

## **Blackbeard in Beaufort**

By Jeannette Holland Austin



When Spain threatened the colonists from St. Augustine, Florida (about 1740), pirates pilfered the shores of the Atlantic ocean. One in particular was William Teach, known as "Blackbeard." Teach was born ca 1668 in Bristol, England and died on 22 November 1718 on Ocracoke Island, North Carolina.

Blackbeard was seen in the Carolina ports of Beaufort and Charleston. He was captain of the vessel "Queen Anne's Revenge." When he sailed into Charleston South Carolina during May of 1718, he blockaded the harbor and plundered nine ships. Also, he took prisoners and demanded that the city provide him with medical supplies. When they agreed, he sent a party ashore.

When his men returned with the supplies, Teach released his prisoners. While in Charleston, Teach learned that Woodes Rogers had orders to rid the Caribbean of its pirates. So he sailed north

for the Beaufort Inlet of North Carolina, called "Topsail". Upon reaching the inlet, "Queen Anne's Revenge" struck a sandbar and was badly damaged. In the process of attempting to save that vessel, the ship, "Adventure" was also lost.

He then captured a Spanish sloop and made his path through the inlet. One of Bonnet's men later testified that Teach intentionally ran "Queen Anne's Revenge" aground.

About that time, a royal pardon was offered to all pirates who would surrender before September 5th of that year. But it was for crimes committed before January 5th. His actions in Charleston were still up for grabs. Teach sent William Bonnet to Bath, North Carolina to test it. Bonnet was pardoned and planned to return to Topsail to collect "Revenge" before sailing for St. Thomas. When he arrived, Teach was gone. more articles