

given name, children's surnames consist of their father's first name followed by "son" or "dóttir" to denote a son or daughter. All of these author's additions were welcomed by this reader.

Willson's experiences, while researching seawomen, contribute to her description of the island nation and its people. She outlines the danger inherent in going to sea over the last few centuries. She describes the ominous sky and unruly ocean waves as she makes her way through and around Iceland's many fiords. Over time, women sought to find their place on fishing boats, either because they crewed their family's boat, or they employed their skill with commercial boat skippers. No matter their reason, fishing allowed women an opportunity to earn a wage well beyond anything that could be made on land.

Willson's training as an anthropologist allowed her to gain an understanding of how and why women had been revered in earlier centuries for serving as everything from deckhands to skippering their own ship. She connects to the past through meeting and interviewing modern seawomen, making good use of her contacts throughout the nation. As well as diving deeply into the Icelandic archives, she also makes use of oral histories of early seawomen that have been passed down through the generations. In breaking the silence on Icelandic seawomen, Willson employs sources currently available. Should she or others continue the study, one hopes more sources will be found.

This book is an interesting read and difficult to put down. Willson's writing and storytelling is engaging and stirring. Those interested in women's history, gender studies, or maritime history will find *Seawomen of Iceland: Survival on the Edge* a worthy addition to their reading list.

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David Wilson. *Suppressing Piracy in the Early Eighteenth Century. Pirates, Merchants and British Imperial Authority in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans*. Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, www.boydellandbrewer.com, 2021. 312 pp., illustrations, notes, appendices, bibliography. US \$130.00, cloth; ISBN 978-1-78327-595-3.

The word "pirates" immediately catches the reader's imagination. I think all of us have a secret fascination with these irascible characters of history. Whether we remember the epic tales of pirates that we read as kids, or the blockbuster movies that we all watch with rapt attention, pirates carry an air of mystery and fascination. Yet most of us know very little about piracy as a historical process. We tend to be caught up with the image of the pirate but not the practical realities of piracy. Piracy, or perhaps more importantly, the ability of the Royal Navy to crush piracy, has been taken as a historical truth. After all, with the most powerful navy in the world by the early eighteenth century, it makes sense that Britain was the one nation capable of suppressing piracy at the time.

David Wilson's *Suppressing Piracy in the Early Eighteenth Century* represents the latest word on the subject of piracy in the eighteenth century and fundamentally challenges the role of the Royal Navy in its elimination. The author's subject is not really pirates, but their victims, the various groups and individuals engaged in the vast British enterprise of "Empire" as it spread across the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. It is these individuals who sought to suppress the threat of piracy. Wilson argues that between 1716 and 1726, a large proportion of the people who relied on maritime trade turned to piracy along the fringes of empire where there was no effective enforcement of the rule of law. In the process, the antag-

onism these pirates produced led to the creation of an ad hoc solution to piracy that was entirely organic to the colonies. Utilizing naval, administrative, and legal resources as needed, the various colonial leaderships scattered across vast areas of the empire produced their own solution to the problem of piracy. They protected key trade routes and waterways and conducted an effective anti-piracy campaign. By changing the perspective from a discussion of piracy to a discussion of this anti-piracy effort, Wilson demonstrates that it was not a single planned and organized campaign that ended piracy. Rather it was an ongoing series of distinctive campaigns. These efforts were often fragmented and shaped by the individual local colonial needs of the moment. They were certainly not the product of a concerted and focused effort led and organized by the powers in London. As the imperial framework became more coherent and beneficial to the various colonial players, and the legal regime became more pronounced, it was the colonies that squeezed out piracy through the elimination of markets and safe harbours.

Broken up into seven chapters with an introduction and conclusion, Wilson examines piracy as a function of colonial relationships in the eighteenth century. Chapter one examines the events that led to piracy through the isolation of large numbers of mariners and the rise of local colonial and inter-imperial conflicts that swirled around the muddy legal realities of the time, as well as ongoing activity in the Caribbean. Chapter two examines the protection of trade in the Caribbean and the failure of the British to rise to the challenge presented by piracy. The next chapter examines the Woodes Rogers expedition, Rogers being a sea captain, privateer and, latterly, first Royal Governor of the Bahamas. Chapters four through six ex-

amine the impact of piracy outside the Caribbean and the efforts of the Royal Navy to protect key colonial trade routes in response to the pressure of lobby groups within England. Chapter seven examines the decreasing impact of piracy after 1722.

One of the most compelling aspects of this work is its incredible detail and depth of research. The author has clearly produced one of the most thorough studies of colonial political, economic, and legal issues possible. In the process, he has also produced an important study of some of the personalities involved and how power struggles within colonial leaderships shaped decisions and events. Particularly interesting is Wilson's description of colonial participation in piracy, including America's Thirteen Colonies. While it is already known that some piracy was supported by key players in the Thirteen Colonies, the scale of these operations has not been well described. Clearly, almost every colony in the Caribbean seems to have been involved in some form of piracy or the support of piracy.

The scale of the research certainly is impressive. Unfortunately, it also produces the key criticism of the text. It is incredibly dense, packed as it is with so much information. This means that for someone who has less experience in colonial history or the history of the period, the text might be a bit of a struggle. In this regard, Wilson's work promises to produce new pieces of information with every reading. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in the subject of British colonial history, the history of colonial America, or the history of piracy. Student, layman, or professor, this book is worth the effort.

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