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

ELLS, CHARLES

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Kidd`s first Piracy.

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strong enough to contend with them. Now he had begun hostilities, he resolved to go on, and therefore he went and cruised along the coast of Malabar. The first prize he met was a small vessel belonging to Aden; the vessel was Moorish, and the owners were Moorish merchants, but the master was an Englishman; his name was Parker. Kidd forced him and a Portuguese that was called Don Antonio, which were all the Europeans on board, to take on with him; the first he designed as a pilot, and the last as an interpreter. He also used the men very cruelly, causing them to be hoisted up by the arms, and drubbed with a naked cutlass, to force them to discover whether they had money on board, and where it lay; but as they had neither gold nor silver on board, he got nothing by his cruelty; however, he took from them a bale of pepper, and a bale of coffee, and so let them go.

A little time after he touched at Carawar, a place upon the same coast, where, before he arrived, the news of what he had done to the Moorish ship had reached them; for some of the English merchants there had received an account of it from the owners, who corresponded with them; wherefore, as soon as Kidd came in, he was suspected to be the person who committed this piracy; and one Mr. Harvey and Mr. Mason, two of the English factory, came on board and asked for Parker, and Antonio, the Portuguese; but Kidd denied that he knew any such persons, having secured them both in a private place in the hold, where they were kept for seven or eight days, that is, till Kidd sailed from thence.

However, the coast was alarmed, and a Portuguese man-of-war was sent out to cruise. Kidd met with her, and fought her about six hours, gallantly enough; but finding her too strong to be taken, he quitted her; for he was able to run away from her when he would. Then he went to a place called Porca, where he watered his ship and bought a number of hogs of the natives to victual his company.

Soon after this, he came up with a Moorish ship, the master whereof was a Dutchman, called Schipper Mitchell, and chased her under French colors, which they observing hoisted French colors too; when he came up with her, he hailed her in French, and they having a Frenchman on

board, answered him in the same language; upon which he ordered them to send their boat on board; they were obliged to do so, and having examined who they were, and from whence they came, he asked the Frenchman who was a passenger, if he had a French pass for himself; the Frenchman gave him to understand that he had. Then he told the Frenchman that he must pass for captain, and by —, says he, you are the captain; the Frenchman durst not refuse doing as he would have him. The meaning of this was, that he would seize the ship as fair prize, and as if she had belonged to French subjects, according to a commission he had for that purpose; though one would think, after what he had already done, he need not have recourse to a quibble to give his actions a colour.

In short, he took the cargo, and sold it some time after; yet still he seemed to have some fears upon him, lest these proceedings should have a bad end; for, coming up with a Dutch ship some time after, when his men thought of nothing but attacking her, Kidd opposed it; upon which a mutiny arose, and the majority being for taking the said ship, and arming themselves to man the boat to go and seize her, he told them, such as did, never should come on board him again; which put an end to the design, so that he kept company with the said ship some time, without offering her any violence. However, this dispute was the occasion of an accident, upon which an indictment was grounded against Kidd; for Moor, the gunner, being one day upon deck, and talking with Kidd about the said Dutch ship, some words arose between them, and Moor told Kidd, that he had ruined them all; upon which Kidd, calling him a dog, took up a bucket and struck him with it, which breaking his scull, he died next day.

But Kidd's penitential fit did not last long; for coasting along Malabar, he met with a great number of boats, all of which he plundered. Upon the same coast he also fell in with a Portuguese ship, which he kept possession of a week, and then having taken out of her some chests of India goods, thirty jars of butter, with some wax, iron and a hundred bags of rice, he let her go.

Much about the same time he went to one of the Malabar islands for wood and water, and his cooper being

ashore, was murdered by the natives; upon which Kidd himself landed, and burnt and pillaged several of their houses, the people running away; but having taken one, he caused him to be tied to a tree, and commanded one of his men to shoot him; then putting to sea again, he took the greatest prize which fell into his hands while he followed this trade; this was a Moorish ship of 400 tons, richly laden, named the *Queda Merchant*, the master whereof was an Englishman, by the name of Wright; for the Indians often make use of English or Dutchmen to command their ships, their own mariners not being so good artists in navigation. Kidd chased her under French colors, and having come up with her, he ordered her to hoist out her boat and send on board of him, which being done, he told Wright he was his prisoner; and informing himself concerning the said ship, he understood there were no Europeans on board, except two Dutch and one Frenchman, all the rest being Indians or Armenians, and that the Armenians were part owners of the cargo. Kidd gave the Armenians to understand, that if they would offer anything that was worth his taking for their ransom, he would hearken to it. Upon which, they proposed to pay him 20,000 rupees, not quite £3,000 sterling; but Kidd judged this would be making a bad bargain, wherefore he rejected it, and setting the crew on shore, at different places on the coast, he soon sold as much of the cargo as came to ten thousand pounds. With part of it he also trafficked, receiving in exchange provisions, or such other goods as he wanted; by degrees he disposed of the whole cargo, and when the division was made, it came to about £200 a man; and having reserved forty shares to himself, his dividend amounted to about £8,000 sterling.

The Indians along the coast came on board and trafficked with all freedom, and he punctually performed his bargains, till about the time he was ready to sail; and then thinking he should have no further occasion for them, he made no scruple of taking their goods and setting them on shore, without any payment in money or goods, which they little expected; for as they had been used to deal with pirates, they always found them men of honor in the way of trade; a people, enemies to deceit, and that scorned to rob but in their own way.

Kidd put some of his men on board the *Queda Merchant*, and with this ship and his own sailed for Madagascar. As soon as he had arrived and cast anchor, there came on board of him a canoe, in which were several Englishmen, who had formerly been well acquainted with Kidd. As soon as they saw him they saluted him, and told him they were informed he was come to take them, and hang them, which would be a little unkind in such an old acquaintance. Kidd soon dissipated their doubts, by swearing he had no such design, and that he was now in every respect their brother, and just as bad as they; and calling for a cup of bomboo, drank their captain's health.

These men belonged to a pirate ship, called the *Resolution*, formerly the *Mocha Merchant*, whereof one Capt. Culliford was commander, and which lay at anchor not far from them. Kidd went on board with them, promising them his friendship and assistance, and Culliford in his turn came on board of Kidd; and Kidd, to testify his sincerity in iniquity, finding Culliford in want of some necessaries, made him a present of an anchor and some guns, to fit him out for sea again.

The *Adventure* galley was now so old and leaky, that they were forced to keep two pumps continually going; wherefore Kidd shifted all the guns and tackle out of her into the *Queda Merchant*, intending her for his man-of-war; and as he had divided the money before, he now made a division of the remainder of the cargo; soon after which, the greatest part of the company left him, some going on board Capt. Culliford, and others absconding into the country, so that he had not above 40 men left.

He put to sea, and happened to touch at Amboyna, one of the Dutch spice islands, where he was told that the news of his actions had reached England, and that he was there declared a pirate.

The truth of it is, his piracies so alarmed our merchants that some motions were made in parliament, to inquire into the commission that was given him, and the persons who fitted him out. These proceedings seem to lean a little hard upon Lord Bellamont, who thought himself so touched thereby, that he published a justification of himself in a pamphlet, after Kidd's execution. In the mean

time it was thought advisable, in order to stop the course of these piracies, to publish a proclamation, offering the king's free pardon to all such pirates as should voluntarily surrender themselves, whatever piracies they had been guilty of, at any time before the last day of April, 1699—that is to say, for all piracies committed eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, to the longitude and meridian of Socatora, and Cape Cormorin; in which proclamation, Avery and Kidd were excepted by name.

When Kidd left Amboyna he knew nothing of this proclamation, for certainly had he had notice of his being excepted in it, he would not have been so infatuated, as to run himself into the very jaws of danger; but relying upon his interest with the lord Bellamont, and fancying that a French pass or two he found on board some of the ships he took, would serve to countenance the matter, and that part of the booty he got would gain him new friends—I say, all these things made him flatter himself that all would be hushed, and that justice would but wink at him. Wherefore he sailed directly for Boston laden with booty, with a crew of swaggering companions at his heels. But no sooner did he show himself in Boston, than the alarm was given of his reappearance, and measures were taken to arrest him. The daring character which Kidd had acquired, however, and the desperate fellows who followed like bull-dogs at his heels, caused a little delay in his arrest. He took advantage of this to bury the greater part of his immense treasure, which has never been found, and then carried a high head about the streets of Boston. He even attempted to defend himself when arrested, but was secured and thrown into prison. Such was the formidable character of this pirate and his crew, that a frigate was sent to convey them to England for trial.

Accordingly a sessions of admiralty being held at the Old Bailey, in May 1701, Capt. Kidd, Nicholas Churchill, James How, Robert Lumly, William Jenkins, Gabriel Loff, Hugh Parrot, Richard Barlicorn, Abel Owens and Darby Mullins, were arraigned for piracy and robbery on the high seas, and all found guilty except three; these were Robert Lumly, William Jenkins and Richard Barlicorn, who proving themselves to be apprentices to some of the