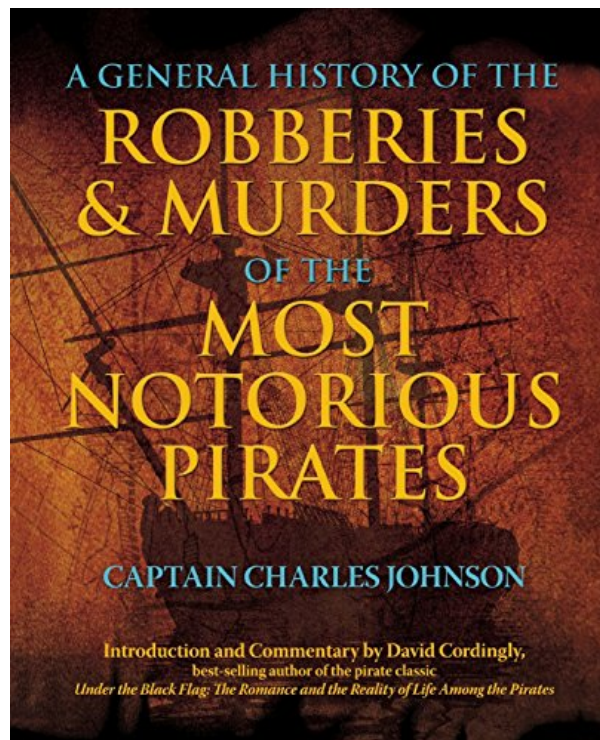
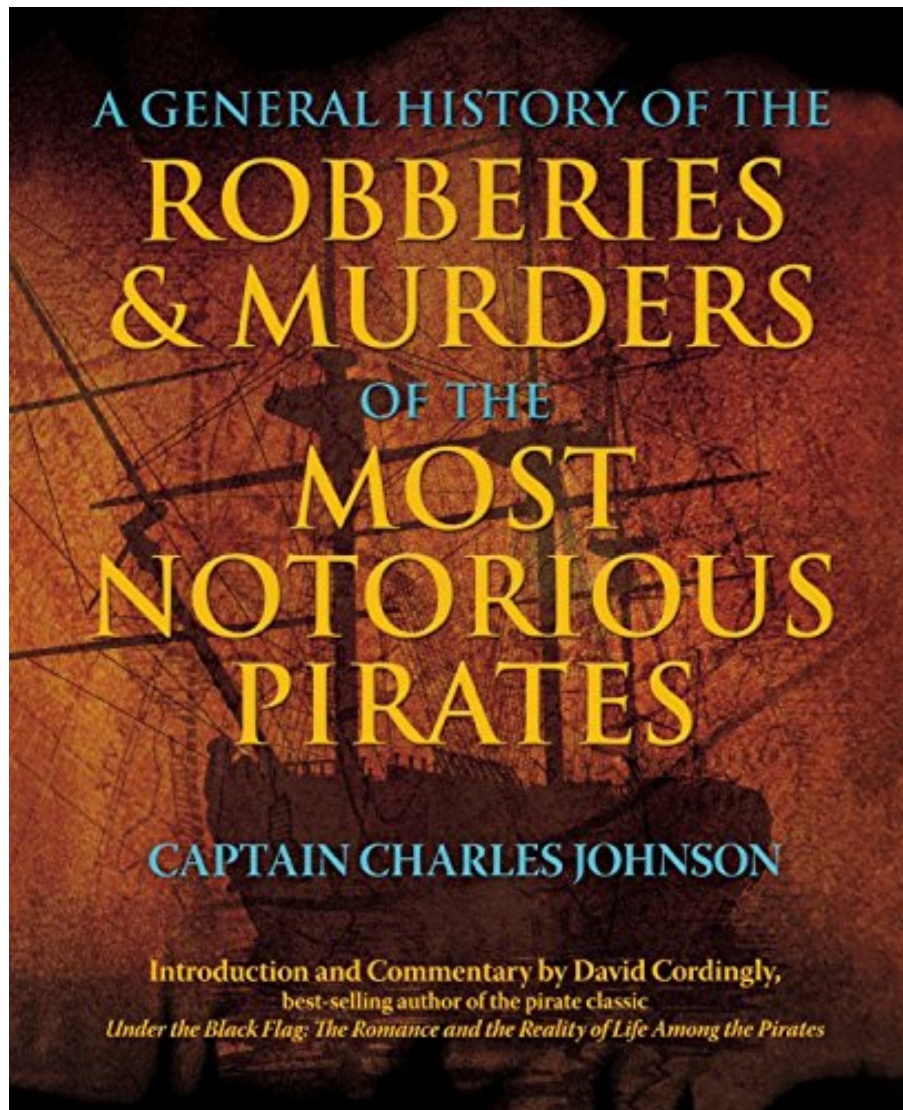


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"I presume we need make no Apology for giving the Name of a History to the following Sheets, though they contain nothing but the Actions of a Parcel of Robbers." A "Parcel of Robbers" they may be, but pirates have long held a special place in our imaginations. The iconography of piracy--peg legs, eye patches, pieces of eight, squawking parrots, the Jolly Roger--was first codified in *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates*. This collection of brief biographies reads like a Who's Who? of piracy, with entries on Captains Kidd, Rackam, and Roberts, women-in-disguise pirates Anne Bonny and Mary Read, and the infamous Edward Teach, a.k.a. Blackbeard, "that couragious Brute, who might have pass'd in the World for a Heroe, had he been employ'd in a good Cause."

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- Sales Rank: #333458 in Books
- Brand: Johnson, Charles/ Cordingly, David (INT)
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- Dimensions: 9.26" h x .97" w x 7.58" l, 1.41 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 368 pages

## Amazon.com Review

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Most helpful customer reviews

37 of 41 people found the following review helpful.

The editor messed up the original book

By A Customer

This Cordingly editor messed up a real classic. If you want to read something that is very different from what the original book was, then read this one. It is sad to see pieces of the classics reprinted as the editor thinks fit according to his personal taste, inserting the pirates of the 1724 edition, taking some of the 1726 edition, mixing them in a blender, and offering the results for sale only to make some money. The illustrations are also misleading, adding them as if they were part of the original book, and including several of the 1900's. If you are interested in reading the real thing, refer to a first leaguer such as Manuel Schonhorn, who edited the 1726 edition of Johnson's. It was published by Dover Publications, first printed in 1972, and again in 1999. If you don't want to buy things that don't work, nor be misled, then save yourself some dollars in poor books and spend them wisely. P.D. Now that I have both books, I will get rid of Cordingly's version, storing it away in the attic.

27 of 31 people found the following review helpful.

Not the Original

By David Stapleton

This is yet another of the knock-offs of Captain Charles Johnson's *General History of Pirates*. It includes narratives of all the old favorites: Blackbeard, Kidd, Roberts, Bonny and others. As usual, Johnson's prose is preserved and some of the original illustrations grace the pages. The editor/publisher has included a glossary, bibliography and notes to the original text.

However, the down side of this particular volume is that it includes only a subset of Johnson's original writings. And, there is no added index with which to quickly reference particular names and such. While I don't quite agree that the editor has ruined the original, I do find that this version falls short of its potential. P-)

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

## STRAP ON YOUR PEG LEG!

By Lance C. Panzer

1695-1725 is called the Golden Age of Piracy, a time when the black flag of the skull and crossbones provoked terror like nothing else. As European ships fattened with goods and gold left the New World for the Old, pirates were as plentiful as sharks. Courageous, clever, defiant--and drunk--these thieves knew no boundaries as they plied the waters with an unquenchable thirst for mayhem. They burned ships for sport, they murdered, they stole, they even bribed colonial governors to look the other way. One gang actually drew up a formal document declaring war on the entire world.

And many of them swung from the yardarm as they were methodically brought to justice.

The most intriguing aspect of these stories is the portrayal of piratical society. They democratically elected their ship's captain. They debated and voted on their next destination. They followed orders unquestionably. They admired courage under fire, and admired an intelligent mind put to foul deeds. They trusted one another--to a point. As two or three ships sailed together, many a time one of them would weigh anchor in the dead of night and sail off with the booty, leaving their cohorts to cry in their rum--or pursue them and viciously kill them all for daring to steal from fellow thieves. A perverse maritime code of respect and deceit evolved amongst these men, much like within today's penitentiaries.

Personally, my biggest surprise was the ease with which pirates recruited more pirates. A ship would be overtaken and plundered, and the pirate captain would shout, "Would anyone like to join us?!" and formerly law-abiding seamen would clamber over the rails to join the cutthroats. The free-wheeling life of adventure, ill-gotten wealth, and promiscuity was irresistible.

HOWEVER, these stories were written in the 1720s, and the syntax is rather bulky, which can dull the reader's attention. Worse, many of the stories sound alike: different names and places, but the same ol' plunder-burn-murder, then rest up on some secluded island, and then plunder-burn-murder some more.

So while these adventures can be rousing, sometimes surprising, and even humorous, the general monotony of the book can be very trying. Nonetheless, this book is widely considered a scholastic cornerstone for the student of piracy. So read this book--or walk the plank!

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