

not only so, but she must be sure of dying an ignominious Death, if she should be taken alive?—She answer'd, that as to hanging, she thought it no great Hardship, for, were it not for that, every cowardly Fellow would turn Pyrate, and so infest the Seas, that Men of Courage must starve:—That if it was put to the Choice of the Pyrates, they would not have the Punishment less than Death, the Fear of which, kept some dastardly Rogues honest; that many of those who are now cheating the Widows and Orphans, and oppressing their poor Neighbours, who have no Money to obtain Justice, would then rob at Sea, and the Ocean would be crowded with Rogues, like the Land, and no Merchant would venture out; so that the Trade, in a little Time, would not be worth following.

Being found quick with Child, as has been observed, her Execution was respited, and it is possible she would have found Favour, but she was seiz'd with a violent Fever, soon after her Tryal, of which she died in Prison.

Charles Johnson, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates, and also their Policies, discipline and Government, from their First Rise and Settlement in the Island of Providence, in 1717, to the Present Year 1724*. London: For C. Rivington, J. Lacy, 1724, pp. 118–126. New York Public Library, Rare Books Division.

From Robert J. Anthony, Pirates in the Age of Sail.

Doc. 9: Pirate Articles

W.W. Norton, 2007

Early eighteenth-century pirate articles, such as the ones given below, present strong evidence that at least some pirates acted democratically in an undemocratic age and that there could truly be honor among thieves. Derived perhaps from ancient seafaring traditions, all crew members aboard pirate vessels swore oaths or signed articles at the outset of cruises whereby they agreed on the manner of such matters as discipline and the sharing out of booty. Bartholomew Roberts' articles perhaps went further than most, banning gambling and sex (with either boys or women) on board ship and limiting drinking after eight o'clock at night. The second document comes from John Phillips' gang. On the night of August 29, 1723, Phillips and four companions seized a schooner off Newfoundland that was owned by William Minott of Boston. Once safely out at sea the crew quickly renamed their ship the Revenge, chose officers, and drew up articles. Phillips was chosen captain and the entire crew then swore to the articles upon a hatchet because they lacked a Bible. Similar to the buccaneers,

these early eighteenth-century pirates also included provisions in their articles for pirates who were wounded in battle.

1. Articles aboard Capt. Bartholomew Roberts' *Royal Fortune*, 1720:

[1] *Every Man has a Vote in Affairs of Moment; has equal title to the fresh Provisions, or strong Liquors, at any Time seized, and use of them at Pleasure, unless a Scarcity * * * make it necessary, for the good of all, to Vote a Retrenchment.*

[2] *Every Man to be called fairly in turn, by Lift, on Board of Prizes, because, (over and above their proper share) they were on these Occasions allowed a Shift of Cloaths: But if they defrauded the Company to the Value of a Dollar, in Plate, Jewels, or Money, MAROONING was their Punishment. * * * If the Robbery was only between one another, they contented themselves with slitting the Ears or Nose of him that was Guilty, and set him on shore, not in an uninhabited Place, but somewhere, where he was sure to encounter Hardships.*

[3] *No Person to Game at Cards or Dice, for Money.*

[4] *The Lights and Candles to be put out at eight o'Clock at Night: If any of the Crew, after that Hour, still remained inclin'd for Drinking, they were to do it on the open Deck[.] * * **

[5] *To keep their Piece, Pistols, and Cutlass clean, and fit for Service[.] * * **

[6] *No Boy or Woman to be allowed amongst them. If any Man were found seducing any of the latter Sex, and carried her to Sea, disguised, he was to suffer Death[.] * * **

[7] *To Desert the Ship, or their Quarters in Battle, was punished with Death, or Marooning.*

[8] *No striking one another on Board, but every Man's Quarrels to be ended on Shore, at Sword and Pistol[.] * * **

[9] *No Man to talk of breaking up their Way of Living, till each had shared a 1000 l [£]. If in order to this, any Man should lose a Limb, or become a Cripple in their Service, he was to have 800 Dollars, out of the publick Stock, and for lesser Hurts, proportionably.*

[10] *The Captain and Quarter-Master to receive two Shares of a Prize; the Master, Boatswain, and Gunner, one Share and a half, and other Officers, one and a Quarter.¹*

¹ In a later edition of *The History of the Pyrates*, dated 1742, an eleventh article was included: "The Musicians to have Rest on the Sabbath Day, but the other Six Days and Nights, none, without special Favour."



FIGURE 11

Pirate with a Peg-Leg (Charles Ellms, *The Pirates Own Book: Authentic Narratives of the Most Celebrated Sea Robbers*. Salem: Maritime Research Society, 1924.)

2. Articles aboard Capt. John Phillips' *Revenge*, 1723:

1. Every Man shall obey civil Command; the Captain shall have one full Share and a half in all Prizes; the Master, Carpenter, Boatswain and Gunner shall have one Share and quarter.

2. If any Man shall offer to run away, or keep any Secret from the Company, he shall be maroon'd, with one Bottle of Powder, one Bottle of Water, one small Arm and Shot.

3. If any Man shall steal any Thing in the Company, or game to the Value of a Piece of Eight, he shall be maroon'd or shot.

4. If at any Time we should meet another Marrooner [that is, pyrate], that Man that shall sign his Articles without the Consent of our Company, shall suffer such Punishment as the Captain and Company shall think fit.

5. That Man that shall strike another whilst these Articles are in force, shall receive Moses's Law (that is, 40 Stripes lacking one) on the bare Back.

6. That Man that shall snap his Arms, or smoak Tobacco in the Hold, without a Cap to his Pipe, or carry a Candle lighted without a Lanthorn, shall suffer the same Punishment as in the former Article.

7. That Man that shall not keep his Arms clean, fit for an Engagement, or neglect his Business, shall be cut off from his Share, and suffer such other Punishment as the Captain and the Company shall think fit.

8. If any Man shall lose a Joint in Time of an Engagement, he shall have 400 Pieces of Eight, if a Limb, 800.

9. If at any Time we meet with a prudent Woman, that Man that offers to meddle with her, without her Consent, shall suffer present Death.

Charles Johnson, *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates, and also their Policies, discipline and Government, from their First Rise and Settlement in the Island of Providence, in 1717, to the Present Year 1724*. London: For C. Rivington, J. Lacy, 1724, pp. 169–172. New York Public Library, Rare Books Division; and George Francis Dow and John Henry Edmonds, *The Pirates of the New England Coast, 1630–1730*. Salem: Marine Research Society, 1923, pp. 315–316.

Corsairs of the Mediterranean

Doc. 10: Maltese Corsairing License Issued to Knight Charles de Willers, 1696

Both Barbary and Christian corsairs were sanctioned by their respective governments for raids against enemy shipping and settlements. Among the Maltese corsairs commissions were issued to both private citizens and knights, allowing them to retain only one-fourth of the value of the prizes captured, the remainder being turned over to the government of Malta. The following excerpt is an English translation of the license granted by Grand Master Raymond de Perellos y Roccafull to the Knight Charles de Willers on February 27, 1696.

Whereas the Knight Charles de Willers was empowered by the Most Eminent Grand Master, our predecessor, to wage war against