

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE REVIVED

Philip Nichols



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Account of Voyages to the West Indies

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

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Sir Francis Drake, the greatest of the naval adventurers of England of the time of Elizabeth, was born in Devonshire about 1540. He went to sea early, was sailing to the Spanish Main by 1565, and commanded a ship under Hawkins in an expedition that was overwhelmed by the Spaniards in 1567. In order to recompense himself for the loss suffered in this disaster, he equipped the expedition against the Spanish treasure-house at Nombre de Dios in 1572, the fortunes of which are described in the first of the two following narratives. It was on this voyage that he was led by native guides to "that goodly and great high tree" on the isthmus of Darien, from which, first of Englishmen, he looked on the Pacific, and "besought Almighty God of His goodness to give him life and leave to sail once in an English ship in that sea."

The fulfilment of this prayer is described in the second of the voyages here printed, in which it is told how, in 1578, Drake passed through the Straits of Magellan into waters never before sailed by his countrymen, and with a single ship rifled the Spanish settlements on the west coast of South America and plundered the Spanish treasure-ships; how, considering it unsafe to go back the way he came lest the enemy should seek revenge, he went as far north as the Golden Gate, then passed across the Pacific and round by the Cape of Good Hope, and so home, the first Englishman to circumnavigate the globe. Only Magellan's ship had preceded him in the feat, and Magellan had died on the

voyage. The Queen visited the ship, "The Golden Hind," as she lay at Deptford and knighted the commander on board.

Drake's further adventures were of almost equal interest. Returning from a raid on the Spaniards in 1586, he brought home the despairing Virginian colony, and is said at the same time to have introduced from America tobacco and potatoes. Two years later he led the English fleet in the decisive engagement with the Great Armada. In 1595 he set out on another voyage to the Spanish Main; and in the January of the following year died off Porto Bello and was buried in the waters where he had made his name as the greatest seaman of his day and nation.

TO THE HIGH AND MIGHTY
CHARLES THE FIRST, OF
GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, and IRELAND,
KING, all the blessings of this, and a better life.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,

That this brief Treatise is yours, both by right
and by
succession, will appear by the Author's and
Actor's ensuing
Dedication. To praise either the Mistress or the
Servant, might
justly incur the censure of *Quis eos unquam
sanus vituperavit;*
either's worth having sufficiently blazed their
fame.

This Present loseth nothing, by glancing on
former actions; and

the observation of passed adventures may probably advantage future employments. Caesar wrote his own Commentaries; and this Doer was partly the Indictor.

Neither is there wanting living testimony to confirm its truth.

For his sake, then, cherish what is good! and I shall willingly

entertain check for what is amiss. Your favourable acceptance may

encourage my collecting of more neglected notes! However, though

Virtue, as Lands, be not inheritable; yet hath he left of his

Name, one that resolves, and therein joys to approve himself.

Your most humble and loyal subject,

FRANCIS DRAKE [BART.]

The Dedicatory Epistle, Intended To
QUEEN ELIZABETH

Written By SIR FRANCIS DRAKE, Deceased.

To The Queen's Most Excellent Majesty,
my most dread Sovereign.

Madam,

Seeing divers have diversely reported and

written of these Voyages
and Actions which I have attempted and
made, every one
endeavouring to bring to light whatsoever
inklings or conjectures
they have had; whereby many untruths have
been published, and the
certain truth concealed: as [so] I have thought
it necessary
myself, as in a Card [chart] to prick the
principal points of the
counsels taken, attempts made, and success
had, during the whole
course of my employment in these services
against the Spaniard.
Not as setting sail for maintaining my
reputation in men's
judgment, but only as sitting at helm, if
occasion shall be, for
conducting the like actions hereafter. So I
have accounted it my
duty, to present this Discourse to Your
Majesty, as of right;
either for itself being the first fruits of your
Servant's pen, or
for the matter, being service done to Your
Majesty by your poor
vassal, against your great Enemy: at times, in
such places, and
after such sort as may seem strange to those
that are not
acquainted with the whole carriage thereof;
but will be a pleasing

remembrance to Your Highness, who take the
apparent height of the
Almighty's favour towards you, by these
events, as truest
instruments.

Humbly submitting myself to Your gracious
censure, both in writing
and presenting; that Posterity be not deprived
of such help as may
happily be gained hereby, and our present
Age, at least, may be
satisfied, in the rightfulness of these actions,
which hitherto
have been silenced: and Your Servant's labour
not seem altogether
lost, not only in travels by sea and land, but
also in writing the
Report thereof (a work to him no less
troublesome) yet made
pleasant and sweet, in that it hath been, is,
and shall be for
Your Majesty's content; to whom I have
devoted myself [and] live
or die.

FRANCIS DRAKE [Knight].

January 1, 1592 [i.e., 1593].

TO THE COURTEOUS READER

HONEST READER,

Without apology, I desire thee, in this ensuing Discourse, to observe, with me, the power and justice of the LORD of Hosts, Who could enable so mean a person to right himself upon so mighty a Prince; together with the goodness and providence of GOD very observable in that it pleased Him to raise this man, not only from a low condition, but even from the state of persecution. His father suffered in it, being forced to fly from his house, near South Tavistock in Devon, into Kent: and there to inhabit in the hull of a ship, wherein many of his younger sons were born. He had twelve in all: and as it pleased GOD to give most of them a being upon the water, so the greatest part of them died at sea. The youngest, who though he was [went] as far as any, yet died at home; whose posterity inherits that, which by himself and this noble Gentleman the eldest brother, was hardly, yet worthily gotten.

I could more largely acquaint thee, that this