


Queen Anne's The Search for Blackbeard's Flagship Revenge

Provided by:

North Carolina Maritime Museum, 315 Front Street, Beaufort, NC 28516. Phone: 252-728-7317

Two web sites for Blackbeard information:

www.qaronline.org and www.ncmaritimemuseums.com

In November 1996, the commercial salvage company Intersal, Inc. reported the location of an unidentified shipwreck just outside Beaufort Inlet to North Carolina archaeologists. Though not definitively identified to date, many researchers believe the remains represent the long-lost flagship of Blackbeard the pirate, the fabled Queen Anne's Revenge. State archaeologists and historians continue on-site investigations, excavation, and historical research. The facts presented below represent some of what is known about both the notorious pirate and his ship.

Blackbeard the Pirate



Little is known concerning the origin of Blackbeard the pirate. Documents suggest both Bristol and London in England, the island of Jamaica, and even Philadelphia as his home. He is said to have operated out of Jamaica as a privateer during Queen Anne's War (1702-1713) previous to becoming a pirate.



Historical sources vary as to Blackbeard's real name. Although popularly known as Edward Teach, documents of the time indicate that his surname was most often written "Thatch."



It appears that Blackbeard began his piratical career sailing in consort with Benjamin Hornigold. Though Hornigold's activities as a pirate can be traced back to as early as 1714, it is not known for sure when Thatch joined forces. The earliest mention of Blackbeard by name found to date is in a ship captain's report indicating his presence in Providence, Bahamas in March 1717.



Blackbeard participated in the capture of over fifty vessels, some in association with the other pirate leaders, Hornigold and Stede Bonnet. Due to Blackbeard's terrifying image and reputation, most captains gave up without a fight when attacked.



Following the loss of the *Queen Anne's Revenge* off Beaufort Inlet, Blackbeard made his way to Bath. There in June 1718 he received the king's pardon from North Carolina's Governor Charles Eden. However, the pirate soon returned to his former activities.



Blackbeard was eventually tracked down at Ocracoke Inlet, North Carolina, by volunteers from the Royal Navy and killed in a brief but bloody battle on November 22, 1718.

Queen Anne's Revenge



Thatch captured a French slave ship called the *Concorde* off the island of St. Vincent on November 28, 1717. The pirate exchanged his smallest sloop for the slaver and transformed her into his flagship.



French historical documents indicate that the *Concorde* was a 200 to 300 ton vessel with an original armament of 14 cannon and crew of 75 men.



Thatch strengthened the armament of the ship to around 40 cannon, renamed her the *Queen Anne's Revenge*, and for the next six months used the ship in consort with smaller sloops to harass shipping throughout the Caribbean and up the eastern seaboard of North America.



According to various letters and depositions, Blackbeard ran both the *Queen Anne's Revenge* and a smaller consort sloop, *Adventure*, aground off Topsail Inlet (present-day Beaufort Inlet) in early June 1718. According to reports left by some of the pirates who were present, Blackbeard did this in order to break up his company of 300 to 400 men. This effectively allowed the pirates to divide the plunder accumulated to that point among far fewer men; forty or less by some accounts.



If the physical remains of Blackbeard's flagship have indeed been located, they will have lain relatively undisturbed and unnoticed off Beaufort Inlet, North Carolina for almost 300 years. The on-going field project will take several years to complete and even additional years to accomplish the associated tasks of artifact conservation, interpretation, and analysis.

Additional Reading

Younger Readers

Beater, Jack

Pirates and Buried Treasure, Great Outdoors Publishing Co., St. Petersburg, FL., 1959.

Day, Jean

Blackbeard: Terror of the Seas, Golden Age Press, Newport, N.C., 1997.

Harper, Wendell J.

The Hunt for Blackbeard's Treasure, Wend Harper Publishers, Goldsboro, N.C., 1997.

Lincoln, Margarette

Pirates, Fact & Fiction: Resource Book for Teachers, National Maritime Museum, 1992.

Maden, Mary

The Secret of Blackbeard's Treasure, Dog and Pony Enterprises, Kill Devil Hills, N.C., 1995.

Whedbee, Charles Harry

Blackbeard's Cup and Stories of the Outer Banks, John F. Blair, Publisher, Winston-Salem, N.C., 1989, 4th Printing, 1996.

Students and Adults

Botting, Douglas

The Pirates, Time-Life Books, Alexandria, Virginia, 1978.

Cordingly, David

Under the Black Flag: The Romance and Reality of Life Among the Pirates, Harcourt, Brace & Company, New York, 1995.

Dow, G.F. and J.H. Edmonds

The Pirates of the New England Coast 1630-1730, Nautical Research Society, 1923, Rio Grande Press, 1993.

Johnson, Captain Charles

A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates, London, 1726, Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., London, 1955.

Lee, Robert E.

Blackbeard the Pirate: A Reappraisal of His Life and Times, John F. Blair, Publisher, Winston-Salem, N.C., 1974, Ninth Printing, 1997.

Marx, Jennifer

Pirates and Privateers of the Caribbean, Krieger Publishing Company, Malabar, Florida, 1992.

Pendered, Norman, C.

Stede Bonnet, Gentleman Pirate, Times Printing Company, Inc., Manteo, N.C., 1977.

Rankin, Hugh F.

The Pirates of Colonial North Carolina, North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C., 1960, Nineteenth Printing, 1996.

The Golden Age of Piracy, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Williamsburg, Virginia, 1969.

Shomette, Donald G.

Pirates on the Chesapeake: Being a True History of Pirates, Picaroons, and Raiders on Chesapeake Bay, 1610-1807, Tidewater Publishers, Centreville, Maryland, 1985.