

## CHAPTER III

### THE FAMILY OF ADAM BLAND OF LONDON:

#### SECOND GENERATION

##### Adam's Marriage to Joan Atkyns

Adam Bland married Joan Atkyns, daughter of William Atkyns, a resident of St. Gregory's Parish in London. He must have married her about 1551. No parish records are extant to indicate Joan's birthdate, though she was buried in St. Gregory's Parish on July 10, 1596. Circumstances in Joan's life, however, make it possible to approximate her birthdate. A study of published marriage records for contemporaries to Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns, by the modern historian Peter Laslett, indicates that the most frequent age of marriage for men was twenty-five, and for women, twenty-two. Laslett found the average (mean) marriage age to be about the same.<sup>1</sup> If Adam and Joan were married in 1551, and their ages came close to the average, Joan would have been born about 1528 or 1530. Was she? Admittedly, there is no way of knowing for sure, but there is another way of looking at it. Menopause for Elizabethan women ordinarily came earlier, at about age forty to forty-five, than for today's woman. It was also ordinary for women in Elizabethan times to bear children with regularity until menopause.<sup>2</sup> Certainly, this was plausible for Joan Atkyns. She had, by my estimate, thirteen children, with her last child, John, being

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Laslett, The World We Have Lost (London: 1965), pp. 83-84.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 81-89, *passim*.

born in 1572.<sup>1</sup> If John's birth marks the approximate time of Joan Atkyns' menopause, then we may reasonably say that she was born between 1527 and 1532. For purposes of reference, an approximate birthdate of 1530 for Joan is appropriate.

Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns lived all their married lives in St. Gregory's Parish, where all their children were born. The parish registers for St. Gregory's survived only from 1559 onward. Beginning in 1538, all parish priests and rectors were ordered to keep records of christenings, marriages and deaths or burials. Many London parishes complied immediately, though some lagged behind for several years. Whether St. Gregory's records were not begun until 1559, or antecedent records were destroyed in the great London fire of 1666, is uncertain. At any rate, information I provide about Adam Bland's family that precedes 1559 is deduced from evidence, but not conclusively proved. In reconstructing the family of Adam Bland, I will delineate the generations that followed his children through their settlement in Virginia. The actual settlement in Virginia is appropriately discussed in Chapters IV, V and VI.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Estimates of the number of Joan's children varies from genealogist to genealogist, ranging from twelve to fifteen.

<sup>2</sup> Information about Adam Bland's family is located primarily in St. Gregory Near St. Paul Parish Register, 1559-1667 (LDS Manuscript 10, 231); other Parish information is from the LDS Microfiche collection and from Harleian Society Publications Indicated by Parish. When parish records are not available, I used wills referred to in Henry Waters, Genealogical Gleanings, Vol. 1 (1901), pp. 812-815; hereafter referred to as Waters. Ralph Thoresby's Ducatus Leodensis (1715); The Bland Proby, Langhorne, and Catcher entries in the Visitation of London (1633); Charles Campbell, The Bland Papers (1840), pp. 145-149; The Richmond Critic, July 9, 1888, and Joseph Hunter, Familiae Minorium Gentium (1895), pp. 421-427. Nicholas Carlisle, Collections For a History of the Ancient Family of Bland (London: 1826) is invaluable. Other occasional sources will be cited fully when used.



The tendency of American genealogists interested in the Bland family to concentrate upon Adam's youngest son, John (1572-1632), and more particularly, John's youngest son Theodorick (1629-1671), has led to neglect not only of the fascinating story of Adam Bland's entire family, but also of potentially connecting tissue to what appear to be other, unrelated Bland families in colonial Virginia.

One of the major themes of this book will be to examine the evidence that could establish linkage between what now appears to be two primal but seemingly disparate families in 17th and 18th century Virginia. Certainly, no such examination can be successfully undertaken without delineating as carefully and accurately as one can, the multifaceted growth of Adam Bland's entire family. The balance of this chapter takes the reader through about six generations of Blands descended directly from Adam Bland and his father. In each case, I discuss, if possible, the birth and death of the child, and in the case of the men, their vocational life. Next, I discuss their marriage and the children they had in their turn, repeating the format for every generation. Before beginning, it may be useful to make several informational points:

First, our knowledge about this family, though it substantially adds to the interested researcher's knowledge, is fragmentary, derived from many disparate sources, and in many cases, constructed on the basis of evidentiary probability. What I say, or conclusions I reach, should not close discussion or inquiry about any family member. Indeed, I look upon this work as a beginning, really as nothing more than an outline to be filled in and modified by my own and other's subsequent research.

Second, a note for the casual reader about dates is appropriate. Until 1752, England observed the Julian calendar, in which the year began on Lady Day, March 25. Thus, any date that falls between January 1 and March 25, is identified by a diagonal: e.g., Adam Bland gained his freedom from the Skinner's Company February 1, 1549/1550. Calendar references without this aid are utterly confusing.

Third, parish registers only occasionally indicate the actual date of birth and death of an individual. Rather, baptismal, christening, and burial dates are listed. Absent better information, probate dates for wills is followed. Infrequently, however, probate of wills may provide no close approximation of a person's death. Peter Bland wrote his first will in 1615, but didn't die until after 1625.

Finally, a word about the name Bland. The venerable Thoresby first found the name mentioned in 1132:

But the Name of the Family, as a Monofyllable, is fo  
obfolete, that I remember not to have met with it,  
fave in Compofitions, where it fignifies yellow, or  
golden...If not originally from the Britifh Belin,  
eafily converted into Blin and Bland: Thus, Cuno-Beline...  
is as much as the Yellow or Golden-Prince...The Italians,  
by changing l into i (as is the Cuftom of their Country)  
render it Bionello...<sup>1</sup>

The name Bland was said to have originated in a hamlet geographically located in Westmoreland County named Bland. In early times, common men were often known by the town in which they lived, e.g., Robert of Bland. Subsequently, some class distinction was used by a French variation, e.g., Robert de Bland. Thus, some pre-sixteenth century Blands were known as de Bland. By the time Adam Bland moved

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<sup>1</sup> Thoresby, p. 93. The word also may derive from the German "Blenden" meaning loosely, "to shine or dazzle."

## MAP II

Ecclesiastical Map of London During the Tudor Stuart  
Period Until the Great Fire of London, 1485-1666

London Bridge crosses the Thames River.

Parishes are numbered 1-110. Parishes where the Bland family lived during this period are circled, and on this page are in parentheses.

Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns lived at St. Gregory's Parish Near St. Paul's Cathedral (33), and all their children were born there.

Peter Bland and Susan \_\_\_\_\_ started their married life at St. Gregory's, but later moved to St. Dionis Backchurch (25) and St. Peter's Cornhill (89).

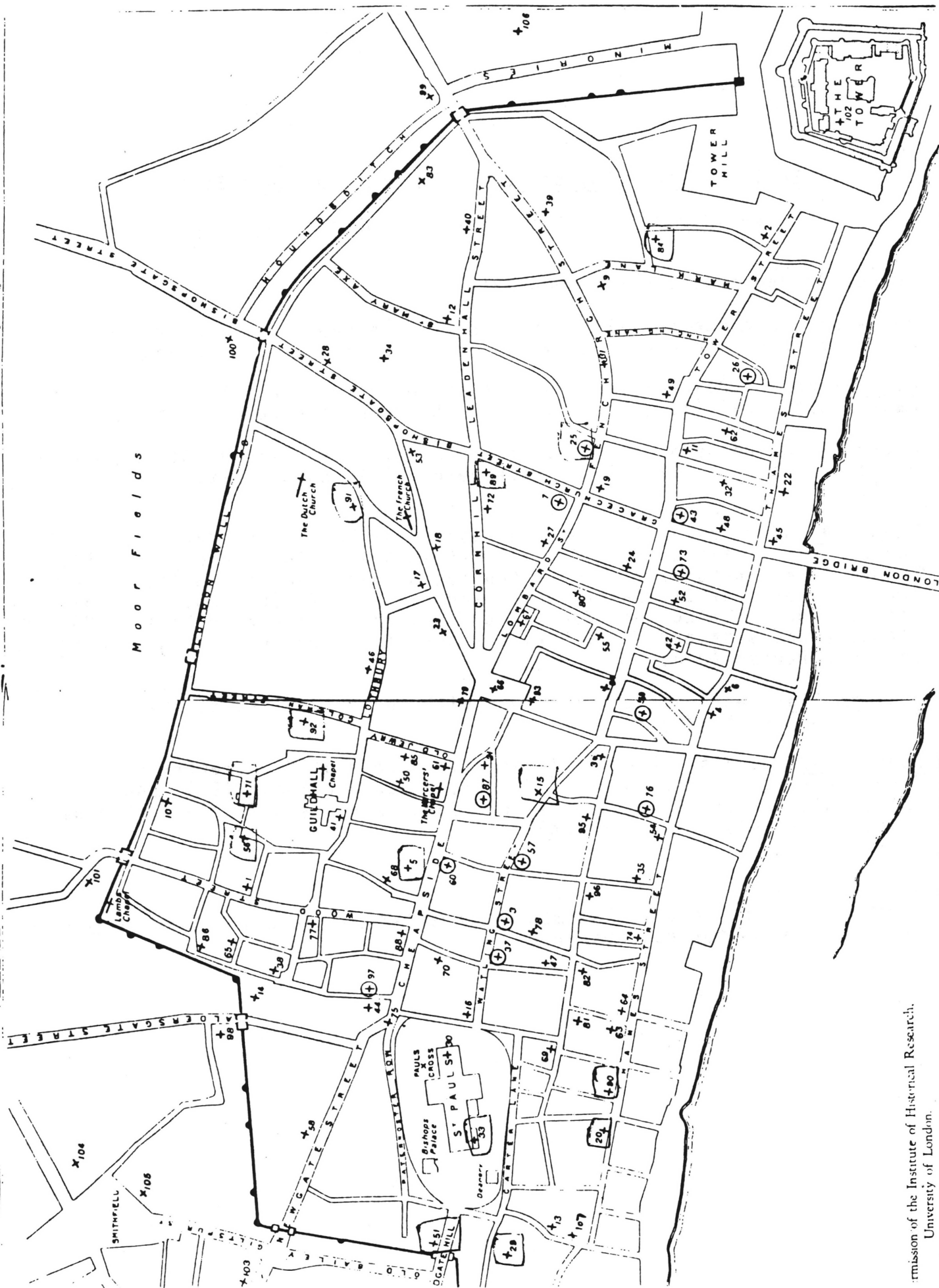
Thomas Bland married Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley at St. Martin's Within Ludgate (51). Elizabeth had been born at All Hallows Honey Lane (5). Thomas lived in Sundridge, Kent County, when he made his will, but he owned property at St. Benet, Peter and Paul Wharfs (90, 20). Thomas' son, George, married Anne Caunte at St. Anne's Blackfriar Parish (29). Thomas Bland's second wife, Mary Catcher Moody, was born at St. Peter the Poor Parish (91).

William Bland was married and lived with Judith Wood at St. Michael Bassishaw Parish (71).

John Bland and Susan Deblere lived alternately at St. Gregory's, St. Mary the Virgin Aldermanbury (56), St. Stephen Coleman (92), and St. Antholin's Parish (15). John's son, John, and his wife, Sarah Greene, lived at St. Olaves Parish (84).

Permission to reproduce this map was granted by the University of London, Institute of Historical Research.

18B.  
MAP II



to London, this practice largely had been discarded, and Blands were simply so spelled with a less frequent variant, Blande. Adam Bland and his children used Bland and Blande interchangeably. Settlers in Virginia, evidently enjoying their release from form and sometimes no doubt flushed with a lack of historical memory or simply illiterate, spelled the word Blann, Blan, etc. The most consistent and enduring spelling, however, has been Bland, which for purposes of simplicity in this book, is what I use.

Throughout this book, when discussing women who married Bland men, I will identify them by their maiden names. This is because there were a limited range of given names for men and women. It becomes extremely confusing at times in discussing men, but in that case is unavoidable. With respect to women, it is much clearer to indicate, for example, that the third generation discussed in this chapter, are children of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns. Subsuming the woman's name under Bland would in many cases complicate her identity. The reader will always understand, however, that among her contemporaries Joan Atkyns was known as Joan Bland after she married Adam Bland.

To summarize briefly, I have previously estimated that Adam Bland was born about 1528 and died in 1594. Joan Atkyns, his wife, was born about 1530 and died in 1596. They were married probably about 1551. By my reading of the evidence, Adam and Joan had thirteen children, including nine sons and four daughters.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thoresby, p. 93. Birthdates of the first four children are estimated, on the assumption that the first child would be born about a year from the date of marriage, and that a natural child spacing rythm of 18-24 months was established by the contraceptive effect of breast feeding.

Robert Bland: Third Generation

I believe that the first child and first son of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns was Robert Bland (third generation). He would have been born about 1552 and died sometime before 1559. Robert's very existence is problematical. First, there is no record of him in the St. Gregory's Parish registers, which as previously stated, began only in 1559. Second, small children did not figure prominently in adult consciousness. Thus, the Bland pedigree submitted to the Visitation of London for 1633 makes no mention of him. By that time, a child who had lived only briefly some eighty years in the past would hardly have been remembered. Nor is a Robert mentioned by Dale's Insert to Thoresby's work, or in Hunter's work. The possibility that there was a child named Robert was first mentioned by Charles Campbell's genealogical addition to The Bland Papers, a fragmentary record of letters, biography and miscellanea held by Theodorick Bland (1740-1790) and discovered somewhat fortuitously fifty years after his death. Campbell lists Robert as a first child of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns, as does an anonymous article in The Richmond Critic on July 9, 1888. Much of the latter article was borrowed from The Bland Papers. It should be remembered that information possessed by Theodorick Bland was probably passed down through his family, and thus it is probably at least contemporary to Thoresby's information (1715).

One would think that the question of whether a child ever lived or not, especially one who died in childhood (there is no trace of a Robert surviving to adulthood), is more or less a trivial issue. But the presence of a son named Robert, particularly a first son, could challenge the traditional name assigned to Adam's father. Thoresby

was the first to identify "Roger" Bland of Orton Parish, Westmoreland County, as Adam's father. Every other key genealogist has copied this information, which is not founded in any objective source, such as a parish register, but is strictly derived from literary tradition, i.e., Thoresby's Ducatus Leodensis.<sup>1</sup> It may well be that old Thoresby was deaf and misunderstood what Robert Dale, his source of information about the Blands, told him. Or perhaps the information Dale had passed on to Thoresby was wrong or had become garbled in the passage of time.<sup>2</sup> When extant evidence is brought to bear, one finds that in all the male names commonly used by Englishmen, Roger occurs very infrequently. Of all the Bland names listed in the Latter Day Saints collection, for London, Westmoreland and York County, Roger occurs only once (not the man in question). Robert, on the other hand, is used profusely. Another way of looking at the issue is to consider Elizabethan child-naming practices. Elizabethan couples took considerable pride in naming their children, especially first sons and daughters, for their parents or grandparents. With this in mind, the reader will notice on the following pages that many of Adam's grandsons were named Robert. None were named Roger, and Adam did not to my knowledge name any of his sons Roger. This suggests at least the possibility that genealogists, beginning with Thoresby, were wrong about the name of Adam's father, or that Roger (if that was his name) was such a scoundrel that neither his sons nor grandsons ever named a

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<sup>1</sup> Thoresby lived from 1658-1725.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Dale, who was Thoresby's source for the Bland family, was an in-law of John Bland (1668-1746), son of Theodorick Bland (1629-1671) and great grandson of Adam Bland. Thoresby gathered this information in 1712 at which time Adam Bland's father had been in his grave probably for upwards of 200 years.

single male child for him. As a matter of fact, Roger has never been used by any Bland that I know about to the present day.

What difference does this make? It appears that certain similar names, beginning with the London family, were used by both major American branches fairly consistently down through the 18th century, at which time American cultural forces supplanted the British and naming practices began to fragment. Robert is a name used frequently and repetitively by both branches of the Bland family in Virginia. Thus, the usage of Robert as the name of our first generation founder, rather than Roger, would supply a source for names used in later generations, and could be important in cementing a probable relationship between the two Virginia families.<sup>1</sup>

#### Jane Bland: Third Generation

Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns' second child and first daughter was Jane, or Joan (third generation). Again, confusion and uncertainty surrounds her name and order of birth. I place her as the second child, following the lead again of The Bland Papers and The Richmond Critic. It should be noted that Thoresby and the genealogists who copy him make her the child of William, who is identified as the oldest child, a logical inconsistency to be dealt with later. Thoresby appears to be correct in asserting that her name in the St. Gregory's record was transposed to "Mary" when she married William Hope on February 20, 1586/1587. She was probably born about 1554, and I have found no record

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<sup>1</sup> At the same time, there is no evidence, only deduction, to support a claim that Adam Bland's father was named Robert. Obviously, the reader must reach his own conclusion.



of her death. William Hope and Jane Bland had a daughter Joan, who is mentioned in Thomas Bland's will of 1617/1618 (Thomas was Jane's brother). She married a Robert Brawler. John Bland's will of 1627 mentions "My cousin, Robert Brawler, and his wife and daughter."<sup>1</sup> William and Jane also may have had a son, William, who was born in St. Gregory's Parish on December 30, 1591.

Peter Bland: Third Generation

The third child and second son of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns was Peter (third generation). It is probable that Peter was born about 1557 and died soon after June 27, 1625.\* He married Susan \_\_\_\_\_ about 1584 in St. Gregory's Parish. Peter and Susan lived out their lives and raised their family in St. Gregory's Parish where Susan was buried January 20, 1614/1615.

Like his father, Peter became a Skinner, and his rise through the company's ranks is fairly well documented. He was sworn to the freedom by patrimony on December 1, 1578,<sup>2</sup> meaning that he did not serve an apprenticeship, but simply bought into the company through a fee paid by his father or himself. His age may be estimated by the fact that he would have had to be twenty-one in order to practice a craft in London; thus, he could have been born no later than 1557. As a Skinner, he remained active in company business. Records show his commendation to the wardens of a young scholar for financial assistance in March 1600/1601.<sup>3</sup> He is also shown in company records as

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<sup>1</sup> Waters, Gleanings, p. 813.

<sup>2</sup> Cross.

<sup>3</sup> John James Lambert, Ed., Records of the Skinners Company of London: Edward I to James I (London: 1934), p. 281.

\* Peter's death may have precipitated the formulation of his brother John's will in 1627, five years before John died. See discussion pp. 26-33

having sponsored the apprenticeship of Thomas Bland, son of Thomas Bland of Essex County, from 1596 to 1605. and for taking up his own son, William, as an apprentice in 1607<sup>1</sup> (a service that was cut short by William's death in 1611). It is interesting that having entered the company through patrimony, Peter would have his own son serve an apprenticeship.

On May 8, 1594, Peter received an appointment as Queen Elizabeth's Skinner, succeeding his father.<sup>2</sup> His terms of employment were exactly the same as his father's. Peter evidently served as Skinner to King James also until 1611 when, as we shall presently see, he was replaced by his son-in-law for what must have been extraordinary reasons (Peter, as Adam before him, had been appointed to a life term). On March 9, 1602/1603, Peter, who was referred to in company records as "of the ancientest of the livery," leapfrogged a lower office of Renter Warden and took his place as one of four Assistant Wardens.<sup>3</sup> Peter advanced to Third Warden in 1610, to First Warden in 1614, and Master Warden in 1615.<sup>4</sup> In 1618, he was elected to the company's highest officer, Master Skinner.<sup>5</sup>

Peter Bland and Susan appear to have had three sons and three daughters, as follows:

Joan (fourth generation), first child and first daughter of Peter and Susan Bland, was born April 18, 1585, at St. Gregory's Parish.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> British Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth I, Vol. III (1591-1594), p. 502. Hereafter, references to the Domestic series will be noted CSPD, and references to the Colonial series will be noted CSPC.

<sup>3</sup> Lambert, p. 286, of letter, Veale to Charles Bland.

<sup>4</sup> Letter, Cross to Charles Bland.

<sup>5</sup> James Foster Wadmore, Some Account of the Worshipful Company of Skinners, Guild of Corpus Christi (London: 1902), p. 192.

Joan married Thomas Langhorne (date and place uncertain) and they appear to have had at least four daughters: Susan (who must have been born about 1607, for she is mentioned in John Bland's will of 1627 as being married to a man named Northers). A daughter, Joan, was baptized in St. Stephen Walbrook Parish on May 5, 1615, and Elizabeth was baptized in St. Gregory's Parish, June 28, 1616. The fourth daughter was named Frances. As previously indicated, Thomas Langhorne was appointed Skinner to King James I in 1611, succeeding Peter Bland, his father-in-law.

Peter and Susan Bland's second child and first son was Adam (fourth generation).<sup>1</sup> Adam was born at St. Gregory's Parish on September 5, 1586 and died there on July 18, 1597.

The third child, and second daughter of Peter and Susan Bland, was Susan (fourth generation). She was baptized at St. Dionis Backchurch Parish on October 29, 1587, "daughter of Peyter Blande, Skinner." She married John Marden in Surrey County, Battersea, on September 8, 1606. Marden died April 17, 1620, and the following September 27, Susan Bland Marden married Sir Arnold Herbert. She had by Herbert one child, William, born August 9, 1624. She is "The Lady Herbert" mentioned by John Bland in his will of 1627. Susan died on July 7, 1644 and was buried at Warfield in Berks County. Her second husband outlived her by five years and was buried near her September 30, 1649.

The fourth child, and second son, of Peter and Susan Bland was Robert (fourth generation) who was born on May 25, 1593 and christened

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<sup>1</sup> Note the naming pattern. The first daughter is named Joan, the first son, Adam.

at St. Peter's Cornhill Parish on June 3, 1593. He must have died young. There is no trace of a Robert in the key wills of Thomas Bland (1617) and John Bland (1627). Also, if he had lived, his father would likely have attempted to apprentice him in the Skinner's Company and some trace would have turned up in the records, but there was none.

The fifth child of Peter and Susan Bland, and their third daughter, was Judith (fourth generation) who was baptized at St. Gregory's Parish on April 27, 1595. She married Thomas Wilcox there on July 22, 1612. What happened to Judith Bland and Wilcox after their marriage is not known. Neither of them are mentioned in the will of Thomas or John Bland.

The sixth child, and third son of Peter and Susan Bland, was William. It is probable that he was born very close to Judith and that they were named for Peter's recently deceased brother William, who died in 1596, and his widow, Judith Wood Bland. Also, we know that he was apprenticed by his father in 1607 and he would have had to be between ten and fourteen to begin the apprenticeship. Given the birthdates of his siblings, Robert (1593) and Judith (1595), it is likely that he was born about 1596 or 1597. He was then a young boy of about fourteen when he was buried at St. Gregory's Parish on August 7, 1611.

### Three Keys and an Unlikely Knave: Peter

#### Bland and His Kinsmen

What follows should be read with a due sense of caution for generalizations constructed from incomplete facts. Yet one must view the last years of Peter Bland's life with a certain amount of poignancy. Peter lost all three of his sons in their childhood, and his wife died

in 1614. These successive deaths may have left Peter despondent, stricken with grief, and emotionally withdrawn. There are some indicators that Peter may not have functioned well after 1611, when his son, William, died. It has been noted, for example, that Peter yielded his title as Skinner to King James to his son-in-law, Thomas Langhorne, in 1611, two months after William's death.<sup>1</sup> This was a position that had been granted to Peter "for life." Finally, as we have seen, Peter Bland progressed in the Skinner's Company to its highest position in 1618, but it may well be that because of increasing mental instability, his terms as Master Warden were honorary in nature, and that he did little of substance in those capacities.

What followed in Peter's life is perhaps best prefaced by the following passage from the will of John Bland, in 1627:

I give unto all my godchildren twenty shillings apiece, except Lawrence Lownes' daughter, and Gregory Blande's son or daughter, for Lownes played the knave with me, and Gregory Bland deceived me likewise, so neither they nor theirs shall have one penny of mine. To my brother, Gillye, forty shillings, and to each of his children by my sister, forty shillings apiece, Judith Lownes not to have anything, the wife of Lawrence Lownes.<sup>2</sup>

It does not take a lot of corroborating evidence in this case to tell that in 1627 John Bland was hopping mad at both Gregory Bland and Lawrence Lownes. To gain some insight into this, it would be well to identify family relationships among the parties. Peter was the eldest living son of Adam Bland. In 1617/1618, Thomas Bland, the second eldest son of Adam Bland, died leaving only Gregory Bland and

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<sup>1</sup> CSPD, James I, Vol. II (1611-1618), p. 76.

<sup>2</sup> Waters, p. 813.

John Bland in line behind Peter Bland, whom it will be recalled, had no sons who lived to adulthood. Lawrence Lownes was a nephew, having married on January 5, 1617/1618 a daughter of Mary Bland Gilby, a sister of Peter, Gregory and John.

Evidently, Peter held the Bland family fortune, having received a sizable estate from Adam Bland and built upon it. In 1615, Peter held lands with rent values of 230 pounds sterling per annum, and "also possessed a personal estate of good value."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps with some premonition of death, Peter drew up his will in 1615, leaving his estate to his three daughters and their issue. Although I am not certain, I do not believe the will met contemporary legal standards. In 1621, Peter wrote a codicil entrusting his lands to John Bland and Lawrence Lownes.<sup>2</sup>

In March 1622/1623, Peter made out a second will, naming Lownes, John Bland and one Baldwin, who was described as Peter's "best trusted friend" as co-executors.<sup>3</sup> To preserve this new will, he placed it in a strong-box secured by three locks and gave one key to each lock to the three executors, a sign, significant in itself, that he may not have fully trusted either of them. In his will, he awarded his property

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<sup>1</sup> Carlisle, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> Subsequent revisions of the will are discussed in Carlisle, pp. 130-133; CSPD, Charles I, Vol. II (1628-1629), p. 550; CSPD, Charles I, Vol. V (1631-1633), p. 233; and CSPD, Charles I, Vol. X (1636-1637), p. 161. I wrote to the British Public Records Office regarding the original minutes of the trial that ensued over Peter Bland's will and was informed that it consisted of 14 closely written pages on thin membrane paper, which over the years had been transposed, one page upon the other. My calculation was that such minutes would not copy well enough to merit the investment. It should be noted also that Peter was not, as might have been expected, designated executor or trustee in the will of his brother, Thomas, in 1617. This may be further evidence that his mental faculties were impaired.

<sup>3</sup> Carlisle, p. 131.

to his children and grandchildren. But then mischief ensued. As literary wisdom has it, a strong-box with three keys at the start of a story assures that by story's end the three keys must unlock the strong-box. Inexorably, it was done. Lownes entered into a conspiracy with Peter's manservant, Hoskins, whereby Hoskins wrote a spurious letter to Baldwin, which purported to be signed by Peter Bland, giving Baldwin permission to turn his key over to Hoskins. Then, as Carlisle says, "the chest wherein the said box with three locks was kept, was opened, and what is become of that will cannot be discovered."<sup>1</sup> By now, however, Peter was a very old man, "weak in body and understanding by reason of his age"<sup>2</sup> (his actions suggest senility). So enfeebled, Peter was euchred by Lownes into writing yet two more successive wills in July and November 1624, and strengthening Lownes' executive powers. On June 25, 1625, Lownes posted a 4,000 pound surety bond with Peter, as security for his actions as Peter's executor, and as a codicil, secured a promise from Peter of a fee amounting to 1150 pounds. Two days later, Lownes totally hornswoggled and subverted Peter, having him sign yet a fifth will which relieved Lownes of the necessity for his 4,000 pound surety bond, and yet more firmly secured Lownes' fee of 1150 pounds from Peter.

As the language of John Bland's will indicates, he was absolutely livid with Lawrence Lownes. A trial of Lownes, Hoskins and Lownes' lawyer was held subsequently (between 1628-1631), and each of the

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1     Ibid.

2     Ibid.

three men were found guilty, fined and jailed. Undoubtedly, charges were pressed by John Bland.<sup>1</sup>

The question that begs an answer is, where was John Bland during all this? It is intriguing that he held the third key (three were necessary to open the strong-box) and must have had a part in opening it, perhaps because he believed the veracity of the forged note written by Hoskins in Peter Bland's name to Baldwin. Whatever, John Bland's consent was required before the strong-box could be opened. Perhaps the forged letter is the source of John's claim that "Lownes played the knave with me." But what does that expression mean? One must remember that John Bland was an immensely intelligent and successful merchant at that time, very much involved in the Grocer's Company, and a member of the governing board of the Virginia Company of London. Could he have been so easily played for a knave? Surely, John was not deceived into opening his brother's three times secured strong-box, and then simply turning the matter over to Lownes, in the absence of Baldwin. Also, John surely would have known that Peter's judgment was none too sound. By the time the will had been rewritten four times, he certainly should have understood that something was amiss (he would almost certainly have had to know of the revisions and as executor, to have given consent to them). Finally, when the fifth and final will of Peter Bland cut his own children and grandchildren out of the picture in favor of Lownes, John Bland must have known about it.

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<sup>1</sup> Carlisle, pp. 132-133.



I believe the answer to the riddle may be found in understanding of the unusually severe strictures in capital fluidity placed upon landed English families by the practice of primogeniture. Typically, the father's estate was passed in unbreakable entail to the eldest son (in the case at hand, from Adam to Peter). Younger siblings and children were at the mercy of the older brother, and had no chance of inheriting or using family capital until the older brother died. In this, the older brother was legally bound to observe the rules, which quite often prevented him from adequately caring for the welfare of his own children, who had to take hind seat to the next eldest brother in line. This appears to have been the problem with Peter Bland and his brothers. Historian Lawrence Stone hit the nail right on the head when he described such predicaments as micawberish, with younger sons waiting around for something to happen, namely, a timely death by the elder brother.<sup>1</sup>

Peter Bland lived an unusually long time for the 16th century, approximately 70 years. Further, when he made up his will, his (the family) estate was not devised to the next eldest son of Adam Bland (who would be Thomas Bland), but to Peter's children, who were all daughters.<sup>2</sup> This may well have angered Peter's brothers. His next eldest brother in 1615 was Thomas Bland, but Thomas died in 1617 or 1618, leaving only Gregory Bland and the youngest son of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns, John Bland.

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<sup>1</sup> Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800 (1978), pp. 87-88, sums up the problems of primogeniture nicely.

<sup>2</sup> That Peter Bland allowed a nephew by marriage, Lawrence Lownes, to become so deeply involved, may suggest a basic distrust of his brothers. The mistrust may have been justified by some objective wrong his brothers did to Peter, or it may have been a product of his assumed mental dysfunction. At any rate, alienation between the brothers appears to underlie the surface issues.

My conclusion is simple. It is that John Bland, who was a man of about fifty when Peter revised his will making him the co-executor, and whose fortunes as a merchant were obviously on the rise, took advantage of Peter's vulnerability, that is, he was a conspirator with Lownes to break the entails that bound the family estate to Peter Bland. It may be that Lownes somehow doublecrossed John, and went too far in his own greed, thus goading John Bland into his angry denunciation of Lownes in his 1627 will. Or it may be that John Bland's anger was contrived and that his accusation in his will of deceit by Lownes and Gregory Bland, was a smoke screen, in which case Lownes was no more than an accomplice.

Whether and to what extent Gregory Bland was involved in all this, is conjectural. He was not a party in the trial that resulted in Lowne's imprisonment. Yet John Bland's denunciation of Gregory at the same time he denounced Lownes is indicative that Gregory also was involved in the dirty business. John was an immensely powerful man by this time, and it may be that he simply disowned Gregory, threatened him with reprisals, and drove him out of town, for tradition has it that Gregory moved to Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Gregory joined Lownes in somehow attempting to doublecross John Bland, who was unwilling to face the obliquity of sending his brother to jail--the trial was held in the Star Chamber--and simply drove Gregory out of London.

If this analysis is correct, the effects on the family were far reaching. First of all, Thomas Bland died before he could claim right to the family estate under the rules of primogeniture. Second, the

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<sup>1</sup> Thoresby, p. 208

family estate was probably added to the already enormous wealth of John Bland. It is important to note that John Bland wrote his will in 1627, five years before his death. In it, he assigned his wealth to his wife, with clear provisions for his own male children, upon their majority. He also excluded, as Carlisle writes, "with severity,"<sup>1</sup> both Gregory Bland and Lawrence Lownes, as well as their children. To the extent he had reclaimed the family estate, it was sequestered to the use of his sons.

Now, it is a central theme of this book, yet to be developed, that both Thomas and John had children and grandchildren who settled in Virginia. The record makes it apparent that the children of John Bland had enormous financial resources with which to settle, while the grandchildren of Thomas Bland who settled in Virginia and Maryland, though certainly not poor, lacked such abundant means. This imbalance of wealth was critical to the later delineation of settlement by the family called The James River Blands (John Bland's descendants) and the Stafford County Blands (Thomas Bland's descendants). (See Chapters IV, V and VI.) Indeed, impact upon the family's development and status in Virginia was substantial through the period of the American Revolution.

#### Thomas Bland: Third Generation

The fourth child, and third son, of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns, was Thomas Bland, who was born about 1558 and died sometime between November 18, 1617, when he made his will, and May 15, 1618, when his will was proved. Thomas was said by Carlisle to be "in the law" and undersheriff of Middlesex County. Thoresby and Hunter identify him as an attorney.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Carlisle, p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> Thoresby, p. 584; Hunter, p. 422; Carlisle, p. 134.

Thomas and his family have been overlooked by many genealogists of the Bland family, although his descendants may be as important to American Bland families as Adam Bland's final son, John (1572-1632). It is commonly recognized that at the dawn of the 18th century there were two major families of Blands in Virginia: (1) the so-called "James River Blands" who descended from Adam through John and his wife, Susan Deblere. The other family was headed by James Bland, a man who was born sometime before 1662 and died in Stafford County, Virginia, in 1708. James' parentage is shrouded in mystery and direct evidence linking him to the James River family has to date stubbornly resisted detection. The quest for the parentage of James Bland has long been a subject of fascination for genealogists and it is one of the primary themes of this study.

During some research at the Virginia State Library on October 14-16, 1980, I came across a reference to a document held at the University of Virginia Library, deposited there by Miss Urilla Moore Bland, of Weston, West Virginia, who traced her ancestry to James Bland through his eldest son, William Bland. Further investigation revealed to me that indeed the University of Virginia Library held two distinct documents written by Miss Bland, containing between them a synopsis of practically all the evidentiary sources ever gathered about the two families.<sup>1</sup> Miss Bland has developed a line of inquiry, with substantial help from an attorney from New York City, Mr. Leslie Dawson, based upon

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<sup>1</sup> Urilla Moore Bland, "Additional Collections for the Ancient Family of Bland," University of Virginia, Alderman Library Acc. No. 9895-b (1974), hereafter referred to as UMB I, and Urilla Moore Bland, "Bland Family, Revised," University of Virginia, Alderman Library Acc. No. 9895-P (1977), hereafter referred to as UMB II.

her unitary vision of a linkage of the two families, which joins together, according to Miss Bland, with Adam (second generation, 1558-1618), his son, George (fourth generation), and his grandson, Thomas (fifth generation) whom Urilla Bland believes was the father of James Bland, of Stafford County. In Chapter VI of this study, I will explore fully the research and conclusions of Miss Bland and her collaborator, Mr. Dawson. For the present, I would like to develop as fully as possible the extant information about Thomas Bland, what I believe were his two marriages, and his children.

Traditionally, Thomas is said to have had three wives: (1) Alice Garmain; (2) Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley; and (3) Mary Catcher Moody. I believe he had only two.

My conclusion is based upon available information about Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley before she married Thomas Bland. The parish registers of All Hallows Honey Lane, London, show that Elizabeth Harrison was born November 3, 1549 to Robert Harrison and Margaret Bennett. She married William Yeardley (spelled in the Honey Lane register "Eardley") on January 2, 1569/1570. Elizabeth Harrison and William Yeardley then moved to the Parish of St. Martins, in Ludgate, and had a family of seven children:

Margaret, baptized October 22, 1570  
 Ann, baptized November 25, 1571  
 John, baptized June 24, 1573  
 Elizabeth, baptized January 1, 1574/1575  
 Joshua, baptized March 8, 1577/1578  
 Jasper, baptized February 5, 1578/1579 (Carlisle says  
 that Jasper died in 1639)  
 Mary, baptized November 3, 1583

Five of these children (John and Joshua died young) were mentioned in Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley Bland's will of 1593, and some were also mentioned in the 1617 will of Thomas Bland, their stepfather. Elizabeth's

will of 1593<sup>1</sup> fails to mention any children by Thomas Bland, causing confusion about her status as mother of his children among genealogists, who conclude from other erroneous information that Thomas had no children by Elizabeth but had two by his last wife, Mary Catcher Moody. Elizabeth's silence in her 1593 will about her children by Thomas may be explained by contemporary legal practice which required that the balance of a widow's third of her former husband's estate revert to his heirs only, upon her death.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the exclusion in her will of children by Thomas Bland is consistent with contemporary practice.

William Yeardley was buried at St. Martin's Ludgate Parish on October 28, 1583,<sup>3</sup> while Elizabeth was pregnant with Mary, their last child. There is a gap in the records until 1587, when there appear records of three sons born to Thomas and Elizabeth Bland at St. Martin's Ludgate Parish. Thus, it is probable that Thomas Bland married Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley about 1586. This fact eliminates Alice Garmain as the first wife of Thomas Bland, as alleged by Thoresby and others.<sup>4</sup> The children of Thomas Bland and Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley were, fourth generation:

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<sup>1</sup> The final will of Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley Bland is invaluable in that it establishes her maiden name as Harrison, and identifies her children by her first husband. Her will is found in Waters, p. 813, and Carlisle, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Morgan, The Puritan Family (1966), pp. 58-59.

<sup>3</sup> Thoresby, p. 585. Thoresby identifies the date of Yeardley's death as 1523, obviously a typographical error.

<sup>4</sup> The St. Gregory's register shows a Thomas Bland marrying Alice Garmain on July 12, 1590. Evidently, he was not the son of Adam Bland.

TABLE I

THE FAMILY OF ADAM BLAND OF WESTMORELAND COUNTY  
AND LONDON, ENGLAND: THREE GENERATIONS

John Bland, "The Martyr" (C. 1515-1555) ----- (1) Robert or Roger Bland = ???  
 (2) Adam Bland (C. 1528-1594) = Joan Atkyns (C. 1530-1596)  
 about 1551

(3-1) pp. 20-22	(3-2) pp. 22-23	(3-3) pp. 23-33	(3-4) pp. 33-40	(3-5) p. 40	(3-6) pp. 40-41	(3-7) pp. 40-41
Robert (C. 1552, died prior to 1559)	Jane (C. 1554, died after 1591), mar- ried William Hope.	Peter (C. 1557- 1625), mar- ried Susan _____.	Thomas (C. 1558-1618), married Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley; Mary Catcher Moody.	Elizabeth (1560, died after 1627), married William Burie.	Frances (1561-1566)	Richard (1562, died in infancy)
(3-8) pp. 40-41	(3-9) pp. 41-48	(3-10) pp. 48-50	(3-11) p. 51	(3-12) p. 51	(3-13) p. 52	
John (C. 1563- 1564)	William (1566-1596), married Judith Wood.	Gregory (1567, died after 1627), married but wife unknown.	Jasper (1568-1596)	Mary (1569, died before 1617), married _____ Gilbie.	John (1572-1632), married Susan Deblere.	

----- Assumed or hypothetical.

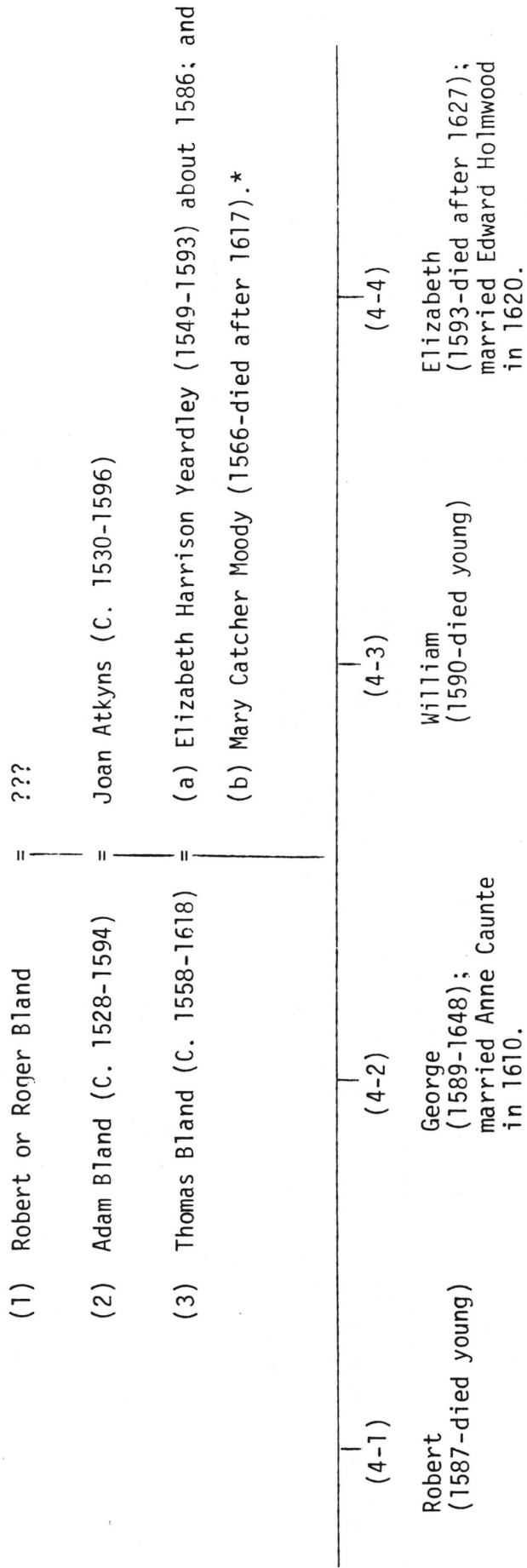
\_\_\_\_\_ Proven.

C. = circa (approximately)

TABLE II

THE FAMILY OF THOMAS BLAND OF LONDON:

FOUR GENERATIONS



\* Thomas Bland and Mary Catcher Moody had no children.



Robert, baptized September 10, 1587, and William, baptized March 21, 1590/1591, must have died young. They are not mentioned in the subsequent wills of Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley of 1593, Thomas Bland of 1617, or John Bland of 1627. The only surviving children then were George, second son of Thomas Bland and Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley, who was baptized at St. Martin's Ludgate on August 10, 1589, and was buried on June 10, 1648, in St. Antholin's Parish, London. Thomas also had a fourth child, a daughter by Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley, whose name was Elizabeth. She is established by other sources, but there is no record of her baptism in the St. Martin Parish register. Elizabeth was logically named for her mother (or perhaps also for Queen Elizabeth) and would have had to be born within a narrow time span between January 1592 and the time of her mother's death on July 19 or 20, 1593. These are the dates that Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley Bland made and proved her will, indicating that death came swiftly for her, perhaps in trauma following the birth of Elizabeth.

In his will of May 16, 1648, George Bland (fourth generation) asks to be remembered as "George Bland, only son of Thomas Bland of London, Esquire, by Elizabeth, his first wife."<sup>1</sup> Such clear language reinforces the elimination of Alice Garmain as the first wife of Thomas Bland, and also eliminates Mary Catcher Moody as the mother of George. Hunter is the first genealogical source I know of to assert that Mary Catcher Moody, Thomas' second wife, was the mother of George and Elizabeth Bland. Hunter's information may have come from the Catcher pedigree of 1633,

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<sup>1</sup> Carlisle, p. 317.

which identifies George and Elizabeth as the children of Mary.<sup>1</sup> Since Mary was in fact the stepmother of the two children, some latitude for confusion must be granted to Mr. Hunter. George also mentioned a "sister," Catherine, in his will.<sup>2</sup> It is possible, but the evidence does not support it, that Catherine was a child of Thomas Bland through Mary Catcher Moody, but most likely she was only a sister-in-law or half-sister, related to George through marriage. This view is strengthened by the fact that no Catherine Bland is mentioned in Thomas Bland's will of 1617, though she almost certainly would have been if she were a natural child of Thomas.

So George Bland (1589-1648, fourth generation) was the only son of Thomas Bland who survived to adulthood and married. He was probably the George Bland of St. Ann's Blackfriar's Parish (which was later part of St. Gregory's and St. Martin's Parishes) who married Anne Caunte, age 24, a widow from St. Peter's Cornhill Parish, at Tottenham High Cross Church in Middlesex County on September 25, 1610.<sup>3</sup> Thomas Bland, his father, one may recall, was a sheriff of Middlesex County. Carlisle indicates that as an adult, George Bland moved to Arundel in Sussex County. It is probable that his son, Thomas (fifth generation) was born at the Aldingbourne Parish in Sussex on August 3, 1612. Of this later Thomas, we know only that he was certainly living by the time of his grandfather's will in November 1617. Positive identification of George's son, Thomas, as the same Thomas who lived in Maryland between

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<sup>1</sup> Hunter, p. 422, and A. V. Hughes Clark, Miscellanea Genealogica Heraldica, Fifth Series (1918-1919), p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Carlisle, p. 139.

<sup>3</sup> John Foster, London Marriage Licenses, 1521-1869 (1889), p. 139.

about 1665-1699, and further linkage of this man with James Bland, is the essential deduction of Miss Urilla Bland. My own conclusion, discussed in depth in Chapter VI, varies from Urilla Bland's. It is that George's son Thomas was the father of Thomas Bland, the attorney of Maryland, who in turn was the father of James Bland, who died in Stafford County, Virginia, in 1708.

Of Thomas' daughter Elizabeth (fourth generation) little is known of her except that she married Edward Holmwood at St. Antholin's Parish on October 26, 1620, and she is mentioned by John Bland in his will of 1627 as "Elizabeth, my cousin Holmwood, and each of her children." There may be an in-law or cousin relationship between Elizabeth and the John Holmwood of Charles City County, Virginia, who was the lawyer of Edward Bland (1613-1652) and Theodorick Bland (1629-1671) and who married Edward's widow.

Before leaving Thomas Bland (1558-1618), I would like to outline as fully as possible the life of his second wife, Mary Catcher Moody. She was born to John Catcher of London, on February 14, 1566/1567 in St. Peter the Poor Parish, where she was married to Thomas Moody, Grocer to Queen Elizabeth, on December 2, 1583.<sup>1</sup> By Moody, she had five children: Edward, William, Margaret, Emma and Ellyn,<sup>2</sup> all of whom are mentioned in Thomas Bland's will of 1617. I have not been able to determine the precise birthdate of these children, but it is reasonable to assume that they were born over a decade between 1584-1594.

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<sup>1</sup> The fact that Mary was born, raised and married in St. Peter the Poor Parish may establish some linkage, in terms of geographic proximity, for the Bland family development discussed in Chapter VI.

<sup>2</sup> James Bland, of Stafford County, Virginia, had a son, William, and a daughter, Ellyn.

This would make it probable that Moody died about 1594, and that Mary married Thomas Bland within a few years. Since Mary was only 28 or 29 when her first husband died, it would seem likely that she was able to bear children for Thomas for many years. Yet there is no evidence in the will of Thomas Bland (1617), or the Catcher Pedigree of 1633, that Thomas Bland and Mary Catcher Moody had any children. Since Thomas mentioned his own children and the children of Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley and Mary Catcher Moody by their previous marriages, it is logical that he would have mentioned any natural children that he had by Mary Catcher Moody. Therefore, one must assume that his only children were by Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley.

#### Elizabeth Bland: Third Generation

The fifth child, and second daughter, of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns, was Elizabeth (third generation) who was baptized at St. Gregory's Parish on May 12, 1560. Elizabeth's date of death is unknown, but she was evidently living in 1627, for she was mentioned in John Bland's will in present tense as "my sister Burye." She married William Burie about 1580, and they evidently lived in St. Gregory's Parish where they had five children, including Margaret, baptized January 24, 1581/1582. Margaret later married a man named Everett. A second daughter, Joan, was baptized April 19, 1583, and Ann, baptized July 12, 1586. Either Joan or Ann married a man named Rosse. Elizabeth and Edward were her children also, but their birthdates are unknown.

#### The Minor Children

Following Elizabeth, Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns had several children who died young. Frances (third generation), sixth child and third

daughter, was baptized July 16, 1561, and was buried March 17, 1566/1567.<sup>1</sup> Richard, seventh child and fourth son, was baptized at St. Gregory's Parish on January 24, 1562/1563 and died there as an infant soon after, according to Thoresby. John was buried at St. Gregory's Parish January 12, 1564/1565. Probably, he was the eighth child, born some time after October 1563.

William Bland: Third Generation

The ninth child, and sixth son of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns by my reckoning, was William Bland (third generation), baptized at St. Gregory's Parish April 5, 1566, and buried at St. Mary's White Chapel Parish on August 5, 1596. I say by my reckoning, for Thoresby and Dale, as well as Carlisle and Hunter, and also Samuel Bland's 1633 Visitation of London, indicate William was the first son. There are two reasons why this would be an illogical order for William. First, there is no evidence that William advanced very far in the Skinner's Company, although he was an adult and a member of the company when he died in 1596. If he were the oldest son, he surely would have been his father's family heir, and also logically would have succeeded his father to the office of Skinner to the Queen in 1594, but Peter did that, and Peter appears to have been the head of the family after Adam's death. Second, from the standpoint of contemporary naming practices, it is highly unlikely that William would be the first son. The genealogists who claim William was the first son, also state that William,

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<sup>1</sup> A minor note is that this child is often identified as a daughter Frances, born 1561, and another child, a son Francis, died in 1566/1567. My reading of the parish register's entry for the burial convinces me that the birth and burial are for the same child, a daughter named Frances.

born April 5, 1566, was one of the children who died in infancy. But there is no recorded entry of a burial for William Bland in the St. Gregory's register. Also, it would be highly unlikely that Adam and Joan would deviate from Elizabethan naming practices and give the same name to two living children. Quite often, Elizabethan children were named necronymically, thus symbolically giving new life to a dead child. This is the case with Adam and Joan's last child, John, named after the brother who died in 1564/1565. But the sense of individualism was strong enough among Elizabethans that there would not likely be a William baptized in 1566 if an earlier William was still living.<sup>1</sup>

William may have begun an apprenticeship in the Skinner's Company at age ten, for he received his freedom by redemption in 1583. Perhaps because he did not live very long, he did not advance far in the company, and his name is mentioned in company records only marginally. In 1587, he appealed to the company wardens for permission to purchase a "poor tenement" in Coneyhope Lane, a piece of company property. He was refused this request but advised, so to speak, that the next available piece of property would be his. The other two extant entries in company records show him being fined in 1587 and 1588 for taking some property out of Skinner's Hall "against the mind of the company," and in 1591 for attempting to sell faulty skins.<sup>2</sup>

In 1590, William appears to have landed a government job as one of three general customs surveyors. His job was that of an inspector,

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<sup>1</sup> Naming practices in Tudor-Stuart England and the New World are discussed extensively by Daniel Scott Smith, "Child Naming Patterns and Family Structure Changes: Hingham, Massachusetts, 1640-1880," Paper 16-5, Newberry Papers in Family and Community Studies (University of Chicago, Ill.: 1973). Professor Smith graciously made his paper available to me.

<sup>2</sup> Lambert, pp. 249-250, 328.

stationed primarily in London. He had no jurisdiction with London ports, but often traveled throughout the rest of the country for on-the-spot inspections.<sup>1</sup> For the balance of William's life, although by no exclusive fault of his, these inspector's posts were sources of conflict within the office of Elizabeth's Lord Treasurer,<sup>2</sup> and for that reason, William may have petitioned for another, higher position in 1594.<sup>3</sup> He appears to have been in the wrong place at the wrong time because he was refused: although "Bland served better than any man, Mr. Carmarden was promised the place a year ago."<sup>4</sup>

William married Judith Wood, a daughter of Thomas Wood of Groby Parish in Leicester County, at St. Michael's Bassishaw Parish on October 26, 1584. I believe that a full record of William and Judith's children is not available, but certainly the establishment of William as a later son of Adam, who married in 1584, would eliminate Jane Bland, who married William Hope (see discussion on pages 22 and 23) as his child. Only two children are recorded for William and Judith.

The first recorded child and son of William Bland and Judith Wood is William (fourth generation) who was born October 11, 1593, in St. John Hackney's Parish. The date of William's death is uncertain, as is his vocation, but he was trained at Emmanuel College in 1611, and received his Bachelor of Arts the same year. He was admitted at Gray's Inn on August 13, 1613.<sup>5</sup> He married Mary Shelley, daughter of Henry

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<sup>1</sup> CSPD, Elizabeth, Vol. 3, pp. 393, 537. Cf. Carlisle, p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> William's role in his customs job is briefly discussed by Frederick Deitz, English Public Finance: 1558-1641 (1932), pp. 322-324.

<sup>3</sup> CSPD, Elizabeth, Vol. 3, p. 570.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Venn and Venn, p. 165. Cf. Joseph Foster, Collectiana Genealogica, Vol. I (1882), p. 74.

Shelley of Parham Parish in Sussex County. The date of their marriage is uncertain, but they had one recorded son, Peter (fifth generation), who was born at St. Margaret Westminster's Parish on October 17, 1620.<sup>1</sup> Peter was only thirteen when his uncle, Samuel Bland, completed the Bland entry for the Visitation of London in 1633. Hunter only mentions him, and Thoresby and Dale are completely silent about him. He is mentioned in no parish records I have seen, except for the bare information about his birth. Carlisle confirms that he studied at Gray's Inn and "was a bold and multifarious writer" during the early years of the Civil War.<sup>2</sup>

In his writings (he was a pamphleteer), Peter first came down on the side of King Charles I, as evidenced by the title of his first essay, "A Royall Position Whereby 'tis Proved that 'tis Against the Common Laws of England to Depose a King." He dedicated this piece to his grandfather, Henry Shelley, a parliamentarian from Sussex County, "because he is confident that nearness of relation cannot bribe his judgment."<sup>3</sup> That young Peter Bland's judgment may have been bribed by his grandfather, who must have gotten very close with the young man following publication of the tract, is evidenced by the different tune Peter sang in his next publication, which came out only a few months later in January 1642/1643: "An Argument in Justification of the Five

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<sup>1</sup> John Bland's will of 1627 mentions "my cousin William Blande's children and my cousin Mary, his late Wife." The statement seems to suggest that both William and Mary were dead by 1627, and that there was more than one child.

<sup>2</sup> Peter matriculated from Jesus College in 1636-1637 and entered Gray's Inn February 13, 1636-1637 (Venn and Venn, p. 164; Foster, Collectiana Genealogica, p. 74).

<sup>3</sup> Carlisle, pp. 127-129, passim.



Members, Formerly and so Virtually Clearing the Four Men Now Accused by His Majesty: Wherin 'tis Proved That the Raising of This Present Army\* by Authority of Parliament is Not Treason..."<sup>1</sup> In 1643, Peter Bland launched a passionate attack upon Sir Isaac Pennington, then Lord Mayor of London, and a Royalist. Pennington's political life survived Bland's attack, but he later switched sides and served as a judge of Charles I, for which he was imprisoned in the Tower of London following the Restoration.<sup>2</sup> Whatever happened to Peter Bland is less certain than whether he ever learned his own mind.

William Bland and Judith Wood's second son was Samuel (fourth generation), with whom Judith was pregnant at the time of William's death in 1596 (identified in William's will as "the child that she now goeth withal").<sup>3</sup> Samuel was baptized March 26, 1597 at St. Mary's White Chapel. He is mentioned in John Bland's will of 1627, without reference to a wife. Since his first child was born in 1629, this would indicate that he married Judith Shelley, sister of his brother William's wife, and another daughter of Henry Shelley, about 1628, thereby making the children of William and Samuel (fourth generation) double first cousins. Samuel was responsible for the Bland entry in the 1633 Visitation of London. He was admitted to Emmanuel College on May 19, 1615, received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1618, and was admitted to Gray's Inn on April 26, 1621.<sup>4</sup>

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\* A reference to the army raised in opposition to Charles I.

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Waters, p. 812.

4 Venn and Venn, p. 165. Cf. Foster, Collectiana Genealogica, p. 74.

By Judith Shelley, Samuel had six children, including four sons and two daughters.

Anna (fifth generation) was baptized at St. Martin's in the Fields Parish on November 29, 1629, and was buried there on March 1, 1629/1630.

George Bland (fifth generation) was baptized February 8, 1630/1631 at St. Martin's in the Fields and was buried at St. Mary the Virgin Aldermanbury Parish on July 31, 1658. Very little is known about George. Evidently, he died unmarried and without issue. It is probable, however, that he is the same George Bland who wrote a long letter to his cousin, John Bland (1612-1680) pleading that he was starving in a Spanish jail. The story follows:

In October 1655, the Cromwell regime commenced hostile military action against Spain, threatening the commercial interests of John Bland (1612-1680, second son of John Bland, 1572-1632, son of Adam Bland), both in Spain and in the Canary Islands. With a catlike agility, however, John Bland landed on his feet by securing a contract to provision the British fleet and sent his cousin George, who styled himself John's "kinsman and loyal subject" into the war zone to carry out the contract, perhaps also to assist John's brother William (1622-1658) who was already in Spain. Presently, however, British military support was withdrawn from the area, leaving private merchants to shift for themselves. The upshot was that George Bland was taken prisoner and left to rot, by what he describes as "cruel captors. Had we been among the Turks we should a' had a better passage than we

received from these people."<sup>1</sup> This passage is from a letter from George Bland to John Bland dated March 17, 1657/1658 which did not reach John until ten months later. Since this date is only a few months before George Bland's recorded burial, the letter may well have been his last communication, and it may be that he was disposed of by the Spaniards, and the parish record of his burial was only a memorial service.

The third child, and second son of Samuel Bland and Judith, was Samuel (fifth generation) who was baptized December 16, 1632, at St. Michael's Bassishaw Parish. The date of his death is uncertain. Carlisle says that he was "one of the gentlemen of the band of pensioners"<sup>2</sup> and he is referred to variously in parish records as a "gentlemen," suggesting that he was well off. Certainly, he married well. His wife was Elizabeth Longueville, daughter of a baronet from Buckingham County. Samuel Bland and Elizabeth Longueville had a daughter Mary (sixth generation) who married William Hales, son of another baronet from Kent County.<sup>3</sup>

The fourth child, and third son of Samuel Bland and Judith Shelley was James (fifth generation), who was baptized at St. Michael's Bassishaw on March 22, 1634/1635, and was buried there June 20, 1638.

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<sup>1</sup> Discussion of George Bland's imprisonment is found in Neville Williams, "The Trials and Tribulations of John Bland, Merchant," Virginia Magazine of History and Biography (hereafter noted VMHB), Vol. 72 (1964), pp. 23-24. This article, while brief and fragmentary in nature, and unaware of the family connections it sometimes describes, is nonetheless useful in that it clarifies some facts about the family and draws attention to otherwise obscured sources.

<sup>2</sup> I do not have the slightest idea what this means.

<sup>3</sup> Carlisle, p. 129.

(It should be noted that he is the first James Bland in this family line during the 16th and 17th centuries.)

Thomas Bland (fifth generation), fifth child, and fourth son of Samuel Bland and Judith Shelley, was baptized at St. Mary the Virgin Aldermanbury Parish on November 8, 1642, and was buried there December 29, 1642.

Jane Bland (fifth generation), sixth child, and second daughter of Samuel Bland and Judith Shelley, was baptized at St. Mary the Virgin Parish on February 25, 1643/1644. There is an entry in the parish records that John Paradise married Jane Bland, "of the parish," on May 10, 1660.

#### Gregory Bland: Third Generation

The tenth child, and seventh son of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns was Gregory (third generation), who was baptized at St. Gregory's Parish April 22, 1567. It is not certain when he died or where. His denunciation by John Bland has been discussed. It indicates that as late as 1627 he was still alive and had sons and daughters. John's attack on him strongly suggests that Gregory was involved in the attempt to strip Peter Bland of the family estate. One source identifies Gregory as a merchant tailor who invested 25 pounds in the Virginia Company of London.<sup>1</sup> Thoresby indicates that Gregory moved to Ireland.<sup>2</sup> He was in London at the time of Thomas Bland's will of 1617. His subsequent disappearance suggests that John Bland ran him out of town over the Peter Bland business.

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Brown, The Genesis of the United States (1890), p. 829,  
<sup>2</sup> Thoresby, p. 208.

I have never been able to identify Gregory's wife but it is obvious that by 1627 he had several children (not unusual, for he would have been sixty by then), and that John Bland's enjoinder against them was not a codicil against future children by Gregory, but aimed specifically at his living children. As we shall see, fate did play the knave with John Bland when, after John's death, one of Gregory's daughters married John's third son, Edward (1613-1652).

Gregory's family is difficult to construct, for we do not know who he married or when, and where they lived, but entries in the parish registers as well as some literary evidence make it possible to complete at least a cursory sketch.

Thoresby reports that Gregory had two daughters, and other genealogists copy this information. The eldest was Frances, and according to Thoresby she went to Charles City, Virginia at "near fifty years of age,"<sup>1</sup> and married John Coggan, a "chirurgeon" or physician, who undoubtedly was one of the most colorful rascals to cross these pages, and who will be discussed in the next chapter. Thoresby also states that Frances died in Virginia in 1677 and was buried at Westover, the family estate in Virginia.<sup>2</sup> It is fairly certain that Frances came to Virginia in 1653,<sup>3</sup> in all probability going there to be with her younger sister, who had been widowed by Edward Bland's death in 1652.

Judging from Thoresby's information then, it would seem reasonable to place her birthdate at about 1603, indicating that she lived from

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1 Thoresby, p. 585.

2 Ibid.

3 Fleet, Vol. 22, p. 12. Frances Bland was headright of Captain Henry Fleet, October 24, 1653.

1603 to 1677. By the time she met and married Coggan in Virginia, she was too old to bear children.

The age of Gregory's second daughter Jane (fourth generation) is similarly difficult to fix, but I have seen one source that makes her two years younger than Frances.<sup>1</sup> If so, Jane would have been born about 1605. Thoresby and Dale indicate that she died in Charles City County about 1664 and was buried at Westover, making her dates approximately 1605 to 1664.

As stated earlier, Gregory Bland had the last laugh on old John Bland, for Jane married John's third son, Edward. Surely this union would have had to occur after the death of John Bland (1632), and probably after Edward reached the age of consent (1634), for one cannot imagine John Bland's wife, Susan Deblere, granting her consent. The family of Edward and Jane will be discussed more fully under the discussion about Edward Bland (1613-1652). Following Edward's death, Jane Bland married John Holmwood, who had been her husband's lawyer and served her brother-in-law, Theodorick Bland, in the same capacity.

A son of Gregory Bland is not mentioned by the Bland genealogists, but is suggested by the language of John Bland's will. If it is correct that Frances and Jane were born in London about 1603 to 1605, their births would be in chronological proximity to a son, Peter Bland, born to Gregory Bland in St. Margaret Patten's Parish, February 5, 1614/1615.

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<sup>1</sup> Zella Armstrong, "Notable Southern Families: The Bland Family," Lookout Publishing Company (Chatanooga, Tennessee: August 5, 1916). I have never seen this article and have been unable to find it in various searches. It is quoted in a work by my cousin, Margaret Bland Magliocco who is unable to find the article. The information given by Mrs. Magliocco indicates that Mrs. Armstrong's dates are consistently wrong, but her ordering of the Bland family is correct.

Jasper Bland: Third Generation

Jasper Bland (third generation) was the eleventh child, and eighth son of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns. He was baptized at St. Gregory's Parish October 28, 1568, and was buried there on December 28, 1596. He died unmarried and without issue. His brother, Gregory, served as executor of his will.<sup>1</sup>

Mary Bland: Third Generation

Mary Bland (third generation) was the twelfth child, and fourth daughter of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns. She was baptized at St. Gregory's Parish on January 22, 1569/1570. The date of Mary's death is uncertain. She married \_\_\_\_\_ Gilbie (Gilby, Gill or Gillye). The date of her marriage and exact order of children is likewise uncertain, but she had a daughter, Judith. Her brother, Thomas, left a bequest to "My Goddaughter Judith Gilbie and the children of my sister Gilbie." Two months later, this Judith Gilbie married the infamous Lawrence Lownes, so that she became one of several in the family to be denounced by John Bland when he made his will in 1627:

To my brother Gillye forty shillings and to each of his children by my sister forty shillings apiece, Judith Lownes not to have anything, the wife of Lawrence Lownes...<sup>2</sup>

Judith Gilbie Lownes was the daughter of Mary. It is possible that Mary and her husband also had a son, whose daughter or granddaughter subsequently married a cousin, Edward Bland (c. 1635-1690) in Virginia, son of Edward Bland (1613-1652).

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce's Randolph Collection, Virginia State Library, Richmond, Acquisition Number 20232, Box 3, Folder 7, October 27, 1967.

<sup>2</sup> Waters, p. 813.

John Bland: Third Generation

The thirteenth and final child, and ninth son of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns, was John Bland (third generation). John was baptized at St. Gregory's Parish on September 28, 1572. He died suddenly on April 20, 1632,<sup>1</sup> and was buried two weeks later in the same coffin with his youngest daughter, Joan Amy, on May 5, 1632.

During his life, John was a very successful merchant, with connections in France and Germany, in Plaistow, Essex County, and also was a shareholder and prominent member of the Virginia Company of London. He was admitted to the freedom of the Grocer's Company in 1626, and was elected Warden of the Company in 1629.<sup>2</sup> Inasmuch as he was fifty-four at the time he gained his freedom, very likely he entered the grocer's guild by redemption (by paying the price of membership), meaning that he was not trained through apprenticeship, but was a part of the merchant elite of London that were nominally members of the great livery companies in order to gain better commercial connections in the provinces.

The above information should deflect the casual reader from an assumption that John, who is often called "John, the Grocer," was an operator of a corner food market. Like the Skinner's Company, the Grocers were one of London's twelve great livery companies, ranking second in the city behind the Mercers. The company derived its name from the guild of pepperers during the 14th century who later became

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Smith, Obituary's: 1623-1674, Camden Society Publications, Vol. 44.

<sup>2</sup> W. W. Grantham, List of the Wardens of the Grocer's Company from 1345 to 1907 (London: 1907), p. 25.



TABLE III

THE FAMILY OF GREGORY BLAND OF LONDON AND

IRELAND: FOUR GENERATIONS

- (1) Robert or Roger Bland = ???
- (2) Adam Bland (1528-1594) = Joan Atkyns (1530-1596)
- (3) Gregory Bland (1567-died after 1627) = ???

(4-1)  
Frances  
(1603-1677)

Married John  
Coggan.

(4-2)

Jane  
(1605-1664)

Married (a) Edward  
Bland, her cousin  
(1613-1652); and  
(b) John Holmwood.

(4-3)

Peter  
(1614-??)

(Nothing is known  
about Peter.)

TABLE IV

## THE FAMILY OF JOHN BLAND OF LONDON: FOUR GENERATIONS

(1) Robert or Roger Bland	=	???						
(2) Adam Bland (1528-1594)	=	Joan Atkyns (1530-1596)						
(3) John Bland (1572-1632)	=	Susan Deblere (1590-1664)						
(4-1) Mary (1607-died after 1652), married Emmanuel Proby.		(4-2) Susannah (1609-died in Stafford County, Virginia after 1664), married Thomas Pearson	(4-3) Thomas (1610-1678), married (a) Elizabeth Witham, (b) Anne Jegon, (c) Katherine Sandys.	(4-4) John (1612-1680), married Sarah Greene (1624-1712).	(4-5) Edward (1613-1652), married Jane Bland (1605-1664), his cousin.	(4-6) Adam (1616-1647), did not marry.	(4-7) Robert (1617-1669), married Mary Hinton.	(4-8) Anne (1619-?), married Stephen Jackson.
(4-9) Elizabeth (1620-died after 1673), married William Beard.		(4-10) William (1622-died after 1658), did not marry.	(4-11) Hester (1623-1624)	(4-12) Richard (1624-1692), married Jane Lane Pott.	(4-13) Rachel (1626-1633)	(4-14) Arnold (1627-1634)	(4-15) Theodorick (1629-1671), married Anna Bennett (1639-1687) in 1660.	(4-16) Joan Amy (1631-1632)

known as "grossers" or those merchants who dealt in large quantities of goods and merchandise.<sup>1</sup>

John Bland's business affairs with the Virginia Company of London will be discussed in the next chapter. In this chapter, I will concentrate on John Bland's family in England, with a postscript upon the life of his remarkable wife, Susan Deblere,<sup>2</sup> whom he married about 1606. Susan is said to have been born about 1590. She was the daughter of \_\_\_\_\_ and Marie Deblere, but the place of her birth remains uncertain. She is often referred to as a Huguenot (a French Protestant) and was perhaps living in England when she met John Bland. Susan was buried on February 7, 1664/1665. She lived with John Bland evidently in several parishes including sequentially, St. Gregory's, St. Mary the Virgin, St. Stephen Coleman's, and St. Antholin's Parish on Sythe Lane, where John Bland and Susan Deblere died and were buried. John and Susan lived together for twenty-six years and in his will he calls her "my well beloved wife, Susan." John and Susan had together a very large family, including one child who was stillborn on August 20, 1621, with no reference to sex, nine sons and seven daughters (Susan was pregnant for thirteen of the twenty-six years she was married to John).

Six of John and Susan's children migrated to Virginia and died there. Twelve of their children lived to adulthood, and ten married. Those who married tended to marry well.

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<sup>1</sup> William Herbert, The History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies of London, 2 volumes (London: 1837), is the standard work on the great companies. Cf. Vol. I, pp. 297-388, for the Grocers; Vol. II, pp. 299-382, for the Skinners.

<sup>2</sup> Susan's maiden name has been often mispronounced: Duclere, Ducleer, Dubleer, etc. The recorder of the St. Antholin's Parish register called her name Doubler. I have chosen Deblere, from the Will of John Bland (1627) which was closest to Susan in time.

Mary Bland

The first child, and first daughter of John Bland and Susan Deblere was Mary (fourth generation), who was baptized November 11, 1607, "in the howse of Peyter Bland," at St. Gregory's Parish. Mary married Emmanuel Proby on June 8, 1626. Emmanuel was a son of Sir Peter Proby, who was active in the Grocer's Company and was elected Lord Mayor of London in 1622.<sup>1</sup> The Proby entry for the Visitation of London in 1633, shows that by then Emmanuel and Mary had two sons, Peter and George, and a daughter Susan. By 1643, the couple were living at the home of John Bland (1612-1680), Mary's younger brother, in St. Olaves Parish, Hart Street. There Mary gave birth to an infant son, Nathaniel, on March 8, 1643/1644 and buried him fifteen days later. The following year Mary gave birth to a daughter, Elizabeth, who was baptized on April 22, 1645.

George Proby, son of Emmanuel Proby and Mary Bland, went to Virginia in 1647 with Edward Bland, his uncle.<sup>2</sup> There is no further mention of him in London, so I presume he died in Virginia. Peter Proby married Grace Ford on April 27, 1656 at St. Olaves Parish. Peter was buried at St. Olaves on November 2, 1684. He may have had a son Peter, who migrated to Virginia, married Jane Servant there, and died in 1692.<sup>3</sup>

It is probable that Emmanuel Proby died about 1652, for in that year John Bland, his brother-in-law, joined with Proby's executor to gain release of some money due Bland by the government, because John

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Aubrey Rees, The Worshipful Company of Grocers, an Historic Retrospect (London: 1923), App. I, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> Nell Marian Nugent, Cavaliers and Pioneers, Vol. I (1934), p. 171. Two subsequent volumes of Nugent's work appeared in 1977 and 1979. Hereafter, this work is referred to as Nugent, with volumes indicated.

<sup>3</sup> VMHR Vol 22 p. 323.

Bland owed Proby "a very considerable amount of money" when Proby died. The amount of money Bland petitioned for was 2,480 pounds. During the proceedings, John described the Proby family's plight as "desperate." After much delay, a fraction of the money was released to John Bland who turned most of it over to his sister Mary, Proby's widow.<sup>1</sup> Following Proby's death, Mary Bland Proby married Thomas Neville. The date of her death is uncertain.

#### Susannah Bland

The second child, and second daughter of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was Susannah (fourth generation) who was baptized on October 29, 1609 at St. Mary the Virgin Parish. Very little is known about Susan, but John Bland's reference to her in his will of 1627 implies she was single. By May 5, 1632, the registers of St. Antholin's Parish shows a Susannah, daughter of Thomas and Susan Pearson, christened.<sup>2</sup> Apparently then, Susan married her husband, Thomas Pearson, who came from the Isle of Ely, one of the channel islands, sometime between 1628 and 1631. Thomas and Susan ultimately moved to Virginia and died there. Thomas must have gone first, for he is seen in Henrico County in 1639. He must have returned to London, for on December 1, 1645, Susan gave birth to Marian Bland at her brother

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<sup>1</sup> Williams, "The Trials and Tribulations of John Bland," pp. 22-23.

<sup>2</sup> The child christened this day must have been the Susannah Pearson West who received a land grant in Stafford County, Virginia, in 1698. Her christening must have been a sweet moment in an otherwise bleak day, when John Bland and his daughter, Joan Amy, were laid to rest.

John's home at St. Olaves, Hart Street. The Pearsons also had a son, Thomas. Their daughter Susan married a John West in Stafford County, Virginia, and had by him, John West.<sup>1</sup>

### Thomas Bland

The third child, and first son and heir of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was Thomas (fourth generation), who was baptized March 3, 1610/1611 at St. Mary the Virgin Parish, and was buried September 26, 1678. Thomas was a lawyer who studied at the Inner Temple in 1628.<sup>2</sup> He received a joint appointment with his brother, John (1612-1680) from King Charles I on June 25, 1640, as Receiver of the King's Rents from York County, surely as lucrative a patronage plum as a king could dispense to a commoner. This appointment got caught up in the political turmoil of the 1640's between King and Parliament, and was rescinded by Parliament in 1648, with a claim that John and Thomas owed 6,000 pounds, and that the money should be paid from their private

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<sup>1</sup> William and Mary Quarterly, (1st Series), Vol. 10, pp. 64-65. The Quarterly is published in three series. Hereafter in notes, the journal will be referred to according to its series, e.g., WMG (1), pp. 64-65.

<sup>2</sup> W. G. Cooke, Students Admitted to the Inner Temple, 1547-1660 (1877), p. 255. Chapter IV will make it clear that John Bland, the Grocer's, second son John (1612-1680) was in fact the manager of the family business affairs, whether or not he was his father's heir. It should be noted that while all of John, the Grocer's sons were minors, when he made his will in 1627, by 1632 when John died, his son Thomas was over 21 and could have taken over business affairs. Yet it appears he didn't. A satisfactory explanation for this apparent contradiction has never been found.

funds.<sup>1</sup> A few months later, the charge was rescinded and Thomas was restored to the position, which he held apparently until at least 1673.<sup>2</sup> Thomas lived in Plaistow and Westham in Essex County, and toward the end of his life, held positions as guardian, collector, and bailiff for Westham.

Thomas had three wives and no children that lived to adulthood. He married Elizabeth Witham on July 14, 1642, at St. Mary the Virgin Parish. Elizabeth was about thirty-eight when she married Thomas. Thomas and Elizabeth may have had one son, Thomas (fifth generation) whose birthdate is unknown, but who was identified as a "sonne of Thomas Bland" when he was buried in the St. Mary the Virgin Parish on July 19, 1646.

I have been able to find nothing about the death of Elizabeth Witham Bland, but on February 20, 1673/1674, Thomas married for a second time to Anne Jegon, of Putney in Surrey County. Anne is identified as a widow of about thirty-two, while Thomas is called a widower of "about fifty-eight." Evidently, the pleasure he took in his young bride had knocked about five years off his age.<sup>3</sup>

Just a few years later, Thomas took for his third wife a young spinster, Katherine Sandys, who herself was baptized on December 25, 1638, at Beningboro Grange Parish, of Newton on Ouse, in Kent County. They were married on April 30, 1677, at the Charterhouse Chapel in London.<sup>4</sup> Like her predecessor, Katherine's youth must have had a

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<sup>1</sup> This claim may be one reason John Bland had such a devil of a time getting sequestered funds released by the Cromwell government.

<sup>2</sup> CSPD, Charles II, Vol. 14, p. 342.

<sup>3</sup> John Foster, London Marriage Licenses: 1521-1869 (1889), p. 140.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., and Carlisle, p. 143.

positively beneficial effect on Thomas' outlook, for the marriage recorder estimated his age as about fifty-five. Thomas had no children by his last two wives.

### John Bland

The fourth child, and second son of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was John Bland (fourth generation). He is the only child of John Bland and Susan Deblere for whom I have been unable to ascertain a birthdate, but the baptismal dates of his older brother Thomas, and his younger brother Edward, reduce the chronological range to sometime between December 1611 and June 1613, so it seems quite safe to place his approximate birthdate at 1612. He died on June 8, 1680, and was buried four days later at St. Olaves Hart Street, where he lived for most of his adult life. John was a very successful merchant, who evidently took over the business affairs of his father.<sup>1</sup> Available literature seems to suggest that he was the decision-maker in the family, the man who decided which brother or cousin would be sent where, made appeals and petitions to the government, and in general, controlled monetary affairs.

John's relationships with the Cromwell regime seem to have been marked by conflict and difficulty, but his relationship with Charles I seems to have been smoother, and he was evidently a fully accepted member of the merchant group that affected the policies of the government of Charles II. He was close to Thomas Povey, Charles II's Master of Requests, and to the famous merchant and diarist, Samuel Pepys.

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<sup>1</sup> John's business relationship with his older brother Thomas, heir to John, the Grocer's estate, is unclear.



John had business interests in Tangiers, where he served as Mayor of that colony for a time in the late 1660's, in Spain, London and Virginia. John appears to have favored remaining in London, with periodic respite in Spain and Tangiers, and directing the family's business affairs from there. His sisters, brothers, cousins, wife, in-laws, and tragically for John, his only son who survived to adulthood, settled in Virginia. John Bland's business affairs and their relation to the Bland family's settlement in Virginia will be discussed in the next chapter.

About 1645, John Bland married Sarah Greene, a daughter of Giles Greene, of Purbeck in Dorset County. Sarah's father was a member of Parliament, which could have influenced his politics at the time his daughter married John Bland, but I have never seen any elaboration upon this point. Sarah's baptismal date is unknown, but if she was twenty-one when she married John, she would have lived to a very old age, for she is said by Thoresby to have died March 4, 1712/1713, and was buried at St. Olaves Hart Street.<sup>1</sup>

John and Sarah had three sons (fifth generation), of whom two died young. The first, John, was born September 28, 1646, and was buried at St. Olaves on January 20, 1659/1660.<sup>2</sup> Thomas, the third son, was baptized at St. Olaves on September 11, 1649, and was buried at St. Antholin's Parish on November 21, 1654.

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<sup>1</sup> The registers of St. Olaves Parish which I reviewed were for 1563-1700, so I have no basis with which to challenge Thoresby's information.

<sup>2</sup> Thoresby states that John was thirteen years, three months and twenty-six days old when he died (p. 586).

The second son of John Bland and Sarah Greene was Giles, who was baptized at St. Olaves Parish on October 26, 1647, and was hanged for his participation in Bacon's Rebellion, in Virginia, on March 27 or March 28, 1677. Chapter IV will include a full discussion of Giles' role in Bacon's Rebellion and the social and political issues that led to his execution.

Giles married Frances Povey, a daughter of Thomas Povey, mentioned previously. By her, Giles had a son John (sixth generation), born after his death, at St. Olaves Parish, in John Bland's home on November 5, 1677. Hunter calls this child "Thomas Posthumous Bland... his legitimacy doubtful." Hunter's remark appears to be spurious. Giles Bland was hanged in late March 1677, and John was born early on November 1677, a passage of seven months' time, which in itself would seem to clear Frances Povey Bland's honor. It is uncertain exactly when Giles Bland was captured and whether he was kept in solitary confinement. Actually, there is no need to rush to Frances' defense, but in the event, one would imagine that her father-in-law, John Bland, could count as well as Hunter. We may safely assume that any whiff of a scandal involving his daughter-in-law during the confinement and execution of his son, would embitter John toward Frances. Yet in his will formulated some three years after the event, John speaks warmly of Frances:

...a competent provision for my good daughter-in-law, Frances Bland, and my grandson, John Bland, being in his infancy, the care of whose education, piety and morality and industry I recommend with great earnestness to my said daughter-in-law, who hath had her share in the undeserved misfortunes of our unhappy familie.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Carlisle, p. 146; Waters, pp. 814-815 (emphasis added by author).

Frances Povey Bland remarried a lawyer, Samuel Starkey, from New Windsdor in Berks County. John Bland, son of Giles Bland and Frances Povey, married Mary Brown, of London, about 1700, and by her had a son, John (sixth generation) called by Hunter "John Bland of the Academy." Hunter lists his dates as 1703-1756. He may be the same John Bland, scholar, who is listed in the Dictionary of National Biography, with dates of 1702-1750.<sup>1</sup> Whatever, he died unmarried and without issue, and his death marks the end of this branch of the Bland family.

#### Edward Bland

The third son, and fifth child of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was Edward Bland (fourth generation), baptized at St. Stephen Coleman's Street Parish on February 5, 1613/1614. He died in Charles City County Virginia on or about May 9, 1652.<sup>2</sup> Like his older brother John, Edward styled himself a merchant and had business connections in London, Spain, Tangier, and Virginia. According to Carlisle, he was in Spain in 1643.<sup>3</sup> He was recorded on the certificate of William Carter in Virginia in 1636 and 1638, and appears to have settled in Virginia permanently about 1647.<sup>4</sup> Edward was educated at Westminster College, and was multi-lingual, being fluent in Spanish, French, Dutch and Latin.<sup>5</sup> While in Virginia he headed an exploratory party that traveled south into what is now North Carolina, and published his findings in a promotional book called The Discoverie of New Brittain.

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1 Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. II (1902), pp. 659-660.

2 WMQ (1st Series). Vol. II (1906), pp. 89-90.

3 Carlisle, p. 297.

4 Nugent I, pp. 160, 171.

5 Richard Beale Davis, Intellectual Life in the Colonial South (1978), p. 357; cf. Allan Briceland, "The Search for Edward Bland's New Brittain," VMHB, Vol. 87 (1979), pp. 133-134, note 17.

Edward married his first cousin, Jane Bland, daughter of his father's brother, Gregory. The date of their marriage is uncertain, although as stated earlier, the bad blood between Gregory and John Bland would have prevented it during their life times. Susan Deblere, in deference to her husband, would not have permitted it while Edward was a minor. Therefore, it is likely they were married about 1634.

Edward and Jane Bland had one child, a son named Edward (fifth generation). His birthdate is unknown, but if he was born a year after his parent's marriage, his birthdate would be about 1635. He was with Edward and Jane Bland when they came to Virginia in 1647, and he is said to have died in 1690.<sup>1</sup> He married Margaret Gilby (Gillie, Gillye or Gilby, Gilbie) possibly a grandchild of John Bland's (1572-1632) sister Mary (1569- ). This would mean that Edward was married to his cousin by his great-aunt, who was also an aunt of his parents, who were cousins, and sister to his parent's parents. Figure that out!

Edward Bland (fifth generation) and Margaret Gilby had one son, John (sixth generation) and a daughter Sarah (sixth generation). Upon Edward's death in 1690, Margaret remarried Thomas Tanner, a planter in Virginia. Edward's son John died unmarried and intestate about 1704. Sarah married Edward New, of Henrico County, and after his death, married Alexander Horton.

By Edward New, Sarah had four children, including a son, John New, who about 1740 got into a legal dispute over possession of lands he alleged belonged to his great-grandfather, Edward Bland. The settlement

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<sup>1</sup> Hening, Statutes of Virginia at Large, Vol. 6, p. 303; hereafter this source will be referred to as Hening.

TABLE V  
 THE FAMILY OF JOHN BLAND OF LONDON: FIVE GENERATIONS

(1)	Robert or Roger Bland	=	???
(2)	Adam Bland (1528-1594)	=	Joan Atkyns (1530-1596)
(3)	John Bland (1572-1632)	=	Susan Deblere (1590-1664)
(4)	John Bland (1612-1680)	=	Sarah Greene (1624-1712)
(5-1)	John (1646-1659)		
		(5-2)	Giles (1647-1677), married Frances Povey about 1675.
		(5-3)	Thomas (1649-1654)

TABLE VI  
THE FAMILY OF EDWARD BLAND OF LONDON  
AND VIRGINIA: FIVE GENERATIONS

- (1) Robert or Roger Bland = ???
- (2) Adam Bland (1528-1594) = Joan Atkyns (1530-1596)
- (3) John Bland (1572-1632) = Susan DeBlere (1590-1664)
- (4) Edward Bland (1613-1652) = Jane Bland (1605-1664)

(5-1)

Edward  
 (1635-1690),  
 married Jane  
 Gilbie.

delineated the Bland family holdings in a way that has been helpful to genealogists.<sup>1</sup>

#### Adam Bland

The sixth child, and fourth son of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was Adam Bland (fourth generation) who was born at St. Stephens Parish, Coleman Street, on September 3, 1616. Thoresby indicates that he died at sea, about 1647, while on a trip to Virginia. This juxtaposition of dates makes it likely that he was enroute to Virginia with his brother Edward's party in 1647, when he died. He is said to have been a merchant with affairs in London, Spain and Virginia.<sup>2</sup>

#### Robert Bland

The seventh child, and fifth son of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was Robert (fourth generation) who was baptized at St. Antholin's Parish on February 22, 1617/1618. He died April 5, 1669.<sup>3</sup> Robert was educated at the College of Corpus Christi, where he was admitted in 1637, received his bachelor's degree in 1640, and his Master of Arts in 1644. He became a minister in 1647 and was appointed Rector of the Wigborough Magna Church in Essex County.<sup>4</sup>

Robert married Mary Hinton, herself the daughter of a minister from Middlesex County. Robert and Mary had five children (fifth generation) including one son and four daughters. The son, Benjamin, died during

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1 Ibid.

2 Thoresby, p. 587; Hunter, p. 423.

3 Venn and Venn, Vol. I, Pt. 1, p. 165.

4 Ibid.

childhood while serving an apprenticeship as a Linen Draper. The first daughter, Elizabeth, was born February 3, 1650/1651, and died in 1709. She married two men: (1) Joseph Ardrey, who was a half-brother or in-law of Sir Joseph Williamson, a government official to whom Giles Bland communicated in order to keep the Crown informed of developments germane to Bacon's Rebellion. Elizabeth Bland Ardrey married (2) William Smith, of Colchester. The second daughter, who had the charming name of Lovegrace, was born November 13, 1655, and died in infancy. The third daughter, Adriana, was born about 1658 and died in April 1703. She married first one Chapel, and second, a man named Prentiss, and had children by both men. The birthdate of the fourth daughter, Margaret, is unknown, but presumably she was born sometime in the 1650's. She married two men, William Greenwell and David Eniver.

#### Anne and Elizabeth Bland

The eighth child, and third daughter of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was Anne Bland (fourth generation) who was baptized at St. Antholin's Church on May 26, 1619. Little is known about Anne, but she married Stephen Jackson, a merchant from Suffolk County on November 7, 1645.

The ninth child, and fourth daughter of John Bland and Susan Deblere was Elizabeth Bland (fourth generation) who was baptized at St. Antholin' Parish on August 30, 1620. Sometime after 1647, Elizabeth married a minister, William Beard, and had children by him. Both Elizabeth Bland and William Beard accompanied Edward Bland on the voyage to Virginia in 1647. William is identified in Alumni Cantabrigensis as



being born in 1613. He was admitted to Kings College in 1630 and matriculated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1633, and a Master of Arts in 1637. After he traveled to Virginia, William secured an appointment as Vicar of Cowley, in Middlesex County, from 1651-1659, and from 1660 until his death in 1686, was Rector of the Ickenham Church.<sup>1</sup> The date of Elizabeth Bland Beard's death is uncertain. She may have returned to Virginia, possibly to attend to some family business, in 1673.<sup>2</sup>

#### William Bland

The tenth child, and sixth son of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was William Bland (fourth generation) who was baptized at St. Antholin's Parish on December 26, 1622. He is identified by Hunter as a merchant in Spain and Virginia, where he is said to have died unmarried and without issue, about 1649.<sup>3</sup> Other information, however, indicates that he was still alive as late as 1658. Specifically, the letter by George Bland (1630-1658) to his cousin, John Bland, in March 1657, states:

...did not cousin William Bland, by friendship he hath got underhand, relieve us in some measure we should have starved long since; and should he be forced away we must of necessity come to that end.<sup>4</sup>

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1 Venn and Venn, Pt. I, Vol. I, p. 117.

2 Peter Coldham, English Convicts in Colonial America (1974), p. 19.

3 Hunter, p. 423.

4 Williams, pp. 23-24. Cf. John McRae Sanders, Barbados Records, Wills and Administrations, 1639-1680, Vol. I, will of John Swan proved November 2, 1658, which shows William Bland as a witness.

Richard Bland

The twelfth child, and seventh son of John Bland and Susan Deblere (the eleventh child was Hester, who died as an infant and will be discussed presently) was Richard Bland (fourth generation) baptized at St. Antholin's Parish on February 11, 1624/1625. Richard died at Beeston Hall, in Leeds, York County, on November 20, 1692. Little is known of his occupation. His name appears, inter alia, with the merchant ventures of his brothers in Spain, London and Virginia, suggesting that he spent some time abroad during the 1640's (including Virginia). He gained his freedom from the company of Framework Knitters, and for the last twenty years of his life was Lord Proprietor of Beeston Hall, which appears to have been his private estate, and the source of his living. Carlisle indicates that Beeston was rich with forests, and later was discovered to be just as rich with coal.<sup>1</sup>

On January 3, 1650/1651, Richard married Jane Lane Pott, a daughter of William Lane and widow of Edmund Pott, both of London. Thoresby indicates that Jane was near seventy when she died at Beeston, May 19, 1694.

Richard and Jane had four sons and two daughters (fifth generation), only two of whom survived to adulthood, and only one of whom married.

Thomas Bland, first child and first son of Richard Bland and Jane Lane Pott, was baptized at St. Katharine Coleman Parish in London, December 19, 1651, and died at Hoxton Leeds, York County, September 1652. Hephzibah, second child and first daughter, was born at Hoxton, September 17, 1654, and died there January 21, 1655/1656. Samuel Bland

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<sup>1</sup> Carlisle, p. 153.

was born at Hoxton, July 4, 1657, and died there March 11, 1657/1658. Rebecca was born at Hoxton January 24, 1658/1659, and died there, unmarried, on February 22, 1681/1682. A son, Benjamin, was born at Hoxton, April 6, 1660, and died there April 24, 1661.

The only child of Richard Bland and Jane Lane Pott to live to adulthood and to marry was Nathaniel, who was born at Hoxton, October 22, 1655. Nathaniel married Elizabeth Fisher, of London, at St. Mary Levoy Parish on April 26, 1681. Elizabeth died in 1712. Elizabeth Fisher Bland was a woman of minor literary note, of whose work Carlisle says "her literary accomplishments afford the most pleasing proof of the solidity of the female mind."<sup>1</sup> Her work consisted of a series of translations into Hebrew of various works of poetry (conversion of poetry from one language to another is an extremely delicate trick). Nathaniel Bland was made free of the Glover's Company of London, and was by trade, a linen draper. He succeeded his father as Lord of Beeston Manor.

Nathaniel Bland and Elizabeth Fisher had six children (sixth generation) of whom one daughter and one son lived to adulthood and married. A daughter was born on December 1681, according to Thoresby, and died immediately. Elizabeth gave birth to a stillborn son in October 1682, at Beeston. Nathaniel, a son, was born March 12, 1683/1684 at Beeston, and was buried May 1684, at a place called Bunhill Fields. Tirzah, a daughter, was born August 3, 1685, and buried at Bunhill Fields in December 1685. Joseph Bland was born December 25, 1686. He was trained in Hebrew by his mother. He married Mary Braithewaite, of Cumberland, on October 15, 1724. It is uncertain whether they had

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<sup>1</sup> Carlisle, p. 153. Cf. Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. II (1902), p. 658.

children. Joseph apparently lived to 102. Carlisle says he died at "a very advanced age" in London in 1788.<sup>1</sup>

Martha Bland, the only surviving daughter of Nathaniel Bland and Elizabeth Fisher, was baptized on November 14, 1688, and married George Moore, of Beeston, on December 15, 1709. By Moore, she had three sons and one daughter.<sup>2</sup>

#### The Minor Children

The eleventh child, and fifth daughter of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was Hester (fourth generation), who was baptized at St. Antholin's on January 18, 1623/1624, and was buried there February 5, 1625/1626.

The thirteenth child, and sixth daughter of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was Rachel (fourth generation) who was baptized on November 14, 1626 at St. Antholin's Parish, and was buried there August 23, 1633. The fourteenth child, and eighth son, was Arnold or Arnall, baptized February 24, 1627/1628 at St. Antholin's Parish, and buried there October 18, 1634. The sixteenth child, and seventh daughter, was Joan Amy, who was baptized at St. Antholin's Parish on January 10, 1631/1632, and was buried there in the same coffin as her father on May 5, 1632. Joan Amy was the last child of John Bland and Susan Deblere.

#### Theodorick Bland

Before Joan Amy, John Bland and Susan Deblere had their ninth son, and fifteenth child, Theodorick, who was baptized at St. Antholin's Parish on January 16, 1629. He was buried at the Bland estate, Westover, in Charles City County, Virginia, on April 23, 1671. Like his older

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<sup>1</sup> Carlisle, p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the family of Richard Bland and Jane Lane Pott, see Thoresby, pp. 587-588, and Carlisle, pp. 151-155.

brothers, Theodorick was a merchant in London. He was in St. Lucar, Spain in 1649, and by 1654 had come to Virginia to take over family affairs, following the death of his older brother Edward in 1652. About 1660, he married Anna Bennett, a daughter of Richard Bennett, a former governor of the Virginia Colony. Anna was born about 1637. After the death of Theodorick in 1671, she married St. Ledger Codd and eventually moved with him to Wharton Creek, Maryland, where she died about 1687.

Theodorick Bland and Anna Bennett had three sons (fifth generation) born at Westover. In this chapter I shall only identify their names and their dates of birth, saving their marriages and families for Chapter V.

The first son, Theodorick, was born at Westover in February 1663/1664. He died at Westover in November 1700. The second son, Richard, was born near Westover on August 11, 1665, and died at his estate at Jordans near the James River on April 6, 1720. The third son was John, who was born at Westover February 8, 1668/1669, moved to York County in England, and died there in 1746. He married, incidentally, Elizabeth Dale, who was a sister to Robert Dale, the informant to Ralph Thoresby, who furnished the first extensive literary source on the Bland family.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Sorrows of Susan Deblere

One of the challenges of modern genealogical and historical research is to reconstruct the lives of ordinary people, those who have gone unnoticed by elitist historians concerned only with the lives of royalty

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<sup>1</sup> Hunter, pp. 425-426, and Thoresby, pp. 588-589.

or great statesmen. Particularly frustrating for the genealogist is to discover an ancient ancestor, for whom nothing is available but dates of birth, marriage, children and death. Yet in most cases, that is all that remains, and even that seems bountiful in some cases. Genealogists are like anthropologists who try to create a whole picture from a bone fragment. One yearns to know so much more about these ancestors, their joys, heartaches, passions, discontents, moods, anger, the trivial and the profound about them, the color of their hair, whether they were fat or skinny, short or tall, fiery tempered or good natured, how they loved, lived, hated. One wishes for god-like power to breathe life into them, to let them live again, to know who they were and what they were like.

Unlike the anthropologist, however, the genealogist is left with fragments of words, little entries in huge tomes, snatches of experience, names in parish registers, on legal documents, a kind word in a will, "to my well beloved wife, Susan"--how many loves and passions, angry marital conflicts and penitent reconciliations must be absorbed in those few words. To recreate, the genealogist must not only read the lines on the page, but between and through the lines, to achieve some understanding.

Among those women of the early generations who married into the Bland family, Susan Deblere stands out. The purpose of this essay is to attempt some clearer understanding of her. It was her children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, who were among the early settlers in Virginia. She is so little known, yet later generations of Blands owe her so much. It is irresistible, therefore, to force from the dry

and dreary pages of wills and registers some intuitive knowledge of who and what she was, to formulate a story about her.

Obviously, she was a woman of remarkable physical and emotional stamina. She was a Juliet without her Romeo. Lay aside any notion that Elizabethan women married any earlier than today. They did not. Yet Susan was the exception. She married the last born child of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns. John Bland was about thirty-four when he married Susan, more than twice her age. No fair Romeo was he. More likely, he was a newly established merchant, thirsting for more. To Susan he must have seemed so old, wise and experienced. Was it a matter of love between them? Marriages in those days were founded on more businesslike principles than today, and were often arranged by parents. In such a culture, John was old enough to have a choice. He must have seen her and thought he would like to marry her. Did Susan have a choice? Would her parents have been moved by the pleas of a fifteen-year-old girl that she did not want to marry a man twice her age? Of these things we know nothing. What is known is that love must have grown between them. They were married for twenty-six years, and Susan was pregnant for about half that time. Her child-bearing years ended when she was forty-one. John Bland was probably not always a joy to live with; ask Gregory Bland or Lawrence Lownes. John's death must have seemed to Susan like an unlikely race against time, for even if he had lived, menopause would have soon released her from the never ending round of pregnancies that marked her life.

But then, perhaps this view of Susan's motherhood is too bleak. Childbirth in all ages has been the time of renewal and joy, and Elizabethans, much more than people in the 20th century can deeply understand, centered their lives around the family. It is charming to

contemplate John and Susan, more than most Elizabethan families, perpetually surrounded by children, who must have been everywhere, playing in the streets near their home, getting into the way of Susan and John and other adults who came to visit or live there, getting into mischief, offering no respite, short of Susan or John huffing angrily off to their private quarters (in case they had any), and slamming the door to get some peace and quiet. There must have been, particularly for Susan, incessant interruptions in the rhythms of her life, so much so that it began to seem as if life had no harmony at all to her, but was just a jumble of day to day events. Her concentration, patience and energy must have been subjected to severe tests daily in order to break up children's fights, quieten their fears, rescue them from danger, bathing, cooking,<sup>1</sup> putting them to bed.

The rewards of all this sacrifice of time and sensibility must have been gratifying to Susan. But there was death too, and it came more frequently than in our time. Susan's children and grandchildren were so numerous that death must have been wrenching to her. To name one reason we cannot comprehend: some religious sects in those days consigned an unbaptized infant to eternal hell, a fact that caused unspeakable grief and heartbreak, even insanity, in many mothers. Except for her stillborn child in 1621, all Susan's children lived beyond the baptismal point,<sup>2</sup> yet children's death cannot be easy for

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<sup>1</sup> Susan must have been a good nutritionist. John lived to age 59, Susan to 74. Twelve of their sixteen children survived to adulthood. Only the stillborn child did not live past infancy. All of this is a remarkable record for Tudor-Stuart England.

<sup>2</sup> Additionally, English mothers of Susan Deblere's time and class often put their infants into the hands of a nursemaid for the first two years, thereby insulating themselves against the infant-mother bonding that is common today.



any parent to bear. My Aunt Hestine once recalled her mother's sentiments about two of her own children's death: no one should have to bury their children. Consider Susan Deblere.

All of the children born to Susan, from Mary in 1607 to 1620, nine in all, lived to adulthood. They were sustenance to Susan, whose child bearing years were followed by the burdens of widowhood and sorrows of multiple deaths, almost certainly the lot of any woman whose family was as large as Susan's, and who lived as long as Susan did. The stillborn child may have been a premonition. In 1625, her two year old child, Hester, died, and then in 1629, she lost her mother.

Several years passed and beginning in 1632, Susan began to feel the full weight of sorrows. These she faced, in a lonely way any woman must understand: without her mother, and without her husband's knowledge, strength and experience. John's death in 1632 ushered in the era for her. He was buried on the same day and poignantly, in the same coffin as their last child, Joan Amy. In August 1633, she buried her seven year old daughter, Rachel. Several months after Rachel's death, Susan petitioned King Charles I for his protection while she made sense of her husband's large estate and fended off "unsatisfied creditors" whom she says "threaten to prosecute me to the ruin of myself and thirteen children."<sup>1</sup> With some allowance for the legal nature of Susan's petition, which tended to dramatize her misfortune, one can begin to understand the dimensions of her inner strength as

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<sup>1</sup> CSPD, Vol. 6, Charles I (1633-1634), p. 44. At the time, Thomas was the only adult male member of the family. Susan's petition offers some insight into the wealth of John Bland: she claimed to have already paid 15,000 pounds to creditors. Today's purchasing power for that amount would be about \$1.5 million.

she tried to make sense of her husband's complicated business affairs (even with legal help) while at the same time struggling with almost constant grief and attempting to hold together her huge family.

Two other events must have saddened her in the 1630's. Her six year old son Arnold, died in 1634, and at about the same time, she must have felt a sense of anger, frustration and bitterness when her son Edward decided to marry his cousin Jane, daughter of none other than Gregory Bland, John's older brother, whom John despised to the extent of banishing him and reading him out of his will. Then there was Virginia.

As we shall see in the next chapter, John and Edward, as well as the younger brothers Adam and Richard, had begun their travels to Virginia in the late 1630's and early 1640's. Since her husband was closely involved with the Virginia Company, Susan must have been world wise enough to see through the puffery that the Virginia Company circulated through the streets of London about Virginia. Surely, her husband had shared his knowledge of the place with her, and she knew Virginia for the swampy, death-ridden, disease-infested pesthole it was in the early years of settlement. Her heart must have constricted every time she heard a son or daughter begin to talk about his next trip to Virginia. The bad news began coming in when her son Adam was killed at sea in 1647, followed by Edward who died in Virginia in 1652. In 1658, her son William died. Between 1643 and 1661, ten of her grandchildren died. She did not live long enough to see Virginia claim the life of her youngest son, Theodorick, or her grandson Giles.

Susan Deblere outlived her husband by thirty-three years. By the time she was buried on Shrovetide Day,<sup>1</sup> February 1, 1664/1665, at St. Antholin's Parish Church, near her mother, her husband and many of her children and grandchildren, the Bland name was already taking hold in Virginia. Her youth when she married the youngest of the third generation children placed her in a unique historical position. By her fecundity, the first generations of Blands in Virginia endured. They were her children and grandchildren. The issue of Susan Deblere's flesh in later generations furnished a bridge to Virginia and the name of Bland flourished in the new world. May she rest in peace.

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<sup>1</sup> Slaughter, p. 152.