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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**

Trial and Execution of ten Pirates.

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scaffold. Observing the executioner unable to untie a knot on the collar of one of the prisoners, he with his teeth untied it. He then prayed most fervently till the drop fell.

Miguel Jose protested his innocence.—“No he robado, no he matado ningune, muero inocente.”—(I have robbed no one, I have killed no one, I die innocent. I am an old man, but my family will feel my disgraceful death.)

Francisco Miguel prayed devoutly, but inaudibly.—His soul seemed to have quitted the body before he was executed.

Breti Gullimillit called on all to witness his innocence; it was of no use for him to say an untruth, for he was going before the face of God.

Augustus Hernandez repeatedly declared his innocence, requested that no one would say he had made a confession; he had none to make.

Juan Hernandez was rather obstinate when the executioner pulled the cap over his eyes. He said, rather passionately—“Quita is de mis ojos.”—(Remove it from my eyes.) He then rubbed it up against one of the posts of the gallows.

Miguel Jose made the same complaint, and drew the covering from his eyes by rubbing his head against a fellow sufferer.

Pedro Nondre was loud in his ejaculations for mercy. He wept bitterly. He was covered with marks of deep wounds.

The whole of the ten included in the death warrant, having been placed on the scaffold, and the ropes suspended, the drop was let down. Nondre being an immense heavy man, broke the rope, and fell to the ground alive. Juan Hernandez struggled long. Lima was much convulsed. The old man Gullimillit, and Miguel, were apparently dead before the drop fell. Eucalla (the black man) gave one convulsion, and all was over.

When Nondre recovered from the fall and saw his nine lifeless companions stretched in death, he gave an agonizing shriek; he wrung his hands, screamed “Favor, favor, me matan sin causa. O! buenos Christianos, me amparen, ampara me, ampara me, no hay Christiano en asta, tiara?”



(Mercy, mercy, they kill me without cause—Oh, good Christians, protect me, Oh, protect me. Is there no Christian in this land?)

He then lifted his eyes to Heaven, and prayed long and loud. Upon being again suspended, he was for a long period convulsed. He was an immense powerful man, and died hard.

A piratical station was taken in the Island of Cuba by the U. S. schooners of war, Greyhound and Beagle. They left Thompson's Island June 7, 1823, under the command of Lieuts. Kearney and Newton, and cruised within the Keys, on the south side of Cuba, as far as Cape Cruz, touching at all the intermediate ports on the island, to intercept pirates. On the 21st of July, they came to anchor off Cape Cruz, and Lieut. Kearney went in his boat to reconnoitre the shore, when he was fired on by a party of pirates who were concealed among the bushes. A fire was also opened from several pieces of cannon erected on a hill a short distance off. The boat returned, and five or six others were manned from the vessels, and pushed off for the shore, but a very heavy cannonade being kept up by the pirates on the heights, as well as from the boats, were compelled to retreat. The two schooners were then warped in, when they discharged several broadsides, and covered the landing of the boats. After a short time the pirates retreated to a hill that was well fortified. A small hamlet, in which the pirates resided, was set fire to and destroyed. Three guns, one a four pounder, and two large swivels, with several pistols, cutlasses, and eight large boats, were captured. A cave, about 150 feet deep, was discovered, near where the houses were, and after considerable difficulty, a party of seamen got to the bottom, where was found an immense quantity of plunder, consisting of broadcloths, dry goods, female dresses, saddlery, &c. Many human bones were also in the cave, supposed to have been unfortunate persons who were taken and put to death. A great many of the articles were brought away, and the rest destroyed. About forty pirates escaped to the heights, but many were supposed to have been killed from the fire of the schooners, as well as from the men who landed. The bushes were so thick that it was impossible to go after them. Several other caves are



in the neighborhood, in which it was conjectured they occasionally take shelter.

In 1823, Commodore Porter commanded the United States squadron in these seas; much good was done in preventing new acts of piracy; but these wretches kept aloof and did not venture to sea as formerly, but some were taken.

Almost every day furnished accounts evincing the activity of Commodore Porter, and the officers and men under his command; but for a long time their industry and zeal was rather shown in the *suppression* of piracy than the *punishment* of it. At length, however, an opportunity offered for inflicting the latter, as detailed in the following letter, dated Matanzas, July 10, 1823.

“I have the pleasure of informing you of a brilliant achievement obtained against the pirates on the 5th inst. by two barges attached to Commodore Porter’s squadron, the Gallinipper, Lieut. Watson, 18 men, and the Moscheto, Lieut. Inman, 10 men. The barges were returning from a cruise to windward; when they were near Jiguapa Bay, 13 leagues to windward of Matanzas, they entered it—it being a rendezvous for pirates. They immediately discovered a large schooner under way, which they supposed to be a Patriot privateer; and as their stores were nearly exhausted, they hoped to obtain some supplies from her. They therefore made sail in pursuit. When they were within cannon shot distance, she rounded to and fired her long gun, at the same time run up the bloody flag, directing her course towards the shore, and continuing to fire without effect. When she had got within a short distance of the shore, she came to, with springs on her cable, continuing to fire; and when the barges were within 30 yards, they fired their muskets without touching boat or man; our men gave three cheers, and prepared to board; the pirates, discovering their intention, jumped into the water, when the bargemen, calling on the name of “Allen,” commenced a destructive slaughter, killing them in the water and as they landed. So exasperated were our men, that it was impossible for their officers to restrain them, and many were killed after orders were given to grant quarter. Twenty-seven dead were



counted, some sunk, five taken prisoners by the bargemen, and eight taken by a party of Spaniards on shore. The officers calculated that from 30 to 35 were killed. The schooner mounted a long nine pounder on a pivot, and 4 four pounders, with every other necessary armament, and a crew of 50 to 60 men, and ought to have blown the barges to atoms. She was commanded by the notorious Diablero or Little Devil. This statement I have from Lieut. Watson himself, and it is certainly the most decisive operation that has been effected against those murderers, either by the English or American force.

“This affair occurred on the same spot where the brave Allen fell about one year since. The prize was sent to Thompson’s Island.”

A British sloop of war, about the same time, captured a pirate schooner off St. Domingo, with a crew of 60 men. She had 200,000 dollars in specie, and other valuable articles on board. The brig Vestal sent another pirate schooner to New-Providence.