



Pirate Queen: The Life Of Grace O'Malley 1530-1603

By Judith Cook

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In a life stranger than any fiction, Grace O'Malley, daughter of a clan chief in County Mayo, went from marriage at fifteen to piracy on the high seas. She had a fleet of galleys under her command (four of them Scots). In 1559 her husband was killed in an ambush and not long after she took as a lover a survivor of a shipwreck. Clansmen came over from Scotland and murdered him. She tracked them down and had them killed, and from then on follow episodes of plunder, kidnapping, piracy and general mayhem. In 1586 she was captured by the Earl of Ormond and was actually on the scaffold with a rope around her neck when she was saved on the orders of Queen Elizabeth. Elizabeth offered to make her a countess. Grace refused, but was officially allowed to be a 'privateer' thereafter. She may also have been an intelligencer for Elizabeth.

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About the Author

Judith Cook is a crime writer and investigative journalist.

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