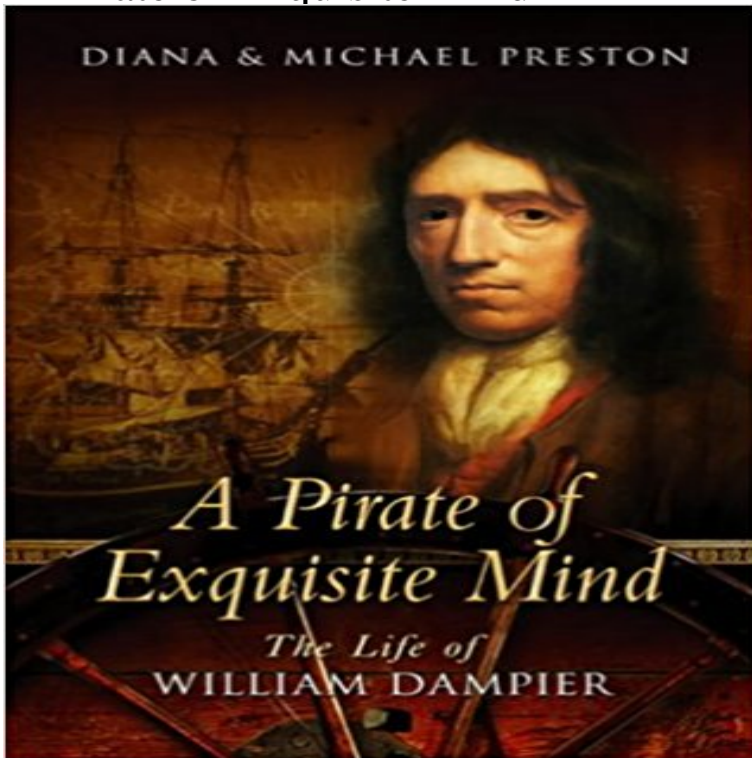


## A Pirate of Exquisite Mind



In 1676, William Dampier started his career as a buccaneer preying on ships on the Spanish Main and struggling through the impenetrable jungle of the Isthmus of Panama in search of gold. He could easily have ended up on the gallows. Poor and obscure yet determined to sail the world and to make his fortune, he was to become the first person to circumnavigate the globe three times. He had a uniquely questing and, in Coleridge's words, exquisite mind, and recorded with passion and dedication all that he discovered about the new world around him. Among his many extraordinary and pioneering achievements, Dampier mapped the winds and the currents of the world's oceans for the first time. He landed in Australia eighty years before Cook and brought back the first scientific specimens. He inspired Darwin a hundred and fifty years later with his notes on the wildlife of the Galapagos Islands and elsewhere. He wrote the first bestselling travel books, which influenced Defoe's *ROBINSON CRUSOE* and Swift's *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS*, and enriched the English language with many new words, from barbecue, avocado and chopsticks to sub-species. A curious man in a curious age, once courted by Samue

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English explorer, sea captain

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