



Portfolio Guide
Conclave of The Pirate
Lords, 1641

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A Note to Delegates

Dear Delegates,

The Executive Board would like to address an important matter concerning the portfolios provided in the study guide for our committee. We understand that the time period in which our committee is set poses challenges regarding the availability of information, especially information which concerns our agenda. In light of this, we have made efforts to provide you with as much relevant information as possible regarding your assigned portfolios in this guide.

It is crucial to emphasise that we urge delegates not to conduct additional research on their portfolios outside of the study guide. This is because certain details about a portfolio may have been modified or adapted for the purpose of creating a more engaging and dynamic committee experience. We kindly request that you refrain from seeking external sources to validate or expand upon the information provided.

Instead, we encourage all delegates to focus their research efforts on the overall time period and the socio-economic environment of the relevant countries during that era. Understanding the historical context and the dynamics of the time will greatly contribute to the quality of debate and crises.

Moreover, we strongly encourage delegates to conduct thorough research on the topics included in the study guide. Familiarise yourselves with the key issues, policies, and perspectives relevant to the committee agenda. This will enable you to actively participate in the discussions and debates during the committee sessions.

While we discourage independent research on the specific details of your portfolios, we welcome any additional information or creative ideas you may have about your assigned portfolios. If you wish to introduce new information into the committee that is relevant and realistic, we kindly request that you first present it to the Executive Board for approval and ratification during committee. This ensures that the information aligns with the committee's goals and maintains a consistent and coherent timeline.

Please feel free to reach out to the Executive Board if you have any questions or require further clarification.

Best regards,

The Executive Board

Abraham Blauvelt

Abraham was born into a family facing the aftermath of the devastating Dover Strait earthquakes of 1580.^[1] Growing up, he experienced the harsh realities of poverty. However, Dover was a large colonial seaport, and hence despite his poverty, Abraham was witness to the maritime hustle and bustle of his city. His eyes were constantly drawn to the daring pirates sailing in and out from its shores. Inspired by their tales of untold wealth and fortunes amassed at sea, Abraham eagerly joined a pirate crew as a young boy, seeking a way out of his destitute circumstances.

Through years of toil and perseverance, he navigated the treacherous waters of piracy, steadily ascending the ranks. Today, he stands as one of the wealthiest English pirates, commanding not just a single ship but a formidable fleet boasting a crew of over 200 loyal pirates. At the heart of this fleet are two formidable warships, the HMS Revenge, and the HMS Vengeance. The Revenge, a sleek and agile frigate, excels in swift manoeuvres and surprise attacks, while the Vengeance, a robust galleon, possesses unparalleled strength and endurance. Abraham also maintains a fleet of nimble and versatile pirate sloops to complement his warships. These smaller vessels, such as the Sea Serpent and the Storm Rider, are adept at navigating shallow waters and swiftly evading pursuit. They serve as invaluable assets in raiding coastal towns, ambushing unsuspecting merchant ships, and scouting for potential targets. As for his crew, Abraham has assembled a diverse and talented group of individuals hailing from different backgrounds and nations. While the

majority are English sailors, his crew includes skilled sailors from various European countries. French sailors, in particular, formed a significant part of his crew. Each member brings their own skills and experiences and range from master gunners and navigators to seasoned boarding parties and stealthy scouts.

Abraham's rise to fame has spread like wildfire – fame earned through audacious exploits against Spanish vessels laden with treasures that have been plundered from their expeditions to nearby Spanish territories. In one daring act, he cunningly intercepted a heavily armed Spanish galleon near the coast of Calais, unleashing a surprise attack that yielded a bountiful haul of gold, jewels, and precious cargo. Such calculated strikes against the Spanish empire became his trademark, solidifying his reputation as a master strategist.

However, whispers of suspicion circulate among some English pirates who can be presumed to be envious of Abraham's vast wealth and unprecedented success. They doubt his loyalty to the English cause. Due to Dover's proximity to France, Abraham had cultivated numerous French allies, including pirates and influential figures within the French government. This has led to rumours that his wealth stems not from true English piracy but from secret dealings with the French. Even his last name, "Blauvelt," with its Dutch origins, seemed to stir doubts among some English pirates who questioned his loyalty. They speculated that his name, translating to "blue field" in English, hints at a connection to Dutch or perhaps even French influences. Abraham's critics question whether his

calculated behaviour is a façade, concealing his true allegiance.



Figure 1.1 Abraham Blauvelt

Ali Bitchnin Reis

Ali Bitchnin Reis was born into a noble French family with a hidden Ottoman ancestry and was raised in the bustling port city of Marseille. Located on the south-eastern coast of France, Marseille has a rich maritime history and was an important trading port during the Ottoman era. The city's bustling harbour attracted merchants, diplomats, and travellers from various parts of the Ottoman Empire, fostering a diverse and vibrant atmosphere.

Born in Marseille, Ali Bitchnin Reis was exposed to this multicultural environment from a young age. Ali's lineage traces back to when his ancestors served as trusted advisors to the French monarchy. Due to political rivalries that came up against the Arab world at that time, his ancestors had needed to keep their Ottoman heritage

concealed, and the French royalty had been kind to them and helped facilitate the same.

As Ali Bitchnin Reis matured, he became aware of his family's secret noble lineage and the responsibility it carried. He felt a deep connection to his Ottoman roots^[2] and a strong sense of loyalty to his ancestors' homeland and to the country that protected his family. This led him to align himself with the French.

Hence, Ali Bitchnin Reis entered into a clandestine partnership with the French authorities using his seafaring skills and knowledge of the Mediterranean. Under their patronage, he embarked on daring missions to disrupt Spanish interests in the region, targeting their fleets, outposts, and trade routes. His actions served the dual purpose of advancing French ambitions while seeking personal redemption for his family's exile, in which, he understood, King Philip IV, the ruler of Spain, had been instrumental.

With his unique background and understanding of French and Ottoman cultures, Ali Bitchnin Reis navigated the intricacies of politics and diplomacy in the Mediterranean. His knowledge of the region and ability to speak multiple languages made him an invaluable asset to the French cause. He cultivated relationships with French diplomats, provided intelligence on rival powers, and operated as a privateer under French letters of marque.

At the heart of Ali Bitchnin Reis's naval prowess is his formidable vessel, the "Al-Mahroosa." This ship is inspired by the sleek and swift Arab dhows that once

dominated the Arabian Sea. Its design combines the best features of traditional Arab ships with modifications tailored to the demands of piracy and naval warfare. The Al-Mahroosa boasts a sleek and slender hull, allowing it to cut through the waves with remarkable speed and agility. Its size strikes a perfect balance, providing ample storage for supplies and loot while remaining manoeuvrable in tight waters. The ship's construction is a testament to functionality and beauty, featuring intricate carvings and ornate decorations that reflect the rich heritage of Arab craftsmanship. One of Al-Mahroosa's most distinctive features is its sail arrangement. It harnesses the power of multiple triangular lateen sails, a design favoured by Arab sailors for centuries. These triangular sails enable the ship to catch the slightest breeze, ensuring swift navigation through calm seas and strong winds. The Al-Mahroosa's sails, emblazoned with vibrant colours and patterns, billow in the wind, capturing the attention and admiration of all who witness it.

Thus, Ali Bitchnin Reis stands as a unique figure in the world of piracy, with his secret noble lineage connecting him to the French and driving his relentless pursuit of personal and national justice on the high seas.

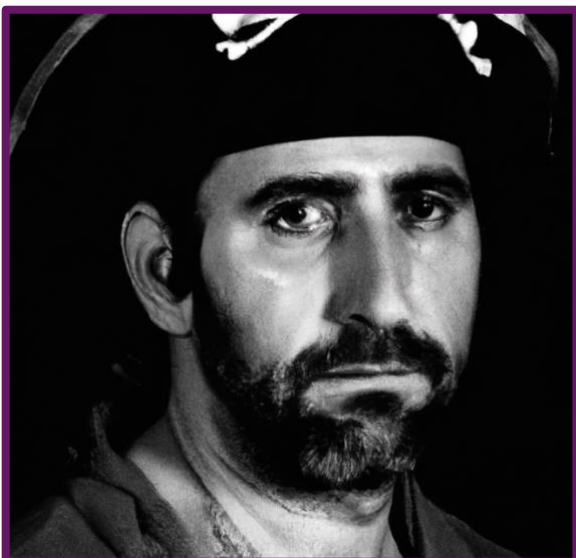


Figure 1.2 Ali Bitchnin Reis

Anne Dieu Le Veut

Born in Brittany, France, Anne Dieu Le Veut's early life was marred by an abusive household. Seeking refuge from her tumultuous circumstances, she courageously fled at the tender age of 13. With nowhere to turn, Anne found herself at the bustling port, where fate led her to board the first large ship she encountered. She concealed herself from the crew for nearly three weeks, at the end of which she was inevitably discovered. However, Anne's audacious spirit impressed these pirates, who recognised the spark of a true pirate within her and welcomed her into their ranks. Anne eagerly embraced the thrilling life of a seafaring adventurer.

Anne's natural talents and resilience became evident as she sailed the vast seas alongside her newfound comrades. Gradually, it became apparent that she possessed a strategic mind that set her apart. Anne meticulously planned each raid, considering crucial elements such as ship routes, cargo value, and potential resistance. Her calculated approach garnered respect among her fellow pirates and elevated her status within the crew. At the age of just 19, she orchestrated a daring coup against the captain, seizing control of the ship and cementing her place as a formidable leader.

At the helm of her unique ship, the 'Tempest's Fury,' Anne commands a fleet of swift and agile vessels. Although, the Tempest's Fury stands apart from any other ship on the seas. It is equipped with secret compartments, concealed cannons, and a reinforced hull capable of withstanding the most brutal battles. This engineering marvel allows her to outmanoeuvre more extensive, more heavily armed vessels,

earning the admiration and awe of her crew and instilling terror in those who dare to cross her path.

Despite her success and reputation, Anne does not measure her wealth solely in material possessions. She believes in equitable treasure distribution among her crew, ensuring each member receives their fair share. This philosophy, coupled with her generosity, has contributed to her having a much smaller wealth than other pirates of her calibre.

However, it is rumoured that Anne Dieu Le Veut has a connection to the Anne of Austria^[3], who had immediately admired the pirate's audacity and independent spirit upon hearing of her, apparently seeing in Anne Dieu a reflection of her yearning for freedom and adventure. The Queen is believed to covertly support Anne Dieu Le Veut's endeavours, offering her protection and assistance when needed. In return, the pirate's successful exploits served as a source of entertainment and intrigue for the Queen, adding a touch of excitement to her otherwise regal and constrained existence. Moreover, with the Queen's blessing and support, Anne Dieu Le Veut's piracy extends beyond mere self-enrichment. It causes her to view herself as a champion of the oppressed and exploited, targeting ships of nations that have wronged the French people.



Figure 1.3 Anne Dieu Le Veut

Bekir Reis

Bekir Reis, a French pirate of remarkable intellect and worldly knowledge, comes from the vibrant city of Marseille^[4], nestled on the southern coast of France. Born into a family of merchants, Bekir was exposed to the intricacies of trade from an early age. His parents' ventures took him to various corners of the world, exposing Bekir to different nations' diverse cultures and political landscapes. As a young man, Bekir embarked on his journey, sailing the seas as a merchant and explorer. His travels allowed him to witness foreign governments' workings and global politics' complex realm. From busy marketplaces to opulent courts, he observed the power, diplomacy, and intrigue dynamics that shaped nations. Bekir's astute mind absorbed all this knowledge of the intricacies of international relations, geopolitical strategies, and the ever-changing dynamics of rival empires. He

studied the art of negotiation, treaties, and the subtle ways decisions were made in faraway capitals reverberated across the seas.

During his voyages, Bekir honed his linguistic skills, becoming fluent in multiple languages spoken by merchants, diplomats, and sailors. His ability to converse effortlessly with people from different nations and cultural backgrounds earned him the respect and trust of many, allowing him to gather valuable insights into the political landscapes of the countries he encountered. While Bekir did not hold significant political affiliations, his vast knowledge of foreign policy and global politics makes him a valuable asset in the pirate world. Fellow pirates seek his counsel, relying on his insights to navigate the treacherous waters of international rivalries, avoiding conflicts that could jeopardise their operations. Bekir's ship, the formidable *La Belle Espérance*, has become a hub of intellectual discourse among the crew. In the quiet hours between raids and skirmishes, discussions on politics, power dynamics, and the fate of empires unfolded on the ship's deck.

La Belle Espérance is equipped with an array of formidable cannons strategically positioned along its sides, capable of delivering devastating blows to enemy ships. The pirate flag flying proudly atop the ship bears the emblem of a crossed sword and quill, symbolizing the combination of Bekir's martial and intellectual prowess. However, what sets *La Belle Espérance* apart is its interior, which reflects Bekir's love for knowledge and exploration. The ship boasts a well-stocked library, filled with books and maps from various corners of the world. Bekir's collection includes navigational charts,

treatises on foreign policy, and accounts of voyages by renowned explorers. The crew, comprised of skilled sailors and astute intellectuals, gathers in the ship's study room to engage in lively discussions on politics, trade, and the ever-changing dynamics of global affairs.

Bekir's encounters with foreign governments and his deep understanding of global politics instil in him a sense of pragmatism and calculated decision-making. Rather than engaging in reckless acts of piracy, he carefully selected targets that would yield strategic advantages, avoiding unnecessary conflicts and focusing on gaining valuable information that could be leveraged to his advantage. His unparalleled understanding of foreign policy and global politics helped him become a respected figure among his fellow pirates. His cunning on the high seas also made him a sought-after ally and a formidable opponent. While he may not have wielded significant political associations, his knowledge and understanding of the world made him a force to be reckoned with in the complex web of pirate politics and maritime affairs.



Figure 1.4 Bekir Reis

Colonel Edward Doyley

Colonel Edward Doyley was born in Southampton, England, into a family deeply rooted in military tradition. His father, a renowned Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Forces, had instilled in him a sense of duty and honour from a young age. Growing up in military company, Edward was constantly exposed to tales of bravery and conquest. While his elder brothers followed in their father's footsteps and pursued military careers, Edward's heart was captivated by the vast expanse of the open sea. Despite his father's hopes for a military legacy, he allowed Edward the freedom to pursue his dreams of becoming a sailor as the allure of the sea seemed irresistible to him.

But Edward soon discovered that the life of a sailor offered limited power and influence, leaving him dissatisfied. Driven by his hunger for wealth and authority, he turned to piracy as a means to attain the riches and control he desired.

The pirate ship he obtained through his network of military contacts was exceptional. It was initially designed as a fortified military vessel^[5] and had been constructed to withstand the perils of warfare. The ship boasted an imposing structure with reinforced hull plating and fortified bulwarks. Its formidable armament included a battery of cannons strategically positioned along the gun decks, capable of unleashing devastating firepower upon enemy ships. This warship-turned-pirate vessel was a symbol of both military might and clandestine operations. The ship's unique features were not limited to its

defensive capabilities. It was equipped with advanced navigational instruments, allowing precise charting of treacherous waters. Its impressive sails, expertly rigged by experienced seafarers, swiftly propelled the ship through the waves, enabling daring pursuits and quick escapes. The ship's interior was designed to accommodate a large crew and sustain long voyages, boasting spacious quarters, ample storage space, and even a makeshift brig for captured prisoners. His military affiliations granted him access to a vast arsenal of weaponry, including cannons, muskets, and swords, ensuring that his pirate ship was well-equipped to overpower rival vessels. All of these features gave him a significant advantage in the increasingly violent pirate world. Edward was also known for assembling and maintaining a very disciplined crew, almost like a military one. Moreover, further drawing upon his connections within the government and army, he obtained a state-sanctioned status as a pirate during times of war. This official backing ensured that his actions were viewed as a necessary evil in service of the English cause.

Now a formidable pirate, Edward operates off the coast of England with fierce patriotism. His plundering exploits primarily target Spanish ships, employing an aggressive and ruthless approach. These admiralty connections afford him certain advantages, such as advanced knowledge of naval operations, intelligence on merchant fleets, and occasionally even privateering commissions that provide a veneer of legality to his pirate activities. The trust and rapport he enjoys with these powerful military figures grant him a degree of

protection and leniency, making it challenging for naval forces to capture or prosecute him. As a result, Edward Doyley operates with a heightened sense of authority and audacity, knowing that his admiralty connections are instrumental in both his survival and his success as a pirate.



Figure 1.5 Colonel Edward Doyley

Francois Le Vasseur

Francois Le Vasseur was born in the coastal town of Saint-Malo, nestled on the rugged coast of Brittany. Francois hailed from a modest background; his family was comfortable but not wealthy. However, they carried within them a legacy of piracy. Francois was born into a lineage of seafarers. His parents were part of the coastal navy, and his aunt and uncles were seasoned buccaners.

Hence, having been raised on stories of maritime exploits, he embarked on his first voyage as soon as he turned eighteen. Though not blessed with extravagant wealth, Francois possessed a different kind of fortune, in time—a crew of a hundred exceptional sailors, each handpicked for

their unrivalled skill, expertise, and experience. Together, they formed a tightly knit family aboard five sturdy ships, with Francois as their esteemed captain, guiding them through the tumultuous seas. They were also all fiercely loyal, a quality earned through shared adventures and the promise of plunder. Weathered by countless voyages, each ship bore witness to the bonds forged on the open waters. Having honed his skills as a sailor and pirate over the years, Francois had developed a keen understanding of the maritime world. He had an uncanny ability to navigate treacherous waters, outmanoeuvre rivals, and spot opportunities for plunder.

But what truly set him apart from the rest was his extensive and intricate network of influential seigneurs^[6], commonly known as landlords, who held considerable political and economic power over the coastal regions of Brittany. These powerful figures owned vast estates, controlling the peasants who toiled on their lands. Through shrewd manoeuvring, astute diplomacy and careful cultivation, Francois had earned their trust and forged alliances with all of them. Francois gained vital intelligence into merchant ships' cargoes and routes through these connections. The landlords' deep understanding of trade networks and access to privileged information allowed Francois to target vessels carrying the most precious and lucrative goods meticulously. His network of informants embedded within the landlords' domains also provided him with privileged information. His raids were swift, calculated, and devastating, leaving merchants in awe of the pirates' uncanny knowledge. This strategic advantage maximised his plundering efforts and secured substantial wealth for his crew.

Moreover, this symbiotic bond between Francois and the landlords extended beyond mere information exchange. Recognising the imminent threat posed by maritime hazards, Francois offered protection to the landlords and ensured the safety of their estates along the coast. His presence and swift retaliation against potential threats acted as a deterrent, safeguarding the landlords' properties and the livelihoods of the local populace. In return for his services, Francois received generous compensation, provisions, and even sanctuary within the seigneurs' estates. The respected pirate became a feared figure among his comrades and the landlords, solidifying his reputation as a trustworthy and valuable ally.

As Francois continued to sail the seas, his unique alliance with the landlords proved to be mutually beneficial. The landlords secured their estates and enjoyed enhanced prosperity, thanks to the protection offered by the formidable pirate. Meanwhile, Francois and his crew reap the rewards of their association, amassing substantial wealth and resources through strategic raids on targeted merchant vessels. In the vast expanse of the ocean, Francois Le Vasseur's unwavering loyalty to his crew and his astute collaboration with the landlords propel him to great heights as a renowned pirate. With his trusted crew and the support of the landlords, he remains a force to be reckoned with, feared, and respected by all who dared cross his path.



Figure 1.6 Francois Le Vasseur

Jean-Fran çois de La Rocque de Roberval

Jean-François de La Rocque de Roberval was born into a highly wealthy French family that lived in the port city of Bordeaux. However, he led a life of indulgence and recklessness during his youth. This resulted in his parents sending him off to serve as a soldier in the Anglo-French War^[7], a conflict that raged at sea from 1627 to 1629. It was during his time in the military that Jean's fascination with sailing took root. As he sailed the seas, he felt a sense of liberation and control that had been absent from his sheltered upbringing. He developed an allure for the pirate's life. However, the strict control of his family kept him from pursuing his newfound fascination further. Through his remarkable skills and unwavering determination, Jean rose through the ranks of the French army, eventually attaining the esteemed position of general commander. His strategic

acumen and charismatic leadership made him a respected figure among his comrades, earning him a reputation for his audacity in battle.

However, Jean was struck by a devastating blow upon returning from the war. His entire family had fallen victim to Smallpox during his absence, leaving him as the sole inheritor of their vast fortune.

Capitalising on his newfound wealth, he embarked on a daring venture, using his resources to acquire his own fleet of ships and assemble a crew. To match his ambitions and exploits, Jean spared no expense in acquiring the most advanced ships of the era. His flagship, a fast galleon named "Le Faucon Noir," is the epitome of maritime engineering excellence. With its sleek design and multiple masts adorned with square-rigged sails, the vessel cuts through the waves with impressive speed. Its agility allowed Jean to chase down merchant's vessels and engage in daring boarding manoeuvres, ensuring successful raids and plunder. In addition to "Le Faucon Noir," Jean commanded a fleet of formidable brigantines and sloop-of-war vessels. These versatile ships provided him with the flexibility to navigate treacherous coastlines, making surprise attacks on unsuspecting targets or swiftly escaping pursuit. With their fore-and-aft rigged sails and shallow draft, these vessels gave Jean an edge in coastal raids and the ability to strike fear into the hearts of his enemies. The advanced weaponry and armament of Jean's ships are equally impressive. Cannons line the decks, ready to unleash devastating firepower upon any ship foolish enough to challenge him.

Many of his former comrades, now jobless after the war's end, eagerly joined him on

his quest for adventure as pirates, knowing that his state-of-the-art vessels gave them a significant advantage in their exploits. While the majority were French sailors, with time, his crew also began to include skilled sailors from various European countries, especially England. Although Jean was not the most seasoned pirate, his ambition and the advanced nature of his ships quickly propelled him to prominence. Within a decade, he had successfully carried out several audacious exploits, notably targeting Spanish vessels and plundering their precious cargo.

When starting out, he first set his sights on capturing the valuable Spanish ships that sailed from Santander and Oviedo. With calculated precision, he and his crew would ambush unsuspecting vessels, overpowering their defences and seizing the treasures they carried. During these daring encounters, Jean's prowess with the sword truly shone. He became known for his exceptional swordsmanship skills, dispatching opponents with remarkable speed and precision. His ability to lead his crew in daring boarding actions earned him both fear and respect among his enemies. These ventures brought him considerable wealth, adding to his already affluent background.

However, intrigue and suspicion surrounded Jean's past. During the height of the Anglo-French War, Jean had been captured by English sailors during a fierce naval encounter. The customary protocol dictated that his head would be severed from his body and prominently displayed on the mast of their ship as a chilling warning to the French forces. Yet, against all odds, he miraculously escaped unscathed after a week in their custody. Jean claims it was a daring escape, but

rumours persist that he struck a clandestine deal with influential English figures on board, offering them a substantial sum of money after the war's end in exchange for his release. Some pirates harbour doubts about Jean's true loyalties, speculating that he remains indebted to the English and that his actions are motivated by more than just French patriotism.

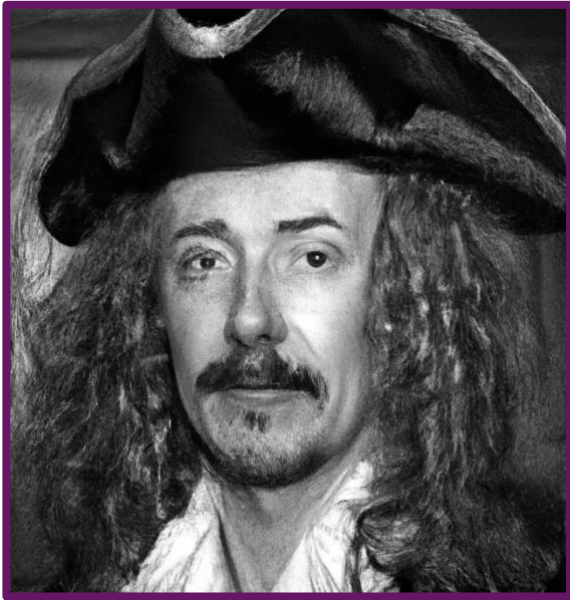


Figure 1.7 Jean-Francois de La Rocque de Roberval

Moses Vanclein

Moses Vanclein was born in Bristol, England. Born into a family of seasoned traders, Moses inherited his parents' entrepreneurial spirit and keen business acumen. Growing up amidst the vibrant trade networks of Bristol, Moses absorbed the intricacies of commerce, gaining an invaluable understanding of supply chains, market dynamics, and negotiation tactics. His parents, successful merchants, taught

him the art of evaluating risks, identifying profitable opportunities, and navigating the complex world of trade. However, fate had a different path in store for Moses.

Tragedy struck when his parents' ship, laden with precious cargo, fell victim to a ruthless Spanish privateer. Witnessing the ruthless plundering of his family's livelihood, Moses vowed to avenge their loss and embarked on a different kind of trade—one that involved capturing Spanish vessels and reclaiming what had been taken from him. Utilising his knowledge of trade routes, Moses skilfully transformed himself into a formidable pirate captain. He understood the intricacies of supply and demand, targeting Spanish ships carrying valuable goods sought by eager markets^[8]. Rather than merely looting for the sake of it, Moses strategically seized cargo that would fetch the highest price, maximising his plunder and ensuring his crew's prosperity. The lessons learned from his merchant upbringing became invaluable in his piratical pursuits. Moses possessed an acute sense of market trends and knew when and where to strike to secure the most lucrative spoils. His understanding of trade dynamics^[9] allowed him to identify valuable cargoes, be it exotic spices, precious metals, or rare goods, ensuring each plundered ship yielded the greatest possible reward. Moreover, Moses's experience in trade negotiations bestowed upon him a unique ability to forge alliances and secure favourable terms in pirate circles. His talent for deal-making and resourceful bartering set him apart from his peers. He possessed the rare ability to navigate the treacherous waters of pirate politics, forming strategic alliances with

fellow captains and leveraging his connections to ensure his crew's safety and prosperity.

Moses Vanclein's ship, the *Prospero*, is a vessel optimized for economic warfare on the high seas. It is equipped with specialized storage compartments and secure vaults to safely store the seized goods. These compartments are ingeniously designed to protect the treasures from damage and to keep them hidden from prying eyes. The ship also features a small workshop where skilled crew members can appraise and evaluate the value of the acquired merchandise. With their proficiency in trade negotiations and their knowledge of market dynamics, Moses and his crew excel at bartering and securing advantageous deals within the pirate community. Their ability to leverage their economic expertise has earned them respect and recognition among fellow pirates, who often seek their guidance when it comes to valuing and trading plundered goods.

Moses Vanclein, the vengeful trader-turned-pirate, sails the high seas with an unwavering determination to strike back at the Spanish. His astute business acumen, honed through his upbringing in a family of traders, has been transformed into a formidable weapon.

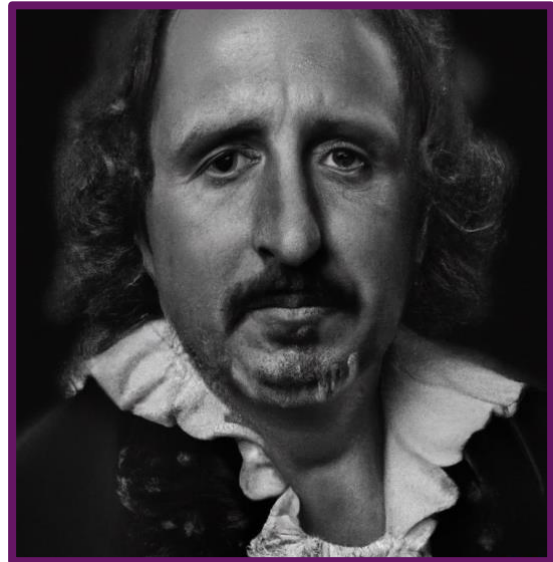


Figure 1.8 Moses Vanclein

Pierre Le Grand

Pierre Le Grand was born in the coastal city of Dieppe on the northeastern coast of Normandy. Officially recognised as a French privateer, he carries out daring raids against enemy ships under the French flag. However, whispers persist that Pierre's connections extend beyond his French affiliation. His origins offer a glimpse into the complexity of his character. Raised in Dieppe's tight-knit fishing community, Pierre's parents were fishermen, with his father hailing from a long line of French seafarers. However, his mother hailed from across the English Channel^[10], bringing a unique blend of English heritage to his upbringing.

Growing up amidst the bustling fish markets of Dieppe, Pierre developed a profound understanding of the intertwined nature of French and English maritime traditions. In this vibrant hub of activity, fishermen from both sides of the Channel congregated, fostering a sense of cohesion and shared livelihood that transcended national boundaries. It was within this dynamic environment that Pierre absorbed

an inclusive worldview, and his inherent distinctions between French and English seemed less significant.

From a young age, Pierre accompanied his parents on fishing expeditions, learning the ropes of navigation and maritime skills. The blend of French and English influences in his household, and the diverse mix of fishermen he encountered, cultivated his linguistic abilities, enabling him to navigate both cultures and languages effortlessly.

During one of these voyages, Pierre's path veered towards piracy. Drawn to the allure of the open seas, he embraced the life of a seafarer, navigating the treacherous waters between legal privateering and outright piracy. His linguistic fluency and familiarity with French and English naval strategies positioned him as an astute observer of the political and military tensions between the two nations.

As a part of a French crew from Normandy, Pierre's seafaring prowess was evident from a young age. He swiftly rose through the ranks, earning a reputation as a formidable sailor and strategist. Yet, with time, some began questioning whether his allegiance to France was as unwavering as it seemed.

Some astute observers have noted peculiar details that hint at, what they think is, Pierre's double dealings. Some say they caught a discreet exchange between him and British naval officers, their interactions suggesting a level of familiarity beyond what is expected of a French privateer. Rumours persist of secret meetings held in shadowy taverns, where Pierre's allegiances may be further entwined with the British.

Pierre's ship, the "Le Prince de la Couronne," fuels the speculative fires. First, because it loosely translates to 'The Royal Prince', which bears a striking resemblance to the name of the renowned English Navy boat, the 'HMS Royal Prince'. Second, though flying the French flag, it bears a subtle blend of French and British designs, suggesting an intricate dance of loyalties. Its cannons, boasting French craftsmanship, are complemented by British modifications, enhancing the ship's firepower and agility. Some question his selective targeting of Spanish ships, as if driven by personal vendettas rather than purely patriotic motives. The occasional assistance provided to British ships, whether intentional or coincidental, only adds to the intrigue surrounding his true intentions.

Despite these suspicions, Pierre's loyalty to France cannot be easily dismissed. He carries out devastating attacks on enemy vessels, disrupting Spanish and Dutch trade routes with unrivalled efficiency. His knowledge of French naval tactics is unmatched, further bolstering his reputation as a stalwart defender of French interests.



Figure 1.9 Pierre Le Grand

Phillipe Bequel

Phillipe Bequel was born into poverty and hardship in La Rochelle^[1], France. Growing up in the shadows of wealth and opulence, Philippe yearned for a life beyond the limitations of his humble beginnings. With his bustling city being a popular tourist centre, Philippe seized an opportunity to escape his. He embarked on a career as a boatman - ferrying wealthy tourists from Belgium, Germany, and the UK to nearby islands like Île de Ré and Île d'Oléron. However, he created a clever scheme that went far beyond mere transportation.

During these ferry rides, Phillippe skilfully engaged his passengers in conversation, captivating them with his magnetic personality and infectious enthusiasm. He used his natural charisma to forge connections and establish a rapport, subtly collecting information about their backgrounds, interests, and networks. Little did they know that he would simultaneously subtly pilfer valuables from these unsuspecting passengers, all the while cultivating them as valuable contacts.

These connections would later prove invaluable in his pursuit of adventure and wealth. The tourists, unwittingly victimised by Phillippe's light-fingered actions, often departed the ferry without knowing their losses. Instead, they carried a sense of fascination, unknowingly transformed into potential allies in Phillippe's future endeavours.

This way, over time, Phillippe managed to amass not only substantial wealth of ill-gotten gains but also a network of influential contacts from his business. Yet, his encounters with the wealthy had left him

disenchanted with the act of stealing from them. As Phillippe's reputation grew, so did his ambitions.

A newfound moral compass guided him towards a different path—one where he could make a difference for his community, particularly the poorest of the poor. He realised that his acquired wealth and network provided him with an opportunity to uplift his community—the poverty-stricken individuals who shared his humble beginnings. With his newfound resources, he aimed to channel his efforts towards empowering the poorest of the poor, seeking to make a tangible difference in their lives. Driven by this newfound sense of purpose, Phillippe Bequel embarked on a daring path, transforming from a mere opportunist into a man driven by a mix of ambition, moral redemption, and a hunger for adventure.

Combining his love for the sea with his thirst for adventure, Philippe turned to piracy. Born into poverty, these individuals - the pirates he employed - possessed an insatiable thirst for wealth and a fierce determination to rise above their circumstances. This scraggy crew, armed with a relentless determination to escape their circumstances, employs their intimate understanding of hardship to outwit adversaries and plunder the seas with audacious aggression. Compared to other pirates at sea, they definitely have below-mediocre-quality equipment. However, with each successful raid, their thirst for wealth intensifies, fuelling their relentless pursuit of riches. They possess an uncanny ability to spot opportunities where others see only chaos, seizing the moment with calculated precision. Their hunger has transformed them into pirates of

unparalleled tenacity, ready to do whatever it takes to achieve their dreams.



Figure 1.10 Phillippe Bequel

Samuel Axe

Samuel Axe is a character shrouded in ambiguity. Currently, he is a pirate affiliated with the English government^[12], operating with what once was a state-sanctioned vessel to conduct daring raids against Spanish ships. Known for his audacious exploits on the high seas, Samuel has maintained a reputation for loyalty and unwavering commitment to his cause and crew. However, despite this, rumours persist about his true background. Samuel claims to have been born in Southwold, Britain and says he joined a pirate crew that docked at his town at a young age.

Conversely, some close to him have observed his fluency in French and extensive knowledge of French history, leading to speculation about hidden connections to the French. Curiously, individuals in Southwold who should be familiar with his supposed origins have

never heard of him, adding a layer of mystery to his past. Samuel dismisses these rumours, insisting that his impoverished upbringing forced him to leave his hometown at a young age, with his parents having abandoned him, and hence he is not well remembered. Still, suspicion lingers among those interacting with Samuel, increased by subtle hints suggesting affiliations beyond what meets the eye. For example, some who have gotten the rare chance to meet him up close say he wears a discreet ring adorned with a fleur-de-lis, a symbol closely associated with the French monarchy. Furthermore, apparently his prized cutlasses bear intricate engravings of French phrases and quotes. One of the most captivating aspects of Samuel's enigmatic persona is the cross tattoo on his arm. Few pirates claim to have recognised a striking resemblance to the Cross of Lorraine, a symbol historically associated with France. When questioned about its meaning, apparently, Samuel nonchalantly dismisses it as the Cross of St. George, the emblem of England. Throughout his maritime exploits, Samuel Axe remains a figure of intrigue, blending loyalty to his English comrades with curious hints of a deeper connection to French interests.

Nonetheless, his unswerving dedication to his crew and unwavering commitment to his cause has solidified his reputation as a formidable pirate, capable of striking fear into the hearts of his enemies.

Samuel's ship's sleek profile allows it to slice through the waves with ease, propelled by a combination of square-rigged and fore-and-aft sails. Its sturdy oak frame, reinforced with iron plating, offers superior

protection against enemy attacks, ensuring the safety of Samuel and his crew during intense naval encounters. The ship's advanced rigging system and strategically positioned masts enable swift adjustments to harness the wind's power and maximize speed. It also hosts a comprehensive array of navigational instruments, including astrolabes, cross-staffs, and quadrants, grace the ship's chartroom. These essential tools, meticulously calibrated and maintained, enable Samuel and his crew to accurately determine their position at sea and plot precise courses using detailed maps and nautical charts.



Figure 1.11 Samuel Axe

William Ayres

William Ayres was born in the thriving city of London, the epicentre of political power and influence. He had humble beginnings. He was the child of servants in the royal^[13] family's household. Growing up within the palace walls, William spent his early years working in the royal kitchen, honing his skills of disguise, deception, and

observation. In the heart of the palace, he became a master of subtlety, learning the art of diplomacy and the intricate workings of courtly affairs. However, William's true passion emerged within the secretive confines of the royal library^[14]. Hidden away from prying eyes, he delved into the world of ancient manuscripts, maps, and cryptic writings. The countless hours spent deciphering cryptic codes and uncovering hidden knowledge transformed him into a master of cryptography and clandestine communication. As William matured, he ventured beyond the confines of the palace walls and found himself drawn to the adventurous life of a pirate. Harnessing the knowledge and connections he had acquired during his time in the royal household, he seamlessly transitioned from the corridors of power to the treacherous waters of the high seas. With an innate talent for espionage and a natural ability to read people, William became a sought-after asset in the pirate world. His mastery of deception and manipulation made him an invaluable strategist, capable of gathering vital intelligence and exploiting rival pirate factions. William's skills extended far beyond espionage. He possessed a deep understanding of cryptography, deciphering codes, and encrypted messages with ease. While William embraced the life of a pirate, he never severed ties with his past. He maintained a network of connections between the English government and the royal family, leveraging his diplomatic skills to navigate treacherous waters on land and at sea. His ability to broker deals, forge alliances, and maintain a delicate balance between piracy and his English affiliations set him apart from his fellow buccaneers. It is rumoured that William's excursions in the ocean are not only for personal enrichment. Many among the pirate underworld suggest

that he plunders Spanish ships not only for their tangible treasures but also for their secrets. It is believed that he meticulously seeks out confidential documents, coded messages, and classified information about the Spanish government and their plans. These invaluable secrets are then discreetly sold back to the English government, solidifying William's position as a trusted informant and agent of espionage.

William's ship has a streamlined hull, crafted from sturdy English oak. It cuts through the waves with remarkable agility. The ship's narrow profile and finely tuned sails allow for swift navigation, enabling William and his crew to outmanoeuvre enemy vessels with ease. The ship's advanced rigging system, comprised of intricate lines and pulleys, enables rapid adjustments to harness the wind's power efficiently. Furthermore, William's ship is equipped with a complement of cannons and possesses a formidable arsenal. Strategically positioned along its gun decks, these cannons range from long-range culverins to short-range swivel guns, providing William with a tactical advantage during naval skirmishes.



Figure 1.12 William Ayres

William Cobb

William Cobb was born in the coastal town of Portree in England and emerged as a formidable English pirate whose nautical prowess was unmatched. From an early age, William's affinity for the sea was evident. Born into a family of skilled sailors and navigators, he inherited their deep knowledge of celestial navigation, mapmaking, and the intricacies of maritime boundaries.

But it was his exceptional skills in cartography that truly set William apart from his fellow pirates. He possessed an innate talent for mapmaking, honed through generations of his family's lineage. Legends say that his ancestors were royal mapmakers responsible for crafting intricate navigational charts for the kingdom's explorers and navigators. This heritage bestowed upon William a reverence for the art of cartography, fuelling his desire to create detailed and accurate maps that would guide him and his crew to uncharted territories.

Within pirate society, William's cartographic skills are highly revered^[15]. His meticulously crafted maps are prized possessions among his fellow pirates, who rely on them to navigate treacherous waters, locate hidden coves, and evade capture.

As word of William's navigational prowess and mapmaking abilities spread, pirates from far and wide sought his guidance and expertise. He became a sought-after advisor, offering insights into the most perilous routes and sharing his intricate knowledge of uncharted waters. His reputation as a master cartographer

solidified his position as a respected figure within the pirate community.

But it was not only William's nautical prowess that set him apart. Unlike his fellow pirates, he has a discerning eye for the true treasures aboard Spanish ships. While others fixated on gold and silver, William sought out treasures of a different kind – precious artefacts, priceless paintings, and cultural relics that spoke of a rich and storied past.

Hence, rather than plundering Spanish ships solely for monetary gain, William Cobb seeks to rescue these artistic masterpieces from oblivion. He recognises their historical and cultural significance, understanding that they hold the stories of civilisations long gone. His raids are meticulously planned, targeting vessels rumoured to carry these cultural treasures.

In the aftermath of a successful raid, William's pirate crew finds themselves surrounded not just by piles of gold but by the exquisite craftsmanship of sculptures, the beauty of paintings by renowned artists, and manuscripts that revealed forgotten knowledge. His keen eye and appreciation for art attracted the attention of collectors, scholars, and patrons eager to preserve and showcase these stolen treasures. William Cobb's ship, the 'Azure Serpent,' is not just a vessel for plunder and riches but a floating treasure trove of historic artefacts and cultural treasures. The Azure Serpent has been ingeniously designed with hidden compartments, reinforced chambers, and carefully crafted storage spaces, purposefully built to safeguard valuable artefacts, exquisite paintings, and priceless relics from the clutches of time. Through his audacious exploits, William Cobb became more than just an English pirate; he

emerged as a guardian of history and cultural heritage. His daring raids enriched his collection and contributed to the preservation and dissemination of priceless artefacts, paintings, and manuscripts.



Figure 1.13 William Cobb

William Jackson

William Jackson was born in the rugged lands of Plymouth, England, a town with a complex history intertwined with Spanish influence^[16]. As a young boy, he witnessed the economic struggles faced by his local community, where Spanish ships frequented the harbour, and Spanish merchants and sailors held considerable sway. This Spanish dominance created an imbalance of wealth and power, leaving the local population grappling with inequality and limited opportunities. The effects of the Protestant Reformation further fueled William's growing resentment towards the Spanish. Plymouth became a refuge for those seeking religious freedom, including many Spanish individuals who were Protestant or opposed to the Catholic Church's dominance. The stark contrast

between the wealth enjoyed by the Spanish merchants and the hardships endured by the local population fueled William's fervent desire for justice. He saw piracy as a means to challenge the Spanish stronghold, disrupt the established order, and restore a semblance of equity to his homeland. His deep-rooted hatred towards the Spanish was born out of a sense of righteous indignation and a determination to reclaim the resources and opportunities that had been denied to his community. Operating against Spanish interests in the Caribbean and off the coast of Honduras in South America, Jackson carved a name for himself through his daring exploits. He had a particular talent for intercepting Spanish slave and cargo ships, swiftly overtaking them and seizing their valuable treasures. One of his most notable feats was capturing a heavily laden Spanish vessel, which he cleverly ransomed back to Spain for an exorbitant sum of 10,000 pieces of gold, a truly impressive ransom.

Known for his cunning and resourcefulness, Jackson employed various tactics to ensure his success. He often 'acquired' supplies from Spanish vessels and skilfully sold them back to England at a considerable profit. This method provided him with financial gains and struck a blow against Spanish dominance in the region. By disrupting their trade and syphoning off valuable resources, Jackson weakened the Spanish hold on the Caribbean and bolstered England's economic interests. In addition to his exploits against Spanish ships, Jackson was a master at raiding smaller settlements scattered throughout the Caribbean. He would meticulously plan these raids, targeting vulnerable coastal

towns and extracting their wealth. The local inhabitants and authorities lived in constant fear of his sudden and audacious attacks. Jackson's raids not only enriched his coffers but also struck fear into the hearts of those who dared to oppose him. What set William Jackson apart from other pirates was not only his audacity but also his unwavering loyalty to his homeland. While driven by a thirst for wealth and adventure, he always maintained a deep sense of patriotism. His plundering activities were not solely motivated by personal gain but also by a desire to weaken Spain's influence in the region and strengthen England's position as a dominant maritime power. Adorned with an imposing ship and a fiercely loyal crew, William Jackson's legacy lives on as a testament to the indomitable spirit of the buccaneers. His vessel, aptly named "The Black Hawk," is equipped with hidden compartments, swift manoeuvrability, and an arsenal of cannons, making it a formidable force on the high seas.



Figure 1.13 William Jackson

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