



HISTORY OF PIRACY IN THE CARIBBEAN

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History of Piracy in the Caribbean

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Introduction

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The Pyrates in the *West-Indies* became more numerous than in any other Parts of the World, on several Reasons:

First, Because there are so many uninhabited little Islands and Keys, with Harbours convenient and secure for cleaning their Vessels, and abounding with what they often want, Provision; I mean Water, Sea-Fowl, Turtle, Shell, and other Fish; where, if they carry in but strong Liquor, they indulge a Time, and become ready for new Expeditions before any Intelligence can reach to hurt them.

It may here perhaps be no unnecessary Digression, to explain upon what they call Keys in the *West-Indies*: These are small sandy Islands, appearing a little above the Surf of the Water, with only a few Bushes or Weeds upon them, but abound (those most at any Distance from the Main) with Turtle, amphibious Animals, that always chuse the quietest and most unfrequented Place, for laying their Eggs, which are to a vast Number in the Seasons, and would seldom be seen, but for this, (except by Pyrates:) Then Vessels from *Jamaica* and the other Governments make Voyages, called Turtling, for supplying the People, a common and approved Food with them. I am apt to think these *Keys*, especially those nigh Islands, to have been once contiguous with them, and separated by Earth-quakes (frequently there) or Inundations, because some of them that have been within continual View, as those nigh *Jamaica*, are observed within our Time, to be entirely wasted away and lost, and others daily wasting. There are not only of the Use above taken

Notice of to Pyrates; but it is commonly believed were always in buccaneering piratical Times, the hiding Places for their Riches, and often Times a Shelter for themselves, till their Friends on the Main, had found Means to obtain Indemnity for their Crimes; for you must understand, when Acts of Grace were more frequent, and the Laws less severe, these Men continually found Favours and Incouragers at *Jamaica*, and perhaps they are not all dead yet; I have been told many of them them still living have been of the same Trade, and left it off only because they can live as well honestly, and gain now at the hazard of others Necks.

Secondly, another Reason why these Seas are chose by Pyrates, is the great Commerce thither by *French*, *Spaniards*, *Dutch*, and especially *English* Ships: They are sure in the Latitude of these trading Islands, to meet with Prizes, Booties of Provision, Cloathing, and Naval-Stores, and sometimes Money; there being great Sums remitted this Way to *England*; (the Returns of the Assiento, and private Slave-Trade, to the *Spanish West-Indies*;) And in short, by some one or other, all the Riches of *Potost*.

A third Reason, is the Inconveniency and Difficulty of being pursued by the Men of War, the many small Inlets, Lagoons and Harbours, on these solitary Islands and Keys, is a natural Security.

'Tis generally here that the Pyrates begin their Enterprizes, setting out at first with a very small Force; and by infesting these Seas, and those of the Continent of *North-America*, in a Year's Time, if they have good luck on their Sides, they accumulate such Strength, as enables them to make foreign Expeditions: The first, is usually to *Guiney*, taking the *Azores* and *Cape de Verd* Islands in their Way, and then to *Brazil* and the *East-Indies*, where if they meet with prosperous Voyages, they set down at *Madagascar*, or

the neighbouring Islands, and enjoy their ill gotten Wealth, among their elder Brethren, with Impunity. But that I may not give too much Encouragement to the Profession, I must inform my maritime Readers, that the far greater Part of these Rovers are cut short in the Pursuit, by a sudden Precipitation into the other World.

The Rise of these Rovers, since the Peace of *Utrecht*, or at least, the great Encrease of them, may justly be computed to the *Spanish* Settlements in the *West-Indies*; the Governors of which, being often some hungry Courtiers, sent thither to repair or make a Fortune, generally Countenance all Proceedings that bring in Profit: They grant Commissions to great Numbers of Vessels of War, on Pretence of preventing an interloping Trade, with Orders to seize all Ships or Vessels whatsoever, within five Leagues of their Coasts, which our *English* Ships cannot well avoid coming, in their Voyage to *Jamaica*. But if the *Spanish* Captains chance to exceed this Commission, and rob and plunder at Discretion, the Sufferers are allowed to complain, and exhibit a Process in their Court, and after great Expence of Suit, Delay of Time, and other Inconveniencies, obtain a Decree in their Favour, but then when the Ship and Cargo comes to be claim'd, with Costs of Suit, they find, to their Sorrow, that it has been previously condemn'd, and the Plunder divided among the Crew; the Commander that made the Capture, who alone is responsible, is found to be a poor raskally Fellow, not worth a Groat, and, no doubt, is plac'd in that Station for the like Purposes.

The frequent Losses sustain'd by our Merchants abroad, by these Pyrates, was Provocation enough to attempt something by way of Reprisal; and a fair Opportunity offering it self in the Year 1716, the Traders of the *West-*

Indies, took Care not to slip it over, but made the best Use of it their Circumstances would permit.

It was about two Years before, that the *Spanish* Galleons, or Plate Fleet, had been cast away in the Gulf of *Florida*; and several Vessels from the *Havana*, were at work, with diving Engines, to fish up the Silver that was on board the Galleons.

The *Spaniards* had recovered some Millions of Pieces of Eight, and had carried it all to the *Havana*; but they had at present about 350000 Pieces of Eight in Silver, then upon the Spot, and were daily taking up more. In the mean time, two Ships, and three Sloops, fitted out from *Jamaica*, *Barbadoes*, &c. under Captain *Henry Jennings*, sail'd to the Gulf, and found the *Spaniards* there upon the Wreck; the Money before spoken of, was left on Shore, deposited in a Store-House, under the Government of two Commissaries, and a Guard of about 60 Soldiers.

The Rovers came directly upon the Place, bringing their little Fleet to an Anchor, and, in a Word, landing 300 Men, they attack'd the Guard, who immediately ran away; and thus they seized the Treasure, which they carried off, making the best of their Way to *Jamaica*.

In their Way they unhappily met with a *Spanish* Ship, bound from *Porto Bello* to the *Havana*, with a great many rich Goods, *viz.* Bales of Cochineal, Casks of Indico, and 60000 Pieces of Eight more, which their Hands being in, they took, and having rifled the Vessel, let her go.

They went away to *Jamaica* with their Booty, and were followed in View of the Port, by the *Spaniards*, who having seen them thither, went back to the Governor of the *Havana*, with the Account of it, who immediately sent a Vessel to the Governor of *Jamaica* to complain of this Robbery, and to reclaim the Goods.

As it was in full Peace, and contrary to all Justice and Right, that this Fact was committed, they were soon made sensible that the Government at *Jamaica* would not suffer them to go unpunished, much less protect them. Therefore they saw a Necessity of shifting for themselves; so, to make bad worse, they went to Sea again, tho' not without disposing of their Cargo to good Advantage, and furnishing themselves with Ammunition, Provisions, &c. and being thus made desperate, they turn'd Pyrates, robbing not the *Spaniards* only, but their own Countrymen, and any Nation they could lay their Hands on.

It happened about this Time, that the *Spaniards*, with three or four small Men of War, fell upon our Logwood Cutters, in the Bay of *Campeachy*, and Bay of *Honduras*; and after they had made Prizes of the following Ships and Vessels, they gave the Men belonging to them, three Sloops to carry them home, but these Men being made desperate by their Misfortunes, and meeting with the Pyrates, they took on with them, and so encreas'd their Number.

The LIST of Ships and Vessels taken by the Spanish Men of War in the Year 1716.

The *Stafford*, Captain *Knocks*, from *New-England*, bound for *London*.

Anne, —— *Gernish*, for *London*.

Dove —— *Grimstone*, for *New-England*.

A Sloop, —— *Alden*, for *New-England*.

A Brigantine, —— *Mosson*, for *New-England*.

A Brigantine, —— *Turfield*, for *New-England*.

A Brigantine, —— *Tennis*, for *New-England*.

A Ship, ———— *Porter*, for *New-England*.

Indian Emperor, *Wentworth*, for *New-England*.

A Ship, —— *Rich*, Master.

A Ship, —— *Bay*.

A Ship, —— *Smith*.

A Ship, —— *Stockum*.

A Ship, —— *Sattlely*.

A Sloop, ———— *Richards*, belonging to *New-England*.

Two Sloops, ———— belonging to *Jamaica*.

One Sloop ———— of *Barbadoes*.

Two Ships ———— from *Scotland*.

Two Ships ———— from *Holland*.

The Rovers being now pretty strong, they consulted together about getting some Place of Retreat, where they might lodge their Wealth, clean and repair their Ships, and make themselves a kind of Abode. They were not long in resolving, but fixed upon the Island of *Providence*, the most considerable of the *Bahama* Islands, lying in the Latitude of about 24 Degrees North, and to the Eastward of the *Spanish Florida*.

This Island is about 28 Miles long, and eleven where broadest, and has a Harbour big enough to hold 500 Sail of Ships; before which lies a small Island, which makes two Inlets to the Harbour; at either Way there is a Bar, over which no Ship of 500 Tun can pass. The *Bahama* Islands were possess'd by the *English* till the Year 1700, when the *French* and *Spaniards* from *Petit Guavus*, invaded them, took the Fort and Governor in the Island of *Providence*, plunder'd and destroy'd the Settlements, &c. carried off half the Blacks, and the rest of the People, who fled to the Woods, retired afterwards to *Carolina*.

In *March* 1705-6, the House of Lords did in an Address to her late Majesty, set forth, 'That the *French* and *Spaniards* had twice, during the Time of the War, over run and plundered the *Bahama* Islands, that there was no Form of Government there: That the Harbour of the Isle of

Providence, might be easily put in a Posture of Defence, and that it would be of dangerous Consequence, should those Islands fall into the Hands of the Enemy; wherefore the Lords humbly besought her Majesty to use such Methods as she should think proper for taking the said Island into her Hands, in order to secure the same to the Crown of this Kingdom, and to the Security and Advantage of the Trade thereof.

But, however it happened, no Means were used in compliance to that Address, for securing the *Bahama* Islands, till the *English* Pyrates had made *Providence* their Retreat and general Recepticle; then 'twas found absolutely necessary, in order to dislodge that troublesome Colony; and Information being made by the Merchants to the Government, of the Mischief they did, and were likely to do, his Majesty was pleased to grant the following Order.

Whitehall September 15, 1716.

'Complaint having been made to his Majesty, by great Number of Merchants, Masters of Ships and others, as well as by several Governors of his Majesty's Islands and Plantations in the *West-Indies*; that the Pyrates are grown so numerous, that they infest not only the Seas near *Jamaica*, but even those of the Northern Continent of *America*; and that, unless some effectual Means be used, the whole Trade from *Great Britain* to those Parts, will not be only obstructed, but in imminent Danger of being lost: His Majesty has, upon mature Deliberation in Council, been pleased, in the first Place, to order a proper Force to be employ'd for the suppressing the said Pyrates, which Force so to be employed, is as follows.

'A List of his Majesty's Ships and Vessels employed, and to be employed, at the *British* Governments and Plantations in the *West-Indies*.

Place where.	Rates,	Ships,	Guns.	
<i>Jamaica,</i>	5	<i>Adventure,</i>	40	Now there.
<i>Jamaica,</i>		<i>Diamond,</i>	40	Sail'd from hence thither 5th of last Month.
<i>Jamaica,</i>		<i>Ludlow Castle,</i>	40	To carry the Governor.
<i>Jamaica,</i>		<i>Swift Sloop,</i>		Now there.
<i>Jamaica,</i>	6	<i>Winchelsea,</i>	20	Surveying the Coast of the West-Indies, and then to return Home; but, during her being at Jamaica, is to join the others, for Security of the Trade, and intercepting Pyrates.
<i>Barbadoes,</i>	5	<i>Scarborough,</i>	30	Now there.
<i>Leeward Islands,</i>	6	<i>Seaford,</i>		Now there.
		<i>Tryal Sloop,</i>	6	
<i>Virginia,</i>	6	<i>Lime,</i>	20	Now there.
<i>Virginia,</i>	5	<i>Shoreham,</i>	30	Order'd Home.
<i>Virginia,</i>		<i>Pearl,</i>	40	Sailed thither from Home the 7th of last Month, and is to cruise about the Capes.
<i>New-York,</i>	6	<i>Phoenix,</i>	30	Now there.
<i>New-England,</i>		<i>Squirrel,</i>	20	
<i>New-England,</i>		<i>Rose,</i>	20	Order'd Home.

'Those at *Jamaica*, *Barbadoes* and the Leeward Islands, are to join upon Occasion, for annoying the Pyrates, and the Security of the Trade: And those at *New-England*, *Virginia* and *New-York*, are to do the like.

Besides these Frigots, two Men of War were ordered to attend Captain *Rogers*, late Commander of the two *Bristol* Ships, called the *Duke* and *Dutchess*, that took the rich

Acapulca Ship, and made a Tour round the Globe. This Gentleman received a Commission from his Majesty, to be Governor of the Island of *Providence*, and was vested with Power to make Use of all possible Methods for reducing the Pyrates; and that nothing might be wanting, he carried with him, the King's Proclamation of Pardon, to those who should return to their Duty by a certain Time; the Proclamation is as follows;

By the KING,
A PROCLAMATION, for suppressing of Pyrates.

GEORGE R.

*W*Hereas we have received Information, that several Persons, Subjects of Great Britain, have since the 24th Day of June, in the Year of our Lord 1715, committed divers Pyracies and Robberies upon the High-Seas, in the West-Indies, or adjoining to our Plantations, which hath and may Occasion great Damage to the Merchants of Great Britain, and others trading into those Parts; and tho' we have appointed such a Force as we judge sufficient for suppressing the said Pyrates, yet the more effectually to put an End to the same, we have thought fit, by and with the Advice of our Privy Council, to Issue this our Royal Proclamation; and we do hereby promise, and declare, that in Case any of the said Pyrates, shall on or before the 5th of September, in the Year of our Lord 1718, surrender him or themselves, to one of our Principal Secretaries of State in Great Britain or Ireland, or to any Governor or Deputy Governor of any of our

Plantations beyond the Seas; every such Pyrate and Pyrates so surrendering him, or themselves, as aforesaid, shall have our gracious Pardon, of and for such, his or their Piracy, or Piracies, by him or them committed before the fifth of January next ensuing. And we do hereby strictly charge and command all our Admirals, Captains, and other Officers at Sea, and all our Governors and Commanders of any Forts, Castles, or other Places in our Plantations, and all other our Officers Civil and Military, to seize and take such of the Pyrates, who shall refuse or neglect to surrender themselves accordingly. And we do hereby further declare, that in Case any Person or Persons, on, or after, the 6th Day of September 1718, shall discover or seize, or cause or procure to be discovered or seized, any one or more of the said Pyrates, so refusing or neglecting to surrender themselves as aforesaid, so as they may be brought to Justice, and convicted of the said Offence, such Person or Persons, so making such Discovery or Seizure, or causing or procuring such Discovery or Seizure to be made, shall have and receive as a Reward for the same, viz. for every Commander of any private Ship or Vessel, the Sum of 100 l. for every Lieutenant, Master, Boatswain, Carpenter, and Gunner, the Sum of 40 l; for every inferior Officer, the Sum of 30 l. and for every private Man, the Sum of 20 l. And if any Person or Persons, belonging to and being Part of the Crew of any such Pyrate Ship or Vessel, shall on or after the said sixth Day of September 1718, seize and deliver, or cause to be seized or delivered, any Commander or Commanders, of such Pyrate Ship or Vessel, so as

that he or they be brought to Justice, and convicted of the said Offence, such Person or Persons, as a Reward for the same, shall receive for every such Commander, the Sum of 200 l. which said Sums, the Lord Treasurer, or the Commissioners of our Treasury for the Time being, are hereby required, and desired to pay accordingly.

Given at our Court, at *Hampton-Court*, the fifth Day of *September*, 1717, in the fourth Year of our Reign.

God save the KING.

Before Governor *Rogers* went over, the Proclamation was sent to them, which they took as *Teague* took the Covenant, that is, they made Prize of the Ship and Proclamation too; however, they sent for those who were out a Cruising, and called a general Council, but there was so much Noise and Clamour, that nothing could be agreed on; some were for fortifying the Island, to stand upon their own Terms, and Treating with the Government upon the Foot of a Commonwealth; others were also for strengthening the Island for their own Security, but were not strenuous for these Punctillios, so that they might have a general Pardon, without being obliged to make any Restitution, and to retire, with all their Effects, to the neighbouring *British* Plantations.

But Captain *Jennings*, who was their Commadore, and who always bore a great Sway among them, being a Man of good Understanding, and a good Estate, before this Whim took him of going a Pirating, resolved upon surrendering, without more ado, to the Terms of the Proclamation, which so disconcerted all their Measures, that the *Congress* broke up very abruptly without doing any Thing; and presently

Jennings, and by his Example, about 150 more, came in to the Governor of *Bermudas*, and had their Certificates, tho' the greatest Part of them returned again, like the Dog to the Vomit. The Commanders who were then in the Island, besides Captain *Jennings* abovementioned, I think were these, *Benjamin Hornigold Edward Teach, John Martel, James Fife, Christopher Winter, Nicholas Brown, Paul Williams, Charles Bellamy, Oliver la Bouche, Major Penner, Ed. England, T. Burgess Tho. Cocklyn, R. Sample, Charles Vane*, and two or three others: *Hornigold, Williams Burgess and la Bouche* were afterwards cast away; *Teach* and *Penner* killed, and their Crews taken; *James Fife* killed by his own Men; *Martel's* Crew destroyed, and he forced on an uninhabited Island; *Cocklyn, Sample* and *Vane* hanged; *Winter* and *Brown* surrendered to the *Spaniards* at *Cuba*, and *England* lives now at *Madagascar*.

In the Month of *May* or *June* 1718, Captain *Rogers* arrived at his Government, with two of his Majesty's Ships, and found several of the abovesaid Pyrates there, who upon the coming of the Men of War, all surrendered to the Pardon, except *Charles Vane* and his Crew, which happened after this Manner.

I have before described the Harbour to have two Inlets, by Means of a small Island lying at the Mouth of it; at one of which, both the Men of War entered, and left the other open, so that *Vane* slip'd his Cable, set Fire to a large Prize they had there, and resolutely put out, firing at the Man of War as he went off.

As soon as Captain *Rogers* had settled himself in his Government, he built a Fort for his Defence, and garrisoned it with the People he found upon the Island; the *quondam* Pyrates, to the Number of 400, he formed into Companies, appointed Officers of those whom he most

confided in, and then set about to settle a Trade with the *Spaniards*, in the Gulf of *Mexico*; in one of which Voyages, Captain *Burgess* abovementioned, died, and Captain *Hornigold*, another of the famous Pyrates, was cast away upon Rocks, a great Way from Land, and perished, but five of his Men got into a Canoe and were saved.

Captain *Rogers* sent out a Sloop to get Provisions, and gave the Command to one *John Augur*, one of the Pyrates, who had accepted of the Act of Grace; in their Voyage they met with two Sloops, and *John* and his Comrades not yet forgetting their former Business, made Use of their old Freedom, and took out of them in Money and Goods, to the Value of about 500 l. after this they steered away for *Hispaniola*, not being satisfy'd whether the Governor would admit them to carry on two Trades at once, and so thought to have bidden Farewel to the *Bahama* Islands; but as ill Luck would have it, they met with a violent Turnado, wherein they lost their Mast, and were drove back to one of the uninhabited *Bahama's*, and lost their Sloop; the Men got all ashore, and lived up and down in the Wood, for a little Time, till Governor *Rogers* happening to hear of their Expedition, and where they had got to, sent out an armed Sloop to the aforesaid Island; the Master of which, with good Words and fair Promises, got them on Board, and brought them all to *Providence*, being a eleven Persons, ten of which were try'd at a Court of Admiralty, convicted, and hanged by the other's Evidence, in the Sight of all their former Companions and fellow Thieves. The Criminals would fain have spirited up the pardoned Pyrates, to rescue them out of the Hands of the Officers of Justice, telling them from the Gallows, that, *They never thought to have seen the Time, when ten such Men as they should be ty'd up and hanged like Dogs, and four hundered of their sworn Friends and Companions*

quietly standing by to behold the Spectacle. One *Humphrey Morrice* urged the Matter further than the rest, taxing them with Pusillanimity and Cowardice, as if it were a Breach of Honour in them not to rise and save them from the ignominious Death they were going to suffer. But 'twas all in vain, they were now told, it was their Business to turn their Minds to another World, and sincerely to repent of what Wickedness they had done in this. *Yes,* answered one of them, *I do heartily repent; I repent I had not done more Mischief, and that we did not cut the Throats of them that took us, and I am extremely sorry that you an't all hang'd as well as we.* *So do I,* says another: *And I,* says a third; and then they were all turned off, without making any other dying Speeches, except one *Dennis Macarty*, who told the People, *That some Friends of his had often said he should die in his Shoes, but that he would make them Lyars,* and so kicked them off. And thus ended the Lives, with their Adventures, of those miserable Wretches, who may serve as sad Examples of the little Effect Mercy has upon Men once abandoned to an evil Course of Life.

Least I be thought severe in my Animadversions upon the *Span sh* Proceedings in the *West-Indies*, in respect to their Dealings with us; I shall mention an Instance or two, wherein I'll be as concise as possible, and then transcribe some original Letters from the Governor of *Jamaica*, and an Officer of a Man of War, to the *Alcaldees* of *Trinidado*, on the Island of *Cuba*, with their Answers, translated into *English*, and then proceed to the particular Histories of the Pyrates and their Crews, that have made most Noise in the World in *our own Times*.

About *March* 1722, one of our Men of War trading upon the Coast, *viz.* the *Greyhound* Galley, Captain *Walron*, the said Captain invited some of the Merchants to Dinner, who

with their Attendants and Friends came on Board to the Number of 16 or 18 in all; and having concerted Measures, about six or eight dined in the Cabin, and the rest were waiting on the Deck. While the Captain and his Guests were at Dinner, the Boatswain Pipes for the Ship's Company to dine; accordingly the Men take their Platters, receive their Provisions, and down they go between Decks, leaving only 4 or 5 Hands besides the *Spaniards*, above, who were immediately dispatched by them, and the Hatches laid on the rest; those in the Cabin were as ready as their Companions, for they pulled out their Pistols and shot the Captain, Surgeon and another dead, and grievously wounded the Lieutenant; but he getting out of the Window upon a Side-Ladder, thereby saved his Life, and so they made themselves Masters of the Ship in an Instant: But by accidental good Fortune, she was recovered before she was carry'd off; for Captain *Walron* having mann'd a Sloop with 30 Hands out of his Ship's Company, had sent her to Windward some Days before, also for Trade, which the *Spaniards* knew very well; and just as the Action was over they saw this Sloop coming down, before the Wind, towards their Ship; upon which the *Spaniards* took about 10000 *l.* in Specie, as I am informed, quitted the Ship, and went off in their Launch unmolested.

About the same Time, a *Guard le Coast*, of *Porto Rico*, commanded by one *Matthew Luke*, an *Italian*, took four *English* Vessels, and murdered all the Crews: He was taken by the *Lankeston* Man of War, in *May* 1722, and brought to *Jamaica*, where they were all but seven deservedly hanged. It is likely the Man of War might not have meddled with her, but that she blindly laid the *Lankeston* on Board, thinking she had been a Merchant Ship, who thereupon caught a Tartar. Afterwards in rummaging there was found a Cartridge

of Powder made up with a Piece of an *English* Journal, belonging, I believe, to the *Crean* Snow; and upon Examination, at last, it was discovered that they had taken this Vessel and murdered the Crew; and one of the *Spaniards*, when he came to die, confessed that he had killed twenty *English* Men with his own Hands.

S. Jago de la Vega, Febr 20.

A Letter from his Excellency Sir Nicolas Laws, our Governor, to the Alcaldes of Trinidad on Cuba, dated the 26th of Jan. 1721-2.

Gentlemen,

'THE frequent Depredations, Robberies, and other Acts of Hostility, which have been committed on the King my Royal Master's Subjects, by a Parcel of Banditti, who pretend to have Commissions from you, and in Reality are sheltered under your Government, is the Occasion of my sending the Bearer Captain *Chamberlain*, Commander of his Majesty's Snow *Happy*, to demand Satisfaction of you for so many notorious Robberies which your People have lately committed on the King's Subjects of this Island; particularly by those Traytors, *Nicolas Brown* and *Christopher Winter*, to whom you have given Protection. Such Proceedings as these are not only a Breach of the Law of Nations, but must appear to the World of a very extraordinary Nature, when considered that the Subjects of a Prince in Amity and Friendship with another, should give Countenance and encourage such vile Practices. I confess I have had long Patience, and declined using

any violent Measures to obtain Satisfaction, hoping the Cessation of Arms, so happily concluded upon between our respective Sovereigns, would have put an effectual Stop to those Disorders; but on the contrary, I now find the Port of *Trinidado* a Receptacle to Villains of all Nations. I do therefore think fit to acquaint you, and assure you in the King my Master's Name, that if I do meet with any of your Rogues for the future upon the Coast of this Island, I will order them to be hanged directly without Mercy; and I expect and demand of you to make ample Restitution to Captain *Chamberlain* of all the Negroes which the said *Brown* and *Winter* have lately taken off from the North-Side of this Island, and also of such Sloops and other Effects as they have been taken and robbed of, since the Cessation of Arms, and that you will deliver up to the Bearer such *English* Men as are now detained, or otherwise remain at *Trinidado*; and also expect you will hereafter forbear granting any Commissions, or suffer any such notorious Villains to be equipp'd and fitted out from your Port: otherwise you may depend upon it, those that I can meet with, shall be esteemed Pyrates, and treated as such; of which I thought proper to give you Notice, and am, &c.

A Letter from Mr. Joseph Laws, Lieutenant of his Majesty's Ship, Happy Snow, to the Alcaldes of Trinidado.

Genlemen,

'I Am sent by Commadore *Vernon*, Commander in Chief of all his Majesty's Ships in the *West-Indies*, to

demand in the King our Master's Name, all the Vessels, with their Effects, &c. and also the Negroes taken from *Jamaica* since the Cessation of Arms; likewise all *Englishmen* now detained, or otherwise remaining in your Port of *Trinidado*, particularly *Nicholas Brown* and *Christopher Winter*, both of them being Traytors, Pyrates and common Enemies to all Nations: And the said Commadore hath ordered me to acquaint you, that he is surprized that the Subjects of a Prince in Amity and Friendship with another, should give Countenance to such notorious Villains. In Expectation of your immediate Compliance, I am, Gentlemen,

Off the River *Trinidado*, Feb. 8. 1720.

Your humble Servant, *Joseph Laws*.

***The Answer of the Alcaldes of
Trinidado, to Mr. Laws's Letter***

Capt. *Laws*,

'IN Answer to yours, this serves to acquaint you, that neither in this City, nor Port, are there any Negroes or Vessels which have been taken at your Island of *Jamaica*, nor on that Coast, since the Cessation of Arms; and what Vessels have been taken since that Time, have been for trading in an unlawful Commerce on this Coast; and as for those *English* Fugitives you mention, they are here as other Subjects of our Lord the King, being brought voluntarily to our holy Catholick Faith, and have

received the Water of Baptism; but if they should prove Rogues, and should not comply with their Duty, in which they are bound at present, then they shall be chastized according to the Ordinances of our King, whom God preserve. And we beg you will weigh Anchor as soon as possible, and leave this Port and its Coasts, because upon no Account you shall be suffered to trade, or any Thing else; for we are resolved not to admit thereof. God preserve you. We kiss your Hand.

Trinidad, Feb. 8, 1722.

Signed, *Hieronimo de Fuentes,*
Benette Alfonso del Manzano.

***Mr. Laws's Reply to the Alcaldes
Letter***

Gentlmen,

'YOUR refusing to deliver up the Subjects of the King my Master, is somewhat surprizing, it being in a Time of Peace, and the detaining them consequently against the Law of Nations. Notwithstanding your trifling Pretence (for which you have no Foundation but to forge an Excuse) to prevent my making any Enquiry into the Truth of the Facts I have alledged in my former, I must tell you my Resolutions are, to stay on the Coast till I have made Reprizals; and should I meet any Vessels belonging to your Port, I shall not treat them as the Subjects of the Crown of

Spain, but as Pyrates, finding it a Part of your Religion in this Place to protect such Villains.

Off the River *Trinidado*, Feb. 8. 1720.

Your humble Servant, *Joseph Laws*.

***The Answer of one of the Alcaldes
to Mr. Laws's Reply***

Captain *Laws*,

'YOU may assure your self, I will never be wanting in the Duty of my Post. The Prisoners that are here are not in Prison, but only kept here to be sent to the Governor of the *Havana*: If you (as you say) command at Sea, I command on Shoar: If you treat the *Spaniards*, you should happen to take, as Pyrates, I will do the same by every one of your People I can take up: I will not be wanting to good Manners, if you will do the same. I can likewise act the Soldier, if any Occasion should offer that way, for I have very good People here for that purpose. If you pretend any Thing else, you may execute it on this Coast. God preserve you. I kiss your Hand.

Trinidado, Feb. 20. 1720.

Signed, *Bennette Alfonso del
Menzano*.

The last Advices we have received from our Plantations in *America*, dated *June 9th*, 1724, gives us the following

Account, viz. That Captain *Jones* in the Ship *John and Mary*, on the 5th of the said Month, met with, near the Capes of *Virginia*, a *Spanish Guard del Coast*, commanded by one *Don Benito*, said to be commissioned by the Governor of *Cuba*: 'She was manned with 60 *Spaniards*, 18 *French Men* and 18 *English*, and had an *English Captain* as well as *Spanish*, one *Richard Holland*, who formerly belonged to the *Suffolk Man of War*, which he deserted at *Naples*, and took Shelter in a Convent. He served on Board the *Spanish Fleet* under Admiral *Cammock*, in the War in the *Mediterranean*; and after the Cessation of Arms with *Spain*, settled with several of his Countrymen (*Irish*) in the *Spanish West-Indies*. This *Guard del Coast* made Prize of Captain *Jones's Ship*, and kept Possession of her from 5th to the 8th, during which Time she took also the *Prudent Hannah* of *Boston*, *Thomas Mousell* Master, and the *Dolphin* of *Topsham*, *Theodore Bare* Master, both laden and bound for *Virginia*: The former they sent away together with three Men and the Mate, under the Command of a *Spanish Officer* and Crew, the same Day she was taken; the latter they carried off with them, putting the Master and all the Crew aboard Captain *Jones's Ship*. They plundered Captain *Jones* of thirty six Men Slaves, some Gold-Dust, all his Cloaths, four great Guns and small Arms, and about four hundred Gallons of Rum, besides his Provisions and Stores, computed in all to 1500 /. Sterling.

Of Captain *Avery*, And his Crew

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Romantic Reports of his Greatness. His Birth. Is Mate of a Bristol Man. For what Voyage design'd. Tampers with the Seamen. Forms a Plot for carrying off the Ship. Executes it, and how. The Pyrates take a rich Ship belonging to the Great Mogul. The Great Mogul threaten the English Settlements. The Pyrates steer their Course back for Madagascar. Call a Council. Put all the Treasure on Board of Avery's Ship. Avery and his Crew treacherously leaves his Confederates; go to the Isle of Providence in the West-Indies. Sell the Ship, go to North-America in a Sloop. They disperse, Avery goes to New-England. From thence to Ireland. Avery afraid to expose his Diamonds to sale. Goes over to England. Puts his Wealth into Merchants Hands, of Bristol. Changes his Name. Lives at Biddiford. The Merchants send him no Supplies. Importunes them. Goes privately to Bristol, they threaten to discover him. Goes over to Ireland, solicites them from thence. Is very poor, works his Passage over to Plymouth, walks to Biddiford. Dies a Beggar. An Account of Avery's Confederates. Their Settlement at Madagascar. They meet other Pyrates; an Account of them, ib. The Pyrates arrive to great Power. The Inhabitants described. Their Policy, Government, &c. Places describ'd. The Arrival of Captain Woods Rogers at that Part of the Island. Their Design of surprizing his Ship. One of these Princes formerly a Waterman on the Thames. Their Secretaries, Men of no Learning. Could neither write nor read.

None of these bold Adventurers were ever so much talked of, for a while, as *Avery*; he made as great a Noise in the World as *Meriveis* does now, and was looked upon to be a Person of as great Consequence; he was represented in *Europe*, as one that had raised himself to the Dignity of a King, and was likely to be the Founder of a new Monarchy; having, as it was said, taken immense Riches, and married the *Great Mogul's* Daughter, who was taken in an *Indian* Ship, which fell into his Hands; and that he had by her many Children, living in great Royalty and State; that he had built Forts, erected Magazines, and was Master of a stout Squadron of Ships, mann'd with able and desperate Fellows of all Nations; that he gave Commissions out in his own Name to the Captains of his Ships, and to the Commanders of his Forts, and was acknowledged by them as their Prince. A Play was writ upon him, called, the *Successful Pyrate*; and, these Accounts obtained such Belief, that several Schemes were offered to the Council for fitting out a Squadron to take him; while others were for offering him and his Companions an Act of Grace, and inviting them to *England*, with all their Treasure, lest his growing Greatness might hinder the Trade of *Europe* to the *East-Indies*.

Yet all these were no more than false Rumours, improved by the Credulity of some, and the Humour of others who love to tell strange Things; for, while it was said, he was aspiring at a Crown, he wanted a Shilling; and at the same Time it was given out he was in Possession of such prodigious Wealth in *Madagascar*, he was starving in *England*.

No doubt, but the Reader will have a Curiosity of knowing what became of this Man, and what were the true Grounds of so many false Reports concerning him; therefore, I shall, in as brief a Manner as I can, give his History.

He was born in the West of *England* near *Plymouth* in *Devonshire*, being bred to the Sea, he served as a Mate of a Merchant-Man, in several trading Voyages: It happened before the Peace of *Ryswick*, when there was an Alliance betwixt *Spain, England, Holland, &c.* against *France*, that the *French* in *Martinico*, carried on a smuggling Trade with the *Spaniards* on the Continent of *Peru*, which by the Laws of *Spain*, is not allowed to Friends in Time of Peace, for none but native *Spaniards* are permitted to Traffick in those Parts, or set their Feet on Shore, unless at any Time they are brought as Prisoners; wherefore they constantly keep certain Ships cruising along the Coast, whom they call *Guarda del Costa*, who have the Orders to make Prizes of all Ships they can light of within five Leagues of Land. Now the *French* growing very bold in Trade, and the *Spaniards* being poorly provided with Ships, and those they had being of no Force, it often fell out, that when they light of the *French* Smuglers, they were not strong enough to attack them, therefore it was resolv'd in *Spain*, to hire two or three stout foreign Ships for their Service, which being known at *Bristol*, some Merchants of that City, fitted out two Ships of thirty odd Guns, and 120 Hands each, well furnished with Provision and Ammunition, and all other Stores; and the Hire being agreed for, by some Agents for *Spain*, they were commanded to sail for *Corunna* or the *Groine*, there to receive their Orders, and to take on Board some *Spanish* Gentlemen, who were to go Passengers to *New-Spain*.

Of one of these Ships, which I take to be call'd the *Duke*, Capt. *Gibson* Commander, *Avery* was first Mate, and being a Fellow of more Cunning than Courage, he insinuated himself into the good Will of several of the boldest Fellows on Board the other Ship, as well as that which he was on Board of; having sounded their Inclinations before he opened himself,

and finding them ripe for his Design, he, at length, proposed to them, to run away with the Ship, telling them what great Wealth was to be had upon the Coasts of *India*: It was no sooner said than agreed to, and they resolved to execute their Plot at Ten a Clock the Night following.

It must be observ'd, the Captain was one of those who are mightily addicted to Punch, so that he passed most of his Time on Shore, in some little drinking Ordinary; but this Day he did not go on Shore as usual; however, this did not spoil the Design, for he took his usual Dose on Board, and so got to Bed before the Hour appointed for the Business: The Men also who were not privy to the Design, turn'd into their Hammocks, leaving none upon Deck but the Conspirators, who, indeed, were the greatest Part of the Ship's Crew. At the Time agreed on, the *Dutchess's* Long-Boat appear'd, which *Avery* hailing in the usual Manner, was answered by the Men in her, *Is your drunken Boatswain on Board?* Which was the Watch-Word agreed between them, and *Avery* replying in the Affirmative, the Boat came aboard with sixteen stout Fellows, and joined the Company.

When our Gentry saw that all was clear, they secured the Hatches, so went to work; they did not slip the Anchor, but weigh'd it leisurely, and so put to Sea without any Disorder or Confusion, tho' there were several Ships then lying in the Bay, and among them a *Dutch* Frigate of forty Guns, the Captain of which was offer'd a great Reward to go out after her; but *Mynheer*, who perhaps would not have been willing to have been served so himself, could not be prevail'd upon to give such Usage to another, and so let Mr. *Avery* pursue his Voyage, whither he had a Mind to.

The Captain, who by this Time, was awaked, either by the Motion of the Ship, or the Noise of working the Tackles, rung the Bell; *Avery* and two others went into the Cabin; the