

Important Note

This biography is written for people who know nothing about Assassin's Creed in mind. Stuff is oversimplified, details are skimmed over, and stuff like that. It's the bare bones essentials written in an accessible way.

Early Life

"Soon you will begin training with this sword. There is much for you to learn, Haytham, not only about the steel in your hands, but also the steel in your heart." -

— Edward Kenway to his son, Haytham.

Haytham Kenway was born at the tail-end of 1725 in London to Edward and Tessa Kenway. His father made his name as a pirate who later joined the Assassins, and his mother was a fierce noblewoman who defied her family's wishes to not wed the unruly Edward. Haytham also had a half-sister by Edward called Jennifer.

For a few years: The family lived comfortably in a private mansion in London funded by Edward's private fortune. Haytham was trained at a young age by his father to fight and fend for himself in the hope that one day he'd be an Assassin. Yet the family would be undone.

Reginald Birch was a friend and business partner of Edward's. He was also a member of the Templar Order. Something Edward was unaware of. The Templar was hoping that he could uncover badly needed secrets from Edward. But he never gained that trust. Eventually, Jennifer overheard a conversation between Birch and one of his associates that she told Edward about.

Edward—suspicious about what Jennifer heard—confronted Birch and came to believe he was untrustworthy. As a result the Templar was cast out from his inner circle. In response: The infuriated Birch arranged for mercenaries to kill the Kenway family so he could take possession of Edward's private journal and an ancient amulet in the former pirate's possession. Edward was killed. Jennifer was kidnapped and sold to slavers. Tessa survived after Haytham killed one of the attackers despite only being ten. Birch then arrived at the last moment under the guise of mending fences and killed one of his own men to frame himself as a saviour.

Shocked by her son's deeds: Tessa agreed to leave Haytham in the care of Birch. Haytham was dead set on finding his lost sister and Birch—being the one who sold Jennifer—kept that fact hidden and agreed to help Haytham so he could gain the boy's trust and indoctrinate him into the Templar Order as a promising new member.

Before I get into the rest of Haytham's life, here's a basic explanation for the Assassins and Templars.

In essence: The Templars seek to impose order upon humanity and the Assassins fight against them. They believe in peace through freedom and in the rights of an individual to do as they wish regardless of the consequences. The Templars believe that humanity as a

species is too flawed to be trusted with their own survival and destiny unless controlled under strong leadership.

Neither side is perfect. They've both got shady histories where the lives of innocents have suffered. The acts of the Assassins often lead to chaos or other unintended consequences. The plans of the Templars lead to oppression and authoritarianism. Neither are entirely good or evil. They are both extremists who believe their way is the only way. Though generally, the Assassins fight for the freedom of the people against the machinations and plots of the Templars.

There's also stuff about precursor civilisations and superpowered artifacts. In essence the Templars try to find and use those tools to impose their will and the Assassins do their best to hide or destroy them as they believe the artifacts are too dangerous for humankind.

Early Templar Career

"I am an expert swordsman and I am skilled in the business of death. I take no pleasure in my skill. Simply, I am good at it." — Haytham Kenway.

During his quest to find his sister: Haytham was fully indoctrinated into the Templar Order and he truly believed in their merit and the intentions of their ideals. He became a charming but ruthless killer. Though back then he wasn't cruel or cold unless it was necessary. He essentially knew what he did was brutal but he still believed in trying to be a decent person.

During those years Haytham travelled across most of Europe and met dozens of characters. One of them was a British Officer and Templar called Edward Braddock. For his help in trying to find Jennifer: Haytham befriended Edward and the two men were as close as brothers, but over time Braddock's poor conduct and violent disregard for civilian lives pushed Haytham away from him.

By 1754: Haytham was a respected and trusted member of the Templar Order who had helped the Templars uncover the existence of a precursor storehouse in the American Colonies. As a result of that Haytham was tasked with building a new Templar Rite in the colonies with the mission of finding the storehouse. Haytham agreed and he set sail with a list of potential recruits.

In The Colonies

Haytham arrived in the city of Boston and was immediately met by the British Officer Charles-Lee. Charles was somewhat sycophantic and not yet a fully-fledged member of the Templars, but over time he earned Haytham's trust and joined the Order as the Grand Master's right-hand man.

From 1754 till 1755: Haytham recruited those recommended to him by Birch. They were essentially a collection of outlying but influential figures that formed a mixture of true believers and corrupt officials looking to enrich themselves by working for the Order. They formed a small but highly effective cabal of individuals.

In his quest to find the storehouse Haytham looked to the Native Americans. He essentially believed that if anyone would know of a lost site like that it would be them. He freed a captured group of Natives being held in a British Fortress before they were sold as slaves. One of them was a woman called Kaniehtí:io (Ziio for short). She essentially agreed to help Haytham if he killed a British General trying to remove her people from their lands.

That General happened to be Braddock. Though by now Haytham had no issues with killing his old comrade. The Templar stole the uniform of a Redcoat and ambushed Braddock during a small skirmish. Haytham left believing he had taken the life of the General. Ziio kept her word and took Haytham to the storehouse. Though he was unable to access it. Ziio comforted him as frustration gripped him and the night ended with the two sleeping together in the cave housing the entrance.

For a few weeks: Haytham and Ziio were happy. But Ziio would later overhear Charles-Lee informing Haytham that Braddock had finally died of his wounds. Ziio came to the conclusion that Haytham had lied about killing Braddock and she immediately ended their relationship. They would never see each other again and Haytham wouldn't learn of her pregnancy or their child: Ratonnhaké:ton (who'd later be given the name of Connor).

Finding Jennifer

"What you did is a corruption of everything I believe, and do you know why? You did it not with the application of our ideals but with deceit. How can we inspire belief when what we have in our heart is lies?" — Haytham while confronting Birch over his lies.

From 1755 till 1758: Haytham left the colonies after finding a lead on Jennifer's location. He eventually found his sister and she unveiled the truth of Birch's selling of her and his now obvious manipulation of Haytham.

The family confronted Birch and he defended his deeds as necessary for the greater good. Then followed a small fight which saw Birch die and Haytham injured. It took Haytham four months to recover from his wounds. Jennifer went away to live in the old family home while Haytham returned to his duties in America. The two would occasionally write to one another, but aside from their shared trauma they didn't have much to discuss.

The entire affair hollowed Haytham out. He fell into a spiral where he became more ruthless and devious than he'd ever been before. Gone was the charm and the attempts at trying to seem upright. Now existed an open schemer and killer who'd do whatever it took to advance the plans of the cause he was still loyal towards. Haytham was not unaware of his own decline as he wrote about it in his private diary. But despite being shocked at his own actions: He didn't really try to change himself.

Haytham was simply broken by that point.

Destroying The Colonial Assassins

For the next few years Haytham relentlessly pursued and crushed the Assassins in the Americas. His cause was greatly aided after he recruited a former Assassin by the name of

Shay. Shay was concerned that his old comrades were inadvertently causing precursor temples to send out vast earthquakes that levelled entire cities as a consequence of their endless quest to find said sites. Since they weren't willing to give up their pursuit: Shay turned to the Templars to stop them in order to save lives.

It was during this time that Haytham came across an Assassin named Adéwale. An old friend of Edwards. The two shared words during a naval fight. Adéwale claimed his father would be ashamed of what Haytham became, and Haytham replied that his father had no sense of shame. Shay used the fight to ambush and kill Adéwale.

In 1760: The Colonial Brotherhood was nearly destroyed after a fight out in the Arctic—where one of the precursor sites was located—but one of the Assassins, Achilles, was deliberately left alive. Shay wished for Achilles to survive as they used to be close, but he framed it as a warning symbol for future would-be Assassins. Haytham relented but only after crippling Achilles. By 1763: The last of the Colonial Assassins were defeated.

American War Of Independence

By 1770: The American Colonies were on the verge of declaring independence from the British Empire. Haytham's and the Templar's plans were to aggravate the situation into an open conflict so they could hijack the rebel's cause and make a new country for the Order.

By that point in time Connor had become a young man and had begun his training under the aging Achilles to become the first of a new breed of Assassins. Connor was looking to find his father but also to find Charles-Lee as Haytham's right-hand man had destroyed his village without Haytham's knowledge or consent. The incident also caused the death of Ziio. Though the person who gave the orders for the attack was George Washington. Lee was following them due to his military duties and not because it was the will of the Templars. Though Connor didn't know that and collectively blamed the Templars.

After becoming aware of a new assassin being active: Haytham and his allies met to discuss the matter. It was during that conversation where Haytham learned of the attack he was never told about and Ziio's death. He started to accurately suspect that the new Assassin (Connor) was in-fact his child. An intriguing but terrifying and complex situation for Haytham to grapple with.

In 1778: Haytham arranged for the assassination of George Washington so that Charles-Lee could step in as the leader of the rebel forces. Unfortunately, the plan was thwarted by Connor, who alerted the authorities. Unjustly and unfairly: Connor was implicated in the plot and sentenced to death while the actual assassin was let off the hook thanks to his Templar connections. Haytham was the one who freed his colleague from prison, and after getting a good look at Connor's face, he could see the resemblance between them. Confirming his theory.

Haytham was originally intent on letting Connor be hanged as he was still an enemy. But at the last moment he had a change of heart and threw a knife from the crowd that cut the rope around his son's neck. Connor broke free and once again saved George Washington's life

from the assassin by killing him. The assassin was the first of many Templar leaders Connor would kill.

Later in 1778: Haytham was hunting down a member of the Order who had betrayed the cause. He learned that Connor was also hunting the traitor for his own reasons. The two agreed to a truce and to work together for the time being against a common foe. Something which Haytham did so he could get to know his son. Over the next few months the two would work together and argue the merits and differences of their two sides. Connor was also of the opinion that the Templars were working to keep America within the Empire, which was patently untrue as Haytham tried to explain to no avail.

They eventually tracked down the traitor, who was a doctor by the name of Benjamin Church, and Connor's private ship tailed the fleeing Doctor's vessel. They eventually boarded Church's ship but Haytham got a head start in the hunt for Church. Connor went to Church's quarters and overheard his father slowly beating the traitor to death as he lamented how his friend had betrayed everything they believed in. Connor eventually stepped in and quickly finished off Benjamin.

After that: The two kept their alliance alive by working together to aid the rebels under Washington. Though Haytham was still looking for ways to replace the General. It was during a final meeting between George, Connor and Haytham that Haytham found proof of new orders from Washington to destroy Connor's tribe, who George believed were aiding the British. Haytham immediately told Connor and also informed him about George's complicity in the first strike on his people. The one that had led to Ziio's death. Connor was infuriated and disgusted at George's actions, but he also saw that Haytham had deliberately withheld that information until this right moment in order to manipulate him. Connor thus decided to cut ties with both of them.

In slight fairness to Haytham: He only withheld the original orders sent out by Washington.

The End

'Don't think I have any intention of caressing your cheek and saying I was wrong. I will not weep and wonder what might have been. I'm sure you understand. Still, I'm proud of you in a way. You have shown great conviction. Strength. Courage. All noble qualities. I should have killed you long ago.' — Haytham's final words.

By 1782: Connor had killed half a dozen of Haytham's allies in his quest to find and kill Charles-Lee. Haytham was deeply concerned about Charles' life as he was still the only person who could theoretically replace Washington once the General was finally killed. Haytham thus sent Lee away for his own safety and admitted that Connor was indeed his son in their final conversation.

The two men got into an argument about Haytham's failures as a Grand Master and Lee's ambitious arrogance. They both blamed each other for creating Connor. Haytham for being his actual father and Lee for inadvertently igniting Connor's lust for revenge due to Ziio's death. The two finished the argument by forgiving one another and Lee went into hiding for his own safety.

Later on: Fort George was attacked by a French fleet that supported the rebels' cause. Connor entered the Fort to find Lee and was injured by cannonballs in the process. He eventually came across his father and the two engaged in one final duel. As they fought: The two once again engaged in a verbal fight about their two sides, and Haytham tried his best to explain that his people weren't directly responsible for the traumas of Connor's life.

The fight ended when Haytham pinned Connor to the ground and held them there by his throat. One last time he cursed the Assassins and explained that the resurrection of the Templar Order was always inevitable. Connor was able to raise a hidden blade to his father's throat and struck him with a lethal blow. Haytham died saying he didn't regret his choices in life but that he was proud of his son and that as a Templar: Haytham should have killed Connor long ago. He then dropped dead.

There's a fan-theory that states that Haytham—who was far more experienced than his son and not injured by cannonballs—let Connor kill him in their duel. Haytham was increasingly torn between his loyalties in his older years and could never bring himself to kill Connor. It was mostly because of Haytham's unwillingness to kill his son that Connor got away with bringing down the Colonial Rite. But Haytham was also too committed to his beliefs to betray his order no matter how much he loved Connor.

In the end he allowed Connor to kill him as it was the only way to fulfil his contradictory loyalties as Connor's father and as a Templar. Haytham didn't kill his own son and he died doing his duties for his Order. During all of this time: Haytham wrote a journal for Connor to find so that he could explain his side. Connor later read it.