


A Publication of the North Carolina Maritime History Council

Tributaries

October 1998

Number 8





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Gray Phantoms of the Cape Fear: Running the Civil War Blockade

Members of the Executive Board 1998 – 99

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About the Maritime History Council

THE NORTH CAROLINA MARITIME HISTORY COUNCIL came together in 1988 when a group of individuals professionally involved in maritime history programs began meeting informally to share information and to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Aware that the sheer size of the state's coastal area, increasingly rapid development, and the variety of coastal waters have tended to fragment efforts to preserve the state's maritime history, the group began to explore ways to pool the resources of disparate state and federal agencies.

The North Carolina Maritime History Council was incorporated in 1990 with the mission to identify and encourage historical and educational projects that have as their purpose the enhancement and preservation of the state's maritime history and culture, and that create public awareness of that heritage.

The council views this heritage in broad perspective, noting that its influence extends to the heads of navigation of the state's rivers.

An example of its accomplishments is the purchase of the Edwin Champney drawings, a collection of fifty-nine sketches of coastal scenes from the Civil War period that were obtained by the council in 1990 using funds donated by the Frank Stick Trust and other nonprofit groups. They are now part of the permanent collections of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History and are administered by the Outer Banks History Center.

The council advises the North Carolina Maritime Museum on the newly instituted N.C. Historic Vessel Register. This journal has been published every October by the group since 1991.

Council membership is offered to nonprofit organizations and institutions involved in the study and teaching of the state's maritime culture and to individuals interested in maritime history.

Richard Lawrence
CHAIR



Otway Burns: A Legendary Privateer of the War of 1812

By Lindley S. Butler

North Carolinians who are knowledgeable about privateering should be aware of its importance to the War of 1812 and may have some acquaintance with the exploits of Otway Burns, a hometown hero in Swansboro and Beaufort. Our young people have been exposed to Burns in their eighth grade North Carolina history course, which still tells the story of the state's participation in the War of 1812 through the lives of three men—army colonel Benjamin Forsyth, U.S. naval captain Johnston Blakeley, and privateer captain Otway Burns. This biographical portrayal of that remote conflict has been a fixture in our state's standard history narratives for about a century, including the histories authored by our most notable modern historians—Samuel A. Ashe, William K. Boyd, Robert D. W. Connor, Hugh T. Lefler, and William S. Powell. In the antebellum period, however, the War of 1812 was overshadowed within a generation by the looming sectional crisis that culminated in the Civil War, which has dominated American military historiography to this day.

Through copious news accounts and frequent advertisements of the sales of prize goods, the successes of Otway Burns were well known to his contemporaries; yet in a remarkably short time the stirring events of 1812–1815 had faded into the memories of retired sea captains and sailors and had become relegated to the sea tales related in taprooms of coastal taverns. Although Burns himself lived to the advanced age of seventy-five,

Detail from The Capture of the Snap Dragon by the Martin.
The Mariners Museum, Newport News, Virginia

Inset: Captain Otway Burns, ca. 1815.
N.C. Division of Archives and History

he had lost his fortune through failures of his numerous business ventures. He died in obscurity in 1850 at Portsmouth and was buried under a modest marker next to his second wife in the colonial cemetery in Beaufort. The eccentric old privateer was nearly forgotten, and in the very next year the state's first popular history, John Hill Wheeler's *Historical Sketches of North Carolina from 1584 to 1851*, did not mention Burns. In fact, over thirty years passed before Burns entered the state's historical canon in Wheeler's posthumously published *Reminiscences and Memoirs of North Carolina and Eminent North Carolinians*.¹ What had occurred in the thirty-three years between the publication of Wheeler's histories that brought Burns to the attention of the state's best-known historian of that day? The answer lies in the appearance in 1855 and 1856 in the *North Carolina University Magazine* of a narrative purportedly based on a transcribed log of two cruises in 1812 and 1813 of the *Snap Dragon*.²

By the early twentieth century Burns' grandchildren, especially Walter F. Burns, an investment banker of New York and Chicago, embarked on a mission to ensure a permanent place in history for their illustrious grandfather. When the family initiative ended, the state had a fine portrait of Burns, copied from a contemporary painting done about 1815; a simple but imposing grave monument upon which reposes a cannon thought to be from the *Snap Dragon*, placed in 1901; a bronze statue of Burns, erected in 1909 in Burnsville, the seat of the mountain county of Yancey; a biographical compilation by Walter F. Burns; and published biographical addresses by university historian Kemp P. Battle and Chief Justice Walter Clark.³ Although the collective works on Burns were heavily mythologized and error-filled, they became the bases of all subsequent biographies of him down to the present. Not until 1979 was there a more thoroughly researched biographical sketch by Tucker Littleton and Sarah Lemmon, supplemented by the Burns material in Lemmon's definitive study of North Carolina's participation in the War of 1812.⁴

In the earlier portrait of Burns created by Walter Burns, Battle, and Clark, there is only a hint of the com-

plex private life that underlay the public side of Otway Burns—sea captain, privateer, war hero, capable legislator, successful entrepreneur, merchant, shipbuilder. Little is said about his bankruptcy, his tangled personal life, which included three marriages, and the eccentricities of his last years. Only in our time has it come to light that his first marriage began with a prenuptial property settlement, ended in separation, and required legal action by Burns to gain custody of his only child.⁵

Whether contemporary observers or modern researchers delve beneath his actions to attempt to understand Burns, there is consensus on his iron will, courage, endurance, self-confidence, direct manner, forceful personality, decisive and creative leadership style, mastery of seamanship, and colorful character. Even if the legendary Burns is dismissed, there still remains a larger-than-life individual who well deserves his niche in the North Carolina pantheon of heroes.

The life of Otway Burns, who was born in 1775 in Onslow County near Swansboro, is divided into several distinct periods—his early years in Swansboro where he became a skilled waterman, his brilliant war years, the post-war decades in Beaufort of legislative service and entrepreneurial successes and failures, and his final years as a lightship keeper and retirement to isolated Portsmouth on Core Banks. As a youth in Swansboro and in Beaufort, Carteret County, he became a seaman, mastering the skills necessary to become a merchant captain sailing in trading voyages along the east coast as far north as Maine. He married his cousin Joanna Grant on 6 July 1809 and the following year moved to Swansboro where his only child, Owen, was born. Within five years this marriage ended in separation, but he did not regain Owen from his wife's relatives until 1819 when he executed a legal guardianship. Shortly after the death of his first wife in 1814 he married Jane Hall of Beaufort and purchased a house on Front Street where he lived for the next twenty-one years. After the war he continued sailing and shipbuilding, completing the first steamboat in North Carolina, the *Prometheus*, in 1818. Another vessel that Burns built after the war was a small two-masted sailing boat that was the fastest craft in the area. Christened the *Snap Dragon*, she was said to have had the first center-board ever seen in the region. Other ventures in the post-war period included a store in Beaufort, fishing boats, a salt works, a brickyard which furnished brick for Fort Macon, and promotion of the Clubfoot and Harlow Creek Canal, which is still a connector from the Newport River

behind Beaufort to the Neuse River.⁶

As a legislator from 1821 to 1835 he represented Carteret County seven terms in the House of Commons and four terms in the Senate, where he earned a reputation for independent views and voting for what he thought was right regardless of the political consequences. His support for a state constitutional convention in 1835, which passed the Senate by one vote, made possible long-needed democratic constitutional reforms but ended his political career since the eastern section of the state was generally opposed to the reforms, which would reduce the region's control of the state government. By this time through generosity and poor management he was heavily in debt, and most of his enterprises had failed, although his efforts at community economic development had not gone unappreciated. Reduced to bankruptcy, Burns sought from the Democratic administration of Andrew Jackson, who had always had Burns' enthusiastic support, an appointment as keeper of the Brant Island Shoal Lightboat near Portsmouth in 1835.⁷ He moved to Portsmouth, then a port-of-entry of four hundred people, and lived there the remainder of his life. Three years after the death of Jane in 1839, he married Jane Smith, who also predeceased him.⁸

There are, of course, many stories that could be told about Burns' personal, business, and political lives, but his successful career as a privateer for three years in the War of 1812, which resulted in his becoming one of that war's few heroes, is what secured a

place for him in history.

The War of 1812 was fought largely over maritime issues and national self-respect. The young and weak republic, since gaining its independence from Great Britain in 1783, had been unable to defend its commerce or its seamen. Europe had been at war since the onset of the French Revolution and the rise to power of Napoleon. Over the course of more than two decades of world conflict, both the British and French had seized American shipping; however, only the British Navy, which had increasing difficulty keeping its vast array of ships manned, had resorted to impressing, or forcibly drafting, American sailors into service. In the years prior to 1812 the British had captured 917 American vessels and impressed 6,257 seamen, and the French had seized nearly 500 ships. Diplomatic protests, hollow threats, and an embargo had all failed to secure the right to sail on the high seas unmolested. To this day a fundamental foundation of American foreign policy is "freedom of the seas." To many Americans the issue was one of continued

American Revolution¹³

	Vessels	Prizes	Value
NAVY	64	196	\$6,000,000
PRIVATEERS	792	600	\$18,000,000

British arrogance and domination, and they concluded that a second war of independence was necessary to earn international respect. When war was declared in 1812 in response to the British government's failure to rescind its Orders in Council, the decree authorizing seizure of American ships, the United States was suddenly faced with having to defend its coast with fewer than two dozen ships against the world's foremost navy, comprised of nearly a thousand vessels, one hundred of which were already deployed in the western Atlantic, and officers and crew battle-tested through over twenty years of war.⁹

Faced with such long odds, the United States had no choice but to resort to its traditional defense of naval expansion through privateers. Privateering, the seizure of an enemy's ships and goods in time of war by private armed vessels, has been a significant maritime practice since ancient times. In his memorial address in 1901 Walter Clark described privateering as "simply a volunteer navy, dependent upon its own enterprises and courage for pay."¹⁰

In the infancy of the United States, privateering introduced many of our most capable naval officers to combat at sea. In the country's first two wars, the American Revolution and the War of 1812, privateering vastly increased the tiny naval forces of the young republic, which could only afford several dozen warships but could, at no government expense, unleash hundreds of privateers to prey on the numerous merchant vessels of Great Britain. Privateering has been such an integral component of the United States' naval establishment that this country remains the sole major maritime power that reserves the right to commission privateers. Indeed, the United States was one of the few maritime nations to refuse to sign the 1856 Declaration of Paris treaty that ended privateering. Although we have not used privateers since the War of 1812, (excluding the few commissioned by the Confederate government in the Civil War), in this age of government down-sizing and the laying up or decommissioning of naval ships, it is not too far-fetched to imagine private men-of-war in the future showing the flag and defending the United States' global maritime interests. In truth, in an age of air domination and satellite surveillance, privateering is impractical, but commerce raiding by surface naval forces and submarines nearly won the Battle of the Atlantic for Germany and was a decisive factor in the defeat of Japan in the Pacific in the Second World War, the last great naval conflict in history.

North Carolina Chief Justice Walter Clark in his

public addresses at the dedication of Burns' tomb monument in 1901 and of the Burnsville statue in 1909 expressed a remarkable view of the demise of modern privateering. He concluded that the destruction wrought on British merchant shipping in the Revolution and the War of 1812 and the devastation of the United States merchant fleet by Confederate raiders in the Civil War forced the wealthy businessmen, merchants, bankers, and traders of the great maritime nations to lobby their governments for an end to privateering. In Clark's words, "The eminent buccaneers of Wall Street wish war to be confined to wounding and killing of sailors and soldiers (who have small interest in war), but that their own property should be held sacred on the high seas." To Clark the "surest way to create a desire for peace among the influential element of the enemy is for privateers to lay rude hands upon their floating wealth."¹¹

A privateer was authorized to attack enemy shipping by a commission known as a letter of marque and reprisal. The act regulating privateering, passed by Congress in June 1812, required that when an individual or group of investors had secured an armed vessel, they

could apply through the local customs official to the Secretary of State for a letter of marque and reprisal for each cruise. When a prize was seized, it was brought into port and condemned in the United States district admiralty court. The prize and its contents could then be sold at auction. After Federal duties were paid on the sale, the remain-

ing prize money, excluding a small percentage for disabled crewmen and widows and orphans of deceased crewmen, was distributed, with the ship owners receiving half and the officers and crew dividing the remainder. Also included in the distribution of prize money was a government bounty of twenty dollars for each prisoner.¹² Although naval vessels also took prizes and divided part of the spoils among the crew, the more tolerable discipline and living conditions aboard a privateer and the possibility of much greater individual profit made service aboard the private vessel more enticing to most sailors. To the benefit of the nation's defense, privateers complemented the mission of the navy by preying on the enemy's merchant fleet and exacting at times a heavy toll by aiding in interdiction of their supply lines, hampering their trade, and enhancing naval blockades. According to Edgar S. Maclay, a naval historian, in both the American Revolution and the War of 1812 privateers were "the most important if not the predominating feature of our early sea power." The effectiveness of the priva-

War of 1812

	Vessels	Prizes	Value
NAVY	16	254	\$6,600,000
PRIVATEERS	515	1345	\$39,000,000

teers was striking in contrast to that of the few naval vessels the government could afford.

Given the absurdly small size of its navy, the United States' strategy in the War of 1812 of inflicting on the enemy as much damage as possible on the high seas could only succeed with augmentation by privateers. Of the over 500 letters of marque the bulk were issued in the northern states, with 150 from Massachusetts, 102 from New York, 31 from Pennsylvania, 16 from New Hampshire, 15 from Maine, and 11 from Connecticut. In the South, Maryland (Baltimore) led with 112, followed by Virginia with 9, Georgia and Louisiana with 7 each, and North Carolina with 5.¹⁴

Clearly, privateering was a comparatively unimportant part of the war effort south of Baltimore; yet the North Carolina newspapers of the era were filled with war news (usually dispatched from the field) from the army, the navy, and privateers. A list of prizes taken by the navy and privateers was published every month, and there were weekly notices of the arrival of prizes or war vessels in local harbors.

Since North Carolina was only a minor arena for privateering, how did Otway Burns earn his exalted place in the state's maritime history? Why would an early biographer describe him as "a terror to all the British in American waters,"¹⁵ and a later historian write that Burns "conducted a campaign on the ocean in the War of 1812 which, in some respects, was on a smaller scale but in other elements was on a larger scale than the brilliant exploits of the great naval hero of the Revolution [John Paul Jones]"?¹⁶ The extant record is not so clear as these early assessments declare. The three logs, which would have been filed in the local customs office, appear to have been lost. They survive in a narrative, which contains many factual errors, in the *University Magazine* in 1855–1856, and in two incomplete logs published in newspapers, the first in 1813 and the second in 1896.¹⁷

The latter two logs seem to be literal transcriptions and therefore reliable. Five commissions for cruises of the *Snap Dragon* survive, with two in 1812 and 1813 commanded by Dr. Edward Pasteur of New Bern, the next two commanded by Burns in 1813 and 1814, and the last under William R. Graham of New Bern when the vessel was captured.¹⁸ Most of the anecdotal embellishments about Burns come from the *University Magazine* article, which cannot be taken at face value, although all biographers of Burns have relied on it. The first privateering cruise described in the narrative was under the command of Pasteur, although Burns, as one of the owners of the *Snap Dragon*, apparently was on board. Even if the questionable material is discarded, however, a stirring portrait of Burns emerges from the two authentic logs and contemporary newspaper accounts.

The *Snap Dragon* was purchased from Jedediah Olcott in the summer of 1812 by Pasteur and Burns in

New York City for \$8,000. Originally named the *Zephyr*, she was built on the West River in Maryland in 1808. She was flush decked with two masts and had a length of 85 1/2 feet, a beam of 22 1/2 feet, and a depth of eight feet, 8 inches.¹⁹ From her swift sailing characteristics came her new name, *Snap Dragon*, which may be a play on the flower's name evoking the image of a dragonfly that darts unexpectedly across the water. Her armament varied from six to eight guns, consisting of one pivot gun (a 12-pounder) and five to seven carriage guns, probably 6-pounders, mounted on the sides. At least twice she carried two rail-mounted swivel guns. Other weapons included an array of small arms—as many as 60 cutlasses, 40 pistols, 60 muskets, 25 boarding pikes, 25 pick axes, and 3 blunderbusses. The crew number on the initial voyage was twenty-five officers and men, but subsequently she carried eighty to one hundred men. A vessel this size could be sailed by less than ten men, so the extra complement was for combat and prize crews.²⁰

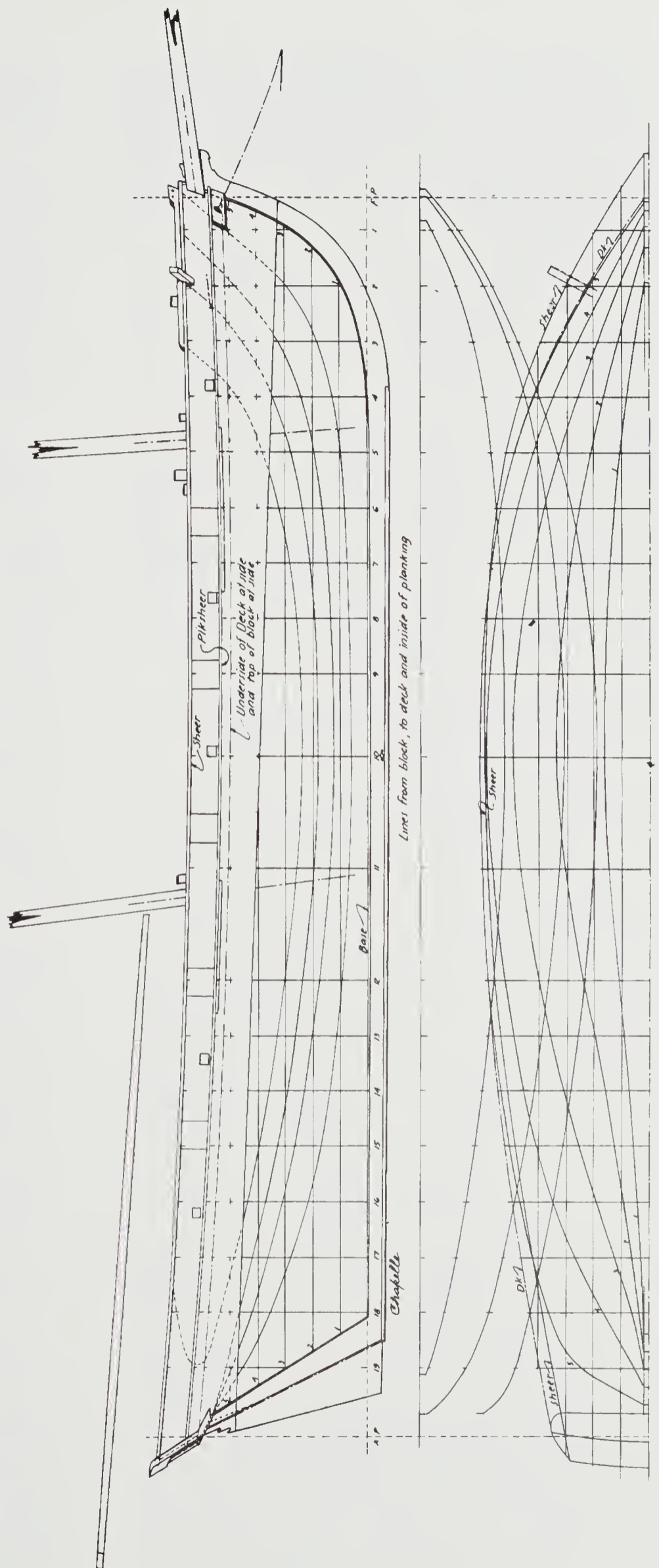
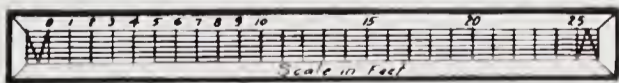
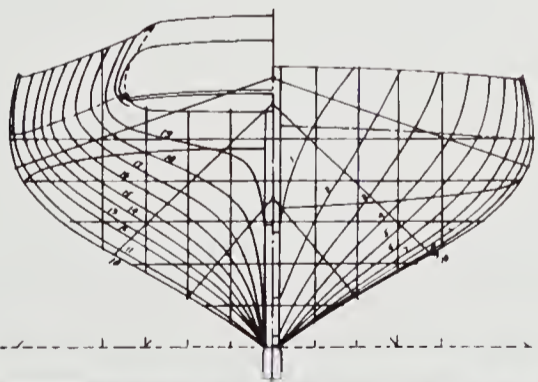
Although Burns has been credited with finding and purchasing the *Snap Dragon*, it is clear from the record that Edward Pasteur was with him in New York and shared equally in acquiring and outfitting the privateer. The *University Magazine* narrative reports, "After consultation with a gentleman [Pasteur] who was part owner of the vessel he commanded, they sold their vessel and bought the other." The first commission issued in New York was on 27 August 1812 to Pasteur, who, accompanied by Burns, sailed the ship to New Bern. There fifty shares were sold in the ship at \$260 per share, and Burns and Pasteur joined eight other investors from New Bern, Tarboro, and Edenton.²¹

Privateer tactics were based on having a fast ship to catch the usually plodding merchant vessels and to run from stronger adversaries. Normally no privateer sought extended combat, especially with a naval vessel; but over the course of the war, merchant vessels became more heavily armed, some carrying over twenty guns. Once the prey was in range, the privateer quickly closed the gap to board and take the vessel by hand-to-hand fighting on the deck. All privateers avoided the traditional naval battle, a cannon duel at short range, since gunfire would only damage a prize and might disable the privateer, bringing the cruise to a premature end.

The *Snap Dragon's* second cruise, again commanded by Pasteur, commenced on 14 October 1812 and continued into early 1813. Since no authentic log exists for this cruise, the only reliable information comes from legal notices in the newspapers. On 23 February 1813 the *Filis* from Curaçao sailed into New Bern under a prize crew. The sloop had been taken on 18 January, with a cargo of 3,000 goat skins, ten hides, 50 mats, earthenware, 20 kegs of oil, and 30 bushels of yams. Having seized several prizes on the voyage, the *Snap Dragon* was then bound for Cartagena to be resupplied to continue the

Privateer Schooner
SNAPDRAGON

Length bet perps 89'-4"
 " on moulded LWL 84'-10"
 Moulded Beam 24'-9"
 " Depth 10'-1"
 Draft, moulded at 1/2 of LWL 7'-11"
 " at LWL 23'-10"
 Hailed from New Bern N.C., 6 guns, 80 men.
 purchased in New York in 1812



The Privateer Schooner Snap Dragon.
 The Search for Speed Under Sail 1700-1855. H.I. Chapelle.

cruise. By mid-March Pasteur had returned to New Bern, reporting the seizure of two sloops, the *Sisters* and the *William & Charles*, and the schooner *Rachael*. The plunder offered for sale consisted of 18 male slaves, 10 boxes of soap, 6 bales of cotton, leather, cordages, a swivel gun, 5 muskets, 24 cutlasses, 25 pounds of powder, and 200 pounds of indigo.²²

The command of this first cruise of the *Snap Dragon* has traditionally been credited to Otway Burns, but the documentary evidence—the commission and the legal notices concerning the sale of the prizes—establish Edward Pasteur as the commander and William Mitchell as the first lieutenant. In addition, there are statements executed at sea on 19 December 1812 and 16 January 1813 by prisoners recently captured “by Edward Pasteur commanding the aforesaid Private armed schooner *Snap Dragon*.”²³ Why then would someone just six years after his death credit Burns with a command he did not hold? He was, of course, at that time the only North Carolina privateer who had acquired a hero’s reputation and who was widely known in the maritime community. The author voiced a concern that has been the motive of historians through the ages when he said,

*from my earliest childhood the adventures of the Snap Dragon, when commanded by Otway Burns, have been rehearsed in my hearing by old tars, many of whom are now dead, and in a few years perhaps Otway Burns and the Snap Dragon will be looked upon as never having had any real existence.*²⁴

This narrative, which is sprinkled with errors, certainly enhanced the legendary Otway Burns and in large part created the legend; however, its uncritical use has done a disservice to Edward Pasteur and a greater wrong to history in general. Unfortunately, the old adage, “Once something is in print it becomes history,” has been only too true in this instance, as historians, amateur and professional, have failed to delve deeply enough into the extant records to ferret out the truth.

A careful reading of the *University Magazine* narrative does place Burns on board the schooner accompanying Pasteur on this first exciting and successful cruise. On their last coastal voyage before the war Pasteur had gone to sea with Burns to Maine, and he may very well have accompanied him on other trips. Burns and Pasteur were both part-owners of the *Snap Dragon*, and Burns, with his extensive sea experience, would have been a welcome advisor to Pasteur on the cruise. The author vividly records the narrative in first person, and his familiarity with life at sea bespeaks a mariner who may have been on the cruise himself. The richness of detail, some of which can be verified by other sources, suggests that it must have been based on a log supplemented by

interviews with contemporaries.

There were several dangerous situations on the voyage in which Burns was credited with saving the ship—an observation that would be unnecessary if Burns was indeed in command. In a “tremendous gale...to the windward of the Gulf of Mexico,” the author wrote, “Burns never left the deck the whole night, for she wanted watching by such a man as he was, and there was no man on earth that could manage her like him.” In the same gale when a “tremendous wave knocked her on beam ends, filled the waist with water and set some of the guns adrift, Burns was on deck in an instant and proved himself equal to the crisis.” The author concluded, greatly relieved, “I am as certain as that I have a soul to be saved that if it had not been for Burns, the *Snap* and all her brave crew must have gone to the bottom.”²⁵ In the narrative Burns was portrayed as impetuous, recklessly brave, and always right both in his instinct for action over the often more timid counsel of his officers and in his uncanny ability to see through the ruses used by the British to decoy him into a trap.

Several times the author slipped and referred to “the commander” rather than to Burns by name. Especially when engaged in negotiations with foreign governors or officials, “the commander” rather than Burns did the honors.²⁶ There is sufficient internal evidence in the manuscript to place both Burns and Pasteur on board the *Snap Dragon*. Burns as an owner and experienced mariner could have in a crisis assumed temporary *de facto* command of the vessel. It may be that the business partners Pasteur and Burns had been functioning seamlessly at sea for some time, and Burns’ easy assumption of leadership when the craft was in danger could have been a pattern long established by the two men. Certainly to a sailor on board the *Snap Dragon*, it would appear that Burns had a major role not only in the survival of the ship but also in the success of the voyage. Obviously an admirer of Burns, the author, presumably writing years later, either wittingly or unwittingly magnified Burns’ role in the cruise to the point that it became his command. Nevertheless, Pasteur was the captain of record and in all subsequent transactions involving the prizes. This cruise, which contributed at least in history so much to the fame of the *Snap Dragon* was that of Edward Pasteur and not Burns, although Burns is entitled to a share in the glory.

This first privateering cruise of the *Snap Dragon* had been resoundingly successful. Pasteur and Burns had taken nine prizes and made “several small captures,” probably local coastal traders, near St. Croix in the Virgin Islands. The voyage had been entirely in the Caribbean—among the Virgin Islands of Tortola, St. Croix, and St. Thomas; along the fabled Spanish Main from Maracaibo on the Gulf of Venezuela to Santa Marta, Cartagena, and Providence Island; and finally off Cape San Antonio, Cuba. There were a number of “pretty tight times” when

the privateer was almost captured or nearly lost in heavy weather. In one incident officers and crew were packing their baggage in preparation for being made prisoners by the fast sloop HMS *Fawn*; but in the last possible moment, with Burns at the helm and the crew lying on the deck behind the bulwark, the saucy schooner slipped past in a hail of grape and canister from a broadside.²⁷

Visits to neutral ports for resupply and repair were a necessity for an overseas cruiser. In the case of layovers in the Spanish ports of Ponce, Puerto Rico, and Maracaibo, the local governors were very accommodating, allowing the Americans to trade for supplies and even a cannon. On the isolated British Providence Island off Central America, the *Snap Dragon* also met a friendly reception, although Burns had to go ashore and single-handedly subdue a drunken liberty party to return them to the ship. At Santa Marta and Cartagena the corrupt local officials nearly ended the cruise of the *Snap Dragon*, placing the vessel in great danger. At Santa Marta Pasteur obliged a request of his British prisoners that they be taken ashore. Under the pretense that they were dealing with pirates, local officials threw both the British and the American crewmen into prison and attempted to gain access to the privateer. The Americans responded by leaving the port, sailing out of sight, and seizing a Spanish military vessel. Returning to Santa Marta, they threatened to hang the Spanish prisoners. Their men were released in two hours, quickly ending the impasse. A similar incident in Cartagena in a dispute over a captured vessel led to internment of the prize by the Spanish, imprisonment for three weeks of the crew, during which time two of them died, and looting of the ship by the Spanish. Paying ransom for the crew and bribes to the officials finally secured release of both the *Snap Dragon* and the stripped prize.²⁸ Following a brush with a British privateer off south Florida the privateer returned to Beaufort after an absence of six months.

On 1 June 1813 a third commission was granted for the *Snap Dragon*, now under the command of Otway Burns. With a crew of seventy-five men, the ship weighed anchor from Beaufort on 3 June for a cruise that would last over two months and be by far the most successful venture of the war for the racy, diminutive schooner. Fortunately, this voyage is documented by an authentic log. Leaving the coast of North Carolina, Burns headed north toward the crowded seas off Halifax, Nova Scotia. The military buildup for the defense of Canada kept a steady stream of merchant vessels plying the sea lanes connecting Britain to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. At first, although the privateer encountered several neutral and American vessels, the only incident of interest was her taking fresh water from a large iceberg just south of Newfoundland's Grand Banks. Finally after twenty-one days at sea, on 24 June she took three prizes—the bark *Henrietta* from Liverpool, the brig *Jane*, and the brig

Pandora. Unfortunately for Burns, all three vessels were in ballast with no cargo. He kept the *Henrietta* and the *Jane*, sending them to Beaufort with prize crews. The *Pandora* he loaded with the paroled prisoners and released. Two days later, in the early afternoon of 27 June, the *Snap Dragon* began a 26-hour chase which lasted through a foggy night into the next morning when the lifting cloud revealed a large convoy protected by several frigates and a 74-gun ship-of-the-line. Burns now could identify his prey as a 14-gun brig which surprisingly was fired upon by the frigate, although it was flying the Union Jack. The chase fled toward Burns, but he kept away, suspecting that he was being decoyed into a trap. Such actions were common tactics by war vessels of the era. The next day yielded two more brigs, the *Good Intent* and the *Venus*, again both in ballast. Burns kept the former and sent the *Venus* on with paroled prisoners. Before dark the *Snap Dragon* was able again to pull away easily from a nosy British armed brig, the *Ring Dove*. On 30 June Burns had another brief long-range duel with a man-of-war, the 14-gun schooner *Adonis*, but the speed of the privateer saved them from all but a few shots through the rigging.²⁹

Off Cape Saint Francis just north of St. John's, Newfoundland, the 4th of July began with the capture of the schooner *Elizabeth*, from which the *Snap Dragon* was resupplied. The *Elizabeth* was sent in to St. John's with prisoners, and the privateer headed north to Grates Point, the entrance to Trinity Bay where the crew relaxed by fishing and taking on fresh water. In a heavy fog at 3:00 a.m. on 7 July the schooner passed close to a ship on the opposite course. Burns tacked and followed in the wake of the ship until noon the next day when the mist cleared, and he saw to his consternation a large frigate bearing down on him. As always, the *Snap Dragon* flitted away quickly, this time into another fog bank, and a deadly game of cat-and-mouse continued for several hours from one fog bank to another until Burns shook off the pursuing frigate. Several other sails appeared, and Burns captured two ships from Cork—the brig *Happy*, taken at 9:30 p.m., and the barque *Reprisal*, seized at 11:00 p.m. When the relentless frigate suddenly appeared the next morning, Burns hastily released the ships with paroled prisoners and escaped. That afternoon the *Snap Dragon*, again in heavy fog, blundered onto the brig *Ann* from Liverpool bound for St. Johns, New Brunswick with a mixed cargo of domestic merchandise, steel, wire, and crockery that was invoiced at £83,000 (\$368,520). Unwilling to risk such a rich cargo to anyone else, Burns spent two days transferring most of it to the hold of the privateer, and then with the *Ann* accompanying him, turned his bow toward Beaufort. Although a number of neutral and American vessels were again encountered, the *Snap Dragon* saw no more prizes and arrived safely at Beaufort on 10 August.³⁰

This voyage would make a fortune for the own-



The Capture of the Snap Dragon by the Martin. The Mariners Museum, Newport News, Virginia

ers and crew of the *Snap Dragon*. In the course of ten weeks at sea, the vessel had taken nine prizes but had been able to keep only four—the barque *Henrietta*, and the brigs *Jane*, *Good Intent*, and *Ann*. There were four close encounters with British warships, although only the *Adonis* was ever near enough to the privateer to exchange fire, and then too far away to do more than hole a sail and cut a line. The 28-hour harrowing chase by the frigate had cost Burns two prizes, but it led him to the *Ann*. The *Henrietta* was sold on 27 September, and the *Ann* was condemned by the district court and sold on 11 October at the warehouse of William Shepard, one of the owners. The cargo was described as having 215 bales, 22 chests, 18 trunks, 43 cases, 2 boxes, 60 casks, 474 bundles, and 22 crates, which held an astonishing array of textile goods, including all types of cloth, lace, linen, silk, and blankets; 25 tons of steel and sheet iron; and 60 casks of card wire estimated at £2,200. Some 300 buyers flocked into New Bern for the upcoming auction from as far away as Boston. The sale, including the ship, was reported to

have brought over a half million dollars, and one source claims that each crewman took home \$3,000. Although it cannot be determined with certainty how much Burns made from the cruise, as an owner he was entitled to a share of half of the net proceeds of the sale after duties were paid, and he had also earned the captain's share of the crew's half of the sale. Needless to say, he was now a wealthy man.³¹

Burns' last cruise on the *Snap Dragon* was from 20 January to 9 April 1814, a total of eighty days at sea. Leaving Beaufort early in the morning with a crew of 100 men and officers, Burns turned the little man-of-war south toward the Caribbean. Within two days a chase was lost in a squall that forced Burns to "let all sails fly" to prevent being capsized by the wind. In the Caribbean by 8 February, the schooner was pursued by two vessels, one of fourteen guns. On 16 February, they were off the coast of South America and sailed as far south as 2° North to the Island of Maracu on the coast of Brazil. In need of water, Burns attempted to enter the Araguari River just

north of the Amazon on 23 February, becoming entangled in a complex of shoals at the mouth and striking a mud bank. High tide refloated the privateer, which then headed north.³²

On 3 March off the coast of Surinam at 6° North latitude, a sail was sighted at 5:00 a.m. Although it proved to be a British ship of at least twenty-two guns, Burns did not hesitate to attack and engaged her at 7:30 a.m. The adversary turned out to be more than a match for Burns in seamanship and was able to prevent the Americans from boarding. With cannon roaring now for four hours, at 11:30 a.m. the privateer was close enough for Burns to order the crew to fire muskets and prepare to board, but well-placed shots in the rigging forced the schooner to fall away. Again at 1:30 p.m. another attempt was made to board, and the enemy vessel was able to ram the *Snap Dragon* head on, taking the jib boom and bowsprit, and bringing down the foremast. The enemy vessel then ran before the wind, leaving behind the crippled *Snap Dragon*. With no damage to the hull below the water line, Burns rigged a jury mast and set the jib. By 4:00 p.m. the privateer was underway.

This fiercely fought 6-hour action so disabled the *Snap Dragon* that there was little choice but to run for the coast. Burns reported that the enemy “fought desperately,” but the privateer was outgunned twenty-two to six. At one point when the *Snap Dragon* crew was boarding, they were repelled with pistols, cutlasses, pikes, hand spikes, and thrown cannon balls, bottles, bricks, and stink pots. Burns wrote that the enemy loss was unknown, but that blood ran from her lee scuppers and that their hull was damaged by chain shot. The Americans suffered four killed and seven wounded.³³

The privateer ran for the coast of South America and entered the Orinoco River in Venezuela on 7 March. They sailed some twenty miles upriver where they anchored, and the crew went ashore to cut timber for temporary repairs. Within two days a foremast was in place, and with new spars the *Snap Dragon* was rigged as a brig. Local officials visited from Angostura (now Ciudad Bolivar). On one hunting expedition, Burns returned with macaws and a 15-foot-long snake (probably an anaconda). After a 13-day stay on the Orinoco, the *Snap Dragon* headed north for Beaufort. On 24 March, she met an American privateer, the *Saratoga*, which was able to spare a small boat and spars. The only prize of the voyage was taken on 28 March—a Swedish schooner that had been captured by the British. The *Snap Dragon* sighted Cape Lookout Lighthouse on 7 April and made Ocracoke Inlet that afternoon, anchoring at Shell Castle. By 9 April she was safely arrived at New Bern.³⁴

This last cruise of Burns led to only one insignificant prize and a severe sea battle that seriously damaged the *Snap Dragon*. It seemed apparent that the Caribbean was no longer a safe cruising ground and had been virtu-

ally swept clean of potential prizes. Burns remained an owner of the privateer but did not go to sea again during the war. Illness, usually described as rheumatism, has been listed as the reason he remained at home, but this was also the time when his marriage was breaking up. It may also be that on this last voyage he had experienced the frustration of few opportunities and much greater risk.

Possibly Burns had a premonition of the future, for the final cruise of the *Snap Dragon* would end with the heretofore lucky schooner’s being engaged in battle and captured. The commission was issued for the privateer’s last voyage on 21 May 1814 with William R. Graham as commander. Leaving port on 26 May, the *Snap Dragon* headed north for the prime sea lanes off Nova Scotia. The first prize taken was the schooner *Linnet* with a cargo of fish, oil, and beef tongues. On 30 June, just north of Halifax, Nova Scotia, she encountered the sloop HMS *Martin*, which proved her undoing. Although the *Martin* had to resort to sweeps to catch the *Snap Dragon* in the light breeze, the chase was soon over, and the schooner bowed to superior fire power. The captured ship and crew were taken to Halifax. The crew were first held in Melville Island Prison at Halifax but were finally transferred to Dartmoor Prison in Britain. They were exchanged after the war, which was over by the end of the year. The glory days of the *Snap Dragon* had ended. Although she briefly sailed as a British privateer, she was sold after the war to a merchant firm of Halifax.³⁵

What can be said about the significance of Otway Burns as a privateer if the record is so uncertain? In his 1899 history of privateering, Edgar S. Maclay gave Burns and the *Snap Dragon* only a few lines, but in his 1916 article on Burns for the *Naval Institute Proceedings* he reported that Burns in three cruises had captured forty-two prizes with a value of \$4,000,000, had engaged in combat with several men-of-war, and had taken over 300 prisoners, compiling “a record of astounding audacity and brilliant success that has few parallels.”³⁶ Apart from the *University Magazine* narrative, which is a questionable source, this study of the extant logs and newspapers has unearthed from the records of two cruises a total of thirty-one captures, although only five of those prizes were returned to North Carolina to be condemned in the District Admiralty Court for sale. One source credits Burns’ second cruise with prizes amounting to \$2,500,000, but the only figure that can be authenticated is the sale in the fall of 1813 that brought in over a half million dollars. By including the *University Magazine* narrative, another nine captures can be added that resulted in one returned prize and a total of over 40 captures. Burns’ long experience as a merchant ship captain and owner left him sympathetic toward those he captured, and he customarily released most of his prizes or used them as cartel vessels to convey his paroled prisoners to a friendly port. Only once did he mention burning a prize, an

uncharacteristic action for him to take. Although Burns was quite willing to make war on Britain and British merchants, he was not comfortable causing suffering to individual merchant seamen or captains. His magnanimity to his prisoners was manifested in several instances by his restoring their personal property and investments in captured cargo.³⁷

Unlike most privateers, who avoided encounters with men-of-war when possible, if Burns thought he had an equal chance, he readily risked clashes with British privateers and naval vessels. He had complete confidence in the speed, agility, and seaworthiness of his beloved *Snap Dragon* and in his own masterful seamanship. Only once did his aggressiveness backfire—in his last engagement with an unknown enemy vessel that left both assailants battered and the *Snap Dragon* disabled.

Without question, in North Carolina and the South, the *Snap Dragon* was the preeminent privateer and Otway Burns was her most famous commander. Through his highly visible role as an entrepreneur and his long career in the legislature, Burns remained on the public stage and to the general populace personified the colorful privateer who had at great personal risk upheld the nation's honor while enriching himself and sharing this wealth with his community. Dying a pauper and almost unnoticed, Burns within two generations became an icon of his state, memorialized from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the sea and enriching our maritime heritage to this day.

NOTES

1. John Hill Wheeler, *Historical Sketches of North Carolina from 1584 to 1851* (Philadelphia: 1851). Reprint (Baltimore: Regional Publishing Co., 1964); John Hill Wheeler, *Reminiscences and Memoirs of North Carolina and Eminent North Carolinians* (Columbus, Ohio: 1884). Reprint (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1966).
2. "Otway Burns and the Snap Dragon," *North Carolina University Magazine*, 4 (November, 1855): 407–413; 4 (December, 1855): 461–467; 5 (April, 1856): 126–131; 5 (June, 1856): 205–208 is a narrative supposedly drawn from one of Burns' logs but embellished with legendary feats of the sea captain. The authorship is attributed to John H. Bryan, Jr. in Kemp P. Battle, "Otway Burns, Privateer and Legislator," *North Carolina University Magazine*, New Series 19 (November, 1901): 10.
3. Walter Clark, "Oration at the Dedication of the Otway Burns Memorial, Beaufort, 1901," in Walter Francis Burns, comp., *Captain Otway Burns, Patriot, Privateer, and Legislator* (New York: 1905), 15–65.
4. Tucker Littleton and Sarah McCulloh Lemmon, "Otway Burns," in William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, 6 volumes (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1979–1996) 1: 282–283; Sarah McCulloh Lemmon, *Frustrated Patriots: North Carolina and the War of 1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973), 158–161.
5. Otway Burns Paper, 6 July 1809, Onslow County Register of Deeds, 4: 29. Copy in Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Rebecca W. Sanders, comp., *Early Carteret County Court Minutes, 1810–1820* (Morehead City: n.d.), 1456. Littleton and Lemmon, "Burns," 283.
6. Ethel T. Elliot, comp., *Marriage Bonds of Carteret County, North Carolina* (Beaufort: n.d.), 14. Burns' property transactions and business ventures are recorded in the Register of Deeds Office, Carteret County, Beaufort. See Deeds U: 156–157, 181–184, 390–391; V: 234–235; Clark, "Oration," 57.
7. S. Pleasanton to Sylvester Brown, Washington, 9 March 1835, National Archives, Record Group 26, U.S. Coast Guard, Bureau of Lighthouses, Fifth Auditor's Office, Lighthouse Letters, 31 volumes, 10: 386.
8. Beaufort Colonial Cemetery; Elliot, *Marriage Bonds*, 14.
9. Donald Barr Chidsey, *The American Privateers* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1962), 89–90; Alfred T. Mahan, *Sea Power in Its Relation to the War of 1812*, 2 volumes (Boston: Little, Brown, 1905) 1: 300. There are a number of excellent studies on the War of 1812 and its causes. More recent is Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989). Earlier but valuable are Reginald Horsman, *The Causes of the War of 1812* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962); Albert Z. Carr, *The Coming of War: An Account of the Remarkable Events Leading to the War of 1812* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1960); James Fulton Zimmerman, *Impressment of American Seamen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966); and the brief Harry L. Coles, *The War of 1812* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1965).
10. Clark, "Beaufort Address, 1901," 25.
11. Walter Clark, "Address at the Dedication of the Otway Burns Monument, Burnsville," *Supplement to the Black Mountain Eagle*, 2 August 1909.
12. An Act Concerning Letters of Marque, Prizes & Prize Goods, 26 June 1812, National Archives, Record Group 45, Naval Records Collection, Letters from the Collectors of Customs Relating to Commissions of Privateers, War of 1812, 6 volumes, 5: 774.

13. Edgar Stanton Maclay, *A History of American Privateers* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1924), viii–ix. Other works on privateering are the previously cited study by Donald Barr Childsey and Donald Macintyre, *The Privateers* (London: Paul Elek, 1975); Francis R. Starke, *The Abolition of Privateers and the Declaration of Paris* (New York: Columbia University, 1897); Jerome R. Garitee, *The Republic's Private Navy: The American Privateering Business as Practiced in Baltimore During the War of 1812* (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 1977).
14. Maclay, *Privateers*, 506; Coles, *War of 1812*, 73. In various sources the figures vary slightly on the number of ships involved and prizes taken, especially in the number of vessels in the United States Navy.
15. Wheeler, *Reminiscences*, 102.
16. Edgar Stanton Maclay, "The Exploits of Otway Burns, Privateersman and Statesman," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, 42 (May–June, 1916): 874.
17. *The Carolina Federal Republican*, New Bern, 18 September 1813; the *Raleigh Register and North Carolina Gazette*, 24 September 1813; the *New Berne Weekly Journal*, 27 February 1896.
18. Commissions for the Snap Dragon, District of New York, Edward Pasteur, 27 August 1812; District of New Bern, Edward Pasteur, 14 October 1812; District of Beaufort, Otway Burns, 1 June 1813, 17 January 1814; District of New Bern, Edward Pasteur, 21 May 1814; National Archives, RG 45, *Privateers, War of 1812*, 1: 53, 229, 230, 231; 2: 266; 6: n.p.
19. Forrest R. Holdcamper, comp., *List of American-Flag Merchant Vessels that Received Certificates of Enrollment or Registry at the Port of New York, 1789–1867* (Washington: National Archives, 1968), 2: 748; Theophilus Parker, *Share in the Snap Dragon*, 7 October 1812 in Ruth P. Barbour, *Cruise of the Snap Dragon* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 1976), 203; Lee H. Nicholson, "Snap Dragon: An American Privateer," *Nautical Research Journal*, 27 (December, 1981): 206.
20. Commissions, 14 October 1812, 21 May 1814, National Archives, RG 45, *Privateers, War of 1812*, 1: 230, 231.
21. Edward Pasteur to Francis Hawks, New Bern, 14 October 1812, National Archives, RG 45, *Privateers, War of 1812*, 1: 229; Theophilus Parker, *Share*; *University Magazine*, 4: 408.
22. *The Carolina Federal Republican*, New Bern, 27 February 1813, 20 March 1813, 17 April 1813, 1 May 1813.
23. Joshua Whithead, Garrett Farrell, and others, on board the Snap Dragon, 19 December 1812, David _____ and others, *Snap Dragon*, 16 January 1813, National Archives, RG 45, Subject File: U.S. Navy, RB, 1812–1815, *British Prisoner Rolls and Lists*, Boxes 575, 577.
24. *University Magazine*, 4: 407–408.
25. *University Magazine*, 4: 461–462.
26. *University Magazine*, 4: 462, 464.
27. *University Magazine*, 4: 462–463.
28. *University Magazine*, 4: 464–465.
29. *The Carolina Federal Republican*, New Bern, 18 September 1813. The Ringdove is identified as the armed sloop *Rifleman* in *University Magazine*, 5: 128–129.
30. *The Carolina Federal Republican*, New Bern, 18 September 1813. *Niles' Weekly Register*, Baltimore, 4 September 1813, 16; 18 September 1813, 46.
31. *The Raleigh Register and North Carolina Gazette*, 17 September 1813; *The Wilmington Gazette*, 2 October 1813; *The Carolina Federal Republican*, New Bern, 11 September 1813; *University Magazine*, 5: 205; Garitee, *Republic's Private Navy*, 179. There were 75 men in the crew. If each man received \$3,000 that totals \$225,000, except that ship's officers received more than a single share. The owners were also entitled to at least \$225,000, which was divided into 50 shares. Unfortunately, it is not known how many shares Burns owned. Naval captains were entitled to a triple share, but often privateer contracts varied. See Childsey, *Privateers*, 46. In addition to the crew's and owner's shares, customs duties and contributions to seamen's welfare were paid from the sale. In a sale of seized cargo in Camden, Maine the duties reported were 15% of the value, which was half the normal import duty. As an incentive privateers were being allowed this break on the import duties. See *Niles' Weekly Register*, Baltimore, 30 April 1814, 150.
32. *New Berne Weekly Journal*, 27 February 1896.
33. *New Berne Weekly Journal*, 27 February 1896.
34. *New Berne Weekly Journal*, 27 February 1896. *Niles' Weekly Register*, Baltimore, 30 April 1814, 151.
35. Commission, 21 May 1814, National Archives, RG 45, *Privateers, War of 1812*, 6: n.p.; *The Raleigh Register and North Carolina Gazette*, 5 August 1814; *Niles' Weekly Register*, Baltimore, 30 July, 1814, 373; Log of the sloop *HMS Martin*, 30 June 1814, Public Record Office, London, ADM 51/2557 (I am indebted to David Moore of the North Carolina Maritime Museum, who secured a copy of this log in London.); Faye Margaret Kert, *Prize and Prejudice: Privateering and Naval Prize in Atlantic Canada in the War of 1812* (St. John's, Newfoundland: International Maritime Economic Association, 1997), 191, 213, 222; National Archives, RG 45, Subject File U.S. Navy, RA, *War of 1812, Rolls and Lists of U.S. Prisoners*, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Box 567, Dartmoor, England, Box 566.
36. Maclay, "Exploits," 874. The government was paying a bounty of \$25 for each prisoner in 1813. *Niles' Weekly Register*, Baltimore, 11 September 1813, 31.
37. *University Magazine*, 5: 129, 205.



Captain John Young and the *Independence*

By Sam Newell

On 15 April 1778 a small American brig enroute from France approached Ocracoke Inlet seeking shelter behind the sandy islands that had helped protect North Carolina's mainland from British intruders. The vessel was unusual in several respects. Unlike the mostly merchant vessels or privateers using Ocracoke's harbor during the American Revolution, this was a warship—the Continental naval vessel, *Independence*. During her brief career she was credited with capturing five prizes as well as executing a number of important missions for the American cause. Her successful record was all the more important in light of the navy's generally poor performance against a vastly superior British foe. Additionally, she was commanded by a man destined to rank as one of the United State's important naval heroes during the War for Independence. John Young, who began his naval career in the *Independence*, would later command the *Saratoga*, an 18-gun sloop-of-war, with which he would capture twelve prizes and a position of honor in the American navy.

But it was Young's actions in the *Independence* which earned him the gratitude of the Continental Board of Admiralty, and yet almost ended his career. For while attempting to enter Ocracoke, the *Independence* struck the outer bar and was "battered to pieces."¹ This loss was particularly acute as the navy had recently suffered a number of other misfortunes, including the capture or destruction of the frigates *Randolph*, *Alfred*, and *Virginia* and the armed ship *Columbus*. A year and a half would pass before Young was formally cleared of responsibility in the sinking. The loss of the *Independence* would be

viewed by some as "negligence and wilful misconduct" by her pilot.²

The *Independence's* naval career lasted less than two years, but in that time she made a significant contribution to the American cause. Her early history is still uncertain. In October 1775 the Continental Congress created a naval committee to purchase vessels for the war effort. This committee initially purchased two ships, six brigs, three schooners, and five sloops as part of an emergency fleet to take action against British movements. The *Independence* was probably one of these sloops.³

The size and appearance of the *Independence* are partly conjecture. Described as a fast sailer, she was outfitted with ten 4-pounder carriage guns and a crew of thirty.⁴ Another source lists her as carrying ten 9-pounders.⁵ Sloops-of-war were ship-rigged vessels, meaning they carried three masts equipped with square sails. Since the *Independence* was purchased from merchant service and also described as "one of the smallest craft on the continental register" she was probably equipped with the traditional single mast sloop rig.⁶ Two privateer sloops, commissioned by New York and Maryland in 1776, and coincidentally named *Independence*, also carried ten guns; the New York vessel's being 4-pounders. Both carried crews comparable to the Continental sloop's and were each of 70 tons.⁷ The *Independence* may also have been of similar tonnage.

The records are silent as to the *Independence's* actions during the first part of 1776. Possibly she was still being outfitted for war. However, after July, under Young's command, she would bring credit to her service capturing prizes, transporting important passengers and dispatches between the newly proclaimed United States, Martinique, and France, and returning with sorely needed military supplies for the war effort. Additionally, in concert with John Paul Jones and his ship *Ranger*, the *Independence* would have the honor of receiving one of the first naval salutes offered to American vessels by a French admiral after the signing of the treaty of alliance between France and the United States.

Young's first service to the American cause was not in the *Independence* but as captain of another sloop

An American Brigantine ca. 1775.
Sailing Ships. Björn Landström.

which he took to Martinique in the spring of 1776. The trip netted a large supply of gunpowder and saltpetre for the Continental forces and secured for Young an offer to command a Continental vessel.⁸

Young received his Continental captain's commission in July 1776 and accepted the *Independence* as his first naval command.⁹ In September he received orders to carry tobacco and bar iron to Martinique to be exchanged for "Arms & Gunlocks, Powder, Gun Flints, Salt petre, sulfar-sail cloth, Blankets, or other woolen goods." Young was given a commission to take as prizes any British vessels which could likely be captured and was ordered to enlist for naval service as many seamen as possible.¹⁰ Young also carried dispatches to William Bingham, United States commercial agent at Martinique, which were to be forwarded to American agents in Paris. These included a commission from the Continental Congress appointing Benjamin Franklin, among others, United States Commissioner with authority to negotiate a treaty of alliance with France.¹¹

The *Independence* left in October for Martinique. North of the Leeward Islands, on 25 October, Young had the great good fortune to secure his first prize, the ship *Sam*. Enroute from Barbados to London, the *Sam* carried 20,000 dollars in specie and "52 C. weight of Ivory" as cargo. A prize crew was put on board and she was sent to Philadelphia along with eight of the *Sam's* company. The rest of the *Sam's* crew, with the exception of her captain and boatswain, joined Young and the *Independence*.¹²

Young arrived in Martinique, forwarded the dispatches and exchanged his cargo for the needed munitions. Illness, however, forced him to remain at Martinique while the *Independence* returned to Philadelphia under the command of her first lieutenant, James Robertson. In December, off the Virginia coast, she was chased by a large frigate and forced into Chincoteague to elude capture.¹³ Lieutenant Robertson again tried to slip past the British cruisers but was spied off the Delaware Capes and chased by six of the enemy's vessels. Robertson escaped these pursuers and finally arrived safely in Philadelphia where the *Independence's* cargo of "Blankets, Coarse cloths and near 1,000 muskets" was unloaded.¹⁴ Her arrival was timely. A quantity of blankets were immedi-

ately sent to George Washington's camp where his troops were suffering from the extreme winter's cold.¹⁵ Reportedly, those blankets arrived on Christmas Day. That night Washington led his men across the icy Delaware to attack and rout the Hessians at Trenton.¹⁶

The *Independence* was idled during the first months of the new year. Young returned from Martinique to again take command of the *Independence* and found a number of crewmen had "absconced" from the ship. As inducement to get the deserters to return he announced that absent crewmen would forfeit their share of any prize money owed them.¹⁷

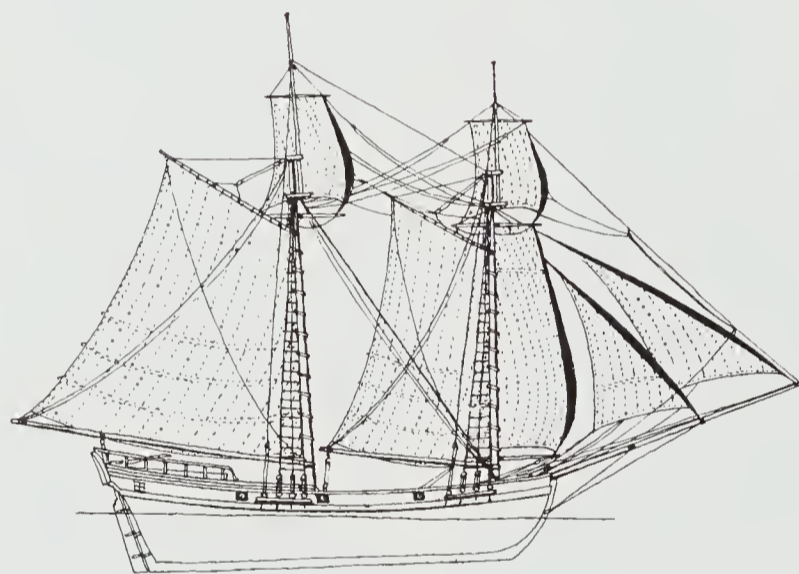
In March Young was again ordered to Martinique.¹⁸ Arriving 5 April, he secured a cargo of "500 tents, 2,000 stand of arms, medicines, etc." needed at Philadelphia.¹⁹ Young, however, was forced to avoid returning directly home as a British squadron was blockading the Delaware Capes and instead put into

Sinepuxent Bay, Maryland. Entering the bay on 11 May, Young spied a small schooner, the 30 ton *Mary*, which was subsequently captured and condemned as a prize.²⁰

Young unloaded his cargo at Sinepuxent. On 13 May the Continental Marine Committee ordered him to prepare the *Independence* for a three-week cruise off the Delaware Capes. Young was to warn incoming American ships of the danger posed by British cruisers blocking the Delaware River and Chesapeake Bay, and advise them to make for safer ports to the south or east.²¹

Possibly, the *Independence* never made the voyage. On 27 May she was still at Sinepuxent when six vessels appeared off shore. One vessel signalled for a pilot and the *Independence's* boat with five crewmen was sent out to oblige. Too late they discovered the visitors were British and were captured. Fortunately, adverse winds kept the British from entering the bay. However, they remained offshore until 7 June, threatening by their presence. Occasionally, when they appeared in sight, signals from the *Independence's* guns alerted the local militia of the danger. Possibly, this prevented the British from attempting an attack.²²

Young was next ordered to Nantes, France, with dispatches from the Committee of Foreign Affairs and the Secret Committee to be delivered personally to Benjamin



An American Schooner. Sailing Ships. Björn Landström.

Franklin and other American commissioners in Paris. The *Independence* was to return with dispatches from these men, bring back any goods provided by Continental agents, and again was commissioned to capture prizes.²³

Young was unable to leave Sinexpuent until mid-August. This delay was perhaps fortunate for on 4 August Young spied Lord Howe's massive 228 vessel British fleet moving southward toward the Chesapeake. He hastily sent messages to authorities in Maryland and Virginia, and to Congress, warning of the danger to Philadelphia.²⁴

The *Independence* finally put to sea 10 August and arrived in the Loire after a passage of forty-five days.²⁵ Two prizes were taken enroute. The brig *Lovely Peggy* was captured 7 September. Although one source suggests she was sent to America, another claims the vessel was recaptured. One week later another prize, name unknown, was taken and brought to L'Orient and sold for £23,000.²⁶

Due to various delays the *Independence* remained in France until late February. After his arrival in September, Young delivered his dispatches as instructed and returned to await replies from the American commissioners. While this official business was being conducted, the sloop was re-rigged as a brig.²⁷ Responses from Paris arrived in early December, but British cruisers offshore kept the *Independence* from putting to sea.²⁸ Later that month adverse winds kept the brig at anchor.²⁹ Meanwhile, on 9 December,

Captain John Paul Jones arrived at Nantes in the *Ranger*.³⁰ Jones and Young were familiar with one another, having met in Philadelphia during the summer of 1776. The two captains joined forces and, on 13 February, carried their ships up the French coast to Quiberon Bay—Jones probably to familiarize himself with the coast and Young hoping to join with a French fleet for protection as it moved from the French coast to the sea.³¹

On 14 February, Jones, in the *Ranger*, sailed past Admiral LaMotte Piquet's flagship and offered a 13-gun salute. The French responded with nine guns. The next day, Jones boarded the *Independence* and, again passing by the admiral, the honors were repeated. These were the first salutes received by Continental ships since the 6 February signing of an alliance between France and the

United States.³²

The *Independence* left with the French fleet on 25 February, traveling as far as the Azores before setting a new course for home.³³ Jones had advised Young to head for Ocracoke Inlet, probably because British cruisers were only occasionally patrolling that stretch of shore. Whether by accident or intent, as some allege, the *Independence's* pilot ran her aground on Ocracoke's outer bar.³⁴ Although the vessel would eventually go to pieces, Young and his crew had time to salvage the ship's cargo, guns, and stores—even the ship's bell.³⁵ These supplies were sent to Edenton and stored with the mercantile firm of Hughes, Smith, and Allen. Two years later thieves broke into the firm's storehouse and carried off some goods including the brig's sails—a reminder to Young of the disaster that threatened his career as a naval captain.³⁶

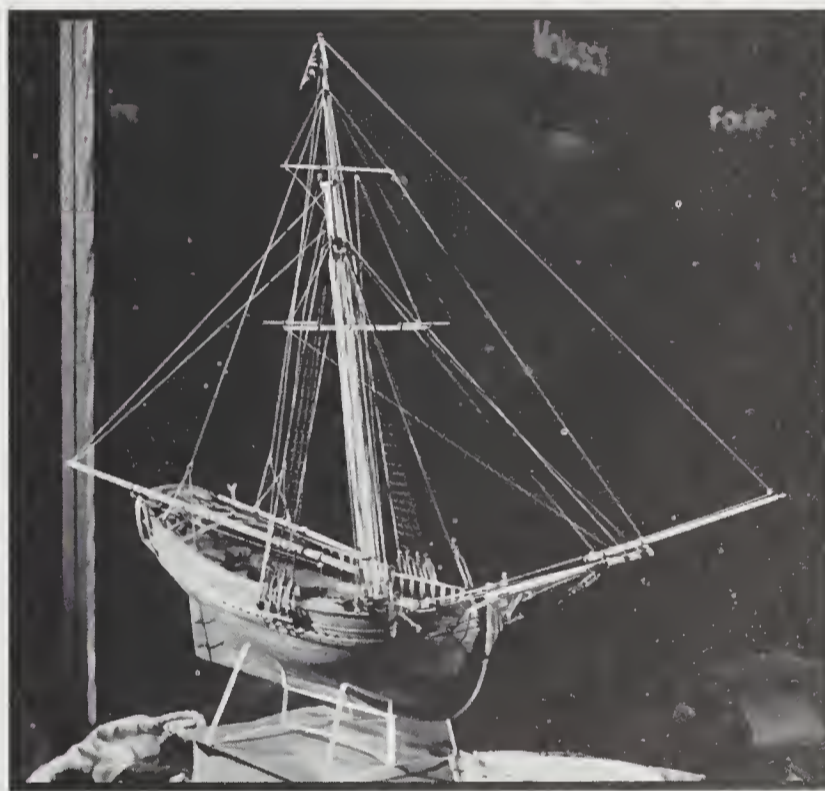
Young's later endeavors, however, would earn

him far more recognition than he had enjoyed in the *Independence*. While awaiting an official inquiry as to his responsibility in the *Independence's* destruction, Young would command two letter-of-marque vessels. He first captained the schooner *Buckskin* on a three-month cruise to Cuban waters. This voyage was uneventful, and he next accepted command of the 14-gun brig *Impertinent*. Although two prizes were captured by her, one was later recaptured by the British.³⁷

Finally, eighteen months after her wreck, a board of inquiry determined that Young bore no fault in

the *Independence's* destruction. His reputation restored, Young was rewarded with command of the *Saratoga*.³⁸ Launched in the spring of 1780, this new sloop-of-war mounted "16 9-pounders and a pair of 4's," and with her Young would capture twelve prizes, bringing credit to himself and the United States Navy.³⁹ This career, though, was ended in March 1781. Enroute to Philadelphia from the Caribbean, the *Saratoga* became separated during a storm from a convoy of merchantmen she was escorting. She was never seen again and was believed lost with all hands.⁴⁰

The *Independence's* actions in the American Revolution have earned her recognition as a nationally important historic vessel. Through her, Young and his crew were able to perform their missions for the



An American Sloop. NCMM Collection, Diane Hardy photo.

American cause. These successes led to Young's appointment to the *Saratoga* and subsequent fame. In addition to her association with Young as an historic figure, she reflects the efforts of a struggling naval administration to contribute to the birth of our new nation. Pressed into the navy from merchant service, she had to be refitted for war. Around such efforts was the American navy born. Her remains possibly still lie at Ocracoke Inlet, a testimony to the dangers faced by mariners in both peacetime and war.

NOTES

1. Nathan Miller, *Sea of Glory: The Continental Navy Fights for Independence, 1775–1783* (New York: David McKay Company, 1974), 322.
2. William Bell Clark, *The First Saratoga: Being the Saga of John Young and His Sloop of War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1953), 1, 16–17.
3. Howard I. Chapelle, *The History of the American Sailing Navy* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1949), 53.
4. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 13.
5. John W. Jackson, *The Pennsylvania Navy: The Defense of the Delaware, 1775–1781* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1974), 434, n. 26.
6. Miller, *Sea of Glory*, 13; William M. Fowler, Jr., *Rebels Under Sail: The American Navy During the Revolution* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), 188.
7. "Request for Commission for the New York Privateer Sloop Independence," 16 July 1776, William Bell Clark, William James Morgan, and Michael J. Crawford, eds., *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, 10 vols. to date (Washington: Naval Historical Center, Department of the Navy, 1964–), 5:1103, hereinafter cited as Clark and others, NDAR; "Journal of the Maryland Council of Safety," 30 September 1776, Clark and others, NDAR, 6: 1072.
8. *Boston Gazette*, 20 May 1776, Clark and others, NDAR, 4: 1415; Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 13.
9. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 13.
10. "Secret Committee of the Continental Congress to William Bingham," 20 September 1776, Clark and others, NDAR, 6:913–914.
11. "Committee of Correspondence to Silas Deane," 24 October 1776, Clark and others, NDAR, 6: 1403.
12. "Extract of A Letter from Barbadoes," 20 November 1776, Clark and others, NDAR, 7:227.
13. "Robert Morris to the Committee of Secret Correspondence," 16 December 1776, Clark and others, NDAR, 7:496.
14. "Robert Morris to the Committee of Secret Correspondence," 16 December 1776, Clark and others, NDAR, 7:496; "Robert Morris to John Hancock," 21 December 1776, Clark and others, NDAR, 7:544.
15. "Robert Morris to John Hancock," 21 December 1776, Clark and others, NDAR, 7:544.
16. "Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 14.
17. "Captain John Young to the Crew of the Continental Sloop Independence, 20 February 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 7: 1250.
18. "William Bingham to the Continental Commissioners in France," 6 April 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 8:283.
19. *Pennsylvania Journal*, 14 May 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 8:965.
20. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 14, 157: "Libel of Captain John Young Against the Schooner Mary," 23 June 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 9: 158.
21. "Continental Marine Committee to Captain John Young," 13 May 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 8:963.

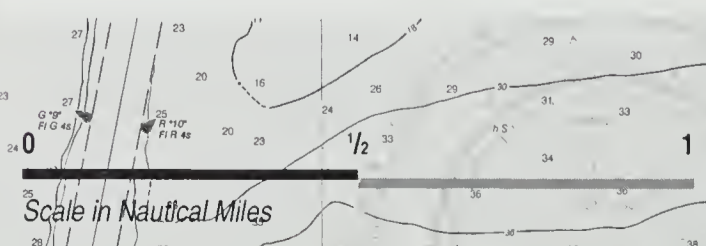
22. "Joseph Dashiell to Governor Thomas Jefferson," 10 June 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 9:84.
23. "Continental Marine Committee to Captain John Young," 5 July 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 9:222.
24. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 15; "Paul Wentworth to William Eden," 30 October 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 10:960.
25. "Paul Wentworth to William Eden," 30 October 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 10:960; Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 15.
26. "Paul Wentworth to William Eden," October 30 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 10:960; "New-Lloyd's List (London)," 28 October 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 10:949; "William Lee to Lieutenant James Robertson," 23 September 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 10:656; Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 157.
27. Fowler, *Rebels Under Sail*, 146.
28. "Captain John Young to the American Commissioners in France," 16 December 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 10: 1109–1110.
29. "Captain Thomas Bell to Silas Deane," 28 December 1777, Clark and others, NDAR, 10: 1156
30. Miller, *Sea of Glory*, 355.
31. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 16; Miller, *Sea of Glory*, 356–357.
32. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 16; Fowler, 146–147.
33. Fowler, *Rebels Under Sail*, 147.
34. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 16–17; Ira B. Grubar, *The Howe Brothers and the American Revolution* (Kingsport, Tennessee: Kingsport Press, 1972), 293; Capt. Willis Wilson to Governor Caswell," 20 May 1778, Walter Clark, ed., *The State Records of North Carolina*, 16 vols. (Winston and Goldsboro: State of North Carolina, 1895–1905). Reprint (Wilmington: Broadfoot Publishing Company, 1993), 13: 132–134. Wilson, captain of the armed galley *Caswell*, sent to Ocracoke in the spring of 1778, wrote to North Carolina's Governor Caswell about problems with Ocracoke pilots saying, "...its clearly evident to me that they wish every vessel cast away, as they may plunder them..."
35. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 178; "To Hewes and Smith," 6 May 1778, Charles O. Paulin, ed., *Outletters of the Continental Marine Committee and Board of Admiralty*, 2 vols. (New York: Naval Historical Society, 1914), 1:237.
36. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 17, 23.
37. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 19, 21–22
38. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 1, 22.
39. Miller, *Sea of Glory*, 277; Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 154, 156–157.
40. Clark, *The First Saratoga*, 154; Miller, *Sea of Glory*, 456.



3.6	3.3	0.2	-2.0
4.1	3.9	0.2	-2.0

X
(QAR)

Chart 1: The modern NOAA chart of Beaufort Inlet. The site believed to be *Queen Anne's Revenge* (QAR) is marked just over a mile south of Fort Macon, at a depth of just over twenty feet. The heavy, gray lines on either side of the mouth of the inlet mark the approximate eighteenth century limits of the barrier islands. The lighter gray lines indicate the approximate channel boundaries of that time. The gray dot indicates the location of the Hammock House, believed to be the "White House" shown on two eighteenth century charts.



DISCONTINUED DUMP SITE
"dredged material"
paths from surveys dated 1977-1995

NOTES:
Nautical regulations are published in Coast Pilot 4. Additions or revisions to Chart 1 are published in the Notice to Mariners. Information on regulations may be obtained at the Office of the 5th Coast Guard District in Portsmouth, Virginia, Office of the District Engineer, Corps of Engineers, Wilmington, North Carolina.
Refer to charted regulation section number

The Historical Geography of Beaufort Inlet

By Philip Masters

As President of Intersal, Inc., the private research firm that conducted a 10-year long search for information on the loss of *Queen Anne's Revenge*, I researched at many of the major archives of Great Britain and the United States. Archive documents confirmed that the 40-gun *Queen Anne's Revenge* became stuck in the sand and was abandoned in June 1718 while attempting to pass over "the Bar at Topsail Inlet," as Beaufort Inlet was then known. In order to determine how that related to today's charts, it was necessary to conduct an exercise in historical geography. At each repository, I carefully sifted through the manuscript collection, taking time to visit the "map room" to search for and order copies of the early charts of coastal North Carolina.

As a result, Intersal accumulated dozens of eighteenth and nineteenth century renditions of Beaufort Inlet as it existed before man's intervention.¹ Attention was focused on the offshore sandbars extending from the mouth of the inlet almost two miles out into the ocean. The most informative of the early charts were adjusted to the scale of today's most detailed NOAA chart of the area (#11547). Copies were printed on clear acetate, enabling us to overlay the old charts on the new. This gave us an understanding of the subtle changes wrought by "Mother Nature" before the U.S. Army Corps of engineers came on the scene in the 1880s, and allowed us to determine where the inlet's eighteenth century boundaries, features, and obstacles were in relation to today's.

The Outer Banks are a four hundred mile-long string of barrier islands (actually, massive sandbars) which act as buffers between continent and ocean. It is as if nature makes and maintains these buffers so they, rather than the mainland, absorb the impact of the ocean, especially during hurricanes. The occasional breaks separating the islands are natural tidal estuaries, where ocean and inland waters mix. These inlets are conduits for the enor-

mous quantities of water dumped into or pulled out of the sea with each shift of the tide.²

A by-product of the tidal interaction is a natural accumulation of sand just outside the mouth of each inlet. Generally speaking, more mud, silt, and sand are dragged out of an inlet by the outgoing tide than are sucked in with the incoming. The resultant offshore sandbars are obstacles to navigation that can limit the size of vessels passing through an inlet.

Beaufort Inlet is in an area of the Atlantic seaboard where the coastline runs east-west rather than north-south, so the ocean is to the south. The inlet's mouth is bordered by two of the Outer Banks. To the east is Shackleford Banks, now part of unspoiled Cape Lookout National Seashore and home to the free-running Shackleford ponies. To the west is Bogue Banks, with the restored Civil War era Fort Macon overlooking the inlet. Early charts show an area of more than two square miles of shallow sandbars just outside Beaufort Inlet, much of them less than six feet from the surface, with some patches exposed at low tide. The sands within those sandbars sometimes shifted with passing storms, but the strong tidal forces were usually quick to bring things back to their former state of equilibrium.

In its natural state, the mouth of Beaufort Inlet was more than a mile wide. With the incoming tide, seawater was sucked through the inlet and into the sound between the barrier islands and the mainland. With the outgoing tide, the sound vomited everything back into the ocean. Forces were strong enough to create a wide, powerful river of water moving through the inlet with each change of the tide. The only practical ship's path through Beaufort Inlet was between the banks of that river. This natural tidal channel, which split the area of shallow sandbars in half, ran for more than a mile before reaching the open ocean. The depth of the channel at the mouth of the inlet, where the tidal forces were most powerful, got right down to bedrock, at more than forty feet. At its southern end, where weakening forces allowed for an accumulation of sand, the channel barely managed to snake its way through the sandbars to mix with the open Atlantic. That spot, where tidal river met ocean, was somewhere on the

outer bar.

In the eighteenth century, it was referred to as “the Bar of Topsail Inlet” then, in the nineteenth century, as “the Beaufort Bar.” The outer bar, as we will call it, was more than a mile south of the mouth of the inlet, at the spot where the two large areas of sandbars on either side of the channel relentlessly tried to join together before blending with the ocean. There, nature somehow managed to achieve and maintain a delicate balancing act that allowed a tenuous accumulation of sand at the outer bar, but not sufficient enough to entirely block the tidal river from finding the ocean. The only way larger vessels such as *Queen Anne’s Revenge* could attempt enter or exit the inlet was to locate that opening along the outer bar—the spot where ocean met channel, and where deeper water could be found—and wait for high tide. But best efforts did not always succeed. *Queen Anne’s Revenge* was the first of at least a dozen eighteenth and nineteenth century vessels reported stranded and lost attempting to navigate over the outer bar at Beaufort Inlet.

Instructions for safe passage through Beaufort Inlet remained relatively unchanged starting with the earliest surviving navigational chart in 1733 (Mosely) on into the nineteenth century. Three prominent eighteenth century charts indicated that entering vessels with a draft of up to fifteen feet could locate the beginnings of the then comma-shaped channel by aligning two visible landmarks. The charts suggested approaching the inlet from the southwest and heading roughly NNE, lining up the western edge of the inlet’s mouth (the easternmost tip of Bogue Banks) with a “White House” visible in the distance in Beaufort.³ Throughout the eighteenth century, large vessels found their way over the outer bar using those references.

Then, a series of major hurricanes starting in the 1820s ushered in sixty years of erosion and instability at Beaufort Inlet. About a quarter mile of the eastern tip of Bogue Banks, including the site of revolutionary era Fort Hampton, disappeared underwater. This widened the mouth of the inlet and shifted the northern end of the channel slightly westward.⁴ With the greater width, more powerful tidal forces came into play, and the southernmost portion of the channel shifted eastward. As a result, in the 1830s the charts advised approaching the outer bar from slightly east of south, with a heading of NNW. In the late nineteenth century, the entrance/exit moved further eastward, and the period charts suggested a more NW heading.

In the twentieth century, the Army Corps of Engineers has dredged and maintained a shipping channel allowing for a straight run from ocean to mouth. Large ocean-going ships come in from due south of the inlet and aim straight for Shackleford Point at a heading approximately twelve degrees east of north. The channel is maintained at a minimum depth of forty-five feet and a width

of at least four hundred and fifty feet. Dredging took place within the borders of the channel, but “knocked down” the surrounding sandbars. As a result, the outer bar has disappeared. That area it once occupied now has a depth of between twenty to thirty feet.

This study was vital to the discovery of *Queen Anne’s Revenge*. It was Intersal’s director of operations, Mike Daniel, who correctly interpreted the charts, allowing the search area to be narrowed. Mike concentrated his magnetometer survey efforts in the area where a passage of the outer bar would have most likely been attempted in 1718, rather than where today’s shallows are. In November 1996, Mike and the Intersal crew located and examined five shipwreck sites in just eleven days of survey operations. The fifth, the site believed to be *Queen Anne’s Revenge*, is just over a mile SSW of the mouth of the inlet, in twenty to twenty-five feet of water—right in line with the path suggested in the eighteenth century charts. Historical geography helped us understand where the passage over the outer bar had been in the eighteenth century. More importantly, it taught us the necessity of studying early maps and charts before searching for a historic site.

There is another potential long-term benefit to this study. By examining the changes that took place at Beaufort Inlet over the one hundred and fifty years (1733–1883) of charted history prior to man’s intervention, we hope to better understand the dynamics associated with the natural creation and maintenance of barrier islands and inlets around the world. Toward this end, in 1997 Intersal donated a full set of copies of the early charts of Beaufort Inlet to the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort.

NOTES

1. While dozens of repositories were searched, virtually all of the charts important to this study were copied in the following five: the map collection at the North Carolina State Archives in Raleigh, the Map Room at the New York Public Library on Fifth Avenue at 42nd Street in NYC, the Geography and Map Division at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, the map collection at the National Archives just outside Washington, DC, and the map collection at the British Public Record Office in Kew, just outside London.

2. See *The Outer Banks of North Carolina* by David Stick, Chapel Hill, 1958.

3. Reference was made to a “White House” as a landmark on charts dated 1738 (Wimble), 1775 (Mouzon), and 1794 (Holland). Legend has it that the charts were referring to the Hammock House, circa 1709, still standing and known as the oldest house in historic Beaufort.

4. The mouth of the inlet was a mile and a half wide for the next sixty years. In the late nineteenth century, the westernmost tip of Shackleford Banks was seen to be seriously eroding. The Army Corps of Engineers shored up the area by driving pilings into the sand, thereby extending Shackleford Point about three-quarters of a mile westward. This effectively cut the width of the inlet’s mouth in half. It has since been maintained at that width.

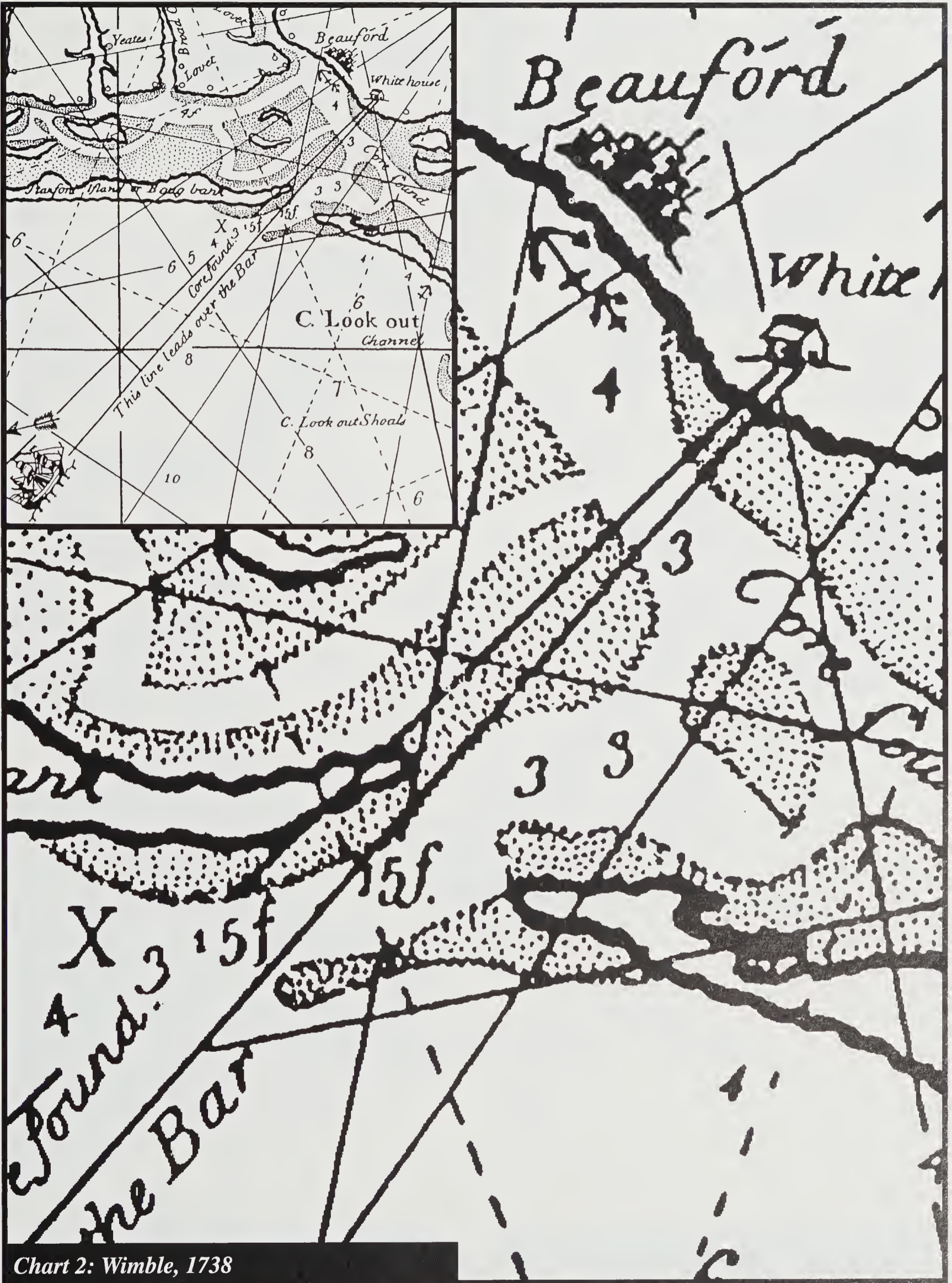


Chart 2: Wimble, 1738

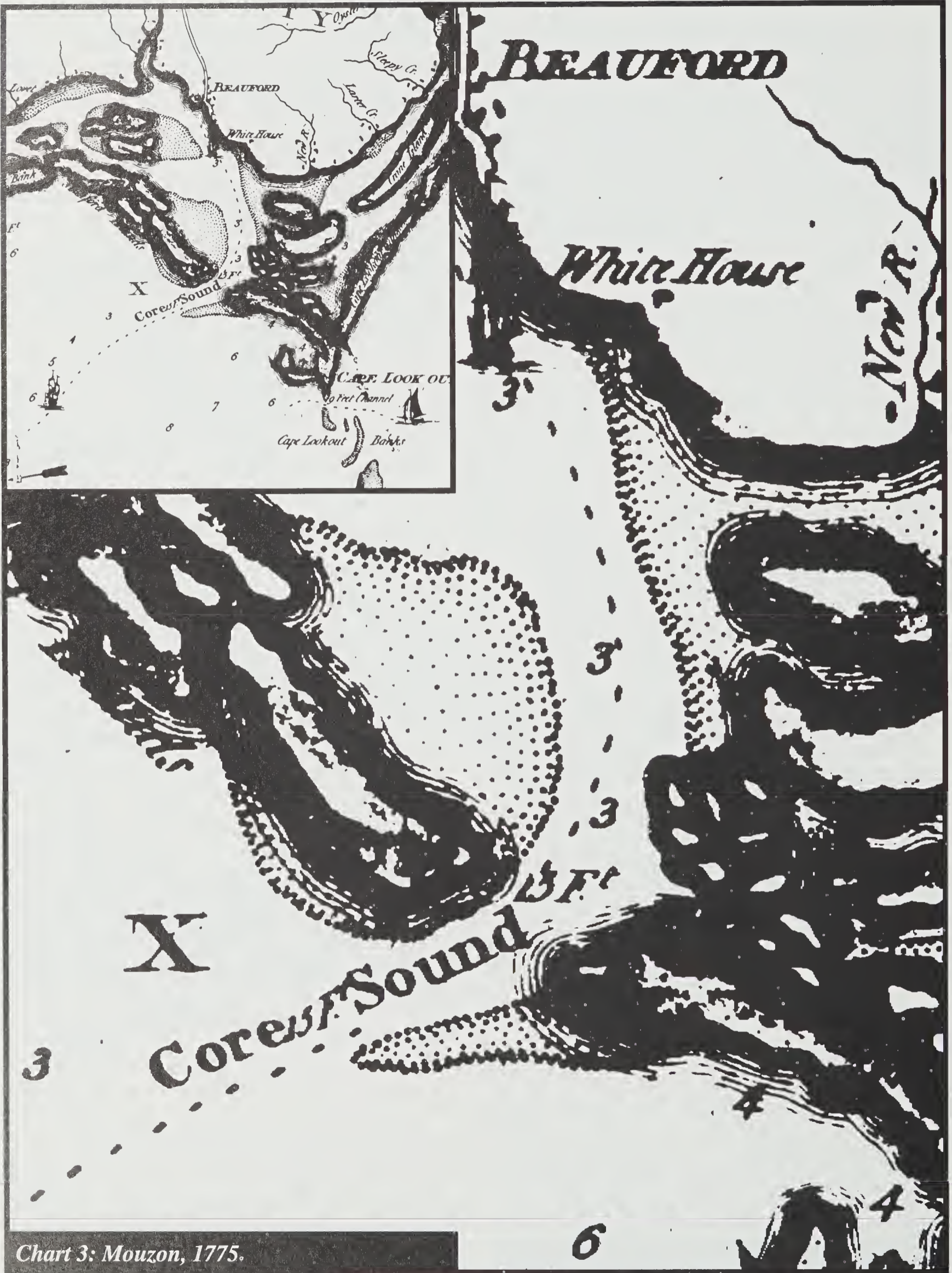


Chart 3: Mouzon, 1775.



Chart 4: Coles/Price, 1806

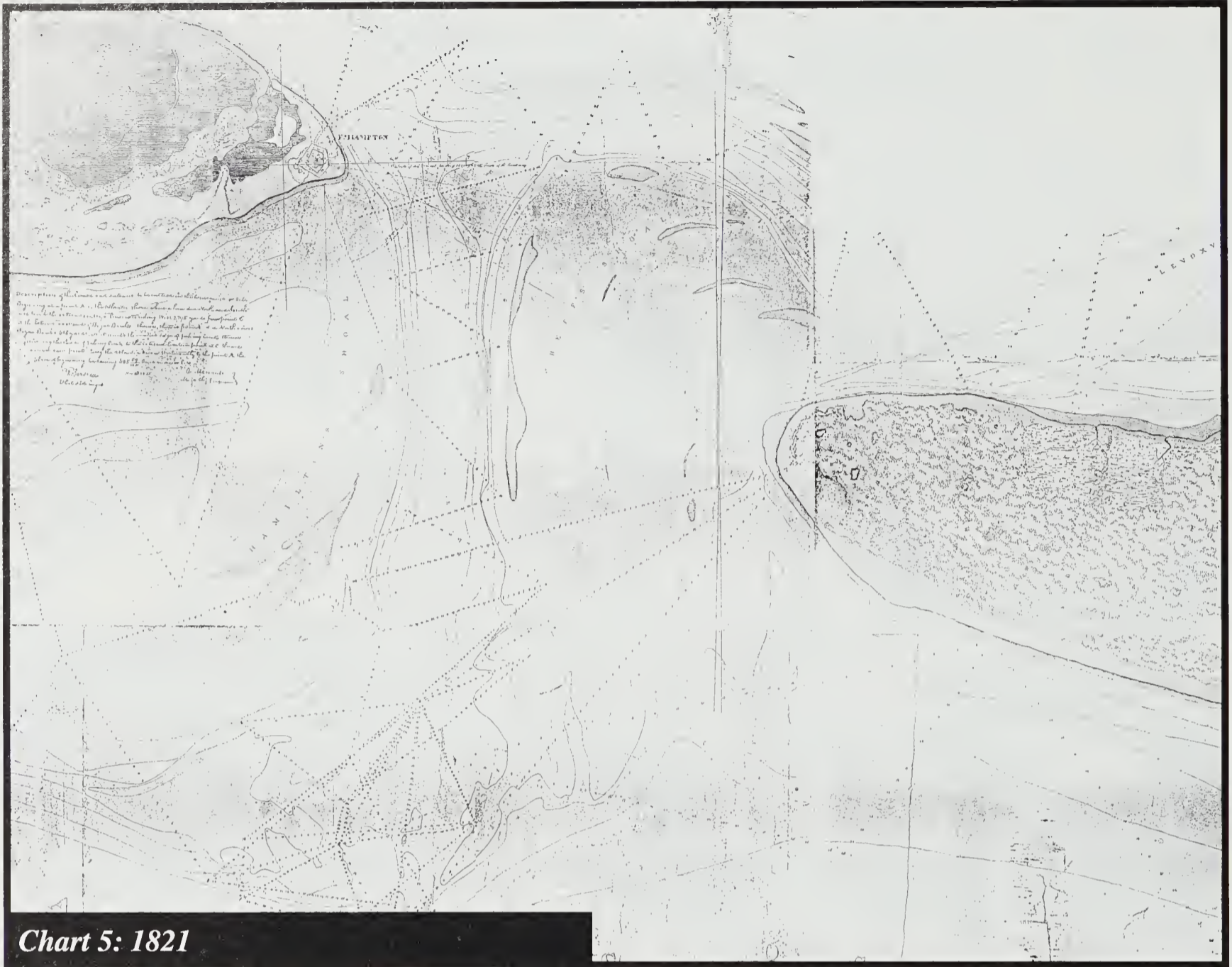


Chart 5: 1821

KEY TO CHARTS

Chart 2: The Wimble chart of 1738. This is the first recorded reference to the “White House” as an aid to navigation. The suggestion was to approach the inlet from the southwest.

Chart 3: The Mouzon chart of 1775. As in the earlier chart, the “White House” is referenced and, once again, the suggested approach was from the southwest.

Chart 4: The Coles/Price chart of 1806. Here, reference is made to a “windmill” instead of the “White House” as an aid to navigation. Note that the safest approach is still from the southwest.

Chart 5: A chart of 1821. Note the suggestion is to approach from a more southerly direction.

Chart 6: The Blount chart of 1830. The suggestion is still to approach from a more southerly direction.

Chart 7: The survey of 1857. Note that the suggested direction of approach is from the southeast.

Chart 8: The survey of 1876. Note the shift back to a suggested direction of approach from the south.

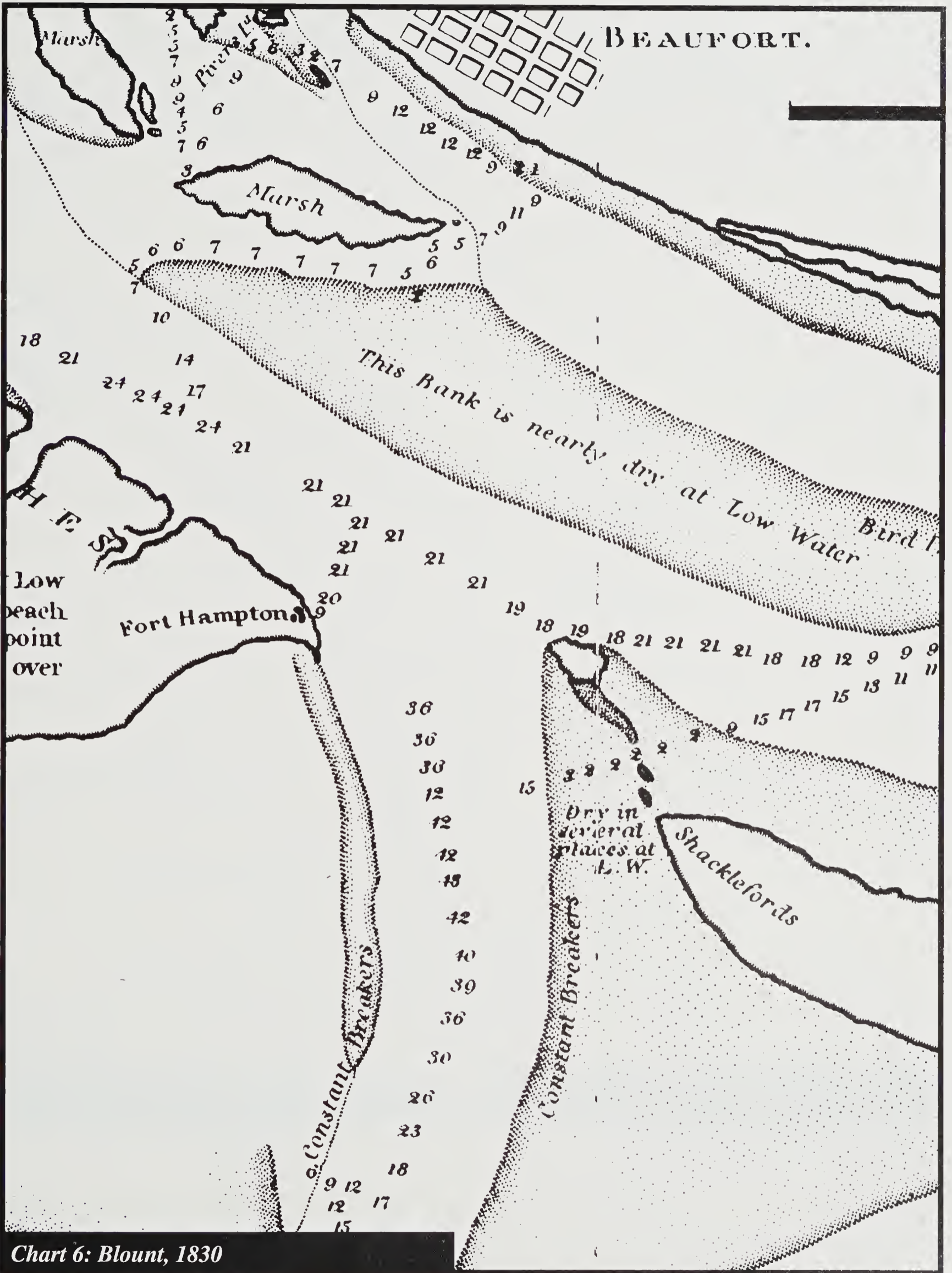


Chart 6: Blount, 1830

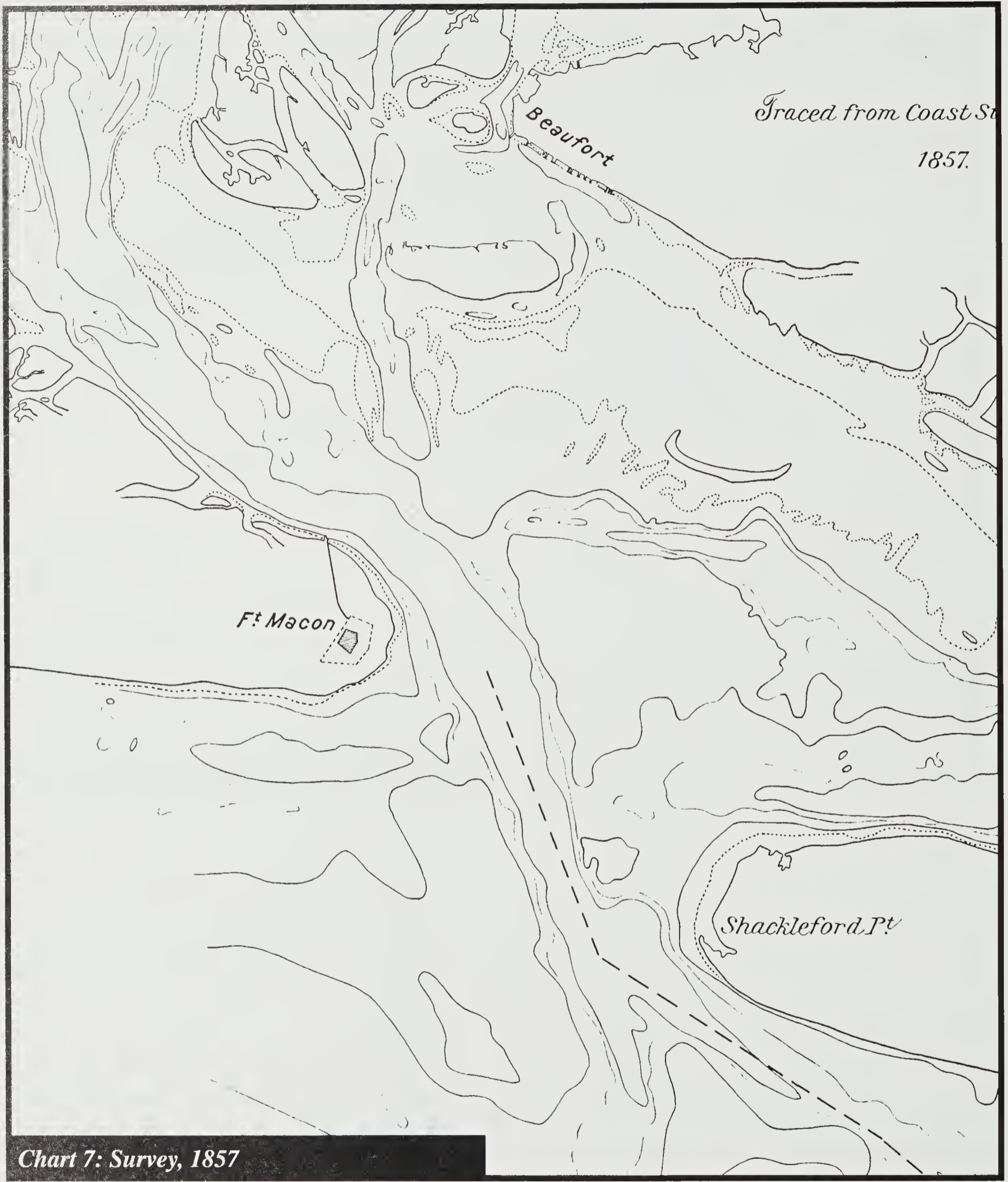
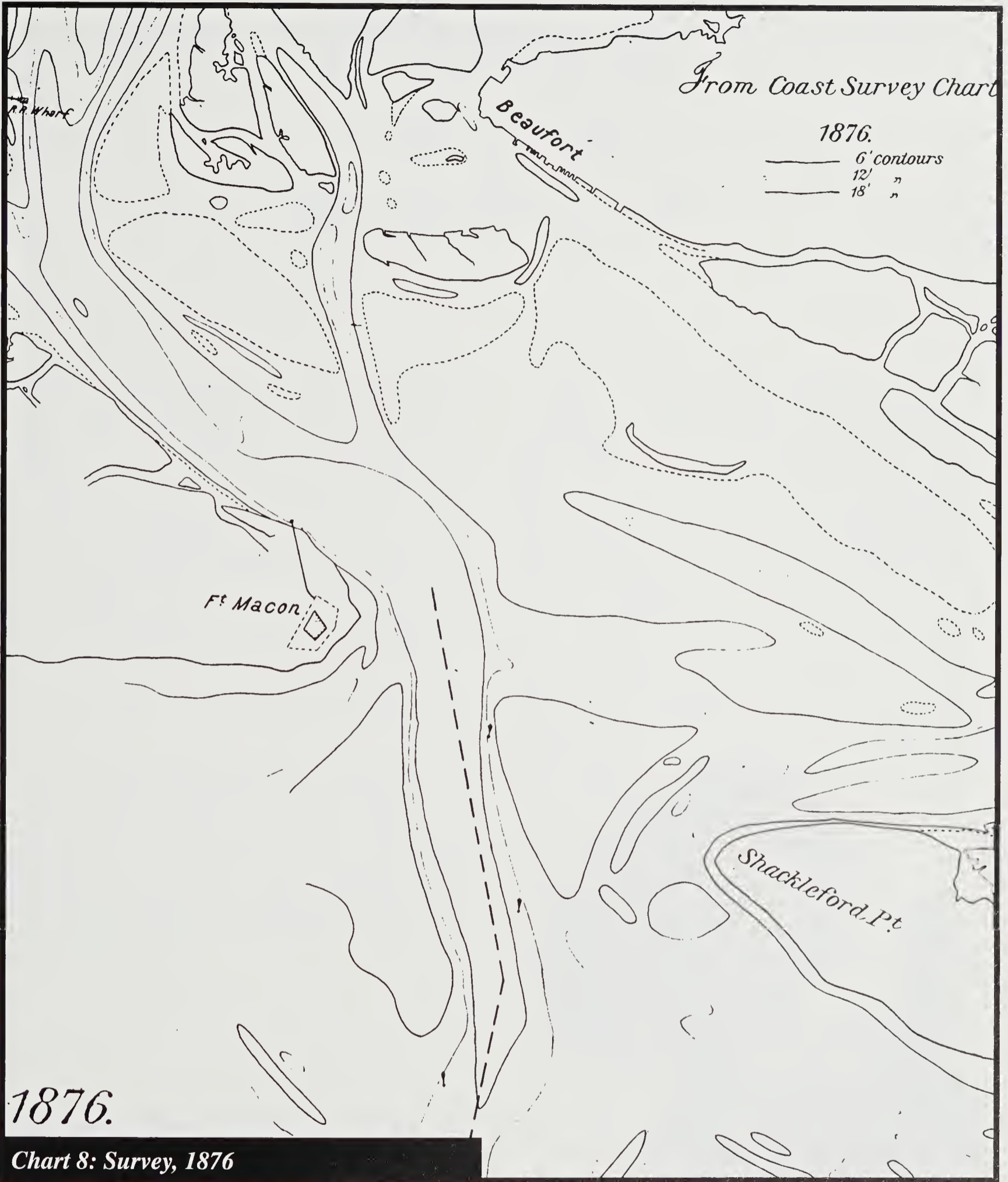
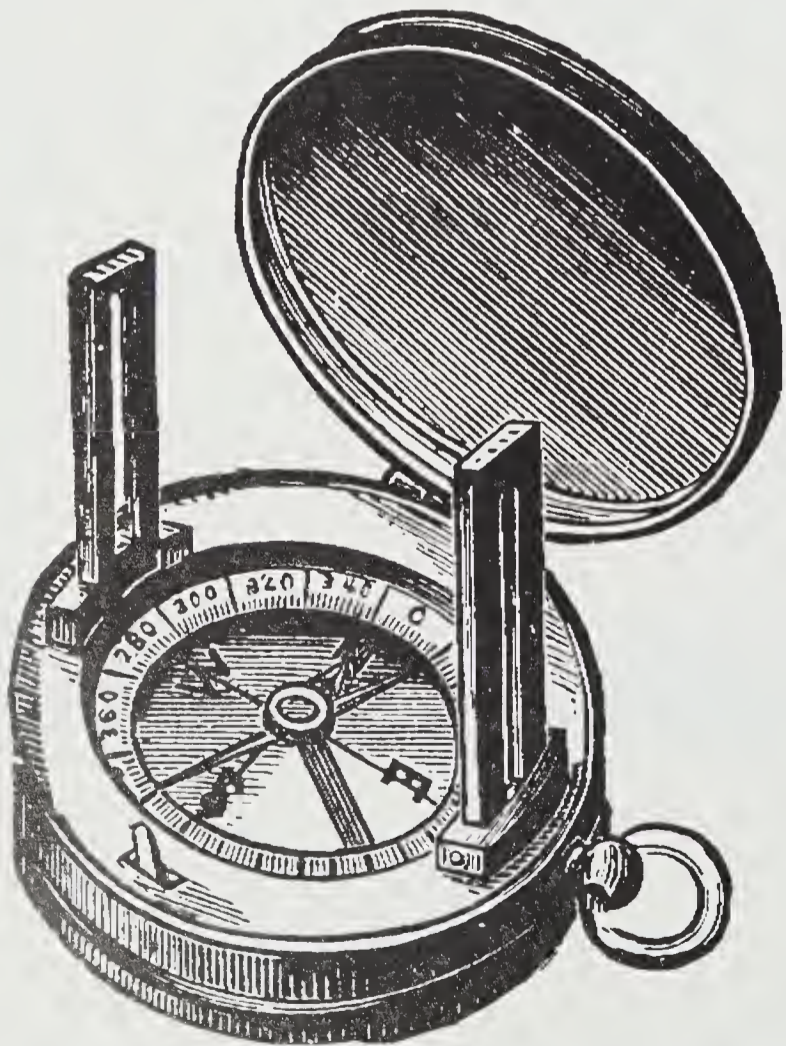


Chart 7: Survey, 1857

Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division



Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division



Reports from the Field

Historic Bath Visitor Center Renovated

The 1970 Historic Bath Visitor Center underwent renovations beginning in December 1997 and concluding in June 1998. The work was funded by the Repair and Renovation Reserve administered by the State Budget Office and required the total relocation of the site operation, to the 1790 Vander Veer House at Historic Bath. Labor for the relocation was provided by the Hyde Correctional Center.

Work on the nearly 30-year old building included the correction of various code deficiencies, new floor coverings and ceilings, new color schemes, creation of storage areas, expansion of restrooms, a fire alarm system, improvement of work areas, and the creation of a Gift Shop for the site's support group, the Historic Bath Commission.

The first event held in the renovated building was the hosting of the state's Queen Anne's Revenge Travelling Exhibit for twelve days in June. Cultural Resources Secretary Betty Ray McCain was down for an exhibit opening ceremony on 6 June. The exhibit was well promoted and over quadrupled normal visitation for this period in the month of June. The exhibit featured salvaged artifacts that had only previously been displayed in Raleigh and Beaufort.

Gerald W. Butler

Port O'Plymouth Museum

An announcement has been made noting the formation of the Washington County Roanoke River Commission—an organization dedicated to the preservation, promotion, historical, and recreational use of the Roanoke River. Formed by the Plymouth Downtown Development Association and the Historical Society of Washington County, the group of concerned citizens has created a list of maritime projects that will encourage historical, educational, and tourism aspects on the Roanoke.

Each project will be headed by its own special advisory group comprised of experts in that given field. One project will be an eco-maritime experience comprised of twenty-six acres of wetland adjacent to the Port-O-Plymouth Museum. Featured will be an environmental walk, educational center, canoe trail origination point, Primitive Boy Scout camping, and dining facility.

More maritime in nature, a museum is planned featuring the boats, fishing, travel, construction, and trade of the Roanoke. To this end, a collection is being assembled of shad boats, early engines, photos, fishing memorabilia, and marine artifacts of the Roanoke.

The U.S. Government established the Roanoke River Light Station in 1835 with a 4-masted Light Ship costing \$10,000. This was replaced with a "screw-pile" lighthouse in 1866. The commission has located the original construction plans and intends to reproduce it with appropriate historical material to serve as an educational display.

The most ambitious project is the reconstruction of the CSS RAM *Albermarle* as a full scale, steam driven, passenger-carrying tool portraying the Civil War naval history of the region. The 133-foot hull will be of fiberglass, with ballast tanks and imitation "iron plates," and will travel with a 5-foot freeboard and flood down to its original 18-inch depth at the docks.

Harry L. Thompson

The graduate program in Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology at East Carolina University has been very active recently. Five faculty members and several students assisted with the *Queen Anne's Revenge* project. Gordon Watts conducted remote sensing; Larry Babits has assisted with the identification of objects and research, Frank Cantelus used our SHARPS system to locate objects at the site, and Brad Rodgers and Tim Runyan assisted at the site. Runyan gave a talk on the *Queen Anne's Revenge* at the opening of the traveling exhibit at the new visitor's center in Bath. Secretary of the Department of Cultural Resources Betty Ray McCain, along with others including the mayor of Bath, England, cut the ribbon.

Brad Rodgers conducted a field school in June that followed two weeks of dive training. The students visited the CSS *Nense* and then settled down to work at Castle Island and in Washington, N.C. Ten wrecked vessels were found. It was a good experience for the students. ECU received assistance from the new museum in Washington, The Estuarium, which provided dock space for research vessels.

Larry Babits and several students worked in St. Leonard's Creek, Maryland, east of Washington, D.C. The site has two gunboats of Joshua Barney's flotilla, sunk and burned to avoid capture by the British coming up the Chesapeake to attack Washington, D.C. Preliminary results indicate the identification of a 50-foot gunboat.

In July Frank Cantelus, Larry Babits, and several students, including some from ECU's Coastal and Marine Studies minor program, sailed as crew on the U.S. brig *Niagara*. This replica vessel of Commodore Perry's vessel at the Battle of Lake Erie in 1813 is owned by the State of Pennsylvania. Our crew helped sail it from Erie west across Lake Erie past Detroit, and up Lake Huron, then down the length of Lake Michigan to Chicago. They participated in a tall ship's race, then sailed to South Haven, Michigan.

Several publications appeared this year including *Maritime Archaeology* (Plenum), edited by Larry Babits and Hans Van Tilberg, an ECU program graduate. Michael Palmer published *Lee Moves North* (John Wiley). Babits was co-editor with students Cathy Fach and Ryan Harris of the *Underwater Archaeology Proceedings* for the Society for Historical Archaeology that appeared in August. Carl Swanson continues his research on colonial Charleston, and John Tilley on the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Anthony Papalas was invited to lecture on the ancient trireme at Oxford University. Gordon Watts was active with the CSS *Alabama* project in France and conducted the fall field school in Bermuda.

Tim Runyan chaired the National Maritime

Heritage Grants Advisory Committee that recommended the distribution of \$610,000 in grants for maritime projects.

Twelve students defended their theses this past year. Also the flavor was very international with students from Puerto Rico, Canada, and Greece. They will benefit from two vessels added to the program—a 25-foot Parker with extended cabin and the 65-foot research vessel *Hydra*. The *Hydra* was in use by the EPA and will be sailed to North Carolina this fall. Students will also benefit from a newly established scholarship through the generosity of Barbara and Matthew Landers. A revised curriculum for the MA degree was adopted for fall 1998.

Timothy J. Runyan

Roanoke Island Festival Park Home of the Elizabeth II

Roanoke Island Festival Park is a history, education, and cultural arts complex that celebrates the birth of a nation. Through living history interpretation, film, interactive exhibits, and a variety of cultural programs, visitors explore the unique role in history Roanoke Island and the Outer Banks have played, from the time before England's first attempts to colonize North America in the late sixteenth century to the early twentieth century.

Roanoke Island Festival Park is the expansion of the *Elizabeth II* State Historic Site, first dedicated in 1984 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of voyages sent by Sir Walter Raleigh to the New World. When fully completed (in late summer 1998), Roanoke Island Festival Park, which is operated by the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, will comprise an exhibit hall, a film theater, an outdoor pavilion, a museum shop, space for art shows, performances, and meetings, and the *Elizabeth II* sailing ship. With the expansion of the site, visitors will be able to delve more deeply into the fascinating evolution of Roanoke Island and the Outer Banks.

A lively mix of history and the arts educates and entertains visitors. The "ghosts" of important figures of the eighteenth century wander the expansive lawns and boardwalks and share their knowledge and insights. At the *Elizabeth II*, a 60-foot sailing vessel representative of those used in 1585, mariners and explorers from the Old World address visitors in a lilting Elizabethan dialect as they discuss the rigors of an ocean journey more than four centuries ago. In the exhibit hall, visitors will enter the sixteenth century through the 38-foot facade of a ship for a walk through time. Several themed exhibit areas illustrate how the surrounding waters influenced the culture

and economics of the Outer Banks, exploring its traditions in fishing, shipbuilding, and lifesaving.

Across from the exhibit hall, the film theater will feature scheduled showings of "The Legend of Two-Path," a 45-minute film depicting the first encounter between the Native Americans and the English settlers, imagined from the Native American point of view. The film was produced by the North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston Salem. When the film is not playing, the theater will be used for performances, seminars, and other films.

The North Carolina School of the Arts has joined with Roanoke Island Festival Park to host a summer institute for some fifty students, who will help provide cultural arts programming for the site. The first season of "Summer Scenes" opened 29 June with a performance by the NCSA International Music Program Orchestra on the eve of its annual European tour. Other programs included jazz, chamber music, dance, vocals, wind, and strings performances. The program will be expanded in 1999 to include drama.

With the expansion of the site, visitation is expected to grow from the current level of about 100,000 to 250,000 within five years, bringing important economic benefits to the Outer Banks along with enhanced educational and cultural opportunities.

Barbara Leary

Underwater Archaeology Unit

In October 1997 Underwater Archaeology Unit (UAU) conducted a month-long investigation of site 0003BUI, the shipwreck near Beaufort Inlet thought to be the remains of Blackbeard's flagship, *Queen Anne's Revenge*. The UAU was assisted in that project by Intersal, Inc., the group that discovered the shipwreck, and their non-profit affiliate, the Maritime Research Institute (MRI). Other support was provided by the North Carolina Maritime Museum; the University of North Carolina-Wilmington, Center for Marine Science; the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Institute of Marine Sciences; East Carolina University, Program in Maritime History and Underwater Archaeology; the Institute of International Maritime Research; and Cape Fear Community College. Project participants made 321 separate dives spending a total of 286 hours on the site. Excellent weather prevailed throughout the project and divers were able to systematically map exposed features and conduct a number of test excavations. The divers located three large anchors and fifteen cannons on the site.

During the last week of the project the underwa-

ter archaeologists raised two 6-pounder cannons, each weighing over 2,000 pounds. The cannons are being cleaned using electrolytic reduction at the conservation laboratory (N.C. Maritime Museum) in Beaufort, a process that could take up to four years to complete. In addition to the cannons, project divers recovered two pewter platters, cannonballs, glass and ceramic fragments, numerous iron concretions, and nearly 200 ballast stones. Like the bronze bell and brass blunderbuss barrel recovered by Intersal divers in November 1996, the artifacts consistently dated to the early eighteenth century. Many of these artifacts have been incorporated into a traveling display which is currently touring eastern North Carolina. Other artifacts are on permanent exhibit at the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort.

In addition to fieldwork at site 0003BUI, the UAU has been involved in variety of other management and research activities related to the site. Those activities include numerous media interviews, historical research, site security, and logistical and budgetary planning for a full-scale excavation and recovery project. The UAU will return to site 0003BUI for another month-long investigation from mid-September to mid-October 1998. That project will continue the site assessment begun last year with the goal of developing a management plan for the site by the spring of 1999. Specific tasks of the 1998 project will include collecting geophysical, environmental, and biological data and samples, and conducting additional test excavations to determine the extent of the buried portions of the site.

In July 1998 UAU staff examined a shipwreck in Little River in Perquimans County. That site, designated 0002LTR, was discovered and reported to the UAU by local fisherman, Barry Cullens. The shipwreck proved to be a 55-foot long, wooden-hulled, sailing vessel that may date to the late-eighteenth or early-nineteenth century. The site was located near the center of the river in twelve feet of water and warrants additional investigation.

Richard W. Lawrence

Advertisements for bids for the first of the major restoration projects, the replacement of the teak deck, of the Battleship *North Carolina* will go out by the end of August. The project will include taking up the original teak decking, completing repairs and modifications to the steel deck underneath and relaying of new teak. Estimates are that the project will take ten months to complete and, even with the replacement teak already purchased, will cost over \$1.5 million.

The second restoration project, restoration of a section of berthing onboard the ship, will probably begin construction in the early summer of 1999. This project will permit an overnight education element focused, initially, on North Carolina boy scouts and girl scouts and the Navy Junior ROTC programs and will be tailored to history merit badges for the scouts and naval training and history for the NJROTC cadets.

David Scheu

Conservation

As the *Elizabeth II* State Historic Site completed its metamorphosis into Roanoke Island Festival Park in October 1997, its staff ended a three-year tenure in temporary offices at the OBHC. With modified plumbing this space became a conservation workshop with provisions for repair of books and deacidification and encapsulation of flat items. The OBHC simultaneously gained a new storage room adjacent to the workshop and began testing the new freezer therein. Staff attended classes in conservation and disaster preparedness sponsored by East Carolina University and SOLINET.

Acquisitious and donations

Notable new holdings include:

- The Dare County Tourist Bureau Collection—twenty cubic feet of photographs, publications, and manuscripts added to an already large and heterogeneous mass of material.
- The Roanoke Island Historical Association Collection—the first twelve cubic feet of a substantial body of photographs, MSS, and publications spanning six decades of *The Lost Colony*. (RIHA, which produces the play, has stated its intention to make the OBHC the primary repository of its documentary legacy.)
- The Ben Dixon MacNeill Collection—394 photographic prints from original negatives at the Museum of the Albemarle. (These images, mostly from 1939 and 1940, cover *The Lost Colony*, the Coast Guard, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and other topics. The museum retains the negatives and granted the OBHC reproduction rights.)
- The Alvah Ward Collection—four cubic feet of manuscripts and photographs pertaining to the dredging and stabilization of Oregon Inlet, the development of the Wanchese Seafood Industrial Park, and related topics from the 1940s to the present.
- The Lawrence L. Swain Collection—three cubic feet of manuscripts, covering local politics and economics in the 1950s and 1960s, from the former chairman of the Dare County Board of Commissioners.
- One cubic foot of manuscripts pertaining to fire protection and water and sewer service in Dare County in two parcels, one donated by the Town of Nags Head.

- Two Civil War documents given by Arthur Gray Coyner of Delaplane, Virginia. One authorizes payment of \$1,980 by the Confederate Army to the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal Company for use of the tug *Junaluska* in 1861.

Exhibits

The Department of Cultural Resources retained an architect to convert a small room behind the Roanoke Island Festival Park ticket counter into new OBHC exhibit space, install painting racks in the stacks, and oversee other tasks to be accomplished with \$87,000 appropriated for repair and renovation. Exhibition of the Edwin Champney drawings at ECU went forward in September 1997 despite cancellation of the Civil War symposium with which the exhibit was to coincide. Staff prepared two traveling exhibits, one for a sixtieth-anniversary reunion of *Lost Colony* cast and crew, the other for a Black History Month observance at the Currituck County Public Library. After great travail, ten drawings and paintings of fish by Frank Stick reached the Musée Océanographique of Monaco in early June, just in time for an exhibition scheduled to last through 11 October.

Miscellaneous

The OBHC and RIFP agreed to serve as co-hosts of the annual conferences of the U.S. Life Saving Service Heritage Association (1–3 October) and the North Carolina Maritime History Council (22–24 October). Notwithstanding its current lack of adequate meeting space, the OBHC accommodated fifteen smaller gatherings during fiscal year 1998.

Brian Edwards, an employee since 1994, was promoted to operations officer in August 1997. He subsequently became the OBHC liaison to the council in order to expedite arrangements for the 1998 conference.

Wynne Dough

The Southport Maritime Museum

The Southport Maritime Museum in Southport, N.C. opened June 1992 housing a collection of artifacts and information pertaining to the vast maritime history of the Lower Cape Fear.

Because the museum was the first of its kind in that area of the state, residents were eager to share their family treasures, resulting in an immediate deluge of display materials. A member of the Cape Fear River Circle Tour and a tourist's destination, of necessity the exhibit area soon expanded from one room to nearly 5,000 square feet, including a research library, a classroom/meeting room, and gift shop. The workshop/storage area also added two small outbuildings.

Today displays include Native Americans, early explorers, pirates, colonial and naval stores, steamships, Civil War, Gilded Age, fishing, shipwrecks and navigation, nature, shipbuilding, and an extensive ship model collection. The library shelves approximately fifteen hundred books, providing a priceless source of information for boatbuilders, Civil War historians, genealogy researchers, and scholars. An additional collection of one thousand books awaits space, loaned by a biology instructor who voluntarily shares expertise with students in the museum's classroom and on tours. A broad range of programs are provided for schools and adult groups year-round, both in-house and outreach. The educational summer programs are a resounding success.

The museum has been recording on video tape the interviews of local senior citizens who contribute invaluable memories of growing up in Southport, military connections, boatbuilding, the lost shrimp and menhaden industries, school chums, hurricanes, recreation, and the good old days of poor and plenty. This collection will soon be available for viewing at UNC-W's Randall Library as well. To take part in North Carolina's Maritime Heritage Trail and to welcome the magnificent *Queen Anne's Revenge* traveling exhibit from 3–14 July, staff and volunteers recently prepared a new exhibit room of appropriate size, then enjoyed excellent returns from the thousands of visitors in Southport for the 1998 4th of July Festival.

The Southport Maritime Museum fulfills a need in the Lower Cape Fear area of North Carolina and has outgrown its own footprint. But its spirit is limitless!

Mary Strickland

North Carolina Maritime Museum

The most important recent development at the Maritime Museum was the purchase, by the Friends of the Museum, of a 36-acre tract of land on Gallants Channel, adjacent to the Town Creek Marina, as the site for the museum's future expansion. In October 1997 an existing building on the waterfront was converted into an interim conservation facility for artifacts from the wreck tentatively identified as *Queen Anne's Revenge*. Adjoining docks and other shore-side facilities erected by the Friends supported the 1998 Junior Sailing Program, but further development of the site will come only after completion of a master plan and approval from the multitude of permitting agencies that control development in coastal areas of North Carolina.

The North Carolina Maritime Museum transferred from the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Cultural Resources, effective 1 July 1997, and is now a section of the Division of Archives and History. In the spring of 1998 the Department of Cultural Resources designated the museum the principal curatorial agency for the artifacts from the *Queen Anne's Revenge* site, and also commissioned the design and construction of a traveling exhibit of the first artifacts to complete the conservation process. Governor Hunt opened this exhibit on 21 May 1998 at the Capitol in Raleigh, and it has since been seen at six sites in eastern North Carolina from Southport to Elizabeth City, with further sites scheduled until well into 1999. Any sites or organizations interested in hosting this exhibit should contact the museum's registrar to obtain details of requirements and available dates.

The museum has also very actively participated in the archaeological work on the *Queen Anne's Revenge* site, providing staff, boats, and equipment, and serving as the operating base for the two field seasons in October 1997 and September–October 1998.

The museum has long wrestled with the physical difficulties of fulfilling its mission to preserve and present the maritime culture of the entire state of North Carolina. Cooperation with all other institutions in the state, both private and public, is the key to successfully accomplishing the museum's goal. An important step in this direction came with the re-opening, in June 1998, of the George Washington Creef Boatshop at Manteo as a joint project of the Town of Manteo, the Roanoke Island Commission, and the museum. The boatshop demonstrates traditional boatbuilding to the public, conserves local watercraft types, mounts exhibits of regional boats and boatbuilders, serves as a platform for more thorough research into the area's maritime culture, and provides professional support for the maritime projects of other institutions and organizations in the locality.

The museum has continued to offer its usual wide range of programs and activities in the Beaufort

area, while staff have traveled widely throughout the country, and even to Canada and England, to make presentations pertaining to North Carolina's maritime heritage.

Paul Fontenoy

Museum of the Albemarle

The museum commemorated its thirtieth year by reevaluating its service area. When it opened in May 1967, the museum was supported financially by ten northeast counties (Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hyde, Perquimans, Pasquotank, Tyrrell, and Washington). In 1979 the museum became a regional service branch of the North Carolina Museum of History. During the following decades, through professional assistance, associate membership, and cooperative advertising, (such as Historic Albemarle Tour) the museum became more closely linked to historical groups and public schools in Bertie, Hertford, and Northampton counties. In February 1997, with the approval of the state and the museum's private support groups, the service area expanded to include these three counties. To cap off the anniversary in May, Museum of History Associates joined Museum of the Albemarle Inc. in hosting the museum's birthday gala.

The museum and its support groups had an extremely successful Capital Campaign to provide exhibitions for the new facility with an \$800,000 goal. Also citizens wanted to express support for this project to the state legislature so they would appropriate the construction funds. To date the pledges are over \$1.6 million to the campaign. New building planning continued through design development phases by architects Hayes, Seay, Mattern, and Mattern in Virginia Beach. A high-quality scale model of the facility was unveiled at the membership meeting in February 1998. To develop long-range plans for the new museum exhibitions, staff invited regional historians, subject-matter specialists, and curators to topical discussions, called Collecting Symposia, which began in 1996.

Within the present facility, the museum offered many entertaining learning opportunities. The entry gallery was enlivened with thirteen county historic sites photos, which opened 16 February. *North Carolina Women Making History*, which remained open until June, inspired program themes for March. The "Notable Women" night introduced the costumed Marguerite McCall as Penelope Barker, while other notable women were represented by costumed youth from Girls, Inc. of the Albemarle. At a Family Night, children experienced

three hands-on object tables concerning women's work with fibers, native foodways, and old-time kitchen tools, and Dorothy Redford presented "Women of Somerset Plantation." In May "The Art of Making Do," a day-long symposium on feedsacks was held by Elle Ryan.

Hundreds of students experienced Living History Days, the school outreach programs with women's work themes of the pre-electric days.

"*Working Birds: Decoys and their Carvers*" remained open during this period. The January Family Night on decoys entertained families with demonstrations by a canvas decoy carver and a world-renowned wildfowl caller. Young children enjoyed the ring toss and coloring ducks to match the model. Later in the month, Neal Conoly, a decoy collector, lectured on *Working Birds: Decoys and their Carvers*. In April Barbara Snowden presented "Unconventional Woman in a Conventional Time," about the Whalehead Club's Mary Louise Knight, relating to the two exhibits on hunting and women.

"*Rage Along the River, 1861-1864*," opened 13 March with Tom Harrison speaking on the building of the ironclad ram CSS *Albemarle* and its first battles. On 3 April, Harrison spoke on the latter battles of the ironclad ram and its sinking at Plymouth. Also in April, Alex Leary spoke at the museum on the "Battle of South Mills," and the museum participated in the reenactment in Camden County with volunteers and staff manning a display and distributing a brochure on battle.

The regional component of the mission was enhanced by outreach efforts through at-school programs, traveling exhibits, festivals, and internet access. By June 1998, these efforts resulted in a ratio of fourteen people served through outreach programming to every one visitor to the museum. Widespread exposure came from educators and volunteers taking museum programs to the state's northeastern schools. Adult outreach programs took the form of presentations to civic groups and historical organizations about the museum's activities and the new building planning. Educational slide and video program loans were also offered. A photographic introduction to the thirteen counties was added to entry of the *Albemarle History* gallery in February 1998, showing historically important structures, accompanied by each county's historic achievements.

Rhonda Tyson



Books and Reviews

Jay Barnes, *North Carolina's Hurricane History—Revised and Updated Edition*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. 256 pages, photographs, maps, appendix, index.

As one who experienced the North Carolina storms beginning the decade of the 1950s from the vantage point of Beaufort's waterfront, and thus in a position to truly appreciate the first edition of Jay Barnes' *North Carolina's Hurricane History*, I was naturally curious as to how the author could have significantly improved on his most impressive initial study of this subject published in 1995.

The format of chapters in the revised and updated 1998 edition is virtually identical to the original publication. It identifies a logical sequence of topics which permits the reader to develop a reasonable understanding of the factors which give rise to a hurricane and then proceeds to provide a brief description of the destructive aspects of these tropical storms. Unlike some historical accounts, which can be nothing more than a rather uninspired compilation of names and dates, the author continues chronologically with a fascinating description of the hurricanes which have affected the North Carolina coast beginning with the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

It is here that the reader encounters the primary reasons for this expanded and revised second edition—the highly detailed accounting of North Carolina's two most recent storms of 1996, hurricanes Bertha and Fran. Perhaps because of the availability of reports on these two, as well as the extent to which Fran represented an example of a storm which not only inflicted considerable damage along portions of the coast but also throughout extensive inland areas of the state, the forty-two pages dealing with these, while informative, tend to be a bit too detailed. Within these pages, however, are excellent photographs which contribute vividly to an appreciation of the extent of damage along the path of Hurricane Fran as it meandered inland.

The chapter "The Next Great Storm" has also been expanded to include references to both the 1996 storms and, as in the final chapter, "Hurricane Survival," contains suggestions on individual behavior and preparations for those who find themselves in the path of a tropical storm. These should be required reading for all who live or visit the North Carolina coastal areas during the season when these storms develop.

Anyone who has had first-hand experience with one of the recent tropical storms, as well as those who may wish to have the volume handy on their coffee table for weekend visitors, should give serious thought to adding this second edition to their library. One can only hope that Jay will not have reason to provide us with an additional revision, regardless of the quality, within the next few years!

John D. Costlow
Beaufort, N.C.

L. VanLoan Naisawald, *In Some Foreign Field—Four British Graves and Submarine Warfare on the North Carolina Outer Banks*. Raleigh: North Carolina Division of Archives and History, 1997. 95 pages, photographs.

In the first six months after Pearl Harbor, Germany's U-boats destroyed nearly six hundred ships, equivalent to half the American merchant ships afloat. Most of these ships were sunk in American waters defended by the U.S. Navy and Army Air Forces. Only six U-boats were lost in the western Atlantic in this period, and the first American sinking of an enemy submarine off the U.S. coast did not come until May 1942.

As Winston Churchill warned from the beginning, American unpreparedness and incompetence in dealing with the U-boats threatened the entire Allied war effort more than the destruction of the American battle-fleet at Pearl Harbor. By March 1942, Churchill was so concerned that he sent a fleet of converted British trawlers to the East Coast of America, man and ships already trained in anti-submarine warfare.

This third revised edition of a study of an incident involving one of the British trawlers along the coast of North Carolina is a welcome addition to the paltry of written history on North Carolina's involvement in the largest and most important war of all time. That this 1997 edition is published by the North Carolina Division of Archives and History is proof that its staff has finally awakened to the direct involvement of coastal residents in World War II. Most North Carolinians are unaware that of the hundreds of ships sunk within the short period of the first five months of 1942, over seventy were sunk and hundreds of lives lost within sight of the Outer Banks.

Naisawald's painstaking research and romanticized portrayal of the sinking of H.M.S. *Bedfordshire* and the subsequent burial of four British sailors at Ocracoke Island, North Carolina, should be a topic in every history of North Carolina class for at least three reasons. First, it is an important history of a period in which most students' parents or grandparents were involved in one way or another. Second, it demonstrates the closeness of our greatest ally, Great Britain. Third, it brings home the fact that death and destruction are the by-products of war, no matter who wins.

This book's third edition has added excellent underwater photographs depicting the untimely grave of the *Bedfordshire* and its crew of forty sailors. It also gives the reader an insight into the German submarine, *U-558*, and its highly decorated skipper, Günther Krech, who still resides in Germany.

As with any historical writing, footnotes would have been helpful in identifying sources, interviews, and the location of documents for those wishing to expand on the topic. This reprint of Naisawald's book, however, will

keep up the public's interest in visiting that small plot of land on Ocracoke Island where the Union Jack flies daily, and where each spring British, Canadian, and American sailors, along with Coast Guardsmen, converge for a patriotic salute to not only the four buried English seamen but all soldiers and sailors of World War II.

CDR. James T. Cheatham, USNR-Ret.
Greenville, N.C.



David Stick, editor, *An Outer Banks Reader*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. xii + 317 pages.

Coastal writer David Stick's anthology is ideal vacation reading. One can polish off two or three selections about the natural environment, history, economy, people, and lore of the barrier islands while lazing on a cottage porch waiting for lunch to settle. The selections offer food for thought but nothing so heavy as to cause intellectual dyspepsia. These qualities are both *An Outer Banks Reader's* charm and its weakness.

From hundreds of possible selections, Stick culled sixty-four pieces that would help explain why more and more people "would rather spend the rest of their lives here than any place else in the world." When making his choices, the editor's main criteria were "readability" and a preference for first-person accounts. Headnotes introduce the selections, which Stick organized around nine themes.

"First Impressions" begins with explorer Giovanni da Verrazzano's 1524 report to the king of France that documents the first encounter between natives and newcomers and ends with a 1956 description of Ocracoke, when the island was not your "average summer resort." In between, William Byrd sneers at Bankers as he and his party survey the boundary between North Carolina and Virginia in 1728 and an antebellum tutor describes the early days of Nags Head as a summer retreat for the planter elite.

In "The Natural Environment" section, one can accompany Rachel Carson as she watches parchment worms build tunnels on shoals near Beaufort; contemplate the staggering number of birds that commercial gunners killed in the 1880s; and mull the puzzle of bluefish blitzes on our shores. The selections in "Man Versus Nature" capture some of the tensions between reverence for nature on the Outer Banks and its exploitation. Writers describe the ferocity of storms, the creation of national seashores, and efforts to preserve Nags Head Woods.

Perhaps the most predictable—and entertaining—chapters focus on "Ships and the Sea" and "War on the Banks." In 1812 Sarah Kollock Harris was a passenger on a ship that tossed off the coast for three weeks before wrecking near Cape Hatteras. Her white-knuckle description of her ordeal rivals Sebastian Junger's recent best-seller *The Perfect Storm*. While the "gentlemen stood around like statues of despair, deeming all efforts to save themselves or us useless," Harris "entreated the dear girls with me to commit their souls to God, before whose tribunal, I thought, they would in a few moments stand." Among the war stories, John Allen Midgett's matter-of-

fact account of his 1918 rescue of a British tanker is unnerving as one realizes that it was all in a day's work for him to maneuver amidst a sea of burning gasoline to save lives.

In "Making a Living" Stick includes a petition that white pilots submitted to colonial officials asking them to suppress the competition of black watermen, an 1856 description of penning and branding wild horses, and turn-of-the-century accounts of harpooning whales and manufacturing yaupon. Jan Deblieu's deftly written piece on the commercial fishing business in Hatteras in the 1980s evokes the competitive and mercurial nature of the enterprise. "Winter," Deblieu observes unromantically, "with its cutting winds and feeble light, is the season of aching muscles, shivering limbs, and swelling hands—of bread and butter fishing." Oddly, however, Stick has omitted the stories of people who cater to and profit from tourists and retirees—the way many Bankers have made a living since World War II.

To understand the tourism boom on the northern Banks one must meet Aycock Brown, ace director of the Dare County Tourist Bureau from 1952 until 1978 and crackerjack photographer whose genius lay in his ability to manipulate images. A vignette of Brown appears in "Ones of a Kind," along with paeans to members of the Midgett clans, a renegade cattleman at Carova Beach, and crab picker extraordinaire, Josephine Spencer.

In "Visitors Leave their Footprints," readers encounter some of the most familiar Outer Banks figures. John White returns in 1590 to a desolate Roanoke Island. John Lawson encounters "gray-eyed Indians" in the early eighteenth century. Orville and Wilbur Wright huddle in their wind-whipped tent by night and test their flying machine by day. Paul Green explains the origins of *The Lost Colony*.

The final section is a hodgepodge labeled "Lifestyles." Unfortunately, the importance of one of the book's most valuable selections—an 1864 account of the settlement of slaves who sought refuge behind federal lines on Roanoke Island—is undermined by its juxtaposition with a humorous account of goose hunting, an ode to one-room schools, and the all too predictable finale—an account of Rodanthe's Old Christmas celebration. Freedom from slavery, a desire to learn how to read and write, and the ability to enjoy the products of one's own labor comprised far more than a "lifestyle."

For all that is included, much is left unsaid. Stick alludes to conflicts between coastal developers and environmentalists and competing visions of the good life, but few contributors address these issues head-on. To be sure, his goal was to appeal to travelers and recent arrivals more than scholars. But given the challenges to our coast now, could not a few more critical voices have been included in this chorus? One selection does describe how the festering debate over jetties at Oregon Inlet was

aggravated in 1990 when a dredge crashed into Bonner Bridge. But the placement of "When the Ship Hit the Span" in the "Ships and the Sea" section rather than the "Man Versus Nature" section diminishes its impact and turns the incident into one more shipwreck story. Or, why does the "First Impressions" section stop in 1956? Is it because our first glimpse of the coast these days is cottages positioned chock-a-block, garish souvenir shops, and ribbons of traffic backed up for miles?

Hardly a day passes that we do not read news reports of a cottage or condominium about to topple into the ocean because of foolhardy development, about conflicts between people who fish to make a living and those who fish for fun, about *Pfiesteria* and all manner of pollutants spoiling rivers and sounds. The politics of development might not produce a particularly readable literature, but surely this is a drama whose characters, plots and motivations we need to understand better.

In *An Outer Banks Reader* Stick has sampled writing about the barrier islands and its people that will be valuable for scholars and entertaining for popular readers. But when it comes to telling the story of the Outer Banks, there are still many voices that need to be heard.

Lu Ann Jones
East Carolina University

Lawrence E. Babits and Hans Van Tilburg, editors.
Maritime Archaeology: A Reader of Substantive and Theoretical Contributions, New York: Plenum Publishing Corporation, 1998. xx + 590 pages; illustrations, tables, maps, notes, appendices, bibliography, index

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his book represents the initial effort in The Plenum Series in Underwater Archaeology, a newly formed avenue of publication for books on the science of this sub-discipline of archaeology. This particular work might easily have been titled *A History of Maritime Archaeology* due to its format as a compilation of material on the various aspects of the field, most previously published elsewhere. The book is divided into nine parts and further subdivided into forty eight chapters. Most pertinent aspects of maritime archaeology are covered; some very well, others hardly at all. The various parts cover respectively, an introduction to the field, geographic regions of research, research design, locating and surveying sites, high technology, site significance, data recovery, conservation, and public interpretation and exhibition. One example of limited coverage is that on interpretation and exhibition, but this unfortunately more probably reflects on the maritime archaeology community as a whole rather than the editors as these aspects are normally neglected there as well.

The additional bibliographies following each section and in an appendix are adequate, but could have been expanded to include more recent and relevant titles, and in at least two instances books are cited which have long had new editions out, but only the earliest editions are mentioned. Many of the illustrations have not been reproduced very well and at one time, with the limited funding and cost-overruns inherent in the publishing arena, this might have been expected. However, the advent and recent development of inexpensive desktop publishing software and scanning technologies should have produced a higher quality particularly with simple black-and-white line drawings, maps, and other illustrations.

As is intended, this book will provide a good introduction to the field of maritime archaeology for undergraduate and graduate students as well as for the audience with a general interest in the field. However, it could have been easily expanded into a valuable tool for the veteran shipwreck researcher who will undoubtedly find most of the work included in the book already on his/her shelf.

David D. Moore
North Carolina Maritime Museum

Dawson Carr, *Gray Phantoms of the Cape Fear: Running the Civil War Blockade*. Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 1998. xi + 227 pages, illustrations, drawings, maps, appendix, bibliography, index.

When the Civil War began in 1861 both sides in the conflict were well aware that one of the Confederacy's greatest weaknesses was its economic position. The South was primarily agricultural, had a very limited industrial base, and depended heavily upon imports for many of its manufactured and raw materials, particularly now that it was at war. The underlying premise of the North's strategy to defeat the Confederacy was to exploit this weakness by splitting the southern states down the Mississippi to block access to the rich resources of the western part of the nation and severing their access to outside war materials through a blockade. Although the resilience of the South's economy was to come as a surprise, and the conflict was to continue far longer and require much greater expenditure of blood and treasure than ever anticipated, the North's exploitation of this weakness ultimately brought it victory.

Dawson Carr sets out to tell the story of the Confederacy's efforts to maintain the flow of essential goods through the blockade Lincoln imposed from the outbreak of hostilities (an action, he notes, that amounted to a *de facto* recognition of Confederate statehood!) While not entirely ignoring other ports, Carr focuses his attention, with good reason, on Wilmington, N.C. The city was the South's last remaining major port from mid-1863 until its fall close to the end of the war and, consequently, bore the primary burden of maintaining the imports of guns, ammunition, clothing, and other essential goods from Europe that allowed the Confederacy to continue the fight for its independence.

Carr's lively narrative recounts the development of the blockade, the trials and tribulations of the blockaders, and the North's long military effort to seal off the coast of North Carolina. He details the expansion of Wilmington's fixed fortifications and the efforts of both the army and navy to provide adequate and more effective forces to defend the city. He discusses the patterns of the trade and the roles of the British possessions in Bermuda and the Bahamas, analyzes the technological development of ever faster and more specialized vessels to run the blockade, and addresses the sometimes convoluted business practices required to maintain this essential lifeline of supplies. Finally, he retells the tale of the final siege of the forts defending the city and its fall to the North in January and February 1865.

Dawson Carr clearly has exploited a wide range

of sources to uncover his story and his lively and lucid style allows him to present a compelling tale to a wide audience. Unfortunately, either he or his publisher decided to forgo citations of his sources, so that future scholars will be compelled to re-research the entire subject should they wish to further explore this topic. The book's designers also decided to enliven Carr's presentation by making extensive use of that great standby of the news magazine industry—the sidebar. Every chapter is interrupted by at least one and as many as five appended stories, each two or more pages long, that utterly destroy the narrative and force the reader to skip over them to maintain continuity. *Gray Phantoms of the Cape Fear* is a useful contribution to the historiography of the Civil War and provides an excellent survey for a general readership, but its shortcomings limit its scholarly utility.

Paul Fontenoy
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