

Crew of the Queen Anne's Revenge

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I was the Quartermaster of The Royal Navy's HMS Ruby until it was captured by the French Navy's ships in 1707. I was sentenced to 12 years of hard labour in the French colony of St. Domingue as a prisoner of war. By 1709 I had found my way to Nassau as a stowaway on a docked pirate ship. This pirate ship was lead by Blackbeard. The other Quartermaster, William Howard, works equally with me keeping everybody in line. We two share a strong relationship because of our strong distaste of the English, as I am an Irishman and Howard is a Scottish man. Even though the two of us work closely, there's a natural rivalry, as we compete for results, manpower, and resources.

The French slave trade operated between 1619 and 1864. This journey is known as the triangular trade. The French ships leave in spring loaded with goods to trade at the African coast where they purchased slaves to bring to the new world. They would then fill up with cargo to bring home to France. La Concorde was owned by French merchant, Rene Montaudoin, and operated out of Nantes. Her first voyage was in July 1710 stopping off the coasts of Guinea and cote d'Ivoire before making way to Martinique, Tobago, Saint-Dominique, and Cuba and then returning to Berth in November of 1711. La Concorde left for her second voyage as a slave ship in spring of 1713 to Benin and Martinique, returning in July 1714. Two more slave voyages were made on this passage in 1715 and 1717.

La Concorde was about 100 miles away from Martinique when pirates descended on her. The Slave ship's French sailors were weak from the journey of the middle passage. Sixty one slaves and sixteen crewmembers had died as well as thirty-one crew members ill from scurvy and dysentery. These pirates were sailing in two sloops; one with a hundred and twenty men and twelve cannons, the other with thirty men and eight cannons. After two rounds of fire, Captain Dosset surrendered La Concorde to the pirate captain, Benjamin Hornigold. He sailed with a first

mate, Edward Teach, also better known as Blackbeard to whom he gave La Concorde to Captain in his own right when he retired in 1713.

Thirty years war began in 1618-1648; it was between the Holy Roman Catholic Habsburgs and their Protestant European rivals. The outcome of the war was The Peace of Westphalia, included a newly independent Dutch Republic and the rise of France as a dominant power in Europe. The English presence in the Caribbean was established in spite of their ongoing conflicts with the Spanish. As the Dutch Republic grew its trade networks they engaged with the English and their superior naval forces in the Angelo-Dutch wars. The first three took place in 1652-1654, 1665-1667, and 1672-1674. These first stemmed because the English privateers attacking Dutch merchant ships, tensions did not fall until 1674, Treaty of Westminster, in which the united Dutch and English formed a powerful naval force. The French kept their dominance as a European power by achieving victory in the Franco-Dutch war which took place in 1672-1678. The Angelo Dutch alliance later united against King Louis XIV of France along side of holy roman emperor and King Charles II of Spain in the nine years war. When the treaty of Utrecht and the treaty of Rastatt ended the war of Spanish succession, many privateers and naval officers were left without alternatives, creating climate in the Caribbean great for buccaneers and piracy.

Every pirate carries a basic set of weapons. These consisted of pistols and cutlass. The use of cutlass rather than a sword is very clearly more efficient when attacking merchandise ship. The cutlass was a backup weapon for after firing all the multiple pistols. The size of the cannons are relatively small due to the ships limited space. When attacking a merchandise ship our essential goal is to capture it to add to their fleet. So, the smaller the cannons the less the damage is. Cannon shooting requires strategy and organization as to when and where to attack the rival ship.

Piracy rose in the Caribbean as New World gold and riches were being transported between colonies and their home countries. Ships were vulnerable to enemies; Pirates were soon to be the most vicious enemies. Port Royal in Jamaica was a safe haven for pirates in exchange for protection from the Spanish.