

A PUBLICATION OF THE NORTH CAROLINA MARITIME HISTORY COUNCIL

Tributaries

October 1997

NUMBER 7



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N U M B E R 7

Tributaries

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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

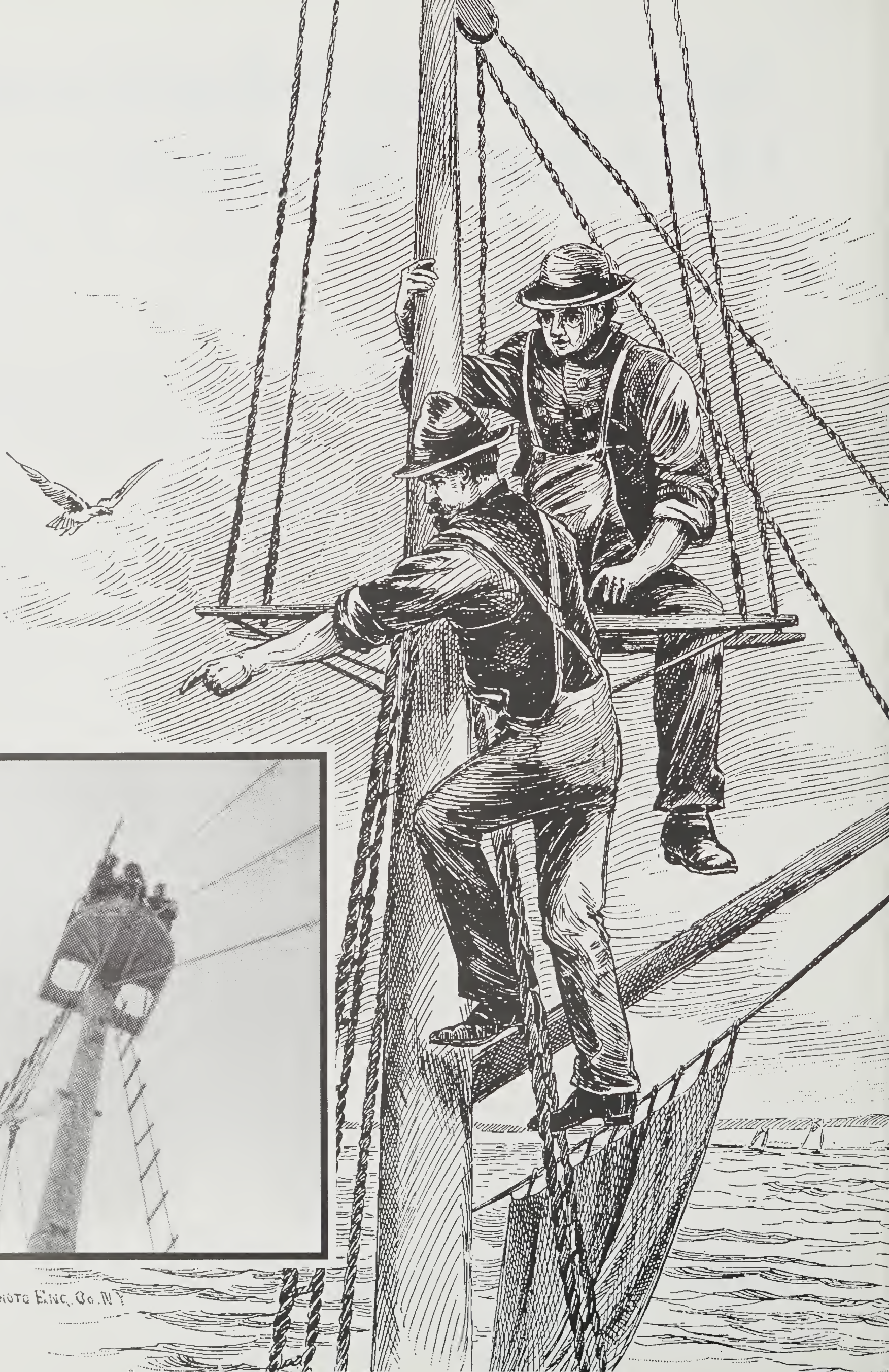


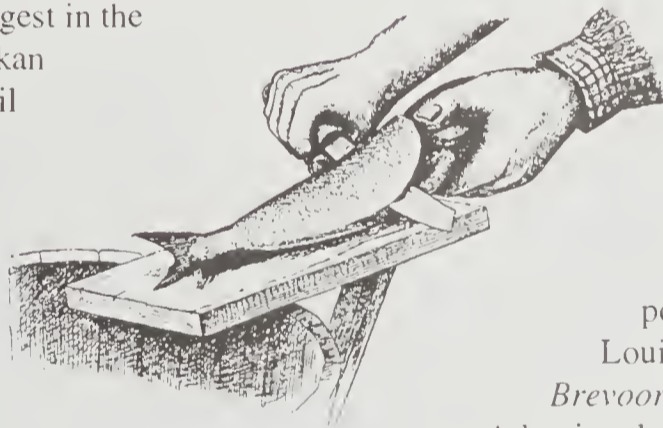
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Fatbacks, Bunkers, and Pogies

by John Frye

It's older than Plymouth Rock, as new as today's closing of an 1,800-foot nylon seine around a half million fish off North Carolina's shores. It has made men rich, others broke. It has nourished farm crops and helped feed stock and poultry. It has helped make goods from Portland cement to steel, from perfume to paint, and recently even a few foods. It has coped for more than a century with competition from sport fishermen. It now faces friction with the ever-expanding tourist economy of salt-water states and growing environmental problems. All this is forcing changed practices on an industry with an always uncertain economic and sociological future.

What is it?...The fishery for menhaden—for North Carolina fatbacks, Virginia bunkers, New England and Mid-Atlantic pogies, long the biggest in the country, now second only to the Alaskan pollock business. The fish meal and oil industry that grew with it produced first oil and fertilizer. Bunkers were once called "fertilizer fish." The oil helped light lamps in coastal homes as whale oil became increasingly scarce. Since the Second World War it has produced primarily protein additives for stock and poultry feeds, chemical components for scores of industrial products—and now, to a limited extent, foods. The Food and Drug Administration has approved its oil, partially hydrogenated, for use in baking fats, margarines, and shorten-



Left and Inset: **Watching for menhaden schools at the masthead, nineteenth- and twentieth-century style.**

Above: **Slivering Menhaden for bait.**

Engravings: *The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States*, G. B. Goode; Inset: Ed T. Simons Collection, NC Maritime Museum

ings. Future approval of refined fish oil would make it "GRAS"—"Generally Recognized as Safe"—in salad oils, pastes and spreads, canning oils, sausages, mayonnaise, and other foods. (European countries have long used oil from herring, anchovies, or similar fish in many foods.)

The fish is thought too oily and bony to eat, though John Lawson's 1709 *A New Voyage to Carolina* called fatbacks "excellent sweet food."

Once an economic support for dozens of Atlantic Coast towns from Maine to Florida, the fishery and industry now are centered in Virginia and North Carolina on the East Coast, and Mississippi and Louisiana on the Gulf Coast. Only a few fish-boats sail out of New England ports. Two processing plants are in Virginia, one in North

Carolina. North Carolina's Beaufort Fisheries sends two fish-boats out of Taylors Creek. Virginia's Zapata Protein, Inc. and AMPRO Fisheries, Inc. operate about 20 vessels from near Reedville. All seek Atlantic menhaden.

Brevoortia tyrannus.

About 50 vessels sail from Gulf ports, one in Mississippi, and four in Louisiana, for another menhaden,

Brevoortia patronus. It is as abundant as the Atlantic relative, if not more so, and just as useful to the industry.

To old timers, Virginia's Reedville is, at least in memory, the heart of the fishery. For many years into the 1960s, almost all companies in the industry were members of Virginia Fishermen's Association, which since has become the National Fish Meal and Oil Association (NFMOA).

North Carolina's and Virginia's fisheries started just after the Civil War. Virginia's was founded in 1867 by Capt. Elijah Reed of Brooklin, Maine, two years after David Floyd of Greenport, Long Island, made an unsuccessful attempt in Chesapeake Bay. Fifty or more companies came after Reed's success, rising and falling over the years.

North Carolina's fisheries, mostly in the Beaufort-



Bailing menhaden from purse-seine into steamer's hold, ca. 1887.

The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States, G. B. Goode

Morehead City area, started at least a year, possibly two years earlier than Virginia's. By one tradition, Union soldiers occupying Beaufort saw huge schools of "fatbacks, mammy shad"—menhaden—"whipping" Core Sound with their dorsal fins. The soldiers told friends at home, and New England and Long Island fish factory operators soon came.

Another story is that C.P. Dey, a Crisfield, Md. engineer, running a Union troop train of Rhode Islanders to New Bern on the Neuse River, saw the schools and returned to start a factory near Beaufort with the coming of peace. As a Chesapeake Bay man, he had seen huge schools there—one described by others as 25 miles long—even before the bay fishery started.

One early North Carolina effort was by the Quinnipiac Fertilizer Company of New Haven, Connecticut. In 1865 or 1866 it sent prospecting parties to Roanoke Sound. The party set weirs to catch the then abundant fish. Angry native fishermen tore up the weirs, and the company fled to Virginia's Cape Charles, at the entrance to Chesapeake Bay.

North Carolina's first processing plant was established on the beach of Harkers Island on lower Core Sound near Beaufort. The fishermen used gill nets, or haul seines from the beaches, and later purse seines from fish-boats under sail. The fish were "processed" in kettles and hand presses. This plant lasted until 1873, when an attempted move to Cape Lookout failed, the owners

losing \$3,000.

In 1866 Rhode Island's Excelsior Oil and Guano Company set up a plant on Portsmouth Island near Ocracoke Inlet with initial capital of \$50,000, and then added \$25,000 more. Skilled northern fishermen used purse seines, but after three years the project died with all capital lost. Scarcity of fish was part of the problem. Hot weather quickly spoiled the catch, which limited the fish-boats' range to 25 miles. Shoaling in inlets, shifting channels, and sudden storms added to the problems. Finally, fishing in the sounds, the only safe areas, was unprofitable, a barrel of fish yielding only two quarts of oil.

In 1870 Church Brothers of Rhode Island built a factory at Oregon Inlet, between Bodie and Hatteras Islands, and brought down a steam fish-boat, *Seven Brothers*, a decade before Virginia's first, the *Starry Banner*. The steamer operation was abandoned in its second year. Again, strong currents made the business dangerous and uncertain. Church Brothers then apparently tried fishing under sail, possibly for other species, with a Roanoke Island man named Etheridge. A Wilmington group lasted two seasons near the mouth of the Cape Fear River. In the late 1870s Captain I. Cain (or Kain) of Roanoke Island built a plant but even this native found not enough fish to operate his first year of 1879, and despite adding a steam boiler and hydraulic presses, did no better the next.

Glimpses, some contradictory, of early North Carolina fisheries are in responses of operators to a ques-

tionnaire by the U.S. Commission of Fisheries, published in 1880 in *A History of the Menhaden* by George Brown Goode with W.O. Atwater. Goode and Atwater found no menhaden taken in quantity from North Carolina inlets and reported on the Quinnipiac Fertilizer Company's repulse in 1866 in Roanoke Sound, even with menhaden "very abundant." They were pessimistic about North Carolina menhaden prospects.

In the 1870s, according to A.W. Simpson, Jr.'s response of January 25, 1875, 200 boats and 500 men were fishing, though with no "special effort to catch fat-backs," at Cape Hatteras and five adjacent townships. "In the rivers near Beaufort, N.C., they are taken in small quantities in gill nets worked from open boats and canoes," he added, but south of Beaufort "the menhaden has no statistical importance." Yet he said that, although in previous years menhaden were "only one-third more abundant than any other species," in 1873 he had seen "twice as many fat-back during the fishing season as I ever saw of any other species on our coast." "Neither capture nor the destruction of the fish on the coast by the other fish seem to affect their abundance," he continued.

Simpson commented on the fall run, which in the later nineteenth century and through the twentieth would bring fleets from Mid-Atlantic and New England coasts

to Beaufort and Morehead City. Simpson said that in the 1875 fall season menhaden passed three days ahead of bluefish. "From the balcony of the light-house," he noted, "at least 25 schools of menhaden have been seen lying along the coast both north and south of the cape. Each school seemed to cover many hundred yards of the water and to be moving south at the rate of from four to five miles an hour. This continued, and school after school followed..."

When the blues came, many menhaden were driven or washed onto the beaches. Few were saved, the fishermen mostly seeking the blues, worth 15 to 50 cents apiece. But some thrifty fishermen did gather up the flapping menhaden, salted them down, and sold them by the barrel "to a good advantage." "Some sold as high, in trade, to bring ten bushels of corn, equal to \$7 in currency, for one fish-barrel of menhaden," Simpson added. Many North Carolina fishermen then thought the run was caused by bluefish driving the menhaden. Simpson, however, concluded that the blues simply followed the fatbacks.

The North Carolina fall fishing contributed to a sociological shift in the fishery toward the end of the nineteenth century. At first, according to studies by Victor A. Liguori, the fishing crews were largely Portuguese. "With this geographic shift," Liguori wrote in a 1967 Princeton



Gang of Portuguese in hold of steamer filling the hoisting-tubs, ca. 1887.

The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States, G. B. Goode



Bailing menhaden from purse-seine into hold, ca. 1950. Ed T. Simons Collection, NC Maritime Museum

University doctoral dissertation, "southern Negroes replaced the Portuguese in the status of ordinary fishermen, and southern native-born whites invaded the subordinate managerial positions formerly held by New England Yankees." "...Ordinary crewmen in the menhaden fishery might best be seen as a Negro fishing proletariat...clearly an employee in a very real, if not altogether rational bureaucracy. All he has to offer is his labor."

It might be added that until the mid-1950s invention of the hydraulic power block to purse the seines and "harden" the catch against the purse boats, blacks contributed greatly to bunker fishing with their chanteys. The rhythmic singing, heard first in North Carolina fleets, made it easier for muscle to claw the seines, mesh by mesh, to the surface between the purse boats. Then the catch could be bailed with a big dip-net, raised by a steam or gasoline donkey engine over the fish-boat rail, and dumped into the fish-hold. Often a fish-boat making a set of up to a half-million fish had to call on a nearby boat to lend its crew, and 40 or more men would strain and sing. As one veteran captain expressed it, "When they got

together good, they pulled about everything on earth."

Chanteying ended with hydraulic power, but at least two groups, one in Beaufort and another in the Reedville, Va., country, have revived the songs and given public concerts along the East Coast. Some chanteys have had to be "sanitized," but most are adaptations of plantation work, chain gang, gospel, and other songs, many never written or previously recorded.

Much that is known about the North Carolina—indeed the entire Atlantic and Gulf Coast menhaden fishery—is in the files of the National Marine Fisheries Service's Southeast Fisheries Science Center on Pivers Island at Beaufort. Here a special menhaden team, headed by Joseph W. Smith, reports regularly on purse seine landings through and for each season, along with statistics on coast-wide age compositions. Comparative landing figures on total "standard" fish for the combined Beaufort and Reedville landings, plus the Gulf Coast figures are provided along with total metric tons.

The program started in the early 1950s under the NMFS predecessor, the federal Bureau of Commercial

Fisheries. Preliminary sampling was of catches in the Middle Atlantic and Chesapeake Bay areas, and the range was extended to the entire Atlantic Coast in 1955. During the early 1960s concern developed over possible overfishing in the Gulf of Mexico, and the program was extended there.

Always a question in North Carolina's fall-winter fishing is whether too many 'peanuts'—[age 0]—pre-spawning fish may be taken. They are simply in the big schools of all ages heading for winter waters. Smith and Douglas Vaughan, the latter leader of the Beaufort laboratory's population dynamics team, reported in 1991 that "growth overfishing may be occurring, [fish] harvested at too young an average age for the full potential harvest from a year class to be obtained." Vaughan, during the 1996 fall fishing season, noted, "we have always had some concern about excessive landings of 'peanuts'."

Vaughan and his team check this catch and other factors—"triggers" designed to address "recruitment overfishing" or maintenance of enough spawning stock to make good recruitment likely. This enables them to "determine whether the stock is in difficulties and what ought to be recommended as management when necessary." Vaughan commented that "recent estimates of spawning stock biomass are currently quite high relative to historic values."

Other "triggers" include total landings, number surviving their first year, catch of fish three years or older, the weight of adult females, and the ratio of mature females "with and without fishing."

For all the uncertainty and trials of fatback fishing and processing in North Carolina after the Civil War, the few "damyankees" and succeeding natives helped ease the economic and cultural strains of Reconstruction. By 1887, when gloomy appraisals had been published by George Brown Goode and A. Howard Clark, a Beaufort venture near the original Harker's Island site processed nearly 15 million pounds. Two years later seven factories were busy around Beaufort and Morehead City. By 1900 a second menhaden center had started at Southport and Cape Fear. The 1902 catch for the two was more than 18 million pounds. In the early years of the twentieth century, menhaden became the most important finfish in the state.

Charles Wallace, a North Carolina legislator, started a factory on Core Sound northeast of Beaufort in the late nineteenth century, and in 1911 built one at Morehead City. Another Core Sound pioneer was R.W. Taylor, Sr.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, despite the Great Depression, Wallace M. Quinn, one of the most colorful men in the fishery and industry until his death in 1973, got his inspiration in North Carolina and went on to build a fleet and operate at least ten plants, mostly on the Gulf Coast, and none where he first heard about bunkers. Quinn was a Crisfield, Md., entrepreneur who had operated a diamond-back terrapin farm and processing plant among his Crisfield businesses. He came to Morehead

City in the late 1920s and started a business shipping soft crabs and scallops. He got to know North Carolina menhaden families—Smiths, Wallaces, Webbs, and others—and became intrigued. He had a fish-boat built at his Crisfield marine railway and brought it to Morehead City. But the factory he planned to use was a Depression victim, and his new boat had to turn to towing gravel and sand barges for a new South Carolina highway. In time he was able to return to the fishery, but in Florida, not North Carolina.

Wallace is another North Carolina name of the nineteenth and twentieth century menhaden world. Charles S. Wallace, born in 1864 on Portsmouth Island, rose from gutting fish in a fish-house as a 12-year-old to owner of the business, and in 1898, built a small menhaden plant on Crab Point, across Calico Creek from Morehead City. All work was by hand. Barrels of fish were hoisted out of holds of 40-foot sailing fish-boats, sun-dried, cooked in open vats, and run through a hand-cranked press. Oil was skimmed by hand ladles from the vats. Scrap was sold for fertilizer.

In 1902 Charles Wallace built a new plant at Smyrna, with wood-fired rotary dryers. More fish were available there, and eight to ten fish-boats worked the seasons. Much hand labor was routine—crews jumping into waist-high water to pull the seines and load the catch into skiffs to take to the fish-boats. Purse boats were not used until about 1912, long after Virginia and other fishermen adopted them.

In 1911 Wallace Fisheries moved to Morehead City. Several 65-foot or longer fish-boats, including two-masted schooners, were used until the start of the Second World War. During this period Wallace's son George, born in 1906, worked after school and during vacations in the Wallace plant, shipyard, and other family enterprises. A Duke University degree in business administration in 1929 prepared him further for fatback fishing and processing.

Meanwhile the company acquired a steam press in 1918, and that year added its first diesel fish-boat, with an 80-horsepower Fairbanks Morse engine. Thus North Carolina's fishery gained a little on Virginia's, where the fish-boats had long been under steam, in fact called only "steamers."

In 1929 Charles Wallace and his associates, William and Earl Webb, built a plant at Mayport, Florida, fishing from Savannah to Cape Canaveral. Wallace himself built another North Carolina plant at Portsmouth, on Casey's Island in 1933, having closed the no longer profitable Smyrna plant in 1931. Oil then sold for only eight cents a gallon, fish meal for \$13 a ton. The Casey's Island venture closed after one season because products had to be delivered by barge. Equipment was reassembled at Southport, and the plant later was sold to Virginia's Standard Products. The solubles plant at Beaufort was sold to Beaufort Fisheries. Thereafter, under George Wallace's leadership, most of the Wallace activity was on

the Gulf Coast.

In 1951 there were eight plants in the Beaufort-Morehead City area. Up to a dozen followed, with about ten employing 500 men afloat or ashore. In the boom years of 1953–1962, more than 150 fish-boats, large and small, fished the Atlantic and North Carolina sounds. In the peak year of 1956 six North Carolina plants, now mechanized far beyond beach kettles and hand-presses, processed more than a billion-and-a-half pounds. Beaufort menhaden enterprises early in the second half of the twentieth century included plants of J. Howard Smith Co. of Port Monmouth, N.J., and the Standard Products Company of Kilmarnock, Va.

The late Harvey W. Smith's plant in Beaufort was part of the once-extensive Smith menhaden enterprise. It was taken over by a British conglomerate, Hanson PLC, in 1974, but later shut down. Standard Products, a 1928 creation of the late H.R. Humphreys, was sold by his son, H.R. "Peck" Humphreys, Jr., in 1988 to AMPRO Fisheries, of Georgia.

North Carolina's sole remaining menhaden plant—Beaufort Fisheries, Inc., on Taylor's Creek,—was founded by W.B.V. Potter and Claud R. Wheatly when the Taylor's Creek Fish Scrap and Oil Company failed during the Great Depression. Later members of the two families still own the company. Jule D. Wheatly is president, succeeding W.H. Potter, now retired but a director. The plant, with an annual capacity of 10,000 tons of fish meal and 450,000 gallons of oil, probably produces up to 20 per cent of the Reedville-Beaufort total with its two fish-boats, the converted minesweepers *Gregory Poole* and *Coastal Mariner* on the Atlantic. Fishing on the sounds has ended.

This is a broad picture of a fishery and industry that has seen good times and bad over nearly four centuries. Legend, if not documentable fact, has the friendly Indian Squanto teaching Pilgrims to plant a pogy in each corn hill for fertilizer. Skeptical New Englanders suggest fish-eating animals would have dug up every corn hill every night, never a cob to survive to that "first" Thanksgiving.

The fishery has been under sail, steam, and now diesel power. The fish-boats, once smelly steam wooden craft, now are diesel-powered steel ships, many converted military craft, with refrigerated fish-holds, even air conditioning and OSHA-ordered split-seat "heads"(toilets).

The twin purse boats, first wooden with oars, now steel or aluminum with diesel engines, pay out astern the 1,200-to 1,800-foot seines of durable nylon instead of cotton nets that barely lasted a season and had to be dried after each day's fishing. The purse boats meet to join the ends of the seine around a school of fish.

As in the past, the fish-boat captain takes one purse boat, the mate the other, but now a half-dozen men do all net handling—some of it still only for the strongest! Spotter planes lead the fish-boat and purse boats by radio, telling the captain and mate where to go, when to close

around the school. No longer does a captain sit in the crow's nest, scanning 360 degrees for a school "whipping." New fish-boats have no crow's nests.

Over the years, the fishery and industry's main concern has been the fish. Would enough return to coastal waters and sounds and their many creeks and rivers from wherever in the Atlantic bunkers winter? Would the schools be big enough for set after set? Would officers' and men's shares of catch dollars be worth the day and the season? For many years some of the Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, and other northern fleets have come to North Carolina for the brief and always uncertain fall fishery, November through January, before the schools head out into the Atlantic—somewhere. Off North Carolina, the migrating northern schools consolidate into huge bodies of millions of fish—as noted in 1875 by A.W. Simpson, Jr. No purse seine, no fish-hold, no fleet can hold them all. Winter gales often keep the fish-boats at Beaufort, Morehead City, and Southport moorings, the crews to amuse themselves with cards and intramural yarning, and some with booze.

If the summer season has been lean, crewmen live off what they made the previous winter tonging oysters, or their families' earnings in oyster shuck-houses. They also may have money from pound netting or fish trapping—hundreds of rigs reaching out across tides from the beaches in late winter and early spring—or what they, and/or their wives, made in the dozens of Virginia herring canneries that canned tomatoes in summer. In summer months the men could make a living, often a good one, crab-potting on the water or crab-picking with the women in the crab houses. Ashore there always has been farming, cutting pulpwood for a paper mill, or logging loblolly pine or hardwoods for the many sawmills.

The industry also has its problems. Menhaden companies have to contend with competition from processors of soybean oil and undergo expensive plant modernization. As in many industries, they also share late twentieth century environmental concerns. They already have had to put scrubbers in factory stacks, mainly, they think, to calm the passions of those who don't agree with natives that "it smells like money."

Environmental questions and controversy are an expansion of long-standing friction with sport and recreational fishing interests, and with unofficial and official promoters of tourism fearful of "unsightly, smelly" fish-boats annoying swimmers and sunners on the beaches, or driving them away with thousands of dead fish after a failed set. North Carolina now forbids purse seining within 1.5 miles of the beach in Dare County on the northern coast to Oregon Inlet, May 1 to September 30, and within a half mile, October 1 to December 31. The fish-boats—and all commercial fishermen—must keep 750 feet off fishing piers.

Friction with sport fishermen—dating back to the 1890s—is often emotional, with some accusing bunker

fleets of pumping rock, blues, and others into the holds. Captains respond that food fish feeding on schools of bunkers always sound before the seines can be pursed, and only a few stragglers are caught. By-catch studies by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science support this. Truly, many a fish-boat cook watches bunkers pumped into the hold but rarely dips out enough food fish for the crews' dinners. A school of blues is least wanted. Their razor-sharp teeth shred the netting and butcher all bunkers in their way.

The industry, itself and through the NFMOA, has long fought proposed restrictions on menhaden fishing in the Chesapeake Bay and along the Virginia and North Carolina coasts. In North Carolina, menhaden and other commercial fishing interests watch their legislature and the State Division of Marine Fisheries. Jule Wheatly of Beaufort Fisheries, Inc. has promised to cooperate in present restrictions simply to "stay in business." It's a matter of a \$2 million business living with \$230 million worth of tourism. Such bills in the Virginia General Assembly bring industry and association executives—and Reedville people dependent on the fishery—to Richmond. So far they have prevailed.

Other commercial fishermen are more wary. Jerry Schill, director of the North Carolina Fisheries Association, warned members to "guard against being put out of business." Even haul seining from the beaches, a centuries-old summer occupation, has been stopped. Schill urged the state to put exhibits and markers on beaches to educate tourists on how fish get to their tables, and that frozen "fish sticks" are not the way fish are.

In Virginia the environmental question raised by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is whether purse seining of menhaden affects the food web of coastal estuaries and bays. Does taking millions of one fish deprive other fish of food and damage the whole food web? It is certain that the bunker is food for almost all carnivores of the seas and sounds. The hungriest and most destructive are the blues. Other predators include striped bass (rockfish), swordfish, weakfish, whales, and porpoises, and, in the rivers, gar and catfish. So, when whole schools of 100,000 or more bunkers are taken, do rock, blues, weakfish, and others go hungry? Do they head for other waters or merely hunt for another school of bunkers? Are other forms of marine life affected? Is this, as some recreational fishermen concede, only a "spot problem" that can spoil a week-end unless the sportsman can follow and find the fish he wants?

The foundation took up a proposal by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's Recreational Fishing Advisory Board for a \$58,000 year-long scientific study of the role of menhaden in "trophic [nutritional] dynamics of Chesapeake Bay." The study would seek, through computer modeling, to tell how Atlantic menhaden fit into the coastal ecosystems and how the commercial fishery and species feeding on menhaden, may regulate

"trophic energy flow, fish production and nutrient dynamics." The VMRC refused to finance the study because the \$58,000 would have come from a salt water fishing license fund.

The Menhaden Team of the Beaufort National Marine Fisheries Services expressed doubt about the proposal, largely because it would be only a one-year study with "precision [for] useful management advice" unlikely. The questions raised by Beaufort may provide a blueprint for a later study, one that could take many years to rectify our present ignorance.

There the matter may lie for future sessions of the Virginia General Assembly and North Carolina Legislature. Reedville and Beaufort residents will rest on their history, but know questions will come up session after session.

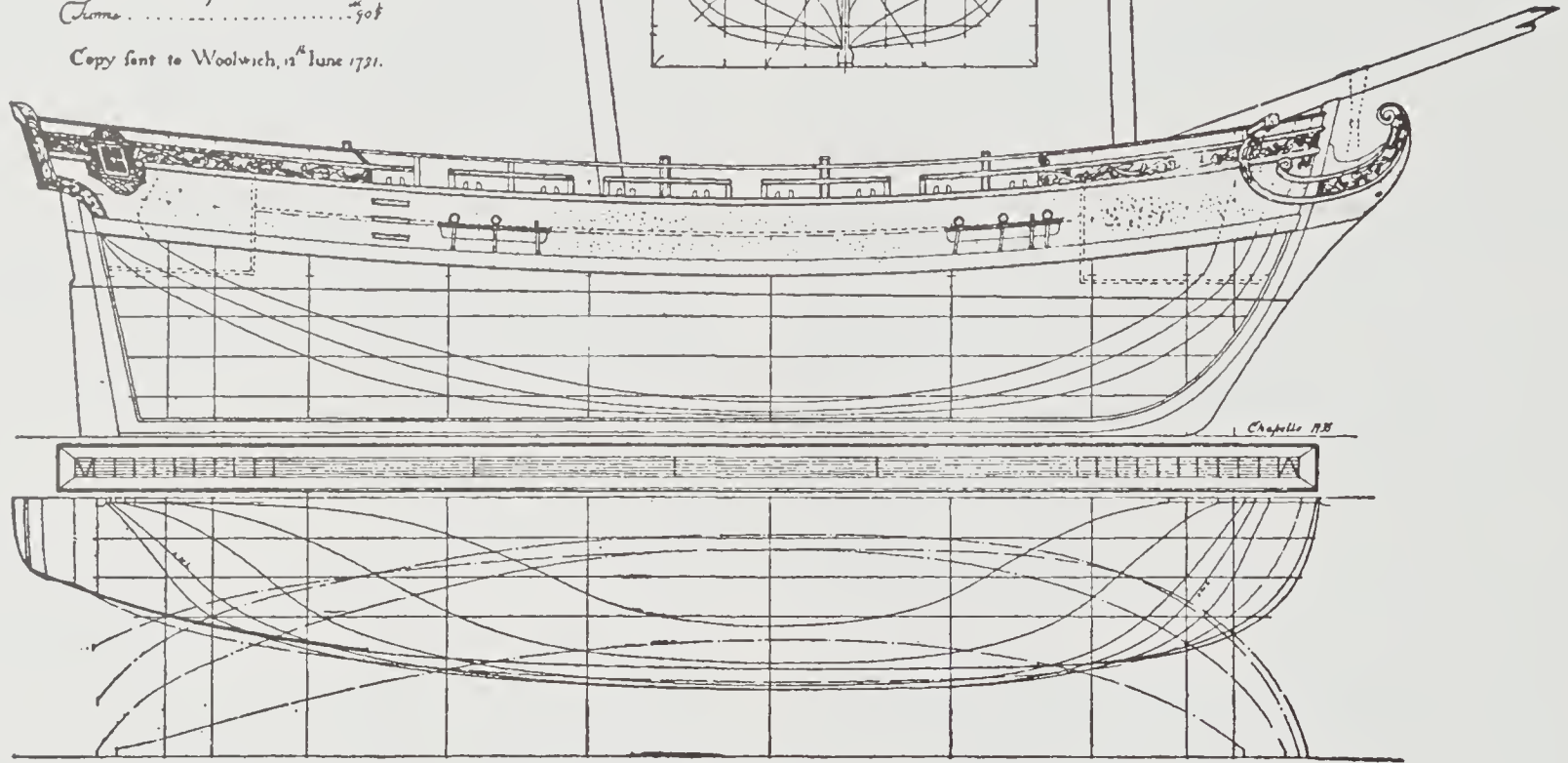
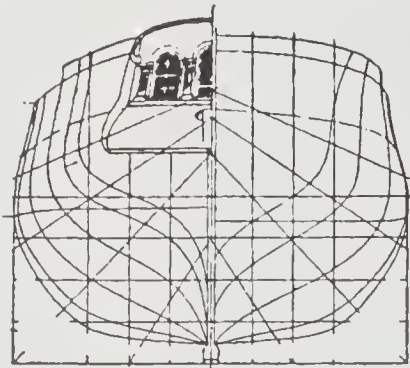
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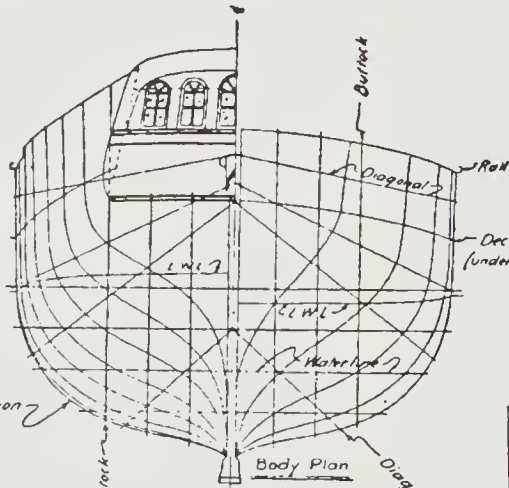
Dimensions.

Length of the Range of the Deck	60.0
Breadth	19.8
Depth	8.3
Draught of Water (Aft)	7.6
..... Fore	6.9
Tonnage	117.0

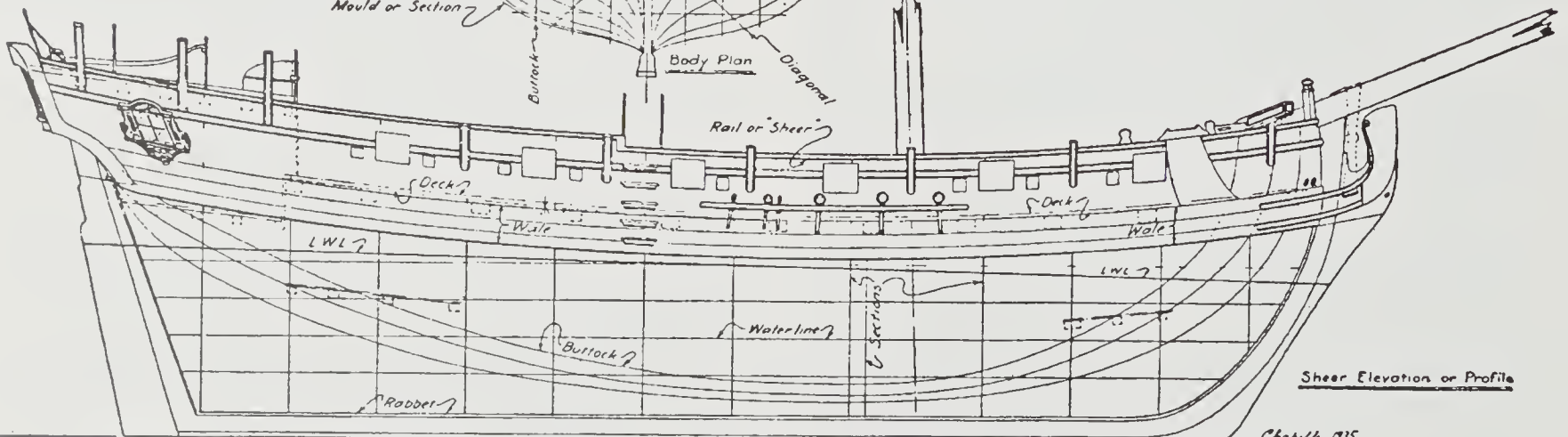
Copy sent to Woolwich, 13th June 1731.



Charlton 1735

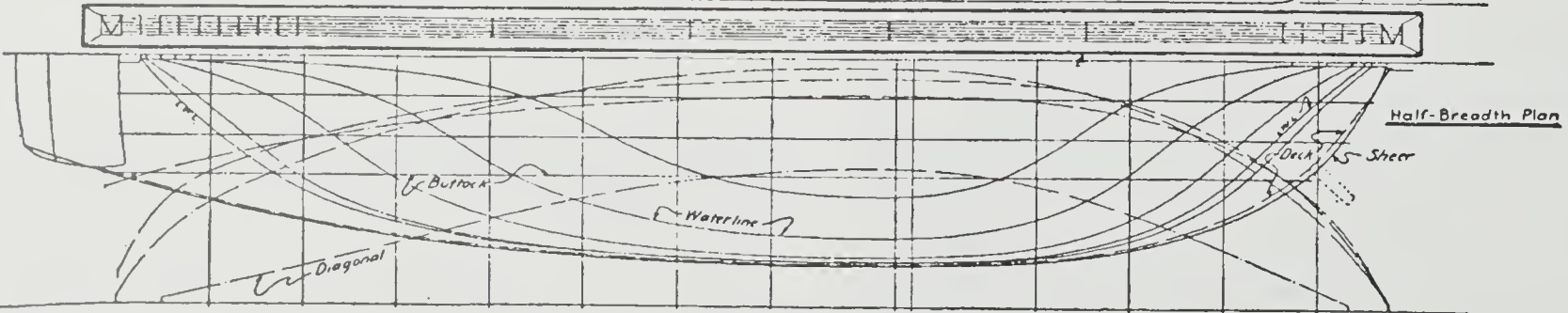


Length on Gundeck 65.7;
on Keel 50.0
Beam moulded 20.10
Depth of hold 9.0
Tonnage given variously as 113⁵/₈ and 117³/₈ Tons



Sheer Elevation or Profile

Charlton 1735



Half-Breadth Plan

Privateering on the Carolina Coast During King George's War

by Carl E. Swanson

The Carolina Coast was free of Spanish men-of-war in November 1739, or so Royal Navy Captain Peter Warren informed the Admiralty: "I do not hear as yet that there has been any Spanish privateers out, nor of any of our trade being taken.¹ Warren had taken up his pen shortly after the Anglo-Spanish War of Jenkins's Ear had been declared; this was a period of anxious anticipation as merchants in port cities along the Atlantic seaboard of North America and in the Caribbean rushed to fit out private men-of-war to prey upon the commerce of the British and Spanish Empires.² Six months later Carolina commerce was still secure. At the end of April 1740 Charleston (Charles Town) merchant Robert Pringle recorded the capture of a Spanish privateer in a letter to his Lisbon business correspondents: "A few Days ago a Spanish Privateer of 16 Guns and 87 Men, was brought in here by his Majesty's ship the *Shoreham*, Capt. Boschawen, taken off the Havana and is the only Privateer that has yet appear'd from that place."³ This prize was the first enemy privateer seen in the South Carolina capital. Unfortunately for Pringle and his associates in the Charleston mercantile community, hundreds of other private men-of-war from Havana as well as St. Augustine, Cap François, Martinique, and other enemy ports subsequently made their appearance in American waters. As the war continued, Spanish and (after 1744) French privateers appeared with alarming frequency, and

their impact on Carolina commerce became increasingly devastating. Throughout the conflict Charleston merchants and governmental officials penned numerous letters concerning the adverse effects of the prize war. The *South Carolina Gazette* (as well as newspapers in every leading American port) published thousands of reports revealing the debilitating impact of Spanish and French predators on American trade. Despite the efforts of the Royal Navy, the provincial coast guard, and British colonial privateers to curb the destructive activities of enemy cruisers, Spanish and French privateering did not cease until after the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle ended the hostilities in 1748.

An examination of Charleston's experience during the War of 1739–1748 reveals the disastrous impact imperial warfare had on American port cities. After a decade of conflict, the Carolina economy was a shambles. Spanish and French privateers played the key role in this disruption of the colony's trade. Enemy predators cruised off the Carolina coast from St. Simons Island to the Cape Fear River. They were able to capture British merchantmen—often in plain sight of Charleston Harbor—with seeming impunity. Although the Royal Navy stationed vessels at the Carolina capital throughout the war, the king's ships were unable to halt the operations of the Spanish and French private men-of-war.

The success of the Spanish and French private men-of-war on the Carolina Coast demonstrates the importance of privateering during the eighteenth century. Private men-of-war were able to disrupt the commerce of one of the most important ports in British America. At the same time, the predators augmented the wealth of the Spanish and French colonies by sending their prizes home to Florida, Cuba, St. Domingue, and Martinique. The privateers increased Spanish and French sea power, but because they were privately owned, manned, and equipped, they did not cause a drain on the treasuries of Spain, France, or their

Left: **Two draughts of typical privateer types; a Royal Navy brigantine or snow of 1721 [above], and a British sloop, ca. 1720.**

The History of American Sailing Ships, Howard I. Chapelle

colonies. Charleston's ordeal during King George's War provides graphic evidence of the value of this marriage of patriotism and the pursuit of profit.

On the eve of the War of Jenkins's Ear, South Carolina had emerged as one of the wealthiest colonies in British North America. The source of the province's prosperity was the growth and exportation of rice. This staple crop had been introduced into the colony in the 1690s and after years of draining swamps, constructing dikes, experimenting with seeds, and importing thousands of black slaves, Carolinians enjoyed substantial profits during the second and third decades of the eighteenth century.⁴ The increasing production of rice served as a catalyst for the growth of Charleston. Unlike the Chesapeake Tobacco Society of Maryland and Virginia, South Carolina did not possess broad, deep rivers capable of permitting ocean-going vessels to sail up to plantation wharves to load rice. Instead, a network of inland waterways allowed periaugers and other shallow-draft craft to transport the colony's staple to the Carolina capital for shipment to overseas markets.⁵

As the production of rice expanded, Charleston grew and prospered. This relationship is easily seen by comparing the city's population to the number of barrels of rice exported. In 1700 Charleston had a population of 2000 and exported 2112 barrels of rice. By 1720 there were 3500 residents in the Carolina capital, while 9115 barrels of rice were exported from the city's wharves. The decades of the 1720s and 1730s witnessed the period of greatest expansion. Charleston grew to 4500 in 1730 and increased to 6800 residents in 1742; rice exports climbed to 41,722 barrels in 1730, and in 1739, the last shipping season before the hostilities erupted, 61,117 barrels of rice left the Carolina city. The South Carolina cereal enjoyed strong markets in Britain, northern and southern Europe, and the West Indies, as well as in the other North American colonies. Britain aided in the expansion of Carolina's rice production by allowing the colony's staple, which was an enumerated good under the Navigation Acts, to be exported directly to European markets south of Cape Finisterre. By 1740 the province's staple trade provided white Carolinians with the highest level of per capita imports in British North America—a clear indication of the colony's wealth.⁶

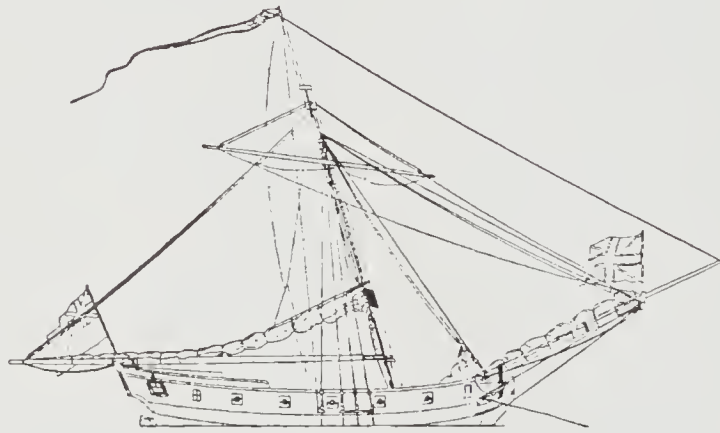
At the same time that South Carolina's rice trade was expanding during the 1730s, relations between Britain

and Spain were rapidly deteriorating. Attempts by English and colonial merchants to expand trade with the Spanish colonies in America were the source of the friction. The Treaty of Utrecht prohibited Anglo-Spanish colonial commerce, and officials in Spain tried to prohibit this traffic. To accomplish this goal, *guarda-costas*—Spanish coast guard vessels—plied the Caribbean and stopped every British ship they met. Public opinion in Britain and America urged retaliation against Spain as the number of incidents involving *guarda-costas* (which received extensive coverage in the British and colonial press) escalated. By the summer of 1739 anti-Spanish feeling had reached sufficient strength to force the government in London to issue letters of marque. For decades British subjects had coveted Spanish commerce; for nearly ten years they had longed to seek revenge against the *guarda-costas*. Finally, Whitehall legalized both pursuits.

Although public opinion in Britain and America was generally exuberant over the prospects of war with Spain, many colonial merchants were not. Proponents of the war primarily included men who expected to earn windfall gains by fitting out privateers that would capture the rich commerce of the Spanish Empire. Businessmen engaged in the more normal peacetime pursuits of shipping American agricultural commodities across the Atlantic in exchange for European products were less optimistic about the possibilities of profit from the hostilities. Moreover, they realized

that their own trade in colonial staples would provide tempting targets for privateers sent out by the enemy. A port's shipping and manpower resources were additional considerations concerning the profitability of wartime predatory activities. Clearly a city that possessed an extensive fleet and large numbers of mariners would look more favorably upon privateering than a port that lacked vessels and sailors. For these reasons, Charleston merchants looked upon the coming war with much foreboding.

Privateering did not offer the Carolina capital the prospects of substantial profits. Although Charleston was one of the leading colonial seaports, it would be unable to play a role in privateering commensurate with its position in the urban hierarchy because of a dearth of locally owned shipping and a scarcity of seamen. Charleston was essentially a shipping point—a place where American agricultural goods were collected for transshipment to



1720 British sloop

The History of American Sailing Ships, Howard I. Chapelle

overseas markets. Most of the vessels that participated in this process were not owned by local residents. In his report to the Board of Trade in 1740, Robert Dinwiddie, surveyor general of customs for the southern district (Maryland to Georgia and the West Indies), stated that Carolinians owned only 25 vessels, and it is unlikely that Charleston residents even owned all of these bottoms. Numerous letters from Robert Pringle indicate that Charleston depended heavily upon shipping from other British ports to ship Carolina rice. Before the declaration of war in 1739, Pringle wrote correspondents concerning his apprehension of commercial disaster resulting from inadequate shipping. "We have the greatest Crop of Rice this Year by much that has ever yet been produc'd in the Province and if the apprehensions of a War Continue: We are afraid of not having Shipping enough to Carry it of[f]." Pringle reiterated these fears time and again throughout the fall of 1739 and during the subsequent winter. In another letter to Thomas Burrill, his Hull, England correspondent, written eight months later, the Charleston merchant reported that his fear regarding the shortage of shipping had been confirmed: "We have not had so many Shipping here this Season as usual occasion'd by the War." The squeeze on shipping did not abate throughout the War of Jenkins's Ear; France's entry into the conflict in 1744 worsened the problem.⁷

Because Charleston merchants owned so few vessels, they were unable to devote much tonnage to privateering once their normal peacetime commerce was closed off by the war. In 1744 Pringle headed a Charleston merchant syndicate that invested in a privateering venture in conjunction with some London business associates. In order to obtain a suitable vessel, Pringle sent Captain Mark Anderson, the venture's prospective commander, to London.⁸

In addition to lacking shipping, Charleston also seemed to face a chronic shortage of mariners. On many occasions, Pringle informed his business correspondents that their vessels' scheduled departures had been delayed because the merchantmen lacked a sufficient crew. Pringle notified his brother Andrew, for example, that "your ship *Susannah* which has been Clear'd out since the 20th [of December 1742], and fair Winds ever Since but Capt. Gregory has been detain'd as he tell me purely for want of Hands, and is oblig'd to goe at Last Weak handed." London shipowner Richard Partridge learned that his brig *Richard* had been delayed in Charleston because she lacked sailors. Francis Dabby's ship *Good Hope* was also "Detain'd some days for want of hands." Pringle informed Guernsey merchants Henry and John Brock that they were indeed fortunate that their ship *Ann* had a full complement because "Seaman are so very Scaree and Difficult to be Procured here." The shortage of mariners continued to plague Carolina merchants throughout King George's War. Henry Laurens, a young

Table 1
Total Yearly Privateering Cruises and Berths undertaken from British Colonial Ports during the War of 1739–1748

Port	Number of Cruises	Relative Frequency (%)	Number of Berths	Relative Frequency (%)
NEWPORT	112	27.9	8613	29.2
NEW YORK CITY	87	21.7	7338	25.0
WEST INDIES ^a	80	19.9	4773	16.2
PHILADELPHIA	46	11.5	4441	15.1
BOSTON	28	7.0	2145	7.3
OTHER ^b	26	6.5	1111	3.8
CHARLESTON	22	5.5	999	3.4
Totals	401	100.0	29,420	100.0

Source: See note 10

^a This category includes all Bermuda privateers, as well as those from the West Indian Colonies.

^b This category includes privateers from Cape Fear, North Carolina; Virginia; Frederica, Georgia; New Hampshire; and New Jersey.

Charleston merchant, complained about the scarcity of seamen in 1748.⁹

The lack of shipping and manpower prevented Charleston from becoming a major center of British colonial privateering. Table 1 clearly reveals that the Carolina capital ranked far behind privateering cruises and the number of men who sailed on board colonial private men-of-war. Charleston failed to fit out any cruisers in 1739, 1741, and 1742. The city's greatest participation in the prize war came during the last two years of the hostilities, but even then the southern city ranked well behind Newport, New York, and the British West Indies.¹⁰

Because it lacked the necessary resources to take advantage of the opportunities presented by privateering, few prizes were brought into Charleston Harbor. When he congratulated English merchant Richard Thompson on his successful privateers in 1740, Robert Pringle lamented the fortunes of Carolina's private warships. "As for Spanish prizes, which you are pleas'd to mention in yours, there has been none brought in here. Excepting three or four Small Sloops and a very Small old Brigg and it is very uncertain if a Spanish prize of any Burthen may be brought in here During the whole course of the War." Four years later, after France had entered the conflict and the prize war was at its height, the Carolina rice merchant still grieved over Charleston's lack of success in capturing enemy commerce. "We in this part of the world," Pringle wrote to William Pringle (no relation), his Antigua correspondent, "have been hitherto pretty much out of the way

in making advantage by the war, and this Province has profited nothing thereby till of late."¹¹

British predators escorted 51 prizes into Charleston Harbor during King George's War.¹² Of this total, Carolina cruisers captured only 14. Ten were taken by privateers, two by colonial coast guard vessels, and the remaining two by Carolina privateers sailing in consort with private men-of-war from other colonies. This means that the majority of the revenue realized from these captures did not remain in Charleston. Privateers from New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Jamaica accounted for 23 of the prizes. The owners of private men-of-war normally received one-third of the proceeds from the prize vessel and cargo, while the privateer's officers and crew divided the remaining two-thirds. Since probably none of the owners and few of the crew members of these privateers were Carolinians, the lion's share of the proceeds of the prizes were remitted to New York City, Newport, Kingston, and Boston. The same is true for the prize shares from the 14 prizes sent into Charleston by the Royal Navy. British prize law stipulated that three-fourths of the proceeds from a navy capture went to the officers. The lower deck seamen shared the remaining quarter. Since few, if any, of the naval officers were Carolina residents, and because the lower deck hands did not receive their prize money until their vessel was paid off in England, very little of the prizes' proceeds remained in the Carolina capital.¹³

Charleston did derive some financial benefits from the prizes brought into the harbor by predators from other ports, however. A myriad of fees stemming from vice-admiralty court proceedings enriched some of the city's residents. The officers of the court charged fees for every legal document they issued—monitions, libels, answers, interrogatories, decrees, and appeals. Added to these expenses were the lawyers' fees shared by the advocate general and defense attorneys. The expense of admiralty justice was substantial as Pringle informed Maryland shipowner Richard Bennett: "You'll please to observe that the Charges of the Court of Admiralty and Lawyers Fees in Claiming the Schooner has Run very high and Comes to a Considerable Sume, but there is no help for it." Carolinians not associated with the vice-admiralty court also received fees from the prizes. Expenses arose from appraising, unloading, and storing prize cargoes. Vendue masters received commissions from selling prize goods at public auction. The city's merchants often received bargains when they purchased prize ships and cargoes, especially if several prizes arrived at the same time and glutted the market for their produce. Henry Laurens hoped to benefit in this fashion from the sale of the prize ship *Patience*. "She will be sold in a few days," Laurens informed James Crockatt, "and possibly I may be concern'd in purchasing her if at a reasonable price." The city's shipyards and artisans employed in servicing ves-

sels also gained when captures arrived in port. Often the prize vessels—and the captors' craft as well—required repairs or needed to be cleaned and refitted.¹⁴

On the whole, however, the big money from privateering went to other ports. Table 2 presents the ports to which British colonial privateers dispatched their prizes during King George's War. Charleston was clearly far behind the leaders.

Although South Carolina did not reap great profits from the participation of her privateers in King George's War, the colony was very much involved in prize actions. The extensive shipping of the Carolina rice trade drew enemy privateers like a magnet. Despite the presence of

Table 2
Ports that received Prizes taken by British Colonial Privateers during King George's War

Port	Number of Prizes	Relative Frequency (%)	Adjusted Frequency (%)
NEW PROVIDENCE ISLAND	63	10.9	11.7
JAMAICA	55	9.5	10.2
ST. KITTS	53	9.2	9.9
OTHER WEST INDIAN ^a	51	8.8	9.5
TOTAL WEST INDIAN	222	38.3	41.3
NEW YORK CITY	85	14.7	15.8
NEWPORT	53	9.2	9.9
CHARLESTON	35	6.0	6.5
PHILADELPHIA	29	5.0	5.4
NEWFOUNDLAND	17	2.9	3.2
BOSTON	12	2.1	2.2
OTHER NORTH AMERICAN ^b	12	2.1	2.2
TOTAL NORTH AMERICAN	243	42.0	45.2
EUROPEAN PORTS	23	4.0	4.3
MISCELLANEOUS ^c	49	8.5	9.1
MISSING	42	7.3	Missing
TOTAL	579	100.0	100.0

Source: See note 10. Frequencies do not add up to 100 per cent because of rounding.

^a This category includes prizes that were taken to ports in Barbados, Bermuda, Curaçao, St. Eustatius, Antigua, Nevis, Montserrat, and the Virgin Islands.

^b This category includes prizes that were taken into Salem and Marblehead, Massachusetts; Burlington, New Jersey; Beaufort and Cape Fear, North Carolina; and Frederica, Georgia.

^c This category includes prizes that were sunk, ransomed, or plundered at sea and then released. It also includes raids upon Spanish and French colonial settlements.

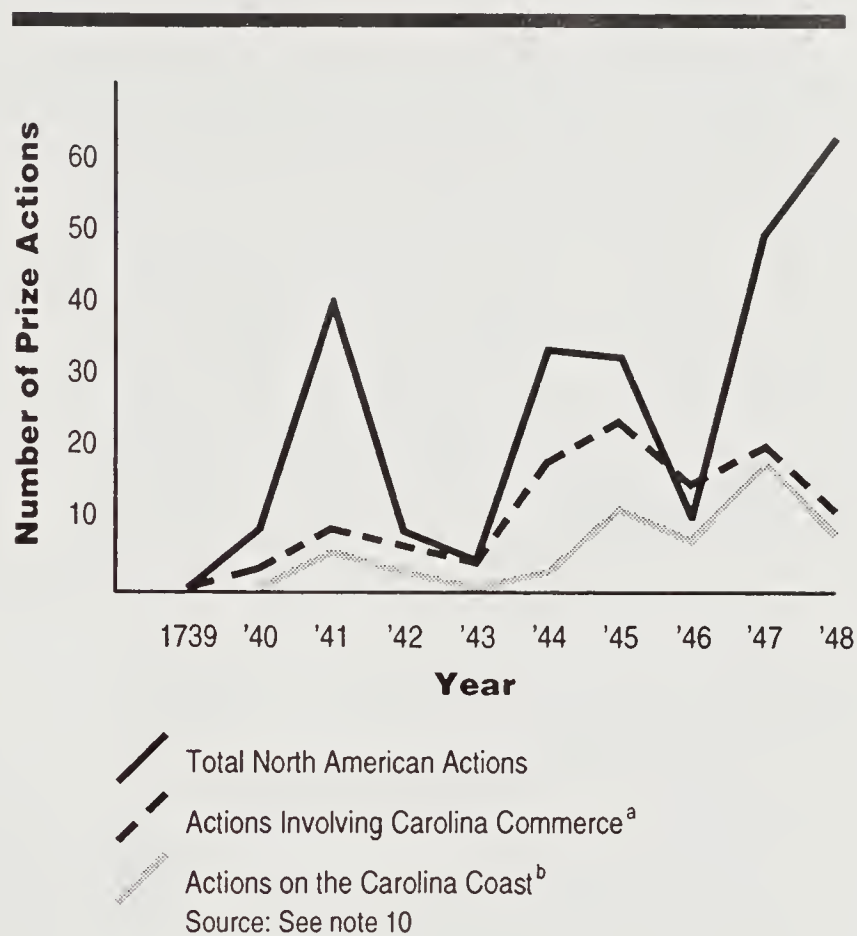
men-of-war on the Carolina station, this southern theater of North America seems to have been inadequately defended. The thinly settled province of Georgia and Charleston's chronic shortage of locally owned shipping combined to prevent any extensive cruising of British colonial predators in the area. The richness of Carolina commerce, weak coastal defenses, and the proximity to Spanish ports in Florida and the West Indies account for the popularity of this region among enemy privateers. In addition, the many capes and islands off the coast of North Carolina provided sheltered rendezvous points for French and Spanish privateers. Ocracoke Island (near Cape Hatteras) and Cape Lookout were two such places. There, enemy warships could send their prizes until they were ready to sail home. They could also take on water and wood as well as slaughtered beef. In short, North Carolina provided a refuge for Spanish and French predators that greatly facilitated their operations on the Carolina Coast as well as off the capes of Virginia farther north.

Figure 1 presents the yearly pattern of Spanish and French prize actions off the coast of North America during King George's War. It also illustrates the enemies' activities on the Carolina Coast as well as actions involving Carolina commerce. In general, the North American prize war was characterized by two periods. The first, the War of Jenkins's Ear from 1739–1743, was the smaller of the two. After one busy season in 1741, prize actions dwindled until the second major upswing in 1744. During the first phase of the hostilities only Britain and Spain were involved. Because France remained aloof, French colonial commerce was not liable to seizure by British predators. At the same time, French residents in Louisbourg, Martinique, and St. Domingue were unable to send out privateers to capture British merchantmen. With France's entry into the conflict in 1744 as Spain's ally, the prize war in North America surged again. Save for a decline in 1746, prize actions continued apace until the war ended in 1748.

Prize actions along the coast of South Carolina and incidents involving Carolina commerce followed the general contours of the war in North America. Few enemy privateers arrived to harass Charleston until 1741—the most damaging year for Carolina shipping during the War of Jenkins's Ear. The most destructive phase of the prize war occurred after the escalation in 1744. Prize actions took place more frequently and did not abate until after the peace treaty was signed.

The residents of British North America were keenly aware of the upswing in Spanish privateering at the beginning of the War of Jenkins's Ear. This was particularly true of South Carolinians. Only newly created and meagerly settled Georgia separated the Palmetto Colony from Spanish Florida. St. Augustine, less than 250 miles from Charleston, had been active in sending out *guarda-costas* in the pre-war years. After hostilities were pro-

Figure 1
Carolina Commerce engaged by Enemy Predators, 1739–1748



^a Carolina commerce is defined as those cases in which the prize vessel was either bound to or from Charleston when engaged by the enemy.

^b The Carolina Coast includes all prize actions fought off North America between St. Simons Island and Cape Fear.

claimed, the Florida city became a leading center of Spanish privateering. In fact, St. Augustine ranked second behind Havana, Cuba, as the capital of Spanish private men-of-war. More Carolina vessels struck their colors to St. Augustine privateers, and the Florida city received more Carolina commerce as prizes than any other enemy port. Don Manuel de Montiano, St. Augustine's governor, was an investor in privateering ventures. One of his captains, Don Juan de Leon Fandino, was the commander of the *guarda-costa* that had captured Captain Robert Jenkins in the *Rebecca* in 1731; it was Fandino who cut off Jenkins's ear.¹⁵

The threat to South Carolina's commerce posed by St. Augustine was clearly appreciated in Charleston. Early in 1740 the South Carolina Legislature agreed to support General James Oglethorpe in an expedition against the Florida capital. Robert Pringle, however, placed little faith in the venture: "The Project of the Province in Conjunction with General Oglethorpe to take St. Augustine is like to Come to nothing, this Province

not being in a condition to give any tolerable assistance.” The merchant’s fears proved justified. After a clumsy operation in conjunction with Royal Navy vessels under the command of Captain Vincent Pearce, Oglethorpe was forced to abandon the expedition in July. Pringle summarized the causes of the failure in a letter to his brother soon after the forces retreated from St. Augustine. He also hoped that a new initiative from Britain would eliminate the Florida privateering port:

All the Kings Ships before St. Augustine have left the place without Effecting any thing and are gone to their Respective Stations, and all the Troops are also withdrawn from thence after an Inglorious Expedition and having been before the place Two Months. The miscarriage of said Expedition is Laid at General Ogelthorpes Door and that our want of Success is entirely Oweing to his unaccountable Bad Conduct and ill management.

It is to be hoped that my Lord Cathcart and Admiral Vernon will have instructions to take St. Augustine. Otherwise I am Affraid it will Still Remain in the possession of the Spaniards which will prove of the Utmost ill Consequences and worse than ever before to So. Carolina.¹⁶

Lord Cathcart and Admiral Vernon did not capture St. Augustine, however, and Spanish privateers continued to operate off the Carolina Coast. The sloop *Sally*, bound to Charleston from Madeira laden with 100 pipes of wine, was taken during the summer of 1740 by a St. Augustine privateer sloop. A small Spanish cruiser chased a Carolina coastal vessel in October while another enemy predator prowled the coast. In March 1741 the *Anchona* was captured after leaving Charleston Harbor. In the fall of the same year a Spanish privateer sloop from St. Augustine captured the ships *Polly*, *Hawke*, and *Squirrel*. The three prizes, which were carrying more than 2100 barrels of Carolina rice to markets in Lisbon and Cowes, England, were sent to St. Augustine. In addition, the Spaniards took the sloop *Martha* and the ship *Cæsar* and equipped the prizes to assist them in their search for British merchantmen.¹⁷

The unsafe conditions existing on the coast of Carolina became common knowledge throughout British America. John Bannister, a leading Newport merchant, wrote an associate that “most of our Carolina Vessells Loaded with Naval Stores have been taken by the Spanish privateers there having been no less than five sale [sail] on the [Carolina] coast at once.” The *Pennsylvania Gazette* carried an article concerning St. Augustine privateers in its issue of August 20, 1741. Based upon the account of John Lucas, an English prisoner who escaped from the Florida capital, the report

stated that at least 36 British vessels had been brought into St. Augustine. Some of them (like the *Martha* and the *Cæsar*) had been subsequently refitted as Spanish privateers and cruised between the capes of Virginia and South Carolina. The article concluded with this comment on the dismal defenses of the Carolina Coast: “Lucas further informs us, that the Spaniards say, *The English at Carolina are certainly asleep, otherwise they’d not let us take their Vessels even on the Bar of Charlestown.*”¹⁸

After the French entered the war in 1744, enemy activity on the North American coast increased markedly. Spanish predators attacked British commerce at its weakest points—the coast of Carolina and the capes of Virginia and Delaware. Table 3 presents the major cruising areas in North American waters. It indicates that, in addition to interfering with Carolina’s commerce, enemy predators disrupted the tobacco trade of the Chesapeake and the extensive shipping bound to and from the port of Philadelphia. French and Spanish privateers often took prizes in all three areas during a single cruise. After embarking from their home ports in the West Indies or St. Augustine, the private men-of-war could intercept merchantmen off Georgia and the Carolinas before proceeding farther north to raid British shipping off the Virginia and Delaware capes. South Carolina’s commerce became vulnerable a second time as the Spanish and French privateers sailed south on their return voyage.

Table 3
Leading North American Cruising Areas of French and Spanish Privateers, 1739–1748

Cruising Area	Number of Cases	Relative Frequency (%)
CAPE OF VIRGINIA ^a	86	35.5
CAPE OF DELAWARE	52	21.5
CAROLINA COAST ^b	51	21.1
NORTHERN COLONIES ^c	31	12.8
OTHER ^d	22	9.1
Totals	242	100.0

Source: See note 10

^a The capes of Virginia also include a number of North Carolina locations between Cape Lookout and Albemarle Sound.

^b The Carolina Coast embraces all actions from St. Simons Island, Georgia, to Cape Fear, North Carolina.

^c The Northern Colonies include all North American prize actions north of the capes of Delaware, including Newfoundland.

^d This category contains six cases that occurred off the Florida Coast and the sixteen vague references to North American waters.

Don Francisco Larango, the noted Cuban privateer commander (commonly referred to as Paunche), assaulted British commerce throughout the war in each of the three major cruising areas. He was successful off the Virginia capes in 1741. In 1744 he returned to the coast of North America and captured six British merchantmen at the mouth of the Chesapeake before heading north to harass shipping off the capes of Delaware. On his return cruise to Havana, Paunche and Captain Figaroa, his consort, intercepted the Philadelphia ship *Lydia* off the Carolina Coast.

The latter years of the conflict witnessed a series of devastating privateering cruises during which the predators began taking prizes off the Carolina Coast before continuing to the two northern cruising grounds. In June 1747 Captain Andrew Gerbee of Cap François, sailing in a sloop mounting ten guns, captured six vessels before returning to St Domingue. Another Cap François privateer—Captain Lahaye in the sloop *Maréchal Vaudreuil*, mounting 14 guns and carrying 150 men—began his 1747 cruise by capturing a brigantine off Cape Fear, North Carolina. Before reaching Cape Henlopen, the Frenchman added a Charleston schooner to his list of prizes. On August 28 Lahaye made his first capture in the Delaware capes—a Philadelphia sloop homeward bound from New Providence Island. Lahaye tarried off the capes until the middle of September. During this period he captured six more British merchantmen and unsuccessfully engaged another. Lahaye completed his successful cruise by raiding the town of Beaufort, just west of Cape Lookout on the North Carolina Coast. The next year Captain Lahaye made a return trip to North America. This cruise followed a similar route and was just as successful. The Cap François privateer began his voyage by taking three prizes off Ocracoke Island. He then proceeded northerly to the Delaware capes where he took prizes almost at will. Lahaye was joined at the entrance to Delaware Bay by Captain Berneau, also from Cap François, and Captains Vincent de Lopez and Ramong, both of Havana. After taking numerous prizes, the enemy predators sailed back to the Caribbean, stopping to collect a few more British vessels off Chesapeake Bay.¹⁹

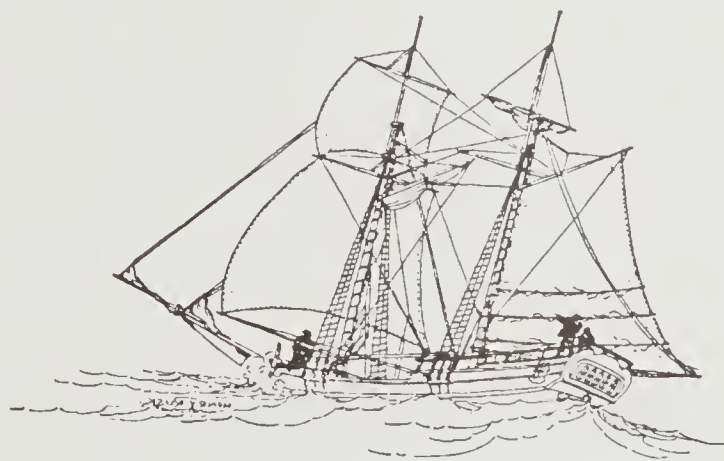
Despite the success of the dramatic, sweeping forays up the North American coasts, many enemy privateers were content to remain cruising off the coast of Carolina.

In the spring of 1745 Don Julian Joseph de la Vega sailed from St. Augustine in consort with French and Spanish sloops. Together they cruised within sight of Charleston Harbor. Before they ended their voyage, seven British merchantmen had hauled down their colors. Throughout the summer of 1745 the *South-Carolina Gazette* published numerous reports of enemy privateers operating on the coast without any interference. South Carolinians learned on June 22 that five predators from Havana—a 56-gun man-of-war, a naval snow carrying 18 guns, and privateers mounting 36, 18, and 16 guns—were cruising off the colony's shores. One month later the paper published an unconfirmed report that Don Julian Joseph de la Vega had returned. The almost total lack of British opposition was made apparent in an article published in September: "Last Tuesday Afternoon a Spanish Privateer Schooner had the Impudence to chase in two Vessels quite over this Bar."²⁰

Although the pace of the prize war slackened in 1746, Charleston residents continued to read the depressing news of enemy captures in the columns of the *South-Carolina Gazette*. In early March they saw a story which indicated that Don Julian in a large brigantine, accompanied by three other predators, had left Havana to cruise against Carolina shipping. This chilling news "had so alarm'd the coasting Commanders here, that for 10 Days past, every Time a Brig hath been seen by them...they have made the best of their Way into Port, reporting they had been chas'd by Don Julian

off Cape Romain." Farther north on the Carolina shore Cape Fear residents witnessed the successful privateering voyage of Captain Don Pedro Arracoche. The Havana commander prowled the Cape Fear area in late July and August. On July 21 the ship *Elizabeth* and sloop *Brunswick*, both bound to Cape Fear from New York City, fell prey to the Cuban. The ship *St. George* struck her colors two days later. Arracoche made his final capture a month later when he took the schooner *Increase*. Carolinians must have enjoyed a measure of satisfaction when George Gyles, commander of the Bristol, England, privateer *Prince Charles*, escorted *La Packavet Real*, Don Pedro de Avillo, into Charleston in December. De Avillo was said to be Arracoche's consort. In any case, *La Packavet Real* had taken three prizes on the coast before Captain Gyles captured her just outside Havana Harbor.²¹

Enemy successes at South Carolina's expense



American-built commercial schooner

The History of American Sailing Ships, Howard I. Chapelle

occurred until peace was finally proclaimed in 1748. Charleston merchant Henry Laurens chronicled British losses in letters to his business associates during the final years of the war. "Our Coast has for some weeks past been grosly insulted by two or three Piccaroon Privateers," he wrote in June 1747. "[they] Sent their Boat and took a Pettiagua Loaded with Rice, within the Bar." Spanish activity was still brisk in August. Charleston residents began a subscription to fit out a sloop to cruise in quest of a privateer after learning that HMS *Aldborough*, the province's station ship, had been damaged in a storm. In late 1747 Laurens summarized South Carolina's experiences during the prize war in letters to his correspondents in London and Boston. Writing to English merchant Alexander Watson, Laurens prefaced a list of six recently captured vessels with the melancholy statement: "We have been very unlucky in our Shipping on this Coast, a great Number of them being taken by Spanish and french Privateers." The Charleston merchant indicated the bleak commercial outlook resulting from the constant attacks of enemy captors in North America and Europe: "I am sorry to observe your Ships from Boston having Suffer'd so greatly by the enemy, but 'tis no more than common nowadays to trade from all ports of America and especially this Province. Our Ships are taken on one Side or the other constantly. Such as escape Privateers on this side fall in with them in the Channel so that very few arrive safe. We have Lately had eight or ten Sail of Loaden Vessels taken on this Coast besides small Pettiaguas etc. drove on Shoar and plunder'd."²²

The first eight months of 1748 differed little from the previous three years. The *South-Carolina Gazette* continued to inform the war-weary merchant community of the latest enemy successes. There were a few rays of light, however. The colony's legislature fit-out two sloops—the *Pearl* and *Nonpareil*—and they succeeded in capturing several enemy cruisers. They also protected commerce by convoying vessels past prowling privateers. In March the *Isabella Galley*, a Charleston privateer, captured the richly laden French ship *St. Jacques* and sent her into Charleston. There were also accounts of the peace negotiations underway at Aix-la-Chapelle. But much of the news was still bad. Spanish privateers still took prizes in plain sight of Charleston Harbor. The town of Brunswick, North Carolina, was sacked by the enemy's privateers-

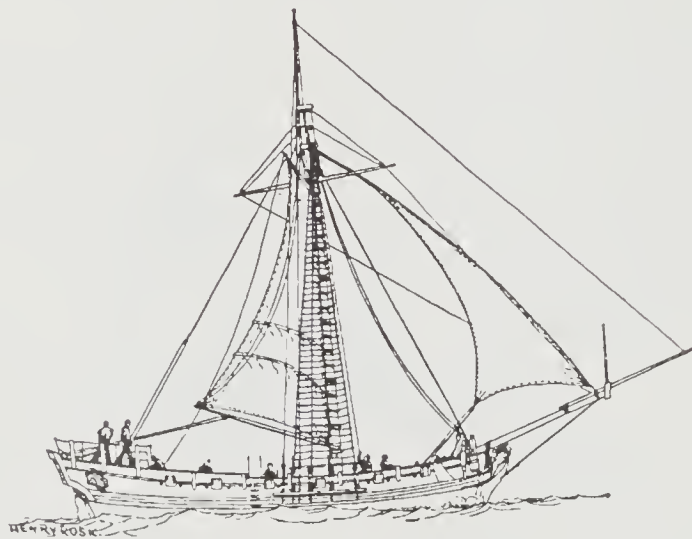
men. Even the long awaited treaty of peace failed to halt reports of enemy captures as privateers from St. Augustine and Havana claimed to have no confirmation of the cessation of hostilities.²³

The exposed nature of the North American coast elicited numerous criticisms from South Carolinians about the protection afforded by the Royal Navy. These complaints, however, were not limited to disgruntled Charleston merchants. Businessmen in every part of the British Empire—the West Indies, the major North American seaports, as well as the British Isles—castigated the king's ships for their failure to prevent British shipping from falling into the hands of Spanish and French privateers. Because the Admiralty was fully aware of the influence that the mercantile community exerted on the government in London, the highest importance was placed on protecting maritime commerce.²⁴ But the naval power of Great Britain was not able to stop the enemy's predators from capturing thousands of British merchantmen.

No one was more bitter in attacking the navy than Robert Pringle. The Carolina merchant was particularly infuriated by what he saw as inexcusable inaction on the part of the naval commanders. After a small vessel had been chased near Charleston by a Spanish cruiser in October 1740, Pringle fumed because the navy did nothing: "The two Kings Ships Station'd here are both Lying up and have been so ever since the middle of July Last. It is a pity that they were not expos'd in the public prints." Pringle informed his

brother Andrew that several vessels bound for Europe had been forced to sail without an escort. They were "obliged to go without the Kings Ship the *Phœnix*, Capt. Fanshaw, altho' he Lay ready in our Road, Yet he would not Stir to See the Ships off the Coast." Moreover, the colony had been forced to fit out its own vessels to seek out a Spanish privateer because the naval vessels refused to do so. On one occasion, the inactivity of the men-of-war worked to their own pecuniary disadvantage: "General Ogelthorpe has had the good fortune," Pringle informed his brother, "to make a Prize of the Pay ship going to St. Augustine Value its said about £616,000 Sterling, and we have at present four Kings Ships in the Harbour who if they had been on their Duty might Certainly have mett with said Prize."²⁵

Pringle's attacks on the navy continued throughout the War of Jenkins's Ear. When HMS *Rye* replaced HMS



Colonial sloop

The History of American Sailing Ships, Howard I. Chapelle

Phoenix, early in 1742, the Charleston merchant commented, “we have had no King’s ships on a Cruize for these Ten months past, so badly is this Coast taken care of.” The navy’s lack of initiative received another censure in the summer of 1742: “Notwithstanding all the King’s Ships Station’d on this Coast, we have just Receiv’d a List of Six Ships Lately taken whereof the *St. Andrew*, William Greig, from this [port] with Rice for Cowes is one and Carry’d to Havanna. The Commanders of the King’s Ships here doe not doe their duty. One of them Capt. Hardy who Arrived from England about four Months agoe and has not been out of Port Since so that our Trade is very precarious.”²⁶

Captain Hardy’s actions received strong criticism again after his participation in the counterattack following the Spanish invasion of Georgia in 1742. “If it had not been thro’ the bad Conduct and Cowardice of Capt. Hardy of the King’s Ships here, we had Destroy’d all their Shipping before they could have got away.” Pringle hoped that Hardy “will be Broke” when authorities in London received an accurate account of the action. Condemnation of Hardy was not limited to Pringle. Eliza Lucas reported to her father that the naval commander’s performance had “greatly disgusted the Gov. and Council as well as the rest of the Inhabitance.” In a letter to George II written in October, South Carolina Lieutenant Governor William Bull bitterly criticized the performance of the navy’s station ships in general and Captain Hardy’s performance in particular:

Many of the Commanders of such Ships as have been Stationed here for some Years past declaring themselves Accountable to no Authority here for any of their proceedings or behaviour; have layed up in harbor as they pleased instead of Cruizing for the Protection of the Trade whilst at the same time this Province have upon several Emergencies been Obliged for that reason to fit out Vessels to do, what was there duty to have done. And in particular the present Commanding Officer of Your Majestys Ships upon the Station who from the time of his arrival here, the beginning of January last never put to Sea again until he went to the relief of Your Majesty’s Troops at St. Simons in July.

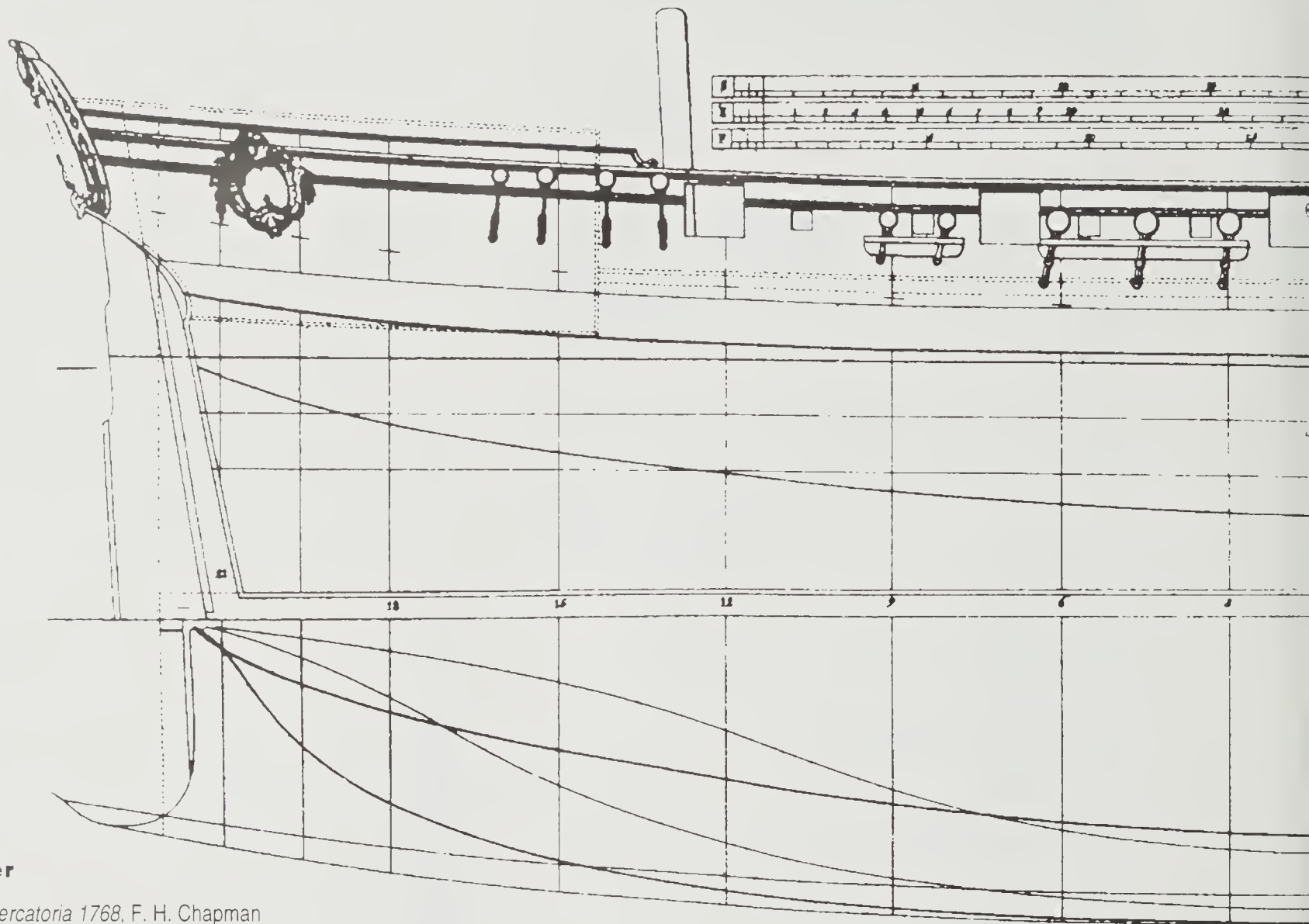
Bull went on to state that Hardy had refused to pursue the enemy’s naval forces as the council had suggested, which resulted in the Spaniards arriving safely at the mouth of the St. Johns River (near present day Jacksonville, Florida). Apparently officials in London did not believe Hardy should be “broke” as he remained on the Carolina station until the end of 1743.²⁷

Criticism of the navy’s attempts to safeguard the empire’s commerce emanated from other colonies as well

as from South Carolina. In May 1740 Barbados and the Leeward Islands sent petitions to Westminster for increased naval protection. The *Virginia Gazette* published an article praising Captain Peter Warren for his successes against Spanish privateers, but the *Gazette’s* editor thought his fellow naval officers merited censure: “If some of the Commanders of the King’s Ships would take Example from the brave Captain Warren, who by his Courage and Vigilance has taken 5 or 6 Spanish Prizes within these few Months, our Coast would be more secure, our Trade protected, as it ought to be, and they would better deserve his Majesty’s Pay, than they have done some Time past; by lying close in a State of Indolence, instead of Activity.” In London, Richard Partridge, Rhode Island’s colonial agent, wrote that English merchants “complain heavily of their losses by the Spaniards which indeed has been very great...and now are applying to Parlmt for redress.” Although additional men-of-war were stationed in the Channel and the Bay of Biscay, British merchantmen still faced capture. Spanish privateers “are as thick and as little disturbed in the Channel and on the Coast of England as ever,” the *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported in August 1742.²⁸

France’s entry into the conflict in 1744 exacerbated the difficulties that the navy faced in protecting maritime commerce. The increased number of prize actions presented in Figure 1 demonstrates the king’s ships’ inability to curb Spanish and French privateers. The navy’s failure to protect the coast of Carolina did not go unnoticed by Peter Timothy, editor of the *South-Carolina Gazette*. After publishing a report that three Spanish privateers captured a vessel in sight of Charleston, the *Gazette* remarked that the naval commanders stated they would not sail in pursuit of the enemy because of the hurricane season. The editor then snidely suggested that the navy was attempting to lengthen the storm season so as to excuse their inactivity.²⁹

South Carolina Governor James Glen indicated in 1746 that he was dissatisfied with the navy’s efforts to protect the colony’s coast. Writing to Admiral Peter Warren, Glen commented on the necessity of active naval patrols on the province’s vulnerable coastline: “You are perfectly acquainted with every circumstance relating to this province. It is needless for me to enter into particular details of it, further than to say that the security of our trade and the safety of the colony is in a great measure dependent upon the protection of his Majesty’s ships of war stationed here...Nothing but ships of force cruising upon our coast can deter privateers from watching for our trade, and even landing on our coast. They have done [so] (alas, with impunity) within these last few days, and carried off the people that were the guard at one of our look-outs.” Glen wanted more men-of-war stationed at Carolina. To get them he recited figures of the value of South Carolina’s trade to Great Britain, and closed his let-



11-gun privateer

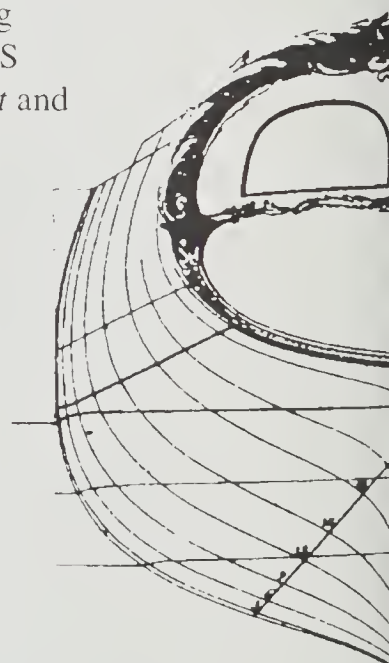
Architectura Navalis Mercatoria 1768, F. H. Chapman

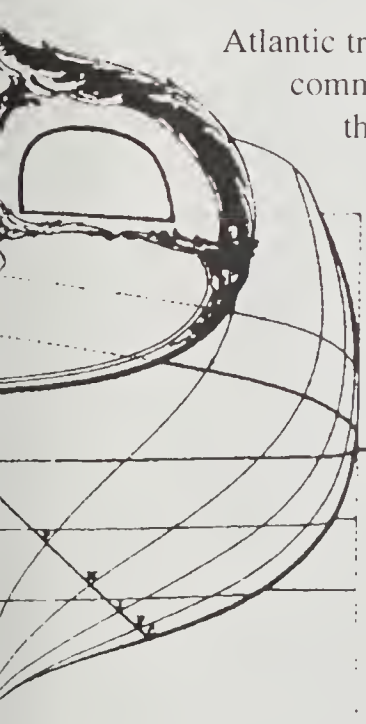
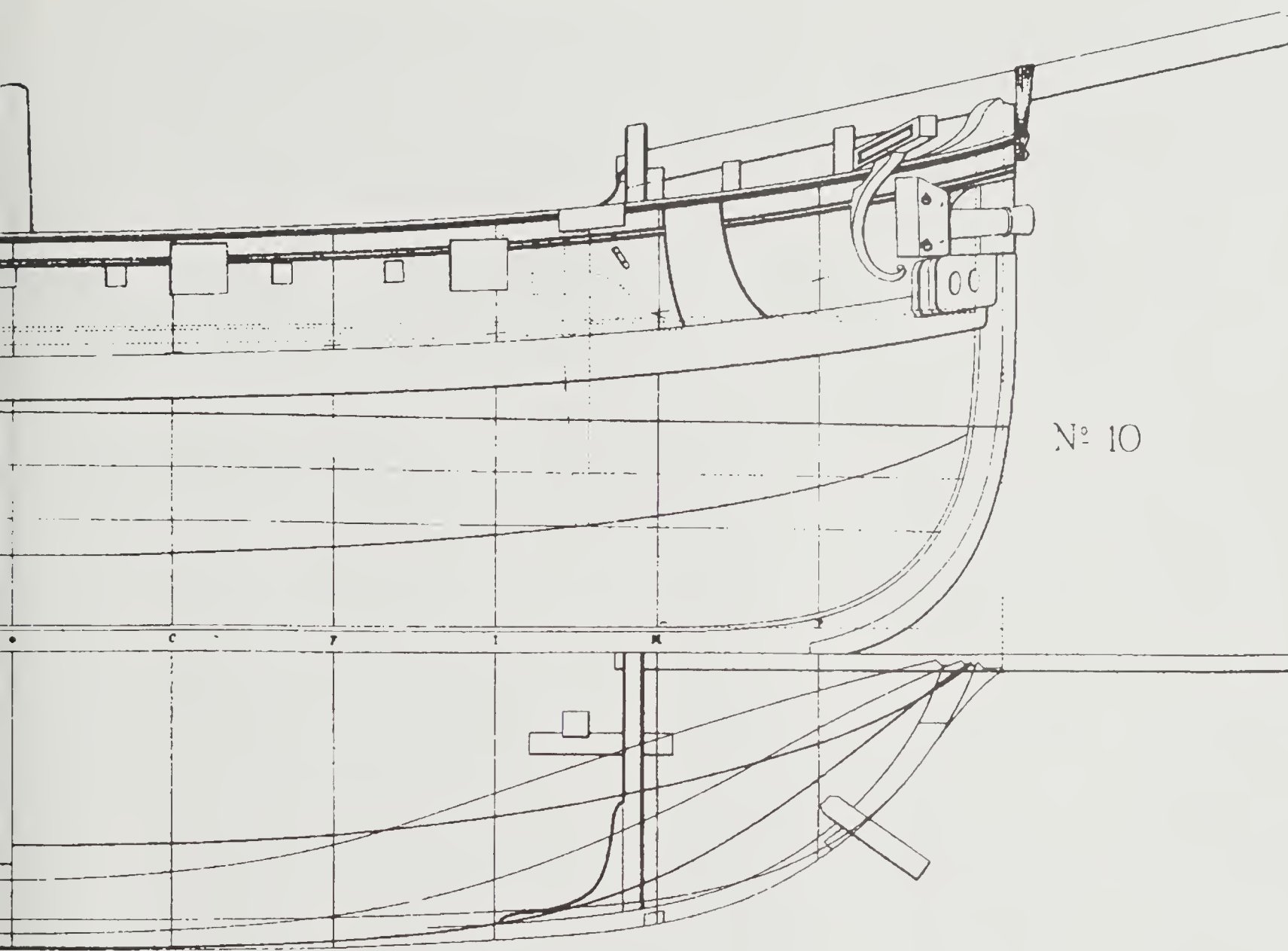
ter with a rather unsubtle reference to the Admiralty: "For these reasons (as all this is well known to the lords of the Admiralty) I make no doubt that they will have given orders for other ships to attend on the service of this province. [Until] such assistance arrives, I thought it my duty to represent to you the present situation of this frontier colony, having neither ship nor sloop. Therefore I desire you will send us such assistance as you can spare."³⁰

Although complaints about the navy continued throughout the remaining years of the conflict, it would be incorrect to view the navy as having been totally inactive. In April 1746 HMS *Aldborough* and HMS *Tartar*, the colony's station ships, engaged and captured the famous St. Augustine privateer Don Julian Joseph de la Vega as he was convoying prizes to the Florida capital. After a furious battle in which the *Aldborough* sustained heavy damage, the king's ships escorted Don Julian into Charleston Harbor. The *Aldborough* also brought in another prize later in the year—a British merchantman recaptured from the enemy. The *South-Carolina Gazette* reported in June 1747 that the navy was doing a creditable job in securing the colony's trade. The editor declared the old proverb "that to send a British Man of

War after a French Privateer, was but sending a Cow after a Hare" was no longer true. HMS *Adventure* recaptured the *Dantzick Merchant* and brought her safely into Charleston. Charles Wray, commander of HMS *Rye*, escorted two privateers and a recaptured British merchantman into Carolina ports.³¹

With hundreds of Spanish and French privateers cruising in quest of British commerce in Europe, the West Indies, and North America, the Royal Navy faced an arduous, indeed an impossible, task. The frequent criticism of the navy's efforts arising throughout the empire, though probably exaggerated at times, clearly indicates that Europe's most powerful navy was unable to protect wartime commerce adequately. Royal Navy officers realized these insurmountable problems. Unless major changes in British shipping patterns and regulations were imposed, Spanish and French privateers would continue their harvest of prizes. There were simply too many predators and too few warships to safeguard Britain's





Atlantic trade. Peter Warren, an active and successful commander, stated the problem succinctly: "Were the whole British fleet employed here [North America] for their protection only they could not secure them from falling into the hands of the enemy."³²

Hundreds of armed Spanish and French privateers plying the North Atlantic in quest of British merchantmen exerted an unsettling effect on the trade of the British Empire. This was particularly true for South Carolina. Ships bound to and from Charleston were frequently taken on the Carolina Coast. Merchant captains, sufficiently skillful or lucky to elude capture in American waters, faced another onslaught of predators as they approached Europe. Merchants suffered from the presence of private men-of-war even if their vessels managed to avoid being taken because the costs of doing business escalated sharply during wartime. An examination of several key commercial indicators—freight rates, insurance premiums, the level of mariners'

wages, and export and import statistics—reveals the depressing impact that maritime warfare had on South Carolina's economy.

The most obvious and dramatic losses to the Carolina economy were the vessels and cargoes captured by enemy privateer. As previously mentioned, customs official Robert Dinwiddie estimated that the colony's residents owned only 25 vessels. Yet enemy predators captured 21 merchantmen whose home port was Charleston—84 percent of Dinwiddie's estimate.³³ This represented a devastating blow to Charleston's merchant marine. Residents of other British ports bore the brunt of the shipping losses. At least 79 merchantmen bound to or from Charleston struck their colors to Spanish and French privateers. Although it is impossible to estimate the total value of these prizes because of fragmentary data for the cargoes, the value of the shipping alone was in the neighborhood of £150,000 sterling.³⁴

The total value of the prizes captured by enemy warships did not constitute the total cost of the prize war. As Ralph Davis, the historian of English shipping, has argued, "by far the most spectacular wartime calamities were the capture of ships and their cargoes by enemy pri-

vateers and warships... It is far from certain, however, that captures, numerous as they were, inflicted as much damage on the shipowning community as other, less dramatic, features of war."³⁵ These other "less dramatic features of war" included freight rates, marine insurance, and seamen's wages. Escalation in the costs for these items made wartime business ventures expensive undertakings.

Merchants feared that the uncertainty of the sea-lanes caused by enemy predators would decrease the volume of shipping engaged in maritime trade. This scarcity of vessels would drive up the charges for carrying freight. This fear of inadequate shipping, brought on by the risks of wartime, was prevalent in the port of Charleston.

Robert Pringle's business correspondence contains numerous references to the lack of shipping needed to transport the colony's rice crop to its overseas markets. "We have this Year the greatest Crop of Rice by much that has ever yet been produc'd in the Province," Pringle wrote to Richard Thompson in

October 1739. "and if the apprehensions of a Warr Continue, we are afraid that there wont come Shipping enough to Carry off the Crop."

The lack of shipping would cause higher freight rates:

"Freight will Govern according to News we may receive wether we may expect Peace or Warr."

In addition to higher freight rates, Pringle also worried that a fall in shipping would have the concomitant effects of lowering the price of Carolina rice and increasing the costs of imported goods:

"If the Shipping doe not arrive it [the Carolina rice crop] will be very low in Price this Season and as the Continued apprehensions of a Warr makes navigation Precarious, the Produce of the Islands, Vizt. Rum, Sugar, and Molasses will be Scarce here and high in Price."³⁶

The freight rates charged for carrying rice from Charleston to London reveal that Pringle's pre-war fears were justified. The cost of shipping the colony's staple to England nearly doubled during King George's War. In late December 1739 Charleston residents learned that they were at war with Spain. Pringle wrote his brother in London that he was "apprehensive that we shall want Shipping to Carry off our Crop of Rice and believe Freight for London will be at £3.10/ [sterling] per Ton."

Six months later, in June 1740, the freight rate had risen by 21.4 percent. Pringle explained the increase to Thomas Burrill: "We have not had so many Shipping here this Season as usual occasion'd by the War, so that

Freight is very high at £4.5/ per ton for London." As the prize war slackened in 1742, transportation costs declined to £3.10.0. In late autumn of 1743, however, the picture grew bleak because of the constant rumors concerning French entry into the war. "Freight is not Likely to be less this Season as we have this year a very Large Crop of Rice," Pringle declared. "Shipping will be Scarce and Freight high As long as the Warr Continues, and more especially if a French Warr should happen which seems to be very Likely." In December, the cost of shipping rice to London was back up to £4 per ton.³⁷

After the French entry into the conflict, Pringle's letters became even gloomier. He wrote Boston merchant John Erving that "as we apprehend a Scarcity of Shipping here next Crop by reason of the War with France and Spain, it is Thought Freight will be high tho at [the] Sametime Our Produce being of but Small Value [we] wont afford it." In January 1745 Pringle despaired that no

bills of exchange were to be had in Charleston, the price of rice had continued to fall, and the freight rate had soared to £6 sterling per ton. The upward trend in Carolina freight rates continued until the very end of the hostilities. Henry Laurens noted that the cost of shipping rice to London in the spring of 1748 was £6.10.0 per ton, an increase of 85.7 per cent over 1739 levels.³⁸

Rising transportation charges were caused in part by greater costs of marine insurance. Scores of privateers cruising throughout the Caribbean, along the coast of

North America, and in European waters increased the risks of maritime commerce. As a result, more of the merchants who engaged in Atlantic trade insured their vessels and cargoes. The greater risk of loss posed by wartime conditions and the increased demand for policies caused marine insurance premiums to escalate. This was true throughout the North Atlantic. Transatlantic premiums climbed from normal peacetime rates of 2½–5 percent to more than 30 percent. Lieutenant Governor Bull recalled these high wartime premiums in a letter to the earl of Hillsborough: "The frequent captures of our shipping in the Spanish and French war in 1744... raised the insurance to and from this place [to] 33 p. cent."³⁹

The level of mariners' wages were another major factor in boosting wartime transportation costs. Once hostilities were proclaimed, there was a major increase in the demand for seamen. The Royal Navy, colonial coast



Large snow-rigged privateer

The History of American Sailing Ships. Howard I. Chapelle

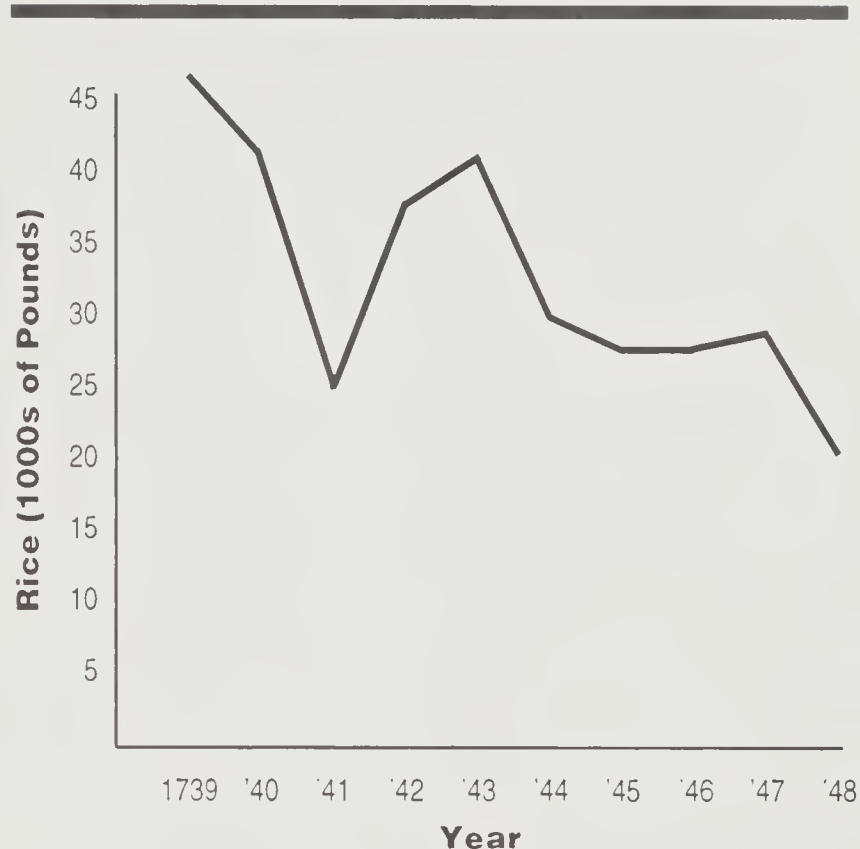
guard, and private men-of-war all needed large complements of men to participate in the prize war. Merchant vessels also tended to carry larger crews than in peacetime to better protect themselves against the enemy's predators. The effect of this stronger demand for tars was a major increase in wages paid in the merchant marine. The average monthly wage rate for seamen rose from the normal peacetime level of 23–25 shillings to 50–55 shillings during King George's War. In addition to higher wages, business expenses were increased because of longer delays in port, while merchants attempted to secure full complements.⁴⁰

The impact of the lack of shipping and high freight rates (caused by higher charges for insurance and wages) are easily seen in the statistics for Carolina exports and imports. Figure 2 presents the annual figures for rice shipped from Charleston. It provides one of the clearest indications that King George's War damaged the colony's economy. The graph shows a marked downturn in the amount of rice leaving the province during the years 1740–1748. Moreover, the level of exports fluctuated with the vicissitudes of the prize war. Rice shipments dropped 42.9 per cent in 1740. This decrease coincided with the upswing in enemy privateering in the War of Jenkins's Ear. (See Figure 1.) As the level of Spanish predatory activities subsided in 1742 and 1743, rice exports rose. This recovery ended in 1744 when France entered the war. As enemy prize actions in North America increased, the amount of rice leaving Charleston declined. Not surprisingly, the volume of all exports from Carolina to England exhibited a similar pattern. The same was true for imports from the mother country to South Carolina. As the prize war increased, total imports and exports fell. Carolina's trade with Britain did not return to pre-war levels until 1751–1752. Robert Pringle's concern over falling rice prices was also justified. The price levels for the colony's staple fell as the volume of enemy activity increased.⁴¹ Writing to Robert Dinwiddie in 1754, Governor Glen summarized the impact of the prize war on his colony: "This Province was brought to the Brink of Ruin by the last French War."⁴²

South Carolina's experiences during King George's War demonstrate the major impact imperial maritime warfare had on the British colonies in the mid-eighteenth century. The numerous comments, apprehensions, fears, and complaints included in the letters of Charleston merchants and Carolina governmental officials reveal convincingly the marked influence wartime actions exerted on the economic life of the colony. The thousands of reports published in the *South-Carolina Gazette* suggest that Carolinians endured assaults on their coast week after week throughout the conflict. The threat of losses at sea or raids on coastal plantations and towns loomed until the hostilities ended in 1748. Even after the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, Spanish privateers took the occasional prize.

Figure 2

Rice Exports from Charleston during King George's War



Source: Gray, *History of Southern Agriculture*. 1930.

The statistics for freight, insurance, and wage rates as well as the fall in the volume of imports and exports and declining rice prices corroborate the depressing outlook expressed in the correspondence of Robert Pringle, Henry Laurens, and their associates. This is important since the tendency of colonial merchants to complain unceasingly about the pace of business activity is well known. The picture that emerges from the evidence is clear: privateering seriously disrupted the commerce of Charleston, the most important port in the southern colonies and one of the busiest seaports in the British Empire.

Several factors increased Carolina's vulnerability to attack by enemy predators. The first was geography. Charleston was the closest major British North American port to St. Augustine, Havana, and Cap François—all leading centers of privateering. In addition, the colony's position vis-à-vis the capes of Virginia and Delaware allowed enemy cruisers two opportunities to prey on Carolina shipping on each privateering voyage. The scarcity of shipping and manpower also worked to Charleston's disadvantage. The city's merchants were unable to exploit fully the opportunities for windfall gains offered by privateering because they lacked the necessary ships and men. Unlike New York and Newport, few prizes were escorted into the Carolina capi-

tal. Thus Charleston was forced to endure all of the adverse effects of the prize war without being able to enjoy the conflict's potential for profit.

The constant criticism of the Royal Navy suggests the limits of the power of the eighteenth-century state. Throughout the hostilities Charleston residents castigated the navy for its inability to capture Spanish and French privateers and thereby safeguard the province's trade. Part of this impotence at sea was caused by a lack of initiative on the part of the naval officers stationed at Carolina, and part by just plain bad luck. Some commanders seemed to prefer the entertainments of Charleston to pacing the quarterdeck. Others, like Captain Hardy, appeared to exercise poor judgment. And Carolinians must have wondered at their ill luck when their station ships always seemed to sustain sprung masts, broken spars, and other assorted damage every time they sailed on a cruise. But complaints about the navy's performance were not limited to South Carolina. Merchants, legislators, and colonial executives throughout North America and the West Indies pleaded with the Admiralty for better protection. Petitions to Parliament for more warships submitted by merchants in England indicate the Royal Navy's performance in the Old World was no more successful than in the New World. The large number of vessels that struck to Spanish and French privateers suggests that the king's ships were unequal to the task of securing Britain's wartime commerce. The Royal Navy was superior to the navies of France and Spain; in this respect Britannia ruled the waves. But Europe's most powerful fleet was unable to prevent the loss of millions of pounds sterling in prizes.

NOTES

1. Warren to Josiah Burchett, Nov. 18, 1739, Julian Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736–1752* (London, 1973), 18, hereafter cited as *Warren Papers*. Burchett was Secretary of the Admiralty.

2. Although the actual declarations of war between Britain and Spain were not issued until the latter part of October 1739, the prize war had begun during the summer. Britain authorized the fitting out of privateers in June. The American colonies received this information in August and September. The *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston) published proclamations concerning the fitting out of privateers on Sept. 8 and 15, 1739.

3. Pringle to Edward and John Mayne, Apr. 29, 1740, Walter B. Edgar, ed., *The Letterbook of Robert Pringle* (Columbia, S.C., 1972), 193, hereafter cited as *Pringle Letterbook*.

4. Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness: The First Century of Urban Life in America, 1625–1742* (1938; rev. ed., New York, 1971) 332; Lewis C. Gray, *History of Agriculture in the Southern United States to 1860* (Washington, DC, 1933), 284–285; George C. Rogers, *Charleston in the Age of the Pinckneys* (New York, 1965) 9; Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York, 1974), 35–37, 55–62; Jacob M. Price, "Economic Function of American Port Towns in the Eighteenth Century," *Perspectives in American History*, VIII (1974), 161–163.

5. Carl Bridenbaugh, *Myths and Realities: Societies of the Colonial South* (1952; rev. ed., New York, 1969), 58.

6. Population figures are from Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness*, 143, and *Cities in Revolt: Urban Life in America, 1743–1776* (1955; rev. ed., New York, 1971) 303. Rice export statistics are from Gray, *History of Southern Agriculture*, 1921–1922. Per capita import figures are derived from the tables of population and import statistics conveniently found in Jack P. Greene, ed., *Settlements to Society, 1607–1763: A Documentary History of Colonial America* (New York, 1975), 238–239, 274–275.

7. Dinwiddie to the Board of Trade, Apr. 29, 1740, printed in Greene, ed., *Settlements to Society*, 275–277. Pringle to Thomas Burrill, Oct. 10, 1739 and June 11, 1740; to John Erving, Aug. 18, 1744; to William Cookson and William Welfitt, Jan. 15, 1745; *Pringle Letterbook*, 139, 218, 734, 797. See also Eliza Lucas to George Lucas, Feb. 10, 1743, Elise Pinckney, ed., *The Letterbook of Eliza Lucas Pinckney, 1739–1762* (Chapel Hill, 1972), 59, hereafter cited as *Lucas Letterbook*.

8. Pringle to A. Pringle, Jan. 21, 1744, *Pringle Letterbook*, 636.

9. Pringle to A. Pringle, Dec. 31, 1742; to Partridge, Feb. 5, 1743; to Dalby, May 23, 1743; to Henry and John Brock, Dec. 12, 1744, *Pringle Letterbook*, 471, 496, 557, 777; Laurens to James Crockatt, Feb. 15, 1748, Philip M. Hamer, ed., *The Papers of Henry Laurens* (Columbia, S.C., 1968), I, 111, hereafter cited as *Laurens Papers*.

10. Tables 1–3 and Figure 1 are based on a computer data file containing 3183 cases concerning prize actions during King George's War. The majority of these cases appeared as news reports in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* during the period 1739–1749. The remaining cases, which were not reported in the *Gazette*, were drawn from the vice-admiralty court records of South Carolina, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, New York, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts, and from bonds for letters of marque and admiralty lists in the Rhode Island State Archives in Providence. Charleston fitted out five privateers in 1747 and the same number in 1748.

11. Pringle to Thompson, June 11, 174; to W. Pringle, Dec. 20, 1744, *Pringle Letterbook*, 215–216, 782. The success to which Pringle referred were two valuable prizes brought into Charleston by the Royal Navy frigates HMS *Rose* and HMS *Flamborough*, not by Carolina privateers.

12. This statement is based on the 51 prize vessels listed in the data file as having been taken into Charleston. It is possible that the data file understates the actual number of prizes escorted into the Carolina city. Prize actions involving skiffs, periaugers, fishing boats, and other small coastal craft may not have been reported in the colonial press. In addition, 9.4% of the Spanish and French prizes included in the data file suffer from missing data and fail to indicate the port to which the prize was sent. Although these qualifications may affect the actual number of prizes presented here, the economic consequences would not be much different if everything were added.

13. On the division of prize money among colonial privateers, and in the Royal Navy, see Carl E. Swanson, *Predators and Prizes: American Privateering and Imperial Warfare, 1739–1748* (Columbia, S.C., 1991) 100–102, 218–219.

14. Pringle to Bennett, Sept. 16, 1742, *Pringle Letterbook*, 414. Laurens to Crockatt, Aug. 27, 1747, *Laurens Papers*, 49.
15. St. Augustine was actually listed as the home port in more prize actions involving Spanish and French privateers than any other city except Havana. More than two thirds (67.4%) of the prize actions involving Spanish and French privateers in the New World failed to indicate the predator's home port. But it is safe to conclude that St. Augustine played an important part in the scramble for prizes. Joyce E. Harman, *Trade and Privateering in Spanish Florida, 1732–1763* (St. Augustine, 1969), 37–40, emphasizes the importance of privateering to St. Augustine's economic survival. For a lengthy contemporary account of the *Rebecca* episode, see the *Boston News-Letter*, Oct. 14, 1731.
16. Pringle to A. Pringle, Mar. 10, 1740, and July 14, 1740 *Pringle Letterbook*, 169–170, 230.
17. Pringle to Samuel Saunders, Oct. 22, 1740; to A. Pringle, Oct. 31 1740; to John and Thomas Sears & Co., Mar. 13, 1741, *Pringle Letterbook*, 260, 265, 302. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 30 and Nov. 26, 1741.
18. Bannister to Captain John Thomlinson, June 1, 1741, John Bannister Copy Book, 1730–1742, Newport Historical Society, Newport, R.I., 171. *Pa. Gaz.*, Aug. 20, 1741. Emphasis in the original.
19. *Pa. Gaz.*, Aug. 30, Oct. 18, 1744; July 9, 1747; Sept. 24, 1747; May 19 and 26, June 2, July 7, 1748.
20. *Pa. Gaz.*, May 30, 1745. *S. C. Gaz.*, June 22, July 22, Sept. 9, 1745.
21. *S. C. Gaz.*, Mar. 10, 1746; Dec. 8, 1746. *Pa. Gaz.*, Oct. 30, 1746.
22. Laurens to Crockatt, June 24 1747, and Aug. 18, 1747; to Watson, Nov. 7, 1747; to Thomas Savage, Nov. 11, 1747; *Laurens Papers*, 11, 43, 73, 82–83. Charleston merchants had attempted to hire a vessel in June to patrol the coasts, but they were unable to agree on the financial terms. See *S. C. Gaz.*, June 25 and 29, 1747.
23. *S. C. Gaz.*, Jan. 6 and 11, Feb. 8 and 29, 1748, Mar. 28, 1748, Apr. 18, May 16 and 25, 1748, July 9, 1748, Oct. 31, 1748, Nov. 14, Dec. 12, 1748.
24. Sir Herbert Richmond, *The Navy in the War of 1739–48*, (Cambridge, 1920), II, 208–209.
25. Pringle to Saunders, Oct. 22, 1740; Pringle to A. Pringle, Oct. 23 and 31, 1740, Pringle to A. Pringle, Mar. 5, 1742, *Pringle Letterbook*, 260, 264–265, 332.
26. Pringle to A. Pringle, Feb. 15, 1742, to A. Pringle, June 17, 1742, *ibid.*, 323, 380.
27. Pringle to A. Pringle, Sept. 7, 1742; to Erving, Oct. 9, 1742, *ibid.*, 406–407, 430. E. Lucas to G. Lucas, Sept. 8, 1742, *Lucas Letterbook*, 55. Bull to George II, Oct. 20, 1742, cited in W. E. May, "Capt. Charles Hardy on the Carolina Station, 1742–1744," *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, LX (1969), 8–9.
28. Richmond, *The Navy in the War of 1739–48*, III, 269. *Virginia Gazette*, May 22, 1741, cited in the *Pa. Gaz.*, June 11, 1741. Partridge to Rhode Island Governor Richard Ward, Feb. 4, 1742, Gertrude Selwyn Kimball, ed., *The Correspondence of the Colonial Governors of Rhode Island, 1723–1775* (1902–1903; reprint ed., Freeport, 1969), I, 211. *Pa. Gaz.*, Mar. 25, Apr. 15 and 22, Aug. 5, 1742.
29. *S. C. Gaz.*, Sept. 9, 1745. This was probably unfair criticism as the hurricane season was normally defined as ending in October.
30. Glen to Warren, July 23, 1746, *Warren Papers*, 299–300.
31. *S. C. Gaz.*, Apr. 28, Dec. 8, 1746; June 8, 1747; May 11, June 15, 1748. Laurens to Crockatt, Oct. 7, 1747, *Laurens Papers*, 61.
32. Warren to Thomas Corbett, Feb. 1745, cited in Richmond, *The Navy in the War of 1739–48*, II, 192. Corbett was Secretary of the Admiralty.
33. It is possible, though unlikely, that Carolinians had increased the number of their vessels by constructing craft during the war. Charleston never developed a significant shipbuilding industry, and its facilities were hard pressed even to service vessels during King George's War. See Price, "American Port Towns," *Persp. in Am. Hist.*, VIII (1974), 162; Joseph A. Goldenberg, *Shipbuilding in Colonial America* (Charlottesville, 1973), 117–124.
34. Nearly 96% of the prize cases in the data file failed to provide quantity breakdowns for prize cargoes. This prohibits any meaningful estimates of the value of the prize goods captured by the enemy. The estimate for the value of the prize vessels is based on the number of vessels, their type (i.e., sloop, ship, brigantine, etc.), and the costs of building vessels in Philadelphia during this period. See John J. McCusker, "Sources of Investment Capital in the Philadelphia Shipping Industry," *Journal of Economic History*, XXXII (1972), 150.
35. Ralph Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (London, 1962), 315.
36. Pringle to Thompson, Oct. 11, 1739; to Henry Collins, Oct. 19, 1739; to Hubert Guichard, Nov. 20, 1739, *Pringle Letterbook*, 141, 145, 150.
37. Pringle to A. Pringle, Dec. 27, 1739; to Burrill, June 11, 1740; to A. Pringle, Dec. 13, 1742; to Cookson and Welfitt, Nov. 7, 1743; to Gedney Clarke, Dec. 24, 1743, *ibid.*, 163, 218, 458, 602, 625.
38. Pringle to Erving, Aug. 18 1744; to Cookson and Welfitt, Jan. 15, 1745, *ibid.*, 734, 797. Laurens to Richard Grubb, May 12, 1744, *Laurens Papers*, 135. Laurens's letter was written one week after Britain and France had agreed to a ceasefire at Aix-la-Chapelle.
39. Bull to Hillsborough, 1768, cited in Gray, *History of Southern Agriculture*, 288.
40. Daniel Baugh, *British Naval Administration in the Age of Walpole* (Princeton, 1965), 205; Davis, *Rise of the English Shipping Industry*, 137, 320–321.
41. Figures for total exports and imports are from Greene, ed., *Settlements to Society*, 274–275; rice price data are from Gray, *History of Southern Agriculture*, 1930. It is interesting to note that after the war Carolina no longer ranked first among the mainland colonies in the level of imports per capita for the white population. In 1750 Carolina trailed New York and Pennsylvania.
42. Glen to Dinwiddie, Mar. 13, 1754, cited in M. Eugene Simans, *Colonial South Carolina: A Political History, 1663–1763* (Chapel Hill, 1966), 269.



Blackbeard the Pirate: Historical Background and the Beaufort Inlet Shipwrecks

by David Moore

As to the *Heinousness* or *Wickedness* of the *Offence*, it needs no *Aggravation*, it being evident to the Reason of all Men. Therefore a *Pirate* is called *Hostis Humani Generis*, with whom neither Faith nor Oath is to be kept. And in our Law they are termed *Brutes*, and *Beasts of Prey*; and that it is lawful for any one that takes them, if they cannot with safety to themselves bring them under some Government to be tried, to put them to Death.

NICHOLAS TROTT, ESQ.
JUDGE OF VICE-ADMIRALTY AND
CHIEF-JUSTICE OF THE PROVINCE OF
SOUTH CAROLINA, 28 OCTOBER 1718¹

On 21 November 1996 salvors located a shipwreck off Beaufort Inlet, North Carolina that many consider the remains of Blackbeard's celebrated flagship *Queen Anne's Revenge*. The activities of Blackbeard and his piratical brethren have been shrouded in legends and folklore for so long that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between myth and reality in the copious literature

Left: **Blackbeard the pirate.**

A General History of the lives and adventures of the most famous Highwaymen, Murderers, Street-Robbers, &c., Charles Johnson

on piracy. Furthermore, one must be cautious even with primary sources. These documents while obviously containing accurate data about the events in question, often were based on second and third party information, hearsay, long distance, and sometimes months-old data, and in some cases, obvious embellishment designed to sway policy makers back in England.²

We know little about the early life of the man who would eventually become a piratical icon. Much of what is generally accepted today concerning Blackbeard's life and activities has come from acclaimed pirate biographer Captain Charles Johnson and his work whose title is normally shortened to *The General History of the Pyrates*.³ Although many feel that Johnson's work is fairly accurate in its historic detail,⁴ it can be proven that not only was his "history" rather embellished in places, but totally erroneous concerning certain events which will be discussed below. It should also be noted that Johnson's second edition, published later in 1724, was somewhat different from his first edition, at least in regards to the activities of Blackbeard. It was this second, and even later editions, that has provided the basis for all subsequent writings based on Johnson's *General History*.

Blackbeard was probably a native of Bristol, England as was suggested by Johnson's *General History*, but there is some evidence to at least suggest London or even Philadelphia as his origin.⁵ His real name is also uncertain. Most authors have referred to the pirate as "Edward Teach" for the past couple of centuries, but a close examination of contemporary sources reveals his name was Thatch (or some phonetic derivation thereof, e.g., Thach, Thache, etc.). It was so spelled in well over 90 percent of the documents perused to date. Although it

is thought that the "Teach" spelling used in later years originated in Johnson's *General History*, it is interesting to note that Johnson spelled the pirate's name "Thatch" throughout his first edition.

The pirate's appearance has also been the subject of many graphic renditions. Again, most have utilized Johnson's rather melodramatic description from the *General History*:

...so our Heroe, Captain *Thatch*, assumed the Cognomen of Black-beard, from that large Quantity of Hair, which like a frightful Meteor, covered his whole Face, and frightn'd *America*, more than any Comet that has appear'd there a long Time. This Beard was black, which he suffered to grow of an extravagant Length; as to Breadth, it came up to his Eyes; he was accustomed to twist it with Ribbons, in small Tails, after the Manner of our Remellies Wigs, and turn them about his Ears: In time of Action, he wore a Sling over his Shoulders, with three brace of Pistols, hanging in Holsters like Bandaliers; he wore a Fur-Cap, and stuck a lighted Match on each Side, under it, which appearing on each side his Face, his Eyes naturally looking Fierce and Wild, made him altogether such a Figure, that Imagination cannot form an Idea of a Fury, from Hell, to look more frightful.⁶

We can compare this to the much more subdued and perhaps more accurate description provided by an eyewitness account. Henry Bostock was the master of the sloop *Margaret* out of St. Christophers when taken on 5 December 1717 south of Puerto Rico. He was aboard the *Queen Anne's Revenge* about eight hours before being released and deposed that "...the Captain by the name (as he thinks) of Capt Tach...was a tall Spare Man with a very black beard which he wore very long."⁷

Johnson's *General History* also reported that Thatch served as a privateer out of Jamaica during Queen Anne's War (1702-1713)⁸, but this has not been substantiated through any other documentation. In any event, information concerning the man's background before launching his piratical career remains either vague or nonexistent.

The earliest mention of the pirate by name appears in the *Boston News-Letter* in October-November 1717.⁹ He was almost certainly sailing as a pirate earlier under the command of one Benjamin Hornigold, but the documents are silent before this date on anything concerning Blackbeard. On the other hand, we can trace Hornigold's piratical activities back as early as 1714,¹⁰ although we cannot necessarily establish when the two joined forces. Johnson stated that this association was initiated the "...latter end of the year 1716..."¹¹ which may be accurate, but the same early issue of the *Boston News-Letter*



Blackbeard the Pirate

First edition engraving by B. Cole, with fur cap.

A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates. Charles Johnson

provides some interesting entries which demand closer examination. Containing news from Philadelphia dated 24 October 1717, the paper records the presence of Blackbeard off the Delaware capes and the taking of a Captain Codd out of Liverpool and Dublin. Codd related the following information:

He was taken about 12 days since off our Capes by a Pirate Sloop called the *Revenge*, of 12 Guns 150 Men, Commanded by one Teach, who formerly Sail'd Mate out of this Port...The Pirates told the Prisoners that they expected a Consort Ship of 30 Guns, and then they would go up into Philadelphia...On board the Pirate Sloop is Major Bennet, but has no Command, he



Blackbeard the Pirate. B. W. S. sculp.

“Corrected” second edition engraving.

walks about in his Morning Gown, and then to his Books, of which he has a good Library on Board, he was not well of his wounds that he received by attacking of a Spanish Man of War, which kill'd and wounded him 30 or 40 Men. After which putting into Providence, the place of Rendevouze for the Pirates, they put the aforesaid Capt. Teach on board for this Cruise.¹²

Most sources state that “gentleman pirate” Major Stede Bonnet and his sloop *Revenge* did not join with Blackbeard until Spring of 1718,¹³ but this passage indicates that not only was Bonnet with Hornigold and Blackbeard as early as October and possibly September 1717 off the Delaware capes, but that it may have been the

particular cruise when Blackbeard joined Hornigold. The reference to “Major Bennet” almost certainly refers to Bonnet who is well known to have had “no command” while “on the account with Blackbeard, while his liberal education, as mentioned in most sources, corresponds to his use of “a good Library on Board.” The “Consort Ship of 30 Guns” probably refers to Hornigold’s vessel *Ranger*. It would be an interesting coincidence that Blackbeard was in command of a sloop named *Revenge* in light of the fact that this was also the name of Bonnet’s sloop.¹⁴

The pirates were some of the original “snowbirds.” When the weather started to get cooler off the ports of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, the pirates began making their way south. We have reports of our pirates taking ships all along the route to St. Vincent just west of Barbados in the Windward Islands of the Caribbean. It was here that Hornigold and Thatch captured the French slave ship *Concorde* out of Nantes, France, and headed toward Martinique with a cargo of slaves.¹⁵ Blackbeard was immediately placed in command of the captive and soon after, Hornigold and some of his crew left the company to take the recently issued king’s pardon which would absolve them of all of their crimes.¹⁶ Thatch renamed the ship *Queen Anne’s Revenge*, added more guns to his prize from ships he plundered shortly thereafter, and soon had a floating fortress with reportedly 40 cannon.¹⁷

According to Johnson’s *General History* and most writers since, Blackbeard’s next major accomplishment was withstanding an attack from and even besting a major English warship:

In this Cruize, they took another Ship and a Sloop, which they plundered and let go, and afterwards fell in with the *Scarborough* of 30 guns. The Man of War engaged *The Queen Ann’s Revenge* for three or four Hours, but not being strong enough to do any notable Service against the Pyrates, returned to *Barbadoes*, the Place of her Station, and *Thatch* steered for the Coast of the *Spanish-America*, and cleaned.¹⁸

The problem with this event, which some writers suggest as the primary reason for Blackbeard’s early notoriety, is that it does not appear to have ever happened. Such an embarrassing situation would have created quite a ripple throughout the Admiralty with major communication exchanged and possibly even a court martial for the ship’s Captain Hume. However, Johnson seems to be the only one to have known about the alleged battle. In addition, a thorough examination of the *Scarborough’s* logbook reveals no such encounter during the period in question.¹⁹ Interestingly, Thomas Knight, who spent some time with the pirates following his capture on 29 November 1717, reported that while on board they observed “...some Vessels in Nevis, and among the rest took one for the

Man of Warr, and they said they would cut her out, but the Captain being ill prevented it."²⁰ Henry Bostock, taken a few days later, added that the pirates "...owned they had met the Man of Warr on this Station, but said they had no business with her, but if she had chased them they would have kept their Way."²¹ So it does appear that Blackbeard's company may have indeed had the opportunity to fight the *Scarborough*, but for one reason or another, the skirmish never actually occurred.

We lose track of Blackbeard after this as the documents remain silent for about three months as to his location or activities. According to the Bostock deposition, the pirates intended to sail for Samana Cay around Hispaniola (modern Dominican Republic and Haiti) to careen the ships and lie in wait for a small Spanish fleet carrying payroll funds.²² Lee mentions that the pirate company was in North Carolina in January 1718 taking the pardon, but this has not been substantiated through any contemporary source.²³ The proposed activity in and around Spanish held territory could explain the lack of evidence in British records.

Blackbeard and company appear again in late March around the Bay of Honduras in the western Caribbean where they took several prizes including the sloop *Adventure* and the large merchant vessel *Protestant Cæsar*. The *Adventure* was an 80 ton sloop out of Jamaica under the command of David Herriot and involved in the lucrative logwood trade. Thatch made the decision to keep this sloop and added her to his growing flotilla.²⁴ The *Protestant Cæsar* had successfully fought off an earlier attack by one of Thatch's sloops (probably Bonnet's *Revenge* under Lieutenant Richards) which provoked the pirate into searching out and burning the vessel so that her captain "...might not brag when he went to New England that he had beat a Pirate..."²⁵

From the Bay of Honduras the pirates traveled to the Caymans where they took a small turtler, probably for the fresh meat. Soon after they sailed around the western end of Cuba and toward the Bahamas where they appear to have taken a small Spanish sloop off Havana along the way. Once they tired of "fishing" some of the known wrecks in the Bahamas for Spanish treasure, they set sail once again up the eastern seaboard toward what almost certainly was Blackbeard's greatest piratical achievement.²⁶

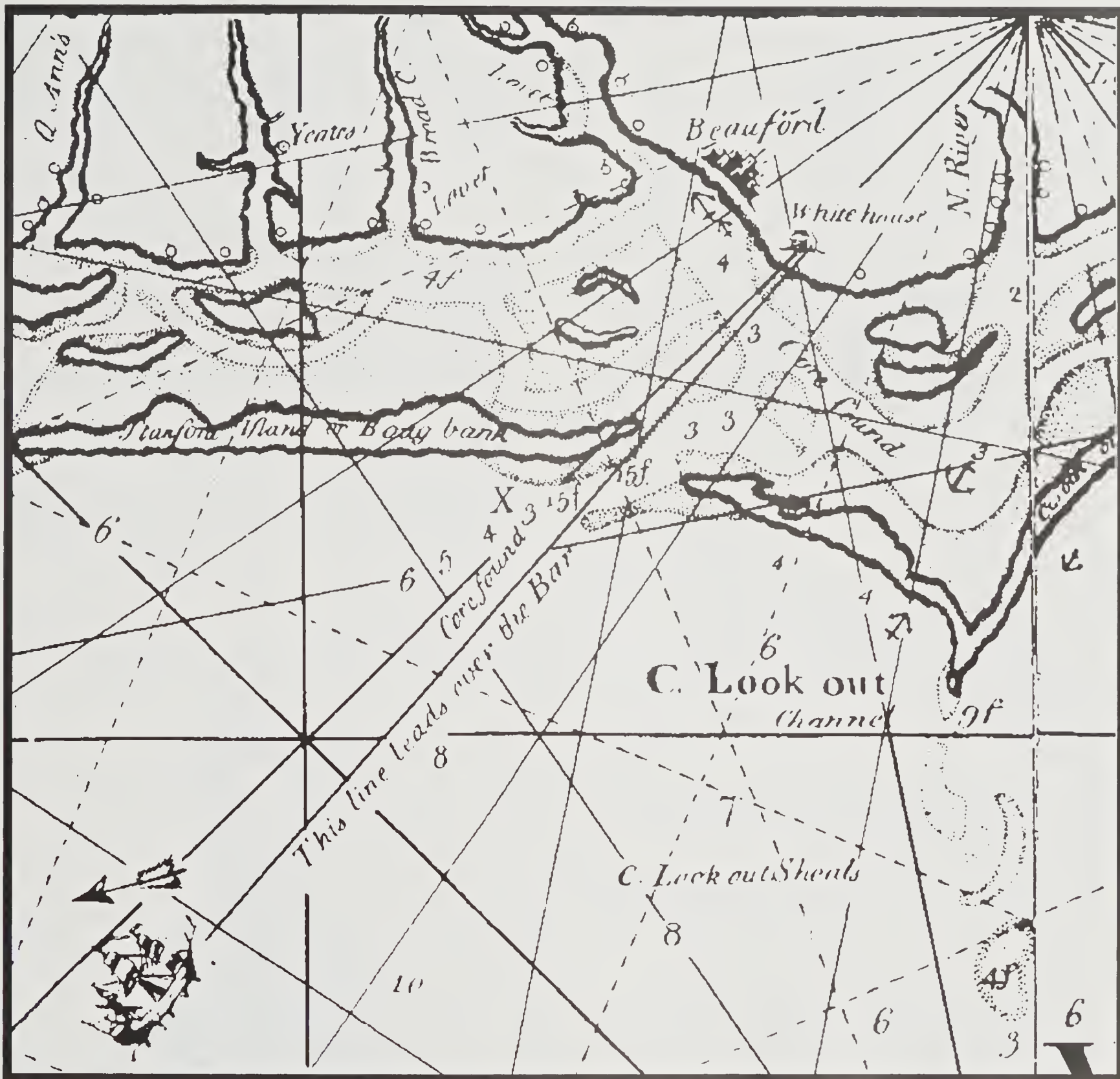
Around the middle of May 1718 Blackbeard's flotilla arrived off the colonial port of Charleston (Charles Town), South Carolina. After taking the pilot boat and most every ship coming in and out of the port for at least a week,²⁷ Thatch dispatched a ransom demand to Governor Robert Johnson for a chest of medicines.²⁸ It has been debated for years why the pirates settled for this paltry amount of loot when they were obviously in a position to demand much more. The pirates also took what was reported as between £1000 and £1500 worth of gold and silver coins from the ships while off

Charleston,²⁹ but it still remains a mystery why Blackbeard settled for this comparatively small plunder, unless it was somehow part of his reported plan which unfolded soon after.

Less than a week after leaving the waters off Charleston, the pirate flotilla arrived off Topsail Inlet, later called Old Topsail, and presently Beaufort Inlet. David Herriot who had been the original captain of the sloop *Adventure* when captured by Blackbeard near the Bay of Honduras, provides the best description of the events at Beaufort Inlet in a deposition recorded in Charleston several months after the loss of the pirate's ships and published in London in 1719:

...about six Days after they left the Bar of Charles-Town, they arrived at *Topsail-Inlet* in North Carolina, having then under their Command the said Ship *Queen Anne's Revenge*, the Sloop commanded by *Richards*, this Deponent's Sloop, commanded by one Capt. *Hands*, one of the said *Pirate* Crew, and a small empty Sloop which they found near the *Havana*.... That the next Morning after they had all got safe into *Topsail-Inlet*, except *Thatch*, the said *Thatch's* ship *Queen Anne's Revenge* run a-ground off of the Bar of *Topsail-Inlet*, and the said *Thatch* sent his Quarter-Master to command this Deponent's Sloop to come to his Assistance; but she run a-ground likewise about Gun-shot from the said *Thatch*, before his said Sloop could come to their Assistance, and both the said *Thatch's* Ship and this Deponent's Sloop were wreck'd; and the said *Thatch* and all the other Sloop's Companies went on board the *Revenge*, afterwards called the *Royal James*, and on board the other Sloop they found empty off the *Havana*.

Says, "Twas generally believed the said *Thatch* run his Vessel a-ground on purpose to break up the Companies, and to secure what Moneys and Effects he had got for himself and such other of them as he had most Value for. That after the said ship and this Deponent's sloop were so cast away, this Deponent requested the said *Thatch* to let him have a Boat, and a few Hands, to go to some inhabited Place in *North Carolina*, or to *Virginia*, there being very few and poor inhabitants in *Topsail-Inlet*, where they were; and desired the said *Thatch* to make this Deponent some Satisfaction for his said Sloop; Both which said *Thatch* promised to do. But instead thereof, ordered this Deponent, with about sixteen more, to be put on shore on a small Sandy Hill or Bank, a League distant from the Main; on which Place there was no Inhabitant, nor Provisions. Where this Deponent



Detail from Chart of James Wimble, 1738. NC Department of Archives and History, Raleigh

and the rest remained two Nights and one Day, and expected to perish; for that said *Thatch* took away their Boat.

That said *Thatch* having taken what Number of Men he thought fit along with him, he set sail from *Topsail-Inlet* in the small *Spanish Sloop*, about *eight* Guns mounted, *forty* White Men, and *sixty* Negroes, and left the *Revenge* belonging to Bonnet there....³⁰

In addition to the many significant details revealed in this document, it is interesting to examine his statement

that about seventeen of the pirates were "put on shore on a small Sandy Hill or Bank, a League distant from the Main; on which Place there was no Inhabitant, nor Provisions." Was this small sandy hill or bank the east end of present-day Bogue Bank? Or were the pirates marooned on a sand bar within the inlet itself? Several 19th century charts of the area indicate that such dry shoals existed at times in the inlet and even had names.³¹ The 1738 Wimble chart which shows the inlet in some detail just two decades after the event indicates that the recognized channel during the period was positioned just off Bogue Bank.³² It would appear that the east end of

Bogue would have been the most logical place to maroon anyone any distance "from the main" on the way out of the harbor and through the inlet.

The only other source to mention the marooning event in any detail is Johnson's *General History*. He wrote in his fourth edition that in the process of leaving the area, Blackbeard "...takes seventeen others and maroons them upon a small sandy island, about a league from the Main, where there was neither bird, beast or herb for their subsistence, and where they must have perished if Major Bonnet had not two days after taken them off."³³ It is apparent that Johnson took his information from Herriot's earlier deposition even if he did slightly embellish Herriot's words adding interestingly that there were no birds or beasts around in an area which literally teems with wildlife even with today's over-crowding and consequent environmental problems.

After losing two of his ships and marooning part of his crew, Blackbeard left the Beaufort Inlet area and traveled north to Ocracoke where he set up his base of operations for the next few months. He was, of course, eventually killed in November 1718 by an expedition sent down from the neighboring colony of Virginia.

During the process of attempting to delimit the area of high probability for Blackbeard's lost ships, a brief cartographic survey was conducted among many of the known charts depicting coastal North Carolina. Topsail Inlet or present day Beaufort Inlet was the focus of this search based on most of the contemporary accounts of the loss.³⁴ Ellis Brand, captain of the guardship *Lyme* stationed in Virginia, provided one clue:

On the 10 June or thereabouts a large pyrate Ship of forty Guns with three Sloops in her company came upon the coast of North Carolina where they endeavour'd To goe in to a harbour, call'd Topsail Inlett, the Ship Stuck upon the barr att the entrance of the harbour and is lost: as is one of the sloops....³⁵

The phrase "Stuck upon the bar at the entrance of the harbour and is lost," though somewhat vague as to the actual position, at least suggested a general location with which to initiate the cartographic research. Inlet bars are sand formations or shoals created both inside and outside of free-flowing inlets by the ebb and flow of tidal action. The Edward Moseley chart published in 1733 provides one of the earliest detailed views of the inlet and suggests that the "entrance of the harbour" lay on the westward side of the inlet. However, the James Wimble chart of 1738, published just 20 years after the loss of Blackbeard's ships, illustrates the most accurate contemporary configuration of the inlet, channel over the bar, and subsequent entrance into the harbor. Additionally, the chart reveals a visual range in the form of a line or bear-

ing drawn from a "White house" near Beaufort out through the inlet with the note instructing mariners that "This line leads over the Bar." If this was not clear enough to follow, the chart included written sailing directions which removed any potential doubt as to the location of the appropriate channel:

Keep to the W^d of the Shoal, and when You are off at the Bar, You'l See a Whitehouse at The E end of Beauford Town, that keep Open of the W. P^t of the Harbour, that mark will lead You in 17 foot over the Bar, then Steer more Easterly, bringing the Eastern P^t of the Harbour S.S.E. come to an Anchor in 5 feet then take a Pilot to Carry You up the Country....³⁶

So with the early eighteenth century channel at least arguably identified, it has only made sense to conduct any survey for the remains of Blackbeard's ships in the vicinity of the contemporary entrance to the harbor. The shipwreck currently under investigation is located on the Beaufort Bar and within one-half to three-quarters of a mile of the old channel entrance. The question of whether the pirate lost the ships by design is rather moot. Hopefully the archaeological excavation of one or both wrecks will shed some light on this, but in the interim we can only rely on doubtful documentation which maintains that this was indeed Thatch's plan. At least many of the pirates who sailed with Blackbeard were under this impression. The question of whether Blackbeard lost more than one ship at Beaufort Inlet appears moot as well in view of the various historical references to the event including those by both Ellis Brand and David Herriot mentioned above.³⁷ The one obvious answer to this question will be to locate another smaller, early eighteenth-century wreck in fairly close proximity to the *Queen Anne's Revenge*.

One interesting question which surfaced many years ago during the initial phases of the Blackbeard Shipwreck Project concerns the disposition of the sloop *Adventure*. Herriot is quite clear that it was his sloop which was lost and even went so far as to depose that he had requested restitution from Thatch for its loss. Ignatius Pell, a recent piratical cohort, agreed with everything that Herriot had stated adding, "That all and singular the Matters and Things herein before deposed by the said *David Herriot* are true."³⁸ This of course includes the indication that Blackbeard left Beaufort Inlet "in the small *Spanish Sloop*, about *eight* Guns mounted...[that] they found empty off the *Havana*."³⁹ which would have been the one involved in the final battle at Ocracoke about six months later. Alexander Spotswood substantiated this when he wrote concerning the "Sloop piratically taken from the Subjects of Spain in a time of Peace."⁴⁰

It seems clear from the sources that the sloop lost

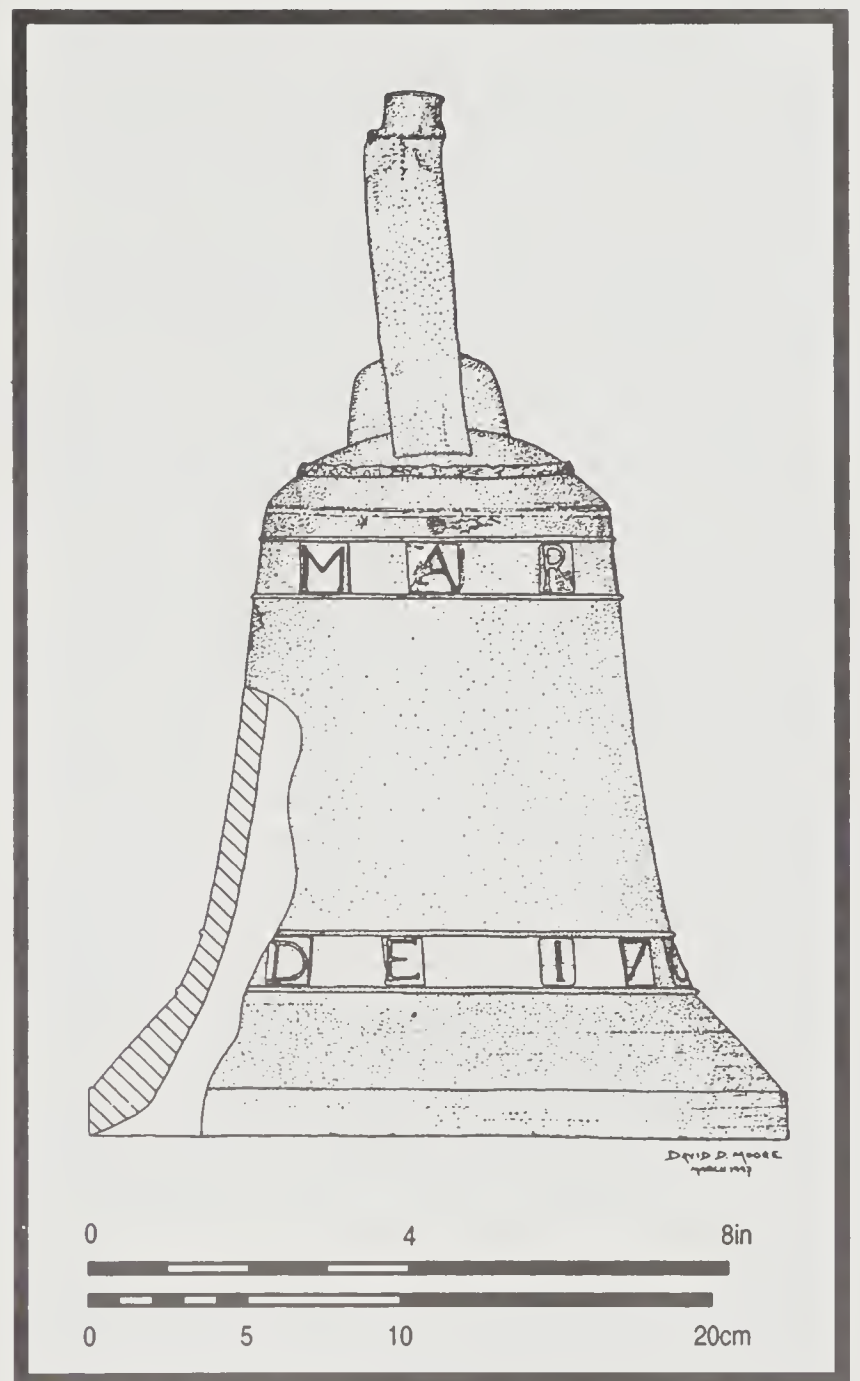
at Beaufort Inlet within a “gunshot” of the *Queen Anne’s Revenge* was Herriot’s 80 ton *Adventure*, and that Blackbeard left on the smaller Spanish prize which the pirates had been using as a tender. It seems equally clear that the sloop at Ocracoke was this prize, and was also being called *Adventure*.⁴¹ This must beg the question of why Blackbeard chose to re-name the Spanish sloop *Adventure*.

On the basis of all of the legends, myths, folklore, and even primary sources surrounding the exploits of the man whose name would become synonymous with the Golden Age of Piracy during the early eighteenth century, one would think that he must have been “a-pyrating” for at least several years. And indeed he may have been, but investigating his life strictly from the primary source documents, we can only trace his activities for about 14 maybe 15 months. Even so, we should feel fortunate that many of these historical events took place here in North Carolina. And indeed, we now have the opportunity to further these investigations through the archaeological



Bell recovered from wreck site. The letters “IHS MARIA” and date “1709” are found along top and bottom bands, respectively.

NC Department of Cultural Resources, Raleigh



Drawing by David Moore, NCMM

record as we continue to develop the Blackbeard Shipwreck Project and initiate the excavation of what is thought to be the remains of his flagship *Queen Anne’s Revenge* just offshore of Beaufort Inlet.

At this point in the investigation the identification of the site as the infamous pirate’s flagship is based totally on circumstantial evidence. In addition to the location of the site discussed above, the most significant clue would have to be the bell which was found and recovered initially by divers on the day the site was located. Though thought to be more likely associated at one time with a mission or similar component of Spanish religious origin rather than an actual ship’s bell, the diagnostic element is nonetheless the date “1709” embossed around its waist, which very effectively dates the site to the appropriate period. The few other artifacts recovered all date comfortably within this period as well. One final clue is a 24 pound cannon ball which was recovered indicating relatively large cannon on board. This size gun would have

been quite appropriate for a ship the size of the *Queen Anne's Revenge*, though not likely to have been used on vessels the size of the sloop *Adventure* or the Spanish treasure ship *Salvador* which may also be in the area. In addition, the files maintained at the North Carolina Underwater Archaeology Unit, which contain information on about 5000 ships lost in our state's waters, reveal no other references to vessels lost around Beaufort Inlet from this period.

What we expect to find is a multitude of material and a wealth of everyday artifacts connected with the seafaring activities of the *Brethren of the Coast*. Archaeologists and historians should be afforded an unparalleled glimpse into a little understood society which heretofore has been shrouded in myths, legends, and folklore. There is also the possibility of locating material associated with the transatlantic slave trade, as the ship was a French slaver when captured by the pirate around November 1717. And it is certainly possible that material plundered from any number of the over 30 ships taken by Blackbeard while in command of the *Queen Anne's Revenge* will be recovered.

The significance of this project is incalculable and its impact both globally and on North Carolina maritime history and archaeology specifically will possibly be too great and far reaching to measure, at least at this initial point in the investigation. Apart from the potential association with the notorious Blackbeard and the rare opportunity to look at a microcosm of piratical society, this site and possibly that of the *Adventure* if found, represent the earliest shipwrecks yet located in North Carolina waters. In addition, they provide archaeologists the chance to study and record ship types of typical colonial vessels from a period in which limited information exists both archaeologically and within the historical record. The *Queen Anne's Revenge* should also provide valuable insight into the mechanics of the notorious transatlantic slave trade where very limited work has been accomplished to date, particularly in regards to the ships and commodities utilized. ■

NOTES

1. *The Tryals of Major Stede Bonnet, and other Pirates*, (London, 1719), 3 (hereinafter cited as *Bonnet Tryals*).

2. A good example of the latter would be the letters of Governor Robert Johnson of South Carolina. In a letter to the Board of Trade (CO 5/1265) on 13 June 1718 he stated that the number of pirates under Blackbeard's command who had recently blockaded the port of Charleston was "...300 men all English..." Five days later in a letter to the Lords Commissioners of Trade (CO 5/1265) he stated they "...are in all above 400 men..." Interestingly and in comparison, Colonel Benjamin Bennett, Governor of Bermuda, wrote to the board on 31 May 1718 (ADM 1/3815) that Blackbeard had "...700 Men or thereabouts...."

3. Captain Charles Johnson, *A General History of the robberies and murders of the most notorious Pyrates, and also their policies, discipline and government, from their first rise and settlements in the Island of Providence, in 1717, to the present year 1724*, 1st edition, (London, 1724), (hereinafter cited Johnson, *General History*, 1st edition).

4. See for example Arthur L. Hayward's introduction to Johnson's *A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pirates*, 4th ed., (London, 1726, rep. ed., 1955), which states, "...that [Johnson] was accurate, even to the smallest particular, is attested by every English or American historian who has had occasion to corroborate his stories from other sources." (This edition is utilized for comparative purposes and hereinafter cited Johnson, *General History*, 4th ed.); and Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, who describes Johnson's work as "...an invaluable collection of mostly accurate information (Cambridge: University Press, 1989), 255, Note 2.

5. Johnson, *General History*, 4th ed., 45 (The 1st edition, 86, states that Thatch was born in Jamaica); CO 152/12, General Walter Hamilton to Board of Trade and Plantations, 6 January 1718, mentioned that the pirate had a "...wife and Children in London..."; *Boston News-Letter*, No. 708, 4–11 November 1718, mentioned that Blackbeard had "...formerly Sail'd Mate out of [Philadelphia]...."

6. Johnson, *General History*, 1st edition, 99–100; this description was repeated verbatim in subsequent editions with exception of the passage concerning the fur hat which was omitted. This was also reflected in the illustrations of Blackbeard, the 1st edition showing the pirate in what we can assume to be a fur hat and the 2nd edition illustration with a more traditional tri-cornered hat (see 32, 33).

7. CO 152/12, folio 67 (iii), deposition of Henry Bostock, 19 December 1717.

8. Johnson, *General History*, 1st edition, 86 (4th edition, 45).

9. *Boston News-Letter*, No. 707, 28 October–6 November 1717.

10. *Boston News-Letter*, No. 520, 29 March–5 April 1714; mentions "...By Letters and Papers via New York of February last...We have an Account of several Piracies committed by one *Hornigold* and *West* with their Accomplices..."

11. Johnson, *General History*, 4th edition, 45; Johnson's first edition does not mention Hornigold at all, but he may have mistaken Bonnet for Hornigold in this case, as all subsequent editions speak of the Hornigold connection.

12. *Boston News-Letter*, No. 707, 28 October – 6 November 1717.

13. Johnson's *General History*, 4th edition does not provide a date but indicates sometime between the taking of the *Concorde* (c. November – December 1717) and the *Adventure* (April 1718), 46; Dr. Robert E. Lee, author of the best modern biography on the pirate, *Blackbeard the Pirate, A Reappraisal of His Life and Times* (Winston Salem, 1974) gives March 1718 as when Bonnet began his association with Thatch, 30 (hereinafter cited Lee, *Blackbeard the Pirate*).

14. Captain Ellis Brand also indicates an earlier association in a letter to the Lords of Admiralty (ADM 1/1472, 4 December 1717) which stated "...one pyret sloop, that was run away with from Barbadoes commanded by Maj^r Bonett, but now is commanded by One Teach, Bonett being suspended from his command, but is still on board, they have most infested the Capes of delaware...."

15. Johnson, *General History*, 1st edition, 63–64 (4th edition, 45; neither edition mentions the origin of the *Concorde*); Lyon G. Tyler, ed., “William Howard, the Pirate,” *Tyler’s Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, volume I, (1920), 36–39, mentions that the *Concorde* was commanded by a Captain D’Ocier and out of Saint Malo; Cdt Alain Demerliac, *La Marine de Louis XIV, Nomenclature des vaisseaux du Roi-Soleil de 1661 à 1715*, (Nice, 1992), 58, mentions that the *Concorde* was outfitted in Nantes by the French slave trader Montaudouin and captured in November 1717 “...par le pirate anglais Edouard TEACH et renommée QUEEN ANNE’S REVENGE.” Efforts to acquire copies of the documents related to Demerliac’s research are currently underway.
16. Privy Council 2/86, “A Proclamation For Suppressing of Pyrates,” 5 September 1717; A transcription of this proclamation can be seen in Lee, *Blackbeard the Pirate*, 243–244.
17. CO 152/12, Thomas Knight deposition, notes “...22 Guns Mounted...” on 29 November 1717 not long after capture of *Concorde*; *Boston News-Letter*, No. 725, 3–10 March 1718, report of Christopher Taylor mentions a “...French ship of 32 guns...”; Governor Robert Johnson of South Carolina (CO 5/1265, 13 and 18 June 1718), Captain Ellis Brand of the *Lyme* (ADM 1/1472, 12 July 1718), and South Carolina Attorney General Richard Allein (*Bonnet Tryals*, 30 October 1718), 8, all mention a ship of 40 guns. One can see the numbers of guns increasing with each successive report, but the question remains as to whether these guns were all mounted on carriages or at least some mounted upon the ship’s rails.
18. Johnson, *General History*, 1st edition, 64 (Johnson’s 4th edition is only slightly different, containing the same basic information, 45).
19. ADM 51/865, Logbook of Captain Hume, HMS *Scarborough*, 11 October 1715 – 5 September 1719.
20. CO 152/12, folio 67 (ii), deposition of Thomas Knight, 30 November 1717.
21. CO 152/12, folio 67 (iii), deposition of Henry Bostock, 19 December 1717.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Lee, *Blackbeard the Pirate*, 28. Lee’s sources for this statement are all secondary with the exception of a letter from Thomas Pollock to Governor Charles Eden which mentions the pirates claiming the pardon in North Carolina, but not the date on which they did so.
24. *Bonnet Tryals*, 44–45 (David Herriot deposition).
25. *Boston News-Letter*, No.739, 9–16 June 1718. The *Boston News-Letter* account calls the *Protestant Cæsar* a 400 ton ship with 26 guns. The Barbados Shipping Returns lists the same vessel at 300 tons and 24 guns (CO 33/15, folio 53). Either way, a large merchantman, but it is interesting to note that one of the other reasons given by Thatch for burning the ship was because she was from Boston where some pirates had recently been hanged. According to the Barbados records, the *Protestant Cæsar* was coming from and held a bond certificate from London.
26. *Bonnet Tryals*, 45 (David Herriot deposition).
27. South Carolina Governor Robert Johnson’s letters (CO 5/1265 and ADM 1/3815) provide limited information on some of the vessels captured by Thatch’s force while off Charleston. However, the South Carolina Naval Office Shipping List (CO 5/508) serves to fill in many of the gaps left in this data while providing ship, captain, and owner’s names, ship type, when/where built, when/where registered, cargo, tonnage, etc. This obscure database effectively paints a broader and more definitive portrait of Blackbeard’s targets and actual prizes, and is the subject of an on-going research project.
28. *Bonnet Tryals*, iii–iv, 8.
29. *Bonnet Tryals*, 8 (South Carolina Attorney-General Richard Allein) and 48 (Ignatius Pell deposition).
30. *Bonnet Tryals*, 45–46 (David Herriot deposition).
31. See for example “Map of Beaufort Entrance and Harbor, North Carolina, From survey under the direction of Captain E. W. Van C. Lucas, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A., June, 1899,” by S. F. Burbank, Assistant Engineer (To accompany annual report, 1899); chart depicts Perry’s Island, an elongated shoal (approximately 2700 feet long) lying roughly north-south approximately 2500 feet southeast of Fort Macon which appears to have been somewhat dry even at high water. Copy on file with the North Carolina Maritime Museum.
32. See William P. Cumming, “Wimble’s Maps and the Colonial Cartography of the North Carolina Coast,” *North Carolina Historical Review*, 46 (April 1969), for reproduction of the James Wimble chart, 1738.
33. Johnson, *General History*, 4th edition, 48; Johnson’s 1st edition, 67–68 interestingly follows the Herriot account fairly closely without any of the embellishment of later editions.
34. For representative sources which mention the location of the loss, see R.A. Brock, *The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1710–1722, now First Printed from the Manuscript in the Collections of the Virginia Historical Society*, (Richmond, 1882), 273 (hereinafter cited *Spotswood Letters*); ADM 1/2282, Captain Vincent Pierce to the Board of Admiralty, 5 September 1718; and the *Boston News-Letter*, No. 744, 14–21 July 1718.
35. ADM 1/1472, Captain Ellis Brand to the Board of Admiralty, 12 July 1718.
36. See note 30.
37. In addition to Herriot and Brand see Ignatius Pell’s deposition which certainly indicates that the loss of the ships was by design (*Bonnet Tryals*, 11) stating that “...the Ship was ran ashore and lost, which Thatch caused to be done.” The *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia*, III, 481, 10 July 1718, mentions Thatch’s “...Pirate Ship and Sloop being lately Cast away...”; the *Boston News-Letter* (No. 744, 14 July 1718) provides similar information, “...that on purpose they Run Their Ship ashore at Topsail inlett, and also a Sloop which are lost...”; and Virginia governor Alexander Spotswood (*Spotswood Letters*, 273) who on 14 February 1719 stated that Blackbeard had “...Lost his Ship at Topsail Inlett, with one of the four Sloops he had in his Company...”
38. *Bonnet Tryals*, 48 (Ignatius Pell deposition).
39. *Bonnet Tryals*, 45–46 (David Herriot deposition).
40. ADM 1/1826, Governor Alexander Spotswood to the Lords of the Admiralty, 11 August 1719.
41. See for example the Logs of Captain George Gordon (PRO ADM 51/672 and National Maritime Museum ADM L/P/32) and Lieutenant Robert Maynard (National Maritime Museum ADM L/P/32); William L. Saunders, ed., *Colonial Records of North Carolina*, (Raleigh, 1886), II, 341, 343, 345; and H. R. McIlwaine, ed., *Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia*, (Richmond, 1928), III, 501.



Sailors, Wilmington, and the First Hospital in North Carolina

by Alan D. Watson

Hospitals, a rarity in the British American colonies before the Revolution, gradually became more numerous in the United States after independence. Still few in number and found principally in the northern states, they included specialized institutions for eyes and ears and for the care of the mentally ill. Those early hospitals, some municipal but most private, were supplemented by federal marine hospitals for American sailors and naval hospitals for navy personnel. North Carolina tardily witnessed the appearance of hospitals. According to a recent article published in this journal, the first in the state was a federal marine hospital constructed in 1846–1847 in Portsmouth on the Outer Banks. However, fragmentary evidence supports the establishment of an earlier hospital in North Carolina. That institution appeared in Wilmington in the mid-1830s, the product of private philanthropy, but also designed principally for seamen.¹

Sailors elicited ambivalent emotions among the American populace. To many, including inhabitants of Wilmington, they were a crude, rowdy lot, always spoiling for a fight, and brawl they did. A melee in Wilmington in 1789, engendered by a dispute over wages, necessitated calling out a detachment of the local militia to keep the peace. However, at times, sailors proved valuable transient members of the community. Before the Revolution they readily offered support for mob actions to oppose the British as they did in

Wilmington in 1765 in the protest of the Stamp Act. Seven years later British seamen in Wilmington acted with alacrity to extinguish a potentially dangerous fire while residents of the town and their slaves stood by idly.²

Ultimately, landlubbers seemed to look upon sailors with a mixture of pity and compassion, viewing the seafarers as simple-minded men, almost childlike in their behavior, who needed protection for their own preservation. Such safeguards were all the more necessary because sailors were strangers in their ports of call, without family and friends, and at the mercy of unscrupulous characters. Of course the public concern for sailors was not altogether altruistic, for Wilmingtonians admitted that they were “well aware of the importance of Seaman...”

They provided the labor for the lifeblood of the town—shipping, and their misfortunes would “greatly injure the trade of this port, and lessen the Commercial importance of the State.”³

Taverns and sailor boarding houses posed particular threats to the welfare of sailors, and by extension, the commonweal of

Wilmington. Before the

Revolution legislation prohibited proprietors of taverns in North Carolina from offering extensive credit to sailors without the approval of their captains for fear that the resulting indebtedness might prevent them from shipping out. Two tavern keepers in Wilmington in 1768 were found guilty by the New Hanover County Court of “keeping disorderly houses, & harbouring & detaining Common Sailors, to the great Injury of the merchants & masters of Vessels trading to the river of Cape Fear.”⁴

By the early nineteenth century sailor boarding houses beckoned to the seafaring sojourners, but too often only to fleece the unwary. Wilmington merchants and townspeople in 1817 complained to the General Assembly about the establishments which frequently were scenes of boisterous behavior and immorality that “shock[ed] the



Left: **View of Wilmington, ca. 1838.**

Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion

deleacy of the Community." Moreover, the proprietors "too frequently" took advantage of the "unsuspecting and confiding nature" of the sailors so that "it is a truth amounting almost to a proverb that few Sailors leave the port with a cent in their pockets." As a result the legislature permitted the Wilmington town commissioners to license the sailor boarding houses, require bond for proper behavior from their owners, and in effect, limit the number of such businesses in the town.⁵

Another, and alarming problem for seamen, and one which also impinged directly upon the port community and its commerce was the health of mariners. Often sailors arrived in Wilmington suffering from various maladies. According to a critic, in less serious cases the collector of the port attempted to provide for the unwell, packing the sailor "off to some sailor tavern, where his sick ear is regaled with the midnight revellings of his unsick companions, or mayhap he is more fortunate and finds an asylum in the hut of some negro woman, where at least, his fevered brain will not be racked with the clanking of gill measures and beer pots." When the deadly contagions of yellow fever and smallpox threatened, mariners were quarantined on board their ships, enduring the most inhumane conditions until all were well or had died. Without a hospital, not only did the sailors suffer privation and often death, but the entire port suffered from the injunction of shipping.⁶

As North Carolina's principal port after the Revolution, Wilmington evidenced the greatest interest in the welfare of the sailors. At the conclusion of the War of 1812, Wilmington dominated shipping in North Carolina, particularly foreign commerce. In the year ending September 30, 1833, Wilmington accounted for 58 percent of the domestic shipping tonnage and 96 percent of the foreign shipping tonnage entering North Carolina ports. At midcentury the figures were 57 and 100 percent, respectively. As a result the number of sailors calling at Wilmington far exceeded those finding their way to less active North Carolina ports. In the year ending June 30, 1852, the number of seamen arriving at Wilmington (918) almost doubled the number in other ports (515).⁷ Unquestionably, Wilmington was the center of maritime commerce in North Carolina and could mount the best claim to the need for a marine hospital.

For its part Congress quickly recognized the need to provide medical care for American merchant and naval seamen. In 1798 Congress enacted legislation for the "Relief of Sick and Disabled Seamen," in effect establishing the Marine Hospital Service (forerunner of the United States Public Health Service). The statute required the deduction of 20 cents per month from seamen's wages—"hospital money" with which to establish a Hospital Fund—to provide for care for sailors in hospitals or other institutions in American seaports, or by authorization of the President of the United States, to

construct hospitals for seamen. Dissatisfaction with the legislation of 1798 and the perceived special needs of the United States Navy led Congress in 1811 to pass a law to establish navy hospitals, financed in part by \$50,000 taken from the Hospital Fund. North Carolina failed to benefit from the federal legislation until the construction of the Marine Hospital at Portsmouth.⁸

Meanwhile, the North Carolina General Assembly early addressed the need to care for ailing seamen. Recognizing the insufficiency of funds raised by parish taxes and the wardens of the poor in counties like New Hanover in which there were ports (Wilmington), the legislature in 1789 imposed a levy on captains and crews of vessels entering North Carolina to help sailors who "frequently suffer[ed] from the want of proper means in sickness...." However, when North Carolina joined the Union late in 1789, its commerce became subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. Finding that the hospital money raised by the federal government proved inadequate for the care of unwell sailors, the state in 1804 and 1817 moved to supplement federal moneys with its own impositions, subject to ratification of Congress. The national legislature approved the state levy of 1817, but only for five years.⁹

While marine hospitals appeared throughout the United States, North Carolina and its chief port remained overlooked. A correspondent to the *People's Press* in Wilmington in 1833 urged townspeople to act, observing that "Justice advances an unanswerable claim; interest presents a powerful motive, and humanity pleads in the strongest terms." Sailors paid their hospital dues and deserved a return on their money. Wilmington's prosperity depended upon its commerce, and commerce in turn depended upon the facilities and advantages that the port could offer. Captains and crews, if they had a choice, would be reluctant to frequent a port which lacked the means to care for ill sailors. And the correspondent alluded to the practice of quarantining sick men on their own ships, where they lacked any medical assistance, and to captains who left sick hands along the river as they departed the port, dooming the men to an almost certain death.¹⁰

James McKay, representative from Wilmington's congressional district, attempted to secure an appropriation from Congress in 1833 for the construction of a hospital in the vicinity of Wilmington. A House committee reported favorably on a bill to expend \$7,000 for a hospital, but it never went to the floor of the lower house for a vote. In the subsequent Congress a bill for \$10,000 for a marine hospital again failed to reach the full House for a final reading, and an amendment for the same purpose, introduced in the Senate by North Carolinian Willie Mangum, was defeated.¹¹

Failing to secure action by the federal government, Wilmingtonians took the initiative. At meetings held on April 17 and May 9, 1835, Edward B. Dudley, prominent

Whig politician and future governor of North Carolina, among others spearheaded an effort to organize a society to collect funds to underwrite a hospital for seamen in the Wilmington area. When the group asked the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States if the federal hospital money that had been collected at the port could be used for the Wilmington hospital, the Secretary refused, stating that "the disbursements in all the ports of North Carolina are nearly double the amount collected there-in...." Nonetheless, the Wilmingtonians persevered, opening the hospital by October 1835 at Mt. Tizra(h), a 150 acre plot of land belonging to Dudley, located about three miles south of the town along the Cape Fear River across from Cat Island and the Dram Tree.¹²

The General Assembly, in its legislative session of November-December 1835, evidenced its support by incorporating the Wilmington Marine Hospital Association to provide "for the relief of sick and disabled American seamen," noting that the Wilmingtonians had "already purchased land and prepared suitable houses for that purpose...." By resolution the legislature appropriated the money collected by the state under the auspices of the statute of 1817, \$1,752.40 to the association. Also in 1835, the General Assembly enacted legislation to impose levies on all seamen entering the port of Wilmington except those serving on coasting vessels within the state, the proceeds of which would be given the Wilmington Marine Hospital Association. However, the implementation of that law, which was subject to congressional approval, was moot.¹³

The hospital remained open for several years as the Wilmington Marine Hospital Association struggled to maintain its operation. Dudley formally sold the Mt. Tizra land to the association in 1836 for \$1,000. At that time the association implored the federal government either to take control of the hospital, appropriate \$8,000 to \$10,000 for the maintenance of the institution, allocate the hospital money collected at the port to the association, or ratify the North Carolina legislation of 1835 to provide supplementary funding, but the national authorities were unmoved. Still, the hospital continued to function at least through September 1838, at which time it was "tenantless." Memorials by the Wilmington Marine Hospital Association to the Secretary of the Treasury in 1844-1845 indicated that the hospital had been "abandoned for years for want of means to sustain it...."¹⁴

Although the hospital had closed and the Wilmington Marine Hospital Association apparently ceased active operations by 1849, Wilmingtonians continued to demand a marine hospital for their port. Two petitions on the subject were sent in 1846 from Wilmington to Washington; the state legislature unanimously adopted a resolution in 1852 instructing North Carolina's congressmen to seek the establishment of a marine hospital along the Cape Fear River; and the

Commissioners of Navigation and Pilotage of the port of Wilmington in 1854 memorialized the Secretary of the Treasury for action. The national government finally yielded. In the late 1850s a federal marine hospital was built in Wilmington, but preceding it briefly in the 1830s was North Carolina's first hospital, established by philanthropy of the Wilmington Marine Hospital Association.¹⁵

NOTES

1. Richard H. Shryock, *Medicine and Society in America, 1660-1860* (New York, 1960), 22-23, 104-105, 154-57; Dr. Martin Rozear, "North Carolina's First Hospital," *Tributaries*, 6 (1996), 6-9.
2. *State Gazette of North Carolina* (Edenton), March 26, 1789; Janet Schaw, *Journal of a Lady of Quality*, ed. by Evangeline W. Andrews and Charles M. Andrews (New Haven, 1921), 169-170; Jesse Lemisch, "Jack Tar in the Streets: Merchant Seamen in the Politics of Revolutionary America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, 25 (July 1968), 381-407; Donna J. Spindel, "Law and Disorder: The North Carolina Stamp Act Crisis," *North Carolina Historical Review*, 57 (January 1980), 1-16.
3. Lemisch, "Jack Tar in the Streets," 380 and 380n. 43; The Memorial of the Subscribers Merchants and Inhabitants of the Town of Wilmington, December 16, 1817, Petitions, General Assembly, Sessions Records, November-December 1817, State Archives, Raleigh, N.C.
4. Walter Clark, ed., *The State Records of North Carolina*, 26 vols. (Raleigh, 1895-1907), 23: 493-494, 727-728, 838; 25: 262-263, 358-359; Minutes of the New Hanover County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, April 1768, State Archives.
5. Memorial of the Subscribers Merchants and Inhabitants of the Town of Wilmington, December 16, 1817; Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina, 1817, Private, Ch. 96.
6. *Wilmington Journal*, February 13, 1846.
7. *The New American State Papers. Commerce and Navigation*. 47 vols. (Wilmington, DE., 1973), 17: 664; 32: 697; *Wilmington Journal*, April 7, 1854.
8. Hans A. Brings, "Navy Medicine Comes Ashore: Establishing the First Permanent U. S. Naval Hospitals," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences*, 41 (July 1986), 257-292; Robert Straus, *Medical Care for Seamen: The Origin of Public Medical Service in the United States* (New Haven, 1950); Ralph C. Williams, *The United States Public Health Service, 1798-1950* (Washington, D.C., 1951).
9. Clark, *State Records*, 24: 56; Laws, 1804, Public, Ch. 20; 1817, Public, Ch. 28; U.S. Statutes at Large, 15th Congress, 1st Session, Ch. 36.
10. *People's Press* (Wilmington, March 27), 1833.
11. *People's Press*, April 3, 1833; *People's Press and Wilmington Advertiser*, July 3, 1834. For McKay and Mangum, see William S. Powell, ed., *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, 6 vols. (Chapel Hill, 1979-1996), 4: 154, 208.
12. *People's Press and Wilmington Advertiser*, April 15, 22, May 13, October 30, 1835; *Wilmington Journal*, April 21, 1854; Lewis Philip Hall, *Land of the Golden River*, 3 vols. (Wilmington, N.C., 1975-1980), 2: 138. For Dudley, see Powell, *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, 2: 112-113.

(notes continue on page 44)

13. Laws, 1835, Public, Ch. 16; Private, Ch. 145; Resolutions, 124. According to the Revised Statutes of North Carolina, published in 1837, Congress had approved the impositions on seamen for the benefit of the hospital, but an examination of the statutes of Congress failed to reveal a corroborating law, and a later correspondent contended that as late as January 1837 Congress had not approved the North Carolina legislation. *The Revised Statutes of the State of North Carolina, ... in Two Volumes* (Raleigh, 1837), 1: 560–561; *Wilmington Journal*, April 21, 1854.

14. Deed from Edward B. Dudley to the Wilmington Marine Hospital Association, March 3, 1836, Seamen Friend's Society Papers, Special Collections, Duke University, Durham, N. C.; *Wilmington Advertiser*, September 14, 1838; *Wilmington Journal*, April 21, 28, 1854.

15. "Expenditures upon the new marine hospital at Wilmington, July 12, 1858 to September 1, 1859," Samuel A'Court Ashe Papers, Miscellaneous, Private Collections, State Archives; Laws, 1852, *Resolutions*, 636; *Wilmington Journal*, February 13, 1846; May 5, 1854; January 23, 30, February 20, 1857; Hall, *Land of the Golden River*, 2: 138–140.

Books and Reviews

Basil Greenhill with John Morrison. *The Archaeology of Boats and Ships: An Introduction*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1996. 288 pages; photographs, drawings, maps, notes, bibliography, index.

reviewed by Paul Fontenoy
North Carolina Maritime Museum

There have been two broad-ranging studies of the evolution of boats whose fundamental approaches to the subject have become the foundation for virtually all work done in this field during the past half-century. The first, James Hornell's *Water Transport* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1946) set out "to marshal in due order the major part of the knowledge within our ken concerning the origins of the many devices upon which men...launch themselves afloat upon river, lake and sea." This was followed by Basil Greenhill's *The Archaeology of the Boat* (London: A. & C. Black, 1976) which took advantage of the archaeological discoveries of the previous thirty years to broaden its view of watercraft evolution and development. Dr. Greenhill, who was director of the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich from 1967 until 1983, has undertaken a thorough revision of his earlier work in collaboration with Dr. John Morrison, a prominent scholar of oared fighting vessels of the Classical era for over 50 years.

The product of their labors, *The Archaeology of Boats and Ships*, is far more than a revision. It is a successful synthesis of the original tradition of nautical archaeology—ethnography, image and textual analysis, and antiquarian studies, with but limited artifactual input—with current scientific archaeological methodology. The authors bring together the fruits of anthropological field work, demographic studies, naval architecture, archaeological site studies, experimental archaeology, and historical investigation to produce a wide-ranging inquiry into

marine origins and developments that is also rigorously analytical.

The book's paradigm, however, is firmly rooted in the older tradition. The result is profoundly satisfying because Greenhill starts from the broad social environment within which watercraft operate before proceeding to locate the individual types within this framework. The contextual narratives of most archaeological site reports tend towards superficiality. In contrast, readers of *The Archaeology of Boats and Ships* never have to remind themselves of the functionality of watercraft (boats are tools) and therefore can comprehend more clearly the impact of social and environmental forces on the forms that vessels take.

Chapter 2, "Six Boats and Their Builders," epitomizes this approach. The very chapter title lays out Greenhill's conviction that comprehensive study of watercraft demands detailed knowledge of both vessels and their builders (and, for that matter, their operators, too). A thorough understanding of the contents of this one chapter should become a mandatory prerequisite for all who would aspire to any level of expertise in the study of boats and ships. This reviewer would also commend the first section of this chapter to all North Carolinians, for it is a splendidly evocative celebration of the traditional wooden Carolina Skiff and its builders.

The Archaeology of Boats and Ships is essential reading for all who are seriously interested in understanding the history of the world's watercraft, both from a purely technical perspective and within their functional context. It is a fitting monument to the accomplishments of maritime archaeologists and ethnographers during the past half-century. It also serves as a tocsin warning of the fragility of this achievement in the face of institutional fickleness—the National Maritime Museum's Archaeological Research Centre, which Greenhill set up early in his tenure as director, has been closed since his departure, its staff scattered, and the museum now focuses its attention on exhibits celebrating, among other things, pirates!

David Cordingly. *Under the Black Flag: The Romance and the Reality of Life Among the Pirates*. New York: Random House, 1995. xxii + 300 pp.; photographs, maps, notes, bibliography, index.

Jennifer Marx. *Pirates and Privateers of the Caribbean*. Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishers, 1992. x + 314 pp.; photographs, notes, bibliography, index.

reviewed by John A. Tilley
East Carolina University

The public's appetite for information and misinformation about piracy seems to be insatiable. Maritime museums spend much of their time trying to get people interested in characters who didn't sail under the skull and crossbones, yell "shiver me timbers," and inflict disgusting tortures on the innocent. In 1992 the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich met the problem head-on and mounted a temporary exhibit on the history of piracy. It was one of the biggest hits in the history of maritime museums. Though the historical artifacts on display were actually rather modest (pirates didn't leave much material culture) the exhibits were so well presented that nobody minded much. One of the highlights was the coat Dustin Hoffman wore in the movie "Hook." This reviewer walked out of the gift shop carrying an inflatable plastic parrot.

Shortly after the exhibit closed, Dr. David Cordingly, one of the museum staff members responsible for it, published *Under the Black Flag*. The book seems to have two functions: to give the general reader some basic information about the history of piracy, and to consider how the public obsession with the subject has evolved over the centuries. Cordingly, a trained scholar with a background in marine art as well as history, has a refreshing ability to make his topic accessible to non-professionals without talking down to them. He sorts out the facts about Morgan, Roberts, Kidd, Blackbeard, and plenty of less notorious personages whom most readers will be meeting for the first time. One of the most remarkable is Mrs. Cheng, a former prostitute whose huge fleet of Chinese pirate ships terrorized shipping in the Far East during the early nineteenth century.

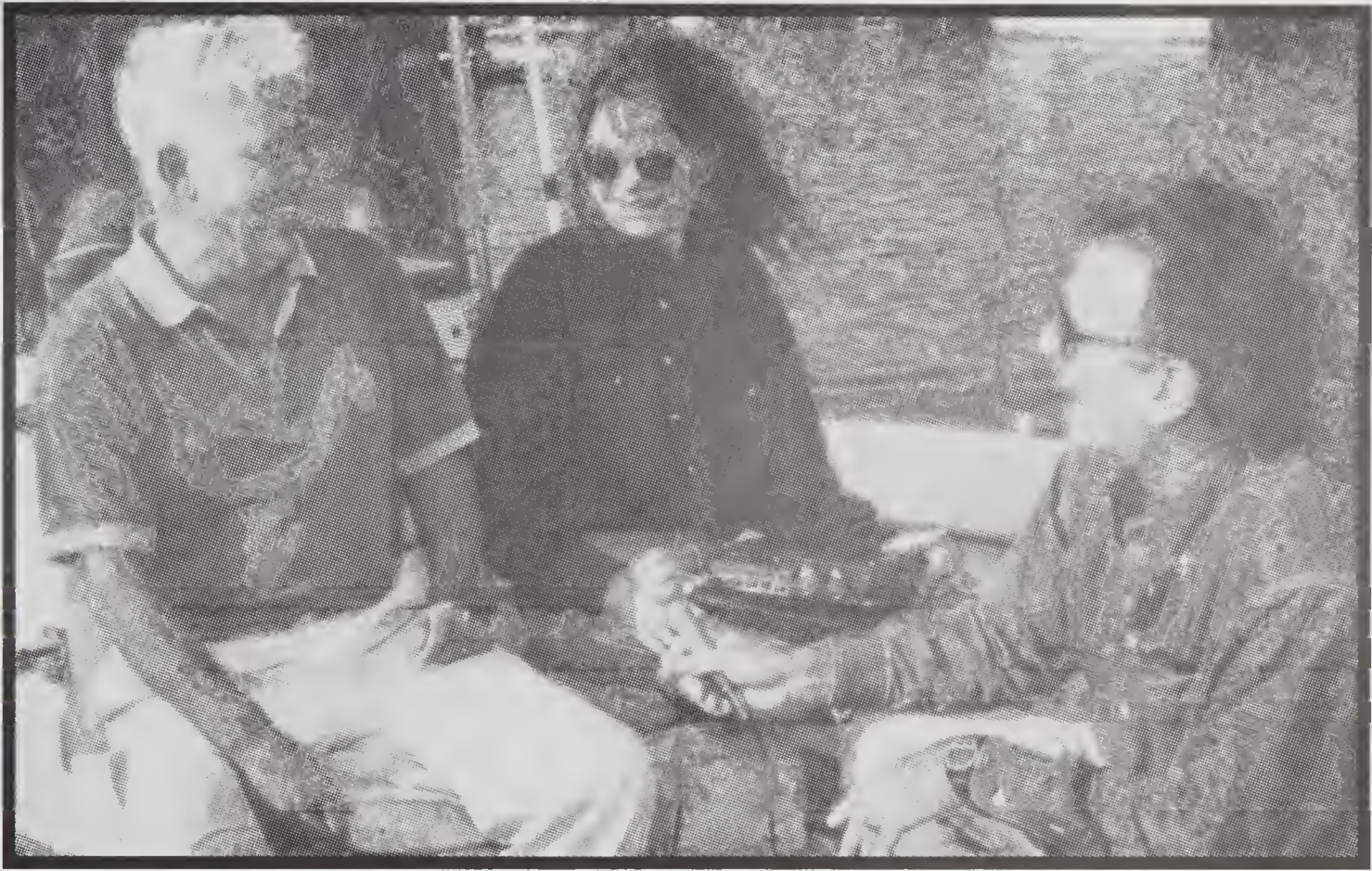
Cordingly is at his best, however, when he deals with the pirates of fiction. He takes us into the study of Robert Louis Stevenson, the rehearsals for the first stage production of "Peter Pan," and the Hollywood sound stage where Errol Flynn taught the movie-going public of the 1930s the meaning of the term "swash-buckler." The book is handsomely produced, the text is amply annotat-

ed, and a good bibliography will send the interested reader in the right direction to pursue the subject further.

Jennifer Marx's book is a straightforward history of piratical adventures in their most famous venue. As the title implies, the author covers a wide range of legal and illegal maritime exploits; in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the line was often open to interpretation. Marx brings considerable knowledge to the subject, having formal training in history and extensive experience in underwater archaeology. Her book goes into more detail than Cordingly's, and makes some effort to set the activities of the Caribbean adventurers within their context in European and American politics and diplomacy.

Scholars, unfortunately, will find some weaknesses in this book. The author's writing style is enthusiastic and generally competent, but could have used some help from an editor. The preface contains an impressive list of European archives where the author has done research, but almost all of the hundred works in the bibliography are widely available published sources. The book's ten chapters include fifteen endnotes that identify the sources of quotations. Why those fifteen were selected, while dozens of other quotes were left unattributed, is not explained.

Under the Black Flag can be heartily recommended to both experts and novices as a thoroughly engaging summary of the subject with a new, personalized slant. *Pirates and Privateers of the Caribbean*, a longer and more detailed discussion of a narrower subject, is shaky in its scholarly apparatus but a generally sound narrative history. The general reader will find either book an entertaining and worthwhile read.



Rex O'Neal of Ocracoke shares island phrases with the authors. Herman Lankford

Walt Wolfram and Natalie Schilling-Estes. *Hoi Toide on the Outer Banks, The Story of the Ocracoke Brogue*. The University of North Carolina Press, 1997. xi + 148 pp.; photographs, maps, tables, appendix, references and bibliographic notes, index.

*reviewed by Connie Mason
North Carolina Maritime Museum*

Imagine the daunting task of describing instrumental music with only the written word. This was one of the challenges faced by authors Wolfram and Schilling-Estes—translating the music, structure, and essence of the Ocracoke brogue to those familiar and unfamiliar with its nuances. As professional linguists, Wolfram and Schilling-Estes's success required a high level of skill, patience, understanding, and artistry to accomplish this work.

This study had great potential for being very dry and scholarly, addressing such stimulating topics as verb agreement, intensifiers, double modals, homophones, possessive nouns and pronouns...all those grammar school terms which can make the blood run cold and the eyes lock into a watery, catatonic stare. However, the authors have shuffled science with humanity, interweaving the nomenclature of their profession with the voices of the

Ocracokers' folklore, poetry, and history. They accomplished this well with only some minor discrepancies in their historical interpretations outside their expertise.

One of the universal themes of this work is the need for acceptance of dialect as an important part of a culture. No dialect should be considered uneducated, ungrammatical, or socially unacceptable. "Linguistically, all languages and dialects are equally systematic—and equally suitable for the expression of even the most complex notions....Dialects take on heightened social standing when they are spoken by socially favored people, not because they're linguistically 'better' than other dialects."

I hope all teachers, no matter what level or expertise, read this book. The insight and understanding gained from this study will promote an appreciation for all regional dialects and perhaps prevent the scarring and stigma associated with diverse manners of expression. Our dialects give us distinction as a people and unity as a region. All our state's dialects deserve this kind of in-depth analysis and preservation. I look forward to the next study. ●

Maritime History Prize Essay Competition

Call
For
Entries

The North Carolina Maritime History Council and the Friends of the North Carolina Maritime Museum invite submissions to the annual *Tributaries* Prize Essay Competition. A prize of \$200 will go to the winning essay, which also will be published in the October 1998 issue of *Tributaries*, the council's award-winning publication.

Essays may relate to any aspect of the history of North Carolina's maritime and coastal communities, should incorporate original research, and must not have been previously published. Judges will take into account originality of subject matter and treatment, appropriate use of source materials, style, and potential appeal to readers in reaching their decision.

Submissions should be no more than 2,500 words in length, excluding endnotes. Entrants must submit two copies of their essays, double-spaced with brief endnotes, and adhere to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 14th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993) in matters of grammar, style, and methods of documentation. Entries must be postmarked no later than May 31st, 1998.

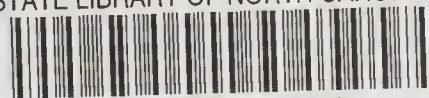
This competition is open to all students who have yet to complete work for a terminal degree.

Send all entries to:

*Paul Fontenoy, Curator of Maritime Research
North Carolina Maritime Museum
315 Front Street; Beaufort, NC 28516-2125*

*Phone: (919) 728-7317 Fax: (919) 728-2108
e-mail: ncs0018@interpath.com*

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