

REG'S PIRATE SCHOOL



The symbol of my Pirate's School. This would appear on the graduation certificate.

Well as you know, I told you about my early life as a pirate and some of the adventures which I had when I sailed the seven seas with my pirate friends. As I said, it was all true. Then I told you that I left my pirate friends and returned to Tasmania after I got married to the most beautiful of girls. So what did I do then? Well quite frankly I did indeed miss the adventurous life of excitement and plunder. Nonetheless I settled in a blissful domestic life that marriage can bring and I never regretted it. But, as said, I did miss my old life and friends.

For the time being I worked in an office and while it paid reasonably well, you can imagine for a man who had such an exciting life as I had, it was terribly boring. By now we had a couple of boys who wanted too, to follow my footsteps and become pirates. Well that got me thinking.....why not start a pirate school? A school for pirates! There must be many boys who wanted to be exactly that – PIRATES!

The more I thought about it, the more I was determined to set up such a school. Wouldn't be grand and me the Headmaster of it all? My boys, Jack and Jake, were very young then, even too young to become pirates, so I decided to go ahead anyway and begin. Now where should I start a pirate school? Then it hit me...why Port Royale in Jamaica, where all the pirates live or go after a raid. There they have a whooping good time, drinking rum mixed with gun powder, count up their Spanish gold and the jewels that they had taken, ransom the people they had captured, eat as much as they could and enjoy the company of the fairer sex, which often resulted in plenty of children running around. I could teach all those children to be pirates! And the pirates themselves would be happy because with the hordes of children going wild it often annoyed them; so if I took them under my wing at school, after the pirates paying me a handsome fee of course, the pirates would be quite happy.

So off I went, leaving Jack and Jake behind with their treasured mother and my wife, with the promise I would return as soon as I could with great riches, so that I could come back to Tasmania and live like kings, perhaps buying a big home at Lauderdale, next to John.

My school for pirates I had planned would not be just like any other school, where the boys would spend long boring hours at their desk in study. Oh no, not my school. There would be no such thing as sitting indoors. No my students would learn the job as they go. In other words I would have a pirate ship and they could learn the pirate trade as we sailed the high seas. I would teach them pirate language (for pirates have their own way of talking), how to tie knots, how to dance a gig and to sing pirate shanties, how to be the best in sword play, how to cuss with words like "Bother", "Blast" and "Darn it", how to say "Arrrr" in a threatening tone, how to drink rum mixed with gun powder, how to eat like a pirate (definitely no knives and forks, just fingers), how to dress like a pirate wearing an eye patch, even though there was nothing wrong with the eye, how to swing from sail to sail, how to attack another ship, how to capture it, how to fire a pistol, how to dig and hide the treasure and how to make treasure maps, how to be merry, how to walk the plank and survive, how to write ransom notes in blood, besides much, much more which I had learnt when I was a pirate. It was also important to learn pirate rules, which were never to harm children, always help orphans and love women.

I then built a pirate ship so that I could sail from Tasmania to the Pacific Ocean through the Panama Canal and thence to Port Royale. I launched my pirate ship which I called "*Blood Lust*" from Risdon Cove when the tide was high and sailed down the River Derwent with it, under the Tasman Bridge, then to open waters. I have a model of my pirate ship at home in my lounge room which you must come and see. Now, I couldn't sail *Blood Lust* alone, after all I need a navigator and some crew. So I had placed a job advertisement in the "Pirate's Journal" newspaper and was able to pick some desperate characters to help sail the vessel to Port Royale. I didn't need a lot of crew, so besides myself, there was "Desperate Joe" the navigator, "Baby Face George", Legs Diamond, "(because he could dance the best gig ever) "One eye Tom" and "Scar face Al". You will realise by now all pirates have nick-names. Well, it took us three months to finally sail into Port Royale and what a welcome we got. Some of my old ship mates were there, besides my old captain, Captain Black Beard, the most fearsome of all pirates that sailed the seven seas. I cannot tell you how happy they were to see me and in celebration "No Teeth Barney" made a special cake for me which contained Spanish pieces of eight. Captain Black Beard put especially large crackers in his beard and let them off to everyone's delight. It was such jolly fun.



My Pirate ship, *Blood Lust*.

Without delay I put my plan to all and with a hearty “Arrr” they all agreed to help me by sending their kids to my pirate school. In the end children I ended up with one hundred and twenty boys. A number of girls wanted to join too, so I took on the best of them, the leader being Big Nose Kim. Boy did she have a whopper! But she could cuss and fight with the rest of them.

So we sailed the Caribbean, me teaching them the art of piracy, raiding such islands as the Bahamas and Cuba. We even got a mentioned in the New York Times newspaper and Fox News Cable television did a feature on us. The DooooooooooooGooooooooooders were horrified of course as were the politically correct, but what did we care? We had a wonderful time and lived life to the full. I got denounced in the United Nations, some President calling me a “rogue” and a bad example to all children, but children, when I looked at those aboard the *Blood Lust* learning piracy, I could see the light in their eyes and their supreme enjoyment in that they were actually enjoying life and had something to live for. No, I was not setting a bad example I was showing them how life can be one big adventure. And they were healthy; no asthma, no allergies, no coughing, no mental or behavioural problems and none of them saw a doctor, took a pill or had a shot. Life on the High Seas was the answer! Oh if only all children, everywhere could come to my pirate’s school; it would be a better world.

Well it was after a three month voyage around the South Pacific Islands learning to plunder and all the other pirates’ things that we returned to Port Royale. All the children had done well and once ashore I was planning a graduation ceremony when all successful pirates (and they all deserved it) would graduate and receive their pirate’s eye patch. All the leading pirates would be there including Black Beard (who would give out the eye patch), Captain Kidd (who was Master of Ceremonies) and Captain Teach who was our Patron. The ceremony went off well and afterwards there was a lot of feasting, wenching, shooting off

of firearms and wholesome pillaging of the countryside that went on for three or was it four days?

Then one morning when I was in my bunk with a sore head there was a knock at my cabin door. It was Little Buck, my cabin boy. Little Buck was a coloured boy, about your age, whom I had saved from a Portuguese slave ship sailing for India. I took him on board to be my – as said – cabin boy. Well Little Buck handed me a letter, delivered by my pet and very large, ferocious looking, eagle, which I had named Stern Face. Stern Face the eagle I used to send letters to home in Tasmania and the family in turn would write a letter, tape it to one of Stern Face's legs and he would fly back to me and deliver the note. Much like a carrying pigeon.

Well I opened the letter to learn that it was from my darling wife who told me not to forget Jack's forthcoming fourth birthday and as I had promised him a ruby crusted dagger he will be looking forward to receive it from me. Well I had forgotten about his birthday, being busy and all. And low and behold it was only two days hence. I was determined not to miss his birthday, so grabbing the dagger as stated I ran out of the cabin ready to set sail. Then the thought came to me...*Blood Lust*, even with favourable winds, would not get to Hobart within two days. I fingered my jaw in deep thought, and then it came to me. I would have to go against everything a pirate believed in, but there was no alternative. If I was to get home for Jack's fourth birthday I would have to(I find it difficult to say even now) fly home in a plane. Well it was holiday time now for the students before I took on another batch, so I had the time to return home.



Jack's Ruby crusted Dagger.

I ran to the airport (we pirates never take cars) and managed to get a ticket to Tasmania on the Dodgy Airlines jet 727 boarding now for home. You may not believe this but I had never been on a plane, always travelling by sea, so it was all new to me and I can tell you I did not like it.

Anyway we were flying high over the Pacific Ocean when I got sick and tired of sitting down, so I decided to take a walk. As said, I had never flown before and was not familiar with planes. I got up from my seat and walked down the aisle to stretch my legs. I walked to the

rear of the plane and saw a door. Naturally I wondered where it led, me having come on board the plane from the front. I thought perhaps it would go to the place where I could buy a good pint of rum and gun powder being somewhat thirsty and missing the true pirate's drink, having been served a weak of tea in a plastic cup.

The next thing I did was open the door; well, you could have blown me down. It was the door that led to the outside of the plane and as soon as I had opened this gust of strong wind it took me out of the inside of the plane only to have me fall 35,000 feet into the ocean, leaving the plane behind. I got quite a shock I can tell you as no doubt you can imagine!

Down, down I fell spiralling as I went and every second the deep blue waters of the Pacific Ocean came zooming up to me – or was I zooming down to it?. I thought this was the end of my life because hitting those waters from this height would be like falling on concrete. Then I remembered my mother's words..."Be a Briton". – In other words be brave. Well, what would mother do in a circumstance like this? I thought I would dive into the water like diving off a pool board and part the waters like a knife cuts into butter. So I placed my self into a diving position with the water coming ever so fast towards me. With my arms outstretched and my hands together I hit the water at an alarming speed and I reckon I went under the water at least a 1,000 feet then I arched my back, kicked vigorously and projected myself towards the surface of the Ocean. Within a number of minutes I broke the surface gasping for all one's worth as I had to hold my breath for an awful long time and here, no doubt, my pirate training saved my life as we used to learn to hold our breath under water just in case we got knocked off the pirate ship when fighting.

Well I had broken the surface all right, but my worries were not over for as soon as I had done so and had taken my bearings, what do you think happened? Well the noise of me hitting the water and me raising to the surface took the notice of four great white sharks and I reckon the biggest one was at least 20 foot long with a mouth that could swallow a man whole. I had come across these gruesome creatures before, but had never really encountered them. I then saw them glide to me from all four angles. I was surrounded and they had, indeed, planned to share my worthless body for their next meal. Panic began to rise, but again those immortal words of mother rang in my ears, "Be a Briton", so gritting my teeth I thought I had nothing to lose, but to defend myself and defend myself I did. The one in front came first and as he began to take a bite, I plunged my fist into his snozzle; it stunned him, I then spun 'round and did likewise to the great white shark that was to get me from the back. Again I stunned him as I had done the other, while instantly I levelled up and with my left arm punch ever so hard the snozzle to the shark to my left and with my right pounded more than once the snozzle of the shark that was twenty foot long. All were stunned, but I knew it would only be a few more seconds before they recovered and would once again attack me. I was not too happy about the affair I can tell you and like all pirates when we get our temper up we are game for anything. Before they recovered I punched the

snozzle of each shark several times. This really did the trick and them thinking that they have more than met their match, swam away leaving me behind, quite exhausted.



The twenty foot Great white coming towards me.

Now what to do? It was all very well beating off dangerous and horrible, greedy sharks, but here was I in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and treading water. I looked around and no ship could be seen. I was in the middle of no where. *"This is a nice how to do,"* I thought. It might come as a shock to you all that we pirates are quite religious and in moments of sheer danger we call out to our patron saint, which is Saint Barnaby, the Patron Saint of all Pirates. *"Saint Barnaby,"* I cried, *"In all what is good in pirates, help me."* And would you believe I got an instant answer.

I immediately felt the bottom of the ocean shake as I had never experienced it before. It not only shook, but rumbled like ten thunder claps. Saint Barnaby had produced an underwater earth quake. I thought, *"This is all very well, but how is it to help me?"* I should not have worried because from the earth quake which must have been at least measuring 9 on the Richter scale a huge big tidal wave was the result. As the wave rose it took me with it, me still treading water and I rose I reckon in anyone's estimation, a good 100 feet. The wave began to move towards the east, exactly where I needed to go, to the coast of Australia. So somehow I got to a position where I could foot surf to Australia and there I was surfing in such a style to ...*home*. Australia was a good 2,000 miles away and I knew it would take a journey of surfing of at least a fortnight, but there was no other alternative. Jack was expecting me (I still had his ruby crusted dagger in my belt) and although I would not make it to his birthday on time I would, however, survive and be able to see his little face again.

It worked. I foot surfed all the way to the coast of New South Wales and as we were heading to Bondi Beach (and you should have seen the faces of the people on the beach) the wave began to get smaller and smaller until I got ashore as the wave was only about 1 foot high. *Thank you Saint Barnaby.* I can tell you I was exhausted and hungry, but not

thirsty for occasionally it rained and I was able to open my mouth to catch the water which kept me a live for such a long period.

In the end , I caught a fishing boat back to Hobart (no more flying for me) and then home to my family. True I was indeed late for Jack's birthday, but they were ever so happy to see me and he was so pleased with his dagger that he placed it under his pillow and slept over it for many a night.

Eventually I returned to Port Royale and I still go there from time to time to my Pirate's School. Perhaps Joe you will like to come with me next time?