



Real Pirates: The Untold Story of the Whydah from Slave Ship to Pirate Ship

By Kenneth J. Kinkor, Sharon Simpson

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The riveting story of the slave ship *Whydah*, captured by pirates and later sunk in a fierce storm off the coast of Massachusetts, energizes this lavish companion book to a unique exhibition on a five-year U.S. tour. Packed with plunder from more than 50 captured ships, the *Whydah* was discovered by underwater explorer Barry Clifford in 1984. Now, for the first time, its treasure holds are unlocked for public view.

More than 200 items were retrieved from the ocean floor: the telltale ship's bell, inscribed "Whydah Galley 1716"; coins and jewelry, buttons and cufflinks; muskets, cannons, and swords; everyday objects including teakettles and tableware, gaming tokens, and clay pipes. The artifacts provide an unprecedented glimpse into the raucous world of 18th-century pirating and shed light on the link between the slave trade and piracy during those tumultuous times.

Built to transport human captives from Africa to the Caribbean, the *Whydah* made one such voyage before being captured in 1717 by Sam Bellamy, the boldest pirate of his day. Two months later, in one of the worst nor'easters ever, the ship sank, drowning all but 2 of the 146 people aboard. For anyone intrigued by the lore of piracy, the mystery of shipwrecks, or the sad and salty intertwining of slave and pirate history, *Real Pirates* has the answers.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 4–7—Clifford, an underwater archaeological explorer, used research and the artifacts recovered from the *Whydah* to tell the story of its life as a slave galley and pirate ship. In the process, he dispels many myths about buccaneers. Beginning when it was built in 1715, the author provides brief background information on the horrendous conditions under which people were sold and transported, and the *Whydah's* part in the trade. However, when it was captured by Sam Bellamy, its use shifted to piracy. Clifford profiles several members of the pirate crew, including 11-year-old John King. He outlines the pirates' organization and adherence to "Ye Articles of ye Gentlemen of Fortune," a list of laws covering such matters as how decisions will be made and prizes divided. Photographs of artifacts (cufflinks, buttons, utensils, weapons) and the recovery crew at work combine with large visually appealing paintings of dramatic battle, storm, and courtroom scenes. Unfortunately, the text font is small and difficult to read, complicated by the textured background of the pages. Nonetheless, the book is a fascinating blend of history, ocean-diving recovery, and archaeology, and demonstrates archaeology in action and the role artifacts play in informing us about the past.—*Lucinda Snyder Whitehurst, St. Christopher's School, Richmond, VA*

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About the Author

Barry Clifford is one of the world's best-known underwater explorers. Born and raised on Cape Cod, he has been involved in underwater surveys and recovery missions for more than half of his life. After locating the wreck of the legendary *Whydah* in 1984, Clifford and his team successfully located the main body of the shipwreck in 1998. He has preserved the *Whydah* artifacts as an intact collection, establishing a museum, the Expedition *Whydah* Sea Lab & Learning Center, in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Clifford is also an accomplished mountaineer and jungle explorer, a member of the Explorers Club, and a Discovery Quest Scholar. He is the author of *Expedition Whydah*, *The Lost Fleet*, and *Return to Treasure Island*.

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