**[Daniel](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/352-daniel/" \o "Go to Daniel's profile)**

* Pyrate Captain
* http://pyracy.com/uploads/pip_pyrate_captain.gif
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[Posted March 20, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16692-account-of-piracies-on-the-virginia-coast-1724/&do=findComment&comment=381585) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16692-account-of-piracies-on-the-virginia-coast-1724/&do=reportComment&comment=381585)

Many sources mention the Spanish *guardacostas* acting as pirates; this is one of the few actual examples I've found (another is in Johnson's introduction). The *St. Francis de la Vela*'s attack on the *John and Mary* is mentioned in other sites, but this full story from the *Boston Gazette* is not reproduced on the Web anywhere that I know of.

Note that two of England and Taylor's men are now serving with the Spanish *guardacostas*!

Quote

Capt. John Jones of the Ship *John and Mary* of Virginia bound from Guinea and having on board 175 Negros, on the 5th of June was at Anchor about 2 Leagues distance from Cape-Charles in Virginia, when a Ship bearing British Colours bore down upon him, he believing it be some Vessel bound to Virginia, and not at all apprehensive of any Pirate (having but the Night before spoke with Capt. Yeo of His Majesty's Ship *Enterprize*, who assured him there were none on the Coast,) did not offer to make Sail, but was surprized to find himself attack'd with a Command to strike his Colours and come on board in his Boat, and at the same time to see about 70 Small Arms presented at his Ship, and a threatning to fire into her if he did not immediately repair on board.

At his going on board in his Boat, he with four of his Men were immediately secured, he was carry'd into the Great Cabbin, to a Person call'd the Captain, who order'd about 14 Men, most Spaniards, to take possession of the *John and Mary*, to get her under Sail, and to follow him: They stood to the Northward with an easy Sail, and about 11 in the forenoon the same day met the Brigt. *Prudent-Hannah* of Boston bound for Virginia, The Spanish Ship gave chase to her, and coming up with her commanded the Master (Thomas Moussell) to come on board, he came in his Boat with only his Cabbin-boy, and his Boat was immediately sent back with six Spaniards to take possession of his Brigantine. That night the same Brigt. was order'd away with these 6 Spaniards to some of the Spanish Ports in the West-Indies, but to which is not known.

The two Captains, Jones and Mousell, were ordered to lie that night in the same Cabbin with the Spanish Captain, and Capt. Jones speaking Spanish, took the liberty to ask, on what account he had taken his Ship, he was given to understand, that he had a Commission from the Governour of Cuba, which the Spanish Captain told him he would let him see before they parted, but he was not so good as his word.

On the 6th of June the Spaniard with his Prize standing off E.N.E. from the Capes of Virginia, about 8 Leagues, made a Sail, which proved to be the Ship *Godolphin* of Topsham, bound for Rappahannock River in Virginia, The Spaniard hoisted an English Ensign, and put out a Pendant and an Union Jack, and stood off to intercept that Ship, and under these Colours fired a Great Gun for the *Godolphin* to bring too, which she did, and then the Master (Theodore Bane) being commanded off in his Boat the Spaniards with the same Boat took possession of his Ship.

The three Captive Masters continued on board the Spanish Ship, till Monday the 8th of June in the Morning, during which time, they received the following Information from several English and Irish Men of that Ships Crew *viz.* That the said Ship did belong to the Governour or Vice Roy of Cuba, that she is called the *St. Francis de la Vela*, that the Capt. is Don Benito, or according to the common Appellation given him by his Crew, Signior Don Benito, that he is a Knight of one of the Spanish Orders, that the Ship is a Bristol built Galley, first taken by the Sallee Rovers, retaken from them by a Spanish Man of War, sold at Cales by some Merchants, and by them Fraighted to the Spanish West-Indies, and that she was now fitted out at Port-Princess in Cuba, and hired to Benito by the Governour for a certain Sum of Money, which Benito is to get where he can, but that the better to enable him to do it, that Governour has given him a Commission as a Guarde de Coaste. The Crew consists of about 60 Spaniards, including the Negros and Molattos, 14 English, and 18 French; among the English is one Rich. Holland an Irishman, who goes under the Name of the English Captain, and has a great sway on board, he was formerly at St. Augustines, and concerned in the taking sundry Vessels on the Virginia Coast, after the last Cessation of Arms: Benj. Evans formerly Mate of a New England Ship, is their mate or Pilot, and very frankly told Capt. Moussell that his Brigantine was such a Vessel as they wanted to make a Privateer of; there are also John Smith and John Moore, Irishmen, who were of the Pirate Taylor's Crew, at his taking the *Cassandra* in the East-Indies. The next [rest?] of the English on board, and 15 of the French are said to be press'd men.

Capt. Jones by his free and ingenious behaviour, had got so much into the favour of the English and French, that they had promised his Ship should be released without being plundered, but the Spaniards outvoting them, his Scriptore and all his Chests were broke open, about *l.* 350 Sterling in Gold Dust, 1000 Gallons of Rum, about *l.* 200 worth of the Remains of his Guinea Cargo, together with 38 of his choicest Slaves, all Men, were taken away and carried on board this Spanish Ship, and he believes had not this piratical crew been frighten'd with the appearance of a Sail in the Offing, he had not escaped so well, but that fight [fright?] having put them in a great fear, they sent the Captains Mousell and Bane with the whole Crew of the latter, and the Cabbin boy of the former, on board Jone's Ship, and so left him to proceed to Virginia on the 8th of June about noon, but they carry'd Capt. Bane's Ship and Cargo off with them.

Capt. Jones's loss is computed at near *l.* 1600, Capt. Banes's Ship and Cargo about *l.* 3000 and Capt. Moussell's Brigantine about *l.* 1200 with her Cargo.

Smith the Pilot of the Spaniards told Capt. Mousell that in this Cruize they had taken two New England Brigantines, commanded by Capts. Macarty and Burrington, but when he was asked what was become of the Men, he answered, that was not a proper Question; he also said they were to share all their Prizes at the Grand Camanus or Samanus.

- - Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, 1932, reprinted 1965 by Octagon Books, IV p.117-20.

A footnote adds a reference from the *Boston Gazette* from July 20, 1724, saying that 4 Spaniards of this group were tried for piracy and sentenced to death; no mention of how they were caught, unless they were stupid enough to actually go to the Caymans as they said they would.

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

* Old Twillian
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  Shooting pirates.

[Posted March 20, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16692-account-of-piracies-on-the-virginia-coast-1724/&do=findComment&comment=381588) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16692-account-of-piracies-on-the-virginia-coast-1724/&do=reportComment&comment=381588)

There are a few examples of Englishmen serving in *Guarda Costa* vessels. Richard Holland, one time associate of Bellamy and LaBouche served as the 'English Captain' of one, for example.

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

* Goat Specialist
* http://pyracy.com/uploads/pip_immortal_pyrate.gif
* [](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/1929-mission/)
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[Posted March 21, 2010](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16692-account-of-piracies-on-the-virginia-coast-1724/&do=findComment&comment=381598) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/16692-account-of-piracies-on-the-virginia-coast-1724/&do=reportComment&comment=381598)

I don't have the book handy any longer, but in *Johathan Dickison's Journal or God's Protecting Providence* he talks about an Irishman who was living in St. Augustine when it was Spanish occupied (1697). If you're interested in curious little details about the Spanish settlements, I commend that book to you.

Your account has some really neat turns of phrase, though.

"...and a threatning to fire into her if he did not immediately repair on board." "...a threatning..." :rolleyes:I also love the use of the word 'repair'; you don't see it used that way very much today.

"On the 6th of June the Spaniard with his Prize standing off E.N.E. from the Capes of Virginia, about 8 Leagues, made a Sail, which proved to be the Ship *Godolphin* of Topsham, bound for Rappahannock River in Virginia."

Check out those cool names! I've always thought the word "Godolphin" was neat. If I were to write a fictional pirate book (which I doubt I ever will), I would go way out of my way to include the name Godolphin.

"...had not this piratical crew been frighten'd with the appearance of a Sail in the Offing, he had not escaped so well..."

Cool. :unsure:The spelling and weird Latin-based use of letters drives me crazy, but I really enjoy the way they state things in period docs.

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On 3/21/2010 at 9:38 AM, Mission said:

Check out those cool names! I've always thought the word "Godolphin" was neat. If I were to write a fictional pirate book (which I doubt I ever will), I would go way out of my way to include the name Godolphin.

You wouldn't have to go much out of your way, just put a Cornishman in your book - Godolphin is (or at least was) a fairly common Cornish name.