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The Buccaneers of America

Alexandre O. Exquemelin

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The Buccaneers of America Alexandre O. Exquemelin
Alexandre Olivier Exquemelin (1645–1707) was a French, Dutch or Flemish writer best known as the author of one of the most important sourcebooks of 17th-century piracy, first published in Dutch as De Americaensche Zee-Roovers, in Amsterdam, by Jan ten Hoorn, in 1678.

Born about 1645, it is likely that Exquemelin was a native of Harfleur, France, who on his return from buccaneering settled in Holland, possibly because he was a Huguenot. In 1666 he was engaged by the French West India Company and went to Tortuga, where he worked as an indentured servant for three years. There he enlisted with the buccaneers, in particular with the band of Henry Morgan, whose confidante he was, probably as a barber-surgeon, and remained with them until 1674. Shortly afterwards he returned to Europe and settled in Amsterdam where he qualified professionally as a surgeon, his name appearing on the 1679 register of the Dutch Surgeons' Guild. However, he was later once again in the Caribbean as his name appears on the muster-roll as a surgeon in the attack on Cartagena in 1697.

Esquemeling served the Buccaneers as a barber-surgeon, and was present for all their exploits. Little did he suspect that his first hand observations would some day be cherished as the only authentic and true history of the Buccaneers and Marooners of the Spanish Main. A true account of the most remarkable assaults committed upon the coasts of the West Indies by the Buccaneers of Jamaica and Tortuga.

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