**[Fox](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1019-fox/" \o "Go to Fox's profile)**

* Old Twillian
* 
* 
* Moderator
* 2,565 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Beautiful lush Devon, England
* Interests:Nautical history of the 16-18th centuries and living history based thereon.

Shooting pirates.

([IP: 81.103.216.60](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=81.103.216.60)) ·

[Posted November 29, 2005](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=findComment&comment=150939) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=reportComment&comment=150939)

While hunting for a copy of Ned Ward's "Wooden World Dissected" I came across a copy of his "A Trip to New England", published in 1699. The opening part of the pamphlet deals with his journey from Gravesend to Boston and makes interesting and amusing reading.

 Quote

I pack'd up my Auls in order for my Voyage; and Embarked the Ship the Prudent Sarah, at Gravesend, who was weighing Anchor, with a fair Wind for the Downs, That I had no leasure to step back to London to satisfie my Creditors; but, like a Girl that's Ravish'd, was forc'd with a very good will, to do that which I intended.

To entertain this Merry Town, with an exact Journal in Tarpaulin Arabick, is like reading the Revelations to an establish'd Atheist, or repeating a Welsh Commedy to a Highlander. I shall therefore omit all such accustomary Fustian, and divert you with some Thoughts of my own in the time of my Passage.

When I first came on Board, I fancy'd a Ship to be like a Country Village with two or three May-poles in't; and the Fellows running about Deck in Red and White-wastcoats, to be the Young Men of the Town engaged in a match at Foot-ball.

Sometimes I consider'd them as a Pack of Hounds, and the Pilot to be theHuntsman: For, like Dogs upon a Scent, they keep a heavy Yelping at their Business; but in every interval, were as silent as a Beagle at a Loss.

At other times, I have fancy'd a Ship to be a floating Hive, instead of Bees,posses'd by Drones, who make more T---d than Honey.

A Vessel, whilst the Pilot is on Board, is an Emblem of Feeble Monarchy; where the King as a States-man in his Dominions Greater than himself, That the Prince only bears the Title, but the other the Command.

A Man on Board cannot but be thoughtful on two Destinies, vix. Hanging and Drowning: for withinside you have Rope, and without Water enought to effect either. So that it often put me in mind of the old Proverb, The Sea and the Gallows refuses none.

A Commander when at Sea, is a Marine Deity; his Will is his Law, and the Power of Punishing soly in his own hands. He has a Wooden World at his Mercy, wherein there is no way to be Happy, but by due Obedience: For he that knoweth his Masters Will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many Stripes.

When out at Sea, I thought the World was Drown'd, because no Land was to be seen. The Captain and his Mess, I compar'd to Noah and his Family; but as for the rest, they were the Beasts of the Ark.

We were very good Christians when we'd nothing else to do: All Hands in a Calme to Pray or Pick Okum; but to work in a Storm, serve God serve Devil.

Brandy and Tobacco are the Soul of a Seaman; he that wants either, is but half himself; and he that has neither, wants every thing that's needful; and must, in his own defence, turn Thief or Beggar.

Mariners, like Parsons, are much given to look Upwards; but never consult Heaven beyond the Pole, or the Pointers. At Sea they are a kind of Persians, trusting to the Sun, Moon and Stars for Bodily Salvation.

They seldom take notice but of one Miracle since Adam, and that is of Noah's guiding the Ark to a safe Harbour, without the help of a Sail, or the use of a Rudder: Which (forgetting Providence) they urge to be Impossible.

A foul Wind makes scanty Messes: for it's a chearful saying among Seamen,Large Wind, Large Allowance: Starving and Drowning being to them equally terrible.

Facetious Ignorance is an excellent Tallent to win the Captains Favour. Reason at Sea, without the Rules of Navigation, is as dangerous to be talk'd as Treason: For nothing galls the Ambition of a Commander more, Than to hear any Body on Board seem Wiser than himself.

They generally bestow their Favours, as Fortune does her Benefits, as if both their Heads were in a Bag; and for want of Sense or Sight, choose Dances for their Minions, and Fools for their Companions: Dreading Ingenuity, and flighting Merit. Being possitive in Errors, hateful to Instruction, proud of their Ignorance, and Wise in their own conceits.

A Violent Storm at Sea, to me, seem'd the Minute resemblance of a generalConflagration: When Jarring Elements for Power contended; and angry Heavens belch'dout flakes of its consuming Fire on the reflecting Ocean; follow'd with dreadful Claps of rending Thunder, rattling from Cloud to Cloud, thro' Rains and Hurricanes till the Conquering Wind had blown his Sable Enemies beneath our Horizon, and clear'd the Skies of his affrightening Rivals.

A Calm to me was an Effeminate acquiescence of the Elements; and unpleasant to a manly disposition: The World look'd as if Nature was a Sleep; and, careless of her charge, had suffer'd (thro' Neglect) the whole Universe to be Idle. I could compare our Ship to nothing in so smooth a Sea, but to an Egg upon a Looking-glass.

Idleness at Sea is the worst of Slavery; and he that has nothing to do, is Buried Alive in a Cabbin instead of a Coffin.

With these sort of Cogitations I past away my Time, being tost about by the Waves like a Dog in a Blanket, till we got Sight of the Promis'd Land, and Arriv'd at our desir'd Port, Boston.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=edit)

[**Gentleman of Fortune**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1651-gentleman-of-fortune/)

* Dread Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 1,456 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Germany... Franconia (northern Bavaria)
* Interests:I \*used\* to be an environmental scientist, until I married a DoDDs teacher in 1997. Since then, I have been living in, and traveling around, Europe (First the UK, now Germany).

My hobbies are all the "usual suspects" for those interested in re-enacting and Golden Age of Piracy stuff.... but I have drifted away from the pirate scene as my location and young family don't allow for any more than "virtual" pirate participation. Besides Piracy, I am into Reverend Guitars and Vintage Corvettes.

([IP: 84.170.244.87](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=84.170.244.87)) · · 

[Posted November 30, 2005](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=findComment&comment=150977) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=reportComment&comment=150977)

That is an interesting piece... thanks for posting.

 Quote

nd the Fellows running about Deck in Red and White-wastcoats

hmmmm..... checked or stiped? Ticking? wool?

More questions.

GoF

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=editComment&comment=150977)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/#elControls_150977_menu)

[**Coastie04**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/27-coastie04/)

* Dread Pyrate
* 
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* Member
* 1,008 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Juneau, AK
* Interests:Nautical history, sailing (especially tall ships and my own 'Sanctioned Mistress'), shooting (of all eras and calibers), and homebrewing.

([IP: 152.121.19.61](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=152.121.19.61)) · · 

[Posted November 30, 2005](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=findComment&comment=150982) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=reportComment&comment=150982)

Foxe, that's just great! I've often used the phrase "the sea and the gallows refuse noone", but I didn't realize it was that old! Thanks for the post, though. This is why I love this pub.

Coastie 

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=editComment&comment=150982)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/#elControls_150982_menu)

[**Fox**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1019-fox/)

* Old Twillian
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* Moderator
* 2,565 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Beautiful lush Devon, England
* Interests:Nautical history of the 16-18th centuries and living history based thereon.

Shooting pirates.

([IP: 81.103.145.164](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=81.103.145.164)) · · 

[Posted November 30, 2005](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=findComment&comment=151003) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=reportComment&comment=151003)

 Gentleman of Fortune said:

 Quote

nd the Fellows running about Deck in Red and White-wastcoats

hmmmm..... checked or stiped? Ticking? wool?

More questions.

Or some red and some white - like two football teams?

Dammit! Just yesterday I was reading about speckled waistcoats and breeches and I thought "GoF will either love me or hate me for posting this", then I started thinking about something else and now I've forgotten where I found the reference...I'll have to trawl through all the stuff I was reading yesterday and see if I can find it for you.

 Quote

I've often used the phrase "the sea and the gallows refuse noone", but I didn't realize it was that old!

There are some great phrases in there that any first-person pirate re-enactors ought to take note of:

"Tarpaulin Arabick" for the language of seamen, incomprehensible to others, and "tost about by the Waves like a Dog in a Blanket" made me laugh out loud. Later in the same work Ward describes rum as being sometimes called "Kill Devil". (Incidentally, Ward makes it clear that rum is there preferred drink of the landsman while brandy is more popular with seamen - doesn't Dampier say something about being able to drink a quart of burnt brandy in the cold southern latitudes?).

Perhaps my favourite bit in the later description of Boston is this paragraph about... ahem... ladies' pursuits:

"Publick Kissing, and single Fornication are both of a Price; for which Reason the Women wisely consider, the latter may be done with more safety than the former; and if they chance to be Detected, and are forc'd to pay the Fine, they are sure before-hand of something for their Money. " 

In another work Ward described the "pissdale" of a ship: in the morning a sailor "crawls…to the pissdale where he manages his whipstaff with one hand and scratches his poop with the other" 

Right, I'm off to hunt down a source for spotty waistcoats...

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=editComment&comment=151003)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/#elControls_151003_menu)

[**Fox**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1019-fox/)

* Old Twillian
* 
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* Moderator
* 2,565 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Beautiful lush Devon, England
* Interests:Nautical history of the 16-18th centuries and living history based thereon.

Shooting pirates.

([IP: 81.103.145.164](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=81.103.145.164)) · · 

[Posted November 30, 2005](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=findComment&comment=151008) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=reportComment&comment=151008)

Well that didn't take as long as I thought it would.

An extract from Adam Baldridge's deposition describing one of the ships sent to a Madagascan trading post. Baldridge was notorious for supplying pirates with provisions and other goods, so this example gives an interesting insight into the kinds of things pirates bought with their ill gotten gains.

"August 7, 1693

Arrived the ship Charles, John Churcher Master, from New York, Mr Frederick Phillips owner, sent to bring me several sorts of goods: 4 pairs of shoes and pumps, 6 dozen of worsted and thread stockings, 3 dozen of speckled shirts and breeches, 12 hats, some carpenter's tools, 5 barrels of rum, 4 quarter casks of Madeira wine, 10 cases of spirits, 2 old stills full of holes, one worm, 2 grindstones, 2 cross-saws and 1 whipsaw, 3 jars of oil, 2 small iron pots, 3 barrels of cannon powder, some books, catechisms, primers and hornbooks, 2 Bibles and garden seeds,3 dozen of hens. And I returned for the said goods 1100 pieces of eight and dollars, 34 slaves, 15 head of cattle, 57 bars of iron."

*Note - sorry, they were spotty shirts, not waistcoats*

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=editComment&comment=151008)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/#elControls_151008_menu)

[**Mission**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)

* Goat Specialist
* 
* 
* Admin
* 5,082 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
* Interests:Scholarly piracy, designing and creating haunted house rooms and props, movies, abstract thinking, abstruse thinking, obstructive thinking, ideating, random thinking, movies, cartoons, movies, movies scores, cycling, world peace and small furry dogs, movies, writing, drawing, personal skills training, gremlins and, of course, lest I forget, movies.

([IP: 24.231.221.86](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=24.231.221.86)) · · 

[Posted September 18, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=findComment&comment=369016) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=reportComment&comment=369016)

I was digging around in the archives when I found this. It's neat.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=editComment&comment=369016)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/#elControls_369016_menu)

[**Bright**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/5106-bright/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 380 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:South Carolina
* Interests:He has been seen most recently in the company of the Charles Town Few and rumored to be their Quarter master

([IP: 75.183.176.188](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=75.183.176.188)) · · 

[Posted September 18, 2009](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=findComment&comment=369028) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/6239-a-sailors-life/&do=reportComment&comment=369028)

June 2nd, 1691 – North/Northwest of Great Abaco Island – Dawn

After eight days, we catch sight of the Pirata. We lost eleven good men to her Captain Ratchett when we last met; we may finally chance to settle the score. Today there will be no surprise; they see us and know we will catch her before night falls.

June 2nd, 1691 – Midnight

The battle is fully three hours over. The men continue repairs. While victorious, not a man celebrates. We were surprised once again. The men responded in battle as expected – fearlessly. But they must wonder about a Captain that falls prey to a trap twice in a fortnight. No matter – fortune’s smile finds us still the hunter. We closed on the Pirata at dusk, cutting her off as we ran along a series of small cays. I called to hold water, when from behind us, around the east end of a cay, came two pirate brigantines. The nearest, the Revenger. The second ship, its standard a skull with black hair against a scarlet field, was unfamiliar. Ratchet led us to this place! Inside two minutes we would be fighting all three rogues. The Pirata’s first shots found their mark, taking sixteen foot of starboard rail and dislodging two of our

12 pounders. The second tore straight through the foremast. As we closed on her, I ordered men into the yards with flint muskets. Along with all my starboard cannon, the men in the yards opened fire. We wounded her, though once again, not mortally. As the Revenger and the other bore near, luck finally found us: without reason, just as the Revenger and the mystery brigantine achieved their steerageway, the mystery ship fired but a single cannon shot. It hit directly the Revenger just below water, and must have struck her powder, for she unleashed a terrible, wonderful explosion. Perhaps it was the act of a frightened seaman setting a fuse without order. Perhaps it was an act of betrayal or madness. No matter – the Revenger immediately began to list and turn into the mystery brigantine, causing great calamity on both.The Pirata, now heavily damaged, fled along with the mystery ship. Our foremast rigging down, we could not chase.

June 3rd, 1691 – 70 miles Northwest of Great Abaco Island

The Pirata ran North by Northeast. I intend to follow. I know that this course, and course of action, does nothing to put my men at ease. It is not the pursuit of the Pirata – in this the men join with a thirst for vengeance. Rather, it is the destination – the Sea of Mists – that puts them ill at ease. I believe that there is nothing to this devil’s triangle other than rumor and legend. But it is rumor and legend that now grips the ship, with talk of whirlpools and freak squalls, strange beasts the size of clipper ships, compasses that do not work, and at its very heart – a chain of islands perpetuall shrouded in mists and fog. I’ve met no man of honor that has sailed this sea and given account of it. My own beliefs do not shape those of the men, nor raise their confidence; especially when I’ve so recently led them to trouble I should have avoided. It does not help that we pulled from the water eight seamen from the Revenger, who have since talked of nothing but the dangers ahead. Two of them have asked us to abandon them upon any island we pass, choosing a lifetime of loneliness over passage into the Mists. Our course is set.

June 7th, 1691 – The Sea of Mists – Noon

Already we have seen many strange things in the Mists. I describe these events without exaggeration; I make no suggestion that they be believed by anyone else who reads here – I assure only that these are the events I did see and hear myself. We have been without a working compass now for two days. As such I cannot be certain of our position. Twice now we have spotted the Pirata – but both were near dusk, and we lost her at nightfall. At daybreak, we sailed through a school of fish that leapt through the air as they swam. They were about three hands long, with sharp, pointed teeth and evil eyes. When they leapt from the water they spread their fins and flew like birds, covering great distances. One landed in the ship – a mate tried to examine the “flying devil” and lost a finger for his curiosity.

June 8th, 1691 – The Sea of Mists

No Pirata; but we are still accompanied by the devil’s mischief. We sailed this morn among a chain of small islands. Passing one of the larger islands, we slipped into a deep fog, and soon thereafter, we heard beating drums, a savage, primitive sound that greatly unnerved the crew. After a long time, the drumming stopped – and then we heard the cry, a terrible, horrible sound – a wail that lasted for nearly a dozen heartbeats. My men stood about petrified, for we had not an inkling where it came from, or even what it was. It did not come from the throat of any man – that is certain. Though we were in need of water, and briefly saw land through breaks in the fog, I did not stop. We headed out for open water. I spoke to the men to rally their courage. I am not sure I have succeeded. I feel their fear, I see it in their eyes, and in my heart I know they share my worry – that our journey into these Mists was my third mistake in a very short time.

Captain Arthur Howell