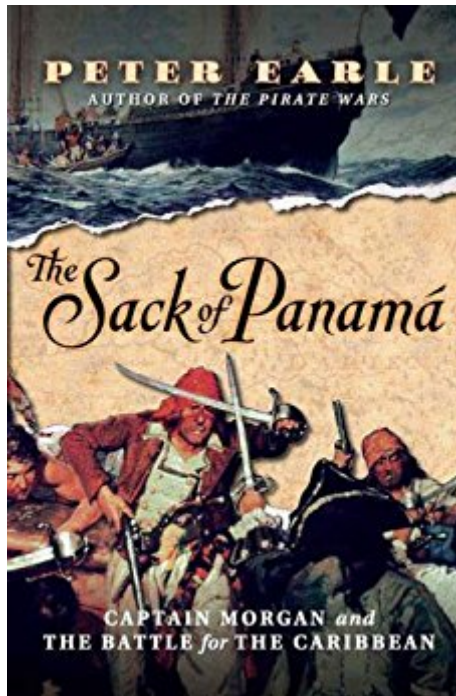


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The Sack Of Panamá: Captain Morgan And The Battle For The Caribbean



Synopsis

Captain Henry Morgan's capture of the city of Panamá in 1671 is seen as one of the most audacious military operations in history. In *The Sack of Panamá*, Peter Earle masterfully retells this classic story, combining thorough research with an emphasis on the battles that made Morgan a pirate legend. Morgan's raid was the last in a series of brutal attacks on Spanish possessions in the Caribbean, all sanctioned by the British crown. Earle recounts the five violent years leading up to the raid, then delivers a detailed account of Morgan's march across enemy territory, as his soldiers contended with hunger, tropical diseases, and possible ambushes from locals. He brings a unique dimension to the story by devoting nearly as much space to the Spanish victims as to the Jamaican privateers who were the aggressors. The book covers not only the scandalous events in the Colonial West Indies, but also the alarmed reactions of diplomats and statesmen in Madrid and London. While Morgan and his men were laying siege to Panamá, the simmering hostilities between the two nations resulted in vicious political infighting that rivaled the military battles in intensity. With a wealth of colorful characters and international intrigue, *The Sack of Panamá* is a painstaking history that doubles as a rip-roaring adventure tale.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of the best things about the ongoing popularity of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" movies is that they have urged other studios and publishers to release treasures from their vaults in order to capitalize on the boom. Classic movies like "Sea Hawk" and "Captain Blood" finally made it to DVD... and Earle's brilliant book, "The Sack of Panama," has finally been re-released. The book, originally published by a relatively small British press in 1981, is a nod to good ol' fashioned narrative history--unlike the "social" histories of the last half-century, it tells a single story with well-defined characters with a "plot." This isn't even a broader history of piracy, just a single historical moment. And what a moment! Morgan's attack on Panama City (with its various antecedents) is the stuff of epics: unendurable hardship, audacity, the clash of nations, brilliant strategies made on the fly, heroism and cowardice... its all in there, larger than life. Earle does a fantastic job of chronicling these events, but wraps them around the emotions, scents and tactile sensations of the time that the reader really feels a part of this incredible adventure. I particularly remember the horrifying moment when Morgan's men, having survived an unbelievably harrowing overland march across the Panamanian isthmus where they faced starvation and disease, set upon cattle grazing outside Panama City, desperately eating the meat raw. Moments later, they set their murderous, blood-splattered eyes on the city for the first time, and I thought with a chill, "Oh, ----! This is gonna be ugly!" But even better, Earle uses this single moment to illuminate the broader history of the era.

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