's baby, Captive, born on the trail. Miriam and her companions finally reach Montreal, a city of shifting loyalties filled with the intrigue of war, and here, by a sudden twist of fortune, Miriam meets the prominent Du Quesne family, who introduce her to a life she has never imagined. Based on an actual narrative diary published in 1807, *Calico Captive* skillfully reenacts an absorbing facet of history.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers (October 29, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0618150757

ISBN-13: 978-0618150755

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.9 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (82 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #971,786 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #73 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > Canada](#) #495 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > Colonial](#) #3656 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories](#)

Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

## Customer Reviews

*Calico Captive* is Elizabeth George Speare's (1908-1994) first novel. It was inspired by the diary of Susanna Willard Johnson, abducted by the Abenaki Indians in 1754 (during the French and Indian War) from her house in Fort Number 4 in Charleston, New Hampshire, published for the first time in 1796 and then 1807 (and presently available online at [...]) Susanna Johnson was made captive with

all her family, including a 14 year old sister, turned into the sixteen year old Miriam in the book, conducted to the Indian settlement of St. Francis and then sold to the French in Montreal, where she remained for three years before being set free after the payment of ransom. It took some years still before the whole family could be reunited. Captivity narratives evolved into a kind of literary genre during the early years of American literature. These diaries, mostly by women, were always written at distance from the event of the abduction and share in their originality many stereotyped situations. These memories have been identified by modern critics as vehicles for a subjective rather than objective truth, as a means of political propaganda and as a form of sensational literature such as the "slave narratives". Post-modern and cultural analysis have re-evaluated them as examples of gender and culture conflicts and pointed out the principal elements of the genre: what a proper woman should do in a desperate situation and the religious message of sticking to Faith in times of adversity. Not rarely, however, the captives depict their captors as individuals and somehow opened themselves to these foreign (Indian or French) cultures.

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