

ACTION OFF OCRACOKE

By WILBORNE HARRELL and HEYWOOD ZIEGLER, JR.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED

Jonathan Banks, a merchant of Edenton who died in 1765, left a diary which has recently been found. In the diary he tells of his adventures at sea and how he meets Blackbeard; how Blackbeard meets Anne Bonney and falls in love with her. He tells how Blackbeard accepts King's Pardon and pretends to settle down at his hideout on the Pasquotank; how the people of Carolina become aroused and how the Governor of Virginia sends Lieutenant Maynard to capture Blackbeard, when the Governor of North Carolina refuses to act. Blackbeard then flees to his rendezvous at Ocracoke. At Ocracoke, Jonathan Banks and Blackbeard go ashore under cover of darkness to learn what news they can of Lieutenant Maynard. Meanwhile, Maynard, having trailed Blackbeard to his lair, is lying outside Ocracoke Inlet. Learning what they can, Blackbeard and Banks again board ship and prepare for the terrific battle which they know will take place the next day, when Lieutenant Maynard sails through Ocracoke Inlet and comes to grips with the pirate craft. Blackbeard knows he will be fighting for his life.

As noon approached, we noticed undue activity aboard Maynard's ships. The die was about to be cast—Maynard was coming through! He was navigating treacherous shoal waters, and he had placed in the bow of each vessel a man with a sounding line. Maynard was working his way, inch by inch across the shoals.

Blackbeard lowered his glass and barked an order. Men sprang to ropes and guns, and others took up battle stations at strategic points of the deck. They were prepared to make it hot for Lieutenant Maynard, if he approached close enough to get his grappling hooks in the Revenge.

Bedlam broke loose aboard us. Now that the motley pirate crew knew that a fight really impended, they released pent up tension with yells and curses. Blackbeard's plan was to remain steady and allow Lieutenant Maynard to bring the fight to the Revenge.

Onward Maynard came, slowly but surely working his vessels through the Inlet. Apparently his failure to secure a pilot was not going to deter him, for with dauntless stubbornness he was inexorably bringing the matter

to a showdown.

Still more than a mile from us, Maynard abandoned his sails and prepared to approach by working his way slowly with sweeps. The wind had fallen, and it would have been difficult to maneuver to battle position under canvas.

The distance between us and Maynard closed to less than a mile. The Lieutenant could be seen among his men, directing the slow, steady movement of the sweeps.

Blackbeard remained quietly but tensely at his post. His eyes measured the gradually lessening distance that separated the Revenge from Maynard's flagship. In another few moments she was so close that her name, Pearl, could be read on her bow. We were slowly, but very slowly moving under half sail toward the Pearl. Maynard's men stood immobile, tensely waiting, with gun and pike and grappling hooks. They were ready.

So were we, aboard the Revenge. Suddenly Blackbeard lowered his glass and issued quick, staccato orders to his men. Sailors sprang to obey; gunners stood ready with lighted matches. Anne Bonney had disappeared from her position beside the rail—she had evidently sought safety below.

Blackbeard cupped his hands and hailed the approaching vessel. Maynard had now withdrawn his sweeps and was allowing the momentum of the tide to bring his craft to the Revenge.

"Ahoy! Aboard the Pearl! Come no closer or we fire!" Blackbeard shouted. His answer was a chorus of derisive shouts. Now the crews of both vessels were shouting and cursing. Further parley would be futile. Blackbeard shrugged and turned toward the forward gun crew, standing alert with smoking matches, and dropped his arm in signal. Then he drew his cutlass.

Instantly from the Revenge's forward battery billowed smoke and fire. We had fired the first round, a broadside that raked the deck of the Pearl.

Splinters and bits of wood and rope and canvas filled the air as our shot took telling effect. When the smoke cleared, we saw that the men who had lined the rail of the Pearl were seriously decimated. Some we knew were dead, and others were grievously wounded. But the remaining answered us with defiant yells and a fusillade of small arms fire, and sprang to the shrouds with cutlass and pike

in hand prepared to board us the moment our sides touched.

The sides of the Revenge and the Pearl touched, a straining, grating, ominous sound. Someone yelled, "Repel boarders!" and instantly the crews of both ships commingled in a vortex of sweating, yelling, cursing, fighting men, slashing with cutlass, stabbing with knife, and pistolling wherever they could. A haze of smoke and smell of burning powder filled the air. The cries of the wounded and groans of dying men were heard on all sides. Some died in their tracks, some threw down their weapons and cried for quarter. Others jumped overboard.

Amid the struggling mass of fighting men the red head of Lieutenant Maynard weaved back and forth, as he hacked and slashed with his sword and slowly worked his way toward Blackbeard.

Blackbeard was a raging maniac. A bloody cutlass in one hand, a pistol in the other, he fought; and as he fought he yelled obscene curses and shouts to and sundry about him. Men fell before him like flies and gave way to his furious onslaughts. His swinging cutlass had woven a ring of steel about him which no one could break down. Men died as they stood before him, or limped or dragged themselves from his raging fury. Blackbeard's black hair fell from his forehead in wild, unkempt array, giving a ferocious and terrifying aspect to his countenance. His black beard, which had mingled with blood and grime, had become matted and sticky. From the hand of a dying gunner Blackbeard snatched a still lighted match and stuck it in his beard; then from his coat he took several more matches and lighting them from the already lit match, stuck them also in his beard. The smoke and flame swirling about his face gave him an eerie, gruesome look, his face becoming a veritable dancing skull, a grinning death head.

The red head of Lieutenant Maynard broke through the ring of men about Blackbeard. For a moment Blackbeard paused in his savage ferocity and glared at Maynard. They stood, facing one another, the wild-eyed, black-maned Blackbeard and the grim, redheaded Maynard.

Then with a yell Blackbeard raised his cutlass and rushed at Maynard. Maynard neatly parried and his riposte thrust his blade through Blackbeard's coat. Steel rang on steel, blades flashed and thrust and parried. Stepping lightly and fighting warily the two men circled. A slash of Blackbeard's cutlass not quickly enough parried drew blood from Maynard's arm, which flowed down his hand and reddened his flash-

ing blade. Parry, thrust, strike, slash, back and forth they battled. Then like a striking snake the slim point of Maynard's rapier slipped under Blackbeard's guard and ran him through.

Blackbeard sank slowly to the deck, blood gushing out between his fingers as he instinctively pressed his wound, attempting to staunch the flow of red that was letting out his life. He coughed once, looked up at Maynard with amazed, fast glazing eyes, and then slumped to the deck—dead.

The battle was over. There was no more fight left in the remnants of the crew of the Revenge. They threw down their weapons and cried for quarter, which Maynard granted. Prisoners, they were shackled and

hurried aboard the Pearl, to be carried to Virginia and stand trial for piracy on the high seas. There was only one foregone conclusion to their collective fate—they would all be hanged.

True to his oath that he would bring back the head of Blackbeard, Maynard struck off the grisly memento and stuck it to his masthead. And in this manner he sailed from Ocracoke Inlet

And now, as I write these last words

in my diary, I come to the end of my narrative. I am sitting up in bed with a pillow at my back; a candle gutters at my elbow, lighting these pages as I write.

My life draws to a close, and I now make known here in this diary a disclosure which I have kept well, and have sedulously guarded throughout the years. Only one other man, the Governor here in Edenton, has known my secret; but for reasons best

(Concluded on Page Nine)

If You Need Money To Finance or Re-Finance Your Farm at Low Interest Rates... SEE

T. W. JONES

Edenton, North Carolina
Representative of One of the Nation's Largest Insurance Companies

TAKE UP TO 20 YEARS TO REPAY LOANS

DEPENDABILITY



WHEN the declaration of independence was signed, there were but few newspapers. People depended on the town crier to spread the tidings... which he never failed to do!

We can depend upon those whom we have served to spread the tidings of our un-failing dependability. Conscientious planning and expert supervision result in ceremonies of unmarred beauty.

WILLIFORD
Funeral Home
PHONE 231-EDENTON N.C.
THE HOME OF THE ALBEMARLE MUTUAL BURIAL ASSOCIATION



SCHENLEY

SCHENLEY DISTRIBUTORS, INC., LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY.
BLENDED WHISKEY.
65% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS, 86 PROOF
\$2.10 PT. \$3.40 4/5 qt.

IT'S BUILT FOR KEEPS!

IN the difficult years ahead, that new truck of yours will have to put out more—and take it longer. So there are many reasons you'll be wise to choose a GMC!

You'll get the constant dividend of GMC's greater pulling power — truck-built horsepower with greater sustained torque than other engines.

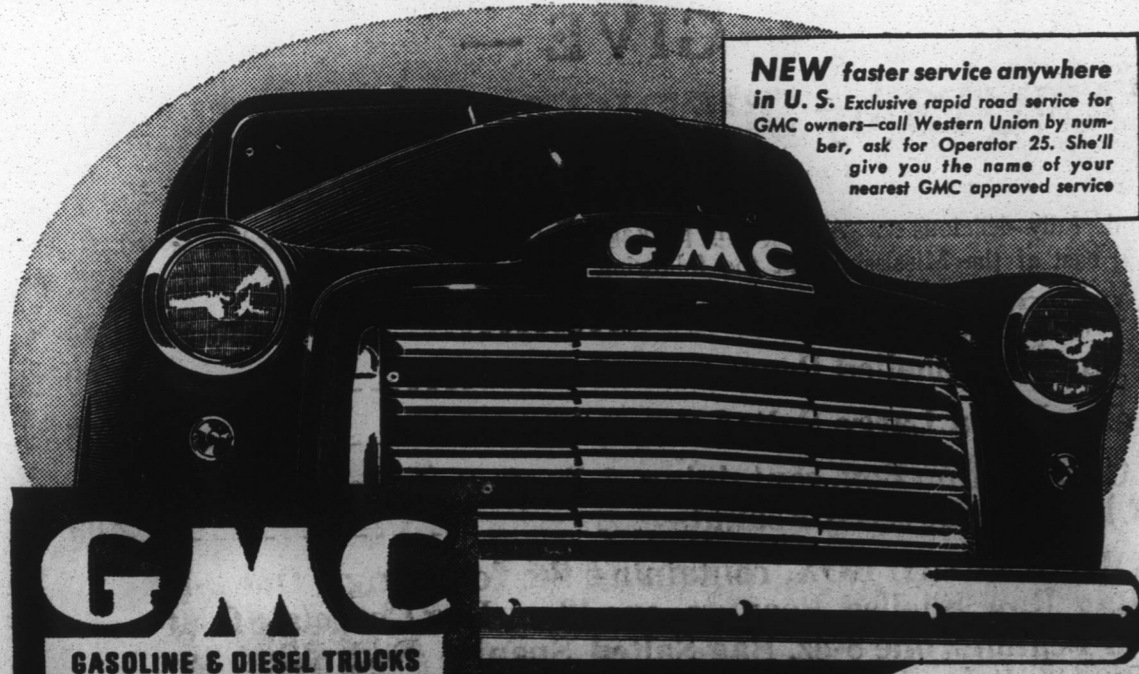
And with that power goes the greater stamina of GMC's rugged truck-engineered frame. In practically all models, from 1/2 ton up, you get such extra value features (at no extra cost!) as Synchro-Mesh transmission,

Tocco-hardened crankshaft, airplane-type bearings, and Lifetime Weathersealed cabs. They all tell you that longer life and lower maintenance are standard equipment with a GMC.

As your GMC dealer we are transportation engineers, specializing in selecting the exact combination of the right engine, axle, transmission and frame for your particular trucking job.

That's why there's a special GMC truck waiting for you. Come in, let us show you why GMC is your best buy for the years ahead!

NEW faster service anywhere
in U. S. Exclusive rapid road service for GMC owners—call Western Union by number, ask for Operator 25. She'll give you the name of your nearest GMC approved service



GMC

GASOLINE & DIESEL TRUCKS

1/2 TO 20 TONS

GM GENERAL MOTORS

Get a real truck!

LIGHT • MEDIUM • HEAVY MODELS • Made in the widest variety of engine-body-chassis combinations to fit every trucking need

Chas. H. Jenkins Motor Co., Inc.
105 to 109 E. Queen Street Edenton, N. C.
Phone 147

You'll do better on a used truck with your GMC dealer

SAVE REGULARLY

Saving is easier and more successful when it becomes a habit. It requires little effort to put aside small amounts regularly, and they soon mount up to a substantial total.

A Savings Account at The Bank of Edenton provides safe, convenient banking facilities and encourages systematic thrift. Open your account now and build it up with regular deposits.

BUY UNITED STATES SAVINGS BONDS

THE BANK OF EDENTON

EDENTON, NORTH CAROLINA

Safety for Savings Since 1894

MEMBER FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM
MEMBER FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION