

Pirates of the Carolinas




✠ Blackbeard

Edward "Blackbeard" Teach started his career as a privateer near Jamaica during Queen Anne's War. When the war ended, he longed to return to the privateering lifestyle. He took up piracy with Benjamin Hornigold, who gave him *The Concorde*, a ship they took in the Caribbean. Blackbeard renamed the ship *The Queen Anne's Revenge*. Blackbeard continued to cruise the Caribbean and, by the spring of 1718, he was in command of four vessels and more than 300 pirates.

He left Charleston for North Carolina, where Gov. Charles Eden granted Blackbeard a pardon, as Blackbeard shared his wealth with Eden, and set up a smuggling ring on Ocracoke Island.



✠ Anne Bonny Mary Read "Calico Jack" Rackham

At the age of 16, Anne Cormac ran off with James Bonny, a pirate who took her to New Providence. It was there she met "Calico Jack" Rackham. Rackham was bored with civilian life, and Anne Bonny was bored of her husband, so she and Rackham stole a sloop and were pirates together. On board one of the ships they took was Mary Read, who had become accustomed to living life on the seas as a man rather than on the land as a woman. She opted to stay with Calico Jack and Anne Bonny. Their ship was attacked in 1720, but the only ones who fought back were Anne Bonny and Mary Read. Rackham and the rest of the crew were too drunk to fight back. The men all were hanged the next day, but Anne Bonny and Mary Read were allowed to live, both claiming to be pregnant.



✠ Stede Bonnet

Stede Bonnet came from a well-to-do family and never lost his manners. Thus, he earned the nickname "The Gentleman Pirate" and was reportedly the only pirate in history to have paid for his own ship. Bonnet met up with Blackbeard, who said he'd get a pardon and that Bonnet should seek the same. When Bonnet came back to his ship, though, all his treasure and belongings were gone.

Bonnet never got to exact revenge on Blackbeard, as Bonnet lost a battle to the army of the governor of South Carolina and was hanged near present-day Wilmington, N.C.

Pirate terminology

- Pirates:** Classic high-seas robbers who owed allegiance to no nation. "Pirate" comes from Greek word "peirates," which means "to attack."
- Booty:** Something that is seized by pirates in violence.
- Buccaneers:** Pirates; privateers who operated in West Indies and off the coast of Central and South America during end of the 17th century.
- Corsairs:** Pirates who operated in the Mediterranean; raided ships along North Africa's Barbary Coast during 16th century.
- Fire in the hole:** Warning issued before the gunner set his match to a cannon's fire hole.
- Jacob's ladder:** Rope ladder used to climb aboard the ship.
- Landlubber:** Slow, clumsy person not skilled with ship life and more suited to life on land.
- Shiver me timbers:** A saying of shock, thought to have come from the sound a ship made when running aground or hit by a cannon blast.
- Sloop:** A small sailing vessel with a single mast set about one-third of the boat's length.

The Golden Age of Piracy

The years between 1689 and 1718 have been dubbed the Golden Age of Piracy.

1717: Earliest mention of the name **Blackbeard** appears in a newsletter.
 • **Hornigold** and **Blackbeard** plunder several ships in the Caribbean.

1718: **May 1718: Blackbeard** blockades Charles Town for one week.
June 1718: Blackbeard arrives in Bath Town, where he is pardoned by Gov. Eden.

1719: **August 1719: Calico Jack and Bonny** take a sloop named William.
Nov. 22, 1718: Blackbeard is killed near Ocracoke Island, N.C.

1720: **1720: Calico Jack's** ship is attacked on orders of the governor of Jamaica. **Bonny and Read** are the only ones not drunk and are the only ones who fight the soldiers on the ship.
November 1720: Calico Jack and all the men on his ship are hanged in Jamaica. **Bonny and Read**, both claiming to be pregnant, are allowed to live.

1721: **1721: Read** dies of hay fever while pregnant in a Jamaican prison. Bonny is sent back to Charles Town.

Sources: N.C. Maritime Museum; Terrance Zepke, "Pirates of the Carolinas"; S.C. Information Highway; www.kipar.org/resources/index.html University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; PiratesInfo.com

