PIRATES

A History

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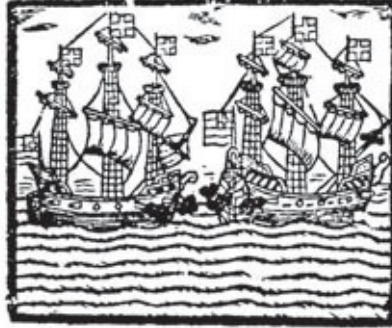
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The History Press

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Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments

Any attempt to write a history of piracy must gratefully rely on numerous authors and selecte archives. These are listed in the bibliography, but special thanks are due to the librarians ar archivists of the British Library, London; the Public Record Office, Kew; and the National Maritim Museum, Greenwich. Valuable, too, was the inter library loan office at the University of Victoria, a were the students of my pirate history seminar at the University of Victoria. Many thanks are also du to those who generously supplied lodging and hospitality in England, especially Patricia Rogers, ar Jo and Charles Cumberlege. Others who kindly helped along the way with information ar encouragement include Chris Archer, Peter Fothergill-Payne, Richard Unger, and Patrick Wrigh Thanks also to Jonathan Reeve, publisher, for his patience as the manuscript went over the time limi Most of all, Heather gave up much of her time to solve all computer problems, and thanks to her, t manuscript and the author both survived. Of course, all errors are due to the author alone.

The Pirate World

The 'golden age' of piracy in the West lasted from the 1680s to the 1720s, and during this time som 5,000 pirates roamed the seas. Who were these pirates? A great many were sailors who becam unemployed after major European wars ended. Others came from the hard grind and exploitation the Newfoundland fishery. Still other pirate recruits came from ships that pirates captured, and whos crews either volunteered or were forced to join. This was especially the case with captured slave ship where conditions for the crew, let alone the miserable slaves, were brutal. And many African slave also joined as willing or unwilling pirates. Then there were indentured servants from the colonies wh found their lives unendurable and were happy to try piracy. Many individuals went 'on account' pirates simply to improve their lot in life, and others were attracted by the promise of wealth th could not be obtained in any other way. Some perhaps joined pirate crews for political or ideologic reasons, and democracy did generally rule on pirate ships. Merchant and navy ships were notorious f poor conditions and bad treatment, and so sailors from these ships often decided to try their luck wi pirate ships. In fact, mutinies on merchant ships in particular were often caused by lack of provision and tardiness in paying their crews, so that most of the crew would turn pirate. Altogether there we many reasons to become a pirate at this time, and there was always the lure of treasure to attract m unhappy with low wages and poverty stricken lives.

How then to enter the world of the pirates of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centurie One way is to listen to what they said about themselves. A good start is an early eighteenth-centur mock trial, in which a group of pirates pretended to put themselves in court in order to both critici and make fun of the judicial system of the day:

Attorn. Gen: An't please your Lordship, and you Gentlemen of the Jury, here is a Fellow before you that is a sad Dog, a sad sad Dog; & I humbly hope your Lordship will order him to be hanged out of the Way immediately. He has committed Pyracy upon the High Seas, and we shall prove, an't please your Lordship, that this Fellow, this sad Dog before you, has escaped a thousand Storms, nay, has got safe ashore when the Ship has been cast away, which was a certain Sign he was not born to be drown'd; yet not having the Fear of hanging before his Eyes, he went on robbing & ravishing, Man, Woman and Child, plundering Ships Cargoes fore and aft, burning and sinking Ship, Bark and Boat, as if the Devil had been in him. But that is not all, my Lord, he has committed worse Villanies than all these, for we shall prove, that he has been guilty of drinking Small-

Beer; and your Lordship knows, there never was a sober Fellow but what was a Rogue. My Lord, I should have spoken much finer than I do now, but that, as your Lordship knows our Rum is all out, and how should a Man speak good Law that has not drunk a Dram. However, I hope your Lordship will order the Fellow to be hang'd.

Judge: Heark'ee me sirrah, you lousy, pitiful, ill-look'd Dog; what have you to say why you should not be tuck'd up immediately, and set a Sundrying like a Scare-crow? Are you guilty or not guilty?

Pris[oner]: Not guilty, an't please your Worship.[1]

This mock trial gives an insight into the humour, as well as the fears, of the pirates. This skit w[as] performed on an island off Cuba in 1722 by a pirate crew commanded by Captain Anstis, and recorde[d] by Captain Charles Johnson, the eighteenth-century historian of piracy. The pirates well knew th[at] they had committed or were about to commit crimes that would result in the hanging of many of ther[m] or at the least produce an untimely death of some kind. So this mock trial was a way of getting ov[er] their fear of hanging by making fun of it, and at the same time showing a defiance of the law [in] pursuing their piratical ways regardless.

Captain Charles Johnson's book is one of the key sources for Western piracy in the Golden Age [of] piracy from the 1680s to the 1720s. Entitled *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of th[e] Most Notorious Pyrates,* it was first published in 1724, and subsequently in several further edition[s.] Unfortunately, no one knows who Captain Charles Johnson was, since this name was a pseudony[m,] although some older authorities consider Johnson might have been the author Daniel Defoe. Som[e] wonder if Johnson was the playwright Charles Johnson (1679–1748), who did write a play called *Th[e] Successful Pirate,* while still others consider that Johnson must have been a sailor or even a pirat[e,] judging from his inside knowledge of the sea and his connections to many pirates. Whoever he wa[s,] Johnson's book contains biographies of many of the most famous pirates of the day such as Avery (o[r] Every), Blackbeard (or Teach), Rackam, Roberts, Kidd, and the two female pirates, Mary Read an[d] Anne Bonny. By cross checking with documents from the English High Court of the Admiralt[y,] Colonial Office records, trial reports, and other official sources, it seems that Johnson was general[ly] quite accurate, although details were sometimes wrong, and speeches were probably mostly invented.

The world of the pirates has been explored in a large number of books, but the present volume tri[es] to extend the time and space of piracy by going back to classical and medieval piracy and forward [to] modern piracy, while also widening the search to include Asian and South Asian piracy. Yet th[e] greatest volume of archival and other resources easily available relates to the period from about 160[0] onward in regard to Caribbean, Atlantic and Pacific piracy, and so a number of chapters deal with th[is] area. First hand accounts of this period are particularly useful, and some are to be found in the Briti[sh] Library, London. Yet our modern image of the pirate is very strongly formed not from archives [or] from modern books, but by one or two late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century children's book[s,] by the lurid illustrations of the American Howard Pyle at the turn of the century, and by the cinema.

Undoubtedly the most influential children's book is by Robert Louis Stevenson, whose *Treasu[re] Island,* published in 1883, introduced some memorable fictional pirate characters, such as Long Joh[n] Silver, Blind Pew, Ben Gunn, and Israel Hands, the last being the name of a real pirate. Stevenson ha[d] read Charles Johnson and this accounts for the authentic pirate 'feel' to the book. *Treasure Islan[d]* continues to be read and republished, and introduces the strange concept that murderous pirates a[re] especially suitable for children's literature. This must be explained partly because we are no long[er] frightened of piracy, which has retreated to the periphery of the world. Thus piracy belongs to a[n] imaginary world rather than a real world, and so pirate stories can safely be read by children. Th[is] children's theme continued with the highly successful drama of *Peter Pan, or The Boy Who Wouldn['t*

Grow Up, by another Scotsman, J.M. Barrie, which was produced in 1902. This play introduc[es] Captain Hook, whose image is based partly on the pirate Blackbeard. Hook is the unpleasant leader [of] a group of pirates, who pursue a number of children. Once more, the situation is potential[ly] frightening, but is resolved through magical means, and children can feel safe watching the play.[3]

Pirate books for children continue to be published, such as the Pirate Hunter series for teenager[s,] and it is the combination of exotic locations, daring adventures, and pirates who are on the soci[al] boundaries of society like outlaws and highwaymen, who are a suitable distance from real pirate[s,] which make these stories popular.[4] Some of these books are illustrated with the work of the America[n] author and illustrator, Howard Pyle, who produced a very romantic image of the pirate, which has no[w] become the standard of what a seventeenth- or eighteenth-century pirate really looked like. Pyle[s] pirates are shown doing both imagined and genuine pirate activities, such as forcing captives to wa[lk] the plank, pirates being marooned, pirate craft sneaking up on ships, pirates torturing prisoners [to] force them to reveal where their wealth is, pirates fighting pirates, pirates burying treasure, and ev[il] looking pirates like William Kidd.[5] Meanwhile, there has been a surprising resurgence in scholar[ly] pirate historiography in the last dozen years or so, some of which might have been stimulated by t[he] emergence of modern piracy, and others perhaps by the creation of a new genre of pirate film.[6]

Pirate films generally fit into four overlapping categories. First, the 'Swashbuckler' style of film[,] starring actors such as Errol Flynn and Douglas Fairbanks, in films such as *Captain Blood* (192[4,] 1935), based on the novel by Rafael Sabatini, published in 1923; *The Black Pirate* (1926); and *T[he] Black Swan* (1942), another film based on a Sabatini novel published in 1932. The theme in the[se] films tends to be the misunderstood pirate who eventually turns out well, but the central image is t[he] handsome, charismatic, bare-chested, cutlass swinging, dare devil of a pirate, carefree, and yet cari[ng] of his men and usually a woman. The second film category would be the 'patriotic' pirate film, [in] which the pirate hero wages war against an unpleasant enemy of his country. Examples include *T[he] Sea Hawk* (1924, 1942), based on yet another early Sabatini novel published in 1915, with the enem[y] being nasty Spain, a frequent antagonist, as in *The Spanish Main* (1945). Then there is *The Buccane[er]* (1938, 1958), about the American pirate Jean Laffite, who helps the Americans against the British [at] the Battle of New Orleans. The third film category relates to pirate parodies and comedies, which po[ke] fun at the stock characters and themes of the swashbuckling and patriotic era. Needless to say, th[is] genre requires an established set of pirate characters and films to parody, and also signals that t[he] original pirate genre is now tired and seriously in need of new directions. The comedy genre start[ed] around the 1940s, with films such as *The Princess and the Pirate* (1944), starring Bob Hope, a[nd] continued with many more recent films such as *Abbott and Costello Meet Captain Kidd* (1952) a[nd] *The Crimson Pirate* (1952). These films often include an evil Spanish governor or similar unpleasa[nt] tyrant, and the required female interest. The newest example of this genre is *The Pirates of t[he] Caribbean* series which is mainly a parody, but contains a certain amount of swashbuckling, and [a] love interest. Lastly, a fourth category is the children's film. Following the previously mentione[d] connection between piracy and children's literature, a number of children's films have been release[d,] starting with many versions of *Treasure Island* (1920, 1934, 1950, 1972, 1990). The children's fil[m] *Long John Silver* appeared in 1954, and, as might be expected, *Peter Pan* was also turned into a fil[m] in 1953, and again in 1991 under the title *Hook*. *Peter Pan* also became a musical in 1954 and [a] television adaptation in 1976. In some ways, *The Pirates of the Caribbean* films are also children['s] films, while the Gilbert and Sullivan musical/opera, *The Pirates of Penzance* (1983), really als[o] belongs to the parody genre.

Overall, in regard to film, the swashbuckling and patriotic style pirate films held sway from t[he]

1920s to the 1950s, then these genres ran out of steam, and were replaced to a considerable extent by parodies and comedies. These too seemed to have run their course until *The Pirates of the Caribbean* series, which managed to breathe new life into the pirate film with a mixture of swashbuckling, comedy, science fiction, and a dash of children's entertainment. One point is worth making before leaving the topic of the cinema, and this is that the handsome type of pirate portrayed by film stars such as Errol Flynn is rather far from reality. In contrast, for example, the real pirate John James was described in 1699 as 'a man of middle Stature, Square-Shouldered, Large jointed, Lean, much disfigured with the small pox, broad Speech, thick Lipped, a blemish or Cast in his left Eye …' A descriptive selection of a list of pirates, who ran away with the ship *Adventure* in September 1698, was described thus, so that they could be identified if captured:

> John Lloyde: of Ordinary Stature, raw boned, very pale Complexion, darke hair, remarkably deformed by an Attraction of the Lower Eyelid.
>
> John Peirce: Short, well sett, swarthy, much pockfretten.
>
> Andrew Martin: Short, thick great lipps, black bushey hair.
>
> Tho Simpson: Short and Small, black, much squint eyed. [7]

And so on. All of these pirates were quite young, in the fifteen to thirty-five age bracket. Many had eye problems, and some were marked by small pox or other diseases. However, as might be expected from their rough backgrounds and life styles, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century pirates were not quite like those portrayed in the modern cinema. What then was the real pirate world like?

Democracy

Among Western pirates in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a very significant aspect of their lives was the concept of democracy onboard a pirate ship. The pirates did not call it democracy, but they were well aware that the rules, written and unwritten, which they lived under as pirates, were very different from the regimented and hierarchical lives of sailors onboard merchant and naval vessels. Some pirate captains introduced specific rules for living onboard, such as the rules of Captain Bartholomew Roberts, Captain Phillips and Captain Lowther. These rules laid out four basic areas of pirate conduct: the system of division of treasure among the officers and crew; the regulation of life aboard the ship; the reward system for those injured in engagements; and the punishments for infringements of the rules. Every man that came aboard a pirate ship where these rules were followed had to sign articles, usually on a bible, to show that he agreed to obey these rules. It is of interest that Roberts produced twelve rules, Lowther eight, and Phillips nine.

Roberts tended to be stricter, tougher and more of a disciplinarian than other captains, which perhaps accounts for the larger number of his rules. Thus Roberts had rules to forbid dicing and gambling for money, which was a frequent cause of trouble onboard pirate ships, a rule that candles and lights were to be out at eight o'clock at night, though drinking could carry on after this on the open deck, and a rule to prevent boys or women being brought onboard. Roberts also had rules that demanded the crew keep their pistols and cutlasses in good order, that musicians onboard should be able to rest on the Sabbath, but for the other six days and nights be ready to play, and a rule that no crew member should talk of breaking up their way of living until each man was able to share £1,000. This last rule was designed to offset the perennial problem of pirate voyages, when some pirates

wanted to end the voyage with what they had, and others wanted to continue. Other rules related duels as a method of dealing with conflict onboard, and a rule outlining punishments both for pirat leaving their station in battle, and for deserting the ship, which last was a problem when a group mig try to take over a ship and depart, or when an individual might desert and perhaps inform th authorities. Then there was the usual rule for distributing treasure, and for compensating those wl were wounded in battle. Of significance is Roberts' first rule, which spelled out the democratic inte of the pirate life:

Every Man has a Vote in Affairs of Moment; has equal Title to the fresh Provisions, or strong Liquors, at any Time seized, & use them at pleasure, unless a Scarcity make it necessary, for the good of all, to Vote a Retrenchment.[8]

In actual fact, not every one had a vote, since men who were forced to join a pirate crew were judge unreliable, and were narrowly watched by the old hands. Certain officers such as the surgeon we often compelled to join a pirate ship and were also thought to be less enthusiastic. Of course, rul were all very well, but enforcing them, and having pirates obey them, was not an easy matter in a equal democracy. In Roberts' case, he was able to hold his crew together for four years. This was r mean feat, although some crew did desert him, and there was too much drinking, which in the end le Roberts' ships vulnerable when the Royal Navy caught up with them. Captain Lowther's eight rul were very much the same, except that there were fewer rules regarding conduct onboard, and the la two rules spelled out particulars. Lowther's rule number seven stated, 'Good Quarters be given whe called for', presumably to save the lives of those victims that wanted to surrender, and rule numb eight stated that the first pirate to see a sail should have the best pistol or small arm onboard tl victim. Lowther's rules did not prevent much dissension onboard his ships, and he was also accused cruelty. Lowther's ship was eventually caught while the crew was careening it (cleaning the bottom the hull of barnacles and weed), and Lowther either shot himself ashore, or was shot by a fello pirate.[9]

Captain Phillips' articles were again much the same as those laid out by Roberts. Thus there w one for the safety of the ship, which forbade firing arms onboard, or smoking in the hold without a c to the pipe, or carrying a lighted candle without a safety case. If this happened, the perpetrator shou receive Moses' Law – 40 stripes, lacking one, on the bare back. Phillips' articles included the usu threat against those wanting to run away – and Phillips killed two men that attempted this, whi keeping a secret from the company was also a crime. These last two crimes were to be punished l marooning, a favourite punishment of the pirates, though it seems not to have happened very ofte Phillips' last rule forbade the pirates from molesting a 'prudent Woman' without her consent, whic would be punished by death. It is not clear if this rule was obeyed, and one of Phillips' crew, whe about to be hung, did bewail his lack of chastity. The end of Phillips' career was rather gruesom because seven captives onboard from several of his piracies combined to overthrow the pirate crev and Phillips was hit with a mallet which broke his jaw, and he was then battered to death with carpenter's adze. Subsequently, Phillips' head was cut off, pickled, and hung from the masthead.[10]

These rules show what the pirate captains intended rather than what actually happened, but the was a definite appeal to real equality and democracy. In this regard, Charles Johnson expanded on t customs of the pirate way of life. Firstly, Johnson pointed to the role of the quartermaster, who was kind of civil magistrate onboard, carrying out punishment for minor problems by 'drubbing whipping' the trouble maker. The quartermaster was a sort of trustee for the whole ship's compan and also was first onboard any prize, and organized the division of spoils. Next, Johnson wrote of tl

captain's powers onboard, which partly depended on the kind of man he was. Roberts was a stron[g] captain, but even he found that he needed to use a small group of insiders to help him rule. By pira[te] tradition, the captain was only permitted to be captain by the will of the crew, and could be deposed [at] any time. But a pirate captain had certain rights, 'The captain's power is uncontrollable in chase, or [in] battle, drubbing, cutting, or even shooting any one who dares to deny his command.' This meant that [it] was during battle that the captain had total power. Similarly, the captain reserved the right to deal wi[th] prisoners in any way he saw fit. Otherwise, for example, when deciding where to sail, the crew wou[ld] vote on this, and would also vote on whether to attack a particular ship or place onshore. Thus t[he] captain had very few privileges, except perhaps a better cabin than others, and a higher percentage [of] the treasure captured. Needless to say, some captains ruled by fear, some were quickly deposed, an[d] some were able to retain command for the short period they usually had before their piracy came to a[n] end.[11]

The question of the origins of pirate democracy is much debated. Essentially, did this life [of] democracy come about for practical reasons, or was there an ideological element to it? Certainl[y] pirates had no wish to live under the kind of rough justice they experienced onboard merchant an[d] navy ships, and certainly there was a rejection of the hierarchical social world the pirates came fro[m.] Beyond this, there is the often quoted speech by Samuel Bellamy, a pirate captain, who reported[ly] wanted to marry a certain Maria Hallett of Eastham, Massachusetts, but her parents wanted [a] wealthier man. So Bellamy went to sea looking for shipwrecks to recover valuables from, and turne[d] to piracy when he could not find any wrecks. Ironically, Bellamy drowned in 1717 when he wa[s] captain of the captured slave ship *Whydah*, which struck a sand bar. Before this happened, Johnso[n] either invented or paraphrased a speech in which Bellamy addressed the captain of a sloop he had ju[st] captured:

> …you are a sneaking puppy, and so are all those who will submit to be governed by laws which rich men have made for their
> own security, for the cowardly whelps have not the courage otherwise to defend what they get by their knavery; but ___ ye
> altogether; ___ them for a pack of crafty rascals, and you, who serve them, for a parcel of hen-hearted numskulls. They vilify
> us, the scoundrels do, when there is only this difference, they rob the poor under the cover of law, forsooth, and we plunder
> the rich under the protection of our own courage.

Bellamy asked the captured captain to join his crew, but the captain refused, so Bellamy started o[ff] again:

> You are a devilish conscience rascal … I am a free prince, and I have as much authority to make war on the whole world, as he
> who has a hundred sail of ships at sea, and an army of 100,000 men in the field; and this my conscience tells me: but there is
> no arguing with such snivelling puppies, who allow superiors to kick them around at pleasure.[12]

It is hard to say how accurate this speech is. It may reflect Johnson's attitude as much as Bellamy'[s,] but it is very likely that many pirates harboured similar anti-establishment views. Hence, Bart Rober[ts] compared the miserable life of underfed and mistreated merchant sailors to the wonderful possibiliti[es] that could happen with piracy, and frequently drank the following toast, 'D__n to him who ever live[d] to wear a halter.'[13]

These anti-establishment views can be seen in the clothes the pirates wore, for example, 'Calic[o] Jack' Rackam, whose shirts opposed the sumptuary (anti-extravagance) laws of the time, or Ba[rt] Roberts' fine clothes, or the gold chain and gold toothpick that the pirate John James happily wo[re]

round his neck.[14] Then there was the free spending, normally the activity of a gentleman of means, b[ut] newly enriched pirates, who drank, caroused, gambled, and threw money away recklessly. Other ant[i-] establishment attitudes came through in the brutal treatment of unpopular merchant captains a[nd] officers as revenge when they were captured, for example, the pirate Philip Lyne claimed to hav[e] killed thirty-seven masters. Conversely there was better treatment if the individual had been a kind[ly] captain, as happened to William Snelgrave when his ship was taken at Sierra Leone. The pirates we[re] about to dispatch Snelgrave when one of his crew pushed forward and said, 'For God's sake don't k[ill] our captain, for we were never with a better man.' This was enough to spare Snelgrave.[15] On the oth[er] hand, pirates often wanted to make themselves gentlemen through the simple means of getting enou[gh] wealth to act as gentlemen. So in 1721, one pirate crew made a rich haul of some 9,000 poun[ds] sterling from a valuable ship, enough to make them 'gentlemen of fortune', while the pirate Capta[in] Howel Davis tried to entice the crew of the captured ship *Princess* to join him, saying 'he would ma[ke] gentlemen of them all' if they would join his crew. And it is the case that the great majority of pirate[s,] when they were not forced, and when they did not mutiny for lack of food or pay, set out to improv[e] their lives by obtaining material goods and wealth if they possibly could. And some pirate treasu[re] was remarkably large, as in the loot of the French pirate Jean Hamlin, who sent ashore in 1683 [as] much gold dust as could be carried by eight slaves, plus 150 pigs of silver and 120 bags of coins.[16]

Africans Onboard Pirate Ships

Yet there was one component of almost all pirate crews which normally did not share in th[e] democracy onboard, and this was the African slaves. Many Africans were captured when slave ship[s] were taken by pirates off the coast of West Africa, or on the way to the Caribbean and the Americas. [It] is well known that when Roberts' ships were taken by the Royal Navy in 1722 somewhere between 7[0] and 75 Africans were also captured, having served on Roberts' fleet. The question to be asked [in] Roberts' case is whether these Africans were forced, or were volunteers, and in general, one can sa[y] that they were forced into working on his ships. Partly for this reason, no African slaves from Robert[s'] ships were executed, and instead they were sold into further slavery. On the other hand, when [a] member of Roberts' crew testified at his trial, he said that two Africans with loaded pistols forced th[e] crew of a ship at St Christopher to sign ships' articles. In this situation, these two Africans we[re] probably willing participants. On another occasion, a privateer turned pirate was blocked in the port [of] Soulière, near St Augustine, in 1700, by the Royal Navy ship *Lizard*, which found there were 4[0] blacks in arms onboard the privateer. These Africans were evidently active pirates.[17] It is also know[n] that onboard Blackbeard's ship in his last fight there was an African named Black Caesar, 'a resolu[te] fellow, a Negro who he [Blackbeard] had brought up, [entrusted] with a lighted match in the powd[er] room with commands to blow up when he should give him orders.' Black Caesar duly attempted [to] blow up the ship but was prevented by others onboard. When the trial of Blackbeard's pirates wa[s] held, Black Caesar refused to bargain with the authorities, although four other African pirates did tr[y] to turn state's evidence. However, black slaves were not allowed to testify by law in South Carolin[a,] and in the end Black Caesar, and the other four African pirates, were hung along with the rest [of] Blackbeard's crew.[18]

Another incident involving Africans occurred in 1721 when Richard Taylor and a large number [of] pirates at Madagascar decided to go and try and seek a pardon in the West Indies. An eye witnes[s] recorded that, '… thereupon the sd. Richard Taylor with a hundred & twelve white men & for[ty]

Blacks voted to go to the West Indies and came onboard the *Cassandra* …' This sounds as though th[e]
forty Africans had the choice of a vote, and could decide whether to continue piracy or seek a pardo[n.]
On the other hand, Africans were frequently forced onboard pirate ships, and had no choice. The[ir]
normal fate on a pirate ship was to do the hard labour. Yet some Africans were no doubt happy to hav[e]
escaped transportation as slaves, and were willing to join the pirate crew as active participants.[19]

Marooned!

Democracy onboard pirate ships relied partly on adherence to the articles or rules drawn up by capta[in]
and crew. Marooning was one of the punishments decreed by Bart Roberts, yet the word itself had [a]
different history from the commonly understood practice of abandoning individuals on desert island[s.]
Initially, the word 'maroon' was derived from the word for escaped African slaves, who often foug[ht]
against the Spanish, and were called 'cimarrones'. The French and English reduced this word [to]
'maroons'. By the 1660s, Caribbean pirates called themselves 'marooners', because of the[ir]
occasional practice of marooning victims, while sometimes those marooned were the pirat[es]
themselves.

An example of pirates calling themselves marooners is that of Thomas Lawrence Jones and h[is]
associates. Jones gave a long story to the High Court of the Admiralty in 1723 that explained how h[e]
eventually came to be a marooner. Jones' account starts with him serving on a ship called the *Merr[...]*
in 1720, when it was taken off the Guinea coast by the pirate Howel Davis. Soon after, Davis w[as]
killed, and Bartholomew Roberts became captain. Jones claimed that he and 14 others were forced [to]
join Roberts' ship, the *Ranger*. Subsequently, some ships were captured by Roberts, and then a sloo[p]
was taken, which was named the *Good Fortune*. Jones claimed that he was forced to sign articles [on]
the *Good Fortune* by two 'Negroes with loaded pistols'. Now occurred a violent episode that Jones d[id]
not relate in his testimony, in which he had a fight with Roberts over the death of a friend who ha[d]
been killed by Roberts because this friend, in a drunken state, had insulted Roberts. According [to]
Charles Johnson, Roberts ran Jones through with his sword, but Jones fought back and severely be[at]
Roberts as he was pinned underneath a cannon. Jones recovered from his wound, but was given [a]
severe whipping by the crew of the *Good Fortune*, who administered two lashes per crew member [to]
the unfortunate Jones. Jones resented this treatment, and resolved to desert Roberts, which he achieve[d]
by sailing away at night with other malcontents on a captured brigantine under the command [of]
Captain Anstis. Now, finally, according to Jones, these deserters from Roberts resolved 'to live [a]
marooning life – till they would have an answer to a Petition to his Majestie for a Pardon …'[20] S[o]
Jones and his shipmates captured two more ships, in one of which they sailed to 'a marooning Key …[']
According to Johnson, this Key was an uninhabited island off the south-west coast of Cuba calle[d]
Rattan. (This island, actually called Roatan, is close to what is now Honduras.) This petition fro[m]
Anstis' crew was signed in 'round robin' fashion, to prevent the detection of ring leaders, and Johns[on]
records the petition in full. It essentially condemns Roberts as wicked, while Anstis, Jones, and th[e]
rest of the crew sought a better life for themselves. Meanwhile, Anstis, Jones, and the rest of th[e]
pirates took a number of French, Spanish and English ships, lived a 'maroon' life on Rattan [Roata[n]
and other islands for eight months, and sent a second petition. No answer coming to their appea[l,]
Jones and eighteen others eventually left off pirating and sailed to England and dispersed, living fr[ee]
for eight months before being captured. Johnson notes that Jones later died in London's Marshals[ea]
prison.[21]

Turning from marooners to ships' articles, it is well known that some pirate captains in the earl[y] eighteenth century required their crews to sign these articles, which usually included marooning as [a] punishment for various crimes against the crew. Thus Captain Phillips' articles on the *Revenge*, [in] 1723, included three articles that mentioned marooning. Article 2 read, 'If any Man shall offer to ru[n] away, or keep any secret from the Company, he shall be marooned, with one Bottle of Powder, an[d] Bottle of Water, one small Arm, and Shot.' Article 3 read, 'If any Man shall steal any Thing in th[e] Company, or Game, to the value of a Piece of Eight, he shall be maroon'd or shot.' It does not see[m] that Captain Phillips or his crew put the first article into practice – in fact, according to Johnson, tw[o] members of the crew who attempted to leave the ship were simply killed by Phillips, thu[s] contradicting Article 2. Of course, there may not have been a suitable island or land close by f[or] marooning in these two cases. Meanwhile, Article 4 read, 'If at any time we should meet anoth[er] Marrooner [that is Pyrate,] that Man that shall sign his articles without the consent of our Compan[y] shall suffer such Punishment as the Captain and Company shall think fit.' It is worth noting that only [a] few of Phillips' crew were voluntary pirates, and so Phillips no doubt wanted to keep as strict a ho[ld] as he could over his crew.[22]

Another pirate who set out ship's articles was Captain George Lowther, on the *Delivery*, in 172[1,] but it is notable that none of his eight articles mentioned marooning. Instead, all crimes against t[he] ship and crew were to be punished according to what the captain and majority of the company shou[ld] see fit. This was obviously a more flexible system, and did not preclude marooning. Ironicall[y,] Lowther and some of his men marooned themselves on the island of Blanco (near Tortuga), in 1723, [to] avoid capture by a South Sea sloop from Barbados. Lowther was taken by surprise while careening h[is] ship, which made the ship and crew extremely vulnerable. Johnson reported that Lowther probab[ly] shot himself on Blanco, being found dead with a burst pistol by his side.[23]

The next pirate whose articles Johnson lists was the famous Captain Bart Roberts. Johnson trea[ts] the case of Bart Roberts in the greatest detail, since he evidently had very good information [on] Roberts' career. In regard to Roberts' articles, dated around 1720, two of them mention maroonin[g.] The first article, no.2, declares, 'Every Man to be called fairly in turn, by list, on Board of Prize[s,] because, (over and above their proper Share,) they there on these Occasions allow'd a Shift of Cloath[s.] But if they defrauded the Company to the Value of a Dollar, in Plate, Jewels, or Mone[y,] MAROONING was their Punishment.' Johnson added the comment that marooning was a barbaro[us] custom, but noted that if the robbery was between individuals, rather than against the whole crew, th[en] the guilty one would be put ashore, not in an uninhabited place, but where the guilty party wou[ld] suffer hardship. This would obviously be a lesser punishment than marooning on a deserted islan[d.] The second article mentioning marooning was no.7, 'To Desert the Ship, or their Quarters in Battl[e,] was punished with Death, or Marooning.' It is notable that in Roberts' mind, as with Phillips' article[s,] marooning was clearly a particular punishment for those who transgressed against the ship and cre[w] as a whole.[24] It seems that Roberts also used marooning as a punishment when the pirates' victim[s] fought back – thus in 1722 when a French ship resisted Roberts' two ships, the remaining prisoner[s] were marooned on the most desolate island that Roberts could find.[25] On the other hand, Rober[ts] rescued thirteen naked sailors marooned on the island of Dominica in 1720 by a Spanish coast gua[rd] ship, who understandably joined Roberts' crew rather than remain marooned.[26]

These examples are from the early 1720s when pirates were under particular stress from renewe[d] naval efforts to capture and eradicate them, and so pirate captains tended to be stricter in dealing wi[th] their crews. But of course, marooning was practiced earlier, from at least the sixteenth century. It als[o]

occurred sometimes by accident of fate, when a sailor would be left ashore somewhere, as happened a Moskito coast native man called William the Striker. On a raid in the South Seas, Captain Watling and his buccaneers anchored at the Juan Fernandez Islands in 1681, and were forced to leave sudden as three Spanish ships hove into sight. Left ashore was William the Striker, who had become hidde 'under a treed slope' – although Watling and his crew did send a canoe to try to find him befor leaving, but could not. William had to wait three years until 1684 when another South Seas voyag under Captains Cook and Eaton visited the Juan Fernandez Islands, and William was rescued from h marooned state. William Dampier, who was present, described the touching scene as William th Striker came to the beach as another Moskito native, called Robin, joined others as they went asho in canoes. Robin waded through the surf and 'running to his brother Moskito man, threw himself fl on his face at his feet.' Then they embraced, and William was brought onto the ship.[27]

Sometimes, however, men actually wanted to leave their ships and be marooned. This was the cas with four English sailors who apparently left a privateer of their own free will in 1687, and maroone themselves on the same Juan Fernandez Islands. They were rescued by a ship called the *Welfare* October 1690.[28] Much more common, though, was marooning as a malicious act. This happened November 1715 when the third mate of the *Anglesea*, John Rolf, decided to take over the *Anglesea* Buena Vista. Rolf succeeded, and put the master of the ship on a desolate island, where he died.[29] better known example occurred in 1698, when Joseph Bradish, the mate of the *Adventure*, togeth with others, took over the ship, complaining of lack of provisions, and sailed away, marooning th surgeon, the captain's mate, and three others on an island they called Polonoys, six miles fro Sumatra. Some others were left in a long boat at the same place.[30]

Naturally, the most famous of the marooned was Alexander Selkirk, the alleged model or prototyp of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Selkirk sailed with William Dampier in 1703, as part of a privateerin cruise by a two ship fleet on the coast of South America, hoping to capture the Spanish treasure flee The expedition was not a happy one, and to make matters worse, the captain of one of the ships, th *Cinque Ports*, died, leaving command in the hands of a twenty-one year-old first lieutenant calle Thomas Stradling. Selkirk was the quartermaster on the *Cinque Ports*, and he argued bitterly wi Stradling over the seaworthiness of the ship. Selkirk was so angry with Stradling, whom he deteste that he asked to be left behind on the Juan Fernandez Islands. He was put ashore with bedding, se chest, provisions, tobacco, navigation instruments, books, powder and shot. At the last minute Selkir changed his mind, gesticulating frantically from the shore, but Stradling would not take him onboar again. This was in October 1704, but it turned out that Selkirk was fortunate in his decision, since t *Cinque Ports* was wrecked soon after, and the eight survivors imprisoned by the Spanish. Meanwhil Selkirk remained on his island for the next four and a half years until February 1709 when Capta Woodes Rogers, again with Dampier aboard, dropped anchor and was surprised to see smoke and wildly waving individual. This was Selkirk 'cloth'd in Goats-Skins who looked wilder than the fir Owners of them'. Selkirk had lost the art of speech, but was healthy, and had trained young goats an the island cats to keep him company, and when depressed would 'sing and dance with them.' Selki was rescued, and appeared in the pages of Woodes Rogers' book, *A Cruising Voyage Round the Worl* published in 1712. Selkirk appropriately had become 'a better Christian while in this solitude tha ever he was before', which was a kind of stamp of approval of his story.[31]

Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* came out in 1719, and the coincidence of Selkirk's and Robins Crusoe's stories strongly suggested that Defoe used Selkirk as his model for Crusoe. This wa particularly the case because Defoe was clearly very interested in privateers and piracy, writin

briefly on the pirates Gow and Avery, and fictionalising piracy in his books on Captain Singleton an the further adventures of Robinson Crusoe. Nevertheless, a recent book argues persuasively that th original model for Robinson Crusoe's story of marooning was not Selkirk but Henry Pitman. It seem that Pitman was convicted of being involved in the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion in England, an was transported to Barbados as a ten year convict. Despairing of his life, he and a few others escape from Barbados in a small boat in 1687 and eventually wound up on the island of Salt Tortuga, off th coast of Venezuela. There they met with some pirates under the command of one Dutch Yanche o Yanky. This pirate had himself marooned some English buccaneers on Cow Island, close t Hispaniola, after arguments over prizes. Pitman found Yanky devious, and in fact Yanky and his crew sailed off to go raiding, leaving Pitman and his companions marooned on Salt Tortuga. Notabl Pitman bought an Indian from the pirates before they left, in order to use the Indian's skill as survivor – an obvious reference to Man Friday in *Robinson Crusoe*. Pitman was rescued from Sa Tortuga by a pirate ship after three months on the island, being readily accepted because he was surgeon, although Pitman apparently left his seven companions behind. Ultimately, Pitman reache London, and wrote a slim book entitled *A Relation of the great suffering and strange adventures Henry Pitman, Chirurgeon*, which was published in 1689. The connection between Pitman and Defo is strengthened by the fact that Pitman's book and Defoe's book were published by the sam publishing family in London, the Taylor family, at St Paul's Churchyard, and round the corner Paternoster Row, respectively. Finally, another connection is that Henry Pitman made his living aft returning to London by mixing and selling medicines at Taylor's publishing shop in St Paul Churchyard, where he very likely met Defoe.[32]

Women Pirates

In the Western world, piracy was normally the domain of men rather than women. There were number of reasons for this, chief among them being that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centurie women were thought to create considerable unrest on ships, leading to conflicts, fights, disorder, a murder. There was also a convention at the time that considered that women brought bad luck to ship. Another reason for the absence of women pirates was that women were not considered to hav the required physical strength to work a ship. It was also not easy for women to serve onboard a sh in disguise, since it was extremely difficult to hide their sex on a ship where privacy simply didn exist, although there are a few examples of some women who did serve on a ship.

In fact it was possible in the eighteenth century for women to accompany their husbands to sea the Royal Navy if their husbands were of the rank of warrant officer or less. A very few captains in th Royal Navy also brought women onboard in peace time, although this was strictly illegal. It was mu more common for women to enlist as soldiers on land, and many women were to be found Napoleon's army, either in official female units, or disguised as men, or as wives of senior officers. the Royal Navy, it was rare for women to serve in disguise, but one example was William Prothero, private marine onboard HMS *Amazon*, who was found to be a Welsh girl of 18 following her lover sea. Another woman who started as a soldier, and became a sailor, was Mary Anne Talbot, born i 1778, one of the sixteen bastard children of Lord William Talbot. She became the mistress of Captai Bowen in 1792, who enlisted her as a foot boy called John Taylor in his regiment, and they sailed HMS *Crown*, bound for Santo Domingo. There she became a drummer boy, and was present at th battle of Valenciennes, where Bowen was killed. Later she joined the French navy as a cabin boy, b

was captured by HMS *Brunswick* where she served as a powder monkey. She was badly wounded 1794, and wound up in London in 1796, where she was pressed by the Navy, but revealed her sex. Sh continued to wear sailor's clothes, and found that her inheritance had been wasted by her guardia After a spell in debtor's prison, she became servant to a publisher, and died in 1808.[33]

Another woman who disguised herself was Hannah Snell. She served in the marines, and onboa Royal Navy ships. Born in 1723, she fell in love with a Dutch sailor, and married him, but l abandoned her when she was pregnant. The child died, and she enlisted in Fraser's Regiment Marines in 1746. She deserted, and joined HMS *Swallow* as an assistant steward and cook to t officers' mess. She was wounded at the assault on Pondicherry in India, and allegedly used a nativ woman to dress her wounds, in order to maintain her disguise as a man. Snell enlisted on two ship and continued to try to find her Dutch husband. Aboard these ships she was apparently nickname 'Molly' because of the smoothness of her face, and then 'Hearty Jemmy', on account of h popularity. Her disguise as a man still continued. Then she discovered that her Dutch husband ha been executed in Genoa, and so she paid off from HMS *Eltham* and made a few appearances on stag in London, dressed in either her soldier or marine uniforms. Subsequently, she ran a pub in Wappin London, called appropriately *The Female Warrior*. Snell married twice more, but then the strain of h life told on her, and she was judged to have become insane. She died at Bedlam Hospital for the insan in London in 1792, but was buried at Chelsea Hospital among the other soldiers, as she had wanted.[34]

Of course neither Talbot nor Snell were pirates, but they did demonstrate that it was possible f women to serve onboard ship in disguise. It is noteworthy that these two women served in roles th required courage but generally not physical strength. Celebrated as actual women pirates were Ma Read and Anne Bonny. Both women grew up in situations that required them to be dressed as men, a it was as men that they wound up on the pirate ship of 'Calico Jack' Rackam. Mary Read had serve earlier in the infantry in Europe, and this stood her in good stead when she fought a duel in place her lover on Rackam's ship, and killed the sailor who was to fight her lover at a later hour. As a pira she was an active participant on Rackam's ship. Anne Bonny ran away from home with a povert stricken sailor, and they sailed for Providence, hoping to pick up privateering work. Here she met Jac Rackam, abandoned her husband, and went onboard his ship. Read and Bonny wore men's cloth onboard Rackam's ship, but they also sometimes wore women's clothes. Read and Bonny we captured off Jamaica in 1720, along with the rest of Rackam's crew, and went to trial. As it happene both were pregnant, and so escaped hanging for this reason (see Chapter 7).

Besides Read and Bonny, an earlier female pirate was the Irish smuggler and pirate, Grac O'Malley. She was born around 1530 in Connaught, on the west coast of Ireland. Her father was local chieftain, who possessed castles and a fleet of ships that were used for trading, smuggling a piracy. It seems that Grace grew up sailing in her father's ships, and cut her hair short and dressed boy's clothes to show that she was familiar with the sea. Her nickname, 'Granuaille' meant 'bald since she had cut her hair short. Grace married twice, probably both times for economic as well romantic reasons, and produced four children. Her first husband was killed, but her second husban lived at Rockfleet Castle in County Mayo, commanding Clew Bay. Grace operated from Rockfle Castle and Clew Bay for the rest of her life, where the O'Malleys possessed some twenty ships, mo of them being galleys. These galleys were propelled by thirty oars, and had onboard some 100 musk men. Another source relates that the O'Malleys owned three galleys with 200 fighting men, meanin that each galley had sixty odd musket men onboard. Presumably these galleys stayed close to shor but they certainly raided locally and also took passing merchant ships. In the early 1570s, Grac created too much trouble with her raids, and a government force led by Captain William Mart

launched a punitive raid on Clew Bay and Rockfleet Castle in 1574. Apparently, Grace compelle[d] Martin to retreat, but in 1577 on a plundering raid against the lands of the Earl of Desmond (surely a[n] over-ambitious plan), Grace was captured and spent time in Limerick jail. Lord Justice Dru[ry] described her as 'a woman that hath … been a great spoiler, and chief commander and director [of] thieves and murderers at sea to spoil this province.'[35]

In 1588, Grace O'Malley reportedly helped massacre Spanish sailors who came off the wreck [of] their ship, the *El Gran Grin*, in Clew Bay, after the Spanish Armada failed. It seems that Sir Richar[d] Bingham, governor of Connaught in 1588, was responsible for ordering most of the slaughter of the Spanish sailors. It was also Bingham who held a low opinion of Grace, and impounded her fleet. Grac[e] was now in poor financial condition, since her second husband had died in 1583, and she appealed [to] Queen Elizabeth. Bingham meanwhile arrested her brother and one of her sons, and so she went [to] England, meeting Queen Elizabeth at Greenwich Palace in September 1593. This must have been a[n] interesting occasion, although nothing is recorded of the meeting except for a suspect ballad or tw[o]. Judging by later events, Grace probably bought safety from Bingham by promising to fight th[e] Queen's enemies. The Queen instructed Bingham to provide for Grace, and he did release her son an[d] brother, but continued to be hostile until he retired in 1597, when Grace's fortunes improved. She die[d] in 1603, and it is relevant that Grace's son supported the English crown and was made Viscount May[o] in 1627.[36]

Grace O'Malley was very much a woman, chieftain, and pirate of her time, often embroiled [in] regional battles, and profiting from trading and raiding until she came up against the Queen'[s] governor, Bingham. Similar to Grace's story were the female Chinese pirates of the nineteenth an[d] twentieth centuries, who raided locally, and operated according to the cultural norms of the time (se[e] Chapters 9 and 10). In general, female pirates in the Western world in the golden age of piracy (168[0s] to 1720s) were very scarce, as might be expected because of the social restrictions of the day, and it [is] interesting that some pirate captains even attempted to control the presence of women onboard. It [is] well known that one of Roberts' rules read, 'No Boy or Woman to be allow'd amongst them. If an[y] Man were found seducing any of the latter Sex, and carried her to Sea, disguised, he was to suff[er] Death.' According to Johnson this rule was less to protect women (and boys) than to prevent discor[d] onboard, and he cynically wrote that the sentry put to protect any woman captured, actually reserve[d] her favours for himself. This apparently happened to the captive Elizabeth Trengrove onboar[d] Roberts' ship in August 1721. Another pirate, Captain Phillips, stated more ambiguously that 'If [at] any time you meet with a prudent Woman (i.e. not a prostitute or a loose woman), that man who offe[rs] to meddle with her, without her Consent, shall suffer present Death.' Presumably, a less respectab[le] woman could be handled as desired by the crew. On the other hand, the rules of Captain Lowther ha[d] nothing to say about women, and it is known that the Red Sea pirates badly mistreated their fema[le] captives.[37]

As a final note, the lack of women onboard pirate ships is sometimes cited as a reason for pira[te] homosexuality.[38] Yet there is a lack of evidence on this score, although one or two items tend t[o] suggest that in Western piracy there was some homosexuality. In their buccaneer voyage in the Pacifi[c] in 1680–1681, Bartholomew Sharp recorded in his journal that in January 1681 William Cook[e] accused Edmund Cooke of buggering him, '… his Master had oft times Buggered him in England […] in Jamaica … and once in these seas before Panama.' The captain put Edmund Cooke in iron[s], although this event may have been connected to a power struggle onboard for the captaincy of th[e] ship. In any case, Sharp does not add any comment, which suggests he did not find the problem ve[ry]

unusual.[39] That homosexuality existed is evident, as in the case of the cabin boy Richard Mandervell who in 1721 accused his master, Samuel Norman, of forcing him to wash the partly dressed Norman onboard ship at Oporto. Norman apparently called Mandervell 'Son of a Bitch' when he objected.[40] As mentioned elsewhere, the system of matelotage in Hispaniola, among the cattle hunters of the island, and in the logwood camps of Campeche, whereby two men shared all their possessions, hunted together, lived together, and left each other their goods upon death, suggests some may have been in homosexual relationships (see Chapter 5). Among the Barbary corsairs, European observers, often priests, certainly emphasised homosexual relationships in Algiers, although the horror they expressed stemmed partly from their desire to paint the situation in Algiers in the darkest colours in order to arouse publicity to help free the Christian slaves held there. One lurid story of the Barbary corsairs comes from a Christian priest who suggested in 1647 that young Christian captive boys were:

…purchased at great price by the Turks to serve them in their abominable sins, and no sooner do they have them in their power, [then] by dressing them up and caressing them, they persuade them to make themselves Turks. But if by chance someone does not consent to their uncontrolled desires, they treat him badly, using force to induce him into sin; they keep him locked up, so that he does not see nor frequent [other] Christians, and many others they circumcise by force.[41]

Finally, Chinese pirates in the early eighteenth century apparently used homosexuality to recruit young pirates to their junk fleets, while the question of homosexuality, although forbidden by the authorities, seems to have been a more open matter among Chinese pirates (see Chapter 9).

Overall, though, the question of homosexuality among western pirates remains an undecided issue due to lack of sufficient evidence. Many pirates sailed together on a long term basis, such as John Swann and Robert Culliford, but that does not prove a homosexual relationship.

Drink and Food

Whether pirates were men or women, what did they have to eat and drink? Pirates were notorious for heavy bouts of drinking alcohol, and usually drank anything they could get their hands on, whether it was plundered wine, brandy, cider or beer. When Captain Snelgrave, commander of a slave ship, entered the mouth of the Sierra Leone River, his ship was captured by the pirates Thomas Cocklyn, Howel Davis, and the Frenchman La Buze (or La Bouche). Snelgrave watched as the pirates:

…hoisted upon Deck a great many half hogsheads of Claret and French Brandy; knock'd their Heads out, and dipp'd Canns and Bowls into them to drink out of; And in their Wantoness threw full Buckets upon one another. And in the evening washed the Decks with what remained in the Casks. As to bottled Liquor, they would not give themselves the trouble of drawing the Cork out, but nick'd the Bottles, as they called it, that is, struck their necks off with a Cutlace; by which means one in three was generally broke.

Logwood cutters in Campeche (on the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico), were renowned for their drinking bouts, punctuating each toast with a cannon shot. Another scenario that provided for communal drinking was when pirates would gather to take a vote onboard their ship, they would usually first prepare a bowl of punch and then get down to decision making. For example, when the pirate Howel Davis was elected as commander, the election system required that 'a counsel of war was called over a large bowl of punch, at which it was proposed to choose a commander …' In the same

way, when a decision had to be made over shipmates who had broken the rules of the pirate crew, as the case of Roberts' crew 'a large bowl of rum punch was made, and placed upon the table, the pip and tobacco being ready, the judicial proceedings began …' After capturing a ship, pirates woul often celebrate, for example Captain Spriggs' men spent the day 'in boisterous mirth, roaring ar drinking of healths …' Later on, Spriggs' crew captured Captain Hawkins' ship for the second time, the evening, when the pirates were 'most of 'em drunk, as is usual at this time of night …'[42]

In fact, there was hardly any activity onboard a pirate ship that was not associated with drinking one time or another, and this was an age in which heavy drinking was normal. But some pirates su as Roberts tried to control alcohol, while others such as Blackbeard found that rum drinking kept h crew happy, which allowed him to remain as captain. Yet sailing ships of the seventeenth an eighteenth centuries are complicated pieces of machinery, and a drunken crew would find it hard work such a ship, so pirate crews simply could not have been drunk all the time. And in general, th heaviest drinking took place when a pirate ship was in harbour or being careened in some hidden ba Port Royal, in Jamaica, long a well known pirate haunt, provided as many as 100 taverns in 1680 f the pirates and other sailors. Occasionally, such drinking and debauchery let the pirates down, as whe Captain Roberts' crew was taken by surprise by the Royal Navy in 1722 and 'the greatest part of h men were drunk, passively courageous, unfit for service'. In the same way, Blackbeard himself spe the night in drinking before being killed in battle, and possibly would have made a better plan if l had been clear headed.[43]

Pirates also obviously drank simply to quench their thirst. Since water could quickly go ba onboard ship, beer and other alcoholic drinks were a substitute for water. Pirates also drank for soci reasons, in order to help maintain solidarity. Then there was drinking for comfort in cold weather; as part of pirate rituals; or for medicinal purposes. But the drink that is most often associated wi Western pirates was 'bumboo', a mixture of rum, water, and sugar, flavoured with nutmeg. The ke ingredient was rum, and indeed rum tended to be part of most peoples' lives in the Caribbean in t seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

As far as food was concerned, pirates ate anything that was available. Turning once again to Capta Snelgrave, he noted that the pirates who captured his ship ate 'Cheese, Butter, Sugar, and many oth things, they were as soon gone.' Then Snelgrave was served slices of boiled ham laid on a ship biscuit, but he also observed the live fowls on his ship – geese, turkeys, chickens and ducks, bei dispatched and thrown into a large cauldron – along with Westphalian hams and a pregnant sow. Th cook boiled them all together and the pirate crew feasted happily on the result.[44] Another commo source of pirate food was the sea turtle. Turtles were kept alive by being turned on their backs, an they survived for long periods of time due to their low metabolism. This therefore provided fresh me for pirate and other crews who killed the turtles as they needed them. A case in point was th experience of Captain Anstis' pirate crew, who waited on an island off the south-west coast of Cub for news of a pardon. Not having any food except rice for these nine months, they subsisted almo entirely on turtle meat seasoned with rice.[45] In fact, food was always a problem for pirates, who eith had to capture ships with provisions onboard, or raid local ports and villages, or buy whatever fo they could. A case in point was the pirate Captain Gow, who sailed into Porto Santo, near Madeira, 1725, and needed to buy water and provisions, since they were very short of both. The Governor w not speedy enough with the provisions, so he was kidnapped, and as a result Gow obtained a cow ar calf, a good number of fowls, and seven butts of water.[46]

Food shortages were always a logistical nightmare for pirates on long or even short voyages.

Normally, in areas where ships were close to land, like the Caribbean or in the Mediterranean, food could be replaced without too much trouble. But long voyages off the Americas, and especially sailing across the Pacific, were logistical nightmares. The buccaneer, William Cowley, reported such difficulties in the 1680s. Cowley's ship stopped at the Juan Fernandez Islands for goats and fish and green vegetables for the crew, and then sailed along the Pacific coast of South America, where men had to be put ashore in May 1683 because they were suffering from scurvy, (due to lack of Vitamin C). Later, Cowley's ship set off across the Pacific toward the Philippines, a distance of 3,000 miles, where many men were sick from scurvy again. The ship sailed on further east and by February 1685 rats had to be caught and given to sick men since there was no other food. By March all onboard were starving, and now only the ship's cat was left, which was killed to make broth for the sick. The ship went on to the Ladrones Islands, where coconut milk and fruit revived the crew, who also bought 50 hogs from the local Governor. Eventually, Cowley arrived back in England in 1686 after a three year voyage, which had been marked by the ever present problem of scurvy, as well as actual starvation.[47]

Yet the food that was usually associated with Western pirates was called Salmagundi. This dish may have been of French origin, and spread from the buccaneers of the Caribbean to pirates and sailors in the Atlantic, West Africa, and Madagascar. Salmagundi was a highly spiced cold salad composed of chopped pieces of meat of any variety, roasted and marinated in spiced wine, then mixed with palm hearts, cabbage, anchovies, pickled herring, hard boiled eggs, onions, olives, and any other vegetables that could be found. Finally, the dish would be seasoned with garlic, salt, pepper, mustard, freshened up with oil and vinegar if available, and all mixed thoroughly together. The dish protected against scurvy to some extent, and provided a contrast to the heavily salted food generally available. It would normally be served with beer, and it is of interest that Captain Bart Roberts was sitting down, drinking beer, and eating Salmagundi for breakfast, when his ship was surprised by the Royal Navy in 1722.[48]

Swearing

Pirate behaviour included much swearing, yet the overall range of late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century swearing seems quite limited, even if intensely felt. As an example, in 1691, a shoemaker in Boston was overheard swearing at his wife, 'God damn you!', 'the Devil rot you!', and the 'Pox take you', for which crime he spent two hours in the stocks. Pirate swearing during the same period does not seem to be nearly as terrible as might be expected by modern readers.[49] But it certainly shocked contemporaries. When William Snelgrave was taken by pirates in 1719, in the mouth of the Sierra Leone river, he wrote later that the 'execrable oaths and blasphemies shocked me to such a degree that in Hell itself I thought there could not be worse.'[50]

The most common swear words of the day concerned the word 'dog', as in 'you sad dog', 'you lousy dog', or simply 'you dog'. Also common were 'Damn you' or 'Damn me', 'son of a bitch', 'damn your blood', 'God's Zounds' and words related to disease or death such as 'pox'.

In 1697, when William Kidd got into a heated argument with his gunner, William Moore, Kidd simply concluded the argument by saying, 'You are a dog to give me those words.' The seeming mildness of the swearing was belied by Kidd's next action, which was to pick up a bucket and hit Moore on the head, so that Moore died the following day.[51] The pirate Charles Vane used the 'dog' word in 1718 when trying to get information out of a prisoner, 'Damn you, you old Dog, then tell

where your Money is … If we find you in one Lye, we'll Damn you, and your Vessel also …'
Similarly, when Captain Roberts, aboard a merchant ship called the *Margaret*, was accosted by pirate[s]
in 1722, and Roberts delayed in rowing over to them, the pirates called out to him, 'You Dog, You So[n]
of a Bitch. Why have you not come aboard us?'[53]

Beyond the 'dog' word, there were the 'damn' and 'blood' words. In 1718, Robert Hudson, feelin[g]
unfairly treated 'cocked his Piece … and said, Damn your Blood, I'll kill you, for sending me on th[e]
Main Yard in the Storm …'[54] When Bart Roberts' pirate ship, the *Royal Rover*, captured Thom[as]
Grant, master of the *Experiment* in July 1719, Grant was lucky to live. He reported that one pira[te]
immediately said to him, 'Damn You where's your Money.' Grant was wise enough to tell them, bu[t]
then he was noticed by the pirate Walter Kennedy, who knew him from before. Kennedy swor[e,]
'Damn you I know you and will sacrifice you.' Kennedy then punched Grant in the mouth, and woul[d]
have killed him, but other pirates kept Grant out of the way while Kennedy ran about with a cutla[ss]
looking for Grant.[55] Similar sentiments were expressed by the pirate Richard Taylor when he heard [in]
1721 that the Royal Navy was after him and his ship, 'Damne my Blood God forgive me for swearin[g]
…' This seems to indicate that he mildly regretted his blasphemy. At around the same time, in 1722, [a]
pirate recorded a crew mate swearing at another, 'God's Zounds Damn you, you long Dog.'[56] Whe[n]
the *George Galley* was taken by John Smith or John Gow in 1724, one of the mutineers, Jam[es]
Williams, who seems to have been an unstable personality, did not like the request of the master['s]
clerk that he be allowed time to say his prayers before being killed, 'God Damn yr. Blood say you[r]
Prayers and be damned.' Williams also pressed a reluctant crew member to shoot the mate of th[e]
captured ship, saying if he did not, he, Williams, 'would make the Sun and Moon shine through hi[m]
…'[57]

Captain Charles Johnson recounted some swearing episodes, but toned them down for th[e]
publication of his book. Johnson tells the story of Harry Glasby, originally taken off the *Samuel* [in]
1720 by Bart Roberts. Glasby was a sober individual, who did not wish to be a pirate, and tried [to]
escape, but on recapture by Roberts' crew, was in imminent danger of being executed. However, on[e]
of Roberts crew stood by Glasby, saying, according to Johnson, 'G__ d__ n ye gentlemen, I am [as]
good a man as the best of you; d__ n my S__ l if ever I turned my back to any man in my life, or ev[er]
will by G__; Glasby is an honest fellow … and I love him, D__ l d__ n me if I don't … but d__ n m[e]
if he must die, I will die along with him.' So Glasby was saved, but not his accomplices. Johnso[n]
certainly paraphrased this speech, but it must have been close to the original, since he knew a gre[at]
deal about Roberts and his crew.[58]

In 1727, after being falsely accused by a fellow crew member of murder, John Ashley unleashe[d]
what he evidently thought was a severe bout of swearing against his accuser, John Prie, 'You son of [a]
Bitch how can you tell such a damnd Lye when you know we sailed under a Dutch jack [flag] you Do[g]
you are the cause of my ruin … It was yourself Rot you that was the Master …'[59] It was in fact Joh[n]
Prie who decided to kill the master of the ship *Young Lawrence*, swearing upon his decision, 'Cur[se]
my Body, but I will …' The same John Prie, looking for a particular individual, shouted, 'Where's th[e]
son of a Bitch god Damn my blood Ile be through him …' On another ship, taken by the pirate Josep[h]
Cooper, master of the *Night Rambler*, one John Upton tried to escape, but was given a box on the ea[r]
and called 'son of a Bitch'. Upton was also fired at, but luckily the ball passed through his hat and n[ot]
his head.[60]

The conclusion, therefore, is that of course the pirates did swear, but probably no more than th[e]
ruder elements of society at that time, and by modern standards pirate swearing was rather mild.

Buried Treasure

The question of buried pirate treasure is an exciting one, but unfortunately very few pirates buried an[y] treasure for a number of reasons. First, and most important, very few pirates managed to keep any [of] their treasure, because it was all spent in gambling, drinking, womanising, and other pleasures, so th[at] there was nothing left to bury. Secondly, many ships that were seized contained items that could no[t] easily be buried, such as bales of cotton, calico, muslin, and silk, provisions, bulky goods, win[e,] brandy, spices, and of course, slaves. Thirdly, when pirates did capture treasure such as jewelry, gol[d] dust, bars of silver, and so on, it was shared out very carefully among the pirate crew, so that no larg[e] amount was left to bury. Fourthly, when pirates returned to their ports or sought protection for the[ir] treasure in different safe locations, they had to pay off greedy and corrupt colonial Governors, such [as] Nicholas Trott of the Bahamas, and with what was left usually tried to turn their treasure into land [or] property or ships, so again there was nothing left to bury. Fifthly, even if there was some treasur[e] buried, it would be recovered quite quickly by the pirates who buried it. Sixthly, although some pirat[es] such as Henry Avery's men in the Red Sea, collected between £700 and £1,000 pounds each, other[s] often made very little. So of course, there was nothing for them to bury. In one case, there was n[ot] enough treasure to go around a group of pirates on St Mary's Island, Madagascar. The loot wa[s] supposed to be distributed to 14 pirates by Captains Tew, Rayner, Mason and Coats, but there simpl[y] wasn't enough to distribute, so these 14 pirates formed themselves into two groups of seven men eac[h] and fought it out. The result was that 'one of the said Sevens were all killed, and five of the others, [so] that the two which survived Enjoyed the whole Booty.'[61] Finally, the buried treasure that does exist [is] usually to be found in children's stories (*Treasure Island*), or in film versions of what pirates we[re] supposed to do with their plunder (*Blackbeard the Pirate*, 1952).

Nevertheless, one or two pirate stories do suggest some treasure is buried. For example, a you[ng] sailor named Morgan Miles reported in 1721 that he was at St Mary's Island, Madagascar, in 172[0] when Captain Stratton of the *Prince Eugene* traded with the pirate Edmund Conden, captain of t[he] *Flying Dragon*. It seems that a large amount of silver dollars were transferred from the *Flying Drago[n]* to the *Prince Eugene* after Conden bought the cargo of the *Prince Eugene*, which consisted of usef[ul] pirate requirements such as muskets, powder, wine and brandy. Stratton then sailed to Chesapeake Ba[y] on the eastern coast of North America, and at the entrance to the York River, rowed six bags of silve[r] ashore at night, and according to Miles, buried the treasure 'in the sand'. Stratton was then capture[d] and brought to England, where he refused to tell the High Court of the Admiralty anything because h[e] claimed his case was a criminal matter and therefore he was not obliged by law to answer a[ny] questions. It is not clear what happened to the buried treasure, but probably it was recovered by t[he] authorities.[62]

Another case of buried treasure was the effort made by William Kidd to preserve his wealt[h] obtained during his long voyage to Madagascar, the Red Sea, and the coast of India, from 1697 [to] 1699. On this voyage Kidd was supposed to hunt for pirates and French ships, but perhaps Kid[d] became a pirate himself. Kidd returned to New England in 1699 from this voyage, during which tim[e] he had taken two valuable ships, claiming them to be captured under French passes, but he no[w] wondered if he would be seen as a pirate, and he therefore decided to split up his treasure. This wa[s] actually a common tactic of pirates who feared arrest. So Kidd gave some bags of gold and silver [to] friends, such as 'Whisking' Clark, Duncan Campbell, Major Selleck, and Thomas Way, for saf[e] keeping, and he probably sent some more treasure to his wife in New York. Kidd had sailed t[o] Gardiner's Island before confronting Lord Bellomont, Governor of Massachusetts, in Bosto[n]

Bellomont had been one of Kidd's original backers, but Kidd was unsure of Bellomont's intention toward him, and so he decided to bury a large part of his treasure in order to use it as a bargaining ch if needed. Kidd therefore bribed John Gardiner to bury the treasure on his island and keep it safe. Th treasure amounted to 50 pounds of gold and 50 pounds of silver and a chest with medical drugs. The were also items such as spices, muslin, silk and calico clothes, which were hidden rather than burie Most of the gold and silver was buried by tradition in Cherry Tree field on Gardiner's Island. But Kid was never able to reclaim this part of his wealth, since he was arrested and put in jail by Lor Bellomont who hoped to benefit himself from Kidd's treasure. So, after Kidd's arrest, Bellomont ser orders for John Gardiner to dig up Kidd's treasure and deliver it to Bellomont, which Gardiner di Undoubtedly, everybody involved siphoned off parts of Kidd's treasure, including Gardiner, bu Bellomont was able to ship to England what he claimed was the full extent of Kidd's treasure that l had been able to recover. This amounted to some 1,100 ounces of gold, 2,350 ounces of silver, and 4 boxes of various jewels, silver coins, and valuable cloths. Perhaps the whole treasure was then wor about £10,000. This was a small percentage of what Kidd was supposed to have plundered, but Kid probably plundered less than was publicly imagined, while he had sold much of his treasure during h voyage, and some was placed with friends and family and never recovered. Eventually, Kidd was hur in London in 1701, and now only one thing is certain, there is no buried treasure left on Gardiner Island.[63]

Treasure was also supposedly buried by various pirates, including William Kidd, on Oak Island o Nova Scotia. Kidd himself did not bury anything on Oak Island since he is not known to have visite there. In fact, treasure of any kind buried on Oak Island by any group of pirates or visiting ships very improbable. This is because after many heroic attempts to locate treasure there over at least tw centuries by treasure hunters, such treasure has not been found. No pirate or ship's crew would ev bury and conceal their wealth in such a difficult location that it couldn't be easily recovered. But the is another location where treasure is much more likely to be found, and this is St Mary's Island, o the ocean coast of Madagascar. Here, many pirates like Henry Avery, fresh from looting Muslim ship in the Red Sea and elsewhere (see Chapter 6), would either use the island to transship their enormo treasures home to the Caribbean, or the Americas, or Europe, or they might sell parts of it to trade like John Plantain on St Mary's Island, or they might actually stay on St Mary's Island for some year In all those years, very large amounts of treasure passed through the island, from the 1680s to t 1720s. So, some of that treasure seems likely to have stayed on the island. Perhaps there are caches treasure left behind, possibly at Ranter Bay, where the trader Plantain lived, since Plantain himse claimed to be very rich in gold and diamonds.[64]

One very specific location of treasure, allegedly buried by the pirate Blackbeard (Edward Teach), recorded by the sailor and part time artilleryman in India, Clement Downing. According to Downin when he was in India in the early eighteenth century, he met with a Portuguese man named Anthor de Silvestro. This man claimed to have been with Blackbeard when the pirate was killed. Silvest reported that at York River, Chesapeake Bay, near Mulberry Island, Blackbeard's pirates burie 'considerable Sums of Money in great Chests, well clamp'd with Iron Plates.' Downing researched th story a little, and found that there was indeed an island called Mulberry Island, and stated:

> If any person who uses those Parts, should think it worth while to dig a little way at the upper End of a small sandy Cove, where it is convenient to land, he would soon find whether the Information I had was well grounded. Fronting the Landing-Place are five Trees, amongst which, he [Silvestro] said, the Money was hid.

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