

loves his oozie as much as Haji loves him; but when a new inspector for the Rangoon Lumber Company arrives, he fails to recognize the young boy's skill and dismisses him. However, the new handlers prove incapable of managing the elephant, and when the cruelly treated animal escapes to the jungle, it is Haji who brings him back. After incidents of terror created by a band of outlaws, the inspector admits that good oozies can come in small sizes. Although episodes of excitement heighten aspects of the unusual background, and the relationship between boy and elephant is appealing, the story has a certain stolidity.

V.H.

ANDRE NORTON *Red Hart Magic* 181 pp. Crowell 1976 6.95  
CIP

Illustrated by Donna Diamond. Neither Chris Fitton nor his new step-sister Nan Mallory was particularly enthusiastic about their changed status. Not only had Chris's father and Nan's mother married, but the two young people had also been uprooted from familiar surroundings and faced with the difficulties of adjusting to new schools and to the constraints, however temporary, of an aunt's elegant city apartment. Furthermore, both considered themselves loners; afraid to antagonize their peers or the adults who acted as surrogate parents, they lacked the confidence to confront or to solve the problems which pre-adolescents frequently encounter. Recognizing the real meaning of courage and tentatively establishing the mutual understanding necessary for solid family relationships are the unifying elements of a skillfully constructed time-slip fantasy. The book recreates three troubled periods in English history from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries and allows the present-day Nan and Chris to observe their historical counterparts — who were as unassuming and as seemingly powerless as they — resolve great physical or moral dilemmas. The merging of past and present values is smoothly handled, the miniature model of an old English inn serves as an intriguing and effective device for transporting the two back in time, and the central characters solve their problems in a credible manner. The fine-dot ink drawings enhance the mood of the story. M.M.B.

SCOTT O'DELL *The 290* 118 pp. Houghton 1976 6.95

The author displays his distinctive gifts for distilling significance from historical matter and for dealing with the sea. Jim Lynne, at sixteen an apprentice to a ship's architect for the 290 in Liverpool, immediately captures the reader's interest when in a pub on a "raving cold" November night he is approached by his ne'er-do-well, money-grubbing brother, who unsuccessfully seeks to buy information from him about the nearly finished vessel. The Civil War is being fought in America and on the high seas, and Britishers have been taking sides. Jim is for the South; he had been a child in New Orleans and his father owns a Haitian plantation. With lively conversation and with increasing tension from confrontations at sea and aboard Jim's ship, the author crisply tells the story, skillfully integrating historical ele-