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William Dampier, C J Cooney

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A BOOTY OF WORDS

Captain William Dampier


CJ Cooney Esquire




IN THE LATE seventeenth century, William Dampier and his fellow pirates sacked, burned, robbed and ransomed Spanish towns up and down the coasts of Central and South America. Dampier was never any good at this. As pirate or privateer captain, he never captured any treasure of note. However, he did bring home a treasury of useful knowledge in natural history, economics and political economy, hydrography, anthropology, zoology, ethnography, botany, geography, navigation, literature, and language. Of all this, Dampier's booty of words is the most significant.

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *A Booty of Words: A Dictionary Devoted to the Linguistic Treasure Contributed to the English Language by the Pirate William Dampier*:

IN THE LATE seventeenth century, William Dampier and his fellow pirates sacked, burned, robbed and ransomed Spanish towns up and down the coasts of Central and South America. Dampier was never any good at this. As pirate or privateer captain, he never captured any treasure of note. However, he did bring home a treasury of useful knowledge in natural history, economics and political economy, hydrography, anthropology, zoology, ethnography, botany, geography, navigation, literature, and language. Of all this, Dampier's booty of words is the most significant. Today, we commonly use words introduced to the English language by the pirate Dampier. Words like banana, barbeque, castaway, sea-breeze, and subspecies. He was among the first handful of writers to use words like intelligence (information useful for achieving strategic goals), free trade (trade between sovereign peoples without interference or coercion from government), and maroon (to be lost somewhere). In all, he helped introduce around a thousand new English words and helped popularize many more. This book examines in-depth over one-hundred of Dampier's most important and interesting words. This dictionary is more than just a collection of words. It is a skeleton key to our shared past, both linguistically and as a matter of historical fact-facts lived out by Dampier and his contemporaries. *A BOOTY OF WORDS* is required reading for anyone interested in understanding Dampier's true and lasting legacy.