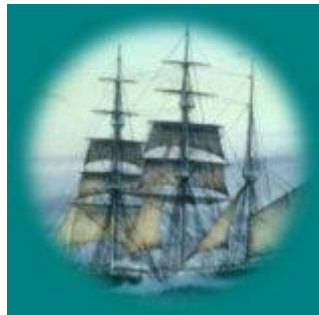


The Queen's Report

Update from the
***Queen Anne's Revenge* Shipwreck Project**
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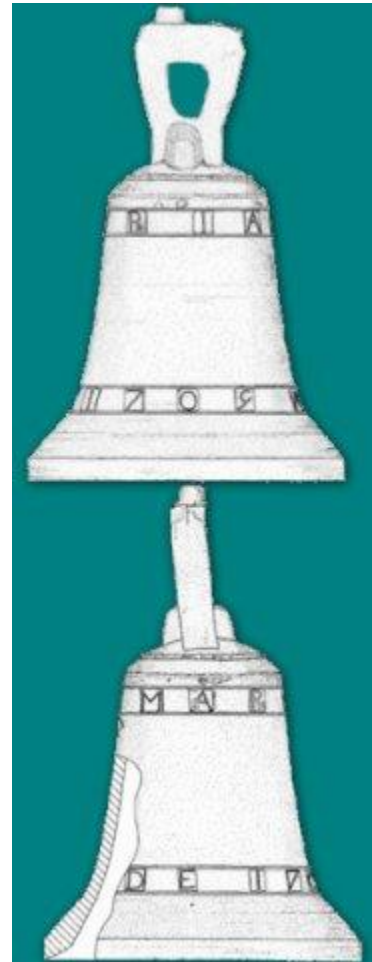
*I*n the fall of 1996, Mike Daniels, Director of Operations for Intersal, suspected he had found something important when he got major hits on his magnetometer while he and his crew were trolling in 23 feet of water just off the coast of Beaufort, N.C. He was right. The hits turned out to be cannons, lots of them, maybe as many as forty. When his divers brought up a bronze bell with a date of 1709 imprinted on it, Daniels knew he might have found the wreck of Blackbeard's flagship, the *Queen Anne's Revenge*, run aground in 1718.

What do we know about the bell? Like most of the artifacts recovered from the site so far, some things we know, and some things we don't -- the research is never-ending. Two years ago *QAR Project* Intern Chris Lange received information about the bell from two Spanish foundries, and this year volunteer Joseph Wilde-Ramsing continued the research by contacting additional Spanish scholars. Here is a brief summary of what they found:

Authorities agree that it is a rather ordinary bell for its time period, similar to hundreds made in Spain largely of copper and tin with some zinc, lead, nickel, and iron. There is little agreement on whether the bell was made for a ship, church, or government function and few clues on where Blackbeard might have attained it. As was the common practice, the bell's inscription reads: IHS MARIA (Latin for "Jesus, Our Savior, and the Virgin Mary"). Since there were some 300 bell casters in Spain during the 18th century, it will be difficult to determine who cast it or where and when. Many of them were itinerant, roving about from site to site wherever someone needed a bell, and apparently none of them kept very good records.

It has always been the custom of bell casters to imprint the date of the year in which the bell was made. Since its discovery, archaeologists thought the date was 1709. After recent consultation with our experts in Spain, however, it now appears that the date is actually 1705 with 5 being highly stylized and looking like a 9. While the correction in date doesn't change the possibility that it was on the *QAR*, which sank in 1718, getting expert analysis makes sure we have our facts right!

Tensions were high last month when *QAR* staff and music experts first rang the bell to determine its tone. This was part of a battery of tests and measurements requested by our Spanish colleagues. Very carefully (for fear it might break or shatter) the bell sounded for the first time since being on the deck of *Queen Anne's Revenge*. The bell survived, and its musical tone is a beautiful G. One of our experts, Dr. Francesc LLOP I BAYO, provided this nostalgic note concerning the sound of our bell:



"I suppose you can still hear its beautiful music. This cultural aspect is of utmost importance because it is the only sound of Blackbeard's ship that we can experience in its original totality. Bells are the only living music of the past because they always sound the same throughout the centuries".

Blackbeard's Last Minutes



Piracy was bloody work for the pirates and for the hardy men who went after them. British Lieutenant Robert Maynard, outfitted in Virginia with two sloops and fifty men with small arms but no big guns, set out to find Teach. They caught up with him in North Carolina. We thought you might find it interesting to read an eyewitness account of the last minutes of the life of Edward Teach (Blackbeard). It is excerpted from the Boston News-Letter, #776, February 23 to March 2, 1719, quoted in Blackbeard the Pirate by Robert E. Lee, used with permission of John F. Blair, Publisher (1-800-222-9796).

"...and when they came in hearing of each other, Teach called to Lt. Maynard and told him he was for King GEORGE, desiring him to hoist out his boat and come aboard. Maynard answered that it was him he wanted, and that he would have him dead or alive, else it would cost him his life; whereupon Teach called for a Glass of Wine, and swore Damnation to himself if he either took or gave Quarter.

"Then Lt. Maynard told his men that now they knew what they had to trust to, and could not escape the Pirates hands if they had a mind, but must either fight and kill, or be killed.....Teach fired some small Guns, loaded with Swan shot, spick Nails and pieces of old Iron, in upon Maynard, which killed six of his men and wounded ten.....Maynard and Teach themselves begun the fight with their Swords, Maynard making a thrust, the point of his Sword went against Teach's Cartridge Box, and bended it to the Hilt, Teach broke the Guard of it, and wounded Maynard's Fingers but did not disable him, whereupon he Jumpt back, threw away his Sword and fired his Pistol, which wounded Teach. (One of Maynard's men) struck in between them with his Sword and cut Teach's Face pretty much. (Another of Maynard's men) being a Highlander, ingaged Teach with his broad Sword, who gave Teach a cut on the Neck, Teach saying well done Lad, the Highlander reply'd, if it be not done well, I'll do it better, with that he gave him a second stroke, which cut off his head, laying it flat on his Shoulder, Teach's men being about 20, and three or four Blacks were all killed in the Ingagement, excepting two carried to Virginia: Teach's body was thrown overboard, and his Head put on the top of the Bowsprit."

QAR Question?

In this issue, the Queen's Report turns the table on its readers. There is no question this time. Instead, we invite you to send in any questions you have about the work of the *Queen Anne's Revenge Shipwreck Project*. If, in the opinion of the editors, it is the most thoughtful and

reflective, we will answer it next issue and list the name of the person who asked it. And of course, we will try to answer all reasonable inquiries. Send your questions to qar@ncdcr.gov.

Director's Report

A majority of our recent efforts at the *QAR Project* have focused on getting materials processed and prepared for conservation. This activity, which entails disassembly of concretions, is being conducted under the direction Underwater Archaeology Branch conservator Nathan Henry and *QAR* Technician Wendy Welsh, both from Fort Fisher. Using x-rays, digital images and scaled drawings these concrete-like nodules containing assorted artifacts are slowly broken down using pneumatic scribes and a lot of patience. The team are working from the simplest to the most complex concretions, which form around deteriorating iron artifacts. Long-time project volunteer (and now part-time employee) Illustrator Robbie Gerard provides conservators with detailed drawings of the more complex *QAR* concretions. They use these drawings to record their work and the objects they encounter. Often the iron objects around which concretions form are completely lost through corrosion and only a cavity remains. These cavities are cast with epoxy resin and after cleaning preserve an exact replica of the original artifact. Most concretions Nathan and Wendy have looked at so far hold the remnants of barrel hoops; but they have also found iron fasteners, shards of glass and ceramics, bone fragments, and several cannon balls.



On the computerized front, Bridgette Iris' persistent efforts and talented skills will provide the award winning *QAR* website with a new appearance this fall. The revised format will enhance public and scholarly benefit by facilitating access to the wide range of information that has and is being generated by the *QAR Project*. The website continues to be administered under the watchful eye of OSA Webmaster Mark Mathis. Karen Browning, a student from Carteret Community College's Internet Technology program, began a fall internship with the *QAR Project*. Karen's principle duties will be data entry into a multi-media database that has been developed for field information (images, illustrations, notes, sketches).

It is a difficult time all over North Carolina and many programs within state government are not able to accomplish all they had planned. The *QAR Project* has been affected both in terms of substantial cuts in last year's budget and by the reality that it is extremely unlikely any state funding will be provided the project in the coming years. Despite this scenario, the project will continue its operations to complete analysis and conservation of recovered artifacts and prepare for future



research at the site. This is made possible for several important reasons. First the Department of Cultural Resources and Secretary Lisbeth Evans have continued to make *QAR* one of their highest priorities and have actively sought to protect its budgets and personnel from reduction. Throughout the Department staffers are providing professional and administrative services. This is especially true of the Underwater Archaeology Branch under the direction of Richard Lawrence, who has redirected much of his and his staff's time to keep *QAR* afloat and more importantly, to help match federal funding. Over the next two years, this funding from the National Endowment of the Arts/Save America's Treasures grant will indeed enable us to save Blackbeard's Treasures. Quite possibly, though, the reason *QAR* has a bright future is because of the vast amount of grass-roots support we have received from many, many people from the Crystal Coast and throughout North Carolina to across the globe. With continued support efforts to explore the *Queen Anne's Revenge* will remain a classic adventure in science, history and folklore.

Next Issue

Look for our report on the *QAR* conservation facility being developed near Greenville in cooperation with East Carolina University's Program in Maritime Studies.