

The trials of Joseph  
Dawson, Edward  
Forseith, William May,  
[Brace] William  
Bishop...

[History](#)



## **The Tryals of Joseph Dawson, Edward Forseith, William May, [brace] William Bishop, James Lewis, and John Sparkes for several piracies and robberies by them committed**

An analysis of trials for several crimes committed Lecturer: Introduction The Trials of Joseph Dawson, Edward Forseith, William May, [brace] William Bishop, James Lewis, and John Sparkes commenced on 29th /10/1969 and ended 6th/11/1969 (John p. 3-7). The above persons gave their confession on several piracies and robberies committed along East-Indies and in other parts (Dawson, p-4). The confessions were made in high court where the commissions were read and proclamation made. Additionally, the grand jury presenting the accused were called and sworn in. They charges for the defendants were read by High court judge, Sir Sc Hedge (Dawson, p. 3-7). On the other hand, the witnesses for the kings were sworn in whereby, the Grand Jury withdrew and returned back afterwards and the case proceeds (Dawson, p. 3-5).

An analysis of trials for several crimes committed

Five men were found guilty namely John sparks, William Bishop, William May, Edward Forseith, James Lewis. This is because the five men participated directly or indirect in piracy crime (Dawson, p. 24-26). On the other hand, Joseph Dawson was considered innocent because he was not on board unlike other culprits who witnessed the crime and decided to remain quite(Dawson, p. 24-26). Additionally, the judges considered group involvement to commit a felony as complicity whereby, a syndicate or a group of gang located in different locations whether on the sea or in the land corporate to commit a

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felony (Dawson, p. 23-27). The result of poor circumstance may be attributed to lack of a comprehensive structure that defines the rimes of piracy crime (Dawson, p. 24-26).

In above connection, judge Charles Hedge an expert in law defined crime of piracy as robbery of the sea whereby, sea bandits hijacked captains, ships and cargo on board and take cargo and money. This crime may include all crimes but not limited to those committed on air, land, internet and water bodies (Dawson, p. 18-25). Additionally, crime of piracy may involve unlawful acts or attempts to steal from pirates both from the water bodies and even out side the sea (Dawson, p. 18-25). On the other hand, defense attorney asserted that their clients did not commit any acts of piracy because they did not forcefully rob or removed any thing of value from the ship. Therefore, their acts were not within the scope of piracy crime as defined by the judge (Dawson, p. 22-24).

Additionally, future lawyers should focus on the actual structure and organization of a pirate trial. This is because, the structures in this case were not specific and therefore, those who were guilty went unpunished. This could have been prevented if there was specific structure (Dawson, p. 30-58). In above connection, piracy may be compare to other sins in terms of jurisdictions applied to both sins and the place of happening (Dawson, p. 16-25). It can be scrutinized that both piracy crimes and other sins have a linear correlation in terms of jurisdiction applied by the court. This is because both types of crimes may be committed in the land, sea, air or even virtually (Dawson, p. 16-25).

## Conclusion

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Based on the above analysis it can be scrutinized how various piracy crimes were committed and how the judge defined piracy crime. Additionally, it can be observed how defendants tried to prove themselves innocent before the judge after being align in court. However, five men were found guilty while one man was found innocent of piracy crime. Conclusively, piracy crime has been compared with other sins to see whether there was correlation between piracy crime and other sins.

#### Works Cited

Dawson, Joseph. *The Tryals of Joseph Dawson, Edward Forseith, William May, William Bishop, James Lewis, and John Sparkes for Several Piracies and Robberies by Them Committed: In the Company of Every the Grand Pirate, Near the Coasts of the East-Indies and Several Other Places on the Seas: Giving an Account of Their Villainous Robberies and Barbarities: at the Admiralty Sessions Begun at the Old-Baily on the 29th of October 1696 and Ended on the 6th of November. London: Printed for John Everingham, 1696.* Print.