

**For Immediate Release:**

November 2003

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**New from Spinner Publications:**

**DRIFTING TOWARD THE SOUTHEAST**

**The Story of Five Japanese Castaways**

**Translation by Junya Nagakuni and Junji Kitadai**

160 PAGES • FULL COLOR • 100+ PAINTINGS & ILLUS.

TRADE PAPER ~ ISBN 0932027-59-8 ~ \$25.00

COMMEMORATIVE CLOTH, LTD. ED. ~ ISBN 0932027-59-8 ~ \$70

NEW BEDFORD, MASS. On November 14, 2003, Spinner Publications will release the book, *Drifting Toward the Southeast*, the first complete English language edition of *Hyoson Kiryaku*—the official, autobiographical account of John Manjiro's historic voyage to the United States as told to the officials of the Shogunate in 1852.

This important historical account was hand-recorded in four brush-written volumes by samurai artist and scholar Kawada Shoryo following Manjiro's nine-month interrogation by Shogun Tokugawa's officials. It was prohibited from public view for many years by the Shogun's isolation law. Spinner's English edition, *Drifting Toward the Southeast*, will showcase high-quality color reproductions of the masterful watercolor paintings by the artist Shoryo, the delicate illustrations by Manjiro himself, and the detailed maps that complete the original document.

John Manjiro was the 14-year-old Japanese boy out fishing with four companions when they were shipwrecked and rescued by an American whaling ship from New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1841. Captain William Whitfield of the ship *John James Howland* grew fond the young castaway and invited him to his home in Fairhaven, Massachusetts where Manjiro was given a formal education in English, mathematics and navigation. He later became mate on a whaling ship and circumnavigated the globe. Longing for Japan, he eventually joined the California Gold Rush and earned enough money for his return to his homeland.

*Drifting Toward the Southeast* reveals Manjiro's accurate memory in depicting the castaways' adventures. Largely ignored in America, but legendary in Japan, Manjiro was the first known Japanese visitor to the United States who was allowed to return to Japan without facing harsh punishment for breaking the isolation law. This original account was completed just nine months before Commodore Matthew Perry's "Black Ships" armada strong-armed Japan into a peace treaty, and became coveted reading of daimyos and samurai leaders. As a result, numerous hand-written copies of *Hyoson Kiryaku* circulated, and the castaways' story spread by word of mouth. It caught the imagination of common people who were eager to know about the outside world, and it shaped their perceptions of mid-nineteenth century America. It also deeply influenced the pioneers of modernization in Japan: men like Sakamoto Ryoma, Katsu Kaishu, and Fukuzawa Yukichi. This unique translation will create valuable source material for the study of this critical period, giving readers, educators, and historians a larger framework for understanding the history of United States–Japanese relations.

Only nine copies of the *Hyoson Kiryaku* are known to be in existence today. Spinner Publications has drawn from several of these copies for this translation. One is in the collection of the Rosenbach Museum in Philadelphia, another was donated to the Millicent Library in Fairhaven, a third is at the Sumiyoshi Shrine in Osaka, Japan, and a fourth is kept by the Kochi Prefectural Museum of History.

