

= Blackbeard =

Edward Teach or Edward Thatch (c . 1680 ? 22 November 1718) , better known as Blackbeard , was a notorious English pirate who operated around the West Indies and the eastern coast of the American colonies . Although little is known about his early life , he was probably born in Bristol , England . Recent genealogical research indicates his family moved to Jamaica where Edward Thatch , Jr. is listed as being a mariner in the Royal Navy aboard the HMS Windsor in 1706 . He may have been a sailor on privateer ships during Queen Anne 's War before settling on the Bahamian island of New Providence , a base for Captain Benjamin Hornigold , whose crew Teach joined sometime around 1716 . Hornigold placed him in command of a sloop he had captured , and the two engaged in numerous acts of piracy . Their numbers were boosted by the addition to their fleet of two more ships , one of which was commanded by Stede Bonnet , but toward the end of 1717 Hornigold retired from piracy , taking two vessels with him .

Teach captured a French merchant vessel , renamed her Queen Anne 's Revenge , and equipped her with 40 guns . He became a renowned pirate , his cognomen derived from his thick black beard and fearsome appearance ; he was reported to have tied lit fuses under his hat to frighten his enemies . He formed an alliance of pirates and blockaded the port of Charleston , South Carolina . After successfully ransoming its inhabitants , he ran Queen Anne 's Revenge aground on a sandbar near Beaufort , North Carolina . He parted company with Bonnet and settled in Bath Town , where he accepted a royal pardon . But he was soon back at sea , where he attracted the attention of Alexander Spotswood , the Governor of Virginia . Spotswood arranged for a party of soldiers and sailors to try to capture the pirate , which they did on 22 November 1718 . During a ferocious battle , Teach and several of his crew were killed by a small force of sailors led by Lieutenant Robert Maynard .

A shrewd and calculating leader , Teach spurned the use of force , relying instead on his fearsome image to elicit the response he desired from those he robbed . Contrary to the modern @-@ day picture of the traditional tyrannical pirate , he commanded his vessels with the permission of their crews and there is no known account of his ever having harmed or murdered those he held captive . He was romanticised after his death and became the inspiration for pirate @-@ themed works of fiction across a range of genres .

= = Early life = =

Little is known about Blackbeard 's early life . It is commonly believed that at the time of his death he was between 35 and 40 years old and thus born in about 1680 . In contemporary records his name is most often given as Blackbeard , Edward Thatch or Edward Teach ; the latter is most often used today . However , several spellings of his surname exist ? Thatch , Thach , Thache , Thack , Tack , Thatche and Theach . One early source claims that his surname was Drummond , but the lack of any supporting documentation makes this unlikely . Pirates habitually used fictitious surnames while engaged in the business of piracy , so as not to tarnish the family name , and this makes it unlikely that Teach 's real name will ever be known .

The 17th @-@ century rise of Britain 's American colonies and the rapid 18th @-@ century expansion of the Atlantic slave trade had made Bristol an important international sea port , and Teach was most likely raised in what was the second @-@ largest city in England . He could almost certainly read and write ; he communicated with merchants and when killed had in his possession a letter addressed to him by the Chief Justice and Secretary of the Province of Carolina , Tobias Knight . The author Robert Lee speculated that Teach may therefore have been born into a respectable , wealthy family . He may have arrived in the Caribbean in the last years of the 17th century , on a merchant vessel (possibly a slave ship) . The 18th @-@ century author Charles Johnson claimed that Teach was for some time a sailor operating from Jamaica on privateer ships during Queen Anne 's War , and that " he had often distinguished himself for his uncommon boldness and personal courage " . At what point during the war Teach joined the fighting is , in keeping with the record of most of his life before he became a pirate , unknown .

= = New Providence = =

With its history of colonialism , trade and piracy , the West Indies was the setting for many 17th and 18th @-@ century maritime incidents . The privateer @-@ turned @-@ pirate Henry Jennings and his followers decided , early in the 18th century , to use the then uninhabited island of New Providence as a base for their operations ; it was within easy reach of the Florida Strait and its busy shipping lanes , which were filled with European vessels crossing the Atlantic . New Providence 's harbour could easily accommodate hundreds of ships , and was too shallow for the Royal Navy 's larger vessels to navigate . The island then was not the popular tourist destination it later became ; the author George Woodbury described it as " no city of homes ; it was a place of temporary sojourn and refreshment for a literally floating population , " continuing , " The only permanent residents were the piratical camp followers , the traders , and the hangers @-@ on ; all others were transient . " Law and order were unheard of ; in New Providence , pirates found a welcome respite .

Teach was one of those who came to enjoy the island 's benefits . Probably shortly after the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht , he moved there from Jamaica , and with most privateers once involved in the war , became involved in piracy . Possibly about 1716 , he joined the crew of Captain Benjamin Hornigold , a renowned pirate who operated from New Providence 's safe waters . In 1716 Hornigold placed Teach in charge of a sloop he had taken as a prize . In early 1717 , Hornigold and Teach , each captaining a sloop , set out for the mainland . They captured a boat carrying 120 barrels of flour out of Havana , and shortly thereafter took 100 barrels of wine from a sloop out of Bermuda . A few days later they stopped a vessel sailing from Madeira to Charleston , South Carolina . Teach and his quartermaster , William Howard , may at this time have struggled to control their crews . By then they had probably developed a taste for Madeira wine , and on 29 September near Cape Charles all they took from the Betty of Virginia was her cargo of Madeira , before they scuttled her with the remaining cargo .

It was during this cruise with Hornigold that the earliest known report of Teach was made , in which he is recorded as a pirate in his own right , in command of a large crew . In a report made by a Captain Mathew Munthe on an anti @-@ piracy patrol for North Carolina , " Thatch " was described as operating " a sloop 6 gunns [sic] and about 70 men " . In September Teach and Hornigold encountered Stede Bonnet , a landowner and military officer from a wealthy family who had turned to piracy earlier that year . Bonnet 's crew of about 70 were reportedly dissatisfied with his command , so with Bonnet 's permission , Teach took control of his ship Revenge . The pirates ' flotilla now consisted of three ships ; Teach on Revenge , Teach 's old sloop and Hornigold 's Ranger . By October , another vessel had been captured and added to the small fleet . The sloops Robert of Philadelphia and Good Intent of Dublin were stopped on 22 October 1717 , and their cargo holds emptied .

As a former British privateer , Hornigold attacked only his old enemies , but for his crew , the sight of British vessels filled with valuable cargo passing by unharmed became too much , and at some point toward the end of 1717 he was demoted . Whether Teach had any involvement in this decision is unknown , but Hornigold quickly retired from piracy . He took Ranger and one of the sloops , leaving Teach with Revenge and the remaining sloop . The two never met again , and with many other occupants of New Providence , Hornigold accepted the King 's pardon from Woodes Rogers in June the following year .

= = = Blackbeard = = =

On 28 November Teach 's two ships attacked a French merchant vessel off the coast of Saint Vincent . They each fired a broadside across its bulwarks , killing several of its crew , and forcing its captain to surrender . The ship was La Concorde of Saint @-@ Malo , a large French guineaman carrying a cargo of slaves . Teach and his crews sailed the vessel south along Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to Bequia , where they disembarked her crew and cargo , and converted the ship for their own use . The crew of La Concorde were given the smaller of Teach 's two sloops , which they

renamed Mauvaise Rencontre (Bad Meeting) , and sailed for Martinique . Teach may have recruited some of their slaves , but the remainder were left on the island and were later recaptured by the returning crew of Mauvaise Rencontre .

Teach immediately renamed La Concorde as Queen Anne 's Revenge and equipped her with 40 guns . In late November , near Saint Vincent , he attacked the Great Allen . After a lengthy engagement , he forced the large and well @-@ armed merchant ship to surrender . He ordered her to move closer to the shore , disembarked her crew and emptied her cargo holds , and then burned and sank the vessel . The incident was chronicled in the Boston News @-@ Letter , which called Teach the commander of a " French ship of 32 Guns , a Briganteen of 10 guns and a Sloop of 12 guns . " When or where Teach collected the ten gun Briganteen is unknown , but by that time he may have been in command of at least 150 men split between three vessels .

On 5 December 1717 Teach stopped the merchant sloop Margaret off the coast of Crab Island , near Anguilla . Her captain , Henry Bostock , and crew , remained Teach 's prisoners for about eight hours , and were forced to watch as their sloop was ransacked . Bostock , who had been held aboard Queen Anne 's Revenge , was returned unharmed to Margaret and was allowed to leave with his crew . He returned to his base of operations on Saint Christopher Island and reported the matter to Governor Walter Hamilton , who requested that he sign an affidavit about the encounter . Bostock 's deposition details Teach 's command of two vessels : a sloop and a large French guineaman , Dutch @-@ built , with 36 cannon and a crew of 300 men . The captain believed that the larger ship carried valuable gold dust , silver plate , and " a very fine cup " supposedly taken from the commander of Great Allen . Teach 's crew had apparently informed Bostock that they had destroyed several other vessels , and that they intended to sail to Hispaniola and lie in wait for an expected Spanish armada , supposedly laden with money to pay the garrisons . Bostock also claimed that Teach had questioned him about the movements of local ships , but also that he had seemed unsurprised when Bostock told him of an expected royal pardon from London for all pirates .

Bostock 's deposition describes Teach as a " tall spare man with a very black beard which he wore very long " . It is the first recorded account of Teach 's appearance and is the source of his cognomen , Blackbeard . Later descriptions mention that his thick black beard was braided into pigtails , sometimes tied in with small coloured ribbons . Johnson (1724) described him as " such a figure that imagination cannot form an idea of a fury from hell to look more frightful . " Whether Johnson 's description was entirely truthful or embellished is unclear , but it seems likely that Teach understood the value of appearances ; better to strike fear into the heart of one 's enemies , than rely on bluster alone . Teach was tall , with broad shoulders . He wore knee @-@ length boots and dark clothing , topped with a wide hat and sometimes a long coat of brightly coloured silk or velvet . Johnson also described Teach in times of battle as wearing " a sling over his shoulders , with three brace of pistols , hanging in holsters like bandoliers ; and stuck lighted matches under his hat " , the latter apparently to emphasise the fearsome appearance he wished to present to his enemies . Despite his ferocious reputation though , there are no verified accounts of his ever having murdered or harmed those he held captive . Teach may have used other aliases ; on 30 November , the Monserrat Merchant encountered two ships and a sloop , commanded by a Captain Kentish and Captain Edwards (the latter a known alias of Stede Bonnet) .

= = = Enlargement of Teach 's fleet = = =

Teach 's movements between late 1717 and early 1718 are not known . He and Bonnet were probably responsible for an attack off Sint Eustatius in December 1717 . Henry Bostock claimed to have heard the pirates say they would head toward the Spanish @-@ controlled Samaná Bay in Hispaniola , but a cursory search revealed no pirate activity . Captain Hume of HMS Scarborough reported on 6 February that a " Pyrate Ship of 36 Guns and 250 men , and a Sloop of 10 Guns and 100 men were Said to be Cruizing amongst the Leeward Islands " . Hume reinforced his crew with musket @-@ armed soldiers and joined up with HMS Seaford to track the two ships , to no avail , though they discerned that the two ships had sunk a French vessel off St Christopher Island , and

reported also that they had last been seen " gone down the North side of Hispaniola " . Although no confirmation exists that these two ships were controlled by Teach and Bonnet , author Angus Konstam believes it very likely they were .

In March 1718 , while taking on water at Turneffe Island east of Belize , both ships spotted the Jamaican logwood cutting sloop Adventure making for the harbour . She was stopped and her captain , David Harriot , invited to join the pirates . Harriot and his crew accepted the invitation , and Teach sent over a crew to sail Adventure making Israel Hands the captain . They sailed for the Bay of Honduras , where they added another ship and four sloops to their flotilla . On 9 April Teach 's enlarged fleet of ships looted and burnt Protestant Caesar . His fleet then sailed to Grand Cayman where they captured a " small turtler " . Teach probably sailed toward Havana , where he may have captured a small Spanish vessel that had left the Cuban port . They then sailed to the wrecks of the 1715 Spanish fleet , off the eastern coast of Florida . There Teach disembarked the crew of the captured Spanish sloop , before proceeding north to the port of Charleston , South Carolina , attacking three vessels along the way .

= = = Blockade of Charleston = = =

By May 1718 Teach had awarded himself the rank of Commodore and was at the height of his power . Late that month his flotilla blockaded the port of Charleston (then known as Charles Town) in South Carolina . All vessels entering or leaving the port were stopped , and as the town had no guard ship , its pilot boat was the first to be captured . Over the next five or six days about nine vessels were stopped and ransacked as they attempted to sail past Charleston Bar , where Teach 's fleet was anchored . One such ship , headed for London with a group of prominent Charleston citizens which included Samuel Wragg (a member of the Council of the Province of Carolina) , was the Crowley . Her passengers were questioned about the vessels still in port and then locked below decks for about half a day . Teach informed the prisoners that his fleet required medical supplies from the colonial government of South Carolina , and that if none were forthcoming , all prisoners would be executed , their heads sent to the Governor and all captured ships burnt .

Wragg agreed to Teach 's demands , and a Mr Marks and two pirates were given two days to collect the drugs . Teach moved his fleet , and the captured ships , to within about five or six leagues from land . Three days later a messenger , sent by Marks , returned to the fleet ; Marks 's boat had capsized and delayed their arrival in Charleston . Teach granted a reprieve of two days , but still the party did not return . He then called a meeting of his fellow sailors and moved eight ships into the harbour , causing panic within the town . When Marks finally returned to the fleet , he explained what had happened . On his arrival he had presented the pirates ' demands to the Governor and the drugs had been quickly gathered , but the two pirates sent to escort him had proved difficult to find ; they had been busy drinking with friends and were finally discovered , drunk .

Teach kept to his side of the bargain and released the captured ships and his prisoners ? albeit relieved of their valuables , including the fine clothing some had worn .

= = = Beaufort Inlet = = =

Whilst at Charleston , Teach learned that Woodes Rogers had left England with several men @-@ of @-@ war , with orders to purge the West Indies of pirates . Teach 's flotilla sailed northward along the Atlantic coast and into Topsail Inlet (commonly known as Beaufort Inlet) , off the coast of North Carolina . There they intended to careen their ships to scrape their hulls , but Queen Anne 's Revenge ran aground on a sandbar , cracking her main @-@ mast and severely damaging many of her timbers . Teach ordered several sloops to throw ropes across the flagship in an attempt to free her . A sloop commanded by Israel Hands of Adventure also ran aground , and both vessels appeared to be damaged beyond repair , leaving only Revenge and the captured Spanish sloop .

Teach had at some stage learnt of the offer of a royal pardon and probably confided in Bonnet his willingness to accept it . The pardon was open to all pirates who surrendered on or before 5

September 1718 , but contained a caveat stipulating that immunity was offered only against crimes committed before 5 January . Although in theory this left Bonnet and Teach at risk of being hanged for their actions at Charleston Bar , most authorities could waive such conditions . Teach thought that Governor Charles Eden was a man he could trust , but to make sure , he waited to see what would happen to another captain . Bonnet left immediately on a small sailing boat for Bath Town , where he surrendered to Governor Eden , and received his pardon . He then travelled back to Beaufort Inlet to collect the Revenge and the remainder of his crew , intending to sail to Saint Thomas Island to receive a commission . Unfortunately for him , Teach had stripped the vessel of its valuables and provisions , and had marooned its crew ; Bonnet set out for revenge , but was unable to find him . He and his crew returned to piracy and were captured on 27 September 1718 at the mouth of the Cape Fear River . All but four were tried and hanged in Charleston .

The author Robert Lee surmised that Teach and Hands intentionally ran the ships aground to reduce the fleet 's crew complement , increasing their share of the spoils . During the trial of Bonnet 's crew , Revenge 's boatswain Ignatius Pell testified that " the ship was run ashore and lost , which Thatch [Teach] caused to be done . " Lee considers it plausible that Teach let Bonnet in on his plan to accept a pardon from Governor Eden . He suggested that Bonnet do the same , and as war between the Quadruple Alliance of 1718 and Spain was threatening , to consider taking a privateer 's commission from England . Lee suggests that Teach also offered Bonnet the return of his ship Revenge . Konstam (2007) proposes a similar idea , explaining that Teach began to see Queen Anne 's Revenge as something of a liability ; while a pirate fleet was anchored , news of this was sent to neighbouring towns and colonies , and any vessels nearby would delay sailing . It was prudent therefore for Teach not to linger for too long , although wrecking the ship was a somewhat extreme measure .

= = = Pardon = = =

Before sailing northward on his remaining sloop to Ocracoke Inlet , Teach marooned about 25 men on a small sandy island about a league from the mainland . He may have done this to stifle any protest they made , if they guessed their captain 's plans . Bonnet rescued them two days later . Teach continued on to Bath , where in June 1718 ? only days after Bonnet had departed with his pardon ? he and his much @-@ reduced crew received their pardon from Governor Eden .

He settled in Bath , on the eastern side of Bath Creek at Plum Point , near Eden 's home . During July and August he travelled between his base in the town and his sloop off Ocracoke . Johnson 's account states that he married the daughter of a local plantation owner , although there is no supporting evidence for this . Eden gave Teach permission to sail to St Thomas to seek a commission as a privateer (a useful way of removing bored and troublesome pirates from the small settlement) , and Teach was given official title to his remaining sloop , which he renamed Adventure . By the end of August he had returned to piracy , and in the same month the Governor of Pennsylvania issued a warrant for his arrest , but by then Teach was probably operating in Delaware Bay , some distance away . He took two French ships leaving the Caribbean , moved one crew across to the other , and sailed the remaining ship back to Ocracoke . In September he told Eden that he had found the French ship at sea , deserted . A Vice Admiralty Court was quickly convened , presided over by Tobias Knight and the Collector of Customs . The ship was judged as a derelict found at sea , and of its cargo 20 hogsheads of sugar were awarded to Knight and sixty to Eden ; Teach and his crew were given what remained in the vessel 's hold .

Ocracoke Inlet was Teach 's favourite anchorage . It was a perfect vantage point from which to view ships travelling between the various settlements of northeast Carolina , and it was from there that Teach first spotted the approaching ship of Charles Vane , another English pirate . Several months earlier Vane had rejected the pardon brought by Woodes Rogers and escaped the men @-@ of @-@ war the English captain brought with him to Nassau . He had also been pursued by Teach 's old commander , Benjamin Hornigold , who was by then a pirate hunter . Teach and Vane spent several nights on the southern tip of Ocracoke Island , accompanied by such notorious figures as Israel Hands , Robert Deal and Calico Jack .

= = = Alexander Spotswood = = =

As it spread throughout the neighbouring colonies , the news of Teach and Vane 's impromptu party worried the Governor of Pennsylvania enough to send out two sloops to capture the pirates . They were unsuccessful , but Governor of Virginia Alexander Spotswood was also concerned that the supposedly retired freebooter and his crew were living in nearby North Carolina . Some of Teach 's former crew had already moved into several Virginian seaport towns , prompting Spotswood to issue a proclamation on 10 July , requiring all former pirates to make themselves known to the authorities , to give up their arms and to not travel in groups larger than three . As head of a Crown colony , Spotswood viewed the proprietary colony of North Carolina with contempt ; he had little faith in the ability of the Carolinians to control the pirates , who he suspected would be back to their old ways , disrupting Virginian commerce , as soon as their money ran out .

Spotswood learnt that William Howard , the former quartermaster of Queen Anne 's Revenge , was in the area , and believing that he might know of Teach 's whereabouts had the pirate and his two slaves arrested . Spotswood had no legal authority to have pirates tried , and as a result , Howard 's attorney , John Holloway , brought charges against Captain Brand of HMS Lyme , where Howard was imprisoned . He also sued on Howard 's behalf for damages of £ 500 , claiming wrongful arrest .

Spotswood 's council claimed that Teach 's presence was a crisis and that under a statute of William III , the governor was entitled to try Howard without a jury . The charges referred to several acts of piracy supposedly committed after the pardon 's cut @-@ off date , in " a sloop belonging to ye subjects of the King of Spain " , but ignored the fact that they took place outside Spotswood 's jurisdiction and in a vessel then legally owned . Another charge cited two attacks , one of which was the capture of a slave ship off Charleston Bar , from which one of Howard 's slaves was presumed to have come . Howard was sent to await trial before a Court of Vice @-@ Admiralty , on the charge of piracy , but Brand and his colleague , Captain Gordon (of HMS Pearl) refused to serve with Holloway present . Incensed , Holloway had no option but to stand down , and was replaced by the Attorney General of Virginia , John Clayton , whom Spotswood described as " an honest man [than Holloway] " . Howard was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged , but was saved by a commission from London , which directed Spotswood to pardon all acts of piracy committed by surrendering pirates before 23 July 1718 .

Meanwhile , Spotswood had obtained from Howard valuable information on Teach 's whereabouts , and he planned to send his forces across the border into North Carolina to capture him . He gained the support of two men keen to discredit North Carolina 's Governor ? Edward Moseley and Colonel Maurice Moore . He also wrote to the Lords of Trade , suggesting that the Crown might benefit financially from Teach 's capture . Spotswood personally financed the operation , possibly believing that Teach had fabulous treasures hidden away . He ordered Captains Gordon and Brand of HMS Pearl and HMS Lyme to travel overland to Bath . Lieutenant Robert Maynard of HMS Pearl was given command of two commandeered sloops , to approach the town from the sea . An extra incentive for Teach 's capture was the offer of a reward from the Assembly of Virginia , over and above any that might be received from the Crown .

Maynard took command of the two armed sloops on 17 November . He was given 57 men ? 33 from HMS Pearl and 24 from HMS Lyme . Maynard and the detachment from HMS Pearl took the larger of the two vessels and named her Jane ; the rest took Ranger , commanded by one of Maynard 's officers , a Mister Hyde . Some from the two ships ' civilian crews remained aboard . They sailed from Kecoughtan , along the James River , on 17 November . The two sloops moved slowly , giving Brand 's force time to reach Bath . Brand set out for North Carolina six days later , arriving within three miles of Bath on 23 November . Included in Brand 's force were several North Carolinians , including Colonel Moore and Captain Jeremiah Vail , sent to put down any local objection to the presence of foreign soldiers . Moore went into the town to see if Teach was there , reporting back that he was not , but that the pirate was expected at " every minute . " Brand then went to Governor Eden 's home and informed him of his purpose . The next day , Brand sent two

canoes down Pamlico River to Ocracoke Inlet , to see if Teach could be seen . They returned two days later and reported on what eventually transpired .

= = = Last battle = = =

Maynard found the pirates anchored on the inner side of Ocracoke Island , on the evening of 21 November . He had ascertained their position from ships he had stopped along his journey , but unfamiliar with the local channels and shoals he decided to wait until the following morning to make his attack . He stopped all traffic from entering the inlet ? preventing any warning of his presence ? and posted a lookout on both sloops to ensure that Teach could not escape to sea . On the other side of the island , Teach was busy entertaining guests and had not set a lookout . With Israel Hands ashore in Bath with about 24 of Adventure 's sailors , he also had a much @-@ reduced crew . Johnson (1724) reported that the pirate had " no more than twenty @-@ five men on board " and that he " gave out to all the vessels that he spoke with that he had forty " . " Thirteen white and six Negroes " , was the number later reported by Brand to the Admiralty .

At daybreak , preceded by a small boat taking soundings , Maynard 's two sloops entered the channel . The small craft was quickly spotted by Adventure and fired at as soon as it was within range of her guns . While the boat made a quick retreat to the Jane , Teach cut the Adventure 's anchor cable . His crew hoisted the sails and the Adventure manoeuvred to point her starboard guns toward Maynard 's sloops , which were slowly closing the gap . Hyde moved Ranger to the port side of Jane and the Union flag was unfurled on each ship . Adventure then turned toward the beach of Ocracoke Island , heading for a narrow channel . What happened next is uncertain . Johnson claimed that there was an exchange of small @-@ arms fire following which Adventure ran aground on a sandbar , while Maynard anchored and then lightened his ship to pass over the obstacle . Another version claimed that Jane and Ranger ran aground , although Maynard made no mention of this in his log .

What is certain though is that Adventure turned her guns on the two ships and fired . The broadside was devastating ; in an instant , Maynard had lost as much as a third of his forces . About 20 on Jane were either wounded or killed and 9 on Ranger . Hyde was dead and his second and third officers either dead or seriously injured . His sloop was so badly damaged that it played no further role in the attack . Again , contemporary accounts of what happened next are confused , but small @-@ arms fire from Jane may have cut Adventure 's jib sheet , causing her to lose control and run onto the sandbar . In the aftermath of Teach 's overwhelming attack , Jane and Ranger may also have been grounded ; the battle thenceforth would have become a race to see who could float their ship first .

The lieutenant had kept many of his men below deck and in anticipation of being boarded told them to prepare for close fighting . Teach watched as the gap between the vessels closed , and ordered his men to be ready . The two vessels contacted one another as the Adventure 's grappling hooks hit their target and several grenades , made from powder and shot @-@ filled bottles and ignited by fuses , broke across the sloop 's deck . As the smoke cleared , Teach led his men aboard , buoyant at the sight of Maynard 's apparently empty ship , his men firing at the small group formed by the lieutenant and his men at the stern .

The rest of Maynard 's men then burst from the hold , shouting and firing . The plan to surprise Teach and his crew worked ; the pirates were apparently taken aback at the assault . Teach rallied his men and the two groups fought across the deck , which was already slick with blood from those killed or injured by Teach 's broadside . Maynard and Teach fired their flintlocks at each other , then threw them away . Teach drew his cutlass and managed to break Maynard 's sword . Against superior training and a slight advantage in numbers , the pirates were pushed back toward the bow , allowing the Jane 's crew to surround Maynard and Teach , who was by then completely isolated . As Maynard drew back to fire once again , Teach moved in to attack him , but was slashed across the neck by one of Maynard 's men . Badly wounded , he was then attacked and killed by several more of Maynard 's crew . The remaining pirates quickly surrendered . Those left on the Adventure were captured by the Ranger 's crew , including one who planned to set fire to the powder room and

blow up the ship . Varying accounts exist of the battle 's list of casualties ; Maynard reported that 8 of his men and 12 pirates were killed . Brand reported that 10 pirates and 11 of Maynard 's men were killed . Spotswood claimed ten pirates and ten of the King 's men dead .

Maynard later examined Teach 's body , noting that it had been shot no fewer than five times and cut about twenty . He also found several items of correspondence , including a letter to the pirate from Tobias Knight . Teach 's corpse was thrown into the inlet while his head was suspended from the bowsprit of Maynard 's sloop so that the reward could be collected .

= = Legacy = =

Lieutenant Maynard remained at Ocracoke for several more days , making repairs and burying the dead . Teach 's loot ? sugar , cocoa , indigo and cotton ? found " in pirate sloops and ashore in a tent where the sloops lay " , was sold at auction along with sugar and cotton found in Tobias Knight 's barn , for £ 2 @ , @ 238 . Governor Spotswood used a portion of this to pay for the entire operation . The prize money for capturing Teach was to have been about £ 400 , but it was split between the crews of HMS Lyme and HMS Pearl . As Captain Brand and his troops had not been the ones fighting for their lives , Maynard thought this extremely unfair . He lost much of any support he may have had though when it was discovered that he and his crew had helped themselves to about £ 90 of Teach 's booty . The two companies did not receive their prize money for another four years , and despite his bravery Maynard was not promoted ; instead , he faded into obscurity .

The remainder of Teach 's crew and former associates were found by Brand , in Bath , and were transported to Williamsburg , Virginia , where they were jailed on charges of piracy . Several were black , prompting Spotswood to ask his council what could be done about " the Circumstances of these Negroes to exempt them from undergoing the same Tryal as other pirates . " Regardless , the men were tried with their comrades in Williamsburg 's Capitol building , under admiralty law , on 12 March 1719 . No records of the day 's proceedings remain , but 14 of the 16 accused were found guilty . Of the remaining two , one proved that he had partaken of the fight out of necessity , having been on Teach 's ship only as a guest at a drinking party the night before , and not as a pirate . The other , Israel Hands , was not present at the fight . He claimed that during a drinking session Teach had shot him in the knee , and that he was still covered by the royal pardon . The remaining pirates were hanged , then left to rot in gibbets along Williamsburg 's Capitol Landing Road (known for some time after as " Gallows Road ") .

Governor Eden was certainly embarrassed by Spotswood 's invasion of North Carolina , while Spotswood disavowed himself of any part of the seizure . He defended his actions , writing to Lord Carteret , a shareholder of the Province of Carolina , that he might benefit from the sale of the seized property and reminding the Earl of the number of Virginians who had died to protect his interests . He argued for the secrecy of the operation by suggesting that Eden " could contribute nothing to the Success of the Design " , and told Eden that his authority to capture the pirates came from the king . Eden was heavily criticised for his involvement with Teach and was accused of being his accomplice . By criticising Eden , Spotswood intended to bolster the legitimacy of his invasion . Lee (1974) concludes that although Spotswood may have thought that the ends justified the means , he had no legal authority to invade North Carolina , to capture the pirates and to seize and auction their goods . Eden doubtless shared the same view . As Spotswood had also accused Tobias Knight of being in league with Teach , on 4 April 1719 , Eden had Knight brought in for questioning . Israel Hands had , weeks earlier , testified that Knight had been on board the Adventure in August 1718 , shortly after Teach had brought a French ship to North Carolina as a prize . Four pirates had testified that with Teach , they had visited Knight 's home to give him presents . This testimony and the letter found on Teach 's body by Maynard appeared compelling , but Knight conducted his defence with competence . Despite being very sick and close to death , he questioned the reliability of Spotswood 's witnesses . He claimed that Israel Hands had talked under duress , and that under North Carolinian law , the other witness , an African , was unable to testify . The sugar , he argued , was stored at his house legally , and Teach had visited him only on business , in his official capacity . The board found Knight innocent of all charges . He died later that year .

Eden was annoyed that the accusations against Knight arose during a trial in which he played no part . The goods which Brand seized were officially North Carolinian property and Eden considered him a thief . The argument raged back and forth between the colonies until Eden 's death on 17 March 1722 . His will named one of Spotswood 's opponents , John Holloway , a beneficiary . In the same year , Spotswood , who for years had fought his enemies in the House of Burgesses and the Council , was replaced by Hugh Drysdale , once Robert Walpole was convinced to act .

= = Modern view = =

Official views on pirates were sometimes quite different from those held by contemporary authors , who often described their subjects as despicable rogues of the sea . Privateers who became pirates were generally considered by the English government to be reserve naval forces , and were sometimes given active encouragement ; as far back as 1581 Francis Drake was knighted by Queen Elizabeth , when he returned to England from a round @-@ the @-@ world expedition with plunder worth an estimated £ 1 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 . Royal pardons were regularly issued , usually when England was on the verge of war , and the public 's opinion of pirates was often favourable , some considering them akin to patrons . Economist Peter Leeson believes that pirates were generally shrewd businessmen , far removed from the modern , romanticised view of them as murderous tyrants . After Woodes Rogers ' 1718 landing at New Providence and his ending of the pirate republic , however , piracy in the West Indies fell into terminal decline . With no easily accessible outlet to fence their stolen goods , pirates were reduced to a subsistence livelihood , and following almost a century of naval warfare between the British , French and Spanish ? during which sailors could find easy employment ? lone privateers found themselves outnumbered by the powerful ships employed by the British Empire to defend its merchant fleets . The popularity of the slave trade helped bring to an end the frontier condition of the West Indies and in these circumstances , piracy was no longer able to flourish as it once did .

Since the end of this so @-@ called golden age of piracy , Teach and his exploits have become the stuff of lore , inspiring books , films and even amusement park rides . Much of what is known about him can be sourced to Charles Johnson 's A General Historie of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates , published in Britain in 1724 . A recognised authority on the pirates of his time , Johnson 's descriptions of such figures as Anne Bonny and Mary Read were for years required reading for those interested in the subject . Readers were titillated by his stories and a second edition was quickly published , though author Angus Konstam suspects that Johnson 's entry on Blackbeard was " coloured a little to make a more sensational story . " A General Historie , though , is generally considered to be a reliable source . Johnson may have been an assumed alias . As Johnson 's accounts have been corroborated in personal and official dispatches , Lee (1974) considers that whoever he was , he had some access to official correspondence . Konstam speculates further , suggesting that Johnson may have been the English playwright Charles Johnson , the British publisher Charles Rivington , or the writer Daniel Defoe . In his 1951 work The Great Days of Piracy , author George Woodbury wrote that Johnson is " obviously a pseudonym " , continuing " one cannot help suspecting that he may have been a pirate himself . "

Despite his infamy , Teach was not the most successful of pirates . Henry Every retired a rich man , and Bartholomew Roberts took an estimated five times the amount Teach stole . Treasure hunters have long busied themselves searching for any trace of his rumoured hoard of gold and silver , but nothing found in the numerous sites explored along the east coast of the US has ever been connected to him . Some tales suggest that pirates often killed a prisoner on the spot where they buried their loot , and Teach is no exception in these stories , but that no finds have come to light is not exceptional ; buried pirate treasure is often considered a modern myth for which almost no supporting evidence exists . The available records include nothing to suggest that the burial of treasure was a common practice , except in the imaginations of the writers of fictional accounts such as Treasure Island . Such hoards would necessitate a wealthy owner , and their supposed existence ignores the command structure of a pirate vessel , in which the crew often served by free suffrage . The only pirate ever known to bury treasure was William Kidd ; the only treasure so far recovered

from Teach 's exploits is that taken from the wreckage of what is presumed to be the Queen Anne 's Revenge , which was found in 1996 . As of 2009 more than 250 @, @ 000 artifacts have been recovered . A selection is on public display at the North Carolina Maritime Museum .

Various superstitious tales exist of Teach 's ghost . Unexplained lights at sea are often referred to as " Teach 's light " , and some recitals claim that the notorious pirate now roams the afterlife searching for his head , for fear that his friends , and the Devil , will not recognise him . A North Carolinian tale holds that Teach 's skull was used as the basis for a silver drinking chalice ; a local judge even claimed to have drunk from it one night in the 1930s . The name of Blackbeard has been attached to many local attractions , such as Charleston 's Blackbeard 's Cove . His name and persona have also featured heavily in literature . He is the main subject of Matilda Douglas 's fictional 1835 work Blackbeard : A page from the colonial history of Philadelphia . Gregory Keyes ' fictional The Age of Unreason has him appearing as the governor of a colony , and Tim Powers ' 1988 novel On Stranger Tides tells of his forming an alliance of pirates . Film renditions of his life include Blackbeard the Pirate (1952) , Blackbeard 's Ghost (1968) , Blackbeard : Terror at Sea (2005) , and the 2006 Hallmark Channel miniseries Blackbeard . Parallels have also been drawn between Johnson 's Blackbeard and the character of Captain Jack Sparrow in the 2003 adventure film , Pirates of the Caribbean : The Curse of the Black Pearl .