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# Shipwrecks: Exploring Sunken Cities Beneath The Sea



## **Synopsis**

An exploration of two strikingly different shipwrecks For those who know how to interpret its secrets, a sunken ship has many tales to tell. The stories of the lives of those aboard its last voyage are revealed in the objects scattered around the shipwreck. Then there are the stories of the many ocean creatures that have found a home inside the broken hull. Two shipwrecks, separated by two thousand miles and two centuries, share a common history of life, death, and rebirth. The first is the Henrietta Marve, a slave trader that sunk off Florida in 1700. The second, an elegant steamer with crew members from a thriving middle-class black community in Maine. Each of their stories starts with underwater exploration, one a search for fabled gold, the other for families lost at sea. Find out what underwater explorers discovered in these sunken cities beneath the sea.

## **Book Information**

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Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

Grade 3 "6" "Stunning images of undersea life including sunken ships, tropical fish, and marine exploration highlight this diverse work packed with information ranging from the discovery of the sunken slave ship Henrietta Marie to discussions of the wondrous array of sea life that makes its home within such wreckage. Cerullo describes the assortment of knowledge and technologies employed by oceanographers such as side-scan sonar and ROVs (Remotely Operated Vehicle), and shows how ocean currents aid in their search for hidden treasures. One such treasure

discussed is the immense, Victorian-style wooden steamship Portland that sank off the coast of Massachusetts on November 26, 1898. The work culminates with an insightful discussion of how readers can get involved in the preservation of these environmental sanctuaries. Combining well-captioned photos, bold text, and a fluid narrative covering a range of ocean life from manatees to zooxanthellae (one-celled algae living in the tissues of reef-building corals), Cerullo has produced a unique look into these underwater communities. Interesting topics, detailed sidebars, and eye-catching photos will draw in readers with an interest in ocean life. "Brian Odom, Pelham Public Library, AL Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Few things are more haunting than a shipwreck. Shaded in blue and frozen like a corpse, the ribbed remains of doomed vessels have an ability to conjure the fear of dying passengers as well as nature's domination over humans. Cerullo takes partial advantage of these elements by zeroing in on two wrecks: the Henrietta Marie, sunk in 1700 near the Florida Keys, and the Portland, sunk in 1898 off the coast of Massachusetts. The book makes the convincing case that these wrecks are important not only for historical reasons but also for the underwater ecosystems their structures now host. Though the pictures and descriptions of sea life are reasonably well done, the dramas of the sinkings are the real hook. The 1972 examination of the Henrietta Marie reveals a dark secret, the discovery of shackles "almost 200 slaves had perished with the ship. Meanwhile, the luxury liner Portland is brought to life with a photo of fine china resting unbroken on the ocean floor. With echoes of Titanic, this delivers both education and shivers. Grades 5-8. --Daniel Kraus

I just purchased this for our 6-year-old grandson, and he loves it. Lot of information, along with excellent photos and illustrations. It's appropriate for children in the six to 9 year old range.

Bought this book for my teenage son. He has really been enjoying it. We were pleased with the book and service we received.

rather brief for a real book

I bought this for a 12 year old and he really likes sunken ships and things and he seemed to really like this book. It was informational and had nice pics at the same time.

Captain Thomas Chamberlain and his crew most likely became more and more fearful and hurricane force winds buffeted the "Henrietta Marie." The ship went down "thirty-five miles west of the Florida Keys" in 1700 and was not discovered until 1972 on the sandy ocean floor In "about twenty-five feet of murky water." Corey Malcom directed the search and his divers used everything from ping pong paddles to move the sand to a magnetometer, a "survey tool" used to find iron objects. Creatures of the deep had made their home in and around the ship, but the crew began to find some interesting things. They found "almost one hundred pairs" of shackles. Just what kind of a ship was this and what kinds of secrets were hidden on the bottom of the ocean floor? Almost two centuries later another ship dubbed the "Portland" ran into a similar situation. On November 16, 1898, a storm named "The Portland Gale" after this luxury ship, an "overnight boat," began to batter it mercilessly. It was later theorized that the ship suffered a slow and terrifying death. One hundred ninety-two passengers and crew perished. Only forty bodies were recovered, but the most mystifying things were the "watches [that] washed ashore." They all said 9:30, but was this in the morning or at night? The ship was not located until 1978, but how did they find it and what would they discover because "fishes are the crew of the 'Portland' now?" The reader will be mesmerized by the shipwrecks and will also learn how they became magnets "for marine creatures." Everyone loves a treasure hunt and this book was exciting from the first page to the last. We not only learn about these mysterious ships, but also about a "living ocean community, where marine animals have made their home in a sanctuary that suddenly appeared in the vastness of the ocean." Learning about the marine life was almost as interesting for me as the shipwrecks. Each ship attracted a different type of life. There are numerous informative sidebars, photographs and reproductions of historical ephemera. In the back of the book is an index, a glossary and additional suggestions of things the reader can do. This was one fun book that you won't regret adding to your library!

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