

III. The Sea Hawk

Errol Flynn puts in his second appearance upon the plague ship known as **OFFSHORE QUARANTINE!** *Flynn's* director on **CAPTAIN BLOOD**, **Michael Curtiz**, also helms this picture.

Here, *Flynn* portrays fictional Elizabethan privateer **Geoffrey Thorpe**, loosely based on a real-life privateer of the era whose identity shall remain undisclosed at the present time due to Admiralty sealed intelligence requirements. The *diligent* and *historically inclined* among you may be able to scry out the lay of his lineaments, and perhaps his *very vestements*, such as, oh, *his cloak*.

Released in **1940**, the film is transparently about English determination to fight a *European tyrant* and dictator in a way that has little to do with historical Elizabethan conflicts with Spain, but as both conflicts centered on concerns of maritime invasion directed toward **dear old Blighty**, it's forgivable.

The movie's title is the same as the 1924 adaptation of yet another **Rafael Sabatini** novel of the same name; however this film is based on an original story by a different writer, **Seton Miller**. This film uses footage shot for the 1924 film, sea shots of fullscale sailing vessels redressed to resemble Elizabethan-era sailing ships. The 1924 silent was the first maritime epic shot at **Catalina Island**, while this film relocated primary photography just across the **Channel**, to my wife's hometown of **Laguna Beach**.

Contemporary reviewers are *split* on the film, as was the case on *release*. The film was an immediate box office success, and then an *overwhelming* one when rereleased in **1947** in the immediate postwar era.

Make ready, *let the mainsheets there fall*, and make the lines *taut*, I say, *taut!* Denature the skillets, there, and *fry the watches* as though ye was *a band of clever gnomes!* Scrub the hole and check the cat's provisions there! *Sharpish!* *Sharpish now!* All hands aloft as we make headway down the coast to **Laguna Beach** and the bounding waves of the **Spanish Main!**