

Exploring the Hudson in 1609

Excerpt from Robert Juet's Journal for September 14-16, 1609

Follow along as sections of Robert Juet's journal of the *Half Moon's* voyage are read. At the end of each section, mark the ship's position on the map **Exploring the Hudson in 1609**. The first section below shows how. Use scrap paper to do the arithmetic.



Henry Hudson entering New York Bay, September 11, 1609. From a painting by Edward Moran. NYS Archives.

1. "The fourteenth, in the morning being very fair weather, the wind southeast, we sailed up the river twelve leagues, and had five fathoms and five fathoms and a quarter less, and came to a *strait* between two points, and had eight, nine and ten fathoms, ... "

A **strait** is a narrow place in a waterway. The two points Juet mentions are today called Verplanck Point (on the east) and Stony Point (on the west).

To mark the *Half Moon's* position on your map:

a. Change leagues to miles. If one league equals three miles, then twelve leagues equals twelve times three miles, which is thirty six miles.

$$1 \text{ league} = 3 \text{ miles}$$

$$12 \text{ leagues} = 12 \times 3 \text{ miles}$$

$$12 \text{ leagues} = 36 \text{ miles}$$

b. Add the number of miles the *Half Moon* sailed to the number of miles at the point where the ship started.

$$36 \text{ miles} + 5 \text{ miles} = 41 \text{ miles}$$

c. There are lines across the river map every five miles. Use them to find where 41 miles should be. Put an X there. Check this position using Juet's description. Your mark should be close to two points of land sticking out into the river.

To find depth in feet:

Change fathoms to feet. If one fathom equals six feet, then five fathoms equals five times six feet.

$$1 \text{ fathom} = 6 \text{ feet}$$

$$5 \text{ fathoms} = 5 \times 6 \text{ feet}$$

$$5 \text{ fathoms} = 30 \text{ feet}$$

2. "... it trended northeast by north one league, and we had twelve, thirteen and fourteen fathoms. The river is a mile broad; there is very high land on both sides. "

For sections 2 to 5, use Juet's compass directions to help you mark the *Half Moon's* position more precisely.

a. One league equals how many miles? _____ miles

Add these miles to the miles at the *Half Moon's* last marked location. Put an X on your map at the ship's new position.

b. Is the river getting deeper or shallower?

c. How deep does it get (in feet)?

3. "Then we went up northwest, a league and a half deep water, ..."

How many miles did the *Half Moon* sail in this section? _____ miles

Add these miles to the miles at the *Half Moon's* last marked location. Put an X on your map at the ship's new position.

4. "...then northeast by north five miles, ..."

Add these five miles to the miles at the *Half Moon's* last marked location. Put an X on your map at the ship's new position.

The Half Moon sailed through this part of the Hudson Valley on September 14, 1609.



5. "...then northwest by north two leagues and anchored. The land grew very high and mountainous. The river is full of fish."

a. How many miles did the *Half Moon* sail in this section? _____ miles

Add these miles to the miles at the *Half Moon's* last marked location. Put an X on your map at the ship's new position.

b. Juet says the land grew mountainous. What do we call these mountains today?

6. "The fifteenth, in the morning was misty until the sun arose, then it cleared. So we weighed with the wind at south, and ran up into the river twenty leagues, passing by high mountains. We had a very good depth, as six, seven, eight, nine, ten, twelve, and thirteen fathoms, and great store of salmons in the river. This morning our two savages got out of a *port* and swam away. After we were under sail they called to us in scorn. At night we came to other mountains, which lie from the river's side. There we found very loving people, and very old men, where we were well used. Our boat went to fish, and caught great store of very good fish."

Relations between the *Half Moon's* crew and native Americans were sometimes friendly, sometimes not. The two whom Juet calls "savages" were hostages, taken after an earlier fight on what is today New York Harbor. They escaped through a **port** - an opening in the ship's side. You can learn more about relations between the *Half Moon's* crew and native Americans by reading other parts of Juet's journal.

a. How many miles did the *Half Moon* sail today? _____ miles

Put an X on your map at the ship's new position.

b. Juet tells of coming to mountains "which lie from the river's side" - they are not right along the river but some distance away. Today, what do we call these mountains, shown in this photo?



7. "The sixteenth, fair and very hot weather. In the morning our boat went again to fishing, but could catch but few, by reason their canoes had been there all night. This morning the people came aboard, and brought us ears of Indian corn and *pompions* and tobacco, which we bought for trifles. We rode still all day, and filled fresh water; at night we weighed and went two leagues higher, and had *shoaled* water so we anchored till day."

Shoal means shallow; "shoaled water" is shallow water.

a. How many miles did the *Half Moon* sail today? _____ miles

Add these miles to the miles at the *Half Moon's* last marked location. Put an X on your map at the ship's new position.

b. What are **pompions**? [Hint: One of the "three sister" crops grown by the native Americans, we see many of these in farm fields during the fall.]

c. Do you think that Hudson still believed this river was the Northwest Passage leading to China? Why or why not? Use examples from the reading.



The replica Half Moon sailing north at Poughkeepsie.