

# To the great Turk and King at Algiers: together with a Postscript of George Pattison's capturing the Turks, and freeing them on their own shore.

## POSTSCRIPT

*Of George Pattison's taking the Turks about the 8th Month, 1663.*

Dear Friend,

Your [letter] I have received. In answer to your request, I have given you an account as well and as near as I can; but as to the exact time I cannot, for I do not have my books. I was George Pattison's mate, and coming from Venice, being near a Spanish island called May York, we were chased by a Turkish ship or patah, as sometimes before we had been, and thinking by our vessel's well sailing, might escape. But Providence ordered it so, that by carrying over-much sail, some of our materials gave way, by which means the said Turk came up with us, and commanded the master on board, who accordingly went, with four men more, leaving me and three men, and a boy, on board our ship; and so soon as our men came on board the Turk, they took them all out of the boat, and came about fourteen Turks in our boat. All which time I was under a very great exercise in spirit, not so much for myself, because I had a secret hope of relief; but a great stress lay upon me, for the men in this very juncture of time. For all hope of outward appearance being then gone, the master being on board of the Turk, and four more, and the Turks just coming on board, I being as one, even as if I were or were not, only desiring of the Lord for patience in such an exercise, and going to the vessel's side, to see the Turks come in, the word of life run through me, 'Be not afraid, for all this you shall not go to Algiers.' And I having formerly good experience of the Lord's doing upon several such like occasions, as in times of war, I believed what the Lord did say in me. At this all kind of fear was taken from me, and I received them as a man might his friend; and they were as civil, so showing them all parts of the vessel, and what she was laden withal, then I said to those who were our men, be not afraid, for I believe, for all this, we shall not go to Algiers: but let me desire you, as you have been willing to obey me, so be as willing to obey the Turks. For by our so doing, I saw we got over them; for when they saw our great diligence, it made them careless of us, I mean in securing of us. So when they had taken some small matter of

what we were laden withal, some went on board their own ship again, and some staid with us, which were about eight. Then began I to think of the master and the other four, which were in the Turks' ship; for as for myself, and the others with me, I had no fear at all; no, I was so far from it, that I said to one then, 'Were but the master on board, and the rest, if there were twice so many Turks, I should not fear them.' So my earnest desire was to the Lord, that he would put it into their hearts to send him on board with the rest; and good was the Lord in answering, for it was as a seal to what he before spoke through me.

As soon as the master was on board with the rest, all manner of fear was off me, as to my going to Algiers, and some said to me, I was a strange man; I was afraid before I was taken, but now that I had been taken I was not. My answer was, I now believe I shall not go to Algiers, and if you will be ruled by me, I will act for your delivery, as well as my own. But as yet I saw no way made, for they were all armed, and we were without arms. Now, we being altogether, except the master, I began to reason with them; what if we should overcome the Turks, and go to May York? At which they very much rejoiced; and one said, I will kill one or two; another said, I will cut as many of their throats as you will have me. This was our men's answer; at which I was much troubled, and said unto them, if I knew any of those who offered to touch a Turk, I would tell the Turks myself; but said to them, if you will be ruled, I will act for you, if not, I will be still; to which they agreed to do what I would have them. Then, said I, if the Turks bid you do any thing, do it without grumbling, and with as much diligence and quickness as you can, for I see that pleases them, and that will cause them to let us be together; to which they agreed.

Then I went to the master, who was a man of a very bold spirit, and told him our intents; whose answer to me was, if we offered to rise and they overcame us, we had as good be burnt alive, the which I knew very well. But I could get him no way to adhere to me, in that he was fearful of bloodshed; for that was his reason, insomuch, that at last I told him we were resolved, and I questioned not to do it without one drop of blood spilt, and I believed that the Lord would prosper it. My reason I could rather go to Algiers than to kill a Turk. So at last he agreed to this, to let me do what I would, provided we killed none. At that time, there being still two Turks lying in the cabin with him; so that he was to lie in the cabin, that by his being there they should mistrust nothing, which accordingly he did; and having bad weather, and lost the company of the man of war, the Turks seeing our diligence, made them careless of us.

So the second night, after the captain was gone to sleep, I persuaded one to lie in my cabin, and so one in another, until at last, it raining very much, I persuaded them all down to sleep, and when asleep, got their arms in possession. Then said I to the men of our vessel, now have we the Turks at our command; no man shall hurt any of them, for if you do, I will be against you.

But this we will do, now they are under, we will keep them so, and go to May York. So, when I had ordered some to keep the doors, if any should come out, straightly charging the spilling of no blood; and so altered our course for May York, the which, in the morning, we were fair by. So my order was to our men, if any offered to come out, not to let out above one at a time. And in the morning one came out, expecting to have seen their own country, but on the contrary it was May York. Now, said I to our men, be careful of the door, for when he goes in, we shall see what they will do. And as soon as he told them we were going towards May York, they, instead of rising, fell all to crying, for their hearts were taken from them. So they desired they might not be sold, the which I promised they should not. So soon as I had pacified them, then I went in to the master, he not yet knowing what was done, and so he told their captain what we had done, how that we had overcome his men, and that we were going for May York; at which unexpected news he wept, and desired the master not to sell him, the which he promised he would not. Then we told the captain we would make a place to hide them in, where the Spaniards should not find them; at which they were very glad, and we did accordingly. So when we came in, the master went on shore, with four more, and left me on board with the Turks, which were ten. And when he had done his business, not taking product, lest the Spaniards should come and see the Turks——. But at night an English master came on board, being an acquaintance; and after some discourse, we told him, if he would not betray us, we would tell him what we had done, but we would not have the Spaniards to know it, lest they should take them from us; the which he promised, but broke it; and would fain have had two or three of them, to have brought them for England. But we saw his end; and when he saw he could not prevail, he said they were worth two or three hundred pieces of eight a piece; whereat, both the master and I told him, if they would give many thousands they should not have one, for we hoped to send them home again.

So he looked upon us as fools, because we would not sell them; the which I would not have done for the whole island. But contrary to our expectations, he told the Spaniards, who threatened to take them from us. But so soon as we heard thereof, we called out all the Turks, and told them they must help us, or the Spaniards would take them from us. So they resolvedly helped us, and we made all haste to run from the Spaniards, the which pleased the Turks very well. So we put ourselves to the hazard of the Turks, and being taken again, to save them.

So we continued about six or seven days, not being willing to put into any port of Spain, for fear of losing the Turks.

We let them have all their liberty for four days, until they made an attempt to rise, which I foresaw, and prevented, without any harm. I was very courteous to

them, at the which some of our men grumbled, saying, I had more care of the Turks than them. My answer was, they are strangers, I must treat them well.

At last, I told the master it might do well to go to the Turks' coast, for there it was more likely to miss their men of war than where we were; and also it might fall out so, that we might have an opportunity to put the Turks on shore: to which the master agreed.

And in two days we were near the Turks' shore, at a place called Cape Hone, about fifty miles from Algiers, as the Turks told us. So when we came about six miles from the shore it fell calm, and I had very much working in my mind, about getting them ashore.

At last I went to the master, and told him, I had a great desire to put the Turks on shore, but how, I knew not; for to give them the boat, they might go and get men and arms, and so take us again; and to put half on shore, they would raise the country and surprise us when we came with the rest. But if he would let me go, and if three more would go with me, I would venture to put them on shore; to which he consented.

So then I spoke to the men, and there were two more, and myself and a boy took in the ten Turks all loose, and went about six miles and put them on shore in their own country, within about four miles of two towns which they knew. Withal, we gave them about fifty padas of bread, and other necessaries to travel with. They would fain have enticed us to go to the towns, telling us we should have wines, and many other things. As to their parts, I could have ventured with them. They all embraced me very kindly in their arms when they went ashore. They made one rising in the boat when going ashore, the which I prevented; and we parted with a great deal of love.

When we came home to England, the king came to the vessel's side, and inquired an account, the which the master gave him.

So this is as near as I can certify you; I have written you more at large to give you the whole as it was; but you may take what is the most material; and so I rest your in that which can do good for evil, which ought to be the practice of all true men.

*Thomas Lurting*

*Liverpool, the 30th of the fifth month, 1680*