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**Pirates own book, or authentic narratives of the lives,
exploits, and executions of the most celebrated sea
robbers**

ELLS, CHARLES

New York [u.a.], 1842

Capture of a Dutch Guineaman.

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This speech was applauded by all but Lord Simpson, who had himself strong expectations of obtaining the highest command. He at last, in a surly tone, said, he did not regard whom they chose as a commander, provided he was not a papist, for he had conceived a mortal hatred to papists, because his father had been a sufferer in Monmouth's rebellion.

Thus, though Roberts had only been a few weeks among them, his election was confirmed by the Lords and Commons. He, with the best face he could, accepted of the dignity, saying, "that since he had dipped his hands in muddy water, and must be a pirate, it was better being a commander than a private man."

The governor being settled, and other officers chosen in the room of those who had fallen with Davis, it was resolved not to leave this place without revenging his death. Accordingly, thirty men, under the command of one Kennedy, a bold and profligate fellow, landed, and under cover of the fire of the ship, ascended the hill upon which the fort stood. They were no sooner discovered by the Portuguese, than they abandoned the fort, and took shelter in the town. The pirates then entered without opposition, set fire to the fort, and tumbled the guns into the sea.

Not satisfied with this injury, some proposed to land and set the town in flames. Roberts, however, reminded them of the great danger to which this would inevitably expose them; that there was a thick wood at the back of the town, where the inhabitants could hide themselves, and that, when their all was at stake, they would make a bolder resistance: and that the burning or destroying of a few houses, would be a small return for their labor, and the loss that they might sustain. This prudent advice had the desired effect, and they contented themselves with lightening the French vessel, and battering down several houses of the town, to show their high displeasure.

Roberts sailed southward, captured a Dutch Guineaman, and, having emptied her of everything they thought proper, returned her to the commander. Two days after, he captured an English ship, and, as the men joined in pirating, emptied and burned the vessel, and then sailed for St. Thomas. Meeting with no prize, he sailed for Anamaboa,

and there watered and repaired. Having again put to sea, a vote was taken whether they should sail for the East Indies or for Brazil. The latter place was decided upon, and they arrived there in twenty-eight days.

Upon this coast our rovers cruised for about nine weeks, keeping generally out of sight of land, but without seeing a sail; which discouraged them so, that they determined to leave the station, and steer for the West Indies; and, in order thereto, they stood in to make the land for the taking of their departure, by which means they fell in, unexpectedly, with a fleet of forty-two sail of Portuguese ships, off the Bay of Los Todos Santos, with all their lading in for Lisbon; several of them of good force, who lay there waiting for two men of war of seventy guns each for their convoy. However, Roberts thought it should go hard with him but he would make up his market among them, and thereupon he mixed with the fleet, and kept his men concealed till proper resolutions could be formed; that done, they came close up to one of the deepest, and ordered her to send the master on board quietly, threatening to give them no quarter, if any resistance or signal of distress was made. The Portuguese, being surprised at these threats, and the sudden flourish of cutlasses from the pirates, submitted without a word, and the captain came on board. Roberts saluted him in a friendly manner, telling him, that they were gentlemen of fortune, and that their business with him was only to be informed which was the richest ship in that fleet; and if he directed them right, he should be restored to his ship without molestation, otherwise he must expect instant death.

He then pointed to a vessel of forty guns, and a hundred and fifty men; and though her strength was greatly superior to Roberts', yet he made towards her, taking the master of the captured vessel along with him. Coming alongside of her, Roberts ordered the prisoner to ask, "How Seignior Captain did?" and to invite him on board, as he had a matter of importance to impart to him. He was answered, "That he would wait upon him presently." Roberts, however, observing more than ordinary bustle on board, at once concluded they were discovered, and pouring a broadside into her, they immediately boarded, grappled, and took