

PART TWO

THE BLAND FAMILY OF THE

JAMES RIVER IN VIRGINIA

CHAPTER IV

THE SONS OF JOHN BLAND, THE GROCER

1646: The Past is Prologue

The Bland family set down serious roots in the new world in 1646. By then, Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns had been dead for more than fifty years and all of their children also were dead. Their youngest child, John Bland, "the Grocer," (1572-1632) had been dead for fourteen years. His widow, Susan Deblere (1590-1664), thanks to her youth when she married John, still lived on Sythe Lane in St. Antholin's Parish, by then an old woman by contemporary standards.

Clearly, for this family the new world, which lay tantalizingly across the brow of Englishmen's consciousness, belonged to the fourth generation. Especially did it belong to the sons and daughters of John Bland, "the Grocer," and Susan Deblere.

These are the key characters in this unfolding story: John Bland and Susan Deblere's first child Mary (1607-?), who married Emmanuel Proby, had a son, George Proby, who was among the first of the Bland kin to come to the new world. The second daughter Susan (1609-?) married Thomas Pierson, who was in Virginia by 1639. Susan later joined him and died in Stafford County, Virginia. Edward Bland (1613-1652) was the first major Bland figure to settle down in Virginia. He came in 1646 or 1647 with his wife, Jane (1605-1664), herself the daughter of John, the Grocer's, despised brother Gregory, and Edward and Jane's only child, Edward (1635-1690). This younger Edward married a cousin and by her had two children: John, who died without issue sometime prior to 1704, and Sarah. Neither perpetuated the family name.

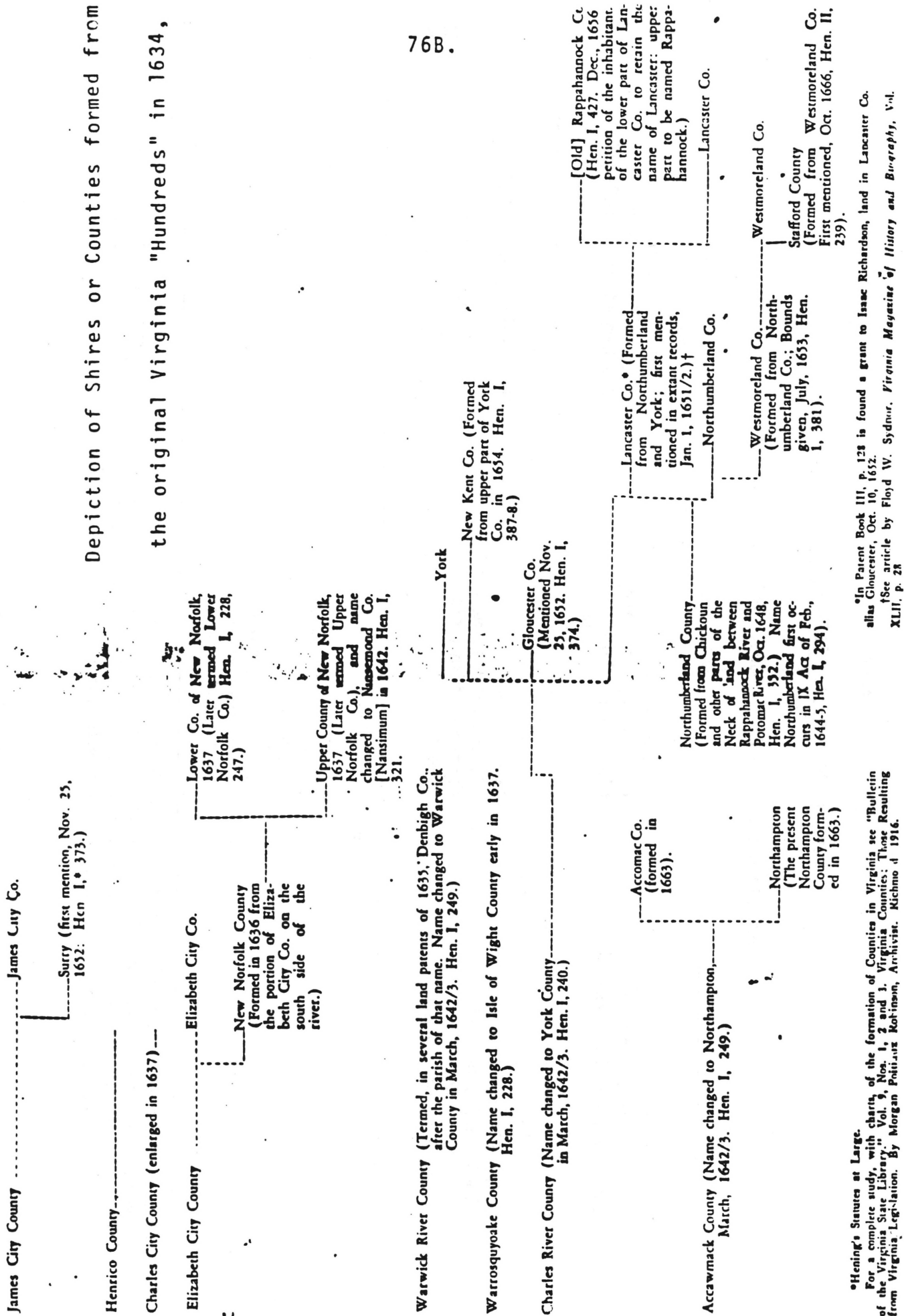
TABLE VII

THE BLAND FAMILY: SETTLERS IN VIRGINIA

(3) John Bland (1572-1632) = Susan Deblere (1590-1664)

(4)	John Bland (C. 1612-1680), married Sarah Greene (C. 1624-1712)	(4)	Edward Bland (1613-1652), married his cousin, Jane Bland (C. 1605-1664)	(4)	Theodorick Bland (1629-1671), married Anna Bennett (C. 1639-1687)
(5)	Giles Bland (1647-1677), hanged in Bacon's Rebellion. Married Frances Povey.	(5)	Edward Bland (C. 1635-1690), married Margaret Gilby, his cousin.	(5)	Theodorick (1663-1700) Richard (1665-1720) John (1668-1746)
(6)	John Bland (- C. 1704), died unmarried. Sarah (?), married (a) Edward New; and (b) Alexander Horton.	(6)		(6)	

(Other children of John Bland and Susan Deblere: Mary (1607-?) had a son, George Proby, and a grandson, Peter Proby, who traveled to Virginia. Susannah (1609-?) moved to Stafford County, Virginia, and died there. Elizabeth (1620-?) traveled to Virginia in 1647 and 1673. Adam (1616-C. 1647), William (1622-C. 1658), and Richard (1624-1692) worked in Virginia as family agents during the 1640's.)



768.

Depiction of Shires or Counties formed from the original Virginia "Hundreds" in 1634,

*Henings' Statutes at Large.
 For a complete study, with charts, of the formation of Counties in Virginia see "Bulletin of the Virginia State Library," Vol. 9, Nos. 1, 2 and 3. Virginia Counties: Those Resulting from Virginia Legislation. By Morgan Polunsky Robinson, Archivist. Richmond 1916.

*In Patent Book III, p. 128 is found a grant to Isaac Richardson, land in Lancaster Co. alias Gloucester, Oct. 10, 1652.

†See article by Floyd W. Sydnor, *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. XLII, p. 28

Before Edward came to Virginia, his younger brothers, Adam, William, and possibly Richard, for a time, acted as family agents in Virginia. Traces of them are found in Virginia records during the first half of the 1640's. But they were loners. Neither Adam nor William were married, and Richard was in Virginia well before the time of his marriage. It was Edward (1613-1652), who came with the intention of remaining. His mission, however, was cut short by his death, so it was Theodorick (1629-1671), the youngest son of John Bland and Susan Deblere, taking up where his brother Edward left off in Virginia, about 1652, who finally laid down roots in the colony.

But the family's settlement in Virginia is due to none of these actors quite so much as to the persistence of John Bland and Susan Deblere's second son, John (fourth generation, 1612-1680). If this chapter were fictional, John would be the character from whose point of view the story was controlled and told. He was the family's overwhelming presence in the last three-quarters of the 17th century. An understanding of John's larger commercial motives form the theme of this chapter, and bring clarity and coherence out of a cascade of conflicting interests and motives. John never lived in Virginia, yet those who did, Edward and Theodorick and their families, were only puppets on his string, at least until he died, moving to his direction, reacting to his will. This John Bland, the merchant, his indomitable wife, Sarah Greene (1624-1712), and their son, Giles (1647-1677), are at the center of this story.¹

¹ To an extent, John Bland enjoys center stage in the story because of the nature of historical evidence, which makes necessary a special tribute to Neville Williams, who, as he says, rescued John's "career from oblivion" in his "The Tribulations of John Bland, Merchant: Seville, London, Jamestown, Tangier, 1643-1680," VHHB, 72 (1964), pp. 19-41, esp. 20. Though Williams was not writing from a genealogical perspective, and was not sensitive to family relations, he did succeed in giving shape to John's public career. My discussion of John Bland relies heavily upon Mr. Williams' article.

It is clear that John Bland was a successful, well educated and cosmopolitan businessman in his time. Like most of the merchant class, he was ambitious and unbending in his desire to marry up, which he certainly did. He married Sarah Greene, the daughter of a parliamentarian from Dorset County. John sought to increase his landed estate and probably, like most London merchants of his time, he wanted his children or perhaps his grandchildren, to rise above his own status as a tradesman, to that of a leisurely life as landed, wealthy gentry. In this last, John was a tragic failure. In spite of what was an obviously successful life, he was at times insensitive, heavy handed, a grasping, often small-minded man, his eye riveted on the main chance, too much so for his own good or for that of his family. It was this unswerving hunger for acquisition and aggrandizement, in addition to his singular political ineptitude that kept his life in turmoil and ultimately brought his family to ruin.

Apparently, John was himself a transitional figure in the merchant's ideal of the gentleman's life of unbought leisure. For whereas Adam Bland, his grandfather, had come up in the world through the ranks of the Skinner's guild, and his father John had bought himself into the Grocer's guild through redemption, John apparently felt no need to affiliate with any guild. He was simply a well-to-do merchant, having inherited his father's business.

John Bland: Merchant in Spain and London, 1643-1664

By the middle of the 1640's, England was embroiled in a civil war that would lead to the execution of the king and a ten-year reign by the Puritan Cromwell. John Bland had just married Sarah Greene, and was becoming quite prominent in commerce between London, Spain, and

to an extent, Virginia. But early in 1643, he made a serious mistake. He had been flouting an edict of King Charles I, whose Ambassador to Spain forbade trade between Spain and London. John Bland continued in the trade, "whereby he ran many hazards of both his person and estate."¹ Fearing that his property might be sequestered, John decided to send all of his goods in Spain to his business partner in London, Andrew King. John, who had been living in Spain, left for London, leaving his brothers, William in Spain, Edward in the Canaries, and Adam Bland acting as his agent in Virginia.²

John valued his Spanish property at 10,000 pounds, and his transfer to England was commercially an astute move. Politically, it was a disaster, for John had seriously underestimated the volatile atmosphere in the mother country. His erstwhile partner, Andrew King, fearing for his life, had fled the city along with the party of King Charles, leaving behind, unclaimed and unprotected, all of John's property. This included not only John's Spanish possessions, but those goods that had been shipped by his brothers in the Canaries and Virginia, and were still aboard ship in London. Parliament, in its fury against King, as a sympathiser to the crown, confiscated all of John Bland's property in his name.

John's enraged response was indicative of his political naivete. He loudly demanded return of what he claimed to be a total of 14,000 pounds of property, pointedly reminding parliamentary authorities that he had loaned them 2,500 pounds which they had used to raise the army that had seized his property.³

¹ Williams, p. 21.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

By the time he returned to London from Spain, the deed had been done: Parliament had sold John's property "for the benefit of the state."¹ John could do nothing but swallow hard and start litigation. He spent the next ten years in pursuit of this lost property, tracking it through an entanglement of government boards before he got a fractional restitution. Litigation dragged on into Cromwell's protectorate (1649-1660). John was granted restitution amounting to 2,718 pounds, but he had actually recovered no more than one-tenth before the entire state was thrown into pandemonium by the beheading of Charles I. Exasperated, John almost gave up.² His case had been immeasurably complicated by Parliament's assessment of a 6,000 pound fine against him and his brother, Thomas, in 1648. Parliament alleged that the two brothers had abused their public trust in the Joint Receivership of the King's Rents from Yorkshire County, and demanded repayment. Any litigation John pursued was thus complicated by this claim, which was not laid aside for a year or so.³ Eventually, the Parliamentary Committee for Public Debts ruled a 4,983 pound restitution in John's estate, but this too dissipated to frustration in the changing political fortunes of the country.⁴

John did not finally regain a part of his losses until the end of 1653, when he piggy-backed his claim onto the settlement of the estate of his brother-in-law, Emmanuel Proby, whom he owed "a very considerable

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Carlisle, p. 143.

4 Williams, p. 22.

sum of money." By joining forces with Proby's executor, John got restitution of 2,480 pounds, most of which he had to pay into Proby's estate.¹

Until about 1664, John remained in London, cultivating his contacts and rebuilding his business. Primarily, he resumed his trade and commerce in Spain, and got involved with the government in provisioning the British fleet. It was this enterprise that, when hostilities broke out between Spain and England, led to the capture and death of his kinsman, George Bland (1630-1658). George's death was a grim residue of John's constant struggle for wealth. Before George, two of John's brothers, Adam and Edward, had perished in another point of John's triangular commerce, a distant and half-civilized little corner of hell called Virginia.

Virginia and the Bland Family: 1616-1646

By the time the Bland family settled in Virginia, the new colony had survived for forty years. Historians of Virginia know that these first years were hard and bitter ones for the men and women who lived there. During the first eighteen years of the colony's existence, it was controlled (governed is not the word) by a private enterprise venture known as the Virginia Company of London. As its name implies, it was based not in Virginia but in London, and its policies were formulated outside its primary base of operations. Also, although it

¹ Ibid. This was of course a family matter, and perhaps less than a fair exchange for John. His sister Mary, Proby's wife, stayed at John's house with her younger children until she remarried. Whether John, with his eye ever on a monetary chance, charged her room and board, is unknown.

had about it some of the aspects of a civil government, it was not created to govern, to provide security, stability and well being for its citizens. It never did. Following a debilitating Indian massacre, the company was closed down in 1624 by the King of England. The story of mismanagement by the successive leaders and entrepreneurs who came to Virginia is succinctly summarized by one disillusioned investor in the Virginia Company, who at the time of the Indian massacre, did some demographic calculations: between 1619-1622, 3570 persons had been sent to the colony. This figure, added to the 700 inhabitants in Virginia in 1619, produced a total of 4270 persons, yet only 1240 were alive in 1624 after the massacre. The Indians had killed 350, leaving a balance of some 2700 persons who had died because of structural and environmental conditions in Virginia.¹

To give these early founders their due, their failures are offset by the simple fact that they did establish a colonial nucleus which survived the hideous environmental obstacles and the leadership's towering stupidity and greed. History redeems them for this, and perhaps also because there was no adequate colonial precedent from which to draw methodological lessons or emulate in practice.

¹ Edmund Morgan, American Slavery, American Freedom (1975), p. 101. One critical reason for such a horrifying mortality was that the Sandys administration, of which John Bland, the Grocer, was a part, did not profit from the experiences of earlier leaders who dispersed the population away from Jamestown during the summer months, thus avoiding the worst effects of epidemics spread by contaminated seawater. The Sandys people never caught on to the connection between environment and mortality: Carville V. Earle, "Disease, Environment and Mortality in Early Virginia," in Thad Tate, Ed., The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century (1979), pp. 96-125.

Virginia, in those early days, was not a place where one wished to bring a wife or family. Basically, it had all the attributes of a boom town, uninhabitable, uncivilized. It was not until the three decades preceding Bacon's Rebellion in 1675-1676, that a pattern of settling down, choosing to live there, and to enrich the community with permanent homes, schools and churches, began to take hold. In 1959, Bernard Bailyn wrote an elegant and concise theoretical paper on the nature of settlement and the arrival of political and social stability in Virginia. Bailyn argued that not until the 1640's when the first traces of family names such as Byrd, Bland, Carter, Burwell, Ludwell and Mason began to appear, did Virginia settle down. Typically, these names were represented in Virginia by younger sons of substantial and well-connected London families, some of them Royalists who were fleeing the perils of life in England under the Puritan protectorate.¹ The integration of the Bland family into Virginia may be considered a veritable model of the Bailyn thesis. To illustrate the point, it may be useful to discuss the connection of the elder John Bland, the Grocer, with the colony.

As Bailyn says, John Bland never "touched foot" in Virginia.² The first mention of John Bland's connection with the Virginia Company indicates that initially he was not heavily invested. In 1618, he purchased four shares of stock which entitled him to 400 acres of land in Virginia, not a very large investment as land proprietorships

¹ Bernard Bailyn, "Politics and Social Structure in Virginia," in J. K. Martin, Ed., Interpreting Colonial America (1975), pp. 186-203, esp. 192-193. The Bailyn thesis is enlarged by Edmund Morgan in his American Slavery, American Freedom (1975), the best recent treatment of the Virginia story in my opinion.

² Ibid.

went in those days. John's business connections with the Virginia Company are not exactly certain. Possibly he got involved in the Company to enhance his more important trade activities, just as he had joined the Grocer's guild for the same reason.

John got involved with the Virginia Company during the Sandys' administration period (1616-1624). John's vantage point was from London. He served on a number of committees which did, to their credit, attempt to invest some internal order in Virginia, such as an attempt to discourage excessive planting of tobacco and at the same time to encourage the planting of staple food crops which would provide homegrown nourishment for the settlers. At the same time, he participated in notions which were at best naive, and at worst, simple recruitment gimmicks to lure the unsuspecting poor into Virginia. One such idea was the establishment of an ironworks in the colony. John, from his London perspective, profited substantially from his connections. He was part owner in a consortium which owned merchant ships, "The Abigaill," "The London Merchant," and "The Ionathan." These merchants evidently had an edge on the competition for shipping goods to Virginia. Additionally, John was associated with a group which in 1622 established "Martin's Hundred,"¹ one of the "particular

¹ John Bland's activities with the Virginia Company are discussed in Susan Myra Kingsbury, Ed., The Records of the Virginia Company of London, 4 Volumes (1906-1934); hereafter referred to in notes as Kingsbury. Vol. I, pp. 275-276, 386, 391-392, 410, 413, 467; Vol. II, p. 420; Vol. III, pp. 59, 66, 81, 592-593, 466.

plantations" which, after 1634, became the formative counties in the colonies.¹ Those who established the hundreds advanced the proposition that they would set aside a certain part of the land for municipal purposes, and that every person who settled for three years at least would get a fifty acre plot. Of course, the catch was that very few people stayed in Virginia for three years. Those who tried usually died in the disease-ridden environment, thus there was little need for schools, churches and the like. On the other hand, for the investors in "Hundreds," the reward was 20,000 acres with promise of an additional 20,000 acres when the "hundred" was populated. As an investor, John Bland profited handsomely.

All of this happened, indeed the Virginia Company folded, when all of John Bland and Susan Deblere's sons were only children. There is an evidentiary hiatus in Bland family activities until 1635, by which time John, the Grocer, was dead and the Bland commercial affairs had been taken over by his son John.

The younger John Bland (1612-1680) came to Virginia twice in 1635.² These trips were followed in 1636 and 1638 by Edward Bland (1613-1652) who traveled to Virginia as another man's headright.³ Again in 1637, a ship called the "Tristram and Jane" arrived in Virginia carrying goods consigned to John Bland.⁴ Another entry in Virginia records shows

¹ Martha Woodruff Hiden and Annie Lash Jester, Adventurers in Purse and Person (1956). Hereafter, this source will be noted as Hiden and Jester.

² New England Historical and Genealogical Quarterly, Vol. II, p. 212, and Vol. IV, p. 261.

³ Nugent, Vol. I, pp. 42, 91.

⁴ Martha Hiden, "Accompts of the Tristram and Jane," VMHB, LXII (1954), p. 432.

that William Bland (1622-1658), went to Virginia in 1640 under an indenture. By 1643, Adam Bland (1616-1647) was acting as the family's agent in Virginia.¹

All of this makes it fairly clear that the Bland family had been interested in Virginia for about thirty years before Edward Bland (1613-1652), who had been in Spain and the Canaries, was sent to Virginia by John Bland.

Edward Bland: 1646-1652

Edward's name first appears on Virginia records as a London merchant on July 7, 1646, when note was made of his purchase of 2,000 acres of land near the Lawnes and Upper Chippoakes Creeks, in Charles City and Surry Counties, near Jamestown. Subsequent entries refer to Edward simply as a merchant, suggesting that he may have begun to style himself differently soon after arrival, one positive indication that he identified with Virginia and intended to settle down. Certainly the second entry, March 10, 1647, in which he is given 1,300 acres for transporting twenty-six persons to the colony, indicates that he came to the colony prepared to stay, for the list of head-rights includes, in addition to himself, his wife Jane (1605-1664), his son Edward (1635-1690), his sister Elizabeth and her future husband William Beard, and his nephew, George Proby.²

These two transactions gained Edward Bland some 3,300 acres, contiguously located in the Jamestown area. On December 23, 1649, he added an additional 3,000 acres at Upper Chippoakes. The evidence

¹ VMHB, Vol. 40, p. 141; Thoresby, p. 208.

² Nugent, Vol. I, pp. 160, 171.

also seems to indicate that at about the same time, Edward purchased an 8,000 acre tract of land called Kymages, which had originally been part of the Berkeley Hundred in Westover Parish, Charles City or Surry County.¹ Thus, within a short time of his arrival, Edward appears to have amassed a property holding of about 14,700 acres.²

Theodorick would later add to this land by purchasing tracts called Westover and Jordans, as well as several smaller tracts.

By 1678, John Bland could itemize the following real property holdings in Virginia:

The several plantations of Bartletts, Kimecheys, Herring Creeke, Jordanes, Westover, Upper Chippoakes, Sunken Marsh Plantation, Basses Choice, Jamestowne Lott, Lawnes Creeke and all other lands etc.³

The above would indicate that the major land acquisitions were accomplished by Edward Bland, and that by the time of Theodorick's death in 1671, the Bland family had title to in excess of 16,700 acres (Westover was 2,000 acres), making the Bland family certainly among the largest of mid-17th Century Virginia landholders.⁴

Obviously, such large land acquisitions exceeded subsistence and dwelling needs. They were shrewd investments, for real property could be transferred, upon the owner's death, to children or relatives. Also,

¹ Bailyn, p. 193; Hening, Vol. VI, pp. 303-308. Edmund Jennings Lee, Lee of Virginia, 1642-1800 (1895), p. 137; hereafter in notes, referred to as Lee. VMHB, Vol. III (1895), pp. 124-125; VMHB, Vol. XLIV (1956), pp. 464-465.

² In addition to the above, John had purchased "Basses Choice," a 400 acre tract, in 1643. WMQ (1), Vol. VII, pp. 214-215.

³ WMG (2), Vol. 4 (1899), pp. 202-203.

⁴ Wilcombe Washburne, Bacon's Rebellion, Unpublished Ph.D. Diss. (Harvard University: 1955), pp. 649-714. This is the key chapter in Washburne's work, and much of it contrasts the real property holdings of participants on both sides of the rebellion. Washburne's analysis sets the Bland family's land holdings in perspective.

the property had an inestimable intrinsic value in timber, furs, and resale as settlements multiplied. But these lands were far off and the least amount of tinkering with values, entitlement, or settlement, was bound to create a crisis. The sort of loose, family confederation that evidently applied in these Bland possessions seemed to guarantee an eventual conflict. Although John Bland evidently provided the money for the purchases from family funds, the basis of his frequent boast that he had invested "more than 10,000 pounds in Virginia," entitlement seemed to rest in the hands of Edward, and after him, Theodorick. This was not a bad arrangement, but as will later be seen, when these brothers died, there arose a crisis of ownership which ultimately caused tragedy in the family. The widows of Edward and Theodorick and their heirs rightfully claimed ownership of the Virginia lands. In both cases, Edward and Theodorick had minor sons upon their death, and their widows exercised a dower right to the lands as long as they lived. It is probably true that John Bland used family money to buy the lands, passing the money to Edward and Theodorick, but if the widows persisted in challenging John's claim to the land, as Theodorick's widow Anna Bennett did, John was left no recourse but to seek restitution through lawsuits.¹

Following this acquisition of property, Edward recedes from the records. His name appears in Maryland archives in 1647 as a result of his lawsuit to recover a boat that was stolen from his wharf.² Edward is most noted, however, for his exploratory travels. On

¹ Letter, Leslie Dawson to Charles L. Bland, June 1, 1981.

² Maryland Archives, noted in Miscellaneous Material Collected by Mr. Leslie Dawson.

August 27, 1650, Edward struck out with three other gentlemen, two indentured servants and an Indian guide. They left Fort Henry (see map IV, page 114A) and headed south across the Nottaway and Meherrin Rivers as they exist in present day Virginia, and turned back after they reached the Roanoke River, North Carolina, just to the west of the Chowan River near Albemarle Sound, just east of present day Rocky Mount, North Carolina. After his return, Edward Bland wrote a short pamphlet entitled The Discovery of New Brittain, which described the terrain, flora and fauna, and native inhabitants of this previously unexplored land. Convinced that the area would yield a rich and profitable harvest of tobacco and sugar, Edward petitioned the Virginia Assembly for the right to gather up one hundred able men to settle the territory. The Assembly granted the request, and Edward got the pamphlet published in London in 1651. It was designed to recruit interested settlers for Edward's project, and it has become a minor classic in colonial American history as an example of the way the Virginia gentry attempted to profit and build upon their explorations. Bland's preface to the pamphlet summarizes the mixture of ideal with profit motive that inspired early Virginia merchants.

Whoever thou art that desirest the Advancement of
 God's glory by conversion of the Indians, the
 Augmentation of the English Commonwealth, in extend-
 ing its liberties; I would advise thee to consider
 the present benefit and future profits that will
 arise in the well settling Virginia's confines,
 especially that happy country of New Brittain.¹

¹ Edward Bland, The Discovery of New Brittain (1651), reprinted by the March of America Facsimile Series, No. 24 (1966); longstanding differences about Edward Bland's route are unraveled in Alan V. Briceland's "The Search for Edward Bland's New Britain," VMHB, Vol. 87, (April 1979), pp. 131-157.

The project was abrogated by Edward's death on May 9, 1652, and there is no evidence that Theodorick, upon his arrival the following year, did anything to follow through on the project.

Following Edward Bland's death, his widow Jane Bland stayed on in Virginia. Title to Edward's property passed to her, at least temporarily.¹ Soon she remarried to John Holmwood, a lawyer who had been a counsel to Edward Bland. By then, Jane was probably about forty-seven years old and past childbearing years; there is no record of her bearing any children by Holmwood. Several sources show Jane's sister Frances coming to Virginia to be with her, at "near fifty years of age."² Frances herself got married to one John Coggan, a chiurgeon, or doctor from Charles City County, and it is not unreasonable to assume that the two couples, with Edward's son, lived under the roof of the house that Holmwood had constructed soon after Edward Bland's death.³

Back in London, John Bland could not have been entirely pleased with these developments. First, although the enormous amount of real property that had been bought up by Edward passed from him to his wife Jane, in John's reasoning John Holmwood, thousands of miles from London, could probably figure out a way to get to the property⁴ if he had a mind to.

¹ Nugent, Vol. I, pp. 277, 279.

² Thoresby, p. 585. Beverly Fleet, Virginia Colonial Abstracts, Vol. 22, p. 12.

³ Elizabeth Davis, Ed., Surry County Records, Book I, 1652-1684. (1957), p. 4.

⁴ Nugent, Vol. I, pp. 277, 279. Holmwood did in fact become a joint administrator with Theodorick Bland, indicating that by the time Theodorick arrived (1653), Holmwood must have obtained some leverage with the property, and in spite of John's worries, was probably an honest man.

Then there is the fact that both Jane Bland and her sister Frances were the daughters of Gregory Bland, who had been driven out of the family by his younger brother John, the Grocer. Edward's marriage to Jane almost certainly resurrected family tensions on this subject. John must have viewed with dismay a development whereby the children of his father's confessed enemy ("Lownes played the knave with me and Gregory Bland likewise deceived me") were in the bosom of some of his most lucrative investments.

John Bland evidently thought it natural to replace Edward with yet another brother. This time it was Theodorick Bland (1629-1671), the youngest son of John Bland and Susan Deblere, who at the time was managing family affairs in Sanlúcar, Spain. Theodorick came to Virginia about January 1653/1654.¹

Theodorick Bland: 1652-1671

Key documentary sources such as Miss Fleet's abstracts, William Hening's Statutes at Large, and H. R. McIlwayne's Minutes of the Council and General Court of Colonial Virginia, as well as other basic sources are replete with notices about Theodorick, who lived in Virginia from 1653 until 1671 when he died, during which time he married and started a family, and served in various government posts, as well as adding to the Bland family's fortunes. Alexander Brown says of him that he was "both in fortune and understanding inferior to no person in his time in the country."²

¹ Davis, Surry County Records, p. 11.

² Brown, Genesis, p. 830.

Theodorick served as Speaker of the House of Burgesses from 1659-1661, and as Justice of Charles City County in 1664-1665. He was a member of the Council of Virginia in 1665-1666.¹ As a merchant, he added considerable property to the already formidable holdings of his brother Edward. In 1657, an unspecified amount of acreage called Jordans,² (formerly known as "Bugger's Bush")³ was signed over to Theodorick. In 1666, Theodorick purchased a 2,000 acre estate called "Westover" where he lived until his death. Westover had been in 1619 part of the estate of Henry, Lord De La Warr, and in 1636 had been purchased by Captain Thomas Pawlett, who when he died in 1643, passed it on to a brother, who sold the property to Theodorick for 175 pounds.⁴ It appears from entries in McIlwayne that Theodorick, in addition to having clear title to his own specific land acquisitions, joined with John Holmwood in amicable joint custody of the estate of Edward Bland, at least after Jane died in 1664.⁵

Theodorick married Anna Bennett (1639-1687) in 1660.⁶ She made a handsome upward connection for Theodorick for she was the daughter of Richard Bennett, who had served variously in Virginia since 1629,

¹ Brown, Genesis, p. 830.

² Davis, Surry County Records, p. 30.

³ VMHB, Vol. 2 (1893), p. 419.

⁴ Bailyn, p. 193; Waters, Gleanings, Vol. 1, p. 425. Westover was ultimately sold to the Byrd family by Theodorick's sons in 1688, for 800L. sterling and 10,000 pounds of tobacco. It became the estate of William Byrd.

⁵ H. R. McIlwayne, Minutes of the Council and General Court, 2nd Ed. (1979), p. 358; hereafter referred to in notes as McIlwayne.

⁶ McIlwayne, p. 503.

including a four-year stint as governor (1652-1655), when he was appointed by the Puritan regime in England to bring Loyalists in the colony under control. Part of the marriage dowry was Richard Bennett's house in James City County.¹ As indicated in the first chapter, Theodorick and Anna were parents of three sons (fifth generation): Theodorick (1663-1700); Richard (1665-1720); and John (1668-1746). The next chapter will be devoted to the descendants of these three brothers through the end of the 19th century.

Theodorick seems to have been a generous man, who was fairly interested in the welfare of the colony, making him part of the distinctive new breed of settler celebrated by Bailyn. According to one source, he donated ten acres for a church in Charles City County, and was prime builder of a county court house and parish prison.²

Theodorick died on April 23, 1671, and on his tombstone was inscribed the following in Latin:

*Cujus Vidua Moetissima Anna, Filia Richard Bennett*³

Anna Bennett Bland remarried about 1675 to Colonel St. Leger Codd,⁴ a man who had business affairs both in Maryland and Virginia, and was a follower of the government of William Berkeley. Colonel Codd survived Anna, who is said to have died in November 1687 at Wharton Creek in Maryland.⁵

¹ VMHB, Vol. 8 (1900), p. 73.

² Jester and Hiden, p. 98; and WMQ (1), Vol. IM (1898), p. 143.

³ VMHB, Vol. X (1902), pp. 373-374; Lee, pp. 137-140 ("His most disconsolate widow Anna, daughter of Richard Bennett").

⁴ Thoresby, p. 586.

⁵ VMHB, Vol. X (1902), pp. 373-375.

John Bland in London and Tangier: 1660-1676

By 1660 John Bland had recovered from his earlier business reverses and was doing quite well as a London merchant. During his marriage to Sarah Greene, two of his three children had died, but his second child Giles (1647-1677) was now about thirteen years old. It is obvious from extant records that the family lived at Hart Street, St. Olaves Parish, not far from the Thames River and the London Navy Yard.¹ John and Sarah lived in a very large house, which the government once leased for the lodging of government employees.² The house was also a home for various members of John's, and probably Sarah's, family. Parish registers show that at various times John's widowed mother, Susan Deblere, and his sisters, Mary Bland Proby and Susan Bland Pierson, and their children lived there. In addition, there were several families of boarders.

When the exiled King Charles II landed at Dover on May 26, 1660, the years of being politically an out ended for John Bland. His old associate, Andrew King, was among the delegation of merchants on hand at Dover to meet Old Charlie. King was soon appointed to a new position within the customs service,³ and the record makes it abundantly clear that John Bland also was in the good graces of the various governmental bodies concerned with merchant activities in the reign of Charles II.

¹ St. Olaves Parish was by John Bland's time, about 600 years old, and had a rich tradition in London society. The parish church was one of the 22 of 109 standing churches which survived the great fire of 1666. The parish's history is discussed in Percival Hunt, Samuel Pepys in the Diary (1959), pp. 40-44.

² CSPD, Charles II, Vol. 15 (1673), p. 77.

³ Williams, p. 25.

As a newly refurbished merchant, John became a writer of minor authority on commercial topics. In 1659, he had published Trade Revived, or a Way Proposed to Restore the Trade of This Our English Nation. Again in 1661, while Theodorick was experiencing the confidence of the Virginia Colonial Government, John wrote To the King's Most Excellent Majesty the Humble Remonstrance of John Bland, a treatise intended to acquaint the King's government with the disastrous effects of the Trade and Navigation Acts upon commerce in Virginia. He may also have been the author of a work written in 1662, A Short Discours of the Late Forren Acquests Which England Holds, viz. of Dunkirk... Tangier... Boombay... Jamayca... Ect...¹ Whatever his talents as a merchant, John was no Milton. One reviewer comments, "Bland spelled badly, even by Seventeenth Century standards."² Samuel Pepys, the famous diarist and business associate of John Bland, confirms this:

December 1662: Read over half of Mr. Bland's discourse concerning trade which (he being no scholler and so knows not the rules of writing orderly), is very good.³

John Bland probably made the acquaintance of Pepys (1633-1703) some time before the Pepysian diaries were started. Like Bland, Pepys lived on Hart Street in St. Olaves Parish, and they seem to have attended the same church. Perhaps a chord of commonality was found in the Huguenot origins of Susan Deblere and Pepys' wife. At any rate, Pepys and Bland had many shared interests, especially between 1662-1665, when Pepys became instrumental in the affairs of the Crown's new

¹ Robert Latham and William Matthews, Ed., The Diary of Samuel Pepys, (Vol. III) 1662, pp. 157-158. Hereafter, the Diary will be referred to as Pepys, with the volume number indicated.

² Pepys, Vol. III, p. 291, note 7.

³ Ibid.

colonial outpost in Tangiers. The record makes it clear that although Pepys was not a close personal friend, and did not always approve of the way Bland went about things, he nevertheless admired his accomplishments and commercial talents. Entries in Pepys' diaries (1660-1669) open windows to some appealing and interesting glimpses into the lives of John Bland and his family:

August 6, 1662: Mr. Bland, the Merchant to me, who hath lived long in Spayne, and is concerned in the business of Tangier, who did discourse with me largely of it; and after he was gone, did send me three or four printed things that he hath writ of trade in general, and of Tangier particularly. But I do not find much in them.¹

On September 5, 1662, Pepys was invited to John Bland's house, where he found "all the officers of the Customes; very fine, grave gentlemen, and I am very glad to know them."² What follows was a long bout of cards and vicious gossip,³ which is however not germane to this study.

On November 11, 1662, Bland was back at Pepys' house:

Telling me very fine things in Merchandize; which but that the trouble of my house doth so cruelly hinder me, I would take some pains in.⁴

On December 31, 1662, Pepys goes to Mr. Bland's:

Where we stayed discoursing upon the reason for delay in the going away of those things a great while. Then...eat a dish of Anchoves and drink wine and syder and very merry...⁵

¹ Pepys, Vol. III, pp. 157-158.

² Ibid., pp. 188-189. The customs service was established in 1671, replacing a farm system of collectors.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Pepys, Vol. III, p. 255. The trouble in Pepys' house was with his wife.

⁵ Pepys, Vol. IV, p. 10.

January 9, 1662/1663: Mr. Bland came in the evening to me hither, and sat talking to me about many things of Merchandize, and I should be very happy in his discourse, durst I confess my ignorance to him, which is not so fit for me to do.¹

Another gossipy discussion of government, officials, especially royalty, transpired between John Bland and Pepys on February 13, 1662/1663..

Mr. Bland setting with me, talking of my Lord Windsor's being come home from Jamaica unlooked for; which makes us think these young lords are not fit to do any service abroad.²

On June 25, 1663, John Bland visited Pepys for some business and there discussed the battle of Ameixial fought between May 29-June 8, 1663 in which the English routed the Spaniards.³

The following long and colorful entry describes a visit to the Bland home by Pepys on July 24, 1663:

...so home and being sent for presently to Mr. Bland's house, where Mr. Povey,* Gauden and I were invited to dinner--which we had very finely, and great plenty but for drink, though many and good. I drunk nothing but small beer and water, which I drunk so much that I wish it may not do me hurt.

They have a kinswoman they call daughter in the house, a short, ugly red haired slut⁺ that plays upon the virginalls and sings but after such a country manner, I was weary of it but yet could not but commend it.⁴

* Thomas Povey, future father-in-law to John's son, Giles.

+ One wonders who this colorfully described girl is. John Bland and Sarah Greene had no daughters.

¹ Pepys, Vol. IV, p. 10.

² Ibid., p. 41.

³ Ibid., p. 198.

⁴ Pepys, Vol. IV, pp. 242-243.

Pepys goes on with great relish to recount how after dinner, a voice teacher arrives to give instruction to the girl he so colorfully described. "What a droll fellow it is, to make her hold open her mouth and telling this and that so drolly, would make a man burst out."¹ Afterward, the guests all repaired to Sarah's kitchen and "sat down to a collation of cheesecakes, tarts, custards and such like, very handsome..."²

In 1662, the North African city of Tangier came into English possession as a result of a royal marriage, and the idea of expanding his success by turning the colony into a profitable trade base, began to capture the imagination of John Bland. Pepys first makes note of Bland's interest in the colony on August 6, 1662.³ By October 1664, John and Giles had left London for Tangier and he was followed by his wife Sarah the following spring.⁴

For John Bland, as for most merchants, as well as Pepys, the primary interest in the colony was commercial. Bland made a prophecy to Pepys on April 13, 1665, that if the crown encouraged men of property to settle in Tangier, the colony would prosper within a few years "and be made a beautiful and delightful place."⁵ Less than a month later, John writes:

Nothing can be of greater service to the King than to make Tangier famous, which can be done by making it cheaper for ships to land and re-ship from thence than to go direct to Spain.⁶

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Pepys, Vol. III, pp. 157-158.

⁴ Pepys, Vol. V, pp. 270-271, and 287-288; and Vol. VI, pp. 43-45.

⁵ CSPD, Charles II, Vol. IV (1664-1665), pp. 307-308.

⁶ Ibid., p. 346.

During the next few years, John Bland hoped to consolidate his gains by being appointed English consul at Malaga, where he hoped to spend "all the vintage time," remaining in Tangier the rest of the year. Although he did not get the consulship, he did prosper in Tangier, from whence he sent Pepys "a very fine African matt." He became easily the most prosperous merchant in Tangier.¹ When Tangier was incorporated in June 1668, John Bland became its first mayor, where he remained until 1676, although his fortunes were not always good there.

The crown had incorporated Tangier in order to provide to the merchant class some leverage in the military government of the colony. Yet Tangier's chief use to the British government was as a strategically located garrison and naval station. Thus, there was incipient and continuing conflict in the colony between military and civilian leaders, throughout John Bland's stay there.²

In the summer of 1664, before he went to Tangier, John Bland had gone to Pepys' home and harangued him "till eleven at night" about the problems for commerce presented by the military dominance of Tangier. At length, Pepys grew weary of Bland and ran him out of the house.³ But Bland's mind did not change, for on first returning to London from Tangier, he again called upon Pepys and:

...tells me, in short, how all things are out of order there and likely to be--and the place never likely to come to anything while the soldier governs all and doth not encourage trade.⁴

¹ Williams, p. 127; Cf. Pepys, Vol. VII, p. 167.

² E. M. Q. Routh, Tangier, England's Lost Atlantic Outpost: 1668-1673 (1912), pp. 113-117. Hereafter referred to as Routh.

³ Pepys, Vol. V, p. 226.

⁴ Pepys, Vol. VII, p. 109.

The presenting cause of the merchants' resentment toward the military in Tangier was that it was an inert, non-income producing entity that entailed a heavy cost in taxes. In fact, friction probably resulted because the merchants' interests did not seem compatible with maintenance of order in the colony.¹ Soon after he became mayor, John Bland got into an unseemly political quarrel with Colonel Henry Norwood, Lieutenant Governor of the Colony. Colonel Norwood looked upon himself as the custodian of the colony's welfare, and toward his self-perceived ends, felt it necessary "to jostle just a little upon the charter," which angered John Bland. The quarrel between Bland and Norwood came to a head over the merchants' unlicensed selling of wine (which probably involved John Bland very closely). Norwood asked Bland to see that the merchants put an end to the practice. Bland refused to recognize the legitimacy of Norwood's authority, and with his son Giles,² began spreading rumors to the effect that Norwood was not only pocketing his soldiers' salaries, but was also profiteering from various underhanded practices.³

Probably because these accusations caused Norwood to get close with him, Bland fled the colony in December 1666, retreating to London.⁴ Pepys, hearing of the conflict, was angry and somewhat disillusioned that Bland had bungled the merchants' interests by allowing himself to get into this squabble.

¹ Routh, pp. 121-122.

² This Colonel Norwood had served as Treasurer of Virginia in the 1650's and 1660's, and was related to Governor William Berkeley, of Virginia "by a near affinity in blood." Thus, it is probable that the reputation of John's son, Giles Bland, preceded him in Virginia. Cf. Bailyn, p. 194.

³ Routh, pp. 117, 122-123; Williams, p. 26.

⁴ Williams, p. 26.

Pepys felt that John Bland had gone out of his way to alienate the military. But most of all, he was aggravated by Bland's clumsy and disordered way of presenting his case.

Never did I see so great an instance of the use of grammar and knowledge how to tell a man's tale as this day, Bland having spoiled his business by ill-telling it.¹

By January 1668/1669, Bland had returned to London and met with Pepys, who continued to feel that Bland was "a foolish, light-headed man," but by then other information had come to Pepys' attention causing him to soften his opinion about Bland. Pepys had learned that Bland and others representing the corporation in Tangier had submitted some "really good" proposals to Norwood, whose answer to them had been:

...shitty, proud, carping, insolent and ironically, so profane in style that ever I saw in my life--so as I shall never think the place can do well while he is there.²

One of Norwood's men rejoiced when John Bland left Tangier, predicting that "provided Mr. John Bland comes not againe to disturb us,"³ the colony would adjust and exist in tranquility. But Norwood's behavior seems to have offended the Tangier committee so much that it acted in traditional government committee fashion: it sent Bland back to the colony in 1670 to co-exist with Norwood.

Back to Tangier went John Bland, reconstructed but unregenerate. The military, he said:

...would have none to live here but those that will... leave them to rule at their wills; buy all, keep all, make slaves of all and get all, destroy all, that will not doe as they doe, and take all fish that comes to their nett.⁴

¹ Pepys, Vol. IX, pp. 392-393.

² Ibid., pp. 430-431.

³ Routh, p. 153.

⁴ Ibid., p. 123.

Again, in 1675, John Bland wrote:

Except his Majestie resolve to make the civill power so eminent as no way be chequed by the military, Tangier will never produce worthy men to live there... Never place could come into a trading nation's hands fitter to be the Magazin of the known world than this, if so bee that honest men had encouragement, knaves punished and governors sent that would permit his majesties interest as well as there owne.¹

So went the dispute between Bland and Norwood. It continued until John Bland's failing health and news that his interests in Virginia were going from bad to worse, forced him to return to London in 1676.

The Bland Family in Virginia: 1671-1674

When Theodorick Bland died in 1671, the family was left without a fourth generation male representative. It appears that the family's property was divided two ways. First, when Edward Bland (1613-1652) died, the major property passed to his wife Jane, or perhaps to a joint custodianship between Jane, John Holmwood, and Theodorick, after he came on the scene.

Edward's son, Edward (1635-1690) gained control of at least Kymages probably when his mother died in 1664.² Jordans and Westover appear to have reverted to Anna Bennett upon the death of Theodorick Bland. John Bland must have been disconcerted to have chunks of real estate as large as Kymages, Westover and Jordans, paid for by his business, fall into the hands of a grandson of Gregory Bland (Edward), even if Edward was also a grandson of John, the Grocer. The entire in-law issue

¹ Routh, p. 148.

² This assumption is implicit in Hening, Vol. VI, p. 303.

had to be unsettling for John. Virginia records seem to suggest that John Holmwood survived his wife, Jane Bland, and also his brother-in-law, Theodorick. There is nothing in the record to suggest that Holmwood was ever exploitative, or took advantage of the Bland family. But then Frances Bland, another of Gregory's daughters, had been living with her sister since about 1653, and the man she married was another matter. Frances' husband, John Coggan, was a doctor, or as they were called in Virginia, a "chiurgeon." It is not certain whether he was a quack or a true physician. Clearly, however, he was an alcoholic, a cheat and a scoundrel, as well as being a gutsy and irrascible brawler. Fleet's record of lawsuits against him seems to indicate that like the other chiurgeons, lawyers and politicians in Virginia, he had his eye on the main chance.¹

Virginia, rife as it was with sickness and disease, was a land of golden opportunity for doctors. As Edmund Morgan wryly notes, sick men could not bargain well, and dead men not at all.² Seventeenth century Virginia doctors charged outrageously high fees for services, and since their ministrations usually hastened their patient's death, collected their ill-gotten fees from the deceased's estates. These chiurgeons were often able to insinuate themselves into the estate settlement of the deceased by these unsatisfied doctor bills, or more adroitly, by marrying the widow and grabbing the whole pile. In the specific case at hand, Fleet records several instances where families of former clients

¹ Beverly Fleet, Virginia Colonial Abstracts, Vol. 10-13 (1961), passim. Hereafter referred to in notes as Fleet.

² Morgan, American Slavery, American Freedom, pp. 163-164.

sued Coggan. One client, who was so angry that he broke Coggan's cheekbone in a dispute over medical services, was ordered to pay Coggan 5,350 pounds of tobacco.¹ In 1665, the court heard evidence of a dispute between Coggan and one Wilkins, another client. Coggan had gone to the house of a neighbor and had met Wilkins there, "betwixt whom passed several words of ill and abusive language," whereupon the two "fell to collering." Wilkins flung Coggan to the ground, blacked his eye and cut his lip, falling upon the doctor, boxing his ears. A dog became excited and joined the fray, biting and lacerating Wilkins' leg, whereupon the two men ceased their hostilities for a spell, and Coggan in a moment of perverse compassion, treated Wilkins' wound. Having treated Wilkins, Coggan then grabbed an axe and threatened to cut off his leg and "knock out his brains."² In 1673, there is another such instance:

John Black for laying hands on John Coggan (in the court and Coggan appearing bloody in the nose). Also, John Coggan for the assault made by him on John Black by pulling him by the hayre of the head in the court and other rudeness in the face of the court.³

One can easily imagine John's reaction to all of this: "Damn Frances Bland. Wouldn't you know Gregory Bland's daughter would marry somebody like John Coggan?" Hearing of Theodorick's death, John must have seen the necessity of breaking up this nest of in-laws. His key objective was to reclaim and consolidate the family fortune. By now, John had used up Adam, William, Edward and Theodorick. This time he had to dig deeper. He sent his only surviving son, Giles Bland, to Virginia to set things straight.

¹ Fleet, Vol. 13, pp. 61, 68, 71.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., p. 95.

Giles Bland and the Family Claim: 1674-1675

Giles Bland was a chip off the old block. Charles Campbell, using genealogical material held in the 18th century by Theodorick Bland (1740-1790), indicates that Giles was "a man of strong parts but of great passions, haughty and imperious beyond bearing."¹ This is a fair summation of Giles, to which should be added that he possessed all the heavy-handedness and political naivete of his father. As an adult he was an attorney. It is not certain where he was trained, but by 1665-1666, Pepys' diaries make clear that he was shuttling to and from Tangier in service to his father,² and he certainly was involved in the dispute between John Bland and Colonel Norwood in 1668-1669. For the next few years, his activities are unknown, but he probably returned to Tangier with John and Sarah in 1670. He first appears in the Virginia records about the autumn of 1674, and given the rather slow means of responding to situations across so great a distance in those days, that lapse of time before his arrival, following Theodorick's death, is about right.

Once in Virginia, Giles moved quickly to recover the Bland family property, or to dispose of it. He appears to have reclaimed the biggest piece of land, Kymages, without difficulty, in a transaction consummated with his cousin, Edward Bland, on March 20, 1674/1675.³

¹ Campbell, The Bland Papers (1840), p. 146.

² Pepys, Vol. VI, p. 65.

³ Hening, Vol. VI, p. 303, Sarah Bland, 1681, returned 2,000 acres of the Kymages tract to Edward Bland. Upon his death in 1690, the returned land was deeded to Edward's heir, John, and upon his death sometime after 1704, the property was given to John's sister, Sarah. Cf. Nugent, Vol. II, p. 217.

Giles also liquidated at least two of the land holdings, "Basses Choice" in December 1675, and "Lawnes Creek" in January 1675/1676.¹

The property that had been in clear title of Theodorick Bland was not so easy to recover. Anna Bennett Bland, one must remember, was now administratrix of Theodorick's estate and mother of his three minor sons. Probably, she had uppermost in her mind the preservation of Theodorick's wealth, that it might be passed on to them. As a result, "in accomodating ye whole affaire with his aunt, he found many difficulties."² Giles first moved legally against Anna on November 18, 1674,³ but had in fact been attempting for several months to negotiate with her. His attempts at settlement seemed more in the nature of uncompromising demands, and showed a striking spirit of meanness and lack of generosity. For example, he demanded that Anna turn over to him a mare that Theodorick had left specifically for a son.⁴ Anna Bennett was not without her defenses in this matter. She was, after all, the daughter of a former governor, and soon after the onset of her quarrel with Giles Bland, she married Colonel St. Leger Codd, of Northumberland County, Virginia, a lawyer and military man who was active in the Virginia government, and who supported Governor William Berkeley during Bacon's Rebellion, 1675-1676.⁵ Giles' niggardly behavior may have driven Anna to marry St. Leger Codd. It is clear

¹ Davis, Surry County Records, p. 137; and Nugent, Vol. II, p. 217. Cf. WMQ (I), Vol. V. (1900), pp. 214-215.

² VMHB, Vol. 21, p. 127.

³ McIlwayne, p. 394.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 448-449.

⁵ VMHB, Vol. 10 (1901), pp. 374-375.

that in the long and drawn out dispute that followed, Colonel Codd became very much involved, and given his connections in Virginia (he was a member of the House of Burgesses 1680-1682) might have been the critical reason for Anna's ultimate success in holding the property. But Codd was not the only Berkeley loyalist that Giles angered in his dispute with Anna. More important was Berkeley's Secretary of State, Thomas Ludwell. On October 3, 1674, Giles and a traveling companion stopped at Ludwell's home while he was away, and in the custom of the time, were offered food and lodging for the night. Ludwell returned, found the two men there and after a few glasses, the subject turned to John Bland's claim against Anna Bennett:

...both (Ludwell and Bland) heated with too much brandy and wine...Ludwell (told Giles Bland) that his father had sent him to Virginia with forged writings to cheate a widowe.¹

With these words, gentlemanly discussion turned sour. Giles called Ludwell a "pittyful fellow, son of a whore, mechanic fellow, puppy and coward."² What happened next is not certain. Giles claimed that the two men exchanged gloves, signifying their acceptance of a duel. Ludwell claims that Giles woke up next morning and stole his glove. What is certain is that Ludwell's glove next day was nailed to the statehouse door, with various and sundry crude remarks.³

¹ VMHB, Vol. 20 (1911), pp. 350-52, and Vol. 21 (1912), pp. 126-27 and 132-133.

² Ibid. Of all these epithets, only "mechanic fellow," meaning loosely, common man, does not have modern currency. Ludwell alleged these comments. Giles never admitted them.

³ Ibid.

It was not an auspicious beginning for Giles. At the very least, his quarrel with Ludwell was ill-chosen, and in no way helped him settle his father's property claims. But an attack on a highly placed government official had far worse consequences: it left Giles in bad odor with the ruling power, Governor Berkeley. Giles was ordered to "immediately acknowledge the horrid injuries he hath done (to Ludwell)" and was ordered to publicly ask forgiveness, in addition to which he was fined 500 pounds, payment of which was held in abeyance until Giles had an opportunity to appeal.¹

Giles did apologize publicly to Ludwell, but with such sarcasm and anger that no one who heard it thought he had repented. He never paid the 500 pounds.

On His Majesty's Service: Giles Bland,
Custom's Collector, 1675-1676

Giles' inflammatory work with his father and his intemperate clash with Ludwell in Virginia, should have served as a warning against entrusting him with further responsibilities, but it didn't. On February 12, 1674/1675, the customs service in England, as an able extension of the government and ever watchful for the opportunity of doing the wrong thing, appointed Giles Bland as the crown's collector of customs in Virginia. The customs officer interpreted and enforced the new colonial Navigation and Trade Acts, formulated in 1651 and revised 1660, 1662 and 1673. It demanded a person with a tactful and compromising temperament, who could tread carefully between the financial interests of the local powers, who sought trade with the least

¹ Ibid.

encumbrances, and the crown, which wanted to maximize revenues to the state. In colonial America, these two interests were always in conflict. Conciliation was impossible anyway. The appointment of Giles Bland was utter insanity.

The Navigation Act of 1673 had established a single customs officer in each of the American colonies. He was to ascertain that every ship entering and departing Virginia waters had complied with the rules and laws on customs duties, as set forth by the Trade and Navigations Acts. Further, the Act of 1673 changed the customs officer's salary from a fixed fee to a percentage of receipts.¹ This last piece of lucre gave incentive to the customs officer to do all that he could to collect as much as he could for the King's treasury, thereby enhancing his personal fortune as well. The previous, fixed salary arrangement had made the customs officer much more the creature of local authorities. This feature of the new law tended to compound the Berkeley government's already well stimulated antipathy toward Giles Bland. Thus, the unhappy juxtaposition of events: Giles was appointed customs officer at just the time when local hostility toward him was highest. In the process, Giles' rather unbecoming behavior with Anna Bennett became the catalyst for conflict with the Berkeley government on a state level, for Giles was in effect an extension of the King's power.

Giles undoubtedly was appointed to the customs post through John Bland's influence, as well as by the influence of Thomas Povey, and perhaps Samuel Pepys. It is important to note that about the time

¹ Thomas Barrows, Trade and Empire: The British Customs Service in Colonial America (1967), pp. 20-24. Cf. Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Period of American History, Vol. 4 (1938), pp. 119-121, 137.

Giles went to Virginia, he had married Povey's daughter, Frances. Povey was one of the Masters of Requests in the government of Charles II, and as Pepys' diaries make clear, an old and trusted friend of John Bland.¹ Significantly, when John Bland drew up his will, he appointed Povey his executor.

Giles also was in touch, through John, with William Blathwayt, a key member of the Lords of Trade and Plantations. And through a cousin connection involving a marriage by one of his uncle Robert Bland's (1617-1669) daughters, Giles was in touch with Sir Joseph Williamson.² Finally, of course, the Blands had influence with Samuel Pepys. Thus, Giles Bland not only had land and its concomitant influence within Virginia, but also formidable lines of communications to the centers of commercial power within the government of Charles II. In the end, Giles' communications with these gentlemen would form the prevailing opinion in England about what was happening in Virginia, during the time of Bacon's Rebellion. It would be an unhappy time for Governor Berkeley and for Giles Bland as well.

From what we know of John Bland and his character, it would seem obvious that he looked to Giles' appointment as a way of enhancing his connections in Virginia. But Giles' behavior in the new job did not bode well for the future. In September 1675, some six months after he started the appointment, Giles wrote a defiant letter to Governor Berkeley, citing case complaints that made it obvious he was at odds with the local authorities from the very beginning. Shunning subtlety,

¹ John and Giles Bland's relationship with Povey, William Blathwayt and Sir Joseph Williamson, are discussed in Washburne, Bacon's Rebellion, pp. 232-245.

² Ibid., pp. 242-244; cf. pp. 63-64.

Giles put Berkeley on notice that, acting as the King's representative, he had exclusive authority in customs matters, whereas Berkeley had none (a misunderstanding of jurisdiction under the Trade Acts). Having denied the old man everything, he proceeded to inform him, in a brilliant irony that seemed to escape Giles, that he could not enforce the Acts "without your honor's assistance." Giles lectured Berkeley further that to date, he had done all that he could to impede the customs work. Giles went on to list several examples,¹ all of them undoubtedly true, which substantiated his allegations, and then laid down the law to Berkeley:

1. Giles wanted a single customs house for all shipping into and out of the York and James Rivers. Giles would have sole charge of the central customs house.
2. Customs deputies, appointed by and accountable to Giles, would be stationed throughout the colony.
3. All of Giles' appointments would be certified by Berkeley.
4. The governor would supply a copy of all bonding information to Giles.

Giles reminded Berkeley that due primarily to his interference in customs matters, the Acts of Trade were being daily violated; unauthorized European goods were coming into the colony, and Virginia commodities were being exported wholesale without payment of duties.²

Now, Governor Berkeley's Green Spring faction was truly an unholy gang of thieves, if ever there was one, and Giles Bland's allegations were probably dead accurate. But truth is beside the point. Giles, in accusing Berkeley of violating the Acts of Trade, was in essence

¹ Barrows, p. 22, and McIlwayne, pp. 435-436.

² Barrows, p. 22. Barrows' authority is the Egerton Mss. 2395, Folio 515.

accusing the governor of treason against the king. And unfortunately for Giles, the Acts of Trade did not leave colonial governors without latitude. They, too, were creatures of the king. Not only that, but sources of Giles' power were across the Atlantic ocean, while Berkeley and his henchmen were neighbors, as it were, just a stone's throw away. Giles' accusations were void of any political acuity, and the governor's response was swift and certain. Giles was suspended from the customs post and placed under the sheriff's custody. Apparently, he was not actually jailed. The Council of Virginia, probably cringing at the proximity to truth of Giles' accusations, condemned the letter as an affront to the government. Berkeley himself, as Giles told it, angrily told Bland that if he attempted to clear any ships, he would "jaye me by the heeles, withall, calling me villain, puppy and such like."¹

That was not the end of it, however, for no matter how powerful Berkeley was locally, the extent of his authority in relationship to Bland was never clearly defined. Giles simply refused to recognize the suspension. Philip Ludwell wrote to his brother Thomas in London in June 1676 that Giles Bland:

...refuses to have any of his papers recorded, yett sayes all the world (though he keeps them in his pockett) ought to be obliged to obey them, and within these two howers most malapertly to the Governor's face, thretened the Councell to give an account of them to England...²

Although the London authorities appear to have commiserated with John Bland about his son's suspension, and in fact forbade the imposition of the 500 pound fine for his confrontation with Thomas Ludwell,

¹ Ibid. Egerton MSS 2395, Folio 515 and 565. Cf., McIlwayne, p. 423

² Washburne, The Governor and The Rebel: A History of Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia (1957), pp. 54, 198.

nothing was done to reverse the Virginia government's action. Thomas Barrows summed up the situation accurately:

In all probability, Bland would have been removed from his collectorship, even had he not participated in Bacon's rebellion. The customs officers alone could not effectively enforce the Acts of Trade. If they were at odds with the local authorities, there were two possibilities: to replace the customs officer or remodel the colonial government. Of the two, the former was by far the easier.¹

There is no denying that Giles Bland's alliance with Nathaniel Bacon was the last straw for Berkeley. At the same time (1675-1676), Giles was sending derogatory reports about his government back to England. Berkeley had his back to the wall and was rapidly losing control of the situation in Virginia. Once he regained his power, Berkeley's retribution, in true 17th century fashion, was swift, sure, unmerciful, and cost Giles Bland his very life.

Giles Bland, Rebel: 1676-1677

The chain of events that ended in Bacon's Rebellion began in July 1675, when a party of Doeg Indians took some hogs from a frontiersman in Stafford County, claiming he had failed to settle with them for some goods he had bought. The settler retaliated by killing or beating several of the Indians and taking back his hogs, whereupon the Doegs retaliated with a full force raid in which one of the settler's servants was killed. The settlers along the Stafford-Westmoreland county line launched an indiscriminate attack upon several Indian tribes. By

¹ Barrows, p. 23.

January 1675/1676, Governor Berkeley was forced to take action to suppress the spreading unrest.¹

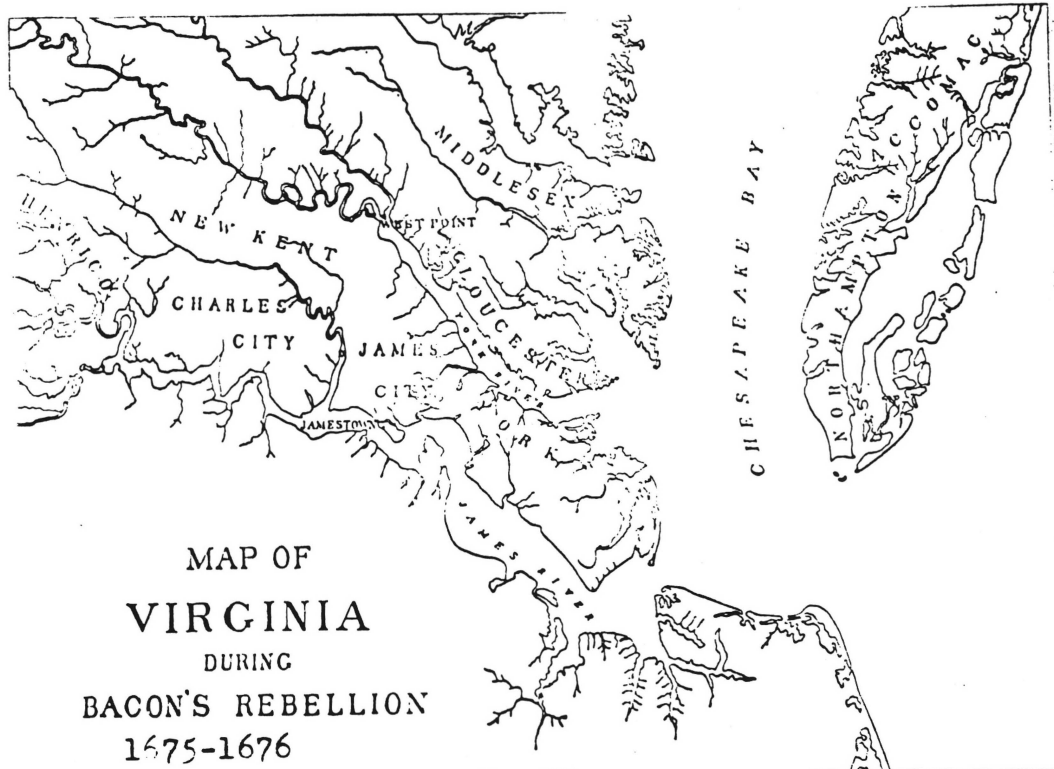
Berkeley, who had generally followed a conciliatory policy with the Indians, chose a defensive policy over retaliatory assault. His solution was a series of forts, for which he would lease contracts, to be situated at the head of each major river, and to be manned by 500 solders conscripted from the lower counties. Berkeley added a further provision that even if the Indian enemy was spotted, he was not to be attacked until the governor gave his approval, by which time, as frontiersmen knew, the Indians would have slipped away into the woods. None of this was likely to win the frontiersmen, who were up in arms about the perceived Indian danger, particularly those from Surry and New Kent Counties who had mutinied against Berkely over taxes, and who perceived this basically static defensive plan as worthless against the mobile and roving Indian forces. Rather, they saw it as another instance of Berkeley's Green Spring faction profiting at their expense.

Into this credibility gap came Nathaniel Bacon, a man about the same age as Giles Bland (Bacon was 29 in 1675), and a newcomer to the colony, whose wife was a close friend of Berkeley's wife, and who was quickly appointed to the Governor's council. Although Bacon was not a radical by nature, he did seem to have a "certain disdain for wealthy Virginians, who had reached their position from 'vile' beginnings or 'whose tottering fortunes have bin repaired and supported at the public chardg,'" ²

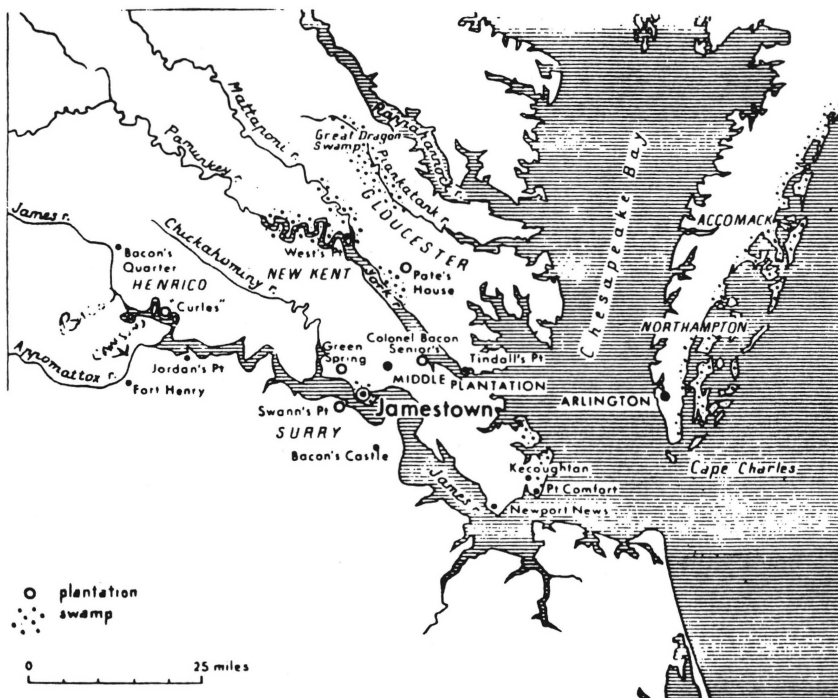
¹ The following discussion of Bacon's Rebellion is derived from Edmund Morgan, American Slavery, American Freedom (1975), pp. 250-292, passim.

² Morgan, p. 255.

MAP III



MAP IV



The James River area, 1675-1676. Note Jordan's Point. The Bland family property was in this area, just south of the juncture of the James and Appamatox Rivers.

Well-off Virginians who were on the outs with the local government, men specifically like Giles Bland, or who just had not been able to get into the Berkeley faction, began to coalesce around Bacon. Undoubtedly Giles Bland was present when, one day in April 1676, Bacon and some of his neighbors got together for a few social drinks. No doubt at this gathering fiery discontent against Berkeley was vented. Later in the month, Giles wrote to Sir Joseph Williamson that "the state of things heere...I find to be in a verie distracted posture." Giles went on to remind Williamson, one of the eyes and ears of the king, that Virginia yielded about 100,000 pounds of revenue to the king through its commerce, and this bounty was endangered if something was not done to curb the profligacy of Berkeley's faction. Giles also spoke darkly of "a considerable Bodie of the Countrie (which had) armed themselves without comission against their enemies,"¹ the Indians.

The Indians then became the catalyst for the grievances of propertied men against Berkeley. To these were added the lower classes, the small property owners and recent freedmen who bore their own grudges against Berkeley, and also were afraid of the Indian threat. Giles Bland cultivated the anger of this group, encouraging them to appeal to the King directly against the extortionary policies of the Green Spring faction, and he got these lower classes to nominate him to be their spokesman back in London.

This was about June 1676, when Berkeley's agents had been compelled to appear in London before the Commissioners of Customs to answer charges Bland had brought against them. Bland's constant flow

¹ VMHB, Vol. 20 (1912), pp. 352-353. Cf. CSPC, IX (1675-1676), pp. 385-386.

of information informing the Commissioners of the disintegration of authority in Virginia undercut attempts by Berkeley's agents in London to discredit negative information.

In the information war, Giles' insistent clinging to the customs position was critical for awhile, for he and Bacon were thus able to get their letters and reports to England during the late spring and summer, and into the fall. Berkeley, on the other hand, was unable to get his communications to the king because of the interceptive powers inherent in Bland's customs post.¹

On July 8, 1676, Giles informed his father-in-law, Thomas Povey, that he had got into the position of spokesman for the discontented in Virginia because:

...the country has resolved to make known to his majesty their deplorable and distressed condition, through the great and heavy burthens of taxation laid upon them, and the continual murders committed by the heathen.²

To reduce a lot of complicated activities to a few sentences, Bacon and his lieutenants sought to get a commission from Berkeley for a "moving force" to carry out a sustained Indian war on the frontier. When Berkeley refused, the Bacon group proceeded without warrant. This was pure and simple insubordination, and on May 10, 1676, Berkeley removed Bacon from the council and denounced him publicly. Bacon, by now completely outside the blanket of government authority, launched a campaign against all Indians, even killing at one point a group of friendly Occaneechee Indians who had just captured a party of Susquehannahs for Bacon. By now Berkeley considered Bacon's activities, and Bland's, treason, and he so defined it, thus alienating and pushing

¹ Washburne, Governor and Rebel, p. 93.

² CSPC, Vol. IX, 1675-1676, pp. 426-427, and Morgan, pp. 255-256.

Bacon's group further into desperation. Nor did Berkeley win favor among the lesser followers of Bacon by calling them "the lowest of people," a description that was mild compared to other comments made by the Green Springs group.

The assembly elections in late May went overwhelmingly to Bacon sympathizers. Bacon arrived in Jamestown on June 6; his leaders, Bland among them, and fifty armed men coming in on a sloop. This gave Berkeley an opportunity to seize Bacon, and after securing a written confession of disloyalty, thrust him before the House of Burgesses on bended knee. Then in an about-face, possibly an attempt at conciliation, Berkeley released Bacon, who quickly departed Jamestown, and contrary to Berkeley's hopes, began regrouping his forces. Two weeks later, he appeared in Jamestown again, this time with a force of five hundred behind him, sufficiently overwhelming any militia Berkeley had on hand.

Exasperated, Governor Berkeley strode out of the statehouse and in a dramatic gesture, bared his breast and shouted at Bacon: "Here! Shoot me, foregod, fair Mark, shoot." Bacon didn't shoot, thus forfeiting one of the rare opportunities man is given to do a truly good work. Instead, he demanded the commission he had so long sought from Berkeley. This time, he had the strength in numbers to get what he came for. The commission gave Bacon authority to raise as many volunteers as he could, and if he saw fit, to transform the volunteers into government forces. After the deed was done, Berkeley attempted vainly to rally a counter force around him, voicing the claim that Bacon's commission, wrenched from him at gunpoint, was null and void. But the governor's power and authority had slipped away. To use a modern phrase, the

hearts and minds of Englishmen in Virginia belonged to Bacon. "Everything is now deplorable here," wrote Berkeley to Thomas Ludwell in England on July 1, 1676, "and three young men that have not beene two years in the Country absolutely governe it: Mr. Bacon, Mr. Bland and Mr. Ingram."¹

For the next several months, Bacon's army and the disorganized forces of Berkeley's government marauded around the country, seeming to vie with one another in who could out-plunder who. In August, Bacon dispatched Giles Bland and another lieutenant to Jamestown to capture the governor, but in a momentary reversal of his bad fortunes, Berkeley's men captured Bland instead. Inspired by this success, Berkeley made a desperate last gamble to regain control by offering freedom to the servants who would rally to his banner. This backfired in two ways. First, it angered the more well-to-do who had a vested interest in keeping the lower classes under their heels, and secondly, the lower classes no longer felt that Berkeley could deliver the goods. Bacon swept into Jamestown, bringing in his wake a swollen army of conscripts he had gathered by making promises similar to those made by Berkeley. After a brief resistance, Berkeley and his faction fled Jamestown for England, and Jamestown was burned to the ground on September 19.²

Ultimately, however, the rebellion failed. Giles Bland was probably released when Bacon burned Jamestown, but on October 26, 1676, which was Giles' birthday, Nathaniel Bacon died of the "bloody flux"

¹ Washburne, Governor and Rebel, pp. 69, 203.

² Ibid., pp. 72, 77 and 78.

and the rebellion petered out. By the following January, Berkeley was back at Green Springs, repatriating the small fish, reinstating his friends, and meting out his justice to the surviving instigators of the rebellion, including Giles Bland.¹

By February, an investigating team commissioned by Charles II, arrived in Virginia to inquire into the causes of the rebellion and to recommend remedies.² These commissioners were armed with a general pardon by the king for all who submitted to his authority. But Charles II had not reckoned upon William Berkeley's outrage. In particular, Berkeley wanted Giles Bland dead, and he refused to bend to the king's will. By the time word could get back to England, the deed was done. Giles was tried March 3, 1676/1677, convicted and sentenced on March 15, and hanged March 27, 1677. It profited Giles Bland nothing that Charles II sent a letter to Berkeley, sharply rebuking him for his lese majeste in modifying the royal pardon. The letter was mailed by the king in May and it reached Virginia in September, by which time Berkeley himself was dead.³ Such was the nature of communication in those days.

For John Bland and Sarah Greene, then in Tangier, the news of Giles' death was grievous and terrible. John, who was in failing health, and Sarah returned to London. John quickly sent to Virginia for his daughter-in-law, Frances Povey, and returned her to his home,

¹ Morgan, pp. 268-269.

² One of the investigators, Sir John Berry, was a close friend of John Bland and Thomas Povey.

³ Morgan, pp. 272-275; Hening, Vol. II, p. 550; CSPC (1677-1680), Vol. X, pp. 14, 42-43, 165, 189.

where she gave birth to John's grandson on November 5, 1677.¹ Now John had lost three brothers and a son to Virginia. But John, now old and enfeebled, was not one to change a method that didn't work. Finding that Giles' execution had left the Bland property in Virginia unprotected, and that "divers persons under several pretensions... have procured themselves of the slaves, cattle and other goods belonging to him," John, in July 1678 hustled his wife Sarah out to Virginia to continue the effort of recovering the family estate.² The odds against success were high, but if anyone could do it, Sarah Greene was the woman for the job.

A Feminine Standoff: Sarah Greene vs. Anna Bennett

If the most cogent imagery for her mother-in-law, Susan Deblere, was of the physically strong, enduring matriarch, then her daughter-in-law, Sarah Greene, evokes the image of a flinty woman of quick wits, and like her husband, dogged determination.

I have a hunch that Sarah was close to her mother-in-law. The uncertain business fortunes of her husband in the 1640's and 1650's, and the loss of two of her sons in the same period, could have made them close, for surely Susan Deblere could tell Sarah of grief. Also, while John Bland made his first trip to Tangier in the fall of 1664, Sarah remained behind in London, joining John only in late February 1664/1665, just two weeks after Susan Deblere died. It is fortuitous that Susan Deblere died when she did, for if she had lived on for a

¹ The reader will recall from the previous chapter that John treated Frances and his grandson, John, generously in his will. Cf. p.

² Williams, Op. Cit., p. 28; CSPC, Charles II, Vol. X (1677-1680), p. 275.

few more months, Sarah might have stayed with her in London, and herself died in the plague that struck London in the summer of 1665.

An enchanting human warmth in the married lives of John Bland and Sarah Greene is implied in Pepys' diaries, which speak of large, boisterous communions among business associates, good food and a large home that was fairly alive with multiple families of kinsmen and boarders.

Even in advanced age, Sarah appeared able to turn male heads, suggesting that indeed she was a beautiful woman. Pepys, one of the most accomplished womanizers of the time, clearly admired her, and Sarah must have enjoyed his company. Two profuse and strangely spelled letters from Sarah to Pepys have been preserved and they fairly brim with girlish delight in his assistance to her in making a connection to Tangier:

Really sir...he (the captain) did treat me with that respect that if I had been the greatest lady in England, he could nott show me more, and clearly it was upon your account.¹

Romances seem to have danced near Sarah on several occasions, though there is not a shred of evidence, in Pepys' diaries especially, where such accounts of his affairs with other women are prolific, or elsewhere, that Sarah was ever unfaithful to John.²

¹ Sarah Bland to Pepys, Rawlinson Mss, A174, Folio 95, and Pepys, VI, pp. 42-45.

² It appears that Sarah, between 1688-1691, had some kind of romance with William Blathwayt, Secretary to the Lords of Trade, who was acquainted with her former husband and was her advocate during her dispute with Anna Bennett Bland Codd and St. Leger Codd. Yet even this is a bit improbable, for Blathwayt was 39 or 40, and Sarah was well into her sixties. Most likely, Sarah had a flirtatious and coy way of writing, her own version of Machiavellian coquetry, which unsuspecting historians mistake for romantic interest.

Pepys seemed rather to admire Sarah Greene, whom he considered an astute business woman, his equal in fact. On December 31, 1662, Pepys came away from a business meeting at John Bland's house, "above all, pleased to hear Mrs. Bland talk like a merchant, in her husband's business very well, and it seems she doth understand it and perform a great deal."¹ Again on September 8, 1664, Pepys remarks of Sarah, "I being fain to admire the knowledge and experience of Mrs. Bland, whom I think as good a merchant as her husband."² Pepys was an acute observer and the fact that he spoke of Sarah with such admiration indicates that she was an exceptional presence.³

Sarah showed her sheer gutsiness in following through as her husband's emissary in Virginia from about 1678-1682. Armed with a power of attorney, she literally took on the government of Virginia in an attempt to get the family's estate settled. In this, she seemed to show some grace with her kinsmen, for whereas Giles had simply taken back the entire acreage of Kymages, Sarah, in 1681, returned 2,000 acres to her nephew, Edward Bland.⁴ But she got no further with Anna Bennett than had her son, Giles.

Following his dispute with the Berkeley faction, Giles was blocked by Berkeley's men in his suit against Anna Bennett Bland and St. Leger Codd.⁵ An entry by the council and general court dated March 21,

¹ Pepys, Vol. III, p. 300.

² Chappell, p. 29.

³ Alice Clark, Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century (1968 pp. 38-39. Clark uses Sarah Greene Bland as a case example of her conclusions.

⁴ Hening, Vol. VI, p. 303.

⁵ McIlwaine, pp. 448-449.

1675/1676, postpones the hearing. Soon after, Giles became embroiled in Bacon's Rebellion and did no more with the family estate. Prior to going to Virginia, however, Sarah Greene had taken up, in London, much of the work that had been undertaken in Virginia by her son. On April 22, 1676, Sarah filed a petition to the king, complaining about the "unexampled severity" of the Berkeley government's actions against Giles. She asked the king to revoke both the 500 pound fine against Giles, and his suspension from the Collector of Customs post. Further, she entreated the king to end the "prejudice and bitterness" with which Giles was being treated in Virginia.¹ This appeal was referred to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, who ordered that the charges be supplied the Virginia agents and that both parties attend a meeting of the board on June 8, 1676.²

Thomas Ludwell himself arrived at the hearing to defend Berkeley, and he came out swinging, "finding himself...bespattered with a part of that dirt which is thrown upon the whole government of Virginia by ...Mrs. Bland."³ Clearly, Ludwell was going for the jugular when he claimed, in answer to the often repeated assertion that John Bland had invested over 10,000 pounds of family money in Virginia, that if the account books of Edward and Theodorick Bland could be produced, "not a fifth part of the sum mentioned in the petition was laid out in the plantations or other estates."⁴ Ludwell retold the story of how Giles came to his home and how the two men had argued about Giles' suit against Anna Bennett Bland, and the insulting letter (by Ludwell's

¹ CSPC, CII (1676), p. 379.

² CSPC, CII (1676), pp. 397-398.

³ VMHB, Vol. 21 (1913), pp. 128-131.

⁴ Ibid.

lights) that Giles had written to Governor Berkeley in September 1676. When he was finished, it was clear that Ludwell would concede nothing to Sarah's sex or case. Things were now coming to a head in Virginia. One wonders if Sarah was fully aware of the seriousness of the civil disorder in Virginia, how deeply her son was involved, and that her (actually her husband, John's) persistence in the face of it was slowly tightening the noose (literally) around her son's neck.

The family matter went unresolved.¹ A few months later Giles was arrested. As noted, he may have been released, but eventually was recaptured by Berkeley and hanged. Sarah is not heard from again until July of 1678 when, armed with her husband's power of attorney, and a note from King Charles to Lieutenant Governor Jeffreys, she went to Virginia to settle her husband's estate. She was in Virginia when John died in June 1680, and in his final will, he made this poignant statement:

I...feeling noe greater griefe under my many adversities and infirmities I now labor under, than her/ Sarah's/ necessary absence in Virginia about my unhappy affairs and estates there, she having been the principal comfort of my passed life, and by her exemplary virtue, discretion, affection, prudence and patience, having deserved much more from mee than I am able to give...²

Perhaps because of her husband's death, Sarah went back to London, leaving William Fitzhugh as her attorney to finish up the case in Virginia.³ Her family was now in tatters, with her husband and all her children dead. Her daughter-in-law, Frances Povey Bland, was now remarried and lived with Sarah's only grandchild away from London.

¹ VMHB, Vol. 21, pp. 134-135; and CSPC CII, Vol. 9, 1675-1676, p. 404

² Waters, p. 815; Carlisle, p. 145.

³ Richard Beale Davis, Ed., William Fitzhugh and His Chesapeake World 1676-1701 (1963), pp. 116-117.

Undaunted, Sarah pressed forward with her suit against Anna Bennett Bland and St. Leger Codd, which continued from 1682-1687. There seems to have been a pattern wherein Sarah won in British hearings only to have the decision stalled or picked apart in the Council and General Court of Virginia.

On March 19, 1682/1683, Fitzhugh wrote to Sarah that he had attempted a reconciliation of interests with Anna and St. Leger Codd, but had been unsuccessful in the attempt, and recommended her to William Blathwayt, the Secretary of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, where her case was lodged.¹ The Lords had commanded both Sarah and the Cods to appear before them to litigate the case, and perhaps sensing the unfairness of the Virginia government's treatment of Sarah, had allowed her to post necessary securities in England in order to move the case along.² Nothing more was heard until May 5, 1684, when Governor of Virginia, Lord Effingham, lamented to the Lords his inability to nullify the king's summons to Colonel Codd, "to answer Sarah Bland's appeals, but I will represent to his majesty, how unfairly and untruly she has stated her case."³ A similar statement was filed by the Council of Virginia on June 23, 1683.⁴ The matter dragged on without any substantial development until February 1685-1686, when the Lords of Plantations, upon the recommendation of the interested parties, referred the matter to arbitration. The arbiter was Lord Effingham, the Governor of Virginia and instrument of previous attacks upon Sarah Bland, and in every respect, hardly a disinterested party. The last

¹ Fitzhugh, pp. 140-142.

² CSPC, II, Charles II (1681-1685), pp. 271-272, and 421. Cf., VMHB, Vol. 28, pp. 354-355.

³ CSPC, II, Charles II (1681-1685), pp. 626-627, 660.

⁴ Ibid.

record of the case is August 1686. In Anna Bennett, Sarah as well as John and Giles, had met her match. Anna's death in 1687 seemed to close the case. She had held on to Jordans and Westover grimly, and now the property in question reverted to her sons who were by then legal adults, Theodorick (1663-1700) and Richard (1665-1720). Perhaps it was just as well, for Sarah, now in her mid-sixties, may not have had the physical stamina to persist in the matter.

John Bland and Sarah Greene's branch of the family became extinct when their great grandson, John (1702-1750) died unmarried and without issue. Sarah Green lived out the balance of her widowhood in St. Olaves Parish at her Hart Street home, and she died there on March 4, 1712/1713.¹

By the time of Sarah's death, the family had set down roots in the new world, thanks primarily to Richard Bland (fifth generation), the second son of Theodorick Bland and Anna Bennet, and Richard's wife, Elizabeth Randolph. His children and grandchildren would in the 18th century enjoy the fruits of the hardships borne by their ancestors in the previous century. They would come to compose a brilliant, able and distinguished family of Virginians and patriots in the American Revolution. They were the Americans.

¹ VMHB, Vol. XX (1911), pp. 374-375.