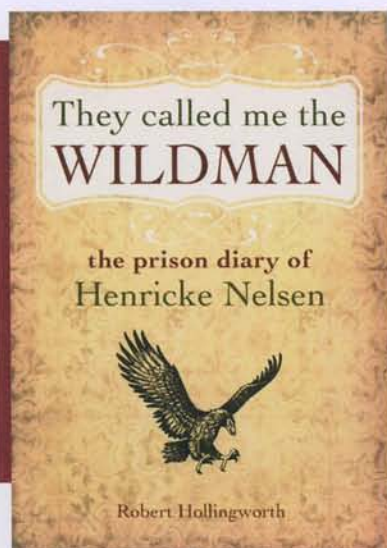


PIER **9**



MURDOCH BOOKS



They Called Me The Wildman:

The prison diary of Henricke Nelsen

By Robert Hollingworth

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Media Release

In the late 1870s, five Victorian newspapers reported stories of a 'Tallarook Wildman'. Eventually Henricke Nelsen, a Swede, was captured, put on trial for vagrancy and sentenced to six month's gaol...

Locked up after fourteen years living in the Australian Bush, the 'Wildman' tells his own story. He writes of famous colonists, the last tribal inhabitants, injustice, crime, love, death and of his secret life amid the last fragments of an untouched landscape.

'I Henricke Nelsen lately of the Tallarooks, do hereby take it upon myself to tell of all that happened on the mountain and I write because of the stories spread and the bad treatment received during these past months...yet I am not the criminal nor the brute they made me out to be. The charge of no lawful means that I have been given 6 months Hard Labour is due to being found guilty of living alone in the Ranges...yet I will not complain but instead use this time...to set the record straight and lay out in plain English exactly how it happened'.

Historian and artist Robert Hollingworth's captivating reconstruction of Swedish-born naturalist Henricke Nelsen's solitary life on a mountain in Victoria's Tallarook Ranges in the 1860's is written in the form of a prison diary. No imaginary work could arrange a better cast of characters than this meticulously researched story. Nelsen's personal reflections interweave with fascinating and engrossing depictions of life in Australia in the early to mid 1800's, allowing the reader insights into early settlement issues of race, class, land development, commerce and trade, the law and living conditions in general.

Robert Hollingworth is an acclaimed Australian artist of longstanding, with works displayed in galleries through Victoria and held private collections in Australia, New Zealand, USA, England, Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore. He has a particular interest in rural and environmental issues, Aboriginal issues, natural history and the history of 'country'. His published writings include articles, essays, memoir and works of fiction.

Robert Hollingworth is available for interview. For more information please contact Kate Mayor at Murdoch Books on (02) 8220 2346 or email katem@murdochbooks.com.au