**A Biography of William Kidd**

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One of the most well known Pirates of all times was Captain Kidd, who had originally been employed to rid the seas of pirates.

Kidd was born around 1645 (the exact date is unknown). He found employment as an English Privateer who found such success in New York and the West Indies that he was called back to serve England. The King’s officers asked Kidd to captain a new powerful ship: the Adventure Galley. The Adventure Galley was equipped with 34 cannons and a crew of 80. Its mission was to capture all French ships, and the pirates of Madagascar. Kidd accepted the proposition.

Kidd thought his ship could use a better crew so he recruited a gang of cutthroats in New York and sailed for Madagascar. Once there, a good portion of his new crew left Kidd’s ship in order to join the pirates. The remaining portion of pirates on Kidd’s crew, threatened him with mutiny, unless Kidd would attack any and all ships. Kidd refused. Mutiny was close at hand, and a fight between him and the ship gunner erupted. Kidd killed the man, and the crew did not pursue the revolt further; however, after that incident, Kidd was a changed man. Plundering ships of all kinds along India’s Malabar coast: Kidd had become a pirate. The holds of the Adventure Galley were already full when Kidd decided to plunder the Quedagh Merchant. The Quedagh Merchant was a huge treasure ship of 400 tons (the Adventure galley weighed only 284 tons). As the pirates approached the merchant, the captain of the vessel gave the sign of surrender; however, the captain of the merchant was secretly preparing for battle.

Sails were trimmed, sand was poured for better footing, ammunition was readied, and buckets were filled for fire fighting. As the pirates neared, the merchant vessel fired- but due to a sudden ocean swell, the shot missed its mark. The pirates immediately threw their grappling hooks, bringing the two ships together. The pirates rapidly boarded the ship, and soon Captain Kidd was in the possession of one of the greatest pirate treasures ever. With this final accomplishment under his belt: he ordered his crew to set sail for New York. Kidd thought he could fool the New Yorkers into believing that all his plunder had been taken only from French and pirate vessels.

Unfortunately for him, he was very mistaken: a great deal of the booty belonged to the powerful British East India Company. Kidd was clapped into chains and shipped to England were he was sentenced to death. Kidd experienced a terrible death: the hangman’s rope broke twice, the third time it held. Once Drake was dead: his body was dipped in tar and hung by chains along the Thames River. Kidd’s body served as a warning to all would-be pirates for years to come. Kidd's farewell speech:

*My name was Captain Kidd, when I sail'd, when I sail'd, And so wickedly I did, God's laws I did forbid, When I sail'd, when I sail'd. I roam'd from sound to sound, And many a ship I found, And then I sunk or burn'd, When I sail'd. I murder'd William Moore, And laid him in his gore, Not many leagues from shore, When I sail'd. Farewell to young and old, All jolly seamen bold, You're welcome to my gold, For I must die, I must die. Farewell to Lunnon town, The pretty girls all round, No pardon can be found, and I must die, I must die, Farewell, for I must die. Then to eternity, in hideous misery, I must lie, I must lie.*

Captain Kidd experienced a short-lived pirating career: but in it he managed to have a great many people killed, some of which he himself murdered in cold blood.