

# **British Piracy Policy in Jamaica**

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Master's Thesis

May 7, 2020

## **Table of Contents**

<b>1 The Origins of Jamaican Piracy: The Start of the Golden Age</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2 The Adventures of the Jamaican Pirates: Building Blocks of Empire</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>3. The Best Pirate I've Ever Seen: A Case Study of the Life of Sir Henry Morgan</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>4. The Decline of Jamaican Piracy: The Hunters Become the Hunted</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Works Cited</b>	<b>74</b>

## **The Origins of Jamaican Piracy: The Start of the Golden Age**

The image of a pirate conjures up an adventuring ship raiding on the high seas preparing to take their next prize and then bury the treasure and continue on for another adventure. Piracy in reality was regulated by colonial powers. Even the most successful pirates of all time had to answer to authority if they were going to make money long term. Piracy worked much better if it was a part of the local economy. If a pirate wanted to spend the spoils of their expedition they had to report it to a governing body. Henry Morgan, arguably the most successful pirate of all time, had a contract regulating the division of plunder and what part went to the crown, parliament, and other governing bodies. The contract stated after initial taxes the admiralty court would take one fourth of all prizes taken at sea but plunder taken on land was divided evenly among the crew as agreed upon.<sup>1</sup> This would not only drive how the crew interacted with the local economy but would also drive the targets that the pirates would attempt to capture. This was a large part of the reason Morgan chose his large privateering ventures to attack cities. After his capture of Porto Bello, the spoils for each man came out to approximately 150 pounds, the equivalent of several years of income for most of these sailors.<sup>2</sup> However, the pirates did not bury any of their captured treasure. They took it immediately back to Jamaica and threw the biggest party they could. The pirates came back to Jamaica because they needed a place to stay and a place to spend their money. There was no point to be a pirate if there was not a reward at the end of the, money did no good on a boat. This meant that pirates needed to blend into the local economies not just for pleasure they also needed repairs and supplies. This meant that the ports had to allow them to both lodge and trade. This required at least toleration of pirates or in some cases outright endorsement of piracy. Port Royal Jamaica became the most famous pirate

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<sup>1</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 48.

<sup>2</sup> Earle, 77.

town in the British Caribbean. Port Royal was not only held as a British pirate colony but was the hub of the golden age of piracy.

If pirates needed a place to land, then what were the policies of the ports that harbored the pirates? The town of Port Royal Jamaica offers a particularly interesting study. It was the most infamous or famous pirate port during the golden age of piracy. The golden age of piracy encompasses a span of approximately 40 years from 1650 to the 1690's where piracy in the Caribbean was at its height and English, French, and Dutch sailors raided the Spanish new world empire that had made Spain the richest country in Europe. Once the British captured Jamaica in 1655 it became a base of operations for pirates after a call from Col Doyley, the officer in charge left to run the Jamaica after the initial expedition.<sup>3</sup> It pulled the defense of Jamaica out of the hands of the navy and into the hands of a private one. How did the British authorities use this new pirate navy and what were their policies governing pirates? Were they fully endorsed at the highest levels or were they tacitly used since there were no other alternatives?

British official piracy policy was a reflection of several factors in the Caribbean. First, was the distance between central government and colonial government meaning that any word between the two took at least twelve weeks meaning that the two options for defense were inaction or independent operation. The second was the small population and the fact that the British were not able to properly garrison their colonies to defend them for the first 50 years. Third, the British did not have the infrastructure to host a navy in the new world permanently. Fourth, Spain's conquest of the new world was a unique geopolitical situation which gave Spain such an advantage over other European powers that it shifted the international system enough to where Britain was willing to defy international customs in the new world to even the playing

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<sup>3</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, "Early English Jamaica without Pirates," 321.

field. All of these factors influenced British policy in Jamaica. The British government chose their piracy policy in Jamaica because it was useful to provide a way to defend Jamaica cheaply and effectively while simultaneously disrupting Spanish trade and allowing British colonies time to build an economy where free trade would become profitable.

The world of the golden age of piracy had several key features that defined it and allowed it to be not only a haven for pirates but also be an age where pirates became popular. First the so-called golden age of piracy was confined in time from around the 1630's to almost 1700.<sup>4</sup> It was confined in geography to mostly the Caribbean but also includes south pacific raiders, and small segments up the east coast of the United States. The target of the majority of these pirates were Spanish ships and towns though they could extend to be any nation that the pirates could find a commission to attack. This was one of the reasons that piracy was effective; they could switch employers and still find jobs because there were so many people fighting or willing to fight the Spanish. Though pirates were careful, particularly in the later years, to not travel to places where the state of war and peace was unknown.<sup>5</sup> Spain's massive power in the new world. Was part of the reason that the golden age is typified by glorified pirates because these pirates were seen as heroes fighting for their country against the Spanish.<sup>6</sup> This notion continued until other countries in the new world built enough infrastructure in the new world to also have cities that were profitable enough for pirates to raid. Leading to another part of the golden age of piracy which is it ends once English and French societies are built up enough to bring back state monopolies on violence.<sup>7</sup> The pirates were primarily made up of sailors who had been marooned or mutinied

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<sup>4</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, xiii.

<sup>5</sup> Raveneau de Lussan and Montauban, *A Journal of a Voyage Made into the South Sea by the Bucaniers or Freebooters of America : From the Year 1684 to 1689*, 182.

<sup>6</sup> Beattie, *British Privateering Voyages of the Early Eighteenth Century*, 6.

<sup>7</sup> Norton, "Classification and Coercion: The Destruction of Piracy in the English Maritime System," 1549.

and indentured servants who had run or rebelled.<sup>8</sup> These were men from the poorer classes of society who were not able to make a living in the smaller plantation colonies.. This was the world of the golden age for the pirates. The rest of the world surrounding it was also a unique period in history.

The landscape of the new world in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century was dominated by two main factors, this consisted of Spain's control and the massive amount of space between Europe and the new world. From the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 Spain and Portugal had divided the Americas and the East Indies through negotiations with the Pope. However, later England, under Oliver Cromwell, did not always recognize the Spanish claims in the new world.<sup>9</sup> There was a twofold reason for this. First, that Cromwell did not recognize the authority of the Catholic Church as other monarchs had before the reformation calling it a Popish donation. Secondly, once the size and scale of the New World was truly discovered it was a geopolitical anomaly in Europe that one of the powers had so much greater draw of resources.<sup>10</sup> These two reasons will factor largely into why England was both willing and needed to use piracy so heavily against the Spanish. In addition, the distance between the new world and Europe meant governors were often on their own. News took twelve weeks to travel between the Caribbean and Europe at a minimum. This was if news was responded to immediately. Thomas Modyford, a governor of Jamaica in the 1660's, received letters that acknowledged response of letters sent six months previous while Modyford was trying to deal with whether to attack Spanish ships or if Spain was going to stop attacking his ships.<sup>11</sup> In the 1680's it was still a problem as the new governor Thomas Lynch continually petitioned lords to give clear laws and instructions because the

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<sup>8</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 97.

<sup>9</sup> Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, 9.

<sup>10</sup> Pestana, 5.

<sup>11</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 144.

Jamaicans were not able to keep up with changing policy.<sup>12</sup> This shows the solitary nature of governance in the colonies. The colonies sometimes had to fight their own fight which led to the idea of lawlessness that helped influence piracy. However, they were not just alone as they were away from their own nations they were also isolated in the Caribbean.

The Spanish system in the New World always attempted to create a mercantilist system, to have a completely isolated and self-sufficient empire. In practice what this meant was that the Spanish, who had the majority of share of the territory in the new world refused to trade or offer shelter to ships in need from other countries. This meant that since there were no British shipyards in the New World at the time the British were unable to make any serious repairs in the Caribbean. This also meant there was no trading among smaller less sufficient British colonies and the larger more established Spanish colonies. Since there were fewer British colonies it meant there were less places to trade and less profit to gain from trade which in the end encouraged piracy. By 1674 Jamaica had become a more profitable colony but it was still in its infancy, but the goal was to build it up into a sugar colony and have other colonies to help support it.<sup>13</sup> The problem of not trading between empires exacerbated the problem of small populations in the Caribbean.

The final defining feature of the Caribbean world was just how few European settlers lived in the Caribbean. This would have several consequences. First it meant that there were very few jobs outside of plantations. In a society that was mostly made up of wealthy planters and

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<sup>12</sup> Lynch, Jamaica. Governor, and Jamaica. Assembly, *A Narrative of Affairs Lately Received from His Majesties Island of Jamaica : Viz. I. His Excellency the Governour Sir Thomas Lynch's Speech to the Assembly Met Sept. 21. 1682 : II. Samuel Bernard, Esq; Speaker of the Said Assembly, His Speech to the Governour : III. An Humble Address from His Majesties Council, and the Gentlemen of the Assembly, to His Most Sacred Majesty : IV. The Governour's Speech at the Proroguing the Assembly*, 4.

<sup>13</sup> Reynell, *The True English Interest, or, An Account of the Chief National Improvements : In Some Political Observations, Demonstrating an Infallible Advance of This Nation to Infinite Wealth and Greatness, Trade and Populacy, with Employment and Preferment for All Persons*, 88.

slaves there was nearly no middle class which meant there were very few good jobs for artisans or Europeans who would build an infrastructure. Secondly it meant that from a tactical perspective it was hard to build a large garrison in a town. A skilled concentrated attacking force could easily capture a town the question came if there was enough money in the town to make it worth bringing the invasion force, or colonists to hold the area after invasion.

The sea raiders of the golden age were called pirates, privateers, buccaneers, and many other names each with a slightly different connotation. A pirate is the first and most universally sinister of the names. It means a person who without regard to country attacks on the seas or land for the purposes of financial gain. The defining feature of a pirate is then that no country acknowledged the authority of a pirate to attack and raid in their name. This meant that a pirate was really someone whose contemporaries agreed that they were a pirate.<sup>14</sup> This becomes important looking at which ships were allowed to raid, and which ships were captured. Each country had times and places they chose to attack or use pirates to their advantage. But it also did not mean they did not prosecute pirates who attacked them. The only real question was would someone support the pirate in their endeavor.

If a pirate did have the support of a country, they became a privateer. A privateer is a privately armed ship. The ship could have investors and be commissioned for raiding purposes but in most cases during the golden age pirates used repurposed ships. The primary authority for a privateer came from having a letter of marque. This was a document that authorized a person or group to raid the ships and towns of other countries. The letter of marque and contract would determine what bodies, usually an admiralty court, determined if the prizes were legal as well as what share of the plunder was owed to the crown and other bodies. Privateers could have

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<sup>14</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 5.

anything from a blank commission to attack any ship not from their country or down to a detailed contract of who or what to attack.<sup>15</sup> While this paper was officially what separated the pirates from the privateers it was the attitude of the people or authorities that chose whether or not to harbor a pirate that made a person pirate of a privateer. Pirates were also often retroactively approved for the actions and then made privateers.<sup>16</sup> This usually happened during wars or very early colonial times. However, it showed the attitude that if the government or people allowed piracy sometimes they let it go farther.

There were several other names applied to pirates and all of them had a slightly different meanings or were used by different. Buccaneer was a term for the men who lived the eastern half of Santiago in what is now Haiti because they farmed bucaan, pigs, on that part of the island near the city of Tortuga. These men lived on their own not under the control of any colonial system and farmed until they decided to raid again. The connotation was typically one of the wayward sailors who was no good and causing havoc. corsair was another term often used at the time. Corsair came from a connotation older than European warfare in the Caribbean but from Muslim pirates coming out of Algiers. Port Royal would often become compared to another Algiers. The Spanish tried to use the word Corsair to illicit feeling of negativity from other European counties who had also been fighting against corsairs for years.

Jamaica became one the greatest pirate havens in the new world but before 1655 it was a Spanish island. Before owning Jamaica, England owned two Caribbean colonies Barbados and the Bahamas. These colonies are small islands on the edge of the Caribbean with very little infrastructure that provided no real avenues to get into the Caribbean. Particularly Barbados was a place not often visited or on the way to any other place based on wind patterns and logistics.

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<sup>15</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 29.

<sup>16</sup> Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, 336.

The English were not able to build a colonial effort in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century due to financial issues and many of their early colonies were focused much farther north where they did not have to fight against the Spanish. However, during the interregnum, Parliament was then willing to give Cromwell money for fighting a colonial war. Cromwell came up with what was called the “western design” which was a plan to break the Spanish monopoly in the new world.<sup>17</sup> There were two reasons for this hostility. First the English did not want the Spanish to have a complete monopoly on the most profitable parts of the new world and secondly the English wanted to fight against Catholicism.<sup>18</sup> The English had also read the account of Bartolome de las Casas who wrote on the evils of Spanish cruelty in America. He talked of the abuse of the peaceful indigenous population.<sup>19</sup> While the English had plenty of reasons to fight the Spanish they used this one to help gain the moral high ground. The western design or The design was eventually planned to dislodge the Spanish from all islands throughout the Caribbean. However, the first goal was to take over the islands of Hispaniola and Jamaica. Only one of those would happen but the conquest of Jamaica was a significant enough event to change the power structure in the Caribbean.

The English invasion found some parts to be easier than expected. The English would prepare for the invasion using some regulars from the army that had just fought in the English Civil war as experienced troops then would take the rest from irregulars and attempt to use Barbadian citizens to fill in the ranks.<sup>20</sup> Cromwell expected to find a group of citizens from

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<sup>17</sup> Pestana, 2.

<sup>18</sup> Pestana, 5.

<sup>19</sup> Casas, *Popery Truly Display'd in Its Bloody Colours, or, A Faithful Narrative of the Horrid and Unexampl'd Massacres, Butcheries, and All Manner of Cruelties, That Hell and Malice Could Invent, Committed by the Popish Spanish Party on the Inhabitants of West-India : Together with the Devastations of Several Kingdoms in America by Fire and Sword for the Space of Forty and Two Years, from the Time of Its First Discovery by Them*, 2.

<sup>20</sup> Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, 20.

Barbados ready and willing to move to the new colony in Jamaica and Hispaniola but the response was less than enthusiastic.<sup>21</sup> The English simply did not have the numbers to fill Cromwell's colonial dreams from what was in the Caribbean at the time. They would need to slowly expand their influence throughout the Caribbean.

Once the English gathered troops they prepared for the invasion of Jamaica. The invasion force was a mix of soldiers and civilians. They had brought 2500 regulars from England and gained another 4000 from various Caribbean colonies.<sup>22</sup> This force ended up being terribly organized and unable to take their main objective of Santo Domingo on Hispaniola. Brought over with the troops in an arrogant move the English also added women and children along on the expedition.<sup>23</sup> While this was practical for building a colony, in the aftermath it was not helping the conquest. Cromwell's western design was too grand for what the English could muster at the time. This would be a driving force around English policy in the Caribbean for the next 50 years and would directly contribute to the English use of pirates and conversely the decline of piracy at the end of the golden age. As the English sailed away from Hispaniola the expedition's, commander Col Doyley set his sights on the secondary target of Jamaica.

This expedition would be smaller based on the defenses of Jamaica and was far more successful. Col Doyley took 500 men from the ship and went to shore in Jamaica.<sup>24</sup> The English forces were met with no resistance.<sup>25</sup> This would allow them a foothold and give them superior numbers over even the entire white population of Spanish Jamaica. The Spanish assumed the

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<sup>21</sup> Pestana, 25.

<sup>22</sup> *A Brief and Perfect Journal of the Late Proceedings and Success of the English Army in the West-Indies, Continued until June the 24th 1655 : Together with Some Quaeres [i.e. Queries] Inserted and Answered : Published for Satisfaction of All Such Who Desire Truly to Be Informed in These Particulars*, 12.

<sup>23</sup> Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, 118.

<sup>24</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 103.

<sup>25</sup> Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, 120.

English were trying to gather supplies and quickly evacuated the town. There was no communication from the Spanish as to the attempted invasion of Hispaniola and even there had been the Spanish still assumed Jamaica was just a waypoint. When the English did not leave the Spanish agreed to parley with the English under the white flag to determine their intentions.<sup>26</sup>. The English put forth a treaty for the Spanish to surrender the island and the Spanish claimed them to be pirate raiders. The war then started into a smaller guerilla campaign. The English thought they had the island as their own but that did not reflect the reality of the situation.

Early Jamaica was tenuously held by the English, but their continued survival was the only remnant of the western design. Jamaica did not immediately fall into English hands. It was the protracted campaign that gradually brought the island under English control. However, Jamaica did not immediately become a pirate haven. The navy was present for its defense in the early years.<sup>27</sup> The navy did not have enough power to fulfill the goal of the design or enough resources to defend the island. They had tried to bring enough of a population from Barbados to settle the island they had conquered. However, many went home a few months after conquest leaving the English army fighting a long campaign and those who had settled in Jamaica attempting to build a suitable sugar economy.<sup>28</sup> It was at this point that piracy in Jamaica started to take hold. Col Doyley, who had then become the military governor of Jamaica, wrote to many of the pirates to try and secure more men for the defense of Jamaica pulling them into a privateering contract.<sup>29</sup> This was the first cultivation of piracy on the island though it would not take hold until later into the 1660's. Even heading into the 1680's Jamaica still did not have the

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<sup>26</sup> Pestana, 122.

<sup>27</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, "Early English Jamaica without Pirates," 329.

<sup>28</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, 324.

<sup>29</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, 321.

defense it needed out of the navy even when ships visited.<sup>30</sup> It was out of the lack of defense and lack of infrastructure that the most famous pirate port in the Caribbean was then born. Within 15 years Jamaica would have two sides of a thriving economy from privateering and planting.<sup>31</sup> This would spark a golden age of pirate raiding where they were enough infrastructure to effectively launch pirate raids without being stomped out, but not enough to make a free flow of trade between the English and the Spanish be profitable.

The historiography of piracy and the Caribbean starts with the ideas of trade and commerce in the empire. It gradually then looks at piracy and how it was used militarily to defend trade and Empire. Most schools of thought start with looking at the interconnected nature of the Caribbean coupled with the distances between not only the islands themselves but also Europe. From there the historiography breaks down into looking at the individual empires.

The first Caribbean pirates and privateers started out as slave traders and raiders. Commerce and empire were related due the mercantilist systems at the time, but these were also tangled by necessity and a lack of oversight. There is a second school of thought proposed by N. Glasier stating trade networks often developed independent of empires. This adds on to the idea that while there was overarching policy in much of the Caribbean there was not a way to regulate it from Europe thought most of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The Spanish monopoly of much of the new world's territory created an interesting relationship among the European powers because it drove the international balance of power so

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<sup>30</sup> Tosier and The Hunter of Jamaica ., *A Letter from Captain John Tosier, Commander of His Majesties Ship the Hunter at Jamaica : With a Narrative of His Embassy and Command in That Frigate to the Captain General and Governour of Havannah, to Demand His Majesty of Great Brittain's Subjects Kept Prisoners There : The Account and Manner of Their Delivery, with a List of Their Names, and Times Kept Prisoners There : As Also, the Miraculous Preservation of Fifteen English His Majesties Subjects, Cast Away and Remaining Eighteen Days in a Long Boat at Sea in a Sad Condition, Taken up by the Said Captain John Tosier*, 5.

<sup>31</sup> Sainsbury et al., *Calendar of State Papers. Colonial Series. America and West Indies*, 1693–1696:25.

far off of normal that countries like England and France considered it under a different set of rules.<sup>32</sup> Lance Grahn and N. Zahedieh both looked at smuggling from the the standpoint of larger networks within the Caribbean than merely the official channels. Part of the reason for this was necessity. It took so long, and so few goods came from Europe that even the better supplied Spanish were almost always willing to trade with the English unofficially. This is because there were needs among all the different countries in the Caribbean that could not be met from Europe. Christian Koot also dived into how these networks helped early English colonies such as Jamaica. This lent credence to the continued idea that there was a disregard for international standards from the British because there was just no way to compete with the Spanish empire as it stood.

Piracy also stood out as one of the few professions for poor white settlers. proposed is because as the imperial system has typically been thought of as European David Wheat purposed that because there were so many slaves in the Caribbean it could not merely be a European empire. The Caribbean was built on a plantation system or a mining economy. There was not enough infrastructure in the Caribbean to host a middle class of white workers. Particularly at the start there was a wide gap between plantation owners and indenture servants with indentured servants eventually replaced by slaves. Kristen Block demonstrated that this also connected Caribbean culture particularly among those who were not rich Spanish because they tried to find connections to work together and survive rather than oftentimes in Europe where those disagreements would cause wars.

Piracy in the Caribbean has several ongoing debates, including how effective or not they were, how prevalent pirates were, what were their ideals, and what were their ultimate goals, as

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<sup>32</sup> Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, 5.

well as what caused their rise and fall. Carla Pestana argues against much of the historiography that pirates were pervasive throughout the Caribbean particularly early Jamaica. She argues that they were not overrun by pirates, but pirates were later invited to the island to start work on the island's economy. Pestana also argues that pirate ships were hard to acquire due to the lack of shipbuilding and repair infrastructure in the Caribbean. This led to a need for pirates to have some other source of labor during lulls in piracy.<sup>33</sup>

Traditionally the story of pirates has been told with very little interaction between pirates and colonial society. Often times they are portrayed as living on the edges of society and was where the name buccaneer came from because the pirates would farm pigs. Mark Hanna argues that they were key pieces of the community.<sup>34</sup> This shows an interesting picture of pirates different from the traditional historiography looking at them as anarchists. Hanna paints them as people who worked in communities and had relationships in the places they went to port. This was important because as argued by others there was so little infrastructure in the Caribbean that pirates would absolutely have needed a home base. These relationships were particularly prevalent in Jamaica. Not only was this beneficial to the pirates, but this meant that early Jamaica was able to have part of its economy dedicated to servicing pirate ships, both British and other nationalities, which gave them a head start in developing infrastructure. Marcus Rediker argued differently that pirates were democratic and almost anarchist. This has been a debate that has yet to be settled looking at whether pirates were criminals, tools of empires, or their own free men. The scholarship seems to agree that pirate life was better for the men than being in the Navy. The larger the pirate crew the more they could accomplish, but also the more the captain had to pay. Pirates captains also listened more closely to their crews than navy captains. This was not out of

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<sup>33</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, "Early English Jamaica without Pirates," 355.

<sup>34</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 65.

the kindness of their hearts but because pirates were often men who had mutinied before. The other argument against pirates loving liberty was their deep involvement in the slave trade. Gregory O'Malley takes this argument. However, that argument can be leveled at nearly every person who fought for liberty during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The overall historiography on how pirates lived and what their crews were made up has grown but the source material seems to go back to traditional picture of pirates. Dan Cordingly paints a picture of pirates as are still being villains of the sea. The primary purpose of a pirate was still to capture money and they were perfectly willing to rape and murder anyone who stood in their way.<sup>35</sup> This is contrasted with an almost heroic painting in other places. Sometimes they are painted as floating democracies that gave freedom to an oppressed class of sailors. However, this is more in popular imagery than historical analysis. However, Lane and other sources show how pirates drew up contracts among the crew and would pay for injuries during battle.<sup>36</sup> Beattie also talks about the aspects of liberty for pirates. He looks at the pirates as a choice for sailors where they had more agency in their job and assignments than in other places.<sup>37</sup> Pirates were also professional fighters who were willing to do whatever it took to get to their paycheck. Cordingly and Earle both record Henry Morgan using human shields, including priests and nuns, in many of his battles.<sup>38</sup> Nearly all sources are in agreement that pirates regularly tortured prisoners to try and find money in the towns. This was especially prevalent during the siege of Panama or other towns where the gold was not prevalent.<sup>39</sup> Another aspect of pirate life is that, they were

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<sup>35</sup> Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag*, 2006, xiv.

<sup>36</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 116.

<sup>37</sup> Beattie, *British Privateering Voyages of the Early Eighteenth Century*, 9.

<sup>38</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 118.

<sup>39</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga*,

professional soldiers. Even more so than some of the defenders particularly of the sleepy Spanish colonial towns. Earle emphasizes this looking at Henry Morgan's men who had gained experience from successive campaigns rather than the Spanish defenders. The overall picture of a pirate is one of a man of violence. These men fought and ready to get rewarded for it.

It is also unclear how pervasive piracy was at the time because they took such a large place in the public imagination it is still unknown just how much they really affected daily life. Kris Lane argues that while the effectiveness of piracy was not enough to fully disrupt Spanish trade however, it did force the Spanish to spend large sums of money to protect their ships. The protection effort he says was what truly cost the Spanish the most money. This brings up an interesting idea that because Spain was the dominant power, they had an image to uphold and to try and preserve that image things like the treasure fleet made it more difficult to build an effective economy. This then brings up the fighting in the Caribbean and the idea of no peace beyond the line. John Brewer argued that the way Britain set up their economy and policies was not for a mercantilist state. This could be a philosophical reason, or it could be because the British wanted to take advantage of already present infrastructure to build their empire more cheaply. This is one of the reasons pirates were so effective because they bridged national boundaries. Though Gregory O'Malley also argues that Spain would not move to a concentrated control of the empire until the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

There is no way to have a discussion about the historiography of piracy without also looking at piracy in popular culture. Piracy has permeated modern popular culture to the point where there is another image of them entirely created from fiction. English piracy first gained its reputation for swashbuckling heroes during the time of Sir Francis Drake. Clare Jowitt describes

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*Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c., 201.*

Drake as someone who was seen as a national hero at the time.<sup>40</sup> Drake took a 70 man crew on his famous around the world pirate voyage and truly started the idea of the pirate as the underdog against an evil empire.<sup>41</sup> What this did for piracy in England was give it the air of adventure and though it would not be the last time piracy takes popular culture it changed the way people looked at it from the idea of corsair raiders from Algiers to something to be celebrated as a nation. Though just as in modern history writers of the time, such as John Smith, were quick to remind people that queen Elizabeth had hung just as many if not more pirates than she had praised.<sup>42</sup> However, piracy would remain popular and heroic in England despite his efforts.

Some of the first truly popular pirate works were not fictional works at all, but the accounts coming back from the New World that historians still use today. The unknown author Captain Charles Johnson wrote a bestseller that was reprinted multiple times in its first several years. The book brought back tales of the new world that excited English readers. It also recounted tales of privateers who fought against the Spanish. Building off the legacy of Drake came men like Henry Morgan who sacked some of the richest and most storied cities in the new world. This built on the myth of pirate heroes building throughout the new world.<sup>43</sup> Alexander Exquemelin wrote his account of pirates in the new world following Henry Morgan and telling the tales of other pirates Calico Jack, Anne Bonnie and Mary Read telling the story of one of the only known cases women as pirates during the golden age. All of these authors capture the sense of adventure, but Exquemelin particularly captures the gruesomeness of pirates as well with detailed accounts of Morgan's attack on Panama. These accounts built the base of pirate stories of pirates but then stories turned to popular fiction.

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<sup>40</sup> Jowitt et al., *The Culture of Piracy, 1580-1630 : English Literature and Seaborne Crime*, 9.

<sup>41</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 43.

<sup>42</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 70.

<sup>43</sup> Jowitt et al., *The Culture of Piracy, 1580-1630 : English Literature and Seaborne Crime*, 20.

Pirates in fiction portray many of the of the adventurous aspects of pirate life but do miss on some of the smaller aspects. *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson stands out as the seminal work in pirate fiction. Dan Cordingly in his book talks about just how influential it was and how almost every modern pirate trope can be tied back to this book.<sup>44</sup> Stevenson so sublimely captured the elements of pirate life and the adventure of being on the high seas that it often has to be compared to history. Though this was not the only place where the myth of buried treasure was spread it is one of the most widely read, however there have been no cases of pirate treasure being discovered. In most cases the pirates took what they had and went back to port and spent it. Stevenson also captures this fine line between seamen and pirates. While pirates often had a hard time finding ships or sometimes commissions there are Stevenson growing up around sailors captured the idea of life at sea.

Modern tales of pirates tend to cast pirates to cast pirates in one or two of the main schools of thought mentioned above or sometimes combine them to build a better story. First pirates can occupy some form of a freedom fighter role. Much in the vein of Robin Hood they stand for freedom and adventure looking against a system that is worse than the anarchy of the pirates. These stories focus on the idea that pirates were mor democratic then the navy or merchant shipping jobs were. Conversely there some cast pirates in the light of the villain choosing to show them raping, pillaging, and plundering the inhabitants of peaceful colonial towns. Then there are just some places in fiction that fill in gaps that no one knows about in history.

There are several gaps to look at in the historiography. One is comparing and contrasting imperial dictations from the countries versus the actual actions of the colonial societies. This will

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<sup>44</sup> Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag*, 2006, 6.

help build the picture of what was official policy versus what things were overlooked because there was enough oversight to punish some of the more serious offenses of governors. Another gap is how did the increasing infrastructure and economy effect piracy through trade. Trade would eventually grow more profitable than piracy which would lead to greater crackdown on pirates by nations other than Spain. Another question which has been up for debate is how England viewed piracy as their power increased or did. They never fully embrace piracy even at the beginning but there were just a few governors who allowed it. Finally, there is a gap looking at the role of pirates as a full tool of empire versus something that each country allowed. Just how much were they sought after versus were they an annoyance until there was a better economy or solution to the problem.

The historiography of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Caribbean is centered around the trade and connections between empires. The Spanish controlled the majority of the power and wealth at the start of the century. This leads to a group of historians who look at the Caribbean as the rise of the British and the fall of the Spanish. Another school of thought looks at it through slavery and some more narrowly as the slave trade. Since there were so many slaves compared to white settlers this helps look at the great disparity in population. This means that there were few jobs for middle class white settlers who often turned to piracy. Piracy has several schools of thought looking at how they interacted with the rest of the world and whether they were tied into their economies or they were parasites on their economy.

Though pirates have been studied since the early eighteenth century there are still questions to be answered. The foremost of which is just what was the piracy policy of Great Britain. They controlled the colony that had the most storied pirate port in the new world and then within a century became the greatest hunters of pirates and defenders of commerce

throughout the world. What then were the factors that brought about this change? Another place to look is at of the laws of Jamaica. Vicki Bia has done a comparison of laws between 1684 and 1688 in Jamaica looking at how the colony and home country interacted as well as what changed.<sup>45</sup> The 1680's proved to be a decade of swing for Jamaica because it went through three different governors as well as Henry Morgan as the Lieutenant governor. While his privateering has been looked at in depth there is a gap looking at what his contributions were as lieutenant governor and how having one of the most successful pirates in history as second in command of a colony known for piracy effected policy. Another gap in the scholarship is looking at the accomplishments of other privateers from Jamaica other than Henry Morgan. He is such a defining figure that he has overshadowed many of the others who were unable to live up to his level.

To answer these questions the second chapter will address the exploits of lesser known privateers as well as pirates captured in Jamaica. Starting with the transition to a pirate state it will look at the buccaneers of Tortuga who answered Col Doyley's call help defend Jamaica as a private navy for spoils. Jamaica was invaded by the Spanish to attempt to recapture it in 1657. Their defeat would later be solidified in the treaty of Madrid, which would come at the end of the war between the English and Spanish giving the English control of Jamaica.<sup>46</sup> This will also look at the policies that let Jamaica privateer during their war with Spanish. This chapter will also look at the Spanish views of English pirates particularly because the Spanish viewed every Englishman in the Caribbean as a pirate. Finally, Jamaica still launched counter piracy

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<sup>45</sup> Via, "A Comparison of the Colonial Laws of Jamaica under Governor Thomas Lynch 1681-1684 with Those Enumerated in the John Taylor Manuscript of 1688."

<sup>46</sup> Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, 2.

expeditions to places like St. Thomas. England was never fully for piracy only when it benefited them.

The third chapter will be dedicated to the life and times of Henry Morgan. This man lived out the ultimate goal that few pirates could. He was able to turn his wealth into status. The real question in scholarship at this point is not what Morgan accomplished, but was Morgan allowed to do and what was it that justified him the eyes of English law. While the ultimate answer is success, sacking Panama as the Spanish jewel of the new world was very easy to justify.<sup>47</sup> There is more to the story looking at the play between Governor Thomas Modyford and the lords back in England in charge of running the colonies. Finally, this will look at Morgan's time as Lieutenant Governor of Jamaica. Morgan served as Lieutenant Governor from 1675 to 1688 when he died. This famous privateer would never reform and was always pushing for more raids against the Spanish and never lost his connection with the pirates.<sup>48</sup> A singular figure in history he would define Jamaica culture while he was alive.

The final chapter will look at the changing British policy and the end of the golden age of piracy. Taking a look at the Island of Jamaica as well as the British Caribbean as a whole it became more profitable for the British to support safe commerce rather than piracy. The wars

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<sup>47</sup> Gage and Chaloner, *A New Survey of the West-India's, or, The English American, His Travail by Sea and Land : Containing a Journal of Three Thousand and Three Hundred Miles within the Main Land of America : Wherein Is Set Forth His Voyage from Spain to St. John de Ulhua, and from Thence to Zalappa, to Tlazcalla, the City of Angels, and Forward to Mexico : With the Description of That Great City as It Was in Former Times and Also at This Present : Likewise, His Journey from Mexico through the Provinces of Guaxaca, Chiapa, Guatemala, Vera Paz, Truxillo, Comayagua, with His Abode Twelve Years about Guatemala and Especially in the Indian-Towns of Mixco, Pinola, Petapa, Amatitlan : As Also His Strange and Wonderfull Conversion and Calling from Those Remote Parts to His Native Country : With His Return through the Province of Nicaragua and Costa Rica to Nicoya, Panama, Portobelo, Cartagena and Havana, with Divers Occurrents and Dangers That Did Befal in the Said Journey : Also, a New and Exact Discovery of the Spanish Navigation to Those Parts and of Their Dominions, Government, Religion, Forts, Castles, Ports, Havens, Commodities, Fashions, Behaviour of Spaniards, Priests and Friars, Blackmores, Mulatto's, Mestiso's, Indians, and of Their Feasts and Solemnities : With a Grammar or Some Few Rudiments of the Indian Tongue Called Poconchi, or Pocoman*, 189.

<sup>48</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 124.

with the Spanish also died down and there were not nearly the same prizes to be gained from the French. The British infrastructure also grew and as it grew so did the navy and the British were once again able to use the military to monopolize violence. These changes highlight the growth in a piracy policy that outside of war the British always claimed they detested but allowed so it did not even have to look like it as an official shift in policy from the crown.

## **The Adventures of the Jamaican Pirates: Building Blocks of Empire**

Once the British established control of Jamaica they wanted to build an economy centered around sugar. There was insufficient infrastructure for a profitable economy at the time and the colony looked doomed to the same small unprofitable fate that the British North American colonies faced. The governor of the island, Colonel Edwin Doyley, sent a letter to nearby buccaneers on Hispaniola and called for settlers to start a life on Jamaica. This invited pirates to Jamaica and established the island as a pirate haven. Doyley later claimed he sent the letter to ask for more settlers to expand the plantation economy, but he and governors after him used the buccaneers as privateers rather than farmers.<sup>49</sup> Jamaica needed settlers but the pirates provided Jamaica another source of income. Charles Leslie, a Barbadian writer who recorded the history of Jamaica in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, said that the “vice” of piracy was the origin of Jamaica’s “virtue” of a plantation economy.<sup>50</sup> Jamaica would have taken much longer to become the successful colony than it did without piracy for three reasons. There was not enough infrastructure to support a successful plantation society without a secondary source of income. The pirates were available settlers that Jamaica needed. Finally, the peace with Spain was suspect at best during the first years on the island. All three of these contributed to the British willingness to use piracy as the “vice” to build the “virtue” of a sugar economy. Pirates brought settlers to Jamaica which set up Jamaican power to challenge the British.

Piracy built the economy of Jamaica by bringing money to the island after successful pirate voyages provided work for people not associated with plantations. Jamaica became famous as a place for pirates to spend their money. Pirate voyages would bring in sums larger

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<sup>49</sup> Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica*, 326.

<sup>50</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 145.

than Jamaica's annual income during the 1660's.<sup>51</sup> This provided incomes for people other than plantation owners, though much of it would go to tavern owners, it also went to building the harbor and other supplies for the ships and other markets. This provided the colony a second source of income and built a small middle class to start building. Piracy meant there was business for a sea trade larger than the plantations.

Piracy also flourished in Jamaica through lax enforcement of peace between the British and the Spanish in the Caribbean. In 1559 the Spanish and French agreed in the peace of Cateau-Cambresis that their peace would only extend east of the Prime Meridian and north of the Tropic of Cancer.<sup>52</sup> The peace did not extend because of a trade dispute between the Spanish and the French over the rights of Frenchmen to trade with Spanish colonies. This meant that the French still raided the Spanish in the new world and the Spanish would claim that any other country in the new world was there illegally.<sup>53</sup> While the British never had any line marked in treaty as the Spanish and French did, they effectively operated under the same construct. By the 1650's when the British conquered Jamaica, the countries would see the beginning of the end of unrestricted warfare in the Caribbean, but the golden age of piracy graced the British new heights in its short time. Into the 1670's the British and the Spanish still fought in the Caribbean despite protests of both sides about peace.<sup>54</sup> News took so long to arrive that attacks often seemed unprovoked. Sir Thomas Moodyford, who would become famous as Governor of Jamaica during Henry Morgan's pirate raids, compared dispatches with the governors of other Spanish colonies to

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<sup>51</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 115.

<sup>52</sup> Mattingly, "No Peace beyond What Line?," 145.

<sup>53</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, "Early English Jamaica without Pirates," 346.

<sup>54</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 44.

figure out the status of war or peace.<sup>55</sup> By the 1680's the British government was starting to spend more oversight on Jamaica but until then it was often up to the governor Jamaica.

The British governor in Jamaica became an important figure in setting piracy policy for the island because of lack of oversight. During the early years of Jamaica, the governor provided direction for the colony and determined policy for everything from pirates to slavery. Early Jamaica had very few laws because the population was so small.<sup>56</sup> Each person was generally governed under British law, but the planters and the governor comprised the council and made the rules.

Jamaican laws were concise and covered their unique concerns. The majority of laws covered slavery.<sup>57</sup> The slave population on Jamaica was often five times that of the white population. The major concern for law and order was preventing a slave rebellion. For defense in case of a slave revolution in the case of Spanish attack all of the settlers were required to join the militia. All Jamaican laws had to be approved in England within two years or they were pocket vetoed.<sup>58</sup> With the slow speed of travel between the two parts of the government laws were kept to minimum. Jamaica also had laws surrounding pirates.

Piracy in Jamaica was run through the admiralty court.<sup>59</sup> These were the men who decided the difference in piracy versus privateering. They also delineated different levels of crime based on violence as well as crimes on the sea were handled differently than crimes on the

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<sup>55</sup> Earle, 137.

<sup>56</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 87.

<sup>57</sup> Via, "A Comparison of the Colonial Laws of Jamaica under Governor Thomas Lynch 1681-1684 with Those Enumerated in the John Taylor Manuscript of 1688," 244.

<sup>58</sup> 241.

<sup>59</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 195.

land.<sup>60</sup> Jamaica was not the lawless world that piracy inhabits in popular culture. Piracy was regulated and encouraged through the legal system in Jamaica. The British always maintained that they used privateers in compliance with international law. Even when giving testimony against buccaneers the Jamaican's claimed it was legitimate.

British rule in Jamaica started under the military governorship of Colonel Edwin Doyley who was responsible for finishing the conquest of the island and is credited with bringing piracy to Jamaica. The letter he wrote the buccaneers has been lost to history.<sup>61</sup> However, in his later testimony he claimed that he invited them to island as settlers rather than pirates.<sup>62</sup> It is entirely possible that Doyley was truthful in these assertions. Jamaica was in dire need of settlers. At the time settlers were the most valuable resource for a colony and its power.<sup>63</sup> Settlers were also hard to come by for colonies because the wealth of a colony was designed not for those in the colony but for those in the home country.<sup>64</sup> What it did offer was an opportunity for some to build wealth to take back to the England. The colony of Jamaica had more land than any of the other British colonies in the Caribbean which made it an ideal colony to build up. This build up came through piracy.

While Doyley later claimed that the call to buccaneers was for settlers it did not change the fact that after he called the buccaneers to the island he then used them as privateers. He would set a precedence for later governors of Jamaica. During Doyley's time as governor England and Spain were also at war in Europe as well as the colonies. This meant that while the English did not have the resources to send a navy to the Caribbean the fight would continue

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<sup>60</sup> Via, "A Comparison of the Colonial Laws of Jamaica under Governor Thomas Lynch 1681-1684 with Those Enumerated in the John Taylor Manuscript of 1688," 252.

<sup>61</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, "Early English Jamaica without Pirates," 321.

<sup>62</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, "Early English Jamaica without Pirates."

<sup>63</sup> Zijlstra, "Competing for European Settlers," 150.

<sup>64</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, "Early English Jamaica without Pirates," 354.

though piracy. At this point there was still no peace beyond the line and the Spanish did not recognize English holdings in the Caribbean until 1670 in the Treaty of Madrid. Until that point the Spanish viewed any other country in the Caribbean as pirates and treated them as such. Spain made two unsuccessful attempts to take Jamaica back which were fended off by the remnants of the English navy from the initial invasion. It was because of this that he felt the need to bring the buccaneers over whether it was for the purpose of piracy or not the threat of Spanish invasion needed settlers to counter. Doyley then fostered an environment that was friendly to pirates by encouraging their business to bring to the colony.

Thomas Lynch holds a unique spot Jamaica's history as governor three times for periods of two years each. His enures came and went with governors, whether himself or others, being recalled to England for questioning, usually about pirates. He would directly commission pirates and tended to use pirates that were commissioned as privateers rather than encourage piracy and grant letters of marque after the fact.<sup>65</sup> This got him recalled to England after the Spanish ambassador complained about his encouragement of piracy.<sup>66</sup> At this point the British colonial administration called back pirate commissions and tried to get the island to stop. However, piracy would not stay down for long.

The governor made the commission official, but by the time of Lynch piracy was so engrained in Jamaican culture that planters would harbor and support the pirates because the protection and business was beneficial.<sup>67</sup> Lynch would continue this behavior until his death in 1684. The fact that he continued to be put back in charge of Jamaica despite his record of

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<sup>65</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 157.

<sup>66</sup> Leslie, 152.

<sup>67</sup> Leslie, 153.

supporting piracy shows the policy of the British Crown. Charles II was deliberately ambiguous when writing policy privateers and piracy.<sup>68</sup> He was able to walk a line between outright war and forcing the Spanish to spend money to protect themselves from pirates. They supported piracy until it threatened war with the Spanish. The crown would then recall a governor and the governor would make a defense to show that their policies were tokenly legal and be sent back to Jamaica.

Sir Thomas Moodyford was the longest serving governor of Jamaica prior to the 1680's and though he will feature prominently in the story of Henry Morgan he also played a role in the founding of Jamaican pirate policy. Moodyford took command of Jamaica in 1664 nine years after the conquest of the island. He had previously served as governor of Barbados. From this experience Moodyford worked to build the sugar economy in Jamaica. He tried to ensure that the expertise of Barbados came to Jamaica to increase output.<sup>69</sup> Sugar created a very top heavy economy with a very small planter class at the top and a slave class at the bottom with very little room for anyone in the middle. Just as Doyley had set Jamaica on the path of piracy Moodyford set Jamaica on the path of sugar and kept the island from turning into a second Tortuga. He built the "virtue" of the sugar economy to Doyley's "vice."

Moodyford set Jamaica on the path of sugar but it did not mean that he did not encourage piracy. Under his governorship not only did the famous exploits of Henry Morgan happen, but many of the lesser known pirates who built the foundation of piracy in Jamaica. Moodyford embodied the idea of using pirates as a backhanded tool rather than being as official as Lynch.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, "Early English Jamaica without Pirates," 335.

<sup>69</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 89.

<sup>70</sup> Leslie, 145.

His policy was to encourage piracy but would more often endorse it after the fact. He was also far more willing to talk with Spanish governors to figure out the status of politics in Europe. The foundation of Jamaica was laid during his term.

The pirates of Jamaica had parts to play in the local economy. The next section will examine three pirates and how they contributed to Jamaica. Bartholomew Portugues set a path for Jamaican piracy and showed what a successful privateer in Jamaica looked like. Roc Brasilano exemplifies the money that piracy brought to Jamaica. John Davis showed the brutality of piracy. Each of these examples built a piece of the golden age of piracy in Jamaica.

Bartholomew Portugues set out from Jamaica with a crew of 30 men to become one of the first famous pirates from Jamaica. With this small crew he captured four Spanish ships.<sup>71</sup> He was able to capture ships with such a small crew for two reasons. First, the pirates were far better armed and used to combat. Second, pirate ships took larger crews than merchant ships. A merchant ship only paid the minimum number of sailors to do the job to keep cost low. Pirate ships were rewarded for having larger crews because it meant they could attack larger targets. They often had two to three times the crew of an average merchant ship. Therefore, even this small crew was successful. This success built Jamaica piracy.

Portugues was one of the first pirates to make Jamaica his base of operations and used the success of his first voyage to generate crews for later voyages. From this base Portugues captured five Spanish ships on various voyages with various degrees of success.<sup>72</sup> This was the true success of Jamaican piracy, Jamaica became a place to land and sell goods as well as recruit a crew. There had been men throughout the Caribbean but on Port Royal had an infrastructure for pirates to bring their treasure.

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<sup>71</sup> Leslie, 95.

<sup>72</sup> Leslie, 94.

Pirate treasure was not only gold, it consisted of trade goods that colonies desired and needed. Pirates never buried their treasure.<sup>73</sup> There was no reason for it, pirates wanted to spend the money they had earned. In a time where there was very little banking infrastructure for lower classes and land was a source of wealth passed through centuries there was nothing else to do but spend treasure.<sup>74</sup> This why the port of Jamaica was desirable for pirates. They could spend their plunder on wine, women, and good times. Pirate treasure was also not always gold it also consisted of goods. Pirates needed to be able to offload these goods. Additionally the colonists in Jamaica need the goods. The Spanish did not allow trade between other country's colonies. The British had so few colonies in the Caribbean the supplies were few and far between. The colony and the pirates benefited from the exchange.

Portugues also showed the difficulties of piracy. He sailed south towards modern Venezuela and captured a much larger ship with 70,000 pieces of eight and 120,000 pounds of cacao.<sup>75</sup> This became his most successful capture yet, but he was unable to return to Port Royal due to unfavorable winds. After this storm he was blown near Spaniards who knew they were pirates and captured them.<sup>76</sup> Portugues escaped jail the night before his execution and survived in the jungle until he could find a ship to pick him up.<sup>77</sup> Piracy was a dangerous career, he lost his

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<sup>73</sup> Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag*, 1996.

<sup>74</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 54.

<sup>75</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 97.

<sup>76</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 47.

<sup>77</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 96.

entire crew between the fight to capture a ship, the storm, and the Spanish imprisonment. While the British were willing to encourage piracy they would not make any effort to protect the pirates either. Piracy was a career that rarely ended prosperously.

The closing of Portugues's life is a sad one. After surviving the escape from the Spanish Portugues eventually made it back to Port Royal and went on a few unsuccessful voyages. He died broke in the streets.<sup>78</sup> At a time when there was very little for pirates to use their money for other than spend once back in port, they very rarely came out wealthy after their careers. Either dying in combat, or penniless in their old age. The same could not be said for those in Jamaica who benefited from the privateers' business.

Roc Brasilano started as a poor Jamaican who did not see any career options outside of piracy. He exemplifies the class of men on Jamaica who could not find a job in the plantation system with its top-heavy economy. Piracy became the other option. Piracy then was a draw that brought settlers and thus power to the island. In this way piracy jump started the economy. The English were struggling, and piracy was something that brought settlers to the island. The death of the golden age of piracy came when trade in the Caribbean became more prosperous than the destabilizing force of the pirates. Calling back to Leslie's "virtue" of a sugar economy which would take time to build. Jamaica needed another solution to build faster and cement itself as a prosperous colony. The "vice" of piracy became the starter for the economy.

Roc Brasilano was also famous for the money he brought back to Jamaica. Brasilano took a voyage down to the Spanish Main and then came back to immediately spend all of the money in Jamaica. They could not always find ways to spend their money in the short time the pirates stayed in Jamaica. One pirate bought a cask of wine and forced everyone walking by to take a

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<sup>78</sup> Leslie, 97.

drink with him because there was nothing else to spend money on.<sup>79</sup> Many were recorded to pay two or three thousand pieces of eight to spend a night with a woman.<sup>80</sup> The pirates simply did not have any way to use their money otherwise. However, for the Jamaican pirates brought life into the town. Pirates brought in over a year's worth of money earned otherwise in those early years and the settlers were able to use it. This money built Jamaica. It would go throughout the economy from infrastructure projects to drawing new trade from England. The island's economy became prosperous and stable by the 1690's through sugar alone and this was the money that built it.<sup>81</sup>

The transition from "vice" to "virtue" was paved by pirates. Jamaica was a society built on a cash crop. A cash crop on its own can support an economy around itself but not an economy designed to challenge Spanish rule. Leslie in his writing on the history of Jamaica in the mid and early eighteenth century talks about piracy in two distinctly different voices. When he talks about the individual acts of piracy Leslie describes their brutishness and cruelty. He does not mince words talking about torture and things that would be considered at the time outside the normal confines of war.<sup>82</sup> He condemns each individual act of cruelty and decries individual pirates as bad men. However, Leslie is also very up front about the wealth and accomplishments of the pirates. When they brought back money and it was beneficial for Jamaica, he praises them, or he will praise acts of bravery while in battle. He saw the benefit it had to Jamaica in the long term. There was no doubt in his mind that piracy was necessary. His tone changes when he talks about

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<sup>79</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 53.

<sup>80</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, 53.

<sup>81</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 171.

<sup>82</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 151.

piracy to praise it. These praises were for the institution more often than individuals. Leslie loved the sin and hated the sinner and showed a very common attitude for people of the time.

Pirates were like any other insurgent force in history they required shelter from whoever was hunting them from a passive or supporting population. Each nation decided who was and was not a pirate at the time. Though just as importantly it was the people around the privateers who let them stay rather than running them out of town.<sup>83</sup> This policy started in Jamaica because piracy was beneficial economically. The money pirates like Roc Brasilano brought to the island made it worth the risk of the harboring pirates or facing a Spanish invasion. The benefit to Jamaica and the destabilization of Spanish power from piracy made it acceptable at a macro level for the British to accept the risk of a war with Spain over the accusations of piracy. This would change as time went on but in the 1660's and 1670's it made things better for both Jamaica and the British.

The third pirate to discuss from early Jamaica was John Davis as an example of the fact that pirates were used as a military force. Davis would go on to become admiral of the pirates.<sup>84</sup> The goal of pirates was to kill people for profit and no number of children's stories could change that fact. They were a mildly regulated private military force. Leslie introduced Davis as an evil man prepared to do whatever it took for money rather than including some mention of valor as he usually did.<sup>85</sup> That being said pirates and privateers had a place in the warfare of the seventeenth century. They were used by countries across Europe including England, France, the

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<sup>83</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 5.

<sup>84</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 47.

<sup>85</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 103.

Netherlands, and even Spain. The difference was that privateers had to equip themselves and they could get rich from the spoils.

Pirates raided towns in addition to capturing ships. There were several possible advantages to attacking towns. Towns are, obviously, stationary, there was no chance in needing to find ships or hope there would be ships near a port. Pirates could plan and time their raids around when they thought there would be money in a town. The biggest considerations for capturing a town was could the pirates muster a large enough crew. There were two factors that could determine crew size. The first was if the town had enough money for the pirates to muster a large crew. Second, there needed to be enough men willing to follow a captain when they prepared to attack a town. After than pirates were often successful capturing Spanish towns.

Spanish towns in the Caribbean were small and often did not have very many citizens. Their major purpose was to run some form of a plantation economy and be a trade hub for the treasure fleet. They would often be garrisoned by less than fifty soldiers.<sup>86</sup> Usually these soldiers were a militia and would need to go to the town fort or have advanced warning to prepare of a defense. There were also slaves or other runaway prisoners who were at times willing to help pirates by providing intelligence such as routes to town or river crossings.<sup>87</sup> The helpers could earn a share of the treasure or a ride away from the Spanish to safety, these were the towns that pirates like John Davis prepared to attack.

Davis prepared to attack much differently than the classic image of a pirate as a seaman. He prepared to attack Nicaragua with eighty men in canoes.<sup>88</sup> Pirates using canoes was not that

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<sup>86</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007; Earle.

<sup>87</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007.

<sup>88</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 104.

uncommon because of the difficulty of finding ships in the Caribbean it also changed the targets and the fighting style that the pirates used. Instead of an escaped slave or servant he used an Indian as a guide.<sup>89</sup> Davis came to the town and sacked it. As with ships it was not just money but goods as well. The pirates took anything of value they could possibly sell or trade back in Jamaica. The inhabitants of the town were either killed or captured. Those who were not killed immediately were tortured for information to find more goods or physically and sexually abused for pleasure.<sup>90</sup> This was not an uncommon practice among pirates, nor even among militaries of time. But the details that writers of the time such as Exquemelin go into paint a clear picture of the violence of pirates. This process could take days or weeks to obtain and transport the wealth of a town.

The time it took meant that the Spanish were often alerted. Davis managed to escape back to Jamaica as a Spanish relief force of 500 came.<sup>91</sup> Once Davis came back to Jamaica he was greeted with a hero's welcome and was praised by the elites of the town. Once again the Jamaicans encouraged the "vice" of piracy bringing them wealth and preparing them for a better future. Davis went on to attack and raid the town of St. Augustine. He would later die in obscurity.

Another piece of Davis's brutality was his attacks on churches. Leslie records him as not sparing the churches and raiding them for any of gold or anything of worth.<sup>92</sup> This was also not uncommon for soldiers of the time. Particularly when catholic and protestant countries fought. The Protestant reformation still drew much of the alliance system in Europe in the 17th century. Looking back much of the impetus for the invasion of Jamaica in the first place came from a

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<sup>89</sup> Leslie, 103.

<sup>90</sup> Leslie, 151.

<sup>91</sup> Leslie, 105.

<sup>92</sup> Leslie, 104.

desire to break Spanish and consequently Catholic power in the new world. Militant Protestantism became a big supporter to continue piracy even as the golden age waned.<sup>93</sup> They used any excuse to attack Catholic rule. Though in Jamaica this was often compounded by a want for money, though the desire to stop piracy from higher levels was also motivated by money. Davis and other pirates would often take the raiding of churches to another level by using clergy as human shields.<sup>94</sup> This would play to their advantage because the townspeople were often not willing to attack their clergy and would often choose to surrender or it would buy pirates the time they needed to close the range with the fort. Pirates continued to be a part of the Jamaican economy, but the British did not only use pirates they also had to hunt pirates.

The Dutch government at St. Thomas was harboring a French pirate in 1683. The British called upon a naval ship captained by Charles Carlile. Once he arrived in Jamaica, he received the intelligence of where the pirates where he sailed to the Virgin Islands. Once there he was unwelcomed from the Dutch on the island but eventually found the ship. He then cornered the ship in against an island and was able to send a crew up to burn the ship.<sup>95</sup> They then were attacked by a Dutch ship on the island but they left and then sailed back to Jamaica.

The British never dropped the idea that piracy was illegal, and they only used legal privateers. This accomplished several goals for the British. The first they were able to avoid outright European war with Spain. The British spent much of the 1670's actively trying to avoid the Caribbean causing a war, rather than using the Caribbean as another theater of war.<sup>96</sup> Along with this policy change came the token recalling of Governors. Both Thomas Lynch and Thomas

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<sup>93</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 135.

<sup>94</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007.

<sup>95</sup> Carlile, "Journal of Capt Charles Carlile, HM Ship FRANCIS, Relating the Burning of the TROMPEUSE, Sharp's Hulk and a Storeship for Pirates, St Thomas Island, 1683."

<sup>96</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007.

Moodyford were recalled for encouraging piracy but were never punished. Henry Morgan would later switch directly from the being questioned about piracy to giving advice on Jamaican policy on the same trip to England.<sup>97</sup> None of these men ever truly reformed they continued to push for privateering as a tool of policy.<sup>98</sup> The second was it kept them able to keep prosecuting anyone who committed acts of piracy against the British. The British did not show any leniency towards pirates or attempt to convince the pirates to work for them. As soon as a pirate was found to fight the British it was a brief trial most often ending in death.<sup>99</sup>

Once the peace went beyond the line and the British continued to use privateers but only in times of war. Once they had achieved their “virtue” of a sugar plantation society they helped bring order back to colonies. Violence was pulled out of the hands of civilians and brought back to the military except in controlled situations.<sup>100</sup> Pirate hunting became a large part of the navy’s job. Though the British would hunt pirates the Spanish were hunting the British.

The Spanish viewed all English activity in the Caribbean as illegal and all of the settlers as pirates.<sup>101</sup> This went back to the Treaty of Tordesillas where the pope divided the world between the Spanish and Portuguese. As the protestant reformation changed the way the British viewed the pope’s decisions, they then decided to challenge the British in the new world. In the 1670 treaty of Madrid the Spanish finally acknowledged British settlements in the new world. However, after that they still claimed the British were pirates.

The Spanish reacted as many countries throughout history have with any paramilitary or insurgent force that those who are ambivalent to it are guilty of participation. At it’s core piracy

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<sup>97</sup> Earle.

<sup>98</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 124.

<sup>99</sup> Gibbs, “The Brevity and Severity of ‘Golden Age’ Piracy Trials.”

<sup>100</sup> Norton, “Classification and Coercion: The Destruction of Piracy in the English Maritime System,” 1549.

<sup>101</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 61.

acts like an insurgency where at any point a pitched battle between the Spanish and the pirates would have resulted in defeat for the pirates. However, the pirates could just go back to farming in times when the danger was too great. The British reaction to piracy from Jamaica was mostly supportive, which meant that pirates could attack freely from Jamaica while the Spanish would have to risk war with the British before being able to stop pirates in anything but the act of piracy. Even if the <sup>102</sup>pirates did not directly support the English as long as they did not attack the English they were allowed to use Jamaica. This did lead to interesting and sometimes ridiculous Spanish policies when they met Englishmen.

The Spanish refused to let the English do anything outside of their ports and it slowed down the English progress towards their “virtue” and encouraged piracy. As mentioned earlier the Spanish would not let the English trade at their ports. One of the consequences of this was an increase in piracy.<sup>103</sup> Until trade was more profitable, piracy was the better option. Forcing the British to build on their own did slow down the progression of British power but ultimately led to a decrease in Spanish power because of the resources expended to fight against piracy. The Spanish also refused to let the English make ship repairs on the land. Lodge wooding was a term used at the time referring to chopping wood to repair ships. This could be after storms or just from normal wear and tear of wooden ships. The Spanish refused to let the English do this because they thought it was something that pirates were doing.<sup>104</sup> While it was an activity pirates did it was something that all wooden ships at the time needed to do. The Spanish capture of

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<sup>102</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 109.

<sup>103</sup> Justin Roberts, “Surrendering Surinam: The Barbadian Diaspora and the Expansion of the English Sugar Frontier, 1650–75,” 731.

<sup>104</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 116.

British ships for lodge wooding only encouraged piracy because once again it stifled legitimate trade.<sup>105</sup>

The Spanish efforts to stop British piracy only built up piracy and British resolve to stay in the Caribbean. First, the British needed the money and the ultimate goal of the Caribbean was to make money. If piracy was more effective, they would use it if trade was effective they would use trade. Second, the Spanish attempt to maintain absolute control of the New World only strengthened English resolve to bring back the geopolitical balance of power. Third, the greater enmity between the British and the Spanish the more likely piracy was to occur. In the end it would take a top down approach from the British to put an end to their piracy.

The “vice” of piracy-built Jamaica up. It brought in the money Jamaica needed to build a sugar economy. This was why all of the governors of Jamaica embraced piracy. They knew it would bring the island benefit in the end and there was too much to be gained to stop their citizens. The pirates were an connected part of the Jamaican economy contributing to the growth of the island and the wealth of the pirates themselves. The money they brought in built their fame and allowed them to continue. The Spanish tried to stop piracy but were unable to. This buildup of pirates leads to most successful pirate of them all Sir Henry Morgan.

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<sup>105</sup> Kraus-Fricdberg, “Livestock, Sugar and Slavery. Contested Terrain in Colonial Jamaica/Pineapple Culture: A History of the Tropical and Temperate Zones.,” 751.

## **The Best Pirate I've Ever Seen: A Case Study of the Life of Sir Henry Morgan**

Henry Morgan was a notable and unique example in the history of piracy. He was everything that the British hoped for from a pirate when they began using Jamaica as a pirate base. He was the worst nightmare of the Spanish as a successful pirate that later served in the Jamaican government. Morgan stood on the shoulders of the 20 previous years of Jamaican piracy and continued that legacy as Lieutenant Governor of Jamaica. Morgan's success ultimately justified his actions to the British crown and were the pinnacle of piracy in the Caribbean both strategically and monetarily. Jamaica was already a pirate haven when Morgan became a captain, and once a leader of his caliber appeared Jamaica had the infrastructure for a massive pirate fleet. Since Morgan was the greatest of the Jamaican pirates his story embodies all the aspects of the quintessential Jamaican pirate. He had to work within the system and chose his targets based on profitability including the taxes he would have to pay. Morgan received no support from the British government during his expeditions keeping with the British policy of low risk high reward. The money he plundered from the Spanish ended up in the Jamaican economy. His attacks affected the Spanish physically and psychologically making the cost of the attacks greater than the treasure stolen. His story as the greatest Jamaican pirate showed the lengths the British were willing to go to covering for pirates and the benefit they gained from piracy.

Little is known about the early life of Henry Morgan. His portrait shows him as a man of medium build with long brown hair and a pencil mustache. Exquemelin claimed he was a poor man who immigrated to the Caribbean as an indentured servant.<sup>106</sup> Other evidence suggests that

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<sup>106</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.,* 32.

came to Jamaica as a soldier on the 1655 expedition to capture the island, and after completing his service became a privateer or moved to Barbados.<sup>107</sup> Leslie claimed he was a man of good birth but also took the indentured servant line.<sup>108</sup> Morgan always stated that he was never a servant to anyone, but either way he became a pirate in his 30's in Jamaica during the 1660's. He distinguished himself on three or four unknown pirate voyages where he emerged as a captain and this is where the story of the greatest buccaneer in history starts.

Morgan's voyages were not only the greatest Jamaican pirate voyages, but they were also the last major voyages from British Jamaica. Morgan's first accomplishment as a captain was taking the small island of St. Catherine which he captured and held for a short time. At the time Thomas Moodyford was governor of Jamaica, and rather than fully commissioning pirates as Thomas Lynch did, Moodyford would issue either blank commissions or after the fact commissions.<sup>109</sup> This allowed the British a couple of advantages in the way they could manage their pirates. First, the pirates were able to attack targets of their choice. Pirates could change targets based on their strength or targets of opportunity. Secondly, it allowed the British plausible deniability. The British could continue to use pirates a paramilitary force without causing the Spanish to resort to a full-scale war. Into this world Morgan started on his famous pirate career.

Morgan's first major attack was against the town of Porto Bello which catapulted Morgan to fame and bolstered his reputation to build larger expeditions later. Porto Bello was a sleepy Spanish town that saw activity only a couple times a year as a pick up point for the treasure fleet. Porto Bello had gold from South America as well as gold from the Pacific carried across the

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<sup>107</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 46.

<sup>108</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 108.

<sup>109</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 29.

Isthmus of Panama.<sup>110</sup> The town had about 500 families making it large enough to be worth attacking but not large enough to have a major military presence.<sup>111</sup> Porto Bello gathered treasure and goods throughout the year until the treasure fleet arrived making it a prime target for pirates. Despite it being a prime target Porto Bello was not prepared for attack the militia was ill-trained and all the weapons were stored in the fort rather than the homes for quick responses..<sup>112</sup> Porto Bello presented Morgan an excellent target. A sleepy Spanish town with untrained militia forces fighting pirates who were professionals.

Morgan's strategy for capturing Porto Bello involved three phases. First the pirates needed surprise to take the town by storm and not allow the militia to assemble. Then Morgan needed to capture the forts to control the town to dislodge any defenders who made it to the fort. Finally, then the looting started. If an object was worth its weight in the ship they would sell it in Jamaica.

News traveled slowly in the Caribbean, so the pirates chose to use the element of surprise. The reason pirate attacks were so successful was they came in from nowhere and left with little ability for pursuit. After giving up on Cromwell's dream of conquering the Caribbean the British switched to using privateers as raiders instead of trying to conquer territory. This created unique situations for both the British and the Spanish. The British could no longer try and capture colonies, but they were able to effectively raid and disrupt Spanish efforts. This ended up effectively building up their small empire while hurting the Spanish. The Spanish on

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<sup>110</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 48.

<sup>111</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 115.

<sup>112</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 57.

the other hand faced the much larger problem of defending from random attacks. The Spanish could not defend from concentrated pirate attacks nor could they dislodge the British from Jamaica. This meant that the majority of the Spanish budget in the new world went to defense because they needed the protection.<sup>113</sup> The privateers effectively became an insurgency attacking when they wanted, forcing the Spanish to be constantly vigilant, and fading away into the background when the attack was over.

The defense of Porto Bello hinged on the Spanish ability to hold the fort. The capture of the fort became the major tactical problem for Morgan in capturing the town. Once he owned the fort, it was left to looting and the pirates had free reign. The fort looked out to the sea and the pirates did not have the guns they would need to try and shell the forts. To deal with this Morgan landed outside of town and set up a surprise attack.<sup>114</sup> The surprised town would also not be able get to the fort in time and the nearest help would have to come from across the mountains in Panama. He captured a sentry to gain intelligence on how to best attack the town.<sup>115</sup> Morgan was now ready, he knew the route he needed to take and had a strategy that could get him around the forts he then prepared his attack.

Morgan attacked the town before dawn trying to keep as many men from getting to the fort for defense as he could. The governor woke up and tried to rally the militia but was only able to gather a few men and brought them to the fort.<sup>116</sup> The pirates then went to the church where some of the town's members were hiding and captured the monks and nuns there and forced

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<sup>113</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*.

<sup>114</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007.

<sup>115</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 116.

<sup>116</sup> Leslie, 118.

them to carry ladders up to the walls of the forts.<sup>117</sup> The pirates use of religious figures as human shields was intended to force the Spanish to stop firing but the Spanish did not. However, the human shields were still effective because of the small number of defenders that actually made it to the fort, and the pirates were able to get the ladders up to the wall and start the assault of the fort. Those present said that the governor conducted himself well and killed several of the pirates but in the end, he fell in combat with the rest of the soldiers and anyone else who resisted. Then the pirates started looting.

While the British government used privateers as a political tool the pirates were not in it for king and country, they were in it for the money. Pirates were so effective for the British because they were low risk high reward.<sup>118</sup> Failure for the pirates cost the British nothing and their success meant only money for the British. The pirates were not trying to conquer territory they simply wanted plunder. Pirate treasure was not merely gold and gems it was anything of value. So, the pirates not only sacked anything of value in the forts and port, they also forced residents to tell them the location of any other items of value.

The pirates raped and tortured the residents of Porto Bello to try and get any information on valuables. Once the pirates captured the town they would stay in it for weeks, in Porto Bello they stayed fifteen days.<sup>119</sup> During these fifteen days Alexander Exquemelin, one of the pirates who was on the expedition, recorded the torture in great detail. Exquemelin's book would become a best seller and eventually one of the foundational sources in the history of piracy in the

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<sup>117</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 51.

<sup>118</sup> Beattie, *British Privateering Voyages of the Early Eighteenth Century*, 6.

<sup>119</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 53.

Caribbean. His account after each city Morgan sacked describes in gruesome detail the torture and rape that happened in the aftermath of the capture. Over the course of the 15 days the pirates abused the townspeople and there was no regard for life it was all about debauchery and finding more gold. Not wanting to fight any more but to go spend the money an approaching Spanish army stopped the pirates.

The Spanish started assembling a relief army in Panama to bring Porto Bello back under control but it would ultimately end with ransom negotiations with the pirates.<sup>120</sup> The Spanish power in the New World was centered around Mexico City and Lima where the Viceroy were stationed.<sup>121</sup> After that the next stations of powers would be other major trading cities such as Panama, Cartagena, or Havana. With actual royal help being too far away in the capitals it was down to the territorial capitals, and Panama was the closest city with a force that could help.<sup>122</sup> A few survivors escaped to Panama and the governor wrote to Lima for support and started to assemble a force of his own. After marching his men over the mountains, he camped in the mountains outside of Porto Bello. With a limited and hastily assembled force Don Juan was not confident in his ability to fight Morgan. He then opened negotiations with Morgan. Morgan asked for a ransom of 350,000 pesos.<sup>123</sup> The Spanish were unable to pay and countered with a lower offer. At this point neither force wanted to fight. The pirates had no interest in a battle if it was not going to gain them more money so they could not raise the price further. The Spanish on the other hand were not convinced they would win the battle against Morgan's forces who were equally well equipped and better trained than the Spanish while holding the defensive position. Since neither side wanted to fight and the Spanish needed the city back, they countered with

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<sup>120</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 71.

<sup>121</sup> Duncan, "The Conquest."

<sup>122</sup> Duncan.

<sup>123</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 31.

what they could pay, 100,000 pesos. The pirates accepted the lower payment for several reasons. One, there was little more money to be gained from staying in Porto Bello where they had obtained almost everything of value. Two, the pirates themselves were starting to become sick and needed to leave town. Three, there was no point in fighting the Spanish for more money than the Spanish were going to be able to give and risk losing the easy money with a deadly battle. The Spanish sent mules with the ransom into town and Morgan and his men prepared to leave Porto Bello behind with over 250,000 pesos now in tow from the spoils.<sup>124</sup>

The expedition was an amazing success from the British perspective. As the pirates set sail for Jamaica with their fortune all the money the pirates brought back would end up back in Jamaica. Charles Leslie, chronicler of Jamaican history, later mentions that once the pirates got back to Jamaica the goal of the town was to get the treasure from the pirates and into the pockets of those on the island.<sup>125</sup> Morgan and his men participated in the same vices that the crews of Brasilano and Davis did and spent their money much in the same way. Not only was the attack on Porto Bello a significant blow against the Spanish, it was a significant victory for the English. The Spanish needed to start increasing the protection for their towns as well as their ships, and at the time Spain frankly did not have the money to do so. Then the English could claim ignorance of the privateers. With no war between Britain and Spain the British, were still looking for ways to gain power in the new world without causing war. Britain would recall the governor of Jamaica as a token apology, who often returned to the post in a few years, and replaced Thomas Moodyford with Thomas Lynch and piracy in the Caribbean would be no worse off. The Spanish could do no more without risking a war in Europe that they thought they would lose.

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<sup>124</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 118.

<sup>125</sup> Leslie, 120.

The governor of Panama Don Juan was sent to prison in Lima for paying the ransom to the pirates and failing to defend Porto Bello. The struggle he faced was the same as many Spanish governors. He had very little he could do against the English. The Spanish could not stop them from building pirate forces because the British were letting them assemble in their colonies. The Spanish did not have the forces necessary to invade Jamaica. Finally, the pirates could attack where they wanted. When the Spanish amassed forces the pirates would simply attack somewhere else. This would not be the end for Don Juan in this story. He would spend the next couple years fighting legal battles after his arrest where he was acquitted and return to his post in Panama, just in time for Morgan to return.

As discussed, earlier pirate treasure was regulated both by the government and the crew itself and Morgan's crew was no different. The state taxed pirates, first twenty percent of the money from any prize captured at sea went to the admiralty.<sup>126</sup> Then the king had his share of any prize money as well. However, the treasure Morgan captured on land was not subject to any taxes. Which meant that the money he brought back from Porto Bello was not subject to taxation. This drove Morgan's decision to attack targets on land because greater share of the profits meant that he could have a larger crew and still pay them while ensuring a large enough force to attack. The pirates had contracts based on rank, performance in battle, and injuries. As the Admiral Morgan would get ten shares. The captains would each get five. Any Specialist, carpenters, doctors, or men of similar skill would get two. Finally, the men would each get one share. Acts of bravery could be paid in a specific number of share and injuries paid out as well. All in all, Morgan's men came back to Jamaica with several years' worth of salary to spend, but the money was soon dried up and the pirates prepared to attack again.

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<sup>126</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007.

The second of Morgan's three voyages was the sacking of Maracaibo which by the standards of many other pirates would have been their most successful voyage, but usually is portrayed as smaller interlude in Henry Morgan's saga. This voyage truly showed his ability to command men and get out of bad situations. It also showed that once the pirates left port they were on their own.

Morgan had his men rendezvous at Ile-a-Vaca, a small island off the southern coast of modern Haiti. As admiral of the pirates all of Morgan's expeditions had more than one ship each with its own crew and not all the crews were Englishmen from Jamaica. He had French and Dutchmen in particular as pirates from all throughout the Caribbean came to join him because of his reputation. They joined out of hopes of a payday rather than an ideal to fight for the British or against the Spanish. He brought all the captains together to evaluate their strength and decide on a target. They looked at the time of year plus their combined strength to determine the best location to attack and they decided on Cartagena. When his captains were all aboard his flag ship for a planning meeting, the ship's powder magazine exploded.<sup>127</sup> Exquemelin would go on to blame the French privateers on board for the explosion, but there is no one is really sure what caused it. Exquemelin does this because they would later find Spanish commissions aboard French ships for raiding the English.<sup>128</sup> In all likelihood however, the French stood to make more money by joining Morgan rather than sabotaging him. The result of the explosion was that Morgan lost 320 men, including all of his captains, and his largest ship. Morgan by some miracle survived being thrown from ship and was picked up from the wreckage by one of his other ships.

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<sup>127</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 56.

<sup>128</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, 57.

The upshot of all this was that they had to change targets. They decided to instead sail south from Jamaica to the town Maracaibo.

The geography of Maracaibo was important to the story. Maracaibo sits at the choke point of a bay in northern Venezuela where it then proceeds to a lake with a second town of Gibraltar at the southern end of the lake. The towns were Spanish trading towns with no significance to either the colonial administration or the treasure fleet.

To capture Maracaibo the pirates had to get to the south side of the city and access it from the lake. Morgan had to put himself under the guns of the fort to do this. He chose to brave the city's guns and run the fort and was rewarded. He then took his men and captured the small garrison at the fort.<sup>129</sup> Morgan now had control of both cities and was prepared to start sacking the cities. Maracaibo and Gibraltar were empty upon the arrival of the pirates. The towns' inhabitants had heard the pirates were headed their way and gone to hide in the hills and forests surrounding the town.<sup>130</sup> The pirates continued down to Gibraltar and found the town in much the same condition and after skirmishes with some of the soldiers left behind the pirates had access to both cities and began to sack them

Over the three weeks the pirates stayed in Maracaibo where their goal was to find as much of value as they could whether the inhabitants had hidden it or taken it with them. Morgan and his men engaged in three weeks of torturing any Spaniard they could find. This torture was particularly vindictive because the pirates were forced to search harder than normal for their

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<sup>129</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 122.

<sup>130</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 57.

treasure.<sup>131</sup> Though Exquemelin claimed that most of the worst offenses were committed away from Morgan while he was off in the woods for a couple days searching for refugees to rob, though that did not mean he did not torture.<sup>132</sup> The pirates boon came when they found a slave who had run away and was willing to tell them the location of the inhabitants.<sup>133</sup> The pirates then tore upon these new prisoners with the same vigor they had upon those they had used on their original prisoners. Exquemelin spends pages on all these atrocities sparing little detail to describe the measures the pirates took to get their pay. And after all of it the pirates came away with a successful haul and turned their sails back to Jamaica.

The pirates were met at the mouth of the bay by a squadron of Spanish ships. While help had not come on the land in this case the pirates were met cornered and with the option of surrender or fight. Morgan convinced his captains and they chose to fight their way out. To do this he put six of his men on a ship loaded with gunpowder and sent it ahead of the fleet. While the Spanish were trying to figure out what was happening the men fixed the course of the ship and then escaped into a lifeboat. The fire ship headed towards the Spanish ships with the powder fused to explode. The ship got close enough to the Spanish flag ship to blow it up and the pirates were able to use the disarray to escape out of the rest of the squadron. In the end Morgan made it back to Jamaica with a successful treasure haul and a second successful voyage.

After Morgan returned there was a short lull in the privateering war between Spain and England. At this point there started to be a legitimate shift in British policy away from consistent

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<sup>131</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 125.

<sup>132</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 62.

<sup>133</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, 54.

use of privateering and working to try and open new world trading rather than raiding. Charles Leslie started to change his discussion of Jamaica as a pirate colony to a plantation colony.<sup>134</sup> It is also at this point the colonial secretary changed from Lord North to Lord Arlington. Lord North had been an extreme proponent of using privateering to break Spanish rule in the New World. Lord Arlington took a far more diplomatic approach to Caribbean politics and actively worked to stop escalation.<sup>135</sup> This was a drastic change from previous attitudes. The prevailing logic in the Caribbean had been escalation because no one had enough resources to truly destabilize the Caribbean and the British could not gain enough money from Jamaica to make it worth it. From then on it would mostly be factions in Jamaica that wanted privateers, and the British crown would take a policy that as Lord North put it, “War was neither honorable nor profitable.”<sup>136</sup> This change in attitude came after years of tacit approval by King Charles II and ushers in the next wave of British foreign policy going forward.<sup>137</sup> From then on it would be only those in Jamaica and a few of the more militant protestants advocating for piracy for a combination of wanting the golden days to return and wanting to destroy the Catholic empire of Spain.<sup>138</sup> Jamaica would also gradually come around to Lord North’s decision as more wealthy planters took over, but the epic saga of Henry Morgan was not yet over.

As 1669 approached and Morgan’s previous voyage ended, he came back and found he would not be commissioned to take another voyage. Many of the pirates would continue on to Tortuga and either take up residence there and farm or get a job with the French, a sample of

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<sup>134</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 146.

<sup>135</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 144.

<sup>136</sup> Earle, 144.

<sup>137</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, “Early English Jamaica without Pirates,” 355.

<sup>138</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 135.

what would happen after the British stopped supporting piracy<sup>139</sup> During this time the Spanish Queen had authorized Spanish privateering on British ships as reprisals for Morgan's raids. Moodyford continued writing to Arlington but was told to wait while they were at peace. This back and forth went on over the course of months. Once again because of the distance Moodyford had to wait to receive word and would often hear other things besides piracy. Moodyford even worked with the Spanish governor in Santiago to try and sort out the peace with the Spanish governor and he showed Moodyford the documents that said they not at war. The peace. This all came into a head by the time Spanish captured three English ships. In response Moodyford started trying to reassemble pirates for the defense of Jamaica.<sup>140</sup> Once the defense was settled Moodyford tried to build another pirate fleet for offense as well, but they are once again denied permission to start. But they eventually started to the build the fleet and prepared them for a counter strike. Then came the most pivotal and questionable point in Morgan's raids.

When Moodyford felt he could wait no longer he gave Morgan the authority to build a crew and attack. Morgan left Jamaica and started assembling a fleet at Ile-a-Vaca once again. Then the all-important letter came back from Lord North telling the privateers to "stay in the same state."<sup>141</sup> Which to Lord North probably meant preparation for defense of Jamaica and not raiding. However, since Morgan had already been sent out Moodyford could then legally argue that he had followed orders. In reality however, this would all come down to the results. If the voyage was a success and the English profited and the Spanish were still unable and unwilling to start a war the English would follow Lord North's line the same way Moodyford had and continue putting the Spanish off and offering future peace this time in all likelihood. If the

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<sup>139</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 134.

<sup>140</sup> Earle, 137.

<sup>141</sup> Earle, 144.

invasion failed or started escalated the situation with Spain both Morgan and Moodyford would likely be found guilty. With their fate back in England now in the balance Morgan was plotting at Ile-a-Vaca

Morgan and his Captains decided that Panama would be the destination of this attack and started sailing towards the main and. Morgan brought a fleet of 37 ships and 2000 men with him on the voyage dwarfing his other fleets.<sup>142</sup> This was not a military expedition the soldiers would not merely go where they were told. This was because Morgan's crew contained significant numbers of men from different nationalities. If a crew did not like the target all they had to do was leave. Knowing this Morgan had to set his sights on a target that was both prestigious and attainable. Morgan prepared his men and tried to convince them that Panama should be the prime target for two reasons.<sup>143</sup> First, the President of Panama had issued letter of marque against the English. Second, and most importantly it was a city that was supposed to be flowing with silver and gold. Panama was the termination point for the Manilla Galleons sailing with Chinese goods from the east and the silver mines of Peru. This image of the great trade city was the blow the pirates wanted to strike. With this in mind the pirates sailed towards Panama.

The adventure itself played out much like many of Morgan's other adventures. However, in this case the Spanish knew Morgan was coming. He first recaptured the fort at St. Catherine in a fake battle securing guides.<sup>144</sup> Morgan then garrisoned his flank out the mouth of the river and sailed up the river to prepare to reach Panama. Once he reached the city the citizens much like those in Maracaibo fled while the Governor prepared to give battle.

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<sup>142</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 4.

<sup>143</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007, 169.

<sup>144</sup> Earle, 172.

The battle of Panama took place in the open plains outside the city very differently than most other pirate battles which were centered around capturing forts. The pirates took their 1800 men against Don Juan and his 1200 men and 400 horsemen. Morgan held the high ground and was able to flank the foot soldiers. The pirates also used modern European line of battle tactics.<sup>145</sup> These pirates were far more experienced than the Spanish soldiers who were long removed from the days of conquistadors who had to fight to conquer the New World. Spain had obtained mostly unchallenged control of any city not on the Caribbean coast. With this the Spanish charge failed and the pirate flank succeeded with the Spanish taking hundreds of casualties while the pirates took a few dozen. The battle of Panama was over while and sack of Panama had begun.

Morgan and his men spent three months in Panama while they raided and looked for more treasure.<sup>146</sup> Before the battle Don Juan had set up gun powder in the city in case the battle was lost and after the defeat set it off. Morgan and his men showed up to city that was mostly destroyed, and they were once again forced to search for much of their wealth. Morgan repeated the horrors of his other voyages murdering, raping, and torturing all while looking for more treasure. Morgan also sent captured ships from the harbor out in an attempt to capture a treasure ship but were unable to catch it.<sup>147</sup> Eventually the men grew restless in Panama and the Viceroy had managed to start marching a force up from Lima and it was time to divide the treasure.

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<sup>145</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel'd Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack'd Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.*, 24.

<sup>146</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 139.

<sup>147</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007.

There is much debate around the division of the treasure from the sack of Panama as some claim Morgan cheated them out of much of the money. While the division of treasure was considered “sacred” amongst the pirates there is no doubt that cheating must have happened with men in a profession centered around stealing. Leslie says that Morgan made 400,000 pesos from the voyage.<sup>148</sup> This claim is years after and would have been pulled from official numbers. Others such as Exquemelin who was there, don’t put a number on it but said that the average man got 200 pieces of eight, small compared to the voyages of Porto Bello and Maracaibo.<sup>149</sup> What is for sure is that the division of treasure was done on the eastern shore of Panama rather than back in Jamaica as it typically was. Exquemelin claimed that Morgan kept extra for his companions. After dividing the treasure, Morgan made himself scarce and sailed back to Jamaica with some loyal crew mates. This is in stark contrast to all his other voyages. While he still brought in a considerable haul for himself there was no massive celebration recorded in Jamaica for Morgan’s men. However, those in England felt very different.

The sack of Panama may not have felt like a victory to the men that Morgan left on the shores of Panama with little treasure and nothing else to do and no ability to raid further, but back in Jamaica and England it was a huge success. Morgan and Moodyford were both recalled by Lord North and technically placed under arrest. However, when they got to England their reception was positive. Both would return to the Caribbean and Morgan was even consulted by

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<sup>148</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor.*

<sup>149</sup> Exquemelin, Ringrose, and Bonne-Maison, *Bucaniers of America, or, A True Account of the Most Remarkable Assaults Committed of Late Years upon the Coasts of the West-Indies by the Bucaniers of Jamaica and Tortuga, Both English and French : Wherein Are Contained More Especially, the Unparallel’d Exploits of Sir Henry Morgan, Our English Jamaican Hero, Who Sack’d Puerto Velo, Burnt Panama, &c.,* 37.

King Charles II for colonial policy. Two years later Morgan and Moodyford would return with Morgan now as the Lieutenant Governor of the colony.

What set Morgan apart from other pirates was his ending. Many pirates have sacked towns and sunk ships, though few quite as grand. Many pirates had brought mountains of gold back to Jamaica and partied it all away in a week. Morgan on the other hand returned to Jamaica with land and titles. He was considered a hero in England and he was celebrated in stories that captured the public's imagination.<sup>150</sup> Morgan occupies a place in pirates only also occupied with Sir Francis Drake with a happy ending. Morgan's piracy would have a legacy and that is what set him apart.

Morgan's life as governor of Jamaica was defined by his time as a privateer, he would continue to want to use piracy as policy in Jamaica. Morgan earned a salary of 600 pounds and prepared to start his new life as a gentleman.<sup>151</sup> However Morgan never really lost the idea that he was a pirate. Emissaries to the island found it hard to believe the promises of peace coming from the governor of Jamaica when his second in command was the most infamous pirate of the age who after the meeting could be found in the tavern swapping sea stories with privateers old and new.<sup>152</sup> As England was switching to a peaceful approach in the Caribbean led to two factions the so called plunder and trade factions.<sup>153</sup> Morgan would join the plunder faction. One thing that did change was Morgan found religion, with the militant protestants.<sup>154</sup> These men longed for the days of Cromwell from 30 years before when the mere fact of Spain being a Catholic nation was reason to go to war. These values lined up perfectly with Morgan's desire to

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<sup>150</sup> Jowitt et al., *The Culture of Piracy, 1580-1630 : English Literature and Seaborne Crime*, 4.

<sup>151</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007.

<sup>152</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*.

<sup>153</sup> Hanna, 122.

<sup>154</sup> Hanna, 135.

continue to push for piracy. The rest of Morgan's life passed fairly normally. He used his knowledge from his days as a pirate to organize defense of the island during two invasions from the Spanish.<sup>155</sup> But eventually Morgan's hard drinking life did him in. He died in 1688 from alcoholism. He was given a 21-gun salute from the ships in the harbor.<sup>156</sup> While Morgan's death did not coincide directly with the end of the golden age, he certainly was the high point.

Henry Morgan sits among the few pirates who lived out their lives happily and rich. His success ultimately justified his actions in a time where piracy was winding down in the Caribbean. He fulfilled the ultimate dream of the British where a pirate could strike successfully at even the largest Spanish cities with no fear of reprisal. His usefulness in the long term justified his success as Morgan was the pinnacle and the close of the golden age of piracy. Morgan's life is a case study for the way the British used pirates. They gave a Morgan a port to build a crew and safely conduct raids, but nothing else. Morgan served as a part of the British system and both he and the British gained from his spoils. Finally, Morgan inflicted defeats to the Spanish that they never thought possible giving the British time to build their strength in the New World.

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<sup>155</sup> Hanna, 133.

<sup>156</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007.

## **The Decline of Jamaican Piracy: The Hunters Become the Hunted**

As the New World changed with rising populations, and the increase in trade, piracy changed as well. This led to a different style of life in the British Caribbean. Instead of welcoming the buccaneers, the colonists' attitudes started to change. Piracy began as a patriotic cause for the British to dislodge Spanish power. Then it became a necessary evil as piracy became a stain on the British record as a world power. Then finally, as the money in Jamaica increased, piracy became a nuisance. Piracy as an insurgence against Spain was initially supported by the British colonists, but as this support waned, the pirates lost their protection and credibility. The next generation of pirates were called freebooters and were fundamentally different from buccaneers because they did not have the support of a nation.<sup>157</sup> Except in times of war, freebooters were not supported by a nation but raided what they could and lived on the fringes of the New World. This was the end of the golden age of piracy. Though pirates still attracted both public and government attention, they were now fewer in number, and much less successful than before. Changing public opinion, increased plantation profits, and increased military support created a desire for stability in the Caribbean and led to the end of the British support of piracy.

One of the most important changes surrounding British policy in Jamaica was profitability. The narrative changed as Charles Leslie recounted the history of Jamaica when he wrote about the 1680's. Emphasis shifted from piracy and conquest to the sugar economy and colonial administration. The change marked a departure from the original purpose of the colony. Initially, Jamaica was part of Cromwell's Western Design to conquer the Spanish New World. However, the purpose of Jamaica had still followed the Western Design, to disrupt Spanish

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<sup>157</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 375.

power in the New World. Thirty years later as the economy evolved, and more British settlers joined the colony, Jamaica became a profitable colony outside of piracy. When Lord Arlington took charge of colonial affairs before Morgan's raid on Panama, he wrote to Thomas Moodyford saying "War is neither honorable nor profitable."<sup>158</sup> While not the only person to have this change, his attitude showed a distinct new style in colonial leadership. Money was always what mattered most from Jamaica and piracy was no longer the primary source of income from the New World. England grew its empire and would change from fighting the Spanish to the French over the next century.

Jamaica was now a plantation colony rather than a pirate colony. One aspect of Jamaica that changed was families started to settle rather than just young men.<sup>159</sup> This was another change that brought the colony from a military base to a colonial destination. Families in the colony also meant there was a chance that some wealth would stay there, and investment could be permanent.<sup>160</sup> Once these settlers came, Jamaica started to build a plantation society. Piracy was not what the new settlers needed. Jamaica was also the biggest British colony in the Caribbean bringing more focus and royal attention to build the infrastructure.<sup>161</sup>

The change in colonial style also meant a change in government. Thomas Lynch was put back in charge when Moodyford and Morgan were recalled. Thomas Lynch, encouraged piracy in an official way. His pirates had Letters of Marque before their expeditions and he did not ride the line as Moodyford did. Lynch's reign saw the first fall in piracy as he stopped giving the Letters of Marque. Even when Morgan came back as Lieutenant Governor the attitude on the

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<sup>158</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007.

<sup>159</sup> Burnard and Hart, "Kingston, Jamaica, and Charleston, South Carolina: A New Look at Comparative Urbanization in Plantation Colonial British America."

<sup>160</sup> Robertson, "Eighteenth-Century Jamaica's Ambivalent Cosmopolitanism."

<sup>161</sup> Zijlstra, "Competing for European Settlers," 154.

island had changed. While piracy would not truly die until 1715 in Jamaica the change in official policy was decisive.

The increase in British colonial success in Jamaica had another side effect. The British now had colonies that were valuable enough for pirates to raid. French and Dutch pirates that had previously served with the British started to raid Jamaican shipping.<sup>162</sup> These pirates who would have served with the British if it was still the best way to make money switched sides. This started an important change in attitude particularly among the wealthy men of Jamaica.<sup>163</sup> Piracy was no longer a boon to them. This new form of piracy took money away from the Jamaicans. The point where chaos no longer turned a profit was the turning point for Jamaica.

Money in a society brings a desire for stability. The most essential thing in Jamaica was no longer fighting the Spanish, rather it was producing enough sugar to turn a profit. Piracy and privateering are inherently unstable. They cannot be ordered where to attack pirates, but are merely told to attack ships from a certain country. Moodyford nor anyone in the British government picked Morgan's targets. He and his crew did that at their gatherings at Isle-a-Vache.<sup>164</sup> Piracy also did not bring in steady profits. Pirate money came in large sums but with long droughts. Piracy was also dangerous to the men who profited from it, where while sugar planting was dangerous work, the men profiting were not the ones in danger. Pirate raids also meant an increase in violence in general. Jamaica would always be on the brink of war with Spain and violent men would always inhabit the colony. What the planters wanted now was peace with Spain to buy and sell their products on their own. This change of attitude led to the demise of piracy in Jamaica. The Jamaicans changed their policy and started only allowing

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<sup>162</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 165.

<sup>163</sup> Lane, 171.

<sup>164</sup> Earle, *The Sack of Panamá*, 2007.

privateers that had a British commission. British commissions then became few and far between outside of major wars. An increase of piracy and an increase in British wealth started to change the attitudes of the British towards the pirates as well.

By 1700 piracy had changed from buccaneers to freebooters.<sup>165</sup> Buccaneers were the pirates of the golden age who raided the Spanish under the protection of the British, French, or Dutch. Freebooters were different as they lived on the fringes of society and raided what they could. There were now larger navies in the new world.<sup>166</sup> For these pirates the world used to be a bigger place. Instead of massive gatherings and expeditions freebooters often had much shorter careers and captured ships on a much smaller scale. Pirates also started raiding different targets choosing ships over cities. It became harder to sell goods and use the money to celebrate. They also often had shorter careers because they were caught much sooner. Rather than live out their careers as the earlier Buccaneers had done these pirates went down in blazes of glory still capturing the same popularity but for a different more brutal reason.

Piracy also lost out as markets opened. Starting in the days of Sir Francis Drake pirates had been part of the rampant smuggling throughout the Caribbean.<sup>167</sup> While free trade would not fully come until the 19th-century trade opened up slightly throughout the 18th century allowed more merchants to earn a steady income and hence smuggled goods themselves in a peaceful Caribbean.<sup>168</sup> This adds to the list of times when piracy began to stunt the growing economy in the Caribbean. Piracy created chaos and it thrived on chaos. Once the playing field of international competition leveled to the point where there was no longer a need to circumvent

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<sup>165</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 374.

<sup>166</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 168.

<sup>167</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 68.

<sup>168</sup> Hanna, 411.

typical international rules to challenge Spanish dominance. The British no longer wanted chaos in the Caribbean they wanted profits through stability.

Another key that drove the British development of Jamaica was the capture of the colony at Suriname. Suriname is a country on the northern coast of South America that the British had originally been trying to build along with Jamaica. Previously, Barbados had been the most important colony, but it was on the edge of the Caribbean and hard to reach.<sup>169</sup> Jamaica started to gain more money and came into the British government's attention. The colony of Suriname was captured by the Dutch in 1667. What this did was drive these settlers to the open land in Jamaica. That gave more power to Jamaica because a large population was the ultimate form of power in a colony.<sup>170</sup> Jamaica became a colony that could grow and build a sugar economy separate from the pirate economy. Jamaica was the preeminent British colony in the Caribbean taking more of the royal money and attention than other places like Barbados and the Bahamas.<sup>171</sup> The British used Jamaica as their primary point of power in the Caribbean and Jamaica would reflect British goals in the Caribbean. Charles II changed the policy of England away from piracy in Jamaica toward plantations. The pirate legacy in Jamaica was pushed aside to make room for the new way of life.

As the attitude towards pirates changed, their trials took on a new light. Pirate trials were handled through the admiralty courts in British territories.<sup>172</sup> Admiralty courts were set up by the Lords of the Admiralty and had jurisdiction over any kind of legal dispute that happened at sea. Admiralty courts had a specific set of laws set to govern pirates and in most places, the laws

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<sup>169</sup> Justin Roberts, "Surrendering Surinam: The Barbadian Diaspora and the Expansion of the English Sugar Frontier, 1650–75," 225.

<sup>170</sup> Zijlstra, "Competing for European Settlers," 150.

<sup>171</sup> Zijlstra, 226.

<sup>172</sup> Norton, "Classification and Coercion: The Destruction of Piracy in the English Maritime System."

were different for the same crime that would have been committed on land.<sup>173</sup> This left pirate trials as their own mysterious category of law for the average citizen. As the golden age ended two kinds of trials emerged. Some trials were sensationalized. Much has been made throughout the British Empire of the trials of those like Calico Jack and Captain Kidd. These trials captured the public imagination and were recorded in histories like Exquemelin's, *Buccaneers of America* and Captain Johnson's *General History of the Pirates*. Newspapers kept the public interested as well. In addition, pirate trials also represented the struggle of the lower classes versus the upper class.<sup>174</sup> These proceedings played out like celebrity trials and built on the mystery and life of freedom that pirates had. Most pirate trials were not like this. The majority of these trials were often single day affairs or even trials for one pirate after the other.<sup>175</sup> The reality for pirates was that most of the time if one was caught on a pirate ship by the authorities a trial was swift and justice ended in death. Pirates were found guilty at least two-thirds of the time.<sup>176</sup> As the odds for pirate trials continued to worsen pirates started to use coercion as an excuse and defense.<sup>177</sup> This was also not always a lie. Pirates had changed from the early days of Jamaica where ships were the limiting factor pirates and anyone with one could build their own crew.<sup>178</sup>

When pirates captured a ship there were three options for those on the ship, death, marooning, or joining. Pirates would press anyone with skills such as carpentry or surgery, but common seamen sometimes were as well to replenish losses. This excuse worked with inconsistent results but if a sailor could prove their life was in danger and that they had the pirate

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<sup>173</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 202.

<sup>174</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 374.

<sup>175</sup> Gibbs, "The Brevity and Severity of 'Golden Age' Piracy Trials."

<sup>176</sup> Gibbs.

<sup>177</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 376.

<sup>178</sup> Carla Gardina Pestana, "Early English Jamaica without Pirates," 335.

had not attacked a ship since they were pressed into service it could be successful. Pirates also asked for the juries to be seamen.<sup>179</sup> They wanted men who understood what it was like to be at sea and understand how bad it could be to be pressed into service either as a pirate or a merchant. Nor did other people understand the trials of sea life and what it took to be a pirate or understand the laws. Most trials were the second kind. While attitudes and definitions toward pirates changed throughout time the harshness did not. What changed over the years was the definition of piracy. The British government had always claimed to take a hard stance against piracy and even back to the days of the Elizabethan pirates the British severely punished pirates.<sup>180</sup> What changed was that the way the British government wanted to use extra military operations in the navy.

Throughout the late 17th and early 18th century the British built up their navy strong enough to challenge the Spanish in the New World and provide protection to their colonies. This meant that the British military became powerful enough to establish control over a colony rather than relying on pirates. Piracy had always had an ambiguous role.<sup>181</sup> It was mostly handled through implicit agreements rather than explicit contracts despite the presence of letters of marque. Privateers were difficult to control or know when they would be successful. It was far easier to post facto approve a pirate's action as a privateer. Pirates were also outside the law and illegal.<sup>182</sup> No one would come to their aid if they were captured by the Spanish and allowed the British plausible deniability. A ship with a letter of marque was likely to be cause for conflict. Pirates who received letters of marque at the end of their voyage could not be legally traced back to the British government. A state needs a large infrastructure to control things with military and

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<sup>179</sup> Gibbs, "The Brevity and Severity of 'Golden Age' Piracy Trials."

<sup>180</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 58.

<sup>181</sup> Norton, "Classification and Coercion: The Destruction of Piracy in the English Maritime System," 151.

<sup>182</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 8.

legal systems.<sup>183</sup> Early Jamaica had so few people and reach that at the start it had very few laws.<sup>184</sup> What this meant is that violence was not handled by the state justice could be dispensed from those with power. This would change in the early 18th century.

From 1680-1720 the British navy doubled in size.<sup>185</sup> This would be the change the British needed to bring order to the Caribbean. Along with the growing economy, the growing military also made stability possible in Jamaica. Pirates had been an important part of the defense of the colony up until 1715. The British simply did not have the manpower they would need militarily and everyone in Jamaica was expected to survive in a militia to defend the colony.<sup>186</sup> Just as on the land sailors were expected to defend the colony in a makeshift navy. When the colony was threatened the governor ordered all ships in the harbor used for the defense of the colony. Until 1715 these ships were manned by pirates.<sup>187</sup> They wanted to defend Jamaica because it was their haven. However, their readiness was never guaranteed and would only be present if Jamaica wanted to harbor pirates. The change away from pirates in the economy had to be mirrored by a change in defense as well.

The navy became a much more practicable form of defense because peace bloomed in the colony. The years of fighting had taken their toll and the Spanish knew they could not enforce their will and acknowledged British presence in the new world as legal. There was no longer a need for a pirate defense force all the time. The second thing that brought peace was money.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Norton, "Classification and Coercion: The Destruction of Piracy in the English Maritime System," 1539.

<sup>184</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 87.

<sup>185</sup> Norton, "Classification and Coercion: The Destruction of Piracy in the English Maritime System," 1551.

<sup>186</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 187.

<sup>187</sup> Beattie, *British Privateering Voyages of the Early Eighteenth Century*, 9.

<sup>188</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 201.

Just as the Spanish had to play their part in bringing peace by acknowledging British settlements. The British had a part to play in peace and it was the change in the administration of the colony from a military base to a plantation system that changed it. Peace treaties between the British and the Spanish now applied throughout their empires. There was no longer a separate code for rules for the colonies.

British foreign policy no longer required separate rules in the colonies as they were ready to conform to international law again. The British had to use pirates to try and stop the international balance of power from being so heavily favorable to the Spanish. The British were unwilling to acknowledge that the Spanish had the rights to all the land and refused to sit back and let the current international order play itself out.<sup>189</sup> But they were only able to gain so much through wars. They used piracy as an insurgency without starting a war but keeping up constant hostility in the new world allowed to British to exact losses on the Spanish.<sup>190</sup> By the end of the 17th century they had accomplished this goal. While there would still be fighting in Europe and the world throughout the 18th century the fight would shift to the so-called second hundred years war between the British and French. After the war of Spanish succession ended in 1713 the Spanish would take a tertiary role in these wars as the Austrians, Prussians, and Dutch took their places on the international stage. By this point piracy had ultimately outlived its usefulness for the British and the pirate hunting operations began.

The British started hunting pirates in earnest after they were no longer using them. The first anti buccaneer squadron entered the Caribbean in 1687 bringing with it a new era for Jamaica.<sup>191</sup> The anti-pirate operations moved to the Dutch Virgin Islands and French Hispaniola.

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<sup>189</sup> Fitzgibbons, "The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell's Bid for Empire, by Carla Gardina Pestana," 5.

<sup>190</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 202.

<sup>191</sup> Lane, 187.

These efforts changed the landscape as pirates were no longer as welcome in Jamaica as buccaneers seamen who had previously been recruits for the British cause attacked.

Piracy performed like an insurgency for the British and when the attitude of the population and government changed to stop supporting the insurgency it died. But throughout history, pirates, privateers, corsairs, buccaneers, and freebooters were all a slightly different flavor from each other, but what truly changed between each category is how the country felt about it.<sup>192</sup> At the turn of the 18th century Samuel Taylor Coolidge, a colonial businessman, said that no man is a pirate unless his contemporaries agree.<sup>193</sup> Piracy could thrive if they were heroes. Buccaneers gave way to freebooters and freebooters were a nuisance. The definition of a pirate was much harsher suddenly and pirates would get pushed to the edges of society.

The golden age of piracy ended around 1700 however, that was not the end of piracy in Jamaica. The war of Spanish succession from 1703-1715 saw privateers once again in Jamaica, but as actual privateers and not buccaneers. After the wartime build up the British then had a large enough navy to support and enforce British law. They no longer needed pirates for colonial security. However, piracy left a legacy in both the British war with the Spanish and British culture. Piracy forced the Spanish to increase spending to protect their colonies and hurt their economy in multiple ways. First, it forced them to continually pay more for shipping. Second, it changed the flow of Spanish shipping in the Caribbean bringing home good far less often. By the end of the golden age pirates were no longer being cast as the righteous heroes fighting the Spanish were still in some cases seen as the dashing rogue that still occupies the spotlight today.

Piracy left a legacy in Jamaica and the British Empire in both the colonial world and popular culture. Piracy and privateering were not the only things that contributed to the downfall

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<sup>192</sup> Cordingly, *Under the Black Flag*, 2006, xvii.

<sup>193</sup> Hanna, *Pirate Nests and the Rise of the British Empire, 1570-1740*, 5.

of the Spanish. Still they played a major role in the larger British plan to both weaken the Spanish and ensure the survival of British colonies. Piracy fascinated the public from the days of Sir Francis Drake and the golden age only brought it to new heights. From sensational trials to the true stories of Exquemelin and Johnson to Stevenson's fictional tales piracy took its place in popular culture and the image of a pirate during the golden age is what stuck.

British use of pirates had been first and foremost designed to disrupt Spanish prosperity in the New World. While the Spanish empire was not an efficient system with mercantilist ideals and everything running through the port of Seville it would have been far more efficient without the British. British piracy started the Spanish treasure fleet. This meant that deliveries could not be as often or efficient as the Spanish wanted and took considerable money for protection. This protection tax doubled as the golden age ended.<sup>194</sup> The Spanish colonists had to pay more and those back in Spain were as well. This indirect form of loss was one of the primary effects of piracy.<sup>195</sup> The Spanish had to continue to pump more and more resources into protecting a wider network that the British put very little money into disrupting.

The low cost of privateering was one of its greatest advantages. The failure of a privateering voyage cost nothing. The success of a privateering mission was all profit for the British. This is one of the reasons they were heroes because successes were all the public knew.<sup>196</sup> Ventures that went out and failed were forgotten. Since the British rarely commissioned privateers but post facto appointed pirates meant that there did not need to be the pressure on the British. The British could concentrate on an attack and hit one point to make a profit. The Spanish lost money every time the British did not attack because of the cost of protecting the

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<sup>194</sup> Norton, "Classification and Coercion: The Destruction of Piracy in the English Maritime System," 1551.

<sup>195</sup> Lane, *Pillaging the Empire*, 202.

<sup>196</sup> Beattie, *British Privateering Voyages of the Early Eighteenth Century*, 6.

merchant fleets and lost money when the British attacked because the attacks were mostly successful.

Piracy also put money into the British colonies. When writing his history of Jamaica Charles Leslie talked about how much money pirates brought into the fledgling economy.<sup>197</sup> The pirates brought in massive amounts of money. They saved none of it. The parties of Morgan, Brasilano, and Davis just went right back into Jamaica and the pirates left and went back out to sea. The money went to the men who built up Jamaica and started the plantations.

Privateering worked so well for the British because they needed time. The Spanish had been trying to build colonies since 1492 when they first arrived. The British did not have their first colony in the new world until Jamestown in 1607. The British did not have the infrastructure they needed to compete with the Spanish or to run their own society.<sup>198</sup> Therefore the British turned to chaos. Once they had a foothold in the center of the Caribbean, they used it to strike with low to no cost attacks of piracy. This also effectively kept Jamaica as a military base with a navy ready to defend it until they had the colonial society they wanted. Defense was also important because until 1667 the Spanish did not recognize the British holdings in the new world as legal.<sup>199</sup> The British were subject to frequent invasion by the Spanish. In the 50 years from the first British conquest of Jamaica, they had the time they needed to build up their economy.

In this world where the British were building up, they also put pressure on the Spanish through tactics just short of war. The British use of pirates and the policy of no peace beyond the line kept the Spanish and British from full-scale war but competing on the international stage.

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<sup>197</sup> Leslie, *A New History of Jamaica : From the Earliest Accounts, to the Taking of Porto Bello by Vice-Admiral Vernon : In Thirteen Letters from a Gentleman to His Friend ... in Which Are Briefly Interspersed, the Characters of Its Governors and Lieutenant Governor*, 146.

<sup>198</sup> Norton, "Classification and Coercion: The Destruction of Piracy in the English Maritime System," 1539.

<sup>199</sup> Fitzgibbons, "The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell's Bid for Empire, by Carla Gardina Pestana," 2.

This style of warfare benefits the party spending less money. The British were able to claim anti-pirate sentiments while still harboring pirates and because Spain could not conquer the colonies there was nothing they could do about because they were in no position for war in Europe. While the governors of some of the colonies did try to work together, they did not come close to curbing piracy. Additionally, the 12-week minimum for news to travel between the colony and home country meant that most people in the colonies were expected to act on their own.

The gray area of war gave the British the ability to quit piracy when they no longer needed it. Not only was any failed pirate no cost to Britain, but when piracy needed to stop there was no harm to the British. This meant that pirates could not live in Jamaica or be a part of British society. Britain suddenly had what they needed infrastructure wise to hold their colonies without fear of pirate invasion. The British were also in a powerful enough position in Europe to hunt pirates harbored by the Dutch and French colonies.<sup>200</sup> When the profit of piracy dried up the British were no worse off for having used it.

Piracy also left a legacy in British culture. For a time pirates and privateers were heroes. Privateering and piracy represented freedom and a chance to succeed. Throughout the British colonial war's seamen chose to privateer over joining the navy.<sup>201</sup> Privateering provided more freedom and liberty as well as a chance at some of the profits of war. Privateers could choose their own risk and leave situations they thought were too dangerous. Privateers could rise in the ranks far quicker than in the navy.<sup>202</sup> The private navy was a way around much the restrictions of the colonial military.

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<sup>200</sup> Carlile, "Journal of Capt Charles Carlile, HM Ship FRANCIS, Relating the Burning of the TROMPEUSE, Sharp's Hulk and a Storeship for Pirates, St Thomas Island, 1683."

<sup>201</sup> Beattie, *British Privateering Voyages of the Early Eighteenth Century*, 14.

<sup>202</sup> Beattie, 7.

Pirates represented a chance at freedom in a world that was heavily structured. Though privateers and pirates in the golden age had rules if they were going to operate and even taxes, they had to pay it was not working on a farm. The tales of adventure brought many to the sea only to be disillusioned by life in the merchant or navy service. Piracy became another option for those who could not find freedom elsewhere.

Privateers also contributed to the British ideology that they were the underdogs fighting the evil Catholic empire. The role that religion and international competition played at this point could not be overstated. The British felt like they were fighting against heresy and oppression for themselves on a large scale. There was no better way to rally the force as an underdog than to use the scrappy image of a free-roaming pirate. This image was burned into the mind of the British public and contributed in large part to why pirates were viewed as heroes.<sup>203</sup> The mythos of pirates as larger than life heroes fighting for a patriotic cause led to the idea of the suave sea captain that is still present today.

On the other side of popular culture, pirates were sensationalized as villains. The violent exploits of pirates such as Henry Morgan were recorded in best-selling novels. These tales of gruesome horror also made pirates into the villains of the sea. The violence may have been sensationalized but when the pirates stood for trial and some of them matched with the previous stories the idea was ingrained in the public's mind. Pirates were the anti-heroes of the day.

Piracy had a legacy that lasted from the golden age to the present. The British used piracy as an insurgency to take the war to the Spanish in a way that they could not under official means. The British used it to change the international order when it was heavily in favor of the Spanish. They used piracy for money and when it was no longer the most profitable option the British

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<sup>203</sup> Jowitt et al., *The Culture of Piracy, 1580-1630 : English Literature and Seaborne Crime*, 4.

stopped. Finally, the British used pirates to create instability and when they wanted stability stopped using pirates. Pirates were an effective form of attack against the Spanish and even at the close of the golden age continued to be used in wars because of their low cost of failure. The heights of piracy were never the same as when the buccaneers sailed from Jamaica.

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