

Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland (Exceptional Social Studies Titles for Intermediate Grades)

By Sally M. Walker

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How did the colonists of Jamestown and Maryland live and die? Forensic anthropology provides an incredible array of answers. Scientists can look into a grave and determine the skeleton's gender, age at time of death, nationality, and sometimes even economic standing within minutes. Laboratory studies can provide cause of death information. Once these details are known, some skeletons can even be matched with a name via the historical record. Sibert-winning author Sally M. Walker worked side by side with archaeologists and forensic anthropologists in her research for this uniquely appealing book.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal
Starred Review. Grade 6–9—Walker takes readers on an archaeological investigation of human and material remains from 17th- and 18th-century Jamestown and colonial Maryland, while addressing relevant topics in forensic anthropology, history, and archaeology. The excavations encompass burial sites of colonists from various backgrounds, including a teenage indentured servant hastily buried in a trash pit, a grouping of prominent colonists laid to rest in lead coffins, and a woman of African heritage who likely toiled as a slave. Answers concerning the identity and fate of the uncovered remains are realized only after various specialists combine their findings to re-create relevant historical circumstances. In one instance, anthropologists provide anatomical details of a recovered skull to artists, who then use the data to produce the first sculpture of an American colonist of African ancestry. The text succinctly explains complex forensic concepts, such as determining the gender and age of a skeleton, or whether a skull represents a person originating from Europe or Africa. Captioned, full-color photographs of skeletal, dental, and artifactual remains shed light on colonial life. Historical documents, illustrated maps, and anatomical drawings complement images of various specialists at work in the field. Photographs of reenactors performing period tasks, such as grinding corn, provide insight into the daily life of the recovered individuals. Though other recent volumes discuss forensic anthropology, such as James M. Deem's *Bodies from the Ice* (Houghton, 2008), *Written in Bone* casts a magnifying glass on the hardships and realities of colonial life so often romanticized in American lore.—*Jeff Meyer, Slater Public Library, IA*
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From Booklist
Starred Review This unusual volume, suggested to Walker by a scientist at the Smithsonian Institution, dips into American history to introduce the work of forensic anthropologists. Focusing on colonial-era sites in the Chesapeake Bay region, the large-format book provides detailed discussions and intriguing close-up views of the grave excavations at Jamestown, Virginia, as well as in three Maryland locations: Providence, St. Mary’s City, and Harleigh Knoll. With precision of her own,Walker describes the meticulous work of the archaeologists and other scientists who study skeletal remains, using physical clues as indicators of a skeleton’s sex, age, birthplace, station in society, and length of time in the colonies. They combine trained observation, background knowledge, and scientific expertise with detective skills to illuminate facets of our history; the final chapter discusses how forensic anthropology has contributed to historians’ understanding of colonial times. Nearly every page carries at least one illustration, usually a color photo but sometimes a helpful diagram, a map, or a period document or print. Back matter includes source notes, a source bibliography, a time line, and lists of recommended books and Internet sites. The reading level is relatively high and the quantity of detailed information is not for everyone, but those intrigued by forensics and history will find this absolutely fascinating. Grades 7-11. --Carolyn Phelan

About the Author
Sally M. Walker is the author of many award-winning nonfiction books for young readers. She is the author of Secrets of a Civil War Submarine: Solving the Mysteries of the H.L. Hunley, which won the prestigious Sibert award in 2006. When she isn't busy writing or doing research for books, Ms. Walker works as a children's literature consultant. She gives presentations at many reading conferences and has taught at Northern Illinois University. Her other books with Lerner include Magnetism, Light, Sound, and Electricity.

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This Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland (Exceptional Social Studies Titles for Intermediate Grades) book is not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book will be information inside this reserve incredible fresh, you will get details which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland (Exceptional Social Studies Titles for Intermediate Grades) without we understand teach the one who examining it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't be worry Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland (Exceptional Social Studies Titles for Intermediate Grades) can bring once you are and not make your carrier space or bookshelves' turn into full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even mobile phone. This Written in Bone: Buried Lives of Jamestown and Colonial Maryland (Exceptional Social Studies Titles for Intermediate Grades) having good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not really feel uninterested in reading.

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