

The background features a detailed antique map with a prominent compass rose in the upper right. The map includes various geographical labels such as 'NALIS', 'DEL', 'MARE PAC', and 'Tropicus Cap'. A decorative cartouche with Latin text is visible in the lower left corner. The overall aesthetic is historical and nautical.

***DANIEL DEFOE,
CAPTAIN CHARLES
JOHNSON***

***THE HISTORY
OF PIRACY:
TRUE STORY
ACCOUNTS
OF THE MOST
NOTORIOUS
PIRATES***

Daniel Defoe, Captain Charles Johnson

The History of Piracy: True Story Accounts of the Most Notorious Pirates

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The Preface

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Having taken more than ordinary Pains in collecting the Materials which compose the following History, we could not be satisfied with our selves, if any Thing were wanting to it, which might render it entirely satisfactory to the Public: It is for this Reason we have subjoined to the Work, a short Abstract of the Laws now in Force against Pyrates, and made Choice of some particular Cases, (the most curious we could meet with) which have been heretofore tried, by which it will appear what Actions have, and what have not been adjudged Piracy.

It is possible this Book may fall into the Hands of some Masters of Ships, and other honest Mariners, who frequently, by contrary Winds or Tempests, or other Accidents incident to long Voyages, find themselves reduced to great Distresses, either through Scarcity of Provisions, or Want of Stores. I say, it may be a Direction to such as those, what Lengths they may venture to go, without violating the Law of Nations, in Case they should meet other Ships at Sea, or be cast on some inhospitable Shore, which should refuse to trade with them for such Things as are absolutely necessary for the Preservation of their Lives, or the Safety of the Ship and Cargo.

We have given a few Instances in the Course of this History of the Inducements Men have to engage themselves headlong in a Life of so much Peril to themselves, and so destructive to the Navigation of the trading World; to remedy which Evil there seems to be but two Ways, either to find Employment for the great Numbers of Seamen turn'd adrift at the Conclusion of a War, and thereby prevent their

running into such Undertakings, or to guard sufficiently the Coast of *Africa*, the *West-Indies*, and other Places whereto Pyrates resort.

I cannot but take Notice in this Place, that during this long Peace, I have not so much as heard of a *Dutch* Pyrate: It is not that I take them to be honestest than their Neighbours; but when we account for it, it will, perhaps, be a Reproach to our selves for our want of Industry: The Reason I take to be, that after a War, when the *Dutch* Ships are laid up, they have a Fishery, where their Seamen find immediate Business, and as comfortable Bread as they had before. Had ours the same Recourse in their Necessities, I'm certain we should find the same Effect from it; for a Fishery is a Trade that cannot be overstock'd; the Sea is wide enough for us all, we need not quarrel for Elbow-room: Its Stores are infinite, and will ever reward the Labourer. Besides, our own Coast, for the most Part, supply the *Dutch*, who employ several hundred Sail constantly in the Trade, and so sell to us our own Fish. I call it our own, for the Sovereignty of the *British Seas*, are to this Day acknowledged us by the *Dutch*, and all the neighbouring Nations; wherefore, if there was a public Spirit among us, it would be well worth our while to establish a National Fishery, which would be the best Means in the World to prevent Piracy, employ a Number of the Poor, and ease the Nation of a great Burthen, by lowering the Price of Provision in general, as well as of several other Commodities.

I need not bring any Proofs of what I advance, *viz.* that there are Multitudes of Seamen at this Day unemploy'd; it is but too evident by their straggling, and begging all over the Kingdom. Nor is it so much their Inclination to Idleness, as their own hard Fate, in being cast off after their Work is done, to starve or steal. I have not known a Man of War

commission'd for several Years past, but three times her Compliment of Men have offer'd themselves in 24 Hours; the Merchants take their Advantage of this, lessen their Wages, and those few who are in Business are poorly paid, and but poorly fed; such Usage breeds Discontents amongst them, and makes them eager for any Change.

I shall not repeat what I have said in the History concerning the Privateers of the *West-Indies*, where I have taken Notice they live upon Spoil; and as Custom is a second Nature, it is no Wonder that, when an honest Livelihood is not easily had, they run into one so like their own; so that it may be said, that Privateers in Time of War are a Nursery for Pyrates against a Peace.

Now we have accounted for their Rise and Beginning, it will be natural to enquire why they are not taken and destroy'd, before they come to any Head, seeing that they are seldom less than twelve Men of War stationed in our *American* Plantations, even in Time of Peace; a Force sufficient to contend with a powerful Enemy. This Enquiry, perhaps, will not turn much to the Honour of those concerned in that Service; however, I hope I may be excus'd, if what I write is with a Design of serving the Public.

I say, 'tis strange that a few Pyrates should ravage the Seas for Years, without ever being light upon, by any of our Ships of War; when in the mean Time, they (the Pyrates) shall take Fleets of Ships; it looks as if one was much more diligent in their Affairs, than the other. *Roberts* and his Crew, alone, took 400 Sail, before he was destroy'd.

This Matter, I may probably set right another Time, and only observe for the present, that the Pyrates at Sea, have the same Sagacity with Robbers at Land; as the latter understand what Roads are most frequented, and where it is most likely to meet with Booty, so the former know what

Latitude to lie in, in order to intercept Ships; and as the Pyrates happen to be in want of Provisions, Stores, or any particular Lading, they cruise accordingly for such Ships, and are morally certain of meeting with them; and by the same Reason, if the Men of War cruise in those Latitudes, they might be as sure of finding the Pyrates, as the Pyrates are to find the Merchant Ships; and if the Pyrates are not to be met with by the Men of War in such a Latitude, then surely down the same Latitude may the Merchant Ships arrive safely to their Port.

To make this a little plainer to my Country Readers, I must observe that all our outward bound Ships, sometime after they leave the Land, steer into the Latitude of the Place they are bound to; if to the *West-India* Islands, or any Part of the Main of *America*, as *New-York*, *New-England*, *Virginia*, &c. because the Latitude is the only Certainty in those Voyages to be found, and then they sail due West, till they come to their Port, without altering their Course. In this West Way lie the Pyrates, whether it be to *Virginia*, &c. or *Nevis*, *St. Christophers*, *Montserat*, *Jamaica*, &c. so that if the Merchant Ships bound thither, do not fall a Prey to them one Day, they must another: Therefore I say, if the Men of War take the same Track, the Pyrates must unavoidably fall into their Mouths, or be frighted away, for where the Game is, there will the Vermin be; if the latter should be the Case, the trading Ships, as I said before, will pass unmolested and safe, and the Pyrates be reduced to take Refuge in some of their lurking Holes about the uninhabited Islands, where their Fate would be like that of the Fox in his Den, if they should venture out, they would be hunted and taken, and if they stay within they must starve.

I must observe another Thing, that the Pyrates generally shift their Rovings, according to the Season of the Year; in

the Summer they cruise mostly along the Coast of the Continent of *America*, but the Winters there, being a little too cold for them, they follow the Sun, and go towards the Islands, at the approach of cold Weather. Every Man who has used the *West-India* Trade, knows this to be true; therefore, since we are so well acquainted with all their Motions, I cannot see why our Men of War under a proper Regulation, may not go to the Southward, instead of lying up all the Winter useless: But I shall proceed too far in this Enquiry, I shall therefore quit it, and say something of the following Sheets, which the Author may venture to assure the Reader that they have one Thing to recommend them, which is Truth; those Facts which he himself was not an Eye-Witness of, he had from the authentic Relations of the Persons concerned in taking the Pyrates, as well as from the Mouths of the Pyrates themselves, after they were taken, and he conceives no Man can produce better Testimonies to support the Credit of any History.

It will be observed, that the Account of the Actions of *Roberts* runs into a greater Length, than that of any other Pyrate, for which we can assign two Reasons, first, because he ravaged the Seas longer than the rest, and of Consequence there must be a greater Scene of Business in his Life: Secondly, being resolved not to weary the Reader, with tiresome Repetitions: When we found the Circumstances in *Roberts's* Life, and other Pyrates, either as to piratical Articles, or any Thing else, to be the same, we thought it best to give them but once, and chose *Roberts's* Life for that Purpose, he having made more Noise in the World, than some others.

As to the Lives of our two female Pyrates, we must confess they may appear a little Extravagant, yet they are never the less true for seeming so, but as they were publicly

try'd for their Pyracies, there are living Witnesses enough to justify what we have laid down concerning them; it is certain, we have produced some Particulars which were not so publicly known, the Reason is, we were more inquisitive into the Circumstances of their past Lives, than other People, who had no other Design, than that of gratifying their own private Curiosity: If there are some Incidents and Turns in their Stories, which may give them a little the Air of a *Novel*, they are not invented or contrived for that Purpose, it is a Kind of Reading this Author is but little acquainted with, but as he himself was exceedingly diverted with them, when they were related to him, he thought they might have the same Effect upon the Reader.

I presume we need make no Apology for giving the Name of a History to the following Sheets, though they contain nothing but the Actions of a Parcel of Robbers. It is Bravery and Stratagem in War which make Actions worthy of Record; in which Sense the Adventures here related will be thought deserving that Name. *Plutarch* is very circumstantial in relating the Actions of *Spartacus*, the Slave, and makes the Conquest of him, one of the greatest Glories of *Marcus Crassus*; and it is probable, if this Slave had liv'd a little longer, *Plutarch* would have given us his Life at large. *Rome*, the Mistress of the World, was no more at first than a Refuge for Thieves and Outlaws; and if the Progress of our Pyrates had been equal to their Beginning; had they all united, and settled in some of those Islands, they might, by this Time, have been honoured with the Name of a Commonwealth, and no Power in those Parts of the World could have been able to dispute it with them.

If we have seem'd to glance, with some Freedom, at the Behaviour of some Governors of Provinces abroad, it has been with Caution; and, perhaps, we have, not declar'd as

much as we knew: However, we hope those Gentlemen in the same Station, who have never given Occasion for the like Censure, will take no Offence, tho' the Word Governor is sometimes made use of.

P. S. It will be necessary to add a Word or two to this Preface, in order to inform the Reader, that there are several material Additions made to this second Impression, which swelling the Book in Bulk, must of Consequence add a small Matter to its Price.

The first Impression having been received with so much Success by the Public, occasioned a very earnest Demand for a second: In the mean Time, several Persons who had been taken by the Pyrates, as well as others who had been concerned in taking of them, have been so kind to communicate several Facts and Circumstances to us, which had escaped us in the first Impression. This occasioned some Delay, therefore if we have not brought it out, as soon as wish'd, it was to render it the more complete.

We shall not enter into a Detail of all the new Matter inserted here, but the Description of the Islands *St. Thome*, &c. and that of *Brafil* are not to be passed by, without a little Notice. It must be observed, that our speculative Mathematicians and Geographers, who are, no doubt, Men of the greatest Learning, seldom travel farther than their Closets for their Knowledge, &c. are therefore unqualified to give us a good Description of Countries: It is for this Reason that all our Maps and Atlases are so monstrously faulty, for these Gentlemen are obliged to take their Accounts from the Reports of illiterate Men.

It must be noted also, that when the Masters of Ships make Discoveries this Way, they are not fond of communicating them; a Man's knowing this or that Coast, better than others, recommends him in his Business, and

makes him more useful, and he'll no more discover it than a Tradesman will the Mystery of his Trade.

The Gentleman who has taken the Pains to make these Observations, is *Mr. Atkins*, a Surgeon, an ingenious Man in his own Profession, and one who is not ty'd down by any narrow Considerations from doing a Service to the Public, and has been pleas'd generously to communicate them for the good of others. I don't doubt, but his Observations will be found curious and very serviceable to such as Trade to those Parts, besides a Method of Trade is here laid down with the *Portuguese*, which may prove of great Profit to some of our Countrymen, if followed according to his Plan.

It is hop'd these Things will satisfy the Public, that the Author of the following Sheets considered nothing so much as making the Book useful; — tho' he has been inform'd, that some Gentlemen have rais'd an Objection against the Truth of its Contents, *viz.* that it seems calculated to entertain and divert. — If the Facts are related with some Agreeableness and Life, we hope it will not be imputed as a Fault; but as to its Credit, we can assure them that the Seafaring Men, that is all that know the Nature of these Things, have not been able to make the least Objection to its Credit: — And he will be bold to affirm, that there is not a Fact or Circumstance in the whole Book, but he is able to prove by credible Witnesses.

There have been some other Pyrates, besides those whose History are here related, such as are hereafter named, and their Adventures are as extravagant and full of Mischief, as those who are the Subject of this Book. — The Author has already begun to digest them into Method, and as soon as he receives some Materials to make them complete, (which he shortly expects from the *West-Indies*) If

the Public gives him Encouragement he intends to venture upon a second Volume.

Introduction

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The Danger of Commonwealths from an Increase of Pyrates. Pyrates in the Times of Marius and Sylla. Takes Julius Cæsar. The Barbarity of those Pyrates. They spare Cæsar, and why. His Behaviour amongst them. Cæsar obtains his Liberty for a Ransom. Attacks and takes the Pyrates. Hangs them at Troy. They increase again to a prodigious Strength. Plunder at the Gates of Rome. The mock Homage they paid the Romans. Pompey the Great, appointed General against them. A prodigious Fleet and Army assign'd him. His Conduct and good Fortune. The Gallantry of those Pyrates. Receive an Overthrow. Barbarouse, a Pyrate, his Beginning. His great Strength. Selim Eutemi, King of Algiers, courts his Friendship. Makes himself King, and how. The King of Tunis overthrown by him. Leaves the Inheritance to his Brother. The West-Indies commodious for Pyrates, and why. The Explanation of the Word Keys. The Pyrates conceal their Booty on them. The Pyrates Security in those Parts. The Rise of Pyrates since the Peace of Utrecht accounted for. An Expedition from Jamaica, to plunder the Spaniards. The Spaniards sue for Justice to the Government of Jamaica. The Plunderers turn Pyrates. The Spaniards make Reprisals. The Names of Ships taken by them. The plunder'd Seamen join the Pyrates. Providence fixed on as a Place of Retreat by them. That Island described. The Lords Address to her late Majesty for securing Providence. An Order of Council in this Reign to the same Purpose. A List of Men of War employ'd for the Defence of the Plantations. Captain

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As the Pyrates in the *West-Indies* have been so formidable and numerous, that they have interrupted the Trade of *Europe* into those Parts; and our *English* Merchants, in particular, have suffered more by their Depredations, than by the united Force of *France* and *Spain*, in the late War: We do not doubt but the World will be curious to know the Original and Progress of these Desperadoes, who were the Terror of the trading Part of the World.

But before we enter upon their particular History, it will not be amiss, by way of Introduction, to shew, by some Examples drawn from History, the great Mischief and Danger which threaten Kingdoms and Commonwealths, from the Increase of these sort of Robbers; when either by

the Troubles of particular Times, or the Neglect of Governments, they are not crush'd before they gather Strength.

It has been the Case heretofore, that when a single Pyrate has been suffered to range the Seas, as not being worth the Notice of a Government, he has by Degrees grown so powerful, as to put them to the Expence of a great deal of Blood and Treasure, before he was suppress'd. We shall not examine how it came to pass, that our Pyrates in the *West-Indies* have continually increased till of late; this is an Enquiry which belongs to the Legislature, or Representatives of the People in Parliament, and to them we shall leave it.

Our Business shall be briefly to shew, what from Beginnings, as inconsiderable as these, other Nations have suffered.

In the Times of *Marius* and *Sylla*, *Rome* was in her greatest Strength, yet she was so torn in Pieces by the Factions of those two great Men, that every Thing which concerned the public Good was altogether neglected, when certain Pyrates broke out from *Cicilia*, a Country of *Asia Minor*, situate on the Coast of the *Mediterranean*, betwixt *Syria* on the East, from whence it is divided by Mount *Tauris*, and *Armenia Minor* on the West. This Beginning was mean and inconsiderable, having but two or three Ships, and a few Men, with which they cruised about the *Greek* Islands, taking such Ships as were very ill arm'd or weakly defended; however, by the taking of many Prizes, they soon increased in Wealth and Power: The first Action of their's which made a Noise, was the taking of *Julius Cæsar*, who was as yet a Youth, and who being obliged to fly from the Cruelties of *Sylla*, who sought his Life, went into *Bithinia*, and sojourned a while with *Nicomedes*, King of that Country; in his Return back by Sea, he was met with, and taken, by some of these

Pyrates, near the Island of *Pharmacusa*: These Pyrates had a barbarous Custom of tying their Prisoners Back to Back and throwing them into the Sea; but, supposing *Cæsar* to be some Person of a high Rank, because of his purple Robes, and the Number of his Attendants, they thought it would be more for their Profit to preserve him, in hopes of receiving a great Sum for his Ransom; therefore they told him he should have his Liberty, provided he would pay them twenty Talents, which they judg'd to be a very high Demand, in our Money, about three thousand six hundred Pounds Sterling; he smiled, and of his own Accord promised them fifty Talents; they were both pleased, and surpriz'd at his Answer, and consented that several of his Attendants should go by his Direction and raise the Money; and he was left among these Ruffians with no more than 3 Attendants. He pass'd eight and thirty Days, and seem'd so little concerned or afraid, that often when he went to sleep, he used to charge them not to make a Noise, threatening, if they disturb'd him, to hang them all; he also play'd at Dice with them, and sometimes wrote Verses and Dialogues, which he used to repeat, and also cause them to repeat, and if they did not praise and admire them, he would call them Beasts and Barbarians, telling them he would crucify them. They took all these as the Sallies of a juvenile Humour, and were rather diverted, than displeas'd at them.

At length his Attendants return'd with his Ransom, which he paid, and was discharged; he sail'd for the Port of *Miletum*, where, as soon as he was arriv'd, he used all his Art and Industry in fitting out a Squadron of Ships, which he equipp'd and arm'd at his own Charges; and sailing in Quest of the Pyrates, he surpriz'd them as they lay at Anchor among the Islands, and took those who had taken him before, with some others; the Money he found upon them he

made Prize of, to reimburse his Charges, and he carry'd the Men to *Pergamus* or *Troy*, and there secured them in Prison: In the mean Time, he apply'd himself to *Junius*, then Governor of *Asia*, to whom it belonged to judge and determine of the Punishment of these Men; but *Junius* finding there was no Money to be had, answered *Cæsar*, that he would think at his Leisure, what was to be done with those Prisoners; *Cæsar* took his Leave of him, returned back to *Pergamus*, and commanded that the Prisoners should be brought out and executed, according to Law in that Case provided; which is taken Notice of, in a Chapter at the End of this Book, concerning the Laws in Cases of Pyracy: And thus he gave them that Punishment in Earnest, which he had often threatned them with in Jest.

Cæsar went strait to *Rome*, where, being engaged in the Designs of his own private Ambition, as were almost all the leading Men in *Rome*, the Pyrates who were left, had Time to increase to a prodigious Strength; for while the civil Wars lasted, the Seas were left unguarded, so that *Plutarch* tells us, that they erected diverse Arsenals full of all manner of warlike Stores, made commodious Harbours, set up Watch-Towers and Beacons all along the Coasts of *Cilicia*; that they had a mighty Fleet, well equipp'd and furnish'd, with Galliots of Oars, mann'd, not only with Men of desperate Courage, but also with expert Pilots and Mariners; they had their Ships of Force, and light Pinnaces for cruising and making Discoveries, in all no less than a thousand Sail; so gloriously set out, that they were as much to be envied for their gallant Shew, as fear'd for their Force; having the Stern and Quarters all gilded with Gold and their Oars plated with Silver, as well as purple Sails; as if their greatest Delight had been to glory in their Iniquity. Nor were they content with committing Pyracies and Insolencies by Sea, they

committed as great Depredations by Land, or rather made Conquests; for they took and sack'd no less than four hundred Cities, laid several others under Contributions, plundered the Temples of the Gods, and enriched themselves with the Offerings deposited in them; they often landed Bodies of Men, who not only plundered the Villages along the Sea Coast, but ransacked the fine Houses of the Noblemen along the *Tiber*. A Body of them once took *Sextilius* and *Bellinus*, two *Roman* Prætors, in their purple Robes, going from *Rome* to their Governments, and carried them away with all their Sergeants, Officers and Vergers; they also took the Daughter of *Antonius* a consular Person, and one who had obtained the Honour of a Triumph, as she was going to the Country House of her Father.

But what was most barbarous, was a Custom they had when they took any Ship, of enquiring of the Person on Board, concerning their Names and Country; if any of them said he was a *Roman*, they fell down upon their Knees, as if in a Fright at the Greatness of that Name, and begg'd Pardon for what they had done, and imploring his Mercy, they used to perform the Offices of Servants about his Person, and when they found they had deceived him into a Belief of their being sincere, they hung out the Ladder of the Ship, and coming with a shew of Courtesy, told him, he had his Liberty, desiring him to walk out of the Ship, and this in the Middle of the Sea, and when they observed him in Surprise, as was natural, they used to throw him overboard with mighty shouts of Laughter; so wanton they were in their Cruelty.

Thus, while *Rome* was Mistress of the World, she suffered Insults and Affronts, almost at her Gates, from these powerful Robbers; but what for a while made Faction cease, and roused the Genius of that People, never used to suffer

Wrongs from a fair Enemy, was an excessive Scarcity of Provisions in *Rome*, occasioned by all the Ships loaden with Corn and Provisions from *Sicily*, *Corsica*, and other Places, being intercepted and taken by these Pyrates, insomuch that they were almost reduced to a Famine: Upon this, *Pompey the Great* was immediately appointed General to manage this War; five hundred Ships were immediately fitted out, he had fourteen Senators, Men of Experience in the War, for his Vice-Admirals; and so considerable an Enemy, were these Ruffians become, that no less than an Army of a hundred thousand Foot, and five thousand Horse was appointed to invade them by Land; but it happened very luckily for *Rome*, that *Pompey* sail'd out before the Pyrate had Intelligence of a Design against them, so that their Ships were scattered all over the *Mediterranean*, like Bees gone out from a Hive, some one Way, some another, to bring Home their Lading; *Pompey* divided his Fleet into thirteen Squadrons, to whom he appointed their several Stations, so that great Numbers of the Pyrates fell into their Hands, Ship by Ship, without any Loss; forty Days he passed in scouring the *Mediterranean*, some of the Fleet cruising along the Coast of *Africa*, some about the Islands, and some upon the *Italian* Coasts, so that often those Pyrates who were flying from one Squadron, fell in with another; however, some of them escaped, and these making directly to *Cilicia*, and acquainting their Confederates on Shore with what had happened, they appointed a Rendezvous of all the Ships that had escaped at the Port of *Coracesium*, in the same Country. *Pompey* finding the *Mediterranean* quite clear, appointed a Meeting of all his Fleet at the Haven of *Brundusium*, and from thence sailing round into the *Adriatick*, he went directly to attack these Pyrates in their Hives; as soon as he came near the *Corecesium* in *Cilicia*,

where the Remainder of the Pyrates now lay, they had the Hardiness to come and give him Battle, but the Genius of old *Rome* prevailed, and the Pyrates received an entire Overthrow, being all either taken or destroyed; but as they made many strong Fortresses upon the Sea Coast, and built Castles and strong Holds up the Country, about the Foot of Mount *Taurus*, he was obliged to besiege them with his Army; some Places he took by Storm, others surrendered to his Mercy, to whom he gave their Lives, and at length he made an entire Conquest.

But it is probable, that had these Pyrates receiv'd sufficient Notice of the *Roman* Preparation against them, so as they might have had Time to draw their scattered Strength into a Body, to have met *Pompey* by Sea, the Advantage appeared greatly on their Side, in Numbers of Shipping, and of Men; nor did they want Courage, as may be seen by their coming out of the Port of *Coracesium*, to give the *Romans* Battle, with a Force much inferior to theirs; I say, had they overthrown *Pompey*, it is likely they would have made greater Attempts, and *Rome*, which had conquer'd the whole World, might have been subdued by a Parcel of Pyrates.

This is a Proof how dangerous it is to Governments to be negligent, and not take an early Care in suppressing these Sea Banditti, before they gather Strength.

The Truth of this Maxim may be better exemplified in the History of *Barbarouse*, a Native in the City of *Mitylene*, in the Island of *Lesbos*, in the *Egean* Sea; a Fellow of ordinary Birth, who being bred to the Sea, first set out from thence upon the pirating Account with only one small Vessel, but by the Prizes he took, he gain'd immense Riches, so that getting a great Number of large Ships, all the bold and dissolute Fellows of those Islands flock'd to him, and listed

in his Service, for the Hopes of Booty; so that his Strength was increased to a formidable Fleet: With these he perform'd such bold and adventurous Actions, that he became the Terror of the Seas. About this Time it happened that *Selim Eutemi*, King of *Algiers*, having refused to pay the accustomed Tribute to the *Spaniards*, was apprehensive of an Invasion from thence; wherefore he treated with *Barbarouse*, upon the Foot of an Ally, to come and assist him, and deliver him from paying this Tribute; *Barbarouse* readily came into it, and sailing to *Algiers* with a great Fleet, he put part of his Men on Shore, and having laid a Plot to surprize the City, he effected it with great Success, and murder'd *Selim* in a Bath; soon after which, he was himself crowned King of *Algiers*; after this he made War upon *Abdilabde*, King of *Tunis*, and overthrew him in Battle; he extended his Conquests on all Sides; and thus from a Thief became a mighty King: and tho' he was at last kill'd in Battle, yet he had so well established himself upon that Throne, that, dying without Issue, he left the Inheritance of the Kingdom to his Brother, another Pyrate.

I come now to speak of the Pyrates infesting the *West-Indies*, where they are 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 night 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, ——— *Satlely*.

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