



# Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum

*Paul Roberts*

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## **Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum** Paul Roberts

In AD 79, the beautiful Bay of Naples was rocked by the dramatic fiery eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Pompeii and Herculaneum--and countless nearby farms, estates, and villages--were completely buried under pumice and super-heated ash. It was arguably the most widely recognized volcanic eruption in recorded history, and the ruins it left behind are our most valuable archaeological record of day-to-day life in the Roman empire.

This magnificently illustrated book illuminates the daily lives of the people of Pompeii and Herculaneum. The plaster-cast bodies of the victims are the most vivid reminders of the horrific event that made Pompeii so well-known, but who were these men, women, and children so cruelly frozen in time? Drawing on full-color photographs of more than 200 excavated objects--from a soldier's sword to a shopkeeper's blue glass storage bottle--Paul Roberts, a curator at the British Museum, lifts the inhabitants of Pompeii and Herculaneum out of the ashes and ruins of their homes and brings them back into the light. Roberts explores every room in the typical Roman home. Here are bronze busts and magnificent mosaics from an entrance area; beautiful frescoes and silver drinking cups from a dining room; a carbonized wooden cradle and birth certificate of a little girl from a bedroom and library; and bottles for fish sauce and cooking pots from a kitchen. In addition, Roberts offers an engaging discussion of the many shops found in the two cities, ranging from bakeries to taverns, and he also reconstructs the catastrophe, drawing on the best archaeological and geological evidence, as well as the eyewitness account of Pliny the Younger.

With sharp full-color photographs of the most celebrated artifacts, including incredible recent finds from Herculaneum, this book captures the public face and private life of real Roman families.

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