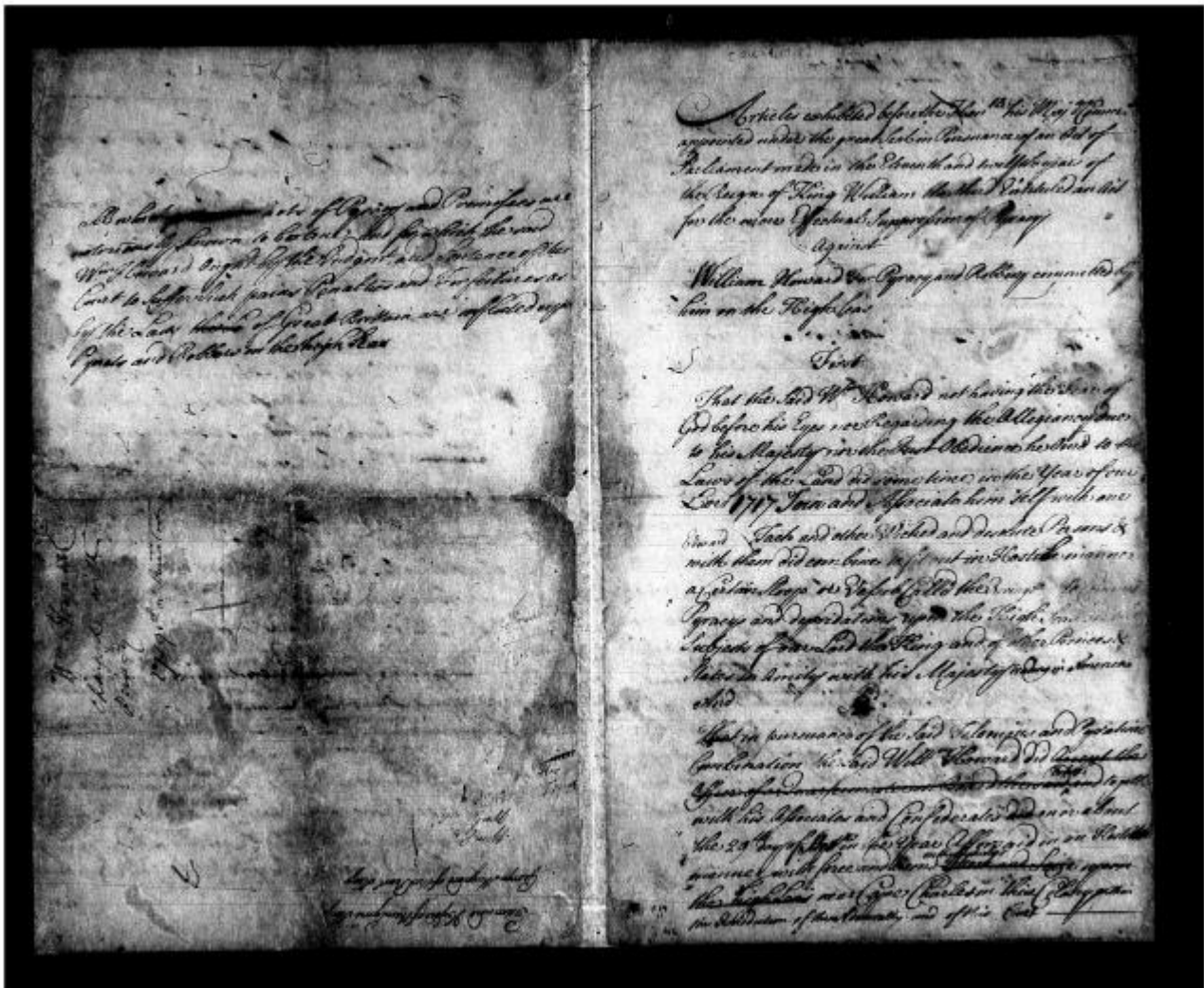
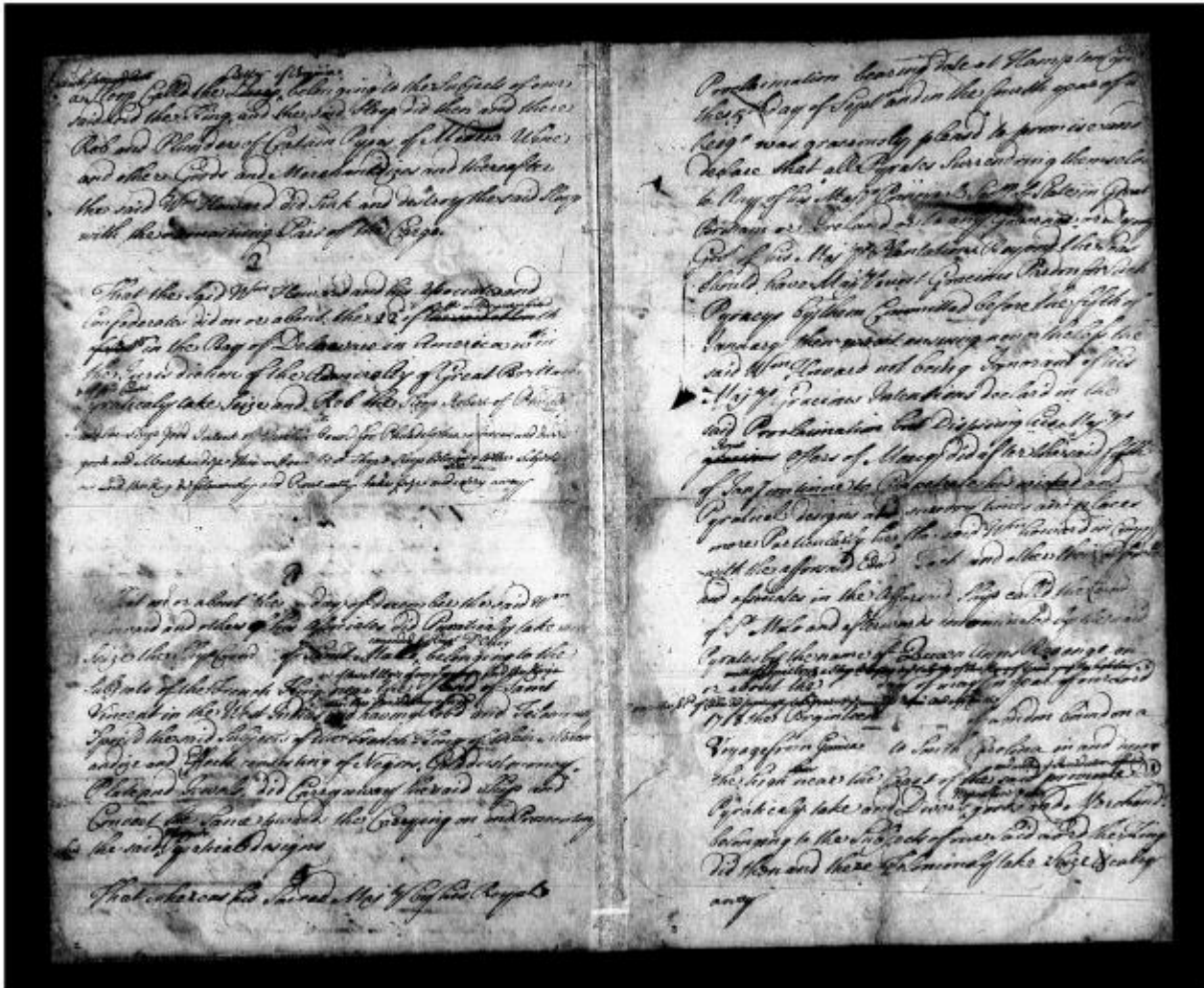


I recently received an email from historian Megan Dohm. Megan had been conducting research in the archives of Richmond, Virginia, and located the original 1718 indictment of William Howard, Blackbeard's quartermaster. She scanned the documents and sent them to me. Although I was familiar with a transcript of the documents, I had never seen copies of the originals. Megan is the author of "Long Way Around" (<https://www.longwayaroundseries.com/>), a thoughtful account of Blackbeard, piracy, and the connection to eastern North Carolina.

You can read a transcript of the indictment below the images (original spellings and inconsistencies retained).



Indictment of William Howard, 1718



Indictment of William Howard, 1718

Articles exhibited before the Hon^{ble} his Maj^{ty} Comm^r appointed under the great Seal in Pursuance of an Act of Parliament made in the Eleventh and twelfth years of the Reign of King William the third Entituled an Act for the more Effectual Suppression of Pyracy

Against

William Howard For Pyracy and Robbery committed by him on the High Seas

First

That the Said W^m Howard not having the Fear of God before his Eyes nor Regarding the Allegiancy due to his Majesty nor the Just Obedience he Ow'd to the Laws of the Land did some time in the Year of our Lord 1717 Join and Associate him self with one Edward Tach and other Wicked and desolute Persons & with them did combine to fit out in Hostile

manner a Certain Sloop or Vessel Call'd the Revenge to commit Pyracys and depridations upon the High Seas on the Subjects of our Lord the King and of other Princes & States in Amity with his Majesty trading in America

And

2.

That in pursuance of the Said Felonious and Pyratival Combination the Said Will^m Howard did together with his Associates and Confederates on or about the 29th day of Sept^r in the Year Afforesaid in an Hostile manner with force and Arms on the High Seas near Cape Charles in this Colony within the Jurisdiction of the Admiralty of this Court attack & force a Sloop Calld the Betty of Virginia belonging to the Subjects of our said Lord the King, and the said Sloop did then and there Rob and plunder of Certain Pipes of Medera Wine and other Goods and Merchandizes and thereafter the said W^m Howard did Sink and destroy the said Sloop with the remaining Part of the Cargo.

3.

That the Said W^m Howard and his Associates and Confederates did on or about the 22nd of Octo^r in the year aforesaid in the Bay of Delaware in America Wthin the Jurisdiction of the Admiralty of Great Brittain & of this Court pyrativaly take Seize and Rob the Sloop Robert of Philadelphia and the Ship Good Instant of Dublin both bound for Philadelphia aforesaid and divers goods and Merchandize then on board the s^d Ship & Sloop belonging to the Subjects of our Lord the King did feloniously and piratically take seize and carry away.

4.

That on or about the --- day of December the said W^m Howard and other of his Associates did Pyrativaly take and Seize the ship Concord of Saint Malo commanded by Cap^t D'Ocier belonging to the Subjects of the French King one of the Allyes of our Sovereign Lord the King near the Island of Saint Vincent in the West Indias within the Jurisdiction aforesaid and having Rob'd and feloniously spoiled the said Subjects of the French King of their Merchandize and Effects consisting of Negros Gold dust money Plate, and Jewels did Carry away the said Ship and Convert the Same towards the Carrying on and Prosecuting his the said Howards Pyratival designs.

5.

That whereas his Sacred Maj^{ty} by his Royal Proclamation bearing date at Hampton Court the 5th day of Sept^r and in the fourth year of his Reign was graciously pleased to promise and declare that all Pyrates surrendering themselves to Any of his Maj^{ty}s Principal Sec^{ys} of State in Great Brittain or Ireland or to any Government or Deputy Gov^r of his Maj^{ty}s Plantations

Beyond the Seas should have Maj^{ty^s} most Gracious Pardon for such Pyracys by them Committed before the fifth of January then next ensuing nevertheless the said W^m Howard not being Ignorant of his Maj^{ty^s} Gracious Intentions declar'd in the said Proclamation but Dispising his Maj^{ty^s} Royal offers of Mercy did after the said fifth of Jan^y continue to Perpetrate his wicked and Pyratival designs at sundry times and places more particularly he the said W^m Howard in Company with the afforesaid Edw^d Tach and other their Confederates and associates in the afforesaid Ship called the Concord of S^t Malo and afterwards denominated by the said Pyrates by the name of Queen Anns Revenge on or about the — month of April 1718 a Sloop belonging to y^e subjects of the King of Spain upon the high Seas near the Isl^d of Cuba did piratically take and seize y^e same did detain and upon the — day of May in year of our Lord 1718 the Brginteen — of London bound on a Voyage from Guinea to South Carolina in and upon the high seas near the Post of the said province and within y^e Jurisdiction aforesd did pyrativaly take and [seize] divers Negro Slaves & goods and Merchandise belonging to the Subjects of our said Lord the King did then and there feloniously take seize & carry away all which acts of Pyracys and premises are notoriously known to be true and for which the said W^m Howard ought by the Judgm^t and Sentence of this Court to suffer such pains Penalties and Forfeitures as by the Laws of Great Britain are inflicted upon Pyrats and robbers on the high seas.