



TIME DETECTIVES



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THE MYSTERY OF THE
PIRATE FLAG



Orpheus

First published in 2012 by Orpheus Books Ltd.,
6 Church Green, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 4AW
www.orpheusbooks.com

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Created and produced by Nicholas Harris, Sarah Hartley,
Erica Williams, Katie Sexton and Ruth Symons,
Orpheus Books Ltd.

Illustrated by Peter Dennis

Text by Nicholas Harris

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ISBN 978 1 7418 3788 6

A CIP record for this book is available from the British Library

Printed and bound in China



TIME DETECTIVES

THE MYSTERY OF THE PIRATE FLAG



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This is the story of two children who went on an incredible journey back through time. On their travels through history, they found themselves in all kinds of exciting places, simply by walking through a series of special doors. You can follow them on their adventures by finding a door on each right-hand page. Opening it, you'll catch a glimpse of what the children themselves saw: a new place in a new time – weeks, years or even centuries earlier.

In the middle of the book, you can read more about it was really like to be a pirate and sail on the high seas many years ago.

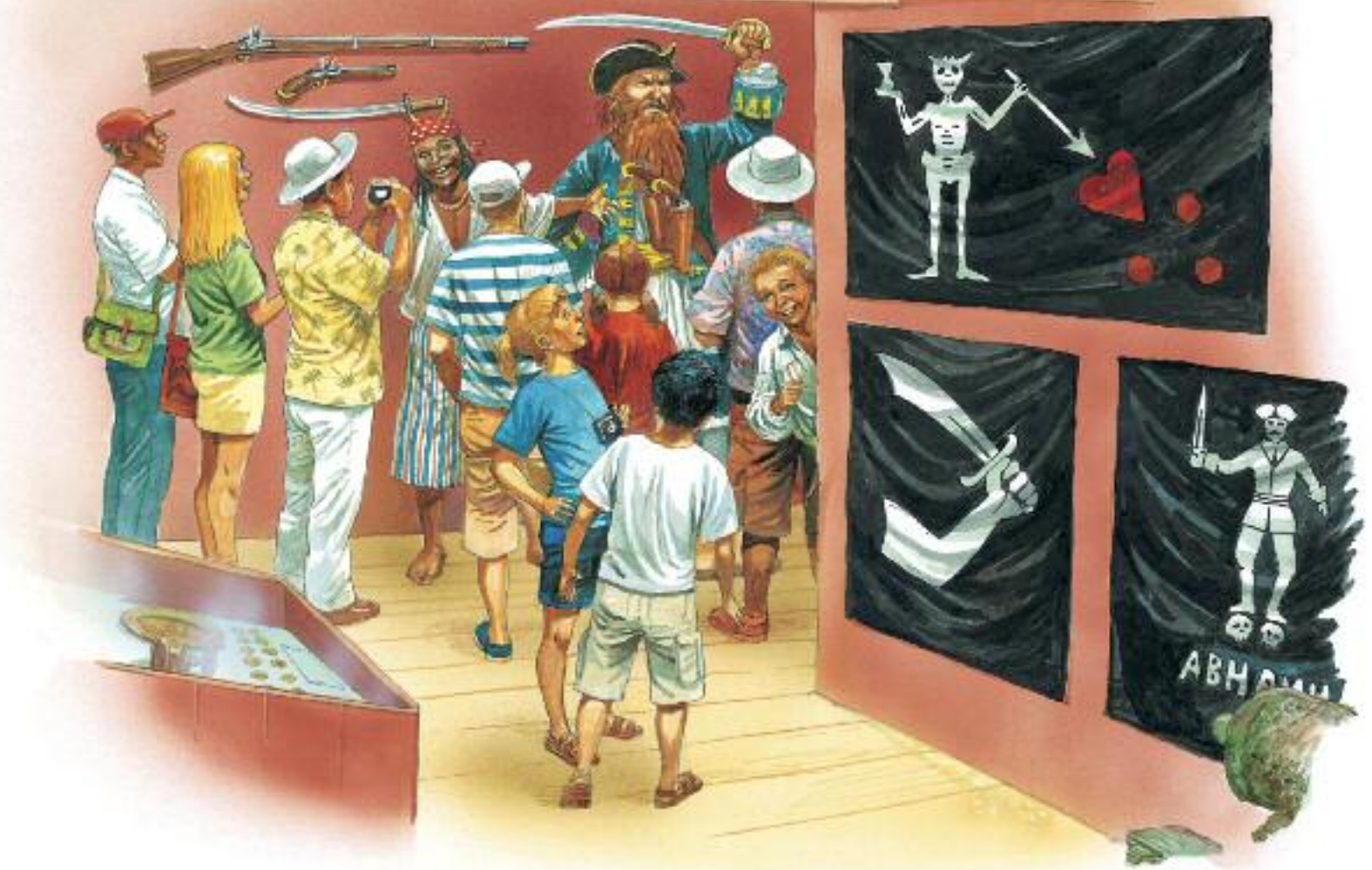


Today: A Pirate Museum

From the top of the tower, there was a great view across the harbour. “It’s called a brig,” said Lizzie. “A two-masted sailing ship. It was a favourite with pirates, because they were pretty fast and could carry lots of big guns. They named this kind of ship after them. *Brigands*, you see? Bad guys.”

Jack, Lizzie’s brother, was impressed. “Wow – you know a lot about pirates!”

“We learnt about them at school. Did you know that, hundreds of years ago, not all the people you’d think of as pirates were *actually* pirates? Some were ordinary seamen, hired to attack Spanish galleons by rival kings and queens. They were called privateers.”



Lizzie and Jack had come with their parents to visit the amazing new MUSEUM OF PIRACY. It was part of a harbour town that had been rebuilt to look exactly as it did nearly 300 years ago. The star exhibit was a magnificent sailing ship, an exact copy of one that plied the seas in those days, chasing other ships laden with treasure – a pirate ship!

Visitors were invited to step aboard the ship itself. Below deck, in between the waxwork models of fierce-looking pirates, the exhibits were laid out. Mounted on the walls were some pirate weapons and flags. Surprisingly, not all of the flags had a skull and crossbones or cross-swords. There were many different designs and symbols.

“Look at this one,” said Jack. “It’s a picture of a skeleton man with horns, sticking a spear into a heart. Soooo scary!”

“Or ‘ows about this one?” whispered an older boy, suddenly appearing from nowhere. “A skull and cross-swords. Yarr, but look, ‘ere be a li’l oblong wi’ a circle inside just under.”



The boy was about 13 or 14. He wore his hair in a pony tail and a broad grin on his face. Apart from his smock top, he looked just like any other teenage boy. The children thought he was one of the museum guides; there was another man dressed as a pirate explaining to the visitors how a musket was fired.

“Sam’s the name,” he said. “Tha’ ain’t goin’ to believe us, but, unlike this fella, I be a *real* pirate! Ship’s boy on the *Black Pelican*, me, and yonder flag – ‘im were ours.”

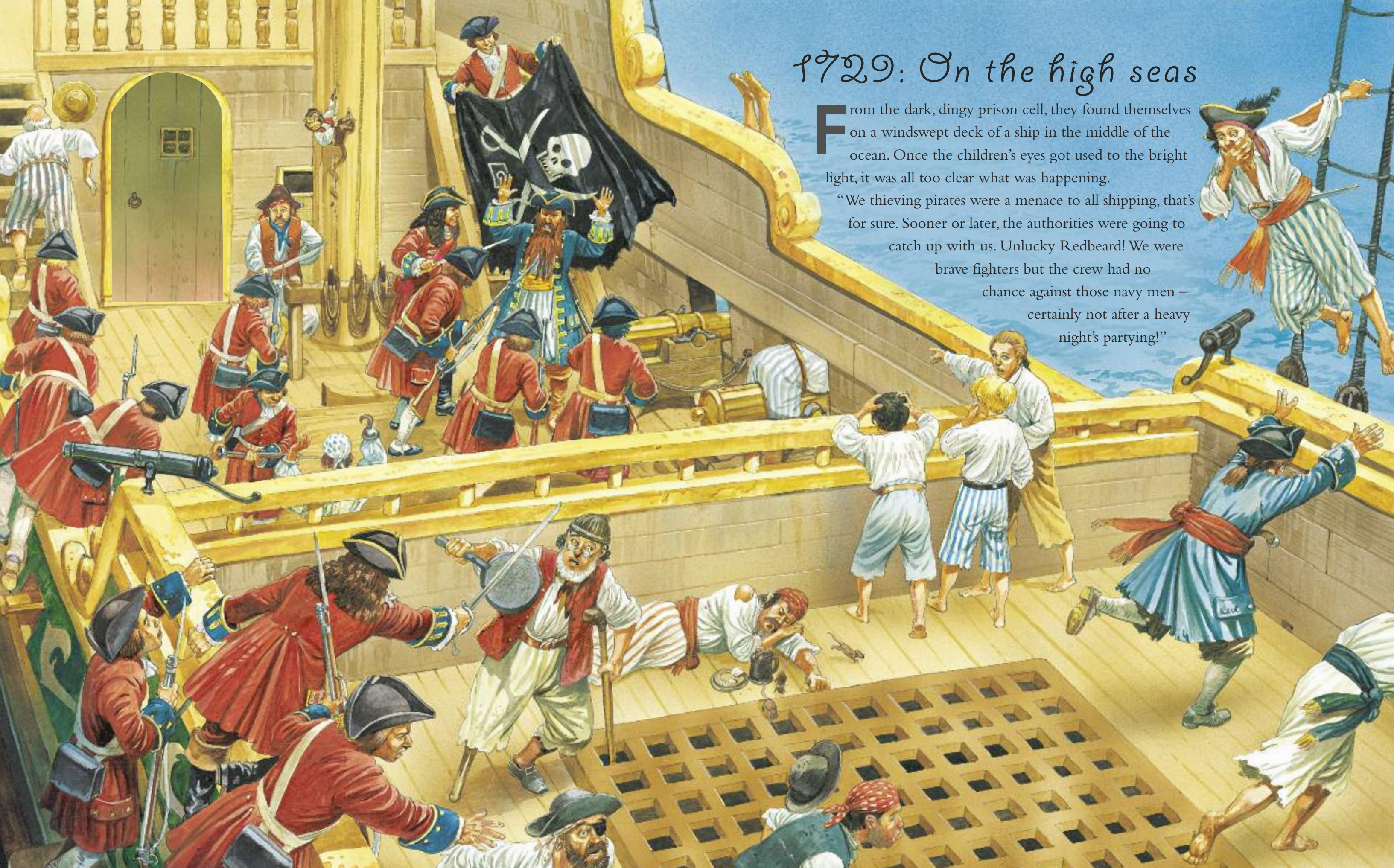
The children stood open-mouthed. He did speak a bit oddly, that was true.

Sam went on. “Tha’ see, Jolly Roger – ‘tis a name folks use for *any* pirate flag. Most of ‘em be jus’ black, or oftentimes red. Or our skip comes up wi’ ‘is own pretty li’l picture. We ne’er flies our flag all ‘t time – only when we spies a ship we fancy ‘avin’ a go at. Then we runs ‘im up the mast to scare her crew out o’ their wits! Us bein’ pirates – them knows wha’s comin’ next...”

“You know a lot about pirates,” said Jack. “Did you learn about them at school, too?”

Sam laughed. “Wanna know more?” The children nodded. “Then come wi’ me.”





1729: On the high seas

From the dark, dingy prison cell, they found themselves on a windswept deck of a ship in the middle of the ocean. Once the children's eyes got used to the bright light, it was all too clear what was happening.

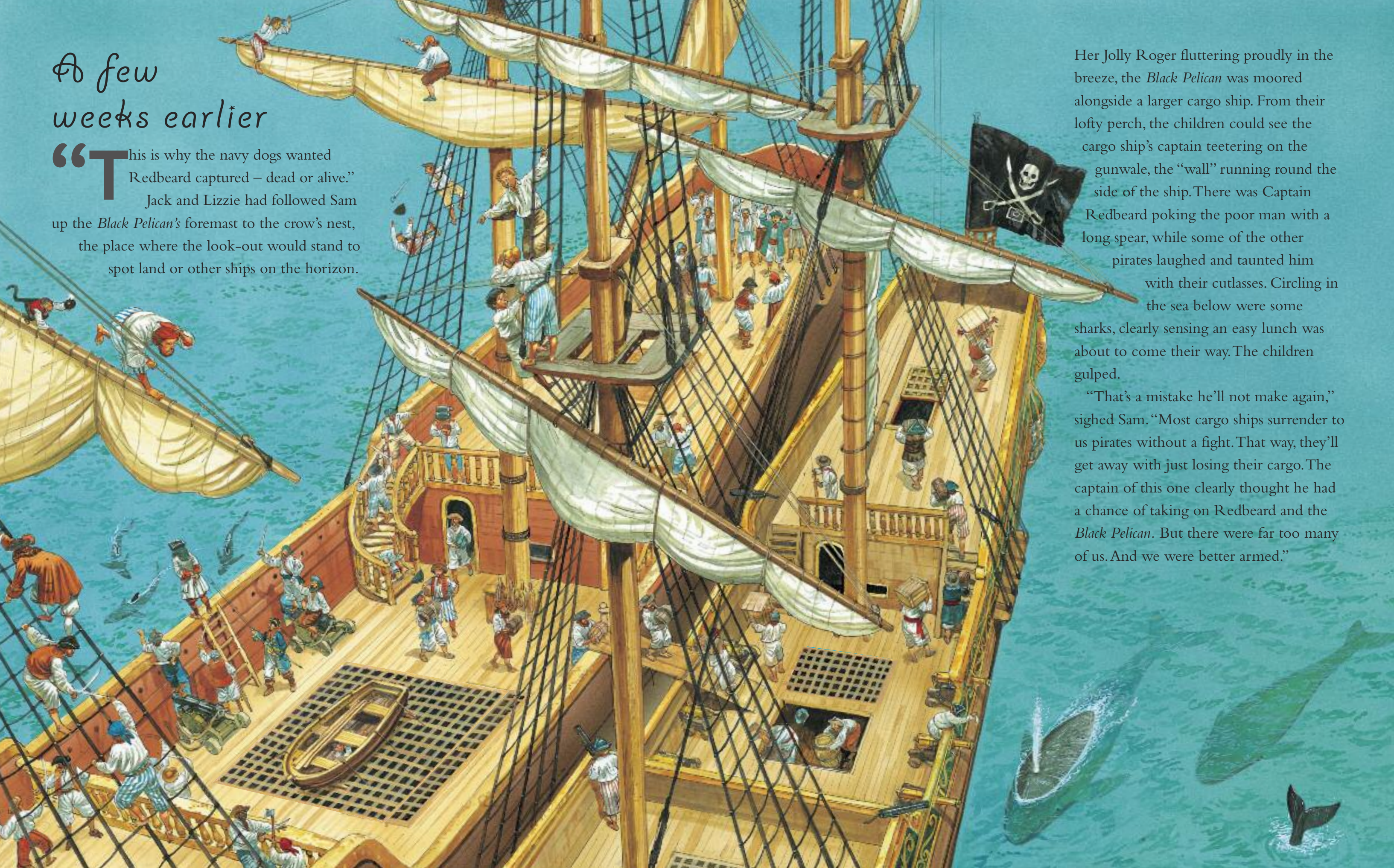
“We thieving pirates were a menace to all shipping, that’s for sure. Sooner or later, the authorities were going to catch up with us. Unlucky Redbeard! We were brave fighters but the crew had no chance against those navy men – certainly not after a heavy night’s partying!”

A few weeks earlier

“This is why the navy dogs wanted Redbeard captured – dead or alive.” Jack and Lizzie had followed Sam up the *Black Pelican’s* foremast to the crow’s nest, the place where the look-out would stand to spot land or other ships on the horizon.

Her Jolly Roger fluttering proudly in the breeze, the *Black Pelican* was moored alongside a larger cargo ship. From their lofty perch, the children could see the cargo ship’s captain teetering on the gunwale, the “wall” running round the side of the ship. There was Captain Redbeard poking the poor man with a long spear, while some of the other pirates laughed and taunted him with their cutlasses. Circling in the sea below were some sharks, clearly sensing an easy lunch was about to come their way. The children gulped.

“That’s a mistake he’ll not make again,” sighed Sam. “Most cargo ships surrender to us pirates without a fight. That way, they’ll get away with just losing their cargo. The captain of this one clearly thought he had a chance of taking on Redbeard and the *Black Pelican*. But there were far too many of us. And we were better armed.”



A few hours earlier

BOOM! It was as if the whole world shuddered. A cloud of smoke from the nearby ship, followed half a second later by a loud crack as a cannonball tore through the side of the ship and whistled just over Redbeard's head. He didn't flinch for a second.

"There's their answer, me hearties!", the captain bellowed to his crew. "They're up for a fight, so let's give 'em one." The men murmured with quiet satisfaction as they cocked their pistols, primed their bombs and took aim with their guns. This was what pirates loved to do!

"Now watch this, kids!" shouted Sam. "First, we give them a chance to surrender. Then, if they don't give in straight away, our ship comes up from behind and gives them a good raking: a few blasts from our cannon right through their ship. If *that* doesn't make them see sense ... well, there's nothing else for it but to board her. See that lad with the grappling hook? When we're right up close, he'll sling it over her side and pull our ships together."



Some weeks earlier: A harbour

The children were standing on top of a tower overlooking the harbour. From here they had a great view of the busy quayside. The crew of the *Black Pelican* were loading her with supplies. She was to set sail the next morning.

“Uh oh,” muttered Sam. “Looks like Captain Redbeard is having a spot of bother with that guard. He’s spotted our flag and wants to know where we’ve got it from. If he finds out we’re pirates, we’re done for. Knowing our skipper, he’ll probably say we captured the flag from some other pirate ship. The truth is, it *is* our flag, but not, strictly speaking, our ship. Now I’m going to show you how we came by her.”



1720: A sheltered bay

“This was the opportunity we had all been waiting for! That night, a ship had sailed into the bay. Most likely she was looking for a quiet place to anchor until the morning. A little later, we heard music and laughter. They probably reckoned there'd be no one about. Time for a party, they thought. Little did they realise ...

“... we were watching them. We waited ... and waited – until silence fell. Every man jack of them, drunk as rats! Then, the Captain gave us the signal ...



“As quiet as mice, we climbed into dinghies and sailed or rowed out across the bay towards the ship. She was the *Black Pelican*, proud vessel of one Captain Bloodeye and his men. But for not much longer. In the morning, they'd be waking up dazed on the beach while Redbeard's men were riding the waves on their brand new ship!”

1718: A tropical island

“So how did you become pirates in the first place?” asked Lizzie. “Well,” Sam began, “it’s a long story.” He told them how he and his mates had once been sailors on a navy ship. They were treated badly, so they mutinied. But the rebellion failed and they were marooned on a remote island.

“We lived on wild pig, fish and coconuts. Redbeard, our fiercest fighter, was elected be our leader. He promised us a life of adventure and riches – as pirates. All we needed to do was capture a ship. Then we could get money and food by attacking other ships. But, first we needed our own flag. The Captain wanted to add a picture of something of yours he was very curious about ...”

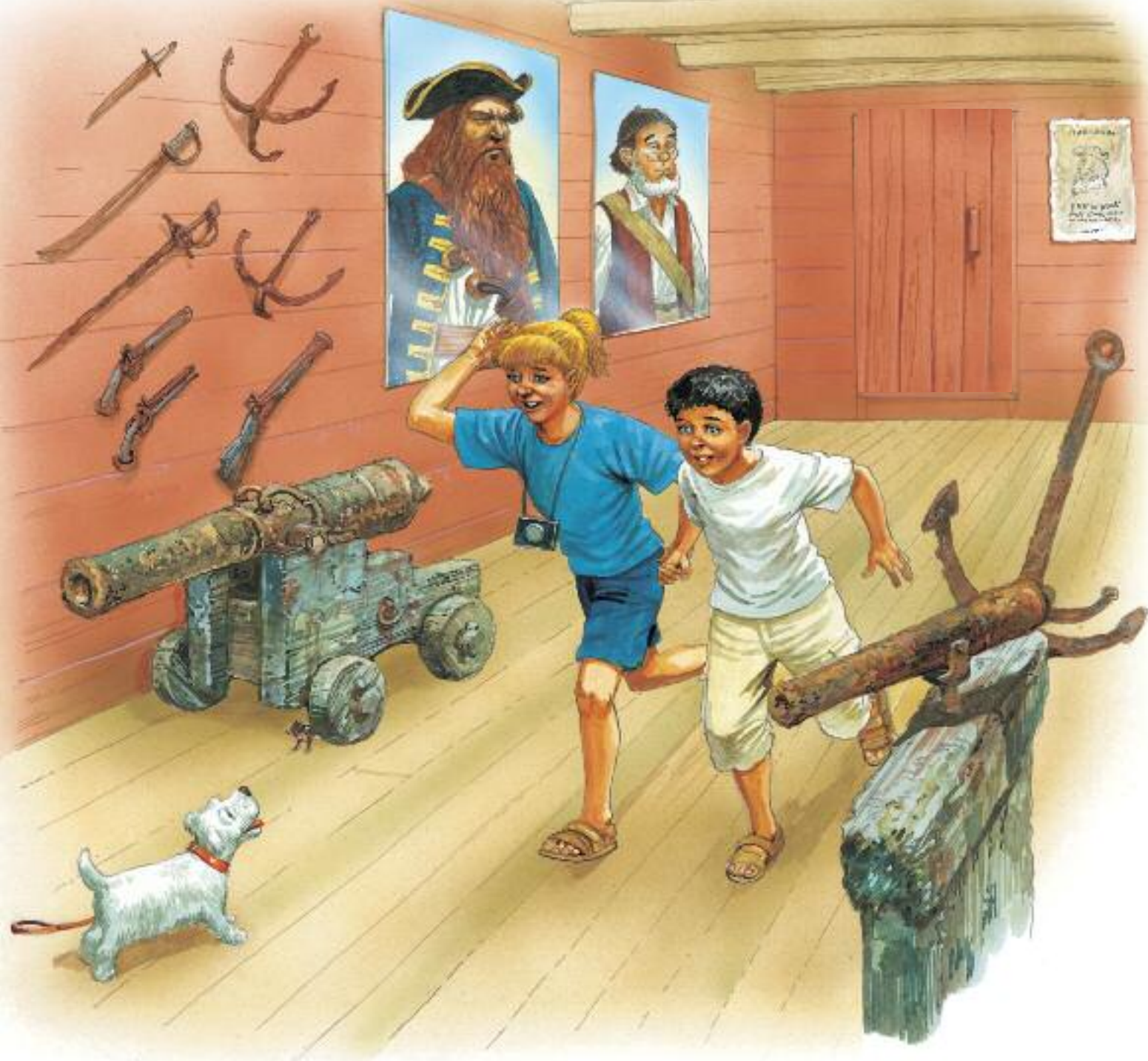
“IT’S THIS!” laughed Jack, pointing at Lizzie’s camera. “But – how ..?”



Back to today

The mystery of the flag was solved. It was fun being pirates with their new friend, but Lizzie and Jack had to get back to their own time. The door to one of the huts on the island showed them the way.

Now they found themselves inside the museum from where they had set out all that time ago. They broke into a run, worrying whether their parents would still be there ...



They found them in the same place where they had seen the flag.

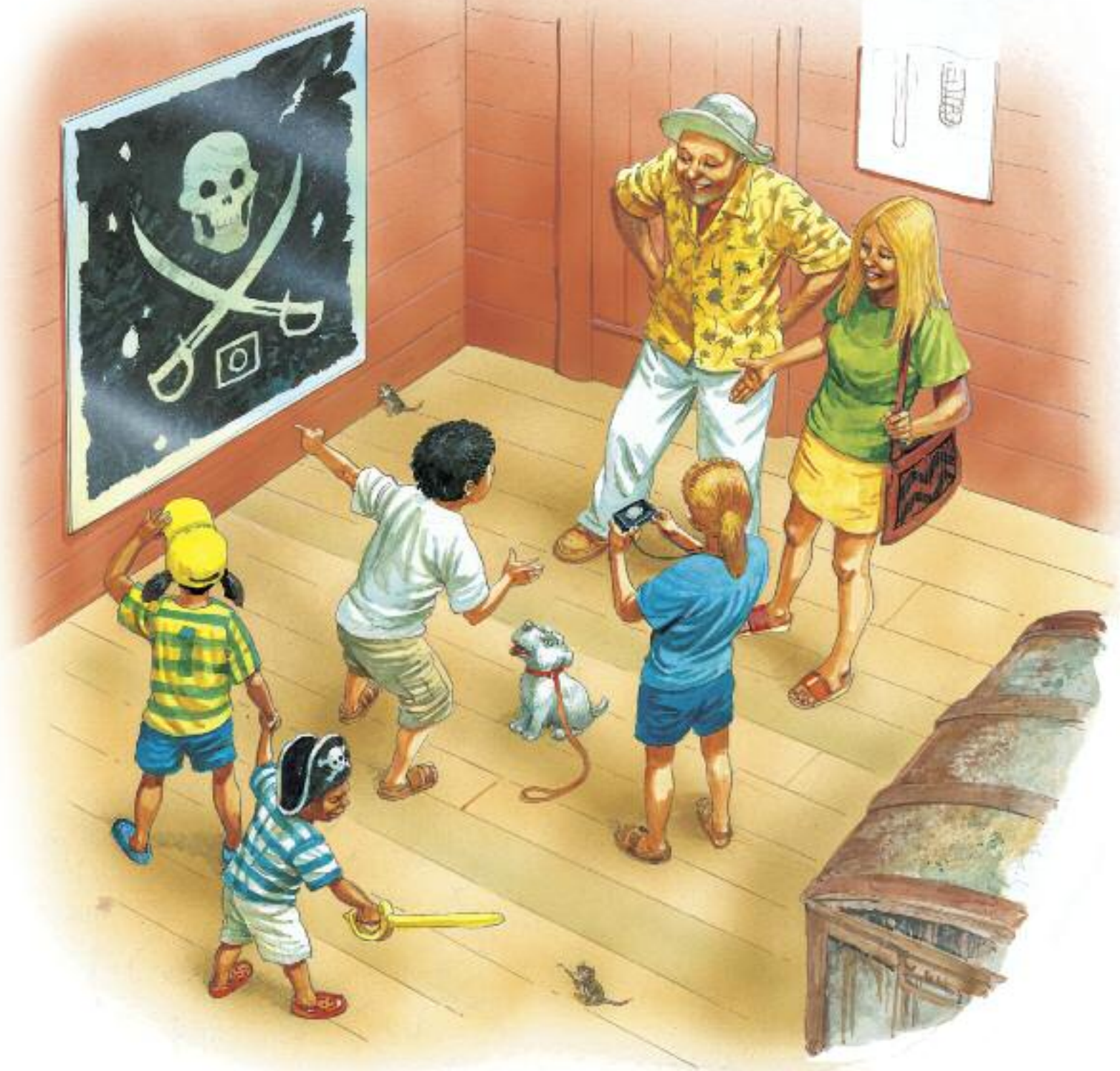
“You’re still here. What a relief!” gasped Jack. “We thought you’d be worried about us.”

His mum looked puzzled. “You were staring at this Jolly Roger only a second ago.”

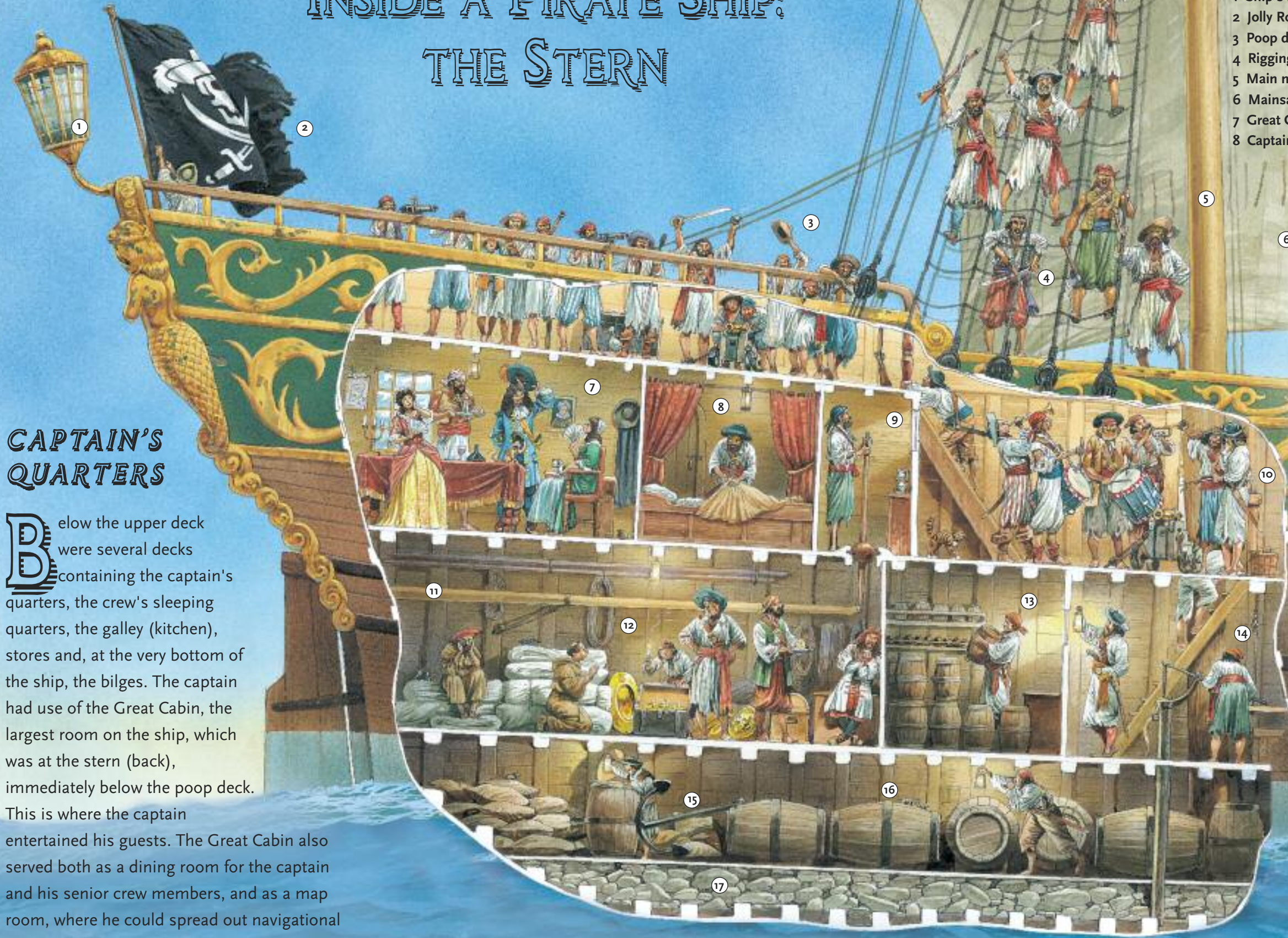
Lizzie realised their journey back in time had all happened within the blink of an eye.

“We met a ship’s boy from a *real* pirate ship, said Jack excitedly. “And he told us loads of stuff about that flag ... then he took us back to a prison, up to a crow’s nest on a really cool sailing ship, and on a desert island and ... that’s Lizzie’s camera – look!”

Their mum and dad just laughed. “So are you two pirates ready for an ice cream?”



INSIDE A PIRATE SHIP: THE STERN



KEY

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Ship's lantern | 9 Helmsman with whipstaff |
| 2 Jolly Roger | 10 Main deck |
| 3 Poop deck | 11 Tiller |
| 4 Rigging | 12 Treasure store |
| 5 Main mast | 13 Gunpowder stores |
| 6 Mainsail | 14 Pumping out the bilges |
| 7 Great Cabin | 15 Anchor |
| 8 Captain's bedchamber | 16 Water stores |
| | 17 Bilges (with ballast) |

CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

Below the upper deck were several decks containing the captain's quarters, the crew's sleeping quarters, the galley (kitchen), stores and, at the very bottom of the ship, the bilges. The captain had use of the Great Cabin, the largest room on the ship, which was at the stern (back), immediately below the poop deck. This is where the captain entertained his guests. The Great Cabin also served both as a dining room for the captain and his senior crew members, and as a map room, where he could spread out navigational charts on the large table. Next door was the captain's bedchamber.

BELOW DECK

At the bow, the front of the ship, was the fo'c'sle (short for forecastle). This deck was higher than the rest of the top deck to give a good view. Most of the crew had their sleeping quarters below the fo'c'sle. They slept in hammocks slung from the ceiling. On the deck below was the ship's kitchen, or galley, reached from above by a run of stairs called a companionway. At the very bottom of the ship were the bilges, containing heavy rocks to help keep the ship stable. Everywhere below deck it was dark, damp and smelly. The crew had to share the limited space with food, water and gunpowder stores.

INSIDE A PIRATE SHIP: THE BOW

WORKING PARTS

The ship was steered by a rudder, a large wooden paddle at the stern. Linked by rods called the tiller and whipstaff, it was controlled by the helmsman. There were several cannon. Each was mounted on a wheeled carriage, making it easy to roll them back for loading with gunpowder and shot. The ship also usually had swivel guns mounted on the gunwales (sides). These could be aimed by turning them from side to side. The ropes and chains that supported and controlled the masts and yards (bars to which the sails were attached) were called the rigging. Sailors used rope ladders called ratlines to climb up the rigging.

- KEY
- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1 Fo'c'sle | 9 Crew's quarters |
| 2 Foremast | 10 Galley |
| 3 Swivel gun | 11 Brick oven |
| 4 Bowsprit | 12 Galley stores |
| 5 Spritsail | 13 Beer barrel |
| 6 Figurehead | 14 Water stores |
| 7 Cannon and gun crew | 15 Dungeon |
| 8 Capstan (winding machine for raising anchor) | |

