

captain and then cutting logwood in Honduras rather than at home with his young daughter.

In this reader's opinion, the book's main weakness is Flemming's treatment of the seafaring men like Low who turned pirate. Flemming argues that those wayward freebooters inflicted "some of the darkest tortures of the era" on their victims (p. 5). However, he makes no effort to contextualize the cruel and exploitative wooden world of the merchant marine and European navies from which most pirates originated. Even contemporaries like Cotton Mather recognized the many hardships common seamen faced. The famous Boston minister regularly encouraged merchants and ship's captains to end their abusive and profit-seeking ways.

At one point, Flemming goes so far as to claim that Ned Low must have planned in advance to become a pirate "since it's hard to believe he and his conspirators abandoned the ship simply because they were tired and hungry and were told to haul another load of wood." Sailors frequently and forcefully resisted such poor treatment, but Flemming portrays them as docile laborers who "were more than used to long hours, poor food in small quantities, and cruel captains with virtually unlimited authority" (p. 11). The marginalization of Low's pre-pirate experiences exemplifies Flemming's unwillingness to engage with the dark and violent history of eighteenth-century transatlantic commerce, which profoundly impacted the lives of many oceangoing men. Despite this conspicuous omission, however, Flemming delivers a well-researched, gracefully written book that brings to life the misadventures of Philip Ashton and other seafarers captured and impressed by some of the most notorious criminals of the Golden Age of Piracy.

Steven J. J. Pitt is completing his doctorate in history at the University of Pittsburgh. He is the author of "Cotton Mather and Boston's 'Seafaring Tribe,'" which appeared in the June 2012 issue of THE NEW ENGLAND QUARTERLY.

ERRATUM:—We regret that in our review of Gordon S. Barker's *Fugitive Slaves and the Unfinished American Revolution: Eight Cases, 1848–1856* (June 2014, pp. 364–66), his last name was mistakenly given as Baker.