

Alan Armstrong

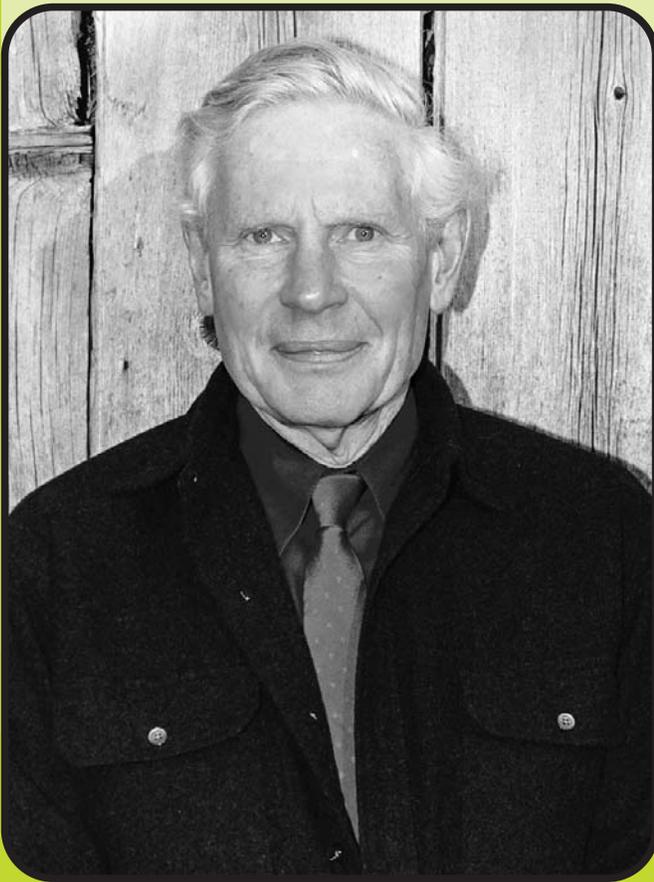


Photo Credit: Jane Feldman

“**W**hat do I hope my readers get? Pleasure. And maybe something they didn't know or feel before.”

—Alan Armstrong

Alan Armstrong's debut novel, *Whittington*, a charming barnyard tale about the descendant of Dick Whittington's cat, won a Newbery Honor in 2006.

About the Author

I was sick a lot as a kid. I survived on stories. The best thing in the world was someone coming in to my room. I waited like a spider, book at the ready—something of the parents' that one of my brothers might read aloud: *Hornblower*, *Gone with the Wind*.

I remember the rush when I realized I could read on my own. I wasn't dependent any more: the world was mine! I walked home from school that afternoon saying to myself, "I can read! I CAN READ!" I looked down. I was floating.

Read what? Someone who puts you onto a good book is like a friend who introduces you to a friend—one of the true generous acts. The best people in the world are the ones who say, "Try this!" Librarians do it every day.

From about age ten, my dream was to make my own book. I wrote and wrote. I showed my efforts to a friend of my father's. She read them. "Write about what you like," she said. "We all know about the rest."

I got a place on the college newspaper. The editor was a tall, pimply boy in ruined clothes who said the only thing that mattered was getting cleanly typed text in by the deadline. When I turned in my first piece, he shot it back with a note: "Write down quotes. Listen for verbs. The story's always in the verbs. Get the verbs down along with any odd words you hear, locutions. And questions. Readers like questions." I rewrote that piece four times. My average now is forty.

Praise for:

WHITTINGTON:

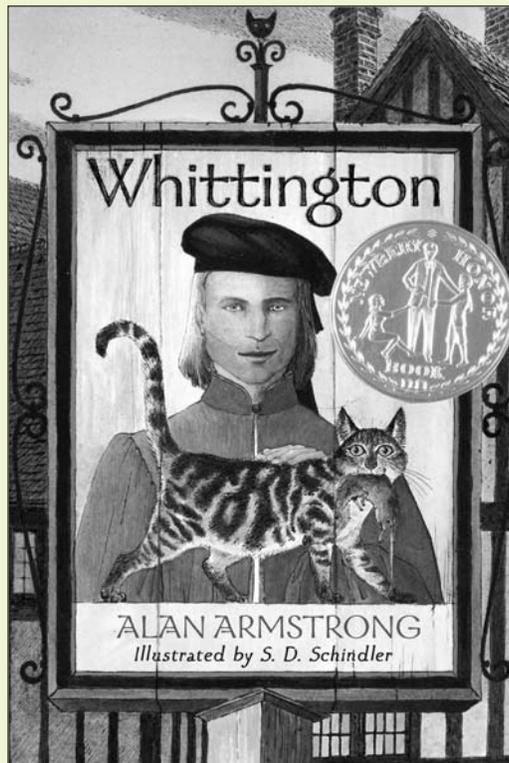
★ "What is remarkable is the compelling quality of both characterization and story. . . . It's a lovely paean to the power of story and the words that carry it along."

—*Kirkus Reviews*, Starred

★ "This superior novel interweaves animal fantasy and family story. . . . Graceful prose, engaging human and animal characters, and a deft interweaving of three story lines make this book worthy of comparison to the work of Dick King-Smith and E. B. White. . . . *Whittington* reads aloud beautifully, and the extended happy ending will leave everyone smiling in delight."

—*School Library Journal*, Starred

Book List



WHITTINGTON

Ages 8–12 • Random House
978-0-375-82864-5 (0-375-82864-8)
GLB: 978-0-375-92864-2 (0-375-92864-2)