

*Adventures on the American Frontier*

# PIRATES AND PRIVATEERS

Part Three  
Captain Kidd, Pirate



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This book features QR codes that link to audio of the book being narrated so that readers can follow along.

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In the late 1600s, merchant ships were having a hard time getting safely into and out of American harbors. Not only were there privateers lying in wait for them, sent by the nations that were at war with England, but buccaneers had come north into the American harbors, too.

The Jolly Roger was a black flag with a white skull and crossbones on it, and it had become the sign of the buccaneers. People in the American colonies started seeing it more and more often.





Pirate ships had begun to hide in American coves, and pirate captains came into the cities selling stolen goods. The people grew upset.

“Why doesn’t the governor put a stop to it?” they asked. But they learned that



the governors were making money from the buccaneers in return for letting them rob ships.

“Something must be done. It isn’t right!” the people said.

That was the way Captain William Kidd felt, too. He had worked along the American coast as a privateersman, taking ships from Spain and France when they were at war with England. He’d also had a brush or two with pirates, and he was known as a man for robbers to stay away from.

But by the year 1695, Captain Kidd was thinking about settling down to lead a simpler life. He had a new wife and small children in New York City.

“No more privateering for me,” he decided. “I’ll take a few more trading voyages to England and back to make some more money. Then I’ll settle down and enjoy my family and my home.”

So in the summer of 1695, Captain Kidd set sail with a load of goods to sell in London. He did not know it then, but



that voyage was to lead him into trouble so great that in a few years' time he would be hearing a judge order him to be hanged as a pirate. People would be telling tales of "The Terrible Captain Kidd."

"They say he wrote ransom letters in the blood of the women and children he kidnapped and murdered," people would be saying.

"He climbed onto the ships of honest merchants with his cutlass between his teeth and murder in his heart!"