

The Legend of Pirate Sam Bellamy  
and the Doomed Ship, *Whydah*

by Grady Locklear

Commissioned for the history-arts production  
*Paths Through the 1700s*

Written and directed by Rebecca Locklear



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The Legend of Pirate Sam Bellamy and the Doomed Ship, *Whydah*

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*Cover Photo: "Eastham, Cape Cod" by Amy Camenga*

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## USES OF THE POEM

The point is to involve students in history surrounding the Golden Age of Piracy (1650-1730) and is often used in history, English, drama, or music classes.

Additionally, students can engage in related research:

- Research pirate captains of the times, including Captain Samuel Bellamy's partner, Captain Palgrave Williams.
- If pirates boarded a slave ship on its way to the Caribbean, they gave male prisoners the option to remain on board the slave ship or to join them as pirates. Investigate why escaped slaves joined the brotherhood of pirates and why Bellamy's *Whydah* crew was racially, nationally, and religiously diverse.
- Study the limitations of navigation of the time, before a means of easily and accurately determining longitude had been invented.

.....and more!

## Background Information

### The Legend of Pirate Sam Bellamy

Rebecca Locklear

In 1715, Samuel Bellamy (1689-1717), a sailor from Devon, England, journeyed to Cape Cod, Massachusetts. While looking for work, he fell in love with a girl, who in legend, was called Maria. He wanted to marry her, but Maria's father forbade the marriage since Samuel had no wealth.

In that same year of 1715, ten or twelve Spanish galleons sank off the coast of Florida during a hurricane. Samuel learned of the sunken ships and persuaded a local goldsmith, Palgrave Williams, to pay for the fitting out of a ship. They set sail for Florida in order to get rich quickly.

Unfortunately, when they arrived, others had already found the sunken ships and stolen the valuable cargo. Since Samuel didn't want to return to Cape Cod penniless, he decided to "go on....."

**...CONTINUED**

# The Legend of Pirate Samuel Bellamy and the Doomed Ship *Whydah*

by Grady Locklear

A young man came to Nauset Bay  
From far across the sea  
An Englishman, his Christian name  
Was Samuel Bellamy.

Sam looked for work in Eastham town  
One long and dreary winter  
And there he met a lovely girl  
And fell in love with her.

Maria lived around the bay  
She loved to watch the waves  
When Samuel asked her hand to wed  
Her father's face was grave.

For Sam just wasn't rich enough,  
Maria's family said  
But Sam would never give her up  
A thought came to his head.

Upon the Nauset shipyard docks  
The merchant sailors told  
A story of a storm that sunk  
Ten ships of Spanish gold.

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**...CONTINUES for 27 verses**

# Notes When Using as Drama

## The Legend of Pirate Sam Bellamy

Rebecca Locklear

**Summary:** In 1715, why did British-born sailor Samuel Bellamy turn to piracy? What happened to Captain Bellamy and his flagship? Act out this exciting true story told in verse.

### Cast of Characters:

	# of Lines
Narrator	108
Samuel Bellamy	0-Lead
Maria	0-Second Lead
Mom	0
Dad	0
Sister	0
Palgrave Williams	0-Second Lead
Merchant Sailor 1	0
Merchant Sailor 2	0
Captain	0-Second Lead
Captain's Mate	0
Captain's Sailor 1	0
Captain's Sailor 2	0
Lead Head of Ship, sound affects	0-Second Lead
5 Ship Folks	0
2-4 Dancers	0

**Setting:** 1715-1717; Cape Cod town, Massachusetts, dockyard; ship.

**Props:** Pirate flag, wooden boxes to sit on, pouch of money, swords, board from ship with *Whydah* written on it (*see left*), gold coins and jewelry, British flag, scarves, one large coin.

**Performance Time:** 13-15 minutes as a skit



# Staging and Music Cues

## The Legend of Pirate Sam Bellamy

Grady Locklear  
Staging and music cues by Rebecca Locklear

**MUSIC CUE:** Set the scene with “Largo” by Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713).

The image displays three systems of musical notation for the piece "Largo" by Arcangelo Corelli. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The music is written in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The first system shows the initial four measures. The second system shows measures 5 through 8. The third system shows measures 9 through 12, with a trill (tr.) indicated above the final note of the treble staff in measure 12.

**NARRATOR:** (downstage SR)

1A young man came to Nauset Bay  
From far across the sea  
An Englishman, his Christian name  
Was Samuel Bellamy.

2Sam looked for work in Eastham town  
One long and dreary winter  
And there he met a lovely girl  
And fell in love with her.

3Maria lived around the bay  
She loved to watch the waves  
When Samuel asked her hand to wed  
Her father's face was grave.

### Performance Suggestions

SAM enters SL. Poses CS. Freeze.

SAM to downstage SL. MARIA enters SL and goes to CS. SAM turns, greets her. Freeze.

Family (MOM, DAD, SISTER) enters SR. MARIA goes to stand next to them. SAM gets down on knee, reaches for and takes her hand. Freeze.

**...CONTINUED**

## HISTORY TIDBIT

This is the area off Wellfleet, Cape Cod, Massachusetts where the wreck of the *Whydah* was discovered.

This same location, with dramatic, high cliffs, is where on November 19, 1620, Pilgrims on the *Mayflower* first sighted land. They headed south toward their destination on the Hudson River but encountered high winds and shoaling. In extreme danger of being wrecked, the ship turned around and anchored at the northern tip of Cape Cod.



**Rebecca Locklear, Writer**  
HISTORY integrated with other subjects

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