

**CAPTAIN RICHARD INGLE, THE
MARYLAND "PIRATE AND REBEL,"
1642-1653: A PAPER, READ BEFORE
THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL
SOCIETY, MAY 12TH, 1884**

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Captain Richard Ingle, the Maryland "Pirate and Rebel," 1642-1653: A Paper, read before the Maryland Historical Society, May 12th, 1884 by Edward Ingle

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EDWARD INGLE

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BY

EDWARD INGLE, A. B.

Baltimore, 1884.

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CAPTAIN RICHARD INGLE,

THE MARYLAND "PIRATE AND REBEL."

IN the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the American colonies, from Massachusetts to South Carolina, were at intervals subject to visitations of pirates, who were wont to appear suddenly upon the coasts, to pillage a settlement or attack trading vessels and as suddenly to take flight to their strongholds. Captain Kidd was long celebrated in prose and verse, and only within a few years have credulous people ceased to seek his buried treasures. The arch-villain, Blackbeard, was a terror to Virginians and Carolinians until Spotswood, of "Horseshoe" fame, took the matter in hand, and sent after him lieutenant Maynard, who, slaying the pirate in hand to hand conflict, returned with his head at the bowsprit.¹ Lapse of time has cast a romantic and semi-mythologic glamor around these depredators, and

¹ Spotswood Letters, Brock, p. 12.

it is in many instances at this day extremely difficult to distinguish fact from fiction. The unprotected situation of many settlements along the seaboard colonies rendered them an easy prey to rapacious sea rovers, but it might have been expected that the Maryland shores of the Chesapeake bay would be free from their harassings. The province, however, it seems was not to enjoy such good fortune, for in the *printed* annals of her life appears the name of one man, who has been handed down from generation to generation as a "pirate," a "rebel" and an "ungrateful villain," and other equally complimentary epithets have been applied to him. The original historians of Maryland based their ideas about him upon some of the statements made by those whom he had injured or attacked, and who differed from him in political creed. The later history writers have been satisfied to follow such authors as Bozman, McMahon and McSherry, or to copy them directly, without consulting original records. To the general reader, therefore, who relies upon these authorities, Richard Ingle is "a pirate and rebel" still.¹

A thorough defence of him would be almost impossible in view of the comparative scarcity of records and the complicated politics of his

¹ Rev. Edw. D. Neill, to whom I am indebted for valuable references, was the first to attempt any kind of a defence of Ingle, but Dr. Wm. Hand Browne, who also has greatly aided me, has omitted the pirate and rebel clause in the history which he is preparing for the Commonwealth Series.

time. In a review of his relations with Maryland, however, and by a presentation of all the facts, some light may be thrown upon his general character, and explanations, if not a defence, of his acts may be made.

Richard Ingle's name first appears in the records of Maryland under date of March 23rd, 1641/2, when he petitioned the Assembly against Giles Brent touching the serving of an execution by the sheriff. He had come to the province a few weeks before, bringing in his vessel Captain Thomas Cornwallis, one of the original council, the greatest man in Maryland at that time, who had been spending some months in England.¹ Between the time of his arrival and the date of his petition Ingle had no doubt been plying his business, tobacco trading, in the inlets and rivers of the province. No further record of him in Maryland this year has been preserved, but Winthrop wrote that on May 3rd, 1642, "The ship Eleanor of London one Mr. || Inglee || master arrived at Boston she was laden with tobacco from Virginia, and having been about 14 days at sea she was taken with such a tempest, that though all her sails were down and made up, yet they were blown from the yards and she was laid over on one side two and a half hours, so low

¹ Assembly Proceedings, 1638-1664, p. 120, Land Office Records, Vol. I., p. 582. In the Maryland records the name is spelled Cornwaleys, but in this paper the rule has been adopted of spelling it Cornwallis, as it is known to history.

as the water stood upon her deck and the sea overraking her continually and the day was as dark as if it had been night, and though they had cut her masts, yet she righted not till the tempest assuaged. She staid here till the 4th of the (4) and was well fitted with masts, sails, rigging and victuals at such reasonable rates as that the master was much affected with his entertainment and professed that he never found the like usage in Virginia where he had traded these ten years."¹ Although his name is given an additional *e* and there are some few seeming discrepancies, the facts taken together point to the probability of his being Richard Ingle on his return voyage to England. Next year he was again in Maryland, and, as attorney for Mr. Penniston and partners, sued widow Cockshott for debts incurred by her husband. The next entry in the "Provincial Records" under this date, March 6th, 1642/3, is an attachment against William Hardige in case of Captain Cornwallis.² This William Hardige, who was afterward one of Ingle's chief accusers, was very frequently involved in suits for debts to Cornwallis, and others. About the mid-

¹ Winthrop's History of New England, Vol. II., p. 75. Winthrop gave another spelling, "Jngle," no doubt obtained from the signature, as has been done with the name more than once in modern times. In a bill sent to the grand jury at St. Mary's, Maryland, February 1st, 1643/4, it was stated that Ingle's ship in 1642 was the "Reformation." The bill was, however, returned "Ignoramus," and the use of the name was probably anachronous.

² Proprietary Records, Liber P. R., p. 85.

dle of the month of January, 1643/4, the boatswain of the "Reformation" brought against Hardige a suit for tobacco, returnable February 1st. Three days afterward a warrant was issued to William Hardige, a tailor, for the arrest of Ingle for high treason, and Captain Cornwallis was bidden to aid Hardige, and the matter was to be kept secret.¹ Ingle was arrested and given into the custody of Edward Parker, the sheriff, by the lieutenant general of the province, Giles Brent, who also seized Ingle's goods and ship, until he should clear himself, and placed on board, under John Hampton, a guard ordered to allow no one to come on the ship without a warrant from the lieutenant general.² Then was published, and as the records seem to show, fixed on the vessel's mainmast the following proclamation.³

"These are to publish & pelaym to all psons as well seamen as others, that Richard Ingle, m^r of his ship, is arrested upon highe treason to his Ma^{ty}; & therefore to require all psons to be aiding & assisting to his Lo^{ps} officers in the seizing of his ship, & not to offer any resistance or contempt hereunto, nor be any otherwise aiding or assisting

¹ Ibid, p. 124.

² Ibid, p. 137.

³ Ibid, p. 124. Council Proceedings, 1636-1657. Bozman, in his *History of Maryland*, Vol. II., p. 271, not knowing evidently that more than one warrant was issued for Ingle's arrest, transposed this proclamation, making it follow Jan. 20; but in P. R. it is under date of Jan. 18, 1643/4.