**[LauraConklin](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/19607-lauraconklin/" \o "Go to LauraConklin's profile)**

* Bilge Rat
* 
* 
* Member
* 15 posts

([IP: 71.91.100.117](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=71.91.100.117)) ·

[Posted February 4, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405757) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405757)

I understand that frequently pirates were after more than just gold and silver; they would also go for fabrics, spices, clothes, weapons, foods, liquor, etc. (And please correct me if I'm wrong) as well as restocking crew and medications.

I once had reference books that reflected this, but for the life of me I can't find them. Anyone know of good, accurate references, such as papers showing what was taken from a prize?

Thank you in advance.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=edit)

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

* Old Twillian
* 
* 
* Moderator
* 2,564 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Beautiful lush Devon, England
* Interests:Nautical history of the 16-18th centuries and living history based thereon.

Shooting pirates.

([IP: 86.164.203.230](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=86.164.203.230)) · · 

[Posted February 4, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405760) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405760)

There are plenty of good references around (see sources below). I did an analysis a while back of the various types of plunder mentioned in accounts of 88 pirate attacks from 1690-1726. Various limitations of the evidence means that the figures given in the table below relate to the number of attacks resulting in the theft of a particular commodity, not the amount or value of that commodity. Figures in the "Total" column are not the sum of figures in the preceding columns, because in many cases more than one commodity was taken in a single attack: for example, if an attack involved the theft of both clothing and food then it would be counted once in *each* of the "clothing" and "provisions" columns, but only once in the "Total" column.



Sources: *Boston News Letter*, 11/8/1718, 18/8/1718, 22/8/1720, 29/8/1720, 21/11/1720, 23/4/1724, 7/5/1724; *Daily Courant*, 15/11/1717, 31/8/1720, 21/3/1722; *Boston Gazette*, 4/5/1724; *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, 22/12/1716, 27/12/1718, 31/8/1723; *Weekly Journal or Saturday’s Post*, 5/10/1717, 14/12/1717; *Post Boy*, 31/7/1718; *American Weekly Mercury*, 17/3/1720; *London Journal*, 2/8/1720, 10/8/1723, 5/10/1723; *Daily Post*, 20/1/1721, 22/6/1721; *Dublin Mercury*, 21/2/1724; *Evening Post*, 29/8/1724; *Tryal of John Quelch*, pp. 2-4; *Tryals of Thirty-Six Persons*, p. 175; CO 37/10, ff. 35, 36, 168; *Tryals of John Rackham*, pp. 18, 21, 49); HCA 1/55 ff. 54, 76; *Tryal of Captain Kidd*, p. 40; *Trials of Eight Persons*, pp. 3, 9, 24-25; *Tryals of Sixteen Persons*, p. 4; Johnson, *General History*, pp. 67, 71, 74, 75,76, 130, 298, 399; Jameson, *Privateering and Piracy*; pp. 170, 190-191, 206, 208, 210, 337, 340, 373-4, 379, 380; *Proceedings on the King’s Commission*, p. 5; *At a Court Held at Williamsburg*, 15/8/1728 HCA 1/99; *At a Court of Admiralty held at Williamsburg* 14/8/1729, HCA 1/99; *Tryals of Stede Bonnet*, pp. 7, 21; *At a Court of Admiralty held at Nassau*, 11/10/1722, CO 23/1 f. 32; *The Humble Petition of Francis Sittwell*, CO 28/15, f. 390

**Edited February 4, 2012 by Foxe**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405760)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405760_menu)

[**LauraConklin**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/19607-lauraconklin/)

* Bilge Rat
* 
* 
* Member
* 15 posts

([IP: 71.91.100.117](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=71.91.100.117)) · · 

[Posted February 4, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405761) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405761)

Thank you, Foxe! Very grateful to you I am!

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405761)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405761_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: 12.232.174.154](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=12.232.174.154)) · · 

[Posted February 5, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405772) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405772)

Wow, that's fascinating! I can't imagine you've even scratched the surface, given that many stolen cargoes were not reported in detail, if at all, but still...

I have four citations where medicine chests are either being taken or extorted. Small in percentage, but interesting that half of them are demands made by pirates with prisoners from those on land: Blackbeard [cited in Johnson] and Low [cited in Ashton].

**Edited February 5, 2012 by Mission**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405772)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405772_menu)

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

* Old Twillian
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* 2,564 posts
* Gender:Male
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* Interests:Nautical history of the 16-18th centuries and living history based thereon.

Shooting pirates.

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[Posted February 5, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405782) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405782)

You're welcome Laura.

You're quite right Mission, 88 attacks for the whole of the 1690-1730 period is only a fraction. One problem was that I only included attacks where I was able to garner enough detail to make it worthwhile. Largely these detailed references were taken from newspaper notices and trial indictments. There are a lot of other attacks where we can surmise what was, or might have been, taken, but don't know with enough certainty to include in the table. For example, in theory pirates *might* have taken provisions, clothing, and ship's equipment from every ship they captured, but we can see that they did not. I therefore felt it would be misleading to include 'probables'.

However, it is worth bearing in mind the limitations of such an approach. For example, in the summer of 1720 Roberts' company took at least 41 vessels off the Newfoundland coast, at least half of which were fishing vessels. The percentages in the table would be considerably different if I*knew* rather than guessed that the booty from most of those ships consisted of provisions, clothing, ship's equipment, fish, and small amounts of valuables or cash. If it helps any, all of the major cash-carrying prizes taken by pirates in that period *are* included in the table, so although it's quite probable that some prizes not included were carrying gold dust or coined money, they were certainly carrying other commodities too. If all the omitted attacks could be included they probably wouldn't skew the end findings all that much, and if they did it would most likely be in favour of personal and professional necessities, and tradable goods.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405782)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405782_menu)

[**Swashbuckler 1700**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/20630-swashbuckler-1700/)

* Dread Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 1,115 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Europe
* Interests:pyrates, pryvateers, naval military and other history, different books, good movies, music (a little bit), drawing, games,...

([IP: 80.223.160.249](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=80.223.160.249)) · · 

[Posted February 9, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405891) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405891)

I am amazed of that someone (Foxe) had done so specific calculations . 

In the list the number of gold and other valuables is much greater than I estimated (I used to believe that only Elizabethan privateers and buccaneers of 17th c got that much gold but that much in Gaop I am surprised) . Same with clothes. The numder of stolen booze is (i think) surprisingly small.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405891)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405891_menu)

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Shooting pirates.

([IP: 86.164.189.37](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=86.164.189.37)) · · 

[Posted February 9, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405897) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405897)

Bear in mind that the figures relate to the number of attacks in which gold was taken, not the amount of gold. For example several of those cases involved the theft of a few ounces of gold dust - valuable in itself, but not as valuable as, say, the slaves that were taken at the same time.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405897)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405897_menu)

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[Posted February 9, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405903) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405903)

 On 2/9/2012 at 1:36 PM, Foxe said:

Bear in mind that the figures relate to the number of attacks in which gold was taken, not the amount of gold. For example several of those cases involved the theft of a few ounces of gold dust - valuable in itself, but not as valuable as, say, the slaves that were taken at the same time.

Yes I know but I am still surprised. Apparently I have under estimated pirate loots (so there was more than just some sugar, slaves, rum and cocoa)

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405903)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405903_menu)

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

* Goat Specialist
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* Admin
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* Gender:Male
* Location:Monroe, MI
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([IP: 75.128.82.198](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=75.128.82.198)) · · 

[Posted February 10, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405933) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405933)

I believe this list has been brought up before, but I just stumbled across it again. There's a [Dictionary of Traded Goods and Commodities, 1550-1820](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/source.aspx?pubid=739&page=4&sort=1) on the British History Online Site. Granted, pirates would not be interested in all the traded goods and commodities, only those that could be readily sold.

It also contains an excellent listing of medicines and the various terms used for the different medicines, which will be of infinite use to me in the future. (Most medicine names were written in abbreviated Latin and each author seems to have had a different idea about just how the terms should be abbreviated.)

**Edited February 10, 2012 by Mission**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405933)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405933_menu)

[**Swashbuckler 1700**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/20630-swashbuckler-1700/)

* Dread Pyrate
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([IP: 80.223.160.249](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=80.223.160.249)) · · 

[Posted February 10, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405939) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405939)

 On 2/9/2012 at 1:36 PM, Foxe said:

Bear in mind that the figures relate to the number of attacks in which gold was taken, not the amount of gold. For example several of those cases involved the theft of a few ounces of gold dust - valuable in itself, but not as valuable as, say, the slaves that were taken at the same time.

Were there BTW gold dust in La concorde when it was taken by (you know who the history's most overvalued pirate)...

did captain Dosset had gold dust in addition to slaves (I have heard rumors)?

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405939)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405939_menu)

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[Posted February 10, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405963) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405963)

Yes there was, some of it has been recovered from the wreck.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405963)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405963_menu)

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[Posted February 11, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=405975) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=405975)

 On 2/10/2012 at 6:03 PM, Foxe said:

Yes there was, some of it has been recovered from the wreck.

Ok good to know...

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=405975)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_405975_menu)

[**Swashbuckler 1700**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/20630-swashbuckler-1700/)

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([IP: 80.223.160.249](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=80.223.160.249)) · · 

[Posted April 14, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=408353) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=408353)

From Genereral History

" Boatswain of the Pyrate Ship, carried away two Cables, and several Coils of Rope, as what belonged to his Province, beating some of our own Men for not being brisk enough at working in the Robbery. Petty, as Sail-maker, saw to the Sails and Canvas; Harper, as Cooper to the Cask and Tools; Griffin, to the Carpenter's Stores, and Oughterlauney, as Pilot, having shifted himself with a Suit of my Clothes, a new tye Wig, and called for a Bottle of Wine, ordered the Ship, very arrogantly, to be steered under Commadore Robert's Stern, (I suppose to know what Orders there were concerning her.) So far particularly. In the general, Sir, they were very outragious and emulous in Mischief."

**Edited April 14, 2012 by Swashbuckler 1700**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=408353)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_408353_menu)

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

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[Posted April 15, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=408373) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=408373)

I have come across dozens of references to pirates taking things like provisions, ship's gear, food and water out of ships in the *General History*. In fact, I'd venture to say that according to that source it was the main thing they stole. It may not have been what they were really after, but several of the pirates appear to have either been very poor planners or have had pretty bad luck in maintaining sufficient general stores to keep their ship going along comfortably.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=editComment&comment=408373)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/#elControls_408373_menu)

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[Posted April 15, 2012](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=findComment&comment=408374) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/18514-treasures-and-loot/&do=reportComment&comment=408374)

 On 4/15/2012 at 9:01 AM, Mission said:

I have come across at least half a dozen references (and probably more like several dozen if you look at each individual report) of pirates taking things like provisions, ships gear, food and water out of ships in the *General History*. In fact, I'd venture to say that according to that source it was the main thing they stole. It may not have been what they were really after, but several of the pirates appear to have either been very poor planners or have had pretty bad luck in maintaining enough general stores on their ship to keep them going.

Indeed they had no access to many ports and provicions were not too easy to find in islands of even coast so other ship's stores were really needed and wanted. Bart Robert once robbed only ship's ropes and anchor. It seems that if pirates did not got loot they could die of starvation.