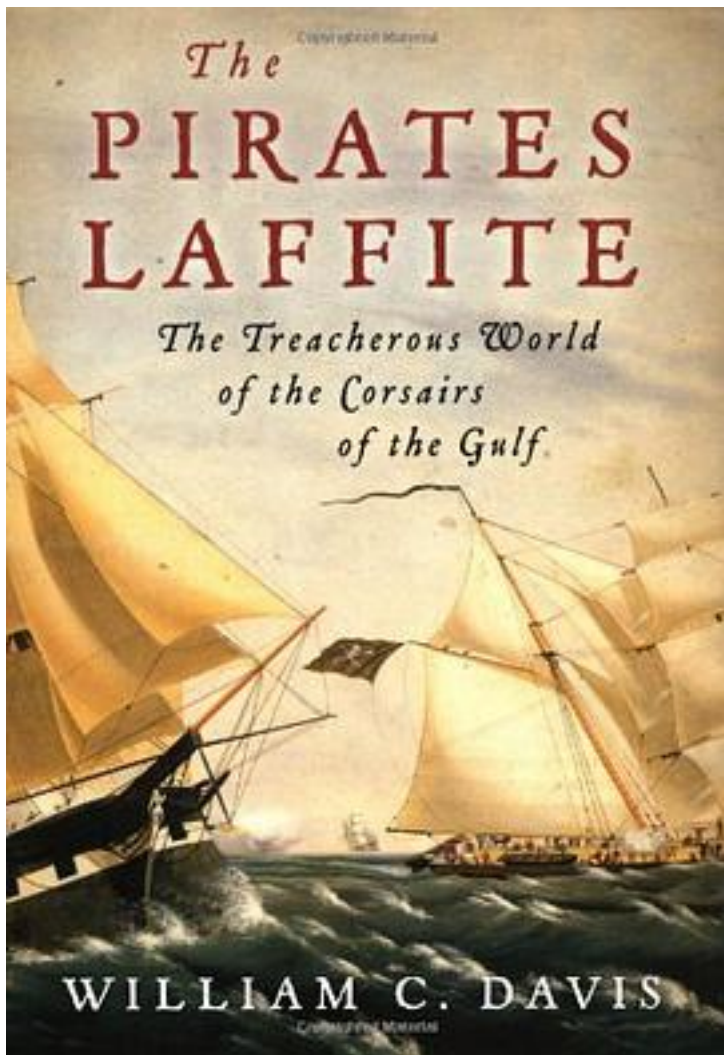


The Pirates Laffite



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Jean and Pierre Laffite's lives were intertwined with the most colorful period in New Orleans' history, the era from just after the Louisiana Purchase through the War of 1812. Labeled as corsairs and buccaneers for methods that bordered on piracy, the brothers ran a privateering cooperative that provided contraband goods to a hungry market and made life hell for Spanish merchants on the Gulf. Later they became important members of a syndicate in New Orleans that included lawyers, bankers, merchants, and corrupt U.S. officials. But this allegiance didn't stop them from becoming paid Spanish spies, handing over information about the syndicate's plans and selling out their own associates. In 1820 the Laffites disappeared into the fog of history from which they had emerged, but not before becoming folk heroes in French Louisiana and making their names synonymous with piracy and intrigue on the Gulf.

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