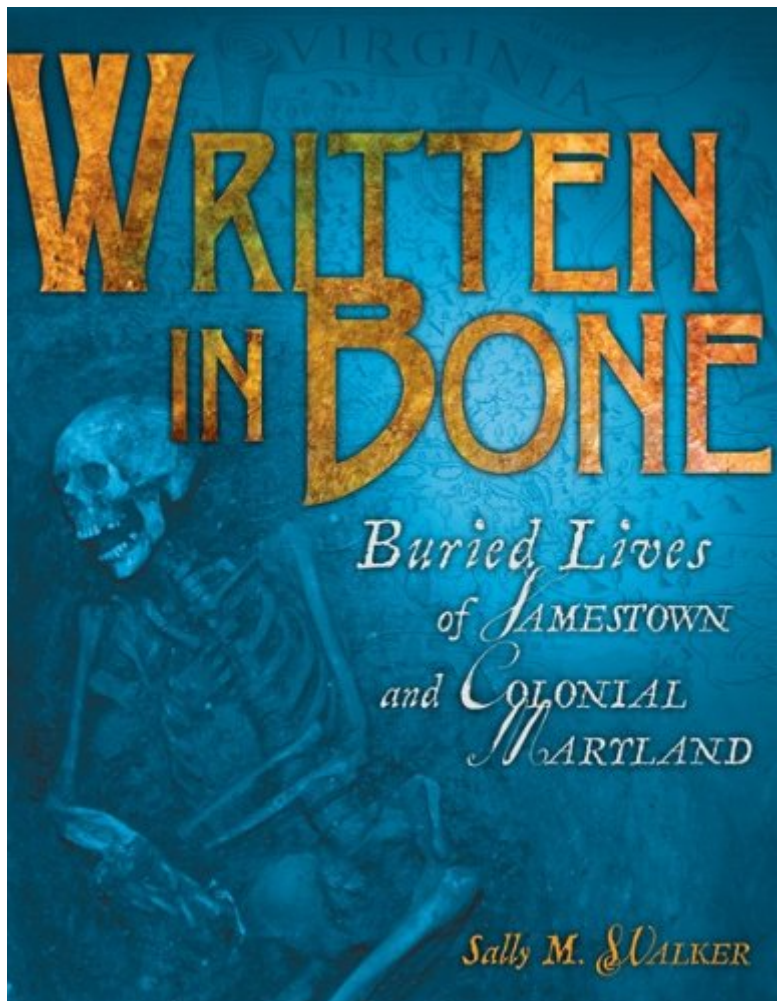


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Written In Bone: Buried Lives Of Jamestown And Colonial Maryland (Nonfiction - Grades 4-8)



Synopsis

Bright white teeth. Straight leg bones. Awkwardly contorted arm bones. On a hot summer day in 2005, Dr. Douglas Owsley of the Smithsonian Institution peered into an excavated grave, carefully examining the fragile skeleton that had been buried there for four hundred years. "He was about fifteen years old when he died. And he was European," Owsley concluded. But how did he know? Just as forensic scientists use their knowledge of human remains to help solve crimes, they use similar skills to solve the mysteries of the long-ago past. Join author Sally M. Walker as she works alongside the scientists investigating colonial-era graves near Jamestown, Virginia, as well as other sites in Maryland. As you follow their investigations, she'll introduce you to what scientists believe are the lives of a teenage boy, a ship's captain, an indentured servant, a colonial official and his family, and an enslaved African girl. All are reaching beyond the grave to tell us their stories, which are written in bone.

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Customer Reviews

Have you ever watched an archaeology dig on the Discovery Channel and thought that it would be something you just might be interested in as a career? If so, you will be fascinated by this book. When we think of archaeology, we mostly tend to think of places like Egypt, but the archaeological digs in this book were conducted right here in the United States. The author, Sally Walker, was fortunate enough to be able to gaze down into the graves of Colonial Americans as they were unearthed. She was standing by the side of Dr. Douglas Owsley, who could often determine the cause of death just by taking a close look at the bones! Many times when going into the past "archaeologists try to fill in the gaps in the historical record." Owsley, a "leading forensic anthropologist," was an essential member of the Jamestown Rediscovery and other similar projects. In this marvelous book we follow him in his quest to discover our American heritage through bones. He would examine the skeletons "in situ" (in place) before removing them from their graves. In this book we rediscover important men and women like Sir Lionel Copley, the "first royal governor of Maryland," and his wife Anne who were buried in extremely rare lead coffins. On the opposite end of the spectrum, we find a young teen who was buried in a trash pit underneath William Neale's house. Now his bones told the tale of a life of hard labor and from the look of things he may have been murdered. Hmmm, where's Owsley? I was utterly entranced by this book. There are numerous "unsolved" mysteries in this book, until Douglas Owsley takes a look that is. The writing is excellent. The book is peppered with photographs, sidebars and diagrams that grace almost every page.

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