

## Yo, ho, ho and a . . . Bushel of Oysters?



*With Talk Like a Pirate Day on September 19<sup>th</sup>, students may be rolling their “Arrs.” Popular media focuses on pirates pillaging at sea, but pirates never limited themselves to the open ocean. Consider these questions on oyster pirates, who made their living thieving shellfish in America’s bays.*

1. Oyster pirates were at the height of their trade during what years?

- The 1700s, the Golden Age of piracy.
- The 1800s, prior to the Civil War.
- Approximately 1930 to 1940.
- Approximately 1870 to 1920.

2. Which famous author spent time as an oyster pirate?

- Jack London.
- Ernest Hemingway.
- Mark Twain.
- Upton Sinclair.

3. What was popular working-class opinion on the oyster pirates?

- Oyster pirates should be hunted down and captured, as they gave a bad name to common fishermen.
- Oyster pirates meant very little to the working class in bay areas; a few people admired or condemned them, but most people ignored them.
- Oyster pirates were heroes, fighting back against corporate ownership of underwater property.
- Oyster pirates pulled attention from more important issues, such as urban crime rates and public health.

4. On April 3, 1883, the comic opera *Driven from the Seas; or the Pirate Dredger’s Doom* played to an appreciative audience at the Norfolk Academy of Music in Virginia. What Chesapeake Bay event did the opera satirize?

- A successful raid against Chesapeake oyster pirates by Virginia governor William Evelyn Cameron, in 1882.
- The sinking of two dredgers’ ships in February 1883, when the dredgers ran against rocks while being chased by overzealous patrol boats.

- The misadventures of a group of drunk oyster pirates arrested for causing a public disturbance in Norfolk in March 1883.
- An unsuccessful raid against Chesapeake oyster pirates by Virginia governor William Evelyn Cameron, in February 1883.

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<http://teachinghistory.org/history-content/quiz>