

Barbary Pirates

- During the 18th and 19th centuries the Barbary Pirates, a group operating out of North Africa, took captive many U.S. merchant ships in hopes of a large ransom from the government for their return.
- Richard O'Brien is just one U.S. citizen who was captured by the Barbary pirates in 1785 while commanding the ship *Dauphin*.
- O'Brien recorded his experiences on the African continent in his correspondences with other American officials and personal journals.
- After coming back the U.S., O'Brien returned to North Africa, using his knowledge of the area to act as a Consul to Algiers.

Primary Sources:

Richard O'Brien Algiers diary

The position held by the Barbary States in the Mediterranean and the state of their political and domestic affairs are described in this journal. It contains some account of the humiliating conditions imposed upon American and European citizens, the "Bey's" haughty attitude toward foreign ambassadors, payment of tribute and ransom exacted for the redemption of prisoners, and the cruel treatment of Christian slaves. The conflicting interests of England, Spain, France, Genoa, Portugal, Russia, Turkey, and other countries are shown in the narrative of their diplomatic activities, wars, naval battles, and the capture of vessels.

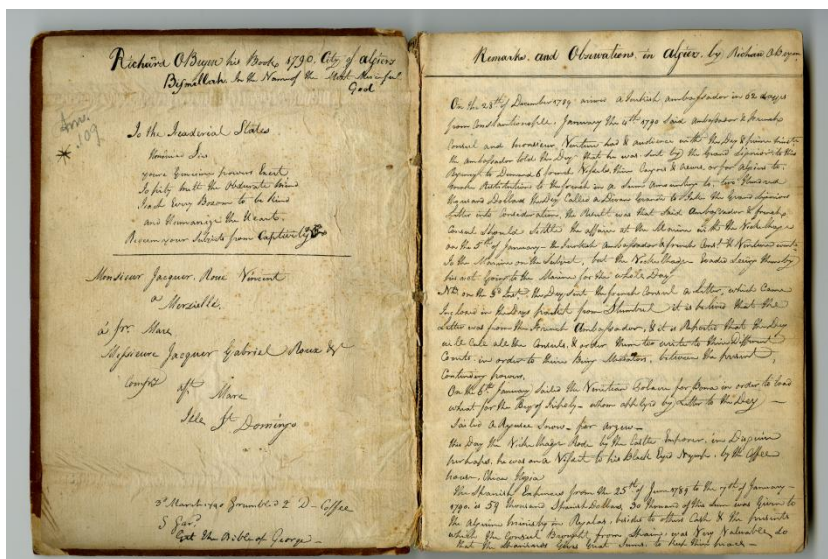
Call Number: Am.109

Remarks and Observations in Algiers by Richard O'Brien [electronic resource]

Published 1790

Call Number: 5561

Digital Library link: <http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/idno/5561>



Page from the *Remarks and Observations in Algiers* by Richard O'Brien (5561)

Correspondence, O'Brien, Richard, American Naval Officer (b. 1758- d. 1824) [electronic resource]

Call Number: 5734

Digital Library link: <http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/idno/5734>

Correspondence, O'Brien, Richard, Lt. in the Revolution, 1758-1824 [electronic resource]

Published 1800

Call Number: 5740

Digital Library link: <http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/idno/5740>

Account of Algerian Prisoner [electronic resource]

Published 1789

Call Number: 10550

Digital Library link: <http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/idno/10550>

*NOTE—This is not Richard O'Brien's account as a prisoner.

Secondary Sources:

The first Americans in North Africa : William Eaton's struggle for a vigorous policy against the Barbary pirates, 1799-1805

Published 1945

Call Number: Tk .12

The Barbary pirates

by Forester, C. S. 1899-1966.

Published 1976

Call Number: TK.142