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Massachusetts
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William Kidd

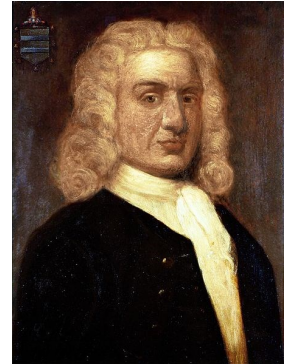
By Matt Landon

William Kidd is probably the most famous of the pirates to be captured in Boston. Today his legacy as a pirate is sometimes debated as he was sometimes reluctant to capture enemy vessels. Kidd was born in Scotland but moved to New York City after it came under English control. He integrated himself well into the population and became friends with three different governors, including Richard Bellomont. Bellomont, who was also governor of Massachusetts Bay and New Hampshire, was a supporter of Kidd along with King William and got Kidd his first letter of marque. A letter of marque allowed private ship-owners to attack vessels their nation was at war with, they were known as privateers. Kidd did well during his time as a privateer, capturing an enemy ship off of the New England coast.

Kidd then was asked by Bellomont to track down other pirates and was given a new ship, the *Adventure Galley*, and money from prominent English nobles. Kidd set sail and rounded the Cape of Good Hope to enter the Indian Ocean. The voyage did not turn out well with Kidd not finding any pirates and his crew threatening to mutiny, they realized he purposely didn't chase ships. Kidd eventually realized he would have to attack a ship soon. The ship he chose was an Armenian registered ship, the *Quedagh Merchant*, leaving India with French passes and protection from the French Crown. Its captain was English though and when Kidd found out he wanted to give the plunder back but his crew refused. They said that since the ship had French passes then it counted as an enemy. The owner of the ship was the Mughal emperor and he complained to the East India Company who relayed the information to England. When the news of the capture found its way to England they branded Kidd a pirate for his capture of a fellow Englishman.

The *Quedagh Merchant* was renamed the *Adventure Prize* and Kidd sailed both ships to Madagascar. Most of Kidd's crew abandoned him here for other pirate captains, so Kidd burned the *Adventure Galley* and sailed for New York with 13 loyal crew members. Kidd sailed back to New York to see Bellomont in the hopes of getting his support, he also buried some of his treasure in hopes it would be a bargaining chip. Bellomont, due to the Crown pushing harder against piracy, decided to save himself and trick Kidd. While in New York, Kidd received a message to go to Boston, where Bellomont currently was residing, saying that he could get clemency there. When he got there he was arrested and sent to jail under the governor's orders, Bellomont now completely against pirates. Since at this point he could not be tried in the colonies, after one year in prison he was sent to London where he was tried before the Admiralty Court.

Kidd was tried for murder and 5 counts of piracy and was found guilty, his Whig backers, being embarrassed, withheld information that might have saved him. Kidd was hanged on May 23, 1701 for being a pirate and his body was gibbeted and placed over the Thames river. Kidd left a legacy that is hard matched by most other pirates of his era. He has left many treasure hunters in his wake looking for the treasure that he supposedly buried on islands along the North American coast. His trial has also been called into question because evidence that could have helped him was suppressed. Kidd is one of the pirates that we use to create our image of them today as swashbuckling heroes of the poor. His buried treasure was used as inspiration for the book *Treasure Island*.



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Nathaniel P. Banks

By Matt Landon

Nathaniel Banks was a Governor, Congressman, and soldier during the 1800's. In 1816 he was born in the town of Wal-tham, Massachusetts and from the beginning had a special talent for debating. He became a member of the Democratic Party at a young age and gave speeches for the party in the state. He tried running for the state legislature but was defeated so instead he got a job, through his acquaintance with a Massachusetts congressman, with the Port of Boston. From 1844-1849 he held this post until there was a political change and he was forced out. He then again tried running for the legislature and this time was successful. He was elected as a member of the Democratic Party with an alliance from the Free Soil Party. The Free Soil Party was active from 1848-1854 and was made up of anti-slavery politicians from the Democrat and Whig parties. He was elected Speaker in 1850 when the coalition also got control of both chambers and the Governor's office. He served as speaker for two years and this gained him credibility within the party. In 1852 he decided to run for Congress.

Banks sought a seat in the House of Representatives in the 1852 election as a Democrat but was more abolitionist than they would like so he lost some of their support. It was the Free Soil Party votes that gave him a narrow victory in the election. He was a member of the committee on military affairs when he voted against the Kansas-Nebraska Act even though he was a Democrat. Soon after this he switched parties to the American Party, which was known by its more common name as the Know-Nothing party. This party was known for its aggressive anti-immigration policies but Banks did not support many of the measures. Banks was elected to chair the new Republican Party which consisted of anti-slavery politicians from other parties. In 1855 when the Democrats lost control of the House of Representatives Banks was elected Speaker of the House. He is officially recognized as being a member of the Know-Nothing party. His support was from his party and the opposition party which made him the first coalition speaker in United States history. He served in this position for two years and in that time assisted with the investigation into the caning of Charles Sumner and helped put anti-slavery politicians into official positions. In 1857 the Democrats regained control of the House and Banks was no longer Speaker.

In 1857 Banks chose to run for Governor of Massachusetts against the incumbent, Henry Gardner. Banks got support from the Republican Party although many did not like how moderate of an abolitionist he was. Even so he won the election comfortably and took office in 1858. During his time in office he removed a judge who was responsible for upholding the fugitive slave law which Massachusetts did not follow and instead protected runaway slaves. The previous governor refused to sign for his removal twice and Banks got a lot of support for doing it. The support gave him an easy reelection in 1858. His election in 1859 relied on two issues. One was the raid on Harpers Ferry which Banks did not support and most of the state didn't as well. They were not ready for the union to be divided. Future governor John Albion Andrews did support this action measure. The other was signing a bill that banned immigrants which got him support from his party but republicans didn't like it because they relied on immigrants. Banks, with the help of these actions, was elected governor again. He did not run again because he made a bid for president which failed. His pick to succeed him as governor, Henry L. Dawes, was also not elected and Andrews was elected governor.

When the American Civil War broke out in 1861 Banks was made a political Major General by Abraham Lincoln. He had no military training but could be relied on for his connections in the government. Banks did not do very well in his time in the Union Army. He held commands in the Shenandoah Valley Campaign, Northern Virginia Campaign, the siege of Port Hudson, and the Red River campaign. After the last campaign, Ulysses S. Grant wired the government for Banks removal from command. He also was in charge of New Orleans in 1864. He eventually resigned in 1865 because his command was taken over by someone with a higher military rank although he still had political precedence. When he resigned he went back home to Massachusetts.

Banks again decided to run for Congress and was elected in 1865, defeating incumbent Radical Republican Daniel W. Gooch. While his election was smooth many of the Massachusetts Republicans were radicals who didn't like his moderate views and often in Congress he had to vote with the radical faction to stay in his seat. During this run he chaired the foreign affairs committee. He also was a big supporter of Manifest Destiny and wanted the United States to annex British Canada. This proposal was defeated and gave him a negative reputation in Canada. He was also heavily involved in the purchase of Alaska from Russia. In 1872 he changed his party affiliation to Liberal-Republican and tried to get Horace Greenly the nomination for president. He did not like that the Republican Party was moving away from labor which is what most of his constituency was. While campaigning he lost his seat in the house to Gooch. In 1873 Banks tried to start a railroad venture but failed so he ran for the Massachusetts State Senate and won. He worked on labor reform while there. In 1875 he was elected to Congress again for two terms but the Republican Party found him unreliable due to his party switches. He served as a United States Marshal for Massachusetts from 1879-88 and was then elected to Congress for a final term. He resigned in 1891 because of failing mental health and died three years later in 1894.

Banks was well respected for most of his career. He was elected to congress in four different stints and served in both chambers of the Massachusetts legislature. His main criticism was that he changed his political party too often and that he was moderate on certain issues that the Republicans pushed for.

