

A N
NARRATIVE
OF THE MANY

Unparallel'd HARDSHIPS,

A N D
CRUEL SUFFERINGS,
WHILE IN FRANCE;

OF THE
Crew of the TERRIBLE Privateer,

COMMANDED BY
CAPTAIN WILLIAM DEATH;

With the PARTICULARS of that most BLOODY
ENGAGEMENT, and the cruel Treat-
ment of the CREW, when taken by the
Vengeance, a French Privateer.

By SAMUEL STOKES, Lieut. of MARINES.

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William Deeth was a native of Ipswich: some
of the family are buried at Wethering.



A N
N A R R A T I V E
O F T H E

Hardships, and Cruel Sufferings,

*Underwent by the CREW of the TER-
RIBLE PRIVATEER, Captain
WILLIAM DEATH.*

✠✠✠✠✠✠✠ CAME from Newfoundland
✠ . . . ✠ in the *Penzance* Man of
✠ ✠ I ✠ War, of Forty-guns, (where
✠ . . . ✠ I was Master at Arms,) about
✠✠✠✠✠✠✠ six Months before I entered
on board the *Terrible Privateer of London*,
Capt. *William Death*. I might have had
any other of his Majesty's Ships, by ap-
plying to any Commander, and producing
the Certificates of my Servitude, but my
Inclination lead me another Way; I was
willing to try my Fortune at Privateering.

Accordingly, *October* 1756, I enter'd myself on board the *Terrible*, in the Post of Lieutenant of Marines. She mounted Eighteen Guns upon our Main-Deck, Six and Nine Pounders, and Six small Carriage-Guns upon our Quarter-Deck, besides Swivels; and having got her rigg'd, &c. we fell down to *Deptford*. Here we staid a short Time to get every Thing ready for our Cruize, and then sail'd for the *Hope*, at which Place our Owners came on board, and paid us our Advance-Money. There was a Ship lying at the *Hope*, from *Cales*, which we heard had contraband Goods on board, and being unwilling to let any Thing slip by us, we boarded her immediately, and we have Hopes she will be condemn'd as a lawful Prize.

As soon as the Ship's Company was paid, we gave our Owners at their Departure, a Salute with our Great-Guns, weigh'd Anchor, and sail'd to the *Dorset* in the highest Spirits imaginable.

We stay'd a short Time in the *Downt*, and sail'd from thence to *Plymouth*. In our Passage to *Plymouth* we had hard Gales of Wind, which pretty well try'd some of our People, who had not been at Sea. We stay'd about ten Days at *Plymouth*, getting in Stores and Provisions, and several Seamen enter'd on board us. About the eighth of *December*, 1756, we set sail from *Plymouth*, on our intended Cruize.

We had on board, when we left *Plymouth*, Two Hundred and Three Men and Boys. After we had clear'd the Land, our Ship's Company grew very sickly, and our Men dy'd very fast. At Break of Day, on the 23d of *December*, 1756, the Man at the Mast-head, spy'd a Sail, about Lat. 47. We crowded all the Sail we could after her. Finding she could not get from us, she hawl'd up her Courses, and lay to for us. When we came within Gun-shot, we fired at her, and she returned it keeping up a Sort of running Fight. But at last, getting pretty close, a smart Engagement began, she fighting us Broad-side,

side, and Broadside; two Hours before she struck.

WE lost in the Engagement, *John Death*; our Fourth Lieutenant, the Master at Arms, the Ship's Barber, and one Foremastman. One Ball kill'd Lieut. *Death*, the Master at Arms, and the Barber. The Master at Arms had one of his Arms, and Part of his Body tore away; in this bloody Condition he was carry'd down to the Surgeon, who, saying it was impossible to save his Life, and the poor Man finding himself dying, bravely, in his last Moments, sung the Song of, *Britons strike home!* and expir'd with the Words in his Mouth. Part of Lieut. *Death's* Bowels flew into a Man's Face that stood near him, who being cover'd with Blood, was advised to go down to the Surgeon, upon which he reply'd, *D——n it, I don't feel myself hurt, its Time to go down, when I can stand no longer.*

THE Ship prov'd to be the *Alexander*, bound from *San Domingo*, to *Old France*; she had *English* Prisoners on board her,
that

that she had taken in her Voyage. There were, likewise, on board, two Ladies of Fortune, who came on board us, with their Watches by their Sides, and richly dress'd; who were treated by Capt. *Death*, and the whole Crew, with the greatest Humanity and Politeness, Capt. *Death* accommodating them with his own Cabin, and made the best Shift he could for himself. But his Courtesy was ill rewarded by these *French* Rascals, as the Reader will find in the Sequel!

We reckon'd her to be as rich a Prize, as any that had been taken at that Time, for one Ship's Company to share; my Share being computed at Five Hundred Pounds. We repair'd the Prize, and got her ready as well as we could, she being in a shatter'd Condition, and it was agreed upon, to make the best of our Way to *Phymouth*.

As we were on our Passage to *Phymouth*, on the 26th of *December*, in the Afternoon, in about Lat. 48, 22, we saw two sail to Windward of us. Little Wind
on

on the 27th, in the Morning, we saw the two same Ships, one of whom came right down upon us; she proved to be a *French Privateer* of Thirty-six Guns, and Three Hundred and Fifty-Men, call'd the *Vengeance*, belonging to *St. Maloes*. She came under our Stern, and rak'd us fore and aft, which kill'd a Number of our Hands. We had put on board our Prize, Mr. Catling, the First Lieutenant, with fifteen Hands, which the *Vengeance* fir'd at in coming down to us, and the Prize return'd the Fire very smartly, and continued so to do, during the whole Engagement. Considering the small Number of Hands, Mr. Catling had, he behav'd with uncommon Bravery, and Resolution. The *Terrible* and *Vengeance*, lay Board and Board a considerable Time, so close that their Anchor was foul of our Bow. The first Broadside we gave them, we kill'd their Captain, and upwards of Sixty of their Hands, besides what was wounded. We being Yard-arm, and Yard-arm, and they being above double our Number, they had a great Advantage over us, by having their

their Tops full of Men, who dropt us with their Small Arms, like Birds.

IT is impossible to describe the bold and undaunted Behaviour of both Officers and Men! Mr. *Wilby*, our Third Lieutenant, after a Ball had graz'd on his Face, and the Hair of his Wig almost sing'd off, brandishing his Cutlas, call'd out, *Come on board, ye French Dogs, if you dare, and we'll warm ye!* It was a Miracle he escap'd with his Life, for his bold Behaviour so exasperated the *French*, that they levell'd at him several Times, but happily for him, he is now alive and well, and both ready and willing to take a suitable Revenge.

CAPT. DEATH, our gallant Commander, behav'd like an Hero; after he had received two Balls in his Left-Side which went thro' him, he held his Left-hand to the Wounds, and with the other grasping his Sword, he for a long Time gave his Orders, and cheer'd and animated his Men, as if nothing had happen'd, nor was he observ'd to change his Countenance. Never was

a hotter Engagement than this, while it lasted, the Blood running in Streams out of the Scupper-Holes. It was a dismal Sight to see, and hear the Cries of the Wounded; Legs and Arms, and poor Souls, some without either Legs or Arms, being strew'd thick on the Deck. At last Capt. DEATH, seeing most of his Men kill'd, order'd the Colours to be struck; Mr. Wisby cry'd out, *Dear, Capt. DEATH, let us fight till we die; let us die, rather than be taken by the French Dogs; to which Capt. DEATH reply'd, It is in vain to stand it out any longer. — You see my Men are almost all dead: And order'd the Colours to be struck, which was accordingly done; on which Lieut. Calling in the Prize did the same, after fighting the Prize, with unparallel'd Bravery,*

WHAT is most shocking, and deserves the Indignation and Resentment of all true *Englishmen* is, that Capt. DEATH received a Musket Shot in his Back, after our Colours were struck, an Action contrary to the Rules of War; and what ought to be held in the utmost Abhorrence. This Wound

Wound was the Cause of his Death, for 'tis probable, he might have recover'd of the others. They soon after stript him of his Watch, and what else was valuable, and threw into the Sea.

BEFORE we struck we kill'd One Hundred and Thirty-five of the Enemy, by their own Accounts; our Ship being painted black, and cutting a grim Figure, the *French* said, when they brought us into Port, that they had taken a Ship full of Devils; for nothing less they said, could have made so terrible a Resistance against a Force so much superior to us.

WHEN Orders were given to strike, *David Bowers*, our Boatswain, who had behaved like a bold *English* Tar, cry'd out, with a Mixture of Anger, and Grief, *Dear Captain, don't strike yet! D——n my Eyes, let's have t'other Broadside at 'em!* The Words were no sooner out of his Mouth, than a Cannon-Ball took off his Head. I heartily pity his Fate, we having lost in him a brave Seaman.

I HOPE the Reader will excuse my mentioning these Particulars, and the Manner in which they were spoke. I having no other View in it, than to shew the Spirit of the Men. It is very certain, the *French* might have boarded us, having many Advantages, both in Respect to Numbers, and the Size of their Ship; but the bold, and desperate Behaviour of the whole Crew, terrify'd their Men so much, that they never made the Attempt.

I COME now to relate the most melancholly Scene of all, which will shew my Brother Seamen, what they are to expect from the pretended Generosity of the *French*. When they came on board us, as I said before, the Deck was cover'd with our Men, some dead, and many with their Arms and Legs off, and otherwise wounded: Numbers of those who were wounded, might have recover'd with proper Care; but, these barbarous Villains, having no more Regard to the Living than the Dead; tumbled all over-board, in Spite of their Dismal Cries for Mercy,

Mercy, which would have pierc'd any Heart, but that of a *French-man*. They then began to strip, and plunder us into our Shirts, and some they stript to the Skin. I had a Chest of good Cloaths, which they soon rummag'd. As I was an Officer on board, I did not think they would strip me, it being very cold Weather, but I was mistaken; they began with me likewise, and stript me into my Shirt; I happen'd to have the worst on of my whole Stock, or they would have taken that too. Hard Fate, thus for Men, who had behav'd so generously to them, and fought so bravely. I always thought 'till now, that Courage was a Recommendation to the Mercy of a conquering Enemy, but we found it otherwise. The Weather being severe, we were in a perishing Condition, but, by good Luck, I pick'd up an old Canvas Jacket, a *French-man* had dropt on the Deck, which was of great Service to me. After they had beat us about unmercifully with their Cutlasses, they put some of us in double Irons on board the *Terrible*, and the Rest they put on board the *Vengeance*, their own Privateer,

Privateer, in a dismal Hole, not big enough for half our Number. They lock'd us in and kept a Guard over us, and we passed the Night in a most horrid Manner; lying one upon another, and terrify'd with the Groans of our dying Companions, to whom those who were alive could neither give, nor procure any Relief. We made piteous Outcries for Air and Water, but all was in vain; they only damn'd us for *English* Boogres.

THE next Morning, being the 28th of *December*, when they came to look at us, they hawl'd Twenty-seven of the poor Wretches out of the Hole, who were smother'd to Death. They hawl'd them upon Deck, and threw them over-board, like so many Dogs, taking no more Notice of it, than if nothing had happen'd. We that were living, were in a weak Condition, and destitute of Covering; and Necessaries of all Kinds. We imagin'd; that this cruel Treatment was partly owing to our killing their Captain, who was a Man in great Esteem with them. They kept us fifteen Days in this
dismal

dismal Hole, in which Time we arrived at St. Malo's. At this Place they fired Minute-Guns, and made great Lamentations for him.

When we were immediately put on Shore, and guarded to Prison in a miserable, and starving Condition; all the Crew very sickly; and nothing to comfort us. Our Limbs being numb'd with Cold, (it being January;) and having little, or nothing to secure us from the Inclemency of the Weather, we could not walk fast enough, which made the Guards lay on us unmercifully with their Cutlasses; the People, at the same Time, coming from all Parts of the Town, hallowing at us; and calling us bad Names, all the Way we went, till we came to the Prison.

When we were put into the Prison, we found it a most dismal Place; it being the County Goal for Thieves. We did not stay here long before many of us lost the Use of our Limbs, and were sent to an Hospital. When we were recover'd, we were sent back to the Goal, where we

were almost starv'd, our Allowance being but four Shillings a Day, which is no more than Two-pence *English Money*. We being oblig'd to lay it out with the Goaler, made it still worse, for what we could buy in the Town for one Shilling he made us pay two for. We us'd to join a Trifle out of our small Allowance to buy us a little Charcoal to make a Fire, and we had no other Place to make it in; but where we eas'd ourselves. In this stinking Hole we us'd to sit bemoaning our hard Fate, till it becoming too full to hold us, we were taken out, and they march'd us to St. Sepulchre's, a Port where they built a great many Prisoners. At this Place they embark'd us on board a large Boat and carried us up a River to the City of *Dinan*. When we arriv'd here we were guarded to the Castle, a noted Place for confining *English Prisoners of War*. In one of the Rooms where I was put were a great many poor Souls like myself, almost naked and full of Vermin. There were four pretty large Rooms in the Castle besides a few little Rooms. In the Room I was in were upwards of one Hundred

and

and Eighty Men, and we were so crouded that we lay one upon another. Our Bedding was Straw, a small Bundle of which was to serve Eight Men twelve Days, at the End of which it was like Chaff, and so lousy, that, together with the Closeness and Nastiness of the Place, a Sickness broke out which carried Numbers of us off, Nine or Ten dying of a Day. It was a dismal Sight to see us carrying our Dead to be buried, sew'd up in a Piece of Hop-sack, and laid on a Plank, with two Sticks put under the Plank and carried by four of us to each Corps, guarded by a Party of Soldiers with their Bayonets fix'd, driving us along like a Parcel of Sheep. We buried our Dead in a Field about half a Mile from the Castle. The Field was left for that Purpose by a charitable Protestant Lady, who left a Sous a Day for *English* Prisoners of War. We are continually surrounded with Soldiers, who abuse us and use us as they please; if we make the least Murmuring, we are immediately clapt into the *Cusbae*, a dismal Place under Ground, where we are kept till they think proper to let us out. The

French Interpreter, when we complain'd to him of the Closeness of our Confinement, made answer, *D——n ye, you English Bougres, why don't you die faster and make more Room.*

ON the First of *June* the Brigades who guarded us were order'd out of *Dinain*, but before they march'd they took several *English* and *Irish* Prisoners out of the Goal and lifted them by Force ; after they march'd, the Militia of the Town did Duty over us. About the 14th of *June* they fitted out three stout Ships from *St. Maloes*, the *French* Officers came to the Prison of *Dinain*, and enter'd most Part of the *Dutch*, *Spaniards*, and other Foreigners taken in the *English* Service to go on board them.

No sooner were the Brigades gone than our Usage became more intollerable than before. The Governor being a Man much addiçted to Drinking, would come two or three times a week in his Cups and beat us about for his Diversion, calling us *English* Bougres, and other bad Names,

if

if we made the least Reply we were sure to be put into the *Custoe*.

THE poor Objects who lay dying in Hospitals, four or five in a Bed, were continually pester'd with Priests, who made Use of every Argument to induce them to embrace the *Roman Catholick* Faith: One of our Crew was perpetually harrassed by an *Irish* Friar; who, one Day came and assured him, that he would undoubtedly be damn'd, if he died a Heretick, but, the poor Fellow, bluntly told him, *That he shou'd be very glad, if he wou'd give him a good Protestant Prayer, but he'd be damn'd, and double damn'd, before he'd turn Papist!* Were it not for the Grace of God, the poor Fellow might be in Hell, (sooner, perhaps, than was agreeable to him,) for he was not much given to Devotion; nay, I doubt, whether he could say the *Lords-Prayer*; but he kept to his Integrity, for he was determin'd to be damn'd on his own Way, rather than turn. He dy'd that Night, and kept his Senses to the last, seeming to be griev'd more at the Thoughts

Thoughts of parting with his Companions, than from any other Consideration. What is more extraordinary the Friar was found dead in his Bed the next Morning: Whether they had any Conversation together afterwards, on the same Subject, is uncertain.

BUT at length the happy Day of our Deliverance arriv'd, for on the 7th of *August* we embark'd on board the *Barrington* Tender, a Cartel-ship, being about Forty-five in Number, including the brave Mr. *Catling* the First Lieutenant of the *Terrible*, Mr. *Witby* the Third Lieutenant, Mr. *Pouge*, Mate, Mr. *Harman*, Gunner, *John Bell*, Boatswain's Mate, Mr. *Rogers*, Midshipman, *John Brannon*, Gunner's Mate, and *Samuel Berry*, Captain's Cockson.

THERE was above 256 *English* Prisoners on board the *Barrington* Tender, many of whom belong'd to *Sbirley's* and *Pepperel's* Regiments taken at *Ostego*, and some of the Crew of the *Hazek* Privateer of *Exeter*. We of the *Terrible*, who had suffer'd such great Hardships, fearing that we should be
 pretis'd

press'd before we had had the Pleasure of seeing our Wives and Families once more, agreed, with a Number of other Sufferers, who were bound to *Plymouth*, to land ourselves at *Salcombe*.

F I N I S.



5 October 1756

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Appeared Personally Captain William Doell of the Ship
 of John Wapping in the County of Middlesex
 and produce a warrant from the Right Honble the Lords
 Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of
 Great Britain & Ireland & for the granting of a Commission or
 Letter of marque to him the said William Doell
 and in pursuance of His Majestys Instructions to Privateers make
 the following Declaration, to wit, That his the said William
 Doell his _____ Ship is called the Terrible
 _____ and is of the burthen of about Three hundred
 _____ Tons That he the said William Doell
 goeth Commander of her that she carries twenty four Carriage
 Guns Two hundred & twenty _____ Men One hundred
 Small Arms One hundred _____ Buttares thirty three Barrels of
 Powder Fifty _____ Pound of great shot and about two
 Thousand _____ Weight of small shot That the said Ship is
 Virtually for Six Months has two Suits of Sails two
 Anchors three Cables and about two Tons _____
 Weight of spare Cordage That Robert Wilkinfon _____
 goes Lieutenant Thomas Suggs _____ Gunner
 John Brown _____ Boatswain John Thomas Dixon
 Carpenter Joseph Newton _____ Cook and Thomas
 Edwards _____ Surgeon of the said Ship and that Thomas Brown
 & Samuel Brooks of London Merchants
 are the Owners and Sellers out of the said Ship

On the same Day

This Declaration was made

Before me

Wm. Death

And: Collee Ducarel

Surrogate