

## Pirates...

Within the modern-day, "pirates" have regularly gotten to be synonymous with the thought of 'sea terrorists'. Presently, of course, that term is not distant from the truth. But it's not the full truth. Present-day notwithstanding, the term "pirates" has existed since ancient times but they got to be so well known within the late 17th-early 18th century, at the stature of the so-called "brilliant age of piracy". It was a time of dispatch exchanging and investigating. Individuals were discovering modern lands, unused landmasses and the world was getting less and less strange as time passed on. We have all seen the movie, "Pirates of the Caribbean" and might have some sort of recognition with the complete world of the pirates, but in the event that one isn't, one got to be. For the story of the Caribbean Pirates of the late 1600s and early 1700s is one of rebellion and adventure.

Pirates are so romanticized, maybe since of what they stood for. They were not continuously simple savages who murdered or looted without segregation. Usually, within the setting of the golden age. Genuine, a few of them did and were unfeeling, but a deeper see will uncover a life driven by a sense of conduct and certain ethics. In reality, France back at that point, legalized piracy so that they may prove to be impediments to other rival countries' tradings. These authorized pirates were called Privateers. They would conduct strikes on rival countries' exchanging ships of commerce. Interests, numerous pirates of the Caribbeans called "Buccaneers" were fed up with their own Empire and sought to form their pirate republic within the Caribbean islands. In spite of their "plundering" nature, shockingly, the pirates had their own codes. They followed a democracy system among themselves. Ships were commandeered by "Captains", which would be elected by the crew members. Equal to the captain was the "Quartermaster" who had reject powers to topple a captain's choice. Then came other "hands" such as "Guns Captain", "Boatswain" etc. If they didn't support the captain sufficient, they seem bring him down through "uprising" and choose themselves a modern captain. The Buccaneers of the Caribbean frequently had "dynamic" ideals (for the time being). Homosexuality was banned in England back at that point, of course. But not within the Caribbean! In spite of what pictures the word "pirate" may bring up, they had respect among them. Perhaps the phrase, "honour among hoodlums" is most able for them. Edward Educate was one such pirate, who has gotten to be an icon in this present day. He was a pirate who was known for his fearsome appearance, tall and forcing with a dim, long beard (which earned him the notorious epithet "Blackbeard"); he would frequently light wires in his cap to frighten his enemies. He captained his dispatch, the popular "Ruler Anne's Revenge". Blackbeard worked within the late 1600s, engaging in robbery. He was afterward murdered in a ship-raid. When he was cut with a broad-sword, he simply replied, "Well done, lad" before being cut a second time and dying off. Legend has it, he received 20 musket-ball wounds and 20 lacerations before dying! It is interesting to note that many pirates operating during this Golden Age of Piracy were former sailors themselves, mostly belonging to the British Navy. What led these men to leave behind their military life and engaging in a life of plunder and raiding? Perhaps no one can know for sure. Was it the money or the idea of going against an Empire which had left them behind? Perhaps a mix of both. Crewmen on a ship had to take oaths to as a terrifying pirate but a well-respected seaman abide by the rules of a ship, they had to maintain a sort of harmony amongst their crewmates. It was clear that they had order amongst themselves. They weren't merely barbarians bent on plundering every ship. Many such pirates became legends. The famous names like Captain Charles Vane, Captain Jack Rackham, Captain Benjamin Hornigold etc. are well-known today. One needs to remove any value-judgements here and just marvel at these men, who had the courage enough to fight off against empires by their ragtag group of crewmen and go on plundering adventures in the seas. And not just men, even women were part of these activities. The famous female pirates include ones such as Anne Bonny and Mary Read, the latter often dressed up as a boy, calling herself "Mark Read". These women

were not mere pushovers, they stood their ground. They were feared and respected, something which couldn't be said for the so-called "civilised" countries back then (Spain, England, France etc.), where women often took a backseat. (Bonny and Read; the two lady-pirates.) These men and women were immortalised in plenty of literature. Perhaps the most famous one is "Treasure Island" by R.L. Stevenson. There, the story revolves around a young boy called Jim Hawkins who seeks to uncover the treasure buried somewhere mysteriously by an evil pirate by the name of Captain Flint. The star of the story, however, is Long John Silver. The most complex and colourful character in the novel, he was the former quartermaster of Captain Flint's ship. Silver is depicted as a terrifying pirate but a well-respected seaman. Such contrasts make Long John Silver a well-constructed character. He has one wooden leg and uses a crutch to hop on around. A parrot sits on his shoulders, uttering phrases that have become popular: "Pieces of eight!". It is said that this is what led to the iconic image of the one-legged pirate with a parrot on his shoulders. "There is more treasure in books than in all the pirates' loot on Treasure Island. Even pirates, before they attack another ship, hoist a black flag. When the pirate grows rich enough, they make him a prince. Let's jump on board, and cut them to pieces". Literature has often depicted these seafaring looters as men of honour. What fed such stories was the conception of pirates themselves. Ruthless landowners back in England took over the land of poor farmers and forced them out. Young men had to work earning low wages and job opportunities were far and few between. They resorted to piracy. Many of them denounced their English life and citizenship and no longer considered themselves "English". They had resorted to a new life of plundering ships of the very same empire that turned their backs on them. Ships that they controlled, had names and artwork on them, to display their banners. Most of their banners were skull-based and were drawn on black flags, which they raised to signal others that they were pirates and that they were about to be braided. And hence, the iconic image of the "Jolly Roger" and the symbol of a "black flag" is synonymous with the Buccaneers of the Caribbean islands. Ship battles, as history tells us, were sights to see. The explosion of cannons, muskets, sword fighting were a daily sight with the act of piracy.

The story of these Buccaneers is now a thing of the past, monsterised sometimes, romanticised often. Perhaps both of them have their foundations. But it is quite clear that these buccaneers followed a very progressive cultural life, as compared to their home countries in Europe back then. If one analysis, these bunch of men, who sought to fight off against an Empire, all with their skills and codes of conduct, maybe they were the progenitors of the American revolutionaries who fought off their British overlords, thus leading to the independence of the USA. Although their stories have faded into history, the ideals some of them sought of achieving- freedom from an empire's wrath, creation of their own republic; no matter what they were as people, it is ought to be admired that they left home to fight off their flawed country and probably, it is to be bit envied, too, for they got to travel the high seas and see the world while doing so.

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