

Pirate Who Gave Much

Other than the fictitious character Jack Sparrow from the movie Pirates of the Caribbean, there are few pirates more well-known, especially throughout Jamaica,

than Captain William Bligh. His contributions to Lucea in particular, were unprecedented.

Several pirates made their way to Lucea's shores, including the infamous Captain Henry Morgan - famed pirate who owned 4,000 acres of land in Lucea - but only one pirate left a lasting impression on the lush area that is still acknowledged today.

Captain Bligh, who preferred to barter plants instead of slaves, resided in Lucea from 1783-1787. Strange as it may seem, the pirate, rather than pillaging, chose to cultivate the densely populated area with exotic plants. His decision was not born out of altruism, but rather, out of the recognition that earnings from the venture were significant.

Along with another pirate, Captain Bligh set sail for Tahiti in search of breadfruit plants in the late 1700s, as planters in Jamaica were offering large rewards to any captain with the unusual plant in tow at the time.

The Jamaican Assembly rewarded Bligh for bringing breadfruit to the island. The breadfruit took to the Jamaican soil and blossomed. Allegedly, it took the slaves years to accept that the fruit could be eaten, as they saw it as strange.

Today, the breadfruit tree can be found all over Jamaica and is a standard side dish to many traditional Jamaican meals.

In 1793, Captain Bligh introduced otaheite apples (also from Tahiti), and he has been associated with bringing Jamaica's national fruit, ackee, to the island. Out of all the parish capitals throughout Jamaica, Captain Bligh chose Lucea to begin his national cuisine legacy.