

Barti Ddu The pirate, 'Barti Ddu', was born in Casnewydd Bach, Pembrokeshire in 1682. His original name was John Roberts. His father was a poor farmer and John went away to sea when he was 13 years old. He was a sailor on a ship that carried slaves from Africa.



The ship, The Princess, was taken by another Welsh pirate, Hywel Davies, in 1719 and John Roberts joined the other pirates on his ship. From now on, John Roberts's new name was Bartholomew Roberts or Barti Ddu. The name means Black Bart, as he had thick black hair.

Soon after this, Hywel Davies, the captain, was killed. The other pirates trusted Barti Ddu as he was a good sailor and he was chosen as the new captain of the ship.

Over the next four years, Barti Ddu became the bravest and most successful pirate. He led the other pirates to attack and to steal treasures from the coasts of Brazil, America and Canada and also across the Atlantic Ocean to Africa.

They took a French war ship that had 52 guns aboard. This ship was called 'The Royal Fortune' and this became Barti Ddu's main ship.



Other sailors in the Atlantic and Carribean Sea feared Barti Ddu and his men. Boats from many countries were on the look-out to try and capture them.

One evening in 1722, as they were celebrating another loot, a British ship, the HMS Swallow, trapped Barti Ddu's ship and he was shot and killed as he stood on the deck.

He was buried at sea by the other pirates. Having lost their leader, the rest of the crew surrendered soon after. After the trial, 54 pirates were hung, 37 of them were given other punishments and 74 were found not guilty.

Although Barti Ddu lived a life of attacking other ships and stealing, some believe that he made the most of his life after very hard beginnings as a sailor on a ship carrying slaves.

Did You Know?

- Barti Ddu spoke Welsh.
- Barti Ddu created a code for pirates. All the treasure and loot was to be shared equally between them. Also, they were not to attack women or steal from them.
- Barti Ddu dressed very smartly in colourful clothing. He wore red breeches and jackets and often had a flamingo feather in his hat



Fascinating Fact

- Barti Ddu was a Christian. He chose not to drink alcohol and loved drinking tea

Can you answer the questions about the story

Where was Barti Ddu born?

What was Barti Ddu called as a young child?

What age did Barti Ddu go to sea?

What is the meaning of his name?

How do you think you would have felt as a young boy going to sea?

Why do you think that the pirates chose Barti Ddu to be their captain of their ship?

What countries did Barti Ddu and his pirates attacked?

Fill in the missing words.

Barti Ddu dressed very _____ in _____ clothing.

He wore _____ and jackets and often had a _____ feather in his hat.