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**Bristol and Piracy in the Late Sixteenth
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Bristol and Piracy in the Late Sixteenth Century

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INTRODUCTION

‘In the first dozen years of the [Elizabeth’s] reign the Privy Council spent more time – according to the evidence of its minutes – discussing pirates and the methods of suppressing them than any other single topic.’¹ Historians, however, have for the most part neglected the threat of piracy in England in the later sixteenth century; this was a period overshadowed by war. Maritime activities increasingly became characterised by piratical qualities, and what is more in wartime the crown largely accepted and even actively encouraged this transformation. Privateering (or ‘discriminating piracy’ as Konstam terms it) became England’s most important naval tactic and was essentially piracy masked in legitimacy due to ‘letters of marque’ issued by the Queen. Boundaries differentiating the legal and illegal became blurred and as a result of these confusions, as well as the involvement of Bristol in privateering during the war (her contribution second only to London in the early stages of 1589-91), this thesis will principally be concerned with instances of piracy in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that are easily distinguished from war-time privateering.² Whilst piracy in London and the Cinque Ports during the reign of James I has been considered in the historiography, this dissertation will focus on the threat of piracy to the port of Bristol and the responses of Bristol’s elite (Mayor and Aldermen) to this threat. Through an analysis of evidence showing the detrimental effects of piracy and how Bristol fought it, this thesis should also shed light on how severely piracy threatened Bristol and the methods available to the elite to respond to it.

The existing secondary literature generally focuses on piracy in London, England as a whole or even internationally. The Thames is a particular place of interest for historians of early modern English piracy, with the most recorded acts of piracy in English waters occurring here. The time period investigated is most commonly later than the one identified, tending to be the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, what has been ironically dubbed ‘The Golden Age’ of piracy. Historians looking at earlier piracy, such as Senior, see the real problems arising at the end of the Anglo-Spanish war. The total number of seamen by 1603 was 50,000 (whereas in 1582 this number

¹ Neville Williams, *The Sea Dogs: Privateers, Plunder & Piracy in the Elizabethan Age* (London, 1975) p.149

² Kenneth Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering 1585-1603* (Cambridge 1964) p.32

had been 16,000), the huge proportion of whom were then unemployed and so resorted to plunder.³ The subject focus for the literature considered, such as Konstam's *Piracy: The Complete History*, is most commonly the involvement of English men as pirates and their motives for this involvement. Devon, Cornwall, Southampton and other South Western ports are depicted as having been incessantly plagued by piracy with members of the local populace, even the gentry, often supporting pirates and their enterprises. Little time has been spent by historians researching the attempts of provincial ports to prevent and suppress piracy, particularly not in South West England, where the majority of pirates are considered to have been based.⁴

George Mallet's dissertation ('Early Seventeenth Century Piracy and Bristol') is the only easily accessible study that expressly considers piracy in and around Bristol in the early modern period. Much of this thesis is dedicated to the trade of Bristol's merchants in pirated goods, particularly between Bristol and Ireland. In contrast, this dissertation will consider the threats of piracy and how Bristol's elite countered it. There is evidence in the seventeenth century of the corruption of Thomas Button, Vice-Admiral for Bristol. Mallet combines evidence of corruption with examples of merchants trading pirated goods to show that in the seventeenth century, a number of influential men from Bristol's maritime community were involved in piracy.⁵ This thesis aims to show that in the sixteenth century, the activities of Bristol's elite were often in sharp contrast to this; it was in their interest to combat piracy in order to protect trade.

Various historians' work, consulted for this thesis such as that of Vanes, McGrath, Appleby and Matthew have recognised that piracy threatened Bristol's merchants and shipping at this time. However, no single study is dedicated to explicitly researching this threat, as is the intention of the first half of this dissertation. Recognition of various threats in the secondary material will be used alongside primary evidence in the first two chapters. A number of studies have considered national responses to piracy, thus chapter three will consider these findings and combine them with various

³ Clive Senior, *A Nation of Pirates; English Piracy in its Heyday* (Devon, 1976) p.9

⁴ John Appleby, *Under the Bloody Flag: Pirates of the Tudor Age* (Gloucestershire, 2009) p.137

⁵ George Mallet, 'Early Seventeenth Century Piracy and Bristol' (unpublished thesis, Bristol, 2009) p.31

published primary literature to balance the final chapter. On the subject of how Bristol itself dealt with the threat of piracy little has been written. Primary source material will therefore drive the fourth chapter of the thesis, much of it previously untranscribed and unused by historians. The Mayor's Audit book pages, for example, are an invaluable source, specifically recording various procedures taken by Bristol's elite in response to piracy, from those employed to the costs involved.

There are a restricted number of sources that reflect both the threat of piracy and how pirates were dealt with by Bristol during this period so these will need to be assumed as representative. Petitions are often biased and so need to be dealt with carefully, as will accounts of the losses inflicted upon merchants by pirates. Letters were often driven by a number of hidden motivations. Use has been made of the High Court of Admiralty records where they appear in the secondary literature (Senior's work in particular makes use of these records), but due to the vast number of records and given time constraints, it was not possible to consult this primary source material directly for the thesis. Similarly, due to the time constraints on this thesis the entire collection of the Calendars of State Papers for this period could not be consulted. Thus the methodology employed was to refer to examples of piracy in the Domestic series for this period on pages where the place names of Bristol, Bridgewater (a port at close proximity) and Cardiff (a local port plagued by piracy) also appeared.⁶

There are a number of justifications for this thesis that have been outlined in this proposal. Most importantly there has been little research into the adverse affects of piracy on Bristol in the sixteenth century, despite it being the second port city of England and geographically in a position to have been heavily threatened. The most original element to the thesis will be its consideration of the responses of Bristol's elite to piracy. Any of these self-driven attempts to suppress piracy in the sixteenth century have been largely neglected, as have the variety of primary sources used in this thesis that document them. Due to merchant domination of the council these responses will also represent merchant attitudes to piracy, and their ability in Bristol to exercise their civic authority to protect their interests. In the years 1605 to 1642

⁶ See Appendix Six

merchants made up 46.67% of the Common Council.⁷ Similarly, over the period 1550 to 1600 36% of Bristol's Mayors were merchants, and between 1605-1642 45.29% of Bristol's Aldermen were merchants.⁸ These figures are representative of the levels of domination merchants had both as Mayor's and Aldermen throughout the period in question.

⁷ David Sacks, *The Widening Gate: Bristol and the Atlantic Economy 1450-1700* (California, 1991) p.166

⁸ David Sacks, *The Widening Gate*, p.168-169

CHAPTER ONE; THREATS: ACTUAL DAMAGE

Introduction

Piracy threatened Bristol in diverse ways in the later sixteenth century. This chapter will consider recorded instances of piracy and plunder to the direct detriment of members of Bristol's community, while the following will discuss potential for damage posed by the prevalence of piracy in areas at close proximity to Bristol. Largely it was merchants, merchant ship crews and ship-owners to whom the most direct threat was posed, in the form of financial set-backs, spoil and even murder. Pirates attacked Bristol's shipping on merchant voyages to the Mediterranean and the Levant, on voyages of discovery into the Atlantic, and closer to home in the waters of the Severn estuary and the Irish Sea, increasingly from the late 1560s. Indirectly, attacks on foreign merchants travelling to Bristol to trade were also damaging; this time to the city's markets and economy in general, for example members of the community who relied on selling to and purchasing from these foreign merchants. Also injurious to Bristol's merchants was the selling of pirated goods to the community, which undercut their legal trade and even usurped some of their business. A particular case considered in this chapter reflects how pirate attacks could result in the destruction of voyages prescribed by the town council to purchase foodstuffs in times of need, thus adversely affecting the community of Bristol at large. Various primary sources accumulated in the research phase of this dissertation, give some indication of the financial damage caused by piracy to Bristol's merchants and seafaring community. Of the sources that survive, it is in financial terms that the damage is really related seeing as, for most of those who suffered, ships and the capital put in to voyages constituted their livelihood. This is voiced in a petition to have the goods of Bristol merchants returned after they were seized in Northern Spain in 1570; 'ootherwise hit wilbe a utter undoinge of divers yonge men for that in those shippis concystithe their holle substaunce'.⁹

Damage to Bristol Caused by Piracy

⁹ Jean Vanes, *Documents Illustrating the Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Sixteenth Century* (BRS Publications, Vo.l. XXXI, Kendal, 1979) p.131-2

Jean Vanes in particular has recognised the threat of piracy to Bristol during the later sixteenth century, including a number of examples in *Documents Relating to Bristol's Overseas Trade in the Sixteenth Century*. She has asserted that 'the Mediterranean coasts...and the Levant became a winter voyage where they [Bristol merchants] ran the gauntlet of the Barbary pirates...'¹⁰ Piracy here is depicted as a common threat which merchants had to factor into voyages. An interesting source is 'a noote of shipmen of Bristoll spoyled and robed by Frenchemen since anno 1576', the record ending in 1587. The source shows that in these eleven years, the total value of goods lost by Bristol merchants to French piracy alone was £16,600.¹¹ This is just a record of the damage done to Bristol merchants and shipping by Frenchmen in this time period and so ignores that done by English, Spanish, Barbary or other pirates lurking off the coasts of Wales and Ireland. The far greater sum of £45,000 was claimed to have been lost in a letter dated 1577 by Bristol men Robert Kitchin, William Salterne, William Ellis, John Barker, Thomas James, Mathew Haviland and John Oliver during this period, due to piracy and wreck.¹² This latter value is just under three times that suggested as having been lost to French men in eleven years. Taking into account that generally more damage was done by piracy than shipwreck, this implies that losses at the hands of other pirates were far more significant than those to the French, particularly as it only considers the losses of seven individuals.¹³ Either way considering these sources must be done with care. We are unaware of the intention of the 'noote' but the letter of 1577 addressed the Privy Council and so could easily contain exaggerations motivated by efforts to gain compensation. This is indicated by the emotionally charged language such as that without relief, 'your poore suppliauntes, their wyves and children, whoe otherwise are like utterlie to be undone...'¹⁴

¹⁰ Jean Vanes, *Bristol at the Time of the Spanish Armada* (Bristol Branch of the Historical Association Pamphlet, The University Bristol, 1988) p.20

¹¹ Vanes, *Documents*, p.113

¹² Vanes, *Bristol at the Time of the Spanish Armada*, p.15

¹³ E. M. Carus-Wilson, 'The Merchant Adventurers of Bristol in the Fifteenth Century' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fourth Series*, Vol. 11, (1928) p.65

¹⁴ Vanes, *Documents*, p.140

Mathew notes that the trade in Spanish and Gascon wines to Ireland and Bristol was the regular trade most often jeopardized by pirates.¹⁵ The fact that ships travelling from Spain could quite possibly have been transporting precious metal probably played a large part in fuelling pirate interest in these voyages.¹⁶ Similarly during this period it has been stressed that piracy 'repeatedly menaced' Bristol's trade to Bordeaux, the Breton ports and La Rochelle.¹⁷ The picture painted is thus one of piracy as a constant threat to various trade routes of the Bristol merchants. In addition to this the growth of deep-sea plunder throughout this period threatened any attempts by merchants to expand the Iberian trade routes in which many of Bristol's merchants were already heavily invested. Willan finds that the threat of Dunkirk and Algiers pirates was serious in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and although a seventeenth century example, in 1619 Bristol claimed they lost £8,000 a year as a result of piracy and shipwreck, with piracy by far the greater problem of the two.¹⁸ During this period, pirates originating from North Africa constituted noteworthy dangers and McGrath stresses that the European powers failed to work together to minimize this threat.¹⁹

Coastal and river piracy were also prevalent in the late sixteenth century and were popularised by the fact that this activity made loot far easier to dispose of. Clive Senior has studied the issues of riverside piracy in the Thames, using High Court of Admiralty evidence. This thesis will consider riverside piracy, or as McGrath terms it 'straightforward piracy', specifically to the detriment of Bristol.²⁰ This type of piracy was prevalent in the Irish Sea and the Bristol Channel as will be discussed in the subsequent chapter; these areas were constantly visited by Turkish pirates, particularly around winter. Appleby cites the complaint of the merchants of Caernarvon in 1592 robbed by pirates during their voyage to Bristol fair.²¹ This was not the only instance, Willan maintains that merchants had to start protecting ships

¹⁵ David Mathew, 'The Cornish and Welsh Pirates in the Reign of Elizabeth' in *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 39, No. 155 (July, 1924), p.338

¹⁶ P. Croft, 'English mariners trading to Spain and Portugal, 1558-1625' *Mariner's Mirror*, LXIX (1983) p.254

¹⁷ Vanes, *Documents*, p.26

¹⁸ T.S. Willan, *The English Coasting Trade, 1500-1750* (Manchester, 1938) p.30

¹⁹ P.V. McGrath, 'Merchant shipping in the seventeenth century: The evidence of the Bristol deposition books, Part II', *Mariner's Mirror*, XLI (1955) p.34

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.35

²¹ Appleby, *Under the Bloody Flag*, p.229

travelling to the Bristol fair, not just from local pirates but from the Turkish also; losses were 'not infrequent.'²² A direct example is that of a pirate named 'Pierce' who is recorded in 1582 as having robbed 'barke and botes that were coming to thys Citie' - as a result the Mayor and Aldermen of Bristol sent out a commission for his capture.²³ Pirates therefore increasingly posed a threat to Bristol's position as a trading centre, which not only adversely effected the elite of Bristol, but craftsmen, farmers and other laymen who relied on trade and fairs.

There are not many recorded examples of pirated goods being distributed in Bristol, although it could be argued that it is unlikely for there to be any evidence of this. Richard Awger bought goods from pirates in 1579 and the cloth purchased was then brought to St. Paul's Fair in Bristol to be sold.²⁴ John Callice a leading pirate operating around the Welsh coast in the 1570s and early 1580s captured a prize in 1574 and sold the cargo in Bristol and Cardiff.²⁵ It was ordered in 1577 that various men of Bridgewater, at close proximity to Bristol, were to be examined for receiving wine and other spoils of pirates.²⁶ Essentially, the trade in pirated goods, unless conducted by Bristol's merchants themselves, threatened their business. Pirates could offer low prices as the wares essentially cost them nothing. These prices were far lower than those offered by any merchant selling goods legitimately and the availability of cheap merchandise for the poor 'might override local notions of legality and wrongdoing'.²⁷

Although there are few documented instances of pirates causing serious threats to Bristol's community at large, the seizure of William Colston's ship by Dutch pirates returning from Danzig with rye is one such example.²⁸ The Eastland Company commissioned this voyage; Colston's was one of three ships allowed to trade in foodstuffs in wartime on account of the 1586 West Country famine, as a solution to

²² Willan, *The English Coasting Trade*, p.30

²³ See Appendix Two

²⁴ D. B Quinn (ed), *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert* (Issued by the Hakluyt Society, Second Series, No. LXXXIII, Volumes I & II, 1938), p.220

²⁵ Appleby, *Under the Bloody Flag*, p.124

²⁶ R.O. State Papers, Domestic. Vol. 112. 3 April 1577. Pirates in 'State Papers Domestic: 1565-1666', Cardiff Records: volume I (1898), pp. 347-368 URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=48097> Date accessed: 20th February 2013

²⁷ John Appleby & P. Dalton, *Outlaws in Medieval and Early Modern England: Crime, Government and Society c.1066 – c.1600* (Surrey, 2009) p.166

²⁸ Vanes, *Documents*, p.17

food shortages in the city of Bristol. Despite this ability of piracy to threaten the wider community, one of the ways in which pirates posed such a problem to merchants and the elite who dealt with them was through the support they were habitually able to drum up among the general (often poorer) public. Large proportions of pirate crews were drawn from the West Country, which suggests that support would have existed here among relations and friends. These people often saw pirates as nautical Robin Hoods, attempting to redistribute wealth through the dispersal of gifts among the local poor. This community solidarity proved to be a particular problem in Cardiff, many people deciding ‘that they wooll neyther accuse one another, nor yet answer to any matter that toucheth them selves vpon theyr othes...’²⁹

There is a common perception that eighteenth century ‘Golden Age’ pirates were the most threatening and notorious.³⁰ However this can overshadow the fact that there were particularly menacing individuals in the early modern period. A few examples of repetitive offenders particularly problematic for Bristol include John Callis, Henry Knollys, ‘Pierce’, Peter Easton and Captain Salkerd the Lundy ‘pirate king’³¹. Pirates could be very conniving and kept on board the flags of various countries enabling them to conceal their real purpose and allowing them to hail trading ships at sea and so get very close to them.³² The *George* of Bristol was ‘set vpon by a pirate that pretended himsef for the State of England and fought with the said ship *George* vnder English Coloures...’ in the seventeenth century.³³ Knollys masked his real intentions of piracy by proposing an alliance to Gilbert’s voyages of discovery in the late 1570s.³⁴ Furthermore throughout this period the threat of piracy could be violent in nature. When Bristol ships the *Matthew* and the *Margaret* were attacked off La Rochelle in 1539, the master Edward Grannell and William Flemming, one of the sailors were both killed.³⁵ Giles Penn a Bristol mariner noted in 1636 that a thousand people had ‘fallen into the hands’ of the Turkish pirates in the last six months.³⁶ In 1625 three Turkish pirates who took Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel threatened to

²⁹ R.O. State Papers, Domestic. Vol. 112. 3 April 1577. Pirates. in ‘State Papers Domestic: 1565-1666’

³⁰ Angus Konstam, *Piracy: the Complete History* (Oxford, 2008) p.150

³¹ Lewis Loyd, *Lundy, Its history and natural history* (London, 1925) p 116-117

³² Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.20

³³ McGrath, ‘Merchant shipping in the seventeenth century: The evidence of the Bristol deposition books, Part II’, p.35

³⁴ Quinn (ed), *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, p.42

³⁵ Vanes, *Documents*, p.114

³⁶ John Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century* (Bristol, 1900) p.137

burn Ilfracombe.³⁷ And in 1582 and 1584 the ships sent out by the Bristol Mayor and Aldermen to pursue pirates were armed with gunpowder reflecting the likelihood of combat in the process.³⁸ Correspondence from the Mayor of Bristol to that of Chester in 1597 about a pirate attack notes that the pirates ‘have murdered or otherwise made away xvi or xvii men’.³⁹ The well-known violence of pirates would have served as a deterrent to informers as indicated in a contemporary source stressing that in Cardiff, those aware of the dwelling places of pirates ‘dare not disclose their knowledg’s.’⁴⁰ Senior recognised this in the criminal records finding that few witnesses came forward ‘because they were frightened of the consequences...’⁴¹

Conclusion

Existing scholarship tends to consider piracy and the trade in pirated goods as activities supported by the southern and western outports in the early modern period. Where threats are considered it is done so on a predominantly national basis and during a later period than this. The abundance of primary source material considered in this chapter relating the damage caused to Bristol’s merchants, crews and shipping, by pirates in the later sixteenth century, challenges these conceptions and calls for individual outport analysis. This chapter does not intend to deny that individuals from Bristol will have been involved in piracy, but aims to reflect that piracy also clearly posed a considerable threat here in the later sixteenth century.

³⁷ Loyd, *Lundy, Its history and natural history*, p. 117-118

³⁸ See Appendices Two & Three

³⁹ See Appendix Four

⁴⁰ R.O. State Papers, Domestic. Vol. 112. 3 April 1577. Pirates. in ‘State Papers Domestic: 1565-1666’

⁴¹ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.119

CHAPTER TWO; THREATS: POTENTIAL FOR DAMAGE

Introduction

Southwest England, southern Ireland and Wales were the areas most tormented by piracy in the early modern period. Much of the secondary literature has identified the prevalence of piracy here, but also in Wales at this time. Its existence is apparent in a huge range of contemporary records, however for this thesis a specific Calendar of Material relating to Cardiff will be considered. Matthews stresses that the pirate havens existing in these areas were well hidden and protected.⁴² The operations that emerged; organizing voyages of piracy as well as disseminating the loot, were highly coordinated and often involved gentry and local officials. Ireland and Wales are of particular interest as they were essentially beyond the reach of government control. Ireland was a persistent thorn in the side of the crown throughout this period, and it was not until Elizabeth's reign that a system for customs collection was even established in Wales.⁴³ From 1565 the Crown could levy customs in all ports of Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire, however this law was frequently disregarded.⁴⁴ Piracy therefore thrived in these areas. The problem of this for Bristol cannot be stressed enough; the city was sandwiched among these pirate havens and reliant upon trade across waters perpetually threatened by them. Mallet identified the proximity of Ireland as facilitating trade between Cork and Bristol in pirated goods in the seventeenth century.⁴⁵ In contrast, this chapter aims to imply the adverse consequences for Bristol's merchants and shipping that would have resulted from this prevalence of piracy at such close proximity.

The Prevalence of Piracy in Surrounding Areas; Constituting Potential Threats to Bristol's Shipping and Trade

⁴² Mathew, 'The Cornish and Welsh Pirates in the Reign of Elizabeth', p.337

⁴³ W. R. B. Robinson, 'The establishment of Royal Customs in Glamorgan and Monmouthshire under Elizabeth I', Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies, XXIII, Part IV (1970) p.347

⁴⁴ Robinson, 'The establishment of Royal Customs' p.357-361

⁴⁵ Mallet, 'Early Seventeenth Century Piracy and Bristol', pp. 7 & 14

Pirates plagued the coast of Ireland during this period; Mainwaring described it in the early seventeenth century as ‘that Nursery and Storehouse of Pirates.’⁴⁶ The Irish Sea is recognised by Konstam as one of the two key parts of British waters that suffered from piracy.⁴⁷ This was largely on account of the fact that in Ireland until 1613 pirates could plead benefit of clergy to avoid trial in a secular court, a right that had long since been abolished in England. As a result even the most notorious and evil offenders avoided prosecution and by the period in question, pirates resided here en masse and had grown bolder.⁴⁸ Attempts by Bristol to capture pirates would have been thwarted by easy escape to the safety of pirate bases in Ireland such as Cork, an area heavily inhabited and frequented by pirates. Not only would the trafficking of pirated goods threaten those merchants who chose not to involve themselves, but the presence of pirates in waters so close to home was a constant danger to Bristol’s shipping and to the regular trade between Irish ports and those like Bristol on the West Coast of England. Senior establishes that in areas like Leamcon, Baltimore and Roaringwater Bay, supplying the needs of pirates became a clandestine and well-run industry.⁴⁹ O’Sullivan stresses that in Cork, people traded with pirates with the permission of the Lord Deputy and that the Mayor also did business with pirates indicating the involvement of officials at the highest levels of society.⁵⁰ The Calendar of State Papers for Ireland are littered with examples of piracy in Cork, it is clear that this locality became a ‘perpetuall market for that trafficque’.⁵¹

Even closer pirate strongholds existed in Cardiff and other ports of Wales like Milford Haven.⁵² While the navy regularly patrolled the Thames at this time, there was no such patrol off the Welsh coast to regulate the threat of piracy to the ships of ports such as Bristol. The Welsh ports were a breeding ground for illicit practices; Cardiff was contemporaneously considered ‘the general resort of pirates, where they are sheltered and protected’⁵³ and less than 40 miles from the port of Bristol, posed a

⁴⁶ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.53

⁴⁷ Konstam, *Piracy: the Complete History*, p.34

⁴⁸ W. O’ Sullivan, *The Economic History of Cork City from the Earliest Times to the Act of Union* (Cork, 1937) p.102

⁴⁹ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.56

⁵⁰ O’ Sullivan, *The Economic History of Cork City*, p.71

⁵¹ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.56

⁵² See Appendix Six

⁵³ Robert Lemon (ed), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580* (London, 1856) p.537

continuous threat. The danger of piracy was exacerbated by the cooperation of locals and even officials with pirates. This was a common occurrence; ‘John ap John Confessith... That he kept company w^t pirates in the Town of Cardif, as generally all men there did.’⁵⁴ It is evident in a letter written by John Davies, Justice of the Peace, that cooperation with pirates among locals made it very hard for officials to do their jobs. Ports like this therefore harboured pirates, entered into illicit dealings with them and sympathy for them existed among the lowest and highest levels of society. Davies remarked in 1576 that in Cardiff ‘pyrattes (as it is comonly Reported) are furnyshed, vittled, ayded, Receaved and succored.’⁵⁵ Furthermore he notes that goods stolen from Haverfordwest were openly sold in Cardiff and elsewhere. The primary source material consulted for this thesis, particularly the Calendar of State Papers, has been riddled with examples of pirated goods being sold in Wales. The cargo of a ship taken by John Callice in March 1574 was sold in Cardiff and Bristol.⁵⁶ This is one example of how pirate business directed at the port of Cardiff could so easily reach Bristol. Milford Haven was also a key port for the vending of booty, Callice frequently sold goods here and there is a direct example of goods stolen from John Ollyve, a Bristol merchant in 1597, transported via Milford Haven to Chester to be sold.⁵⁷ The proximity of Welsh ports like Cardiff to Bristol also enabled pirate crews to recruit Bristol men. Florence Wastell was examined in 1577 to discover how her husband came from Bristol to Cardiff to join a company of pirates.⁵⁸ This is one example of a phenomenon that is sure to have been common.

Although secondary works recognise Lundy as a pirate stronghold and ‘a favoured haunt for pirates’ in the early seventeenth century, the detrimental consequences this might have had for Bristol’s trade and shipping have not been recognised.⁵⁹ Lundy was situated right at the mouth of the Bristol Channel.⁶⁰ In 1608 the Earl of Bath heard complaints of merchants robbed on a daily basis by pirates using Lundy as a place of refuge.⁶¹ There were also pirates who used Caldey Island as a base situated

⁵⁴ R.O. State Papers, Domestic. Vol. 122, No. 2. 1577. in ‘State Papers Domestic: 1565-1666’

⁵⁵ R.O. State Papers, Domestic. Vol III. 1576. in ‘State Papers Domestic: 1565-1666’

⁵⁶ Appleby, *Under the Bloody Flag*, p.124

⁵⁷ See Appendix Four

⁵⁸ R.O. State Papers, Domestic. Vol. 112. 3 April 1577. Pirates. in ‘State Papers Domestic: 1565-1666’

⁵⁹ Appleby & Dalton, *Outlaws in Medieval and Early Modern England*, p.170

⁶⁰ See Appendix Six

⁶¹ Loyd, Lundy, *Its history and natural history*, p.116-117

on the outer reaches of the Bristol Channel.⁶² A local report there at the time of consideration expressed that although the island was fertile, the inhabitants chose not to have oxen to cultivate the land ‘fearing the purveyors of the pirates...who often make their provisions there by their own...’⁶³ This suggests that piracy was a persistent and considerable threat in the Bristol Channel and this undoubtedly would have had adverse implications for Bristol’s merchants and shipping.

It has been shown that piracy not only threatened trade but also threatened voyages of discovery and fishing voyages, particularly into the Atlantic and around areas such as Newfoundland. In 1620 huge numbers of small ships from London, Bristol, Plymouth and Weymouth fell victim to the Turks returning from the Newfoundland fisheries.⁶⁴ This was a particular problem for Bristol in the early seventeenth century as reflected in the letter of the Corporation of Bristol to the Government, begging for a ship of war to be sent to protect those returning from Newfoundland from the Turkish corsairs plaguing the area.⁶⁵ In the early modern period large numbers of English pirates crossed the Atlantic to target these fishing boats attracted to Newfoundland. They were substantial in size and laden with provisions and fishing gear.⁶⁶ In addition ‘the men and the boys who manned them...made excellent conscripts to a pirate crew.’⁶⁷ The pirate Peter Easton in 1612 plundered to the extent that his forces increased to about 500 British fishermen. One contemporary account put the damage caused by Easton and his captains at £20,400...⁶⁸ Bristol’s shipowners undoubtedly suffered from this as by the later sixteenth century they were conducting numerous voyages to penetrate the Newfoundland fisheries.⁶⁹ It was noted by contemporaries that those Bristol men who went on fishing voyages to Newfoundland did so ‘to the great discouragement of other well mynded men’ which connotes the dangers involved.⁷⁰

⁶² See Appendix Six

⁶³ Appleby & Dalton, *Outlaws in Medieval and Early Modern England*, p.165

⁶⁴ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.109

⁶⁵ Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol*, p.91

⁶⁶ David Starkey, Chris Reid & Neil Ashcroft (eds) *England’s Sea Fisheries; The Commercial Sea Fisheries of England and Wales since 1300* (London, 2000) p.12

⁶⁷ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.62

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p.62

⁶⁹ David Starkey, Chris Reid & Neil Ashcroft (eds) *England’s Sea Fisheries; The Commercial Sea Fisheries of England and Wales since 1300* (London, 2000) p.12

⁷⁰ See Appendix Five

Bristol's lack of involvement in voyages of discovery across the Atlantic manifested itself during the age of Elizabeth I; McGrath notes that on only two occasions did the city show interest, and one of these was in Sir Humphrey Gilbert's activities 1582-3.⁷¹ This is surprising, for as Jean Vanes has stressed, the financial situation in Bristol during the Elizabethan period was healthy, thus this was not on account of a lack of resources to fund such an enterprise.⁷² Additionally, Bristol was contemporaneously considered a well-located port for voyages of discovery. In a letter of the 15th March 1567 from Don Guzman de Silva to Philip II it is noted that there are two ways east India can be reached from England; 'by...embarking in this river [Thames] or in Bristol.'⁷³ Despite minimal primary evidence indicating the reasons for Bristol's largely abstinent attitude towards voyages of discovery at this time, it can be designated that piracy could indeed have been a factor, or indeed that practices like smuggling seemed less risky than voyages of discovery when pirates were persistently a threat. Senior has stressed that while in peacetime there were laws in place to regulate the threat of piracy in European waters, in the Atlantic, pirates flouted the law and piracy 'defied definition'.⁷⁴ On returning from a trans-Atlantic voyage, Gilbert declared to Walsingham in 1583, 'in my first enterprise I returned with great losse, because I would not myselfe, nor suffer any of my companye to doe anythinge contrarye to my worde given to her majestie...'⁷⁵ 'Anything' here refers to piracy which suggests that avoiding piratical tactics was detrimental to the voyage.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered primary and secondary material to outline the prevalence of piracy in waters close to Bristol and visited by Bristol ships. It has considered pirate bases located in Southern Ireland, Cardiff and on Lundy and Caldey Islands in the context of Bristol's trade and shipping, an approach that has not before been taken by historians. The pervasiveness of piracy on the land and in waters close to Bristol has been shown to have undeniably threatened Bristol's merchants and shipping. The

⁷¹ Patrick McGrath, *Bristol and America 1480-1631* (Bristol Branch of the Historical Association Local History Pamphlets, Bristol University, 1997) p.12

⁷² J. M. Vanes, *The Port of Bristol in the Sixteenth Century* (Bristol, 1977)

⁷³ Quinn (ed), *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, p.115

⁷⁴ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.44

⁷⁵ Quinn (ed), *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, p.45

chapter has also shown that the presence of piracy in the Atlantic was problematic for Bristol's fishing voyages, as well as possibly serving as a deterrent to voyages of discovery into these areas.

CHAPTER THREE; GENERAL RESPONSES TO PIRACY

Introduction

To better understand the significance of the responses of Bristol's elite to the threats of piracy considered in chapters one and two, it will be useful to discuss the national picture at this time to put methods and initiatives in context. This chapter is dedicated to government enterprise during the period to combat piracy, as well as its shortcomings. The role of the High Court of the Admiralty is also important, as this body was responsible for upholding piracy laws across the realm.

The Responses of Government to Piracy

A key governmental response to piracy was the use of statute and law. During Henry VIII's reign 'An Act concerning Pirates and Robbers of the Sea' and 'An Act for Punishment of Pirates and Robbers of the Sea' were both put into action and led to the trying of pirates under common law.⁷⁶ The High Court of the Admiralty was re-established during the 1520s and 1530s to provide more effective means of dealing with cases of piracy and plunder at sea.⁷⁷ In 1549 a law was passed which made those who maintained pirates punishable by death. In reality it led to fines for those found guilty. Throughout the 1560s and 1570s Appleby and Dalton stress that further use was made of proclamations in efforts to correct the shortcomings of existing laws in the prosecution of pirates, for example the fact that the statute of 1536 did not lead to the punishment of accessories to piracy.⁷⁸ Special commissioners for piracy cases were appointed in 1565 to report instances of piracy as well as all those involved including anyone who aided pirates or purchased plunder. During the 1570s proclamations led to the dismissal of corrupt officers and in 1577 various commissions were set up to deal with piracy. Williams stresses the 'turning point' of efforts to suppress piracy was in 1583 with the appointment of Caesar as judge of the

⁷⁶ <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/high-court-admiralty.htm> accessed 12th February 2013

⁷⁷ John C. Appleby (ed), *A Calendar of Material relating to Ireland from the High Court of Admiralty Examinations 1536-1641* (Dublin, 1992) p.x

⁷⁸ Appleby & Dalton, *Outlaws in Medieval and Early Modern England*, p.154

High Court of Admiralty.⁷⁹ As a result pardons became less easy to acquire and this is clear from Bristol council minutes. Parliament could also pass initiatives in court to improve responses to piracy for example in July 1588 they formed ‘directions for the better and more speedy execution of the commission for the punishment of the aiders of pirates.’⁸⁰

Punishing pirates was therefore a key governmental response constantly shaped by legal reform. The ultimate punishment was hanging and in 1598 Paul Hentzner wrote that the government hung over 300 pirates in London per year. As Appleby has suggested this is likely to be an exaggeration, yet it proves that the government was indeed willing to inflict the ultimate punishment on pirates.⁸¹ Government could send out ships to help suppress piracy. This was most common in the Thames and the Channel where Navy patrols were set up, however there is evidence that in 1613 the ‘Dreadnought’ was dispatched to the Severn to help Bristol merchants deal with pirates.⁸² Government also tasked individuals with the mission of apprehending pirates, however this was most frequently an initiative to protect the Cinque Ports. In June 1583, for example, William Borough and Benjamin Gonson were appointed for such a mission.⁸³ The commissions of 1577 were an important initiative, but the outbreak of war in 1585 meant they fell short of their goals. The government also had indirect options for the suppression of piracy, for example they could reward the capture of pirates, enabling them to avoid putting the voyages on themselves but ensuring the problem was dealt with. In May 1549 Thomas Chamberlayn the Under-Treasurer of Bristol was given a warrant to deliver 60l to Rice Morgan, Ph. Lower, and N. Buckingham ‘of the King’s reward’ for taking a pirate named Cole.⁸⁴

The involvement of government in suppressing piracy, however, is undermined in both the primary and secondary literature by its failures. Senior stresses that it was

⁷⁹ Williams, *The Sea Dogs*, p.150

⁸⁰ Lemon (ed), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580*, p.552

⁸¹ Appleby, *Under the Bloody Flag*, p.247

⁸² P.V. McGrath, ‘Merchant Venturers and Bristol Shipping in the Early Seventeenth Century,’ *Mariner’s Mirror*, XXXVI (1950) p.71

⁸³ Robert Lemon (ed), *Calendar of State papers, Domestic Series Elizabeth, 1581-90*, (London, 1865) p.113

⁸⁴ Lemon (ed), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580*, p.17

hard for the government to combat because ‘it went against most people’s interests.’⁸⁵ Although in theory convicting pirates was straightforward, in practice it was not so. A direct example of the difficulty of exercising the law over pirates at this time was when Richard Uggan was apprehended in Chester for having possession of John Ollyve, a Bristol merchant’s, goods. Unless sufficient evidence was brought against him in twelve days according to law he had to be set ‘at libertie’.⁸⁶ Senior stresses that law suits in England were expensive and lengthy processes generally resulting in little gain.⁸⁷ Bristol men had a ship seized by pirates in Spain in 1570, the process involved a petition, which was then supported by Dr Lewes of the Admiralty Court and sent on to the Queen. On this occasion it was suggested that the Queen should write to the King of Spain.⁸⁸ This shows a number of the stages involved in claiming compensation, and the fact doing so might necessitate the direct involvement of the monarch would surely have resulted in huge amounts of backlog and long waiting times.

The imposition of piracy laws was compromised by war efforts at the end of the century. Not only did war strain resources, but there was a conflict of interest; it was proved during the war with Spain at the end of the century that pirates could be useful in privateering voyages.⁸⁹ In 1584, the year before the official outbreak of war there is evidence of John Callice (notorious pirate) being employed in privateering missions against Spanish and Portuguese ships. Involvement of pirates in the popular and often patriotic privateering missions essentially undermined any effort by government to socially exclude pirates or to paint their wrongdoings as felonies. Callice was also pardoned by the Queen herself in 1577. Similarly Francis Drake, a famous ‘Elizabethan Sea Dog’ essentially began his career as a pirate, as he gained acclaim, Elizabeth I secretly supported his aggressive expeditions.⁹⁰ Senior suggests reluctance on behalf of the government and the monarchy to punish pirate crews in the post-war period, as it was these very men who had been essential to the crucial practice of privateering during the war.⁹¹

⁸⁵ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.125

⁸⁶ See Appendix Four

⁸⁷ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.62

⁸⁸ Vanes, *Documents*, p.131-2

⁸⁹ Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering*, p.16

⁹⁰ Konstam, *Piracy: the Complete History*, p.57

⁹¹ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.18

Government was inconsistent in its policy on piracy. Although proclamation in 1564 ordered that pirates be hung in their home ports, pardons remained common. Between 1558 and 1578 only 106 were hanged and in 1578, of the 900 men brought to trial by the commissions, three were condemned to death.⁹² A direct example of inconsistency that effected Bristol men is the seventeenth century case when Bristol merchants Humphrey Hooke and Humphrey Browne captured a Sallee corsair. They were subsequently condemned of acting illegally by the Privy Council. Latimer uncovers this as having been due to the fact that the London merchants who took the complaint to the Privy Council were in an extremely lucrative trading relationship with these pirates.⁹³ In the post-war period, piracy was a considerably greater threat nation wide. Bristol's elite warned the council of persistent pirate threats in the summer of 1603 and Latimer notes that the Bristol Council 'vainly' pressed the government for aid in dealing with the problems of piracy during this period.⁹⁴ The government of James I then clearly fell short of its duty to deal with piracy, with measures such as the general pardon of 1612 meaning that pirates who surrendered could keep their loot.⁹⁵

Another problem was the incompetence and even corruption of officials, particularly among the local admiralty officers who were the men directly responsible for apprehending pirates. Senior describes the extent of this as 'outstanding'⁹⁶ and stresses the ineffectual way in which men were appointed to the duty, an appointment which was usually for life and due to connections not suitability. Local vice-admirals were actually instructed 'to avoid the appearance of conniving at piracy', an evidently common occurrence.⁹⁷ In February 1577 Richard Vaughan wrote to Sir John Perrot explaining that 'John Brown had half a ton of wine brought into Milford Haven by the pirate 'Edwd. Harberd', and that it was stayed for the Lord Admiral's use.'⁹⁸ In May 1605, a letter to the Earl of Salisbury written by Sir Ferdinando Gorges spoke of the increase in piracy and suggested it 'might easily be prevented if authority were given

⁹² Williams, *The Sea Dogs*, p.149

⁹³ Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol*, p.105

⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p.46

⁹⁵ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.40

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p.127

⁹⁷ Williams, *The Sea Dogs*, p.149

⁹⁸ Lemon (ed), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580*, p.538

to any that knew what to do and would be careful of their duties and licensed to exercise their best means for prevention thereof...'⁹⁹

Conclusion

Whilst government funded commissions into piracy, voyages to apprehend pirates, rewards for outport men apprehending pirates and established and revised countless laws throughout this period all in an effort to suppress piracy, the impossible contradiction of the usefulness of sea-faring men in war-time, despite a piratical past, resulted in an inconsistent policy on piracy during this period. Furthermore, corruption of officials particularly among the vice-admirals resulted in a less than effective body responsible for dealing with pirates. Right up to the war 'ordinary piracy remained a serious social evil and the government's attempts to suppress it were unavailing'¹⁰⁰ - the national response to piracy was not substantial in dealing with pirates, and was likely to have been even less so when the government was preoccupied with war. This provides the background for Bristol's own initiatives for dealing with the threat of piracy, and stresses the significance of the role of Bristol's elite in co-ordinating the responses that will be discussed.

⁹⁹ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.128

¹⁰⁰ Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering*, p.15

CHAPTER IV; BRISTOL'S RESPONSES TO PIRACY

Introduction

This chapter will build on the previous by specifically analysing Bristol's responses to piracy through a number of primary sources. This should not only enable us to get a picture of the way in which Bristol was prepared to combat the problem, but various sources should also give a sense of how serious Bristol itself considered the threat of piracy through the way it was handled. In the seventeenth century McGrath concludes that 'the careful endeavors of his Majesty's instruments, combined with a measure of self-help on the part of the Bristol merchants, were evidently reasonably effective at this time in dealing with the local breed of pirates.'¹⁰¹ This chapter will stress that in the later sixteenth century, a time plagued by strained international relations and war, the prevention of piracy (especially local piracy) was considerably more reliant upon initiatives taken by the elite in the outports themselves, particularly in ports like Bristol where threats posed by pirates seem to outweigh benefits for merchants from trading pirated goods. Unlike Welsh ports such as Cardiff, it was in the interest of Bristol's elite to curb the threat.

Bristol's Responses to Piracy

In the same way as government, Bristol at times paid individuals for bringing pirates in. For example on May 18 1549 Sir Thomas Woodlock was paid 60l to bring in pirates taken in Ireland.¹⁰² This particular case is interesting as it suggests that even after the pirates had been caught, Bristol took interest in their trial. In 1555 Nicholas Thomas, an associate of the notorious pirate Woodman was arrested in Bristol.¹⁰³ It is recorded in the Mayor's Audit Books that in 1577, the city funded and organised the erection of gallows at Canyngs Marshe for the execution of three pirates 'which were condempned who were of that companie that stoll a Barke of Dongarvan owt of Grock and Pill of 30 ton and went away with her'.¹⁰⁴ This time the pirates were caught

¹⁰¹ McGrath, 'Merchant Venturers and Bristol shipping', p.71

¹⁰² Lemon (ed), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580*, p.16

¹⁰³ Appleby, *Under the Bloody Flag*, p.67

¹⁰⁴ See Appendix One

by ‘my lord of Leycestrs Flebote’, and again Bristol’s elite conducted the trial of the pirates. This act shows that the threat of piracy was taken seriously and challenges Williams’ assertion that punishment of death for piracy was a rarity. The actual process of constructing the gallows is depicted as quite an undertaking with two carpenters involved along with their apprentices. Seven labourers were required to transport the timber and construct the gallows, as were others such as the lighterman. This was clearly considered a necessary, even important job; the ultimate sum for constructing the gallows was eleven shillings ten pence which is considerably larger than, for instance, that paid to Hughe Davis ‘tilar’ for five days work repairing the council house roof (four shillings two pence).

It was not only the punishment of pirates that Bristol’s elite directly concerned themselves with. Other pages transcribed from the Mayor’s Audit Books show that Bristol’s men were often involved in the entire process of catching pirates, right down to funding and organising the voyages. Cross-referencing pages from 1582 and 1584 as well as considering these alongside other primary source material has suggested that Bristol’s elite had a set precedent for these voyages, and so were well rehearsed in dealing with the problem. John Sach is depicted as leading a voyage to pursue pirates in the Channel in 1582¹⁰⁵, while a Captain Sachfiled led a 1584 voyage to capture pirates.¹⁰⁶ Vanes notes a Bristol privateer during this period called Captain John Satchfield.¹⁰⁷ It is likely that all three of these men are in fact one person; all three had the status of captain, the same name (spelled differently) and were active at similar times. This reflects that these voyages were clearly entrusted to a professional, well associated with capturing these infidels and moreover that as a privateering captain he had a certain set of skills. Furthermore, the ship the *Marye Fflower* used in the 1584 voyage is mentioned in the secondary literature as one of the ships John Hopkins, master of the Bristol merchant adventurers had on reprisal post-1588.¹⁰⁸ Just like her captain, this ship was clearly well suited to combat and well armed for the task at hand. This all stresses the aggressive, organised and privateering-like nature of piracy prevention voyages. Bristol’s response to piracy was evidently focused, well thought out and reflective of the gravity with which they viewed the threat.

¹⁰⁵ See Appendix Two

¹⁰⁶ See Appendix Three

¹⁰⁷ Vanes, *Bristol*, p.22

¹⁰⁸ Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering*, p.145

The 1584 source includes all aspects of victualling the ship and shows that it was a task that provided employment to diverse members of the community (at a time marked by ‘increasing poverty and insecurity’¹⁰⁹), from a brewer, John Griffin, to Pope the baker, Chandler and Bird the lightermen, Beefe the butcher, and many other labourers and men employed for preparing the voyage.¹¹⁰ It reveals that ‘souldyers’ (soldiers) as well as mariners were required, and that once again as has been previously considered the voyage was armed with gunpowder and ‘caliber shott’ so as to effectively combat armed and dangerous pirates. The original intention was to compare the cost of all these preparations to the sum government demanded of Bristol in 1598, provoking their response in the Book of Trade. However unfortunately there is no record of this sum in either the Book of Trade or the Calendar of State Papers 1598-1601. Thus instead the figure will be compared to the £2,500 required of Bristol for the national Algiers expedition in 1620. The total cost of £59 18s spent by the Mayor and Aldermen of Bristol in pursuing these pirates was only a fraction of the £1,000 they reluctantly agreed to donate to this Algiers expedition. The £59 18s spent in 1584 was no meagre financial undertaking and moreover administratively it involved a significant amount of time, organisation, coordination and effort. However these types of voyages were evidently far less of a financial burden than contributions to a fleet employed by government in national efforts at piracy suppression, whilst also being directed at pirates specifically problematic to Bristol merchants and shipowners in more local waters. Furthermore, they cost significantly less than the ruin suffered as a result of piracy, discussed in chapter one.

There is evidence of attempts by Bristol men to prevent pirate attacks. Willan, O’Sullivan and Croft stress that trading voyages were often conducted in convoy to provide safety from the threats of piracy. Croft sees this as especially necessary when vast numbers of Barbary pirates began to plague expanses of Mediterranean and Atlantic waters.¹¹¹ Vanes has found that Bristol merchants in the later sixteenth century travelled in convoy to avoid trouble from these pirates.¹¹² In wartime merchants had a legitimate reason to arm their ships and to protect themselves from

¹⁰⁹ Vanes, *Bristol at the Time of the Spanish Armada*, p.11

¹¹⁰ See Appendix Three

¹¹¹ Croft, 'English mariners trading to Spain and Portugal, 1558-1625', p.255

¹¹² Vanes, *Bristol at the Time of the Spanish Armada*, p.17

pirates; many combined trading voyages with voyages of plunder enabling them to conduct business whilst avoiding pirate or privateering depredations. While Senior argues that the staged execution of pirates at ‘Execution Dock’ in London failed in their attempts to discourage people from supporting pirates and even to discourage the pirates themselves, the establishment of gallows was nonetheless a measure taken by authorities to prevent piracy.¹¹³ The gallows set up at Cannyngs marshe are an example of Bristol’s council adopting this preventative measure used in the capital. Finally, it also seems to have been necessary for city elites, particularly the mayor, to make themselves aware of notorious pirates, pirate attacks, sympathisers of pirates and the networks that emerged to facilitate the movement and sale of pirated goods. In a letter to the Mayor of Chester, the Mayor of Bristol wrote that Ricahrd Uggan ‘ys a common dealer in the buying of such goods’ and advised him to ‘take bande, or good security for his forth cominge before you’ implying the danger of this man.¹¹⁴ In addition he was aware of an attack on an Irish ship at this time, which insinuates that there was correspondence in circulation about instances of piracy.

Through analysis of some correspondence between the mayors of Bristol and Chester it is clear that interregional efforts and reliance upon authorities in other localities were often important elements to responding to acts of piracy. These letters were written in 1597 and clearly differentiate piracy from privateering, which challenges the assertion of Neville Williams that the long naval war cleared the English coasts of pirates.¹¹⁵ It is apparent from this source that the Mayor of Bristol in the first instance wrote to the Mayor of Chester informing him of a pirate attack resulting in Bristol merchant loss of sacks and oils.¹¹⁶ The source insinuates there were no national alliances when it came to outright piracy as the goods with which the Mayor is concerned belonged to Bristol men and other French merchants, on board a French ship taken by English pirates in the Chester channel. The complicity of the Mayor of Chester is shown through the statement ‘yf any such goods have bene already or shalbe hereafter brought hither to be sould, that we would not only make stay of the said goods; but alsoe of such person as should soe bring the same’. The Mayor of Chester kept his promise and arrested Richard Uggan for the possession of ‘oyles’ on

¹¹³ Senior, *A Nation of Pirates*, p.121-3

¹¹⁴ See Appendix Four

¹¹⁵ Williams, *The Sea Dogs*, p.165

¹¹⁶ See Appendix Four

board the *George Tasker* of Milford. A further example of co-operation between ports is that in December 1577 when the number of commissioners for piracy in the county of Gloucester proved to be insufficient, they requested ‘the assistance of the Mayor, &c. of Bristol’.¹¹⁷

Working with government seems from the primary material to have been key to Bristol’s efforts to suppress piracy, certainly outside the war-years period. There are various examples of the government funding outport efforts to combat piracy. In November 1564 the council authorized the Mayor and Corporation of Bristol to hunt down pirates plaguing the sea between the Scilly Isles and the River Severn.¹¹⁸ Similarly, in 1582 in the voyage to pursue Pierce the pirate although at the ‘commandment’ of the Bristol mayor and Aldermen, the voyage was by ‘vertewe’ of a ‘comysson from my lords of her majesties privie counsel’.¹¹⁹ The fact that the pirates of the 1577 source were caught by Lord Leicester’s fleet signifies the way the Council of Bristol often worked with others (like the Mayor of Chester) to combat the problem. It is apparent however that any aid from government was most likely the result of requests from the mayor and Aldermen of Bristol who wrote various letters concerning piracy throughout this period. For example, a letter written in 1610 concerning Easton the pirate who had taken a Bristol ship and was threatening all those in the Kingroad, yet there was no commission to attack him.¹²⁰

Despite the evidence of Bristol’s elite working with government to combat piracy, when it came to national efforts, government’s attempts to recruit men or financial support from Bristol largely proved fruitless and were often met with tacit resistance. Documents transcribed from the Book of Trade illustrate this. Financial support was requested from Bristol in a national effort to combat piracy in 1598. In the meeting, support is expressed for the cause and the need to protect English merchants from these attacks; there is recognition that the efforts are for the ‘common good’.¹²¹ Notwithstanding this however, excuses are conjured as to why this financial support

¹¹⁷ Lemon (ed), *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reigns of Edward VI., Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580*, p.571

¹¹⁸ Appleby, *Under the Bloody Flag*, p.92

¹¹⁹ See Appendix Two

¹²⁰ McGrath, ‘Merchant Venturers and Bristol shipping’, p.70

¹²¹ See Appendix Five

cannot be provided by the city of Bristol, 'this (nowe poore) place.' They stress that the contribution would be a great burden due to the 'decay of this citty', yet the work of historians such as Richard Stone has shown that at this time trade was flourishing in Bristol.¹²² It could be ascertained that this resistance to contribute indicates the self-interested nature of Bristol's responses to piracy. Attempts throughout the century were made to gain collective advantages by stressing the poverty of the city of Bristol. In 1597 the Bristol Mayor and Aldermen sent a petition to Lord Burghley requesting 'libertie to traffique and sende their shippes to any place within the Straights' for their merchants.¹²³ In 1598, the elite emphasised the monopolisation of trade into the Straits by London merchants again as the cause of the city's decay, and that if granted into London trade circles 'wee wilbe ever willing, to assiste them in all publicke or private causes of good.'¹²⁴

The insinuation in the Book of Trade that the piratical attacks in question were only really effecting London merchants at the time; 'noe wonder thoughe the enemy soe often meeteth & repriseth them for hee canne seldome encounter other' shows that perhaps some level of self-interest was necessary. If Bristol's trade was not really affected by pirate attacks in the Channel and on routes to Normandy and Brittany at this time, why would the elite want to contribute considerable sums to a cause which they saw as essentially protecting the very trade (that of London merchants) which they blamed for the decline of their own? In addition, the elite were combating threats on their own initiative as has been shown. Using this opportunity to voice (and exaggerate) other issues in the city essentially could be interpreted as another way Bristol dealt with the threat of piracy; they manipulated the threat to gain collective advantages whilst dealing with direct threats in local waters and resisting contributing large sums to national efforts. The stress on a desire to trade in the Straits is interesting in this source of 1598; it implies that the petition of 1597, which canvassed for this same privilege, was ignored which might have added to the resistance felt towards making a contribution.

¹²² Richard Stone, 'The Overseas Trade of Bristol Before the Civil War', in the *International Journal of Maritime History*, Vol.23, No.2 (December 2011)

¹²³ Vanes, *Documents*, p.37

¹²⁴ See Appendix Five

It is also important here to recall Latimer's analysis of Bristol's resistance to contributing towards national efforts in suppressing piracy. As previously mentioned in 1617 the Privy Council wrote to the Mayor of Bristol requesting £2,500 to aid efforts to repress piracy. McGrath stresses that in this instance the suppression of piracy was in the interest of Bristol's merchants as the Turkish pirates were a particular threat in the waters they navigated.¹²⁵ However Bristol resisted contributing to the effort, despite the fact that losses to piracy were undoubtedly hugely more considerable than this sum; the expense from the loss of the *John* of Bristol in the later sixteenth century alone amounting to £3,000.¹²⁶ Latimer explains the resistance as due to government often squandering resources and not dealing with the problem, resulting in uncertainty as to whether the money would in fact be used for the aforesaid cause at all.¹²⁷ Although this interpretation might be all too forgiving of the self-interest of Bristol's elite, when we consider late sixteenth and early seventeenth century examples of resistance to contributing to national efforts to suppress piracy, it is important to consider that this decision may also have been affected by a loss of faith in government when it came to the suppression of piracy.

Conclusion

The organised nature and diverse methods employed by Bristol's elite to manage and deal with the threat of piracy reflects their essential role in curbing this problem in the early modern period. From co-operation with other local officials, to requests of aid from government, to putting on voyages to capture pirates themselves, these responses were critical and self-directed. In the seventeenth century responses became even more coherent and organised, McGrath stresses the role of the Society of Merchant Venturers as central to diminishing losses to pirates in these years. In the late sixteenth century this responsibility was largely left to Bristol's Mayor and Aldermen. In 1613 the Society fitted out two ships of war, the *Concord* and the *True Love* costing £172 and in 1614 four ships were appointed at a cost of £320 1s 2d.¹²⁸ This reflects that Bristol's efforts to suppress piracy over time developed in relation to the severity of the threats posed to her trade and shipping. That they were able to

¹²⁵ McGrath, 'Merchant Venturers and Bristol shipping', p.72

¹²⁶ Vanes, *Documents*, p.113

¹²⁷ Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol*, p.69

¹²⁸ McGrath, 'Merchant Venturers and Bristol shipping', p.70

advance in this way, however, is crucially the result of progression in the methods already adopted and precedents already established in the late sixteenth century.

CONCLUSION

As asserted in the introduction, historians of both Bristol's trade and of national piracy have for the most part neglected to acknowledge the threats of piracy to Bristol, and piracy more generally in the sixteenth century. The consideration in this thesis of piracy as a threat to a western outpost goes against the grain of current scholarship, which tends to focus on local connivance or motives for involvement in piracy in these areas. It has shown that piracy was a significant and persistent threat to Bristol at this time and was treated as such by the elite of the city. It has brought together a wide range of examples from both primary and secondary literature to reveal a detailed picture of the threats pirates posed to Bristol at this time, both directly and indirectly. These threats are hard to quantify due to the sporadic nature of attacks and often-exaggerated accounts of financial damage. Similarly although we can be pretty sure that the threat of piracy did not considerably adversely alter Bristol's trading figures, which by the end of the sixteenth century were moving in a positive direction, it is hoped that this research into a largely neglected area of Bristol's maritime environment might encourage future historians of Bristol's sixteenth century trade to consider piracy as an obstacle to merchants.

Mallet argues that merchant protection of the corrupt Thomas Button, alongside evidence of merchants trading in pirated goods between Ireland and Bristol in the seventeenth century testifies to the compliance of Bristol's men with pirates.¹²⁹ Yet as he recognised himself, he did not have the evidence to prove the extent of this corruption. This thesis has shown that in the later sixteenth century there is substantial evidence to prove that piracy was also a serious threat to Bristol and that it was treated as such by Bristol's elite. The discovery and consideration of a wide-range of responses of Bristol's elite to piracy calls for the generally accepted view in the existing historiography, depicting high-levels of elite and lay involvement in piracy in numerous outports, to be re-evaluated. While Senior has effectively argued that subterfuge was rife in a number of ports, particularly those in the South West, it has been proven that this is not a rule that can be nationally applied to the outports of England at this time. The responses of Bristol's elite were for the most part recorded

¹²⁹ Mallet, 'Early Seventeenth Century Piracy and Bristol', p.39

on previously untranscribed Mayor's Audit Book pages, the transcriptions of which should be useful to future historians on this subject. In addition, for historians interested in the role of Bristol's elite at this time in protecting their denizen merchants, a theme in much of the scholarship on Bristol's sixteenth century trade, the chapter on Bristol's responses to piracy reveals a number of other initiatives and tactics they employed.

While before the outbreak of war government was taking various initiatives to respond to piracy, as war loomed piracy was an evil that was increasingly forsaken. Various historians have asserted that war proved to be a temporary solution to piracy, yet the research carried out for this thesis implies that instead, it was a temporary excuse for government to avoid dealing with it. The problem had to be combated by the outports themselves, or it was ignored, which makes the consideration of responses to piracy of the elite of a port like Bristol at this time a particularly worthwhile task.

APPENDIX ONE

Transcription of p.165 in the Mayor's Audit Book of 1577 (Bristol Records Office Ref: F/Au/1/11, p. 165)

Yet the xiith weks

It[e]m p[aid] to William Hutton mason fore I day ei to set the grate in Christmis strete and for fasing it with Fre stone and for pynnyng the wall within the gowt at xiid per daye ----- } xviiid
It[e]m p[aid] for ei away of fyne Lyme, half course o iiid for a paving stone to lay before the grate vd-----viiid
It[e]m p[aid] for a piece of tymbre that is fote for to make giste to lay over the sande gowt afr 10^s per ton ----- iis ix d
It[e]m p[aid] to the halier for haling the said piece of tymbre from the cart side of marsh to ye sawe pit --- iiid
It[e]m p[aid] to John Lya laborer for ii days there at viiid o xvid to Ryve the laborer for i day quarter - --x^d ---- iis ii^d
It[e]m p[aid] to Roo the laborer for iii days atviis iid p[aid] for haling up ii draughts from the sawe pit iii^d ---- iis iiiid
It[e]m p[aid] for haling a piece of a wale borrowed of Mr Kochey and an old Rudder of the store ii^d
It[e]m p[aid] for haling of xviii fates of Rubbell thense which was cast owt of the gowtt at ii^d -- iii^s
It[e]m p[aid] to the sawer for sawyng the said piece of tymbre in gists to cover the said gowt at 20d --- x^d
It[e]m p[aid] to a Carpenter for one days worke to set the frame of the said gowt I pay ei a day iii^d

The xiiith weks

It[e]m p[aid] to hughe Davis tilar for v days ei worke upon the Rowfs of the old counsell house at x^d ---- iis viid
It[e]m p[aid] to Edward Dirrick laborer for v days ei at [crossings out] ii^d --- ... to marryck laborer vi days o iis vid ---- vis viiid
It[e]m p[aid] to Ric Shervill tilar for vi days there at 10d o vs ---- for ii way fyne lyme o xvidfor ix burdens
of mosse o xviiidfor iiiii m^{li} of tile pyns xvid and for iiC of stone nayle of Barry --xiid } xs
It[e]m p[aid] to a carpenter for i days worke to furre the rafters of that Rowfs --- viid
It[e]m p[aid] to John Lyn laborer for v days ei to clense and make clene the old counsell house and the yeld hall w[ith] the loft under the leades at viiidp[er] day - a iis viiid paid to Ryve the laborer for v days
ei there at viid --- iis viiidp[aid] to hewys the laborer for ii days there - xvid for bromes i.. for a basket to carry owt the old rushys xiid for haling xxxvi fates of rubbell, rushes & dust - vis ----}xvs
ixd
It[e]m p[aid] for haling xiii fates from mr Badrams back (???)¹³⁰ and John popleys of Rubell at thend of the worke iid----- iis iid
It[e]m p[aid] for Russhys for St George chappell agaynst the Sessions and Mighelm[a]s dayxiid
It[e]m p[aid] to Ffrere for mending of the matte in the yeld [crossed through] hall and in St George chappell agaynst
the Sessions viz for his paynes-- iiiid for nayles -- iiid for threde -- id -----}viiid
It[e]m p[aid] to a carpenter for ei a day to mend the bordes of the flore of the old counsell house iiiid
It[e]m spent viii yards of newe mat w[ith] was in store -----
It[e]m p[aid] to Baker the pitcher for pitching of xx^{le} yardes ov[er] the gowt at frowme gate at id ob iis vid
It[e]m p[aid] for ix way of course lyme for the said pitching at iiiid p[er] way ----- iis
It[e]m p[aid] for ... of soder to soderre viii scares upon the leades ov[er] the gallery and in the gutters of the old counsell house at vi d p[er] li---- iis vi dfor the scars at iid p[er] scarre -xvid } iis xd
It[e]m p[aid] for ii gallons of wyne vz i of claret at vd p[er] quart - xx^d and i of Seck at vid - iis --- iis viiid

¹³⁰ Throughout appendices (???) means the word is illegible

It[e]m p[aid] half I li of sug[er] as cost - viiid which was gevon to Mr Recorder upon Wednesday at the commandment of Mr Mayer & the Aldermen in consideracon of viewyng of the gowt of the Trinitie of Lafores gate and of the 3 kings of Coleyn }viii^d
 It[e]m p[aid] for iii quartes of claret wyne and I quarte of Seck sent to Mr Recorder upon thursday at the Commandment of Mr Mayer and the Aldermen --- }xxid
 It[e]m p[aid] for the charge of Mr Recorders horsys at the Beares Inne vz for viii horssys v days at grasse atiiid day and night -- xiiis iiiid . for meate for one gelding in the stable and for hay and provandre for the rest of the horssys --- viiis viiid for meate for his hownds id } xxiiis iiiid

Gallows

It[e]m to John Baten carpenter for ii days worke to Fframe tymbre for a paire of Gallows to be set up in Canyngs marshe for the executing of 3 piratts w[hic]h were condempned who were of that companie that stoll a Barke of Dongarvan owt of Grock and Pill of 30 ton and went away w[it]h her, w[hic]h being pursewyd by my lord of Leycestrs Fflebote furnyshed w[it]h lx p[er]sons well armed, was forced to come a land nere to Stert where the piratts fled. at xiis p[er] day } iis
 It[e]m p[aid] to Antony his man carpenter for ii days in that worke -- iis to his ii prentises for ii days a piece there thone at viiid thother at vid -- iis iiiid } iiiiis iiiid
 It[e]m p[aid] to vii laborers to carry the tymbre to the lighter to lade it and unlade it at Canyngs marshe to Digge the holes and to set up the gallows - iis iiiid p[aid] for candells to worke by in the night --- iid p[aid] for ii bragatts of tymbre -- xiid p[aid] for ii piece for spurrs & bracs xiid ---}iiiiis vid
 It[e]m for haling a piece of tymbre to the sawe pit ---iiiiid p[aid] for sawyng it in 3. Kyrffs xiid ----- xvid
 It[e]m p[aid] for lighterage of the said tymbre from the Slyp to Canyngs marshe --- xid
 It[e]m spent i piece of tymbre at xxiiiith fote, of the tymbre w[hic]h was appoynted for the Curbbes of the Kay as apt in the vth weke of this quarter
 It[e]m p[aid] to paye the Barber for a newe Trammell fot the fyshing in the were ----- xiiis

Summus of this syde ---vi li iiiis

APPENDIX TWO

Transcription of the Pirates Section of p. 114 of the Mayor's Audit Book of 1582
(Bristol Records Office Ref: F/Au/1/12, p. 114)

Pursewvng of Pirotts in the Chanell

It[e]m p[aid] to Mr Langley for i barell of Goene powder wayng nete 112^{li} at 14^d
p[er] lb w[hic]h was delyvrd to John Sach of unto who w[it] others a Thom[as] Grove the
m[aste]r
and dyv[ers] maryn[er]s who set forth the Jack w[it]h victualls and went down the channel
as farre as purlock to pursewe one Pierce a pirot w[hic]h robbed Dyv[ers] barke
and botes that were coming to thys Citie w[hic]h was donne at the commandment of
Mr Mayer and Aldermen by vertewe of a Comysson from my lords of her ma[jesties]
P[ri]vie counsel w[hic]h hath here co.rmand for suche affayers w[it]h powder amts to } vi^{li} x^s
viii^d

APPENDIX THREE

Transcription of p.254 of the Mayors Audit Book of 1584 (Bristol Record's Office Ref: F/Au/1/12 p.254)

The xviii daye of July A[n]o D[o]m[ini] 1584

Thacompte of moneys by me delived by maye[r] and the Aldermens appoyntem[en]t for the riginge & fowrth of a shippe called the Marye Fflower of Bristowe to go to followe the Apprehendinge of certheyne ... pyrates noew beinge in the Channell, for which is appoynted for master Thomas Gennyngs towhome is delievered forth the dressinge of Threescoremarriners _ iii^{li} at xii^d p[er] man in the p[re]sence of Mr mayo[r], and sondrey the Aldermen _____ iii^{li} Itm the same daye deliv[er]ed willinge tailo[r] who is appoynted the purveyo[r] of victualls for _ xx marriners to Rigg y shipp ii^{li} vii^s Itm paie to m Captaing Sachfiled to presse _ xx souldyers to s[er]ve the same shipp _____ xx^s Itm paid to John Griffin brewer for iiiii tonne of bere for the saide shipp w[hi]ch was laden aborde her at _ xxxii^s the tonne w[hi]th iii^{li} to _ vi^{li} viii^s and for on barrell of bere sentte downe to the marryners, at the riginge of the shipp iii^{li} iii^{li} vi^s xii^d Itm paid to paye the surgion by mr mayo[r] and the Aldermens apoyntem[en]t, to buy salve and other things to s[er]ve in this viage beinge preste to goe in the saide ship xxx _____

ILLEGIBLE SECTION (HAS BEEN DELETED/HATCHED THROUGH)

Itm paid for a barrell of Gunpowder weyinge i^c i^{qter} w[hi]ch the purser boughte of a _____ stranger for (???) I have paie him in redy money for the same by vi^{li} xv^s viii^d _____ vi^{li} xv^s

Itm paie for one kilderkin and ii ffirkins of butter for the same provision for the shippe _____ ii^{li} xii^s

Itm paid pope the baker for ix^c and vi^{li} of Biskett at viii^s vi^d p[er] C, wh[ic]h in accotts to _____ iii^{li} xvii^s

Itm paid to Chandler Lyterman for xxx tonne of ballas at _____ ix^d p[er] tonne _____ xxii^s vi^d and for carringe downe the bere, and Biskett in his lyter _____ iii^s and to Bird Lyterman for xv tonne of ballas at ix^d p[er] tonne _____ xi^s iii^d iii^{ts} all

Itm p[ai]d to Captaign Sachefeilde by m mayo[r] and the Aldermens appoyntem[en]t x^s to pitsse x marryners more x^s Itm paid Beefe the butcher for x^c of beffe at xii^s vi^d p[er] C wh[ic]h was salted in ii hoggs and a barrell, and for a xxxii^{li} of beefe of odd weighte, wh[ic]h comes to _____ vi^{li} vii^s and for iii^c & xvii^{li} at an other tyme at xii^s vi^d p[er] C (???) to xxxix^s ii^d salted and i^d to the Purser for the shipp, in [a]m[oun]ts all to _____ vii^{li} vi^s ii^d

Itm paid for ix busshells of salte, to salte the Beefe at xii^{li} p[er] busshells [a]m[oun]ts to _____ vii^{li} vi^s ii^d

Its paid for iiC of cheese at xiii^s p[er] C and for iiC and (???) vi^{li} of other cheese at _____ xiiii^s p[er] C w[ith] iiiii^d for carriage Itm paid for ii seame of woode w[ith] carriage to the boate _____ xvii^s bringinge the befe from the shambles to be _____ salted and fetchinge the salt _____ vi^d for one tonne of water Caske _____ iii^s, ii dozen of candells at iii^d p[er] dossen vi^s, one dry vatt for breade _____ v^s one butt , ii^s vii^d one hoggs _____ xxd ii hoggs for beffe at xx^d p[er] hogg iii^s iiiii^d and one barrell for the same _____ xii^d for hallinge the sayles from the shorehouse iiiii^d hallinge ii draughts of bread vi^d for xx platters at ii^d p[er] peece iii^s iiiii^d xx cannes at iid ob p[er] pece - iiis iid smale cannes at iid p[er] pece - xd xiiii bread basketts at iid p[er] pece - iiis iiiid and vi other at id p[er] pece - vi d, ii dossen of Trenchers - iid I C of caliber shott xd for iii mens dynner to cast di C of lead into caliber shott ix d for hallinge the hoggs and the barrell of beefe with the calibers to the key xd for x^{li} of matche atiiid p[er] lb - iiis iiiid i ponde of glewe - iid on Ell and (???) of canvas to make carterges - xviiid - vi seame of wood more at viiid p[er] seame _____ iiiis a basket viid ii C of nayles _____ xiiid xxxli of Okom at id ob p[er] lb hallinge the bere viid carringe the powder and shott xviiid a ladell to caste shotte vi d, browne threade to sewe the cartergesiid for iii boats hyer to carry downe, bere, breade, wood, shott powder and other things vis viid for iii quires of paper at vi d p[er] quire xviii d for brome I dand for a locke to hangg on the Stewaldes Rome vi d and for headinge the bread caste iiiid All wh[ic]h p[ar]cells was laide oute by the Purser as appeareth by his Accompte wh[ic]h [a]m[oun]tts in total - iiiii vis iiiid Item delived & paid the Purser in p[ar]te of paym[en]t of his wage agreed upon by m mayo[r] & the Aldermen wh[ic]h was xl s of wh[ic]h I have paie him in money _____ xxxs

Itm paie more for L^{li} of beffe gott by the purser for the marryners when the shippe was a Riginge after xii s vi p[er] C Item paid to Goodwyffe Baldewynne for iii hoggs of bere after xxxii s p[er] tonne xxiiiis and for iii hoggs at xxd p[er] pece vs - xxix s Item paid to John Apmorgan for his hors hyer to ride downe to Hungrode on nighte to warne the pilates to have a forth the shipp in to Kingrode _____ viiid

Itm ddr to the Purser to buy iii busshells of salte more for to salte more meate for the marryners iiis at xii d p[er] busshell _____ and for iiiii seame of woode at viii d p[er] seame iis viiid _____ vs vii d

Itm paid Cole the lyterman for bringinge a cable to Kingrode iii barrells of bere, and xi long Pikes whereof vi were borrowed of the owners of the mynion and v were the chambers I have paid iiiis iiiid Itm the iiiii daie of Auguste paie Beefe the butcher for iii C i q[uar]ter and i li of beffe more at xii s vi d p[er] C wh[ic]h [a]m[oun]tts to ii li xx d

to Pope the baker for x dossen of bread _____ xs and to Goodwyffe Baldewynne for iiibarrells of Bere xiiis - iii li ii s x d

ILLEGIBLE SECTION (HAS BEEN DELETED/HATCHED THROUGH)

Itm paid a hooper for settinge iidossen of hoopes upon the barrells of powder, Butter, and beefe barrell at vi d p[er] dossen _____ xiiid and for packinge the beefe into a hogg againe after it came out of the shipp _____ iid _____ xiiii d

Itm paid the pylates for bringinge fourth the Mary Fflower into Kingrode as will appear by his bill xxxii s vii d

Itm paid to iii laborers for bringinge iii barrells of powder of Langleys to his storehouse at St. Phillipps...

Wh[ic]h came home in the shipp at her Retorne vi d for hoopinge iii hoggs wh[ic]h went downe w[ith] bere of goodye

Baldewynnes _____ xxd. & to Chandler Lyterman for bringinge the bere, butter, bisbye + cheese gunpowder and other ...

things from the shipp iiis vi d _____ vs vii d

Itm paid wade the hallyer for hallinge i draughte of Biskye to Pope the Bakers house _____ ii d ii draughtes of bere into
 The storehouse at the Key _____ iiiid and to Robert Adeane hoop[er] for setting iii dosen. of hoopes set upon hogsheds of bere
 wh[ich]
 was delivered againe to Griffyne the brewer _____ at viii d p[er]dossen _____ ii s & vi hoopes sett upon a Butt _____ iis xi d
 Itm paid Dakers Plumer for di C of ledd to make caliber shott vi s vii d and to another hooper for settinge
 iiiidossen and viii hoopes upon iii hoggs wh[ich] came up, and are to be solde at _____ viii d p[er] dossen iis iid and to a
 laborer for bringinge the saide iii hoggs from the barke to the storehouse _____ iii d [a]m[oun]ttss _____
 x s
 Itm paid to .MrLangley for a barrell of powder wayinge in the besides the caske ___ vi^{xx} vi li & di at xiid p[er] li wh[ich]
 because it was opened he woulde not receave them againe [a]m[oun]ttss to vi li vi s vi d and for the wantt of certyne
 powder, and for carriage of it to the storehouse _____ iii svii d [a]m[oun]ttss - vi li x s iiiid

APPENDIX FOUR

Transcription of Correspondence between the Mayors of Chester and Bristol about problems with Pirates, 1597 (Cheshire Records Office Ref: ZML/1 ff 140-141)

Ff 140:

Recomendacons unto yo[ur] wor[ship]: havinge received yo[ur] L[ett]re of the vth hereof, to me and my bretheren the Aldermen dyrected, signefyinge how a French Shipp Laden w[i]th Sacks and oyeles of the goods of Mr John Ollyve and other - Marchants of that place, was lately taken neere Caldey w[it]hin yo[ur] Channell by certaine Englishe pyrats, whoe (as yo[u] wryte as it might be coniectured) have murdered or otherwise made away xvi^{en} or xvii^{en} men, that were in the said French Shipp, and that they should have Carryed the said goodes into Milford havon, and from thence transported the same in other Bottomes hither and other places neere hereabouts and therefore willed, that yf any such goods have bene already or shalbe hereafter brought hither to be sould, that we would not only make stay of the said goode: but alsoe of such p[er]sons as should soe bring the same: Soe have I acquainted my bretheren w[i]th yo[ur] said Le[ttr]e and endevo[r]ed o[ur] selves (the service; beinge soe expedyent) to effecte the Contents thereof, and in thexecucion of the same, I have found that one Richard Uggan gent sonne (as he termeth hym selfe) to Sir John Uggan of Bolston in the Countie of Pembroke knight Arryved in this Ryver of Chester upon tewsdays laste the viith hereof, aboorde a certaine Barque Called the George Tasker of Milford, a barque well knowne amonge you (as he affirmeth) and in that Barque transported to this Citie, there from you nyne tonnes i butt of Sack by way of Marchandizes w[hich] nowe maketh vii t tonnes filled upp or thereaboute and neither Oyle nor any other wares or Marchandizes, whom I said Duly exaied, whereby it appeareth that he Came thence aboorde the said Barque w[i]th the sacke afore said upon thursday was sevenight remembred ^ (stuff in margins) And notwithstanding (according to yo[ur] request I have aswell the same Mr Uggan forth Cominge here in prison, and doe hereby geve you notice thereof, to thend that within twelve dayes nexte cominge; there be sufficient Aucthortie and good matter shewed before me againste the said prisoner, touching the Cause and Contents of yo[ur] Le[ttr]e and that there may be bands hadd for the prosecution of the same Cause according to Lawe, ^ [margins] otherwyse I muste in Iustice be Constrayned then then to sett him at libertie and to seeke his ordinary remedy for such his stay and ympeachment of his Credite in this behalfe ^ [crossed through] for the rest of this more for the per of the said wine And for the Costs expedicon hereof I have sent this bearer Roger Dobb (an inhabitant of this Citie) herew[i]th presentlie to travayle to yo[u] and to retorne answeere for whose travayle, labor and hier yo[u] are to take order And thus wisshing I might have donne unto that yo[ur] Corporac[i]on, or unto yo[ur] in p[ar]ticuler a greater pleasure Comitt yo[ur] all to the blessed tuicon of thalmightie Chester of June the xiith 1597 Yo[ur] verie loving frende

Ff 141:

After o[ur] very hartie Comendacons whereas we are geven tunderstandeby yo[ur] l[ett]res of the xith of this infant month, that uppon o[ur] former l[ett]res wrytten unto you on the behalf of Mr John Ollyver, and other m[er]chante of this Cyty you have unde stay of Richard Uggan gent whoe hath there sould in

yo[ur] Cyty ix Tonnes and one Butte of sacke, w[hic]h (as he affirmeth) were brought thither from hence, by way of m[er]chandize, in a barque of mylford called the George Tasker, and that he hath receyved p[er]tof the mony, for the said sacke, and the reste thereof you have stayed in the hande of the m[er]chante which bought those Sacke, deceying the said Uggan alsoe in prison, untill you shall receyve order from hence, for the further execucion of the same cause according to the lawe

We yeld you moste hartly thanks for the specyall Care and regard, that you have had of those o[ur] l[ett]res, and for your great paynes and travell taken therein, w[hic]h we will assuredly endeavour to Requite as any occasion may be offered to use us on yo[ur] behalf in this Cyty, doinge, you tunderstand that upon receyte of yo[ur] said L[ett]res, we have made very Dylygente sorche and enquirye, aswell in herM[ajesties] Custome howse here, as otherwise, but there hath byn noe such barque of Milford at this porte nor any such Sackes transported frome hence as the said Uggan affirmeth, But we are nowe enformed that there ys a Barque of Ireland taken of Late by a pyrate, lyeinge in a shippe of warre about Mylford, w[hic]h ys alsoe vehemently suspect to have taken an other shippe laden w[it]h Sackes and Oyles, for the said Mr Ollyver and other marchaunte of this Cyty, and that the said xix Buttes of Sacke were bought of those pyrates, by the said Uggan in mylford haven, who (as we are enformed) ys a com[m]on dealer in the buying of such goode, when they are brought into those p[ar]ts wherefore we hartely pray you in the behalf of the said Mr Ollyver and his P[ar]tners to make stay of the said secks, so sould by the said Vggan in yo[ur] Cyty, as alsoe to take bande, or good security for his forth cominge before you, or the Judge of the Admyralty to answer that w[hic]h may be Layde unto his Chardge hereafter, touching the entremedlinge w[it]h the said secke, soe bought of pyrates as affoesaid And the said Mr Ollyver and his said p[ar]tners shall endeavour w[it]h as muche convenient speedeas may be, to sende unto you such further proffes as may be had touching the true proprietors of those sackes and whether the same belonge unto him and his p[ar]tners or otherwise to the yrishe [Irish] m[er]chants, w[hic]h will require some tyme to knowe the Certeynty thereof. And thus Leavinge the premises to yo[ur] good Consideracon, we betake you to the tuytion of thalmighty. At Bristoll this xviith of June 1597

Yo[ur] assured Lovinge Ffrend
William Yate Maior

To the right worshipfull William Yate esquire Maior of the Citie of Bristall and to others his worshipful bretheren the Aldermen thereof

APPENDIX FIVE

Transcription of the Book of Trade Pages, 1598 (Bristol Records Office Ref: SMV/2/1/1/34)

p.36

The answer of the Maior & Aldermen and Marchants
Of Bristoll, unto the Lordes of his maties Privie Counsell
Concerninge a contribucon towards the mainteyninge of a
Fleet to suppress ye Spaniards & Dunkirkes 1598

Right honourable and o[ur] very good Lorde: wee have w[ith] much
respecte & rev[er]ence receyved yo[ur] honno[urs] letters (and therein a copie
of one, directed to yo[ur] Lordshipps from the Queenes most excellent
Ma[ie]sty) conteyning many exquisite motives to per[swade] a voluntary
contribucon towarde the mainteyning of a fleete at sea for the
safegared of our Englishe marchante trading upon the said...
against the incursions and surprizes of the Spaniards & Dunkirkes
common enemyes to this Realme In contemplacion of your honnos
saide letters, and for p[er]formance of our humblest duties, wee
have assembled the principall members of this incorporacion, and
have advised together, not of the cause (for the consequence is
apparrant) but of our habillitie some to accomlishe what is desired
or expected from this place
with one voyce we have prostrated the humblest of o[ur] thanks
before the throne of o[ur] god for that in his greate mercy hee
contynueth to ympresse in her highness Royall hart those juste
fooling cares of her faithfull subjecte conservacon
wee alsoe congratulate with much acknowledgment the noble ...
Correspondency in all yo[ur] Lo[rdship's] for soe common a good unto the w[hich]
alsoe o[ur] affections wishe to strive the ampliste powers of the –
Richest of o[ur] sorte But when w[ith]out passion (as was fitt) wee looked
into the true confideracon & fortunes of this (nowe poore) place
wee found the conditone thereof soe changed of late as noe
way able to under goe the burthen of the contribucon Specified
In yo[ur] Lordshipps letters without (as we feare) a publique
It may please yo[ur] honno[urs] usuall goodness receive w[ith] good
the reasons of the decay of this Citty (second of this Realme ...
during heretofore trade) for wee had a free and unrestrained
traffique into the Streigg, whereby it was much increased in
wealth, shipping, and provisions and greatly enabled to doe
S[er]vice unto the state; this o[ur] trade, have the Londiners interrupted
and soe monopolised unto them selves and inforced (yf wee
trade thither) to compound therefore at verie neere a quarter p[ar]te
and soe inrich them out of o[ur] labo[ur] and adventure w[hich] disadvantage
at lengthe, falleth upon, whoe buyeth by rouse of prise, this free trade
failing or thus taimtred, whosoever dependeth thereon, ys alsoe
decayed, especially, since that the londiners conveyby cloth maynes
(retourning otherwise poore some) their wares at an easie rate
giving greate time (with their riches may board) draw customs even
w[ith]in tenn myles of this Citty, and nught sell better cheepe, but
keepe upp o[ur] prizes gaining thereby cleavelie a fourth p[ar]te wh[ich] is o[ur]
Composicon, whereby (wee wanting .out) cannot gayne by any possible

wee had also a free and dailie traffique w[ith] Spaine, whereby ensued, greate riches and much ymployment of shipping at wh[ich] tyme this citty was able to trade wth twenty or thirtie tawle shipps nowe reduced to some eighte or tenn small shipps; the Spanish embargo, and o[ur] reprisals have ended this trade And what – remayneth of trade (upon Retourne) soe exactlie looked into (by officers) over the wont as there is suspicon

wee shalbee enforced, through all these difficulties, to beseech her M[ajesties] gracious favo[ur] to p[er]mittus to sell o[ur] shippes to strangers, ffor that strangers, more than wee bring comodities inward where doble Custome contynue her M[ajesties] state of profit, and make this Citty seeme to stand in former Condicons of habillite upon sight of Customs booke, but under Culler to pay debte in London and other places, these straingers doe exchange their moneys thither and doe not exporte houre or thoure any p[ar]teof o[ur] homewares, contrary to o[ur] good and publike lawes, whereby the manufactors of this land are towarde an utter overthrowe

These two trades (the onely meanes to wealth and strength this Cittie) being thus decayed, the cheife marchande (already rich) feeling smale hope to better their estate by contynuing here bestow their moneys in country purchaces, and w[i]th draw thither Their widowes and daughters married hence, have transported greate porcions w[i]th them, The meaner sorte of marchande have either confirmed what they have formerly gott, or (in best event) doe but breath out a present time w[i]thout any advantage And the gen[er]all Artizan lyves without any certayne or profitable ymploym[en]t London & Converso (infinitle increased by ours and others Ruyns) possesseth almost thoneli trade of all nations, w[i]thin and w[i]th out this land. The Eagle followeth the Carcase and noe wonder thoughte the enemy soe often meeteth & repriseth them for hee canne seldome encounter other

But that they haveing wealth & strengthin abundance should want wills to ymploy them to their owne full defence but soe meanely labor to presse other her Ma[jesties] bountie or o[ur] poore purses to secure their gaines & trades (the gen[er]all decayed) ys surely agreate wounder, Especially yf uncharitably they refuse to admitt us to p[ar]ticipacon of proffit, from whome they desire assistance in their disfortunes

At their like suite, we here to fore Joyned w[i]th them in change for wastage home of the Bourdeanly fleete, but they being both wasters & marchants have from tyme to other served their owne turn of & safetie w[i]thout respecte of assistance to ours the east and south coast have apparrant reason of Injunction w[i]th London, the first for then daylie and necessary entercourse to that citty; the other to safe their howerlie traffiques into Normandy and Brittany. But wee that have noe trade at all into those p[ar]ts where thers dangers are, canne in noe discourse recyve hope of proffit, by confitming in contribucon, the last ruyns of o[ur] poore fortunes

Wee hope wee have hetherunto p[er]formed w[ith]hall faith & dilligence the dutifull p[ar]te of obedient subjecte, to the good satisfacion of her Ma[jesties] yo honno[rs] in all the causes of her service for Ireland Portugall and Cadiz

according unto what commandem[en]t wee have from time to tyme receyved from yo[ur] lo[rds]hipps]by her highness appointment; matters by some p[er]happs esteemed, small though we have felt much, but have cheerefully accomplished, without grudge, complainte or desire of recompences

These true reasons of O[ur] decay and this simple confession of our present disabilitie, in an honest and necessitated freedome wee most humbly desire to lay before the foote of her Ma[jesties] excellent Judgement and mercy by the honourable intervention of your noble men who so Justice wee ymploy for o[ur] assistance that wee may not thus contynue as Aliens in o[ur] owne countrie that being the comon children of one gracious and glorious moother wee may receyve alike favo[ur], proportioned to our faithfull deserving, That a citie soe principall of this Realme, soe ancient, soe naturally & necessarily scited for the aforesaid trades and fitt distribucon at some, (having the comoditie by water w[i]th smale charge, by a tidelie recourse to almost twelve frimtire sheries that nowe ground under the heavie burthen of encreasing prizes of thinge needfull) soe convenient and readie to any (in our powers) employment abroad, and such meanes by trade, to furnishe marrins and other helpe of provisions and victualls for any o[ur] Queenes and countries service

wherefore (as one man) wee all in most humble manner pray that o[ur] sighes may bee heard from heere and that the Londiners may bee commanded to receyve us of this citty into a conjunction and communitie of trade for the streight w[i]th them contributing hereafter to them change according to o[ur] proporcon, this done wee may bee made all no wee wilbe ever willing, to assiste them in all publicke or private causes of good In the meane time, albeit that by reason of the causes before --- alleadged we finde no gewall inclinacoon to this pwte greate --- contribucon; yet preyre we a fullnes of private charitie and feeling affection in the habler sorte, willing to strayne to their uttermost for a cause of this consequence

But yet soe as the same be not drawne to a future president or prejudice, against them or this citty, to whose publicke reputacon & your lordshipps satisfacion (under the due respected they have to her Ma[jesties] good acceptac[i]on they are desirous to offer this and will in those regarde p[er]forme the pow werfullest in their blood & service In expectancy howe yo[ur] honno[rs] willbee pleased to like of the forme of our proceedings herein to further o[ur] humble request for conjunction w[i]th London in trade & to g[i]ve us yo[ur] furtive directions wee all in the very soule of our dearest affection pray the Almightye longe to conserve her sacred Ma[jesties] in p[er]fect health and glorious prosperities, And greatly to increase your Lordshipps in much honno[r] & contentment Remaying

Yo[ur] L[ordshipps] most humble to be
command of

the Letter to the Maior and Aldermen of Bristoll to assist the Company of Marchants for the Collecting of the Dueties of Tonnage

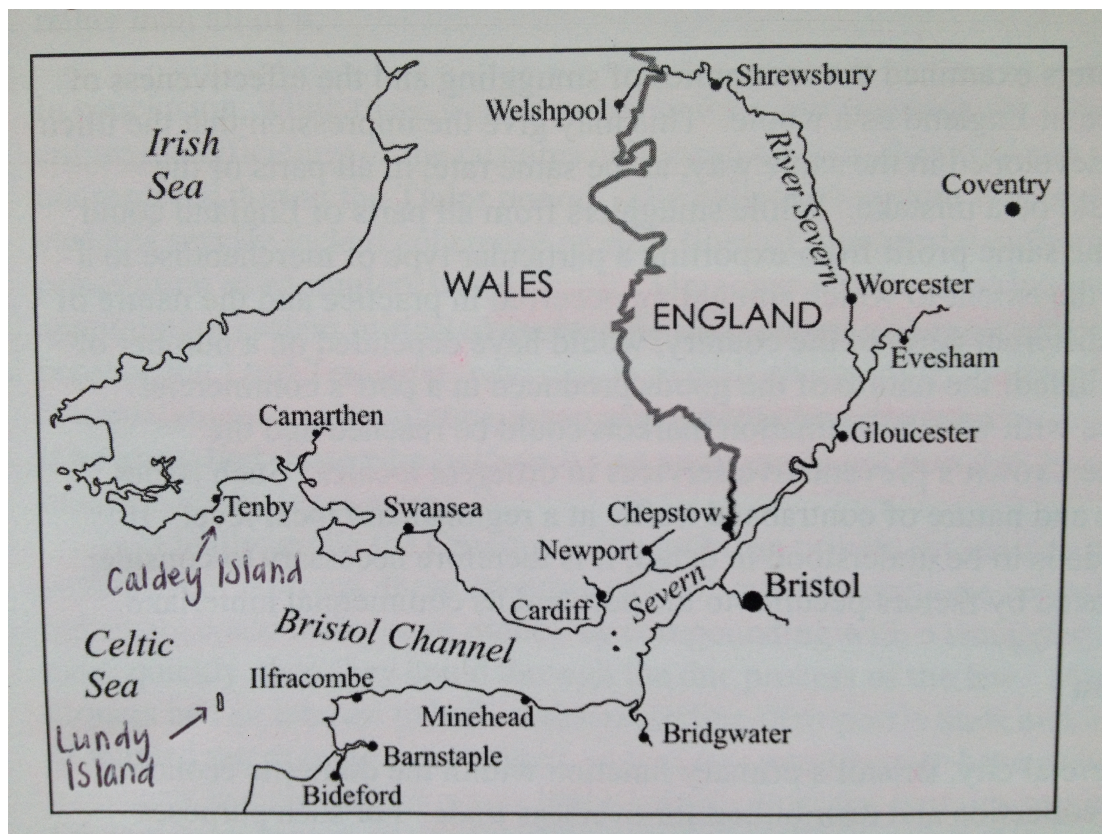
for the poore and poundage of marriners wages.

After ... hartie commendacons whereas wee understand that in time past there hath bine erected an Almeshouse in that Citty of Bristoll for the reliefe of aged and ympotenmt Saylers, and that for the maintenance thereof there was by fall Consent f the marchants and Saylors to bee levyed and Collected of ev[er]y tonnes lading of marchante goode of the same Citty Three halfe pence and of every Saylers wages one penny out of every pound w[i]th w[hi]ch somes aswell the said hospitall or Almeshouse hath bine hitherti mainteyned as alsoe a free Schoole for marrin[er]s Children and a yeerely stipend to bee paid to a minister to say service at a Chappell in Shirehampton neere hungroade soe as the mariners bound to attend their Shipps mighte bee edified and themselves neverthelesse not drawne from their Charge to the indangering of their Shipps and goods And that wee understand that this Laudable and godly order is Somewhat oppayned and w[i]th stoode by reprisers and such as go on fisheing voyadge to y[e] Newfoundland to the greate discouragement of other well mynded men, and to y[e] noe small ympoverishing of the hispitall, wee have therefore _____ thoughte good knowing that by reason of the greate numbers of marrin[er]s that have of late byn naymed in her M[ajesties] services, and on those reprisall voyadge w[hi]ch may have reliefe there yt oughte may more nowe to bee mainteyned then of former t..es, to will and require you in her M[ajesties] name to ressisst the Collectors of the said hospiall to gather and levy the saide three halfe pence on the tonne of m[ar]chante goode and a penny on the pound of marrin[er]s wages aswell on the saide reprisers and Newfoundland men and on other marchante, And soe wee bid you hartilie farewell from the courte of Nonsuch the vth of October 1595

Yo[ur] Loving Ffrinde
John Caut
... Burley
... John Huntoon
...
.....

APPENDIX 6

Fig. 1 Map of Bristol and it's Region¹³¹



¹³¹ Evan Jones, *Inside the Illicit Economy: Reconstructing the Smugglers' Trade of Sixteenth Century Bristol* (unpublished book draft, August 2008) p. 50 (with added notes for Lundy and Caldey Islands)

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