

PART THREE

A VISION OF UNITY

CHAPTER VI

JAMES BLAND AND THE UNITARY TRADITIONPrologue: A Vision of Unity

This chapter explores a question that has compelled the interest and research of practically everyone who has investigated the origins of the Bland family in America: were all Blands in the Colonial period descended from just one family, or were there two or more disparate families of Blands, bearing the same name but not closely related? In other words, do American Blands in the 20th century descend from a common or diverse stock?

Obviously, one must qualify what is meant by "closely related." Nicholas Carlisle, in his work, Collections for a History of the Ancient Family of Bland (1826), stated:

The origin of the Blands commences at a period of remote and inexplicable possession...the great difficulty in tracing genealogy with correctness arises from branches of the same family extending themselves in distant and various directions, and thus propagating stocks apparently unconnected, though all of them are probably the offspring of the same original stem.¹

¹ Carlisle, xviii, p. 93.

Carlisle's observation about genealogy is of course a truism. Indeed, in some remote past time there undoubtedly was a solitary man who styled himself Bland, or some variant, and the many branches of the family in England grew from his progeny.¹

But Carlisle's definition would not satisfy the dedicated genealogist, who not only would want to assume a common ancestral grandparent, but would want to find him, define his life, his marriage and his children. For practical purposes, speaking of the Bland family, it is not possible to probe backward in time much further than 1538, when a more or less uniform method of parish records maintenance was established in England. Beyond that time one must rely upon literary tradition, which for all but the nobility is very scant and unreliable. So the serious genealogist must search for a 16th century founder in England, who could be the source of the seemingly diverse settlements in the New World.

The past five chapters have been devoted to the transition of the Bland family from London to Virginia, and the extension of that family into the 18th century, when it became known to genealogists as the "James River Bland Family." Historically, it is the best known family of Blands and it is a well-documented fact that it stemmed from a London ancestor, Adam Bland (C. 1528-1594) and his wife, Joan Atkyns (C. 1530-1596), through their last child, John Bland (1572-1632) and

¹ The size and diversity of the Bland family is suggested by extant English records, which are indexed in skeletal form by the Church of Latter Day Saints. The church's microfiche collection, comprises names from about 1538-1900. The collection for Bland in England includes 188 pages of entries, about sixty to the page, or some 11,000 names. The genealogist is sobered by the fact that these entries detail births and marriages only (not deaths) for some 700 of 11,000 parish registers.

his wife, Susan DeBlere (1590-1664). This family was first identified by Ralph Thoresby in his Ducatus Leodensis (1715) and by the Victorian chroniclers such as Hunter, Slaughter and Campbell. Deservedly, it is considered one of the founding families of Virginia. The genealogical essays these men wrote about the James River family are in major parts verified and reinforced by objective sources, such as parish records in London, wills, deeds, and standard Virginia literary sources such as The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, The William and Mary Quarterly, Tyler's Historical and Genealogical Quarterly, and others. The James River family is the one that most genealogical researchers of the Bland family encounter first. Whether or not the researcher ultimately discovers a provable descent from the James River family, he invariably must come to terms with it. This is because in colonial Virginia, there were two identifiable families, possibly more. The other significant family of Blands settled in the Virginia Northern Neck in Stafford County, or in its later fragmentation, Prince William, Fauquier and Loudon. The founder of this Stafford County family was James Bland, who was generally thought to have been born about 1655 and died in 1708. James' life will be discussed in some detail later. He seems to have been a contemporary of Theodorick Bland (fifth generation, 1663-1700) and his brother Richard (1665-1720). No one has ever found direct evidence that proves the parentage of James Bland. Owing to the vastly uneven and fragmented nature of record keeping in 17th century Virginia, such evidence may be lost forever.

This evidentiary gap leaves undiscovered the clue that would tell the genealogical researcher who were the parents of James Bland, and ultimately, could answer the lingering question: are the colonial Blands descended from one common stock or from many sources? It is a

question of unity, and as such, goes to the heart of any genealogist's quest to create a seamless continuity as far back into the past as possible.

This writer approaches the question from different perspectives. The genealogist in me wishes, indeed longs, and searches for the unity that would have Virginia settled by one family, or various branches of the same Bland family. The historian in me intuitively rejects the notion of unity as too simplistic for actual historical experience, which often is a jumble of disconnected events. The historian in me, ever skeptical of easy solutions and the symmetry and order that would be suggested by a common stock, looks for and prepares to come to terms with a diverse settlement. The genealogist longing for unity and the historian's skeptical expectation of diversity, operating within the same person, becomes nothing less than a struggle between the heart and the head. What unifies both forces is a trite but compelling desire ultimately to discover the truth of the matter. That is really what this chapter is all about.

To repeat, the line of descent for the James River family is: (1) Robert/Roger Bland of Orton Parish, Westmoreland County, England, with close relations in nearby Sedbergh Parish, York County; (2) Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns of London; (3) John Bland, "The Grocer" and Susan DeBlere of London; (4) Theodorick Bland and Anna Bennett, the Virginians; and primarily, (5) Richard Bland and Elizabeth Randolph and their descendants who flourished in Virginia during the 18th century.

Genealogists have long since concluded that James Bland of Stafford County did not descend from Adam Bland through Adam's son, John Bland, "The Grocer." One woman, however, believes fervently that James Bland descends through the older brother of John, the Grocer, Thomas Bland of

London, the lawyer (1558-1618) and his first wife, Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley (1549-1593). She is Urilla Moore Bland, of Weston, West Virginia, who has devoted most of the last twenty years of her life to a study of the origins of the Bland family. Urilla Bland was born on May 13, 1898, the eldest of four children born to Robert Linn Bland (1868-1957) and his wife, Rebecca Frances Moore (1870-1967). Urilla Bland still lives in Weston, West Virginia, with her surviving brothers.¹

Miss Bland graduated in 1920 from the Goucher College of Baltimore, Maryland, and taught drama and languages (French, English, Spanish and Latin) at the Weston, West Virginia High School.² Urilla Bland also has been a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The overarching theme of her work may be summed up in her own statement:

It is my belief, as it was my father's, that all the Blands of Virginia derive from the same English stock.³

To affirm her belief in this unity, what hereafter shall be called her unitary vision, Miss Bland cites an oral and written tradition that she grew up with, which held that the two seemingly disparate families were one. For example, her father was so certain that he had descended from Theodorick Bland (1629-1671) that he named his first son after him,⁴ only to discover soon afterward that indeed he was not descended from Theodorick (happily leaving his son with that beautiful name).

¹ Urilla Bland's family will be discussed in Chapter VIII.

² This brief sketch of Urilla Moore Bland is taken from her own "Additional Collections for the Ancient Family of Bland," University of Virginia, Alderman Library Acc No. 9895-b (1974), pp. 183-184.

³ Ibid., p. 1

⁴ Robert Linn Bland wrote to S. B. Brown, September 15, 1903: "I have always understood that I was a lineal descendant of Colonel Richard Bland of the Revolution." Brown, p. 551.

Following this, Urilla's father, according to her, made it his intent to write and publish a history of the Blands in the United States, and therefore, contacted as many people with the name as he could. In return he received "innumerable pages" of information, which seemed to persist in a tradition of descent from, or close kinship to the James River family.¹

Urilla Bland's father was close to Anna Bland Thomas, of Cincinnati, Ohio, who later became Mrs. R. W. Donigan. They collaborated during the early years of the 20th century, and were in correspondence during that time with one Theodorick Bland, living at Jordan's Point, James River, Virginia, who did descend from Theodorick (1629-1671). The correspondence consisted of seven letters during 1896-1897 and related the lineage of the James River Blands in some detail. Mrs. Donigan persisted in her communication with him until the postmaster returned her letters with information that the man was dead. This Theodorick Bland wrote to Mrs. Donigan that he was convinced she was descended from Theodorick (1629-1671) through his third son John (1668-1746).²

Additionally, Urilla Bland's great grandfather Thomas Bland (1793-1867) was personally acquainted with various descendants of the James River Blands, named one of his sons Theodorick, and shared a belief with the older Blands that they were descended from the same family. Miss Bland owns an article in the St. Louis Post Dispatch for June 28, 1896,

¹ UMB I, p. 6. Following the death of her father in 1957, Urilla Bland destroyed most of the letters to her father with whom she determined there was no traceable connection.

² Making her most likely grandparent, Theodorick of Stafford County, Virginia (B. 1746-), son of John Bland (1712-1787). Cf. this study, pp. 134-140. This assumption was a false one.

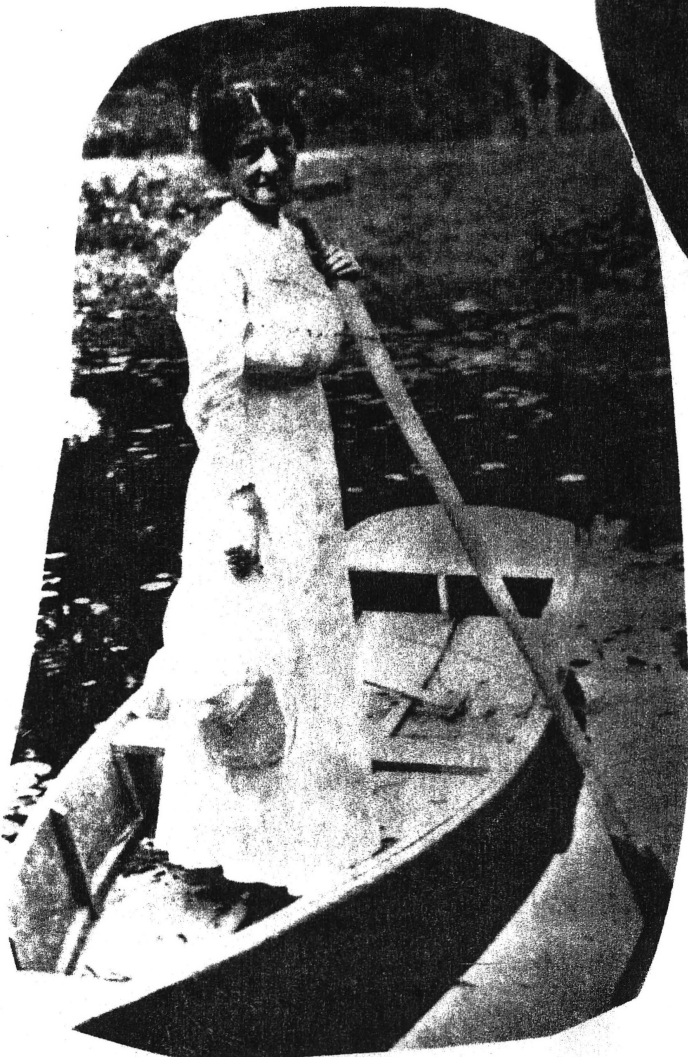
196A.

Urilla Moore Bland
(1898-)



Anna Thomas Donigan

Courtesy: Urilla Moore
Bland.



which purports to trace the lineage of the presidential candidate for Free Silver, Richard Parks "Silver Dick" Bland, back to Robert/Roger Bland of Orton, Westmoreland County, England. A copy of this article was sent to old Silver Dick who promptly agreed with the analysis.¹

Urilla Bland's point in these anecdotes was not to demonstrate their accuracy. Indeed, some were inaccurate and misinformed. For example, it would have been bad form in Victorian America to get into a close discussion about one's origins. The gentlemanly thing to do, short of the need for a legal settlement, if someone claimed to be related to you, or thought he was, would be to generously agree with him. And perhaps nothing more need be said of a presidential candidate's opinion about anything. Silver Dick would have been indeed courageous had he disagreed with the writer's analysis, or threatened to sue if the writer did not substantiate his facts. Urilla Bland's point was to show the strength of a tradition among the older Blands (who were closer to the original founders) that the two families of Theodorick Bland of Westover, and James Bland of Stafford County, were indeed descended from common stock. This tradition has nourished Urilla Bland's particular vision of unity.

If the unitary vision of Urilla Bland is ever to be concretely realized, however, and in general I believe it has, it is obvious that more will have to be known about James Bland of Stafford County, whose life fairly divides the 17th century English and American colonial past

¹ This information is copied from UMB I, pp. 10-11. A letter from Theodore Bland (1825-1894) to Mary Lorentz, May 23, 1894, discusses "Silver Dick's" lineage, suggesting he was a descendant of the James River family. It also illustrates the early confusion between these two lines. In the biography by W. V. Byars, "The American Commoner," (1900), p. 35, Richard Parks Bland stated that he was descended "mostly" from Colonel Theodorick Bland (1740-1790) and named a son Theodorick. This would have been startling news to Theodorick Bland. Richard Parks Bland's genealogy is discussed in Chapter X, pp. 463-477, esp. pp. 468-472.

from the generations that descend from him. And before proceeding to the theories of linkage between James Bland and the James River family, I would like to reconstruct the known evidence about James Bland's life.

James Bland of Stafford County, Virginia

James Bland formulated his will on December 22, 1708, and it was proved on March 9, 1708/1709. In his will, he mentions a wife, Margaret¹, and eight children, including four sons and four daughters. The sons included three who were over twenty-one: William, James and John, and a fourth, Robert, who was a minor when James' will was made. His four daughters were all minors when the will was made, and their names in order of age were Alice, Patience, Ellen and Hannah.² The date of James Bland's birth is not known but is generally estimated as c. 1655, based on information provided to the Daughters of the American Revolution by Mrs. George (Nel) Ford, of Columbus, Mississippi.³ The source for this estimate is not clear. A more reliable index to the birth of James Bland comes from Mr. Leslie Dawson, who indicated that

¹ The maiden name of Margaret also has evaded discovery, but is also the subject of research by Urilla Bland, and is discussed in Chapter VII.

² Stafford County, Virginia Will Book Liber Z, 1699-1709, UMB I, pp. 36-37.

³ Mrs. Ford cites information provided by Kate Duncan Smith, of Birmingham, Alabama, but may also have got her information from a genealogist, Homer Jones; letter to Mrs. Ford from Homer Jones, March 4, 1958. Kate Duncan Smith filed two notes of inquiry in the late 19th century about the family of Robert Bland, grandson of James, VMHB, Vol. 3 (1895-1896), p. 206, and WMQ (I), Vol. 4 (1899), p. 134.

a "James Blann" was witness to the proving of a will in St. Mary's County, Maryland, on February 14, 1683/1684.¹ So far as I know, this is the earliest extant evidence proving James Bland's presence in Maryland or Virginia.

Although this information does not confirm a birthdate for James Bland, it does provide some limiting parameters, which do not exclude the calculation of Kate Duncan Smith and Homer Jones that James was born about 1655. As Mr. Dawson points out, contemporary law forbade service as a witness unless the individual was over twenty-one. Hence, James could have been born no later than 1662, and chances are strong that he would not have reached Maryland in 1683, just in time to witness a will at the scant age of twenty-one. Thus, he was certainly born sometime before 1662.

Obviously, it is important to establish as nearly as possible, James' birthdate, since English records show numerous James Blands. The fact that he could not have been born any later than 1662 would make it useful to push the parameters back into time as far as possible, in other words, to establish the earliest date he could logically have been born.

One way to go about this is to examine known information about James Bland's family. When James made his will in 1708, he had a wife Margaret and eight children, of whom two had to be born no later than 1687 (because they were left unconditional bequests of land and guardian responsibilities for other children in James' will). One was left land but no guardian responsibilities, suggesting that he had not yet reached his majority but was about to. The remaining children, including a son

¹ Leslie Dawson to Charles Bland, November 19, 1980. Source cited was William M. Sweeney, Wills of Rappahanock County, Virginia, 1665-1692, p. 107.

who was probably still a minor in 1723, and four daughters, were all minors when James made his will. To me, for reasons to be elaborated upon in Chapter VII, this age distribution suggests that James was married twice, first to an unknown woman who was the mother of his older children, and second to Margaret _____, who was the mother of his younger children. It also suggests that he was fathering children right up to the time of his death. In checking the ages of fathers at the time of their children's birth in other ascertainable cases during the 17th century, I have found few cases where children were born to fathers who had passed their fifties. (John Bland, the Grocer, was an exception. His last child was born when he was 59, but that may have had less to do with John than with Susan DeBlere's fantastic fecundity.) These probable age parameters would establish a general range of between 1648-1662, and 1655, and would seem to be a respectable median compromise. Of all the James Blands born within these chronological parameters (1648-1662) only one, James Bland of St. Andrews Penrith Parish, Cumberland County, born October 31, 1661, seems to have potential as the same man who died in Stafford County, Virginia, in 1708, and that possibility, because of contradictory information to be subsequently discussed, is very slim.

Also, James' will was clearly composed, either written or dictated by James himself, who declared that he was "sick of body but sound and perfect of sense and memory." This clause would have protected James' heirs from any claim against his estate.

From the above, it appears that James Bland's birthdate cannot be ascertained from extant English parish records. One must recall, however, that in dealing with extant records, the pool of evidence

consists of some 700 of 11,000 total parishes. Given these enormous odds against successfully developing information about James Bland's parentage from parish records, one must turn elsewhere for proof.

After his appearance in the St. Mary's County, Maryland records in 1683, James Bland does not reappear until October 21, 1687, when he leased lands and a plantation at the head of the Quanticut River in Stafford County, Virginia, from one Richard Gibson.¹ Reference to James' apparent settlement near the Quanticut River in Stafford County, Virginia, as well as his subsequent purchase of land near Powells Creek in 1701 (see map on page 206A) and the settlement of his children near the Occoquan River (which will be discussed in Chapter VII), is critical to subsequent development of Urilla Bland's theory that James Bland was related to the James River Blands.

Later, James Bland was sued by Gibson for breach of contract. Gibson claimed he had an agreement with James, apparently that the latter would act as a work foreman for a fee of 500 pounds of tobacco and subsistence. James, however, several times during the contract period,

¹ As shown in a Stafford County court session conducted on October 6, 1691, in which James was ordered to pay Gibson 800 pounds of tobacco for the lease. This was a fairly considerable sum of money. The fact that James could enter into a contract of this size (my reading is that the court ordered payment of the 800 pounds of tobacco from an original 5,000 pound claim by Gibson) lends credibility to Urilla Bland's theory that James belonged to a monied family. James also stood bond for Thomas Meech in the amount of 800 pounds sterling in 1696, also a very substantial sum of money. Noting this, Christopher Johnston remarked in his letter to Robert Linn Bland, October 28, 1904, "it would appear from this that James Bland was a man of substance." Cf. Stafford County Order Book, (1689-1693), pp. 127, 159, 237; Milton Wilson, The Bland Family of New Hanover and Duplin County, North Carolina (no date); hereafter referred to as Wilson. UMB I, p. 40; and VMHB, Vol. 45 (1937), pp. 245-247.

"had gone to tend his corne," and had thus slowed down the pace of work. At the end of the contract period, Gibson claimed that he had agreed to a request by James that his wage rate be changed to 20 pounds of tobacco per day. But, to hear Gibson tell it, James was not a very good laborer, for although:

He did in July begin to work upon the said agreement
...in some tolerable manner...being only now and
then a day or two absent, which although was some
damage of hindrance of work.¹

In the end, Gibson claimed that James Bland walked off the job and "drew other labourers off alsoe."

In this claim, Gibson was not believed by the court and was ordered to pay James Bland 696 pounds of tobacco, in addition to court costs.² The nature of this legal exchange between Gibson and James Bland suggests that the lease of land in Quanticutt was interconnected with an agreement to do certain work for Gibson. It also suggests that James Bland was a bit vexatious and, at the least, susceptible to trouble of various kinds. This conclusion is supported by the next action of record that appears concerning James Bland.

James apparently took his settlement with Gibson and left the county, probably for St. Mary's County, Maryland, for on November 19, 1692, one Abraham Spicer lodged a suit against him for 1,000 pounds of tobacco in damages, but "the said Bland having absented himself out of this county...pl'f could not by legal course recover his said debt."³

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid.

3 Wilson, p. 291.

James participated in legal roles, as witness to wills, and as surety several times in St. Mary's County, Maryland, between 1694-1698.¹ It is impossible to determine exactly what landed status he held in St. Mary's County. Christopher Johnston informed Urilla Bland's father that he had never found a specific grant of land to James Bland in St. Mary's County for even if James had purchased land there, it would be impossible to document because the county's court records were destroyed by fire.²

On December 8, 1701, Burr Harrison sold to James Bland, "now living at Poplar Hill in St. Mary's County, Maryland, six hundred acres of land in Stafford County, Virginia, described as follows:

...on the south side of Powell's Creek, containing 600 acres beginning at the mouth of the said creek at the corner of a small marsh before the spring and so run up the creek in length and breadth outward in the fork called Corkled Point.³

James moved back to Stafford County early in 1702 and lived upon these six hundred acres until he died.

Although this outline of James' life from 1683-1708 is admittedly a sketchy one, it does confirm that he was evidently monied, meaning that he came from a family with money or was extremely shrewd in his business dealings once he got to America. Also, fragmentary though the information is, one concludes from his shuttling back and forth across

¹ Dawson notes, citing for 1694, 2 Cotton; Wilson, p. 291, citing for 1695; Jane Baldwin, Maryland Calendar of Wills: 1685-1702, Vol. 1-2; UMB I, pp. 40-42, citing for 1696 and 1698, Maryland Records, Test & Proc. Lib 16, Fol 150, and Lib 18, Fol 221.

² Christopher Johnston to Robert Linn Bland, October 28, 1904.

³ Wilson, p. 291, and VMHB, Vol. 23 (1915), p. 215.

the Chesapeake, and from the Gibson and Spicer suits against him, that James was a troubled man, who was never quite able to settle down until he bought the 600 acres in Stafford County. This information is critical in developing Urilla Bland's unitary theory about the parentage of James Bland. The evidence itself does not offer a clue about James Bland's parents, but the patterns of movement revealed may do so.

As will be shown on the following pages, James Bland's known movements from 1683-1708 are remarkably like those made by Thomas Bland an attorney from Maryland. James also had business and legal associations with individuals who, in some cases, had conducted business with Thomas Bland. The potential relationship between James Bland of Stafford County, Virginia, and Thomas Bland, of Maryland, forms the core of this chapter.

Three Links to Unity

In a fragment to Robert Linn Bland, written early in this century Anna Bland Thomas Donigan states:

I have been pondering over George, the son of Thomas (will 1618) who married Mrs. Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley. George's will is dated 1648. He had a son Thomas. The will of our ancestor James is dated 1708. There are sixty years intervening between the two dates and I think in all likelihood, George's son Thomas is the father of our James.¹

¹ Letter, Anna Thomas Bland Donigan to Robert L. Bland, undated but written between 1905 and 1915. According to Carlisle, p. 136, George Bland (1589-1648) "had one child only, named Thomas." Mrs. Donigan, assuming perhaps that there was no other Thomas in England, further assumed that this Thomas was the father of James.

Within this brief paragraph lies the germ of Urilla Bland's persistent vision of unity between the James River and Stafford County Bland families. Mrs. Donigan's assertion is breathtaking in its simplicity, and requires, of course, substantial proof to transform it into reality. There must be either direct evidence, a "smoking gun," as it were, or strongly developed indirect evidence that accomplishes three things: (1) there must be a Thomas Bland geographically and chronologically in proximity to James Bland; (2) there must be direct or strong inferential evidence that shows the same Thomas Bland was James Bland's father, or brother; (3) the same Thomas Bland must, by direct or powerful inferential evidence, be proved the son of George Bland (1589-1648) or, a possibility Mrs. Donigan and Urilla Bland did not consider, that Thomas, of Maryland, was a grandson of George. Proof of these three essential links would join the James River and Stafford County families through two brothers, Thomas Bland (1558-1618) and John Bland, "The Grocer" (1572-1632), whose common parents were Adam Bland (C. 1528-1594) and Joan Atkyns (C. 1530-1596). Such linkage would transform Urilla Bland's vision of unity into historical and genealogical reality.

Link I: Thomas Bland of Maryland

In two letters to Robert Linn Bland, written in 1904 and 1905, Christopher Johnston supplied some basic information about one Thomas Bland who came to Maryland about 1670, practiced law there, and disappeared from the Maryland records about 1699.¹ Subsequent research by Milton Wilson, of Bartow, Florida, supplemented Johnston's inform-

¹ Christopher Johnston to Robert Linn Bland, October 28, 1904 and December 14, 1905.

ation, as did critical research undertaken in the 1970's by Urilla Bland, and especially Mr. Leslie Dawson, an attorney from New York City (now Plainfield, New Jersey), who traces his ancestry to James Bland through James' daughter Ellen.¹ The following analysis of Thomas Bland, Maryland attorney, is based upon their collective researches, which more than amply fulfill the requirements for Link I: there was a Thomas Bland in chronological and geographic proximity to James Bland.

In 1659, a Thomas Bland leased lands known as "Maryland Point" in Essex County, England. This Thomas Bland was said to have "relatives who were planters in Virginia."² Leasing one's lands on the part of one who has relatives in Virginia might signal preparation for departure to the new world. Two years later, on January 19, 1661/1662, a 200-acre site in Maryland on the south side of the Severn River, called "Richardson's Folly" was surveyed for the heirs of Thomas Bland.³ The Severn River is a critical location in the potential correlation of Thomas' and James Bland's lives. It lies just to the south of present-day Glen Burnie, in Anne Arundel County, and empties into the Chesapeake Bay. As the map on page 206B shows, it would not be a far distance by boat into the Potomac River region, where James Bland spent most of his life in Stafford County, Virginia, and St. Mary's, Maryland.

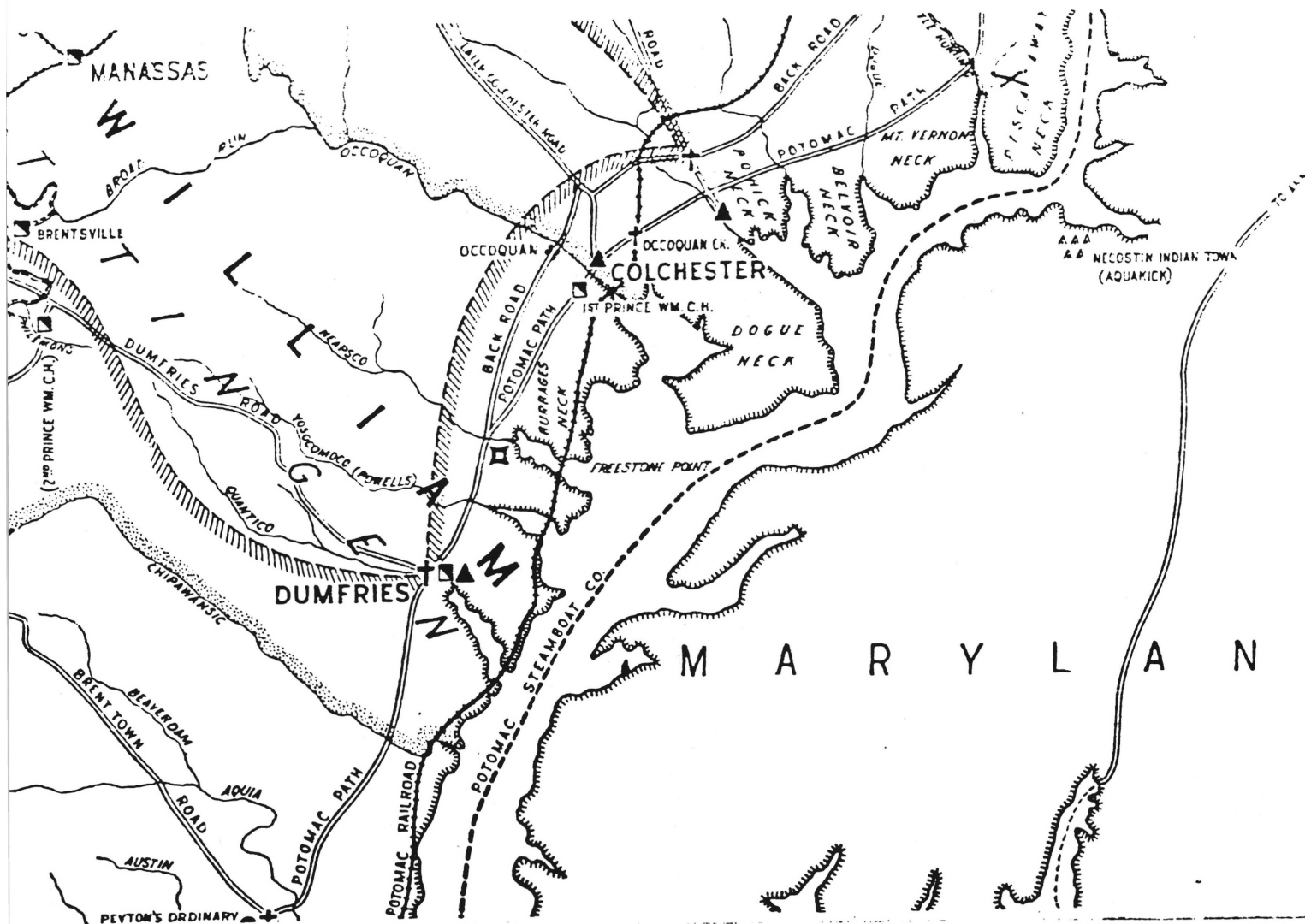
¹ UMB II, p. 1. Cf. Leslie Dawson, History of the Dawson-Davis Family and Related Families of Fairfax and Prince William Counties, Virginia (1974), pp. 67-68.

² New England Historical and Genealogical Quarterly, Vol. 43 (April 1889), p. 139. Another seeming irony, though inconclusive as linking evidence, is the fact that George Bland (1589-1648) moved to Arundel in Sussex County. If my calculations are correct, his son Thomas was born in Sussex County. The London family described in Chapter I had variously properties in Sussex, Kent, Essex, Suffolk and Middlesex Counties, all surrounding the city of London.

³ Rent Rolls, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, 1651-1718, Calvert Papers #883, cited in Wilson, p. 292.

MAP V

Stafford County, Virginia, about 1750, illustrating location of Dumfries and the position of Powell's Creek between the Quanticutt and Occoquan Rivers.

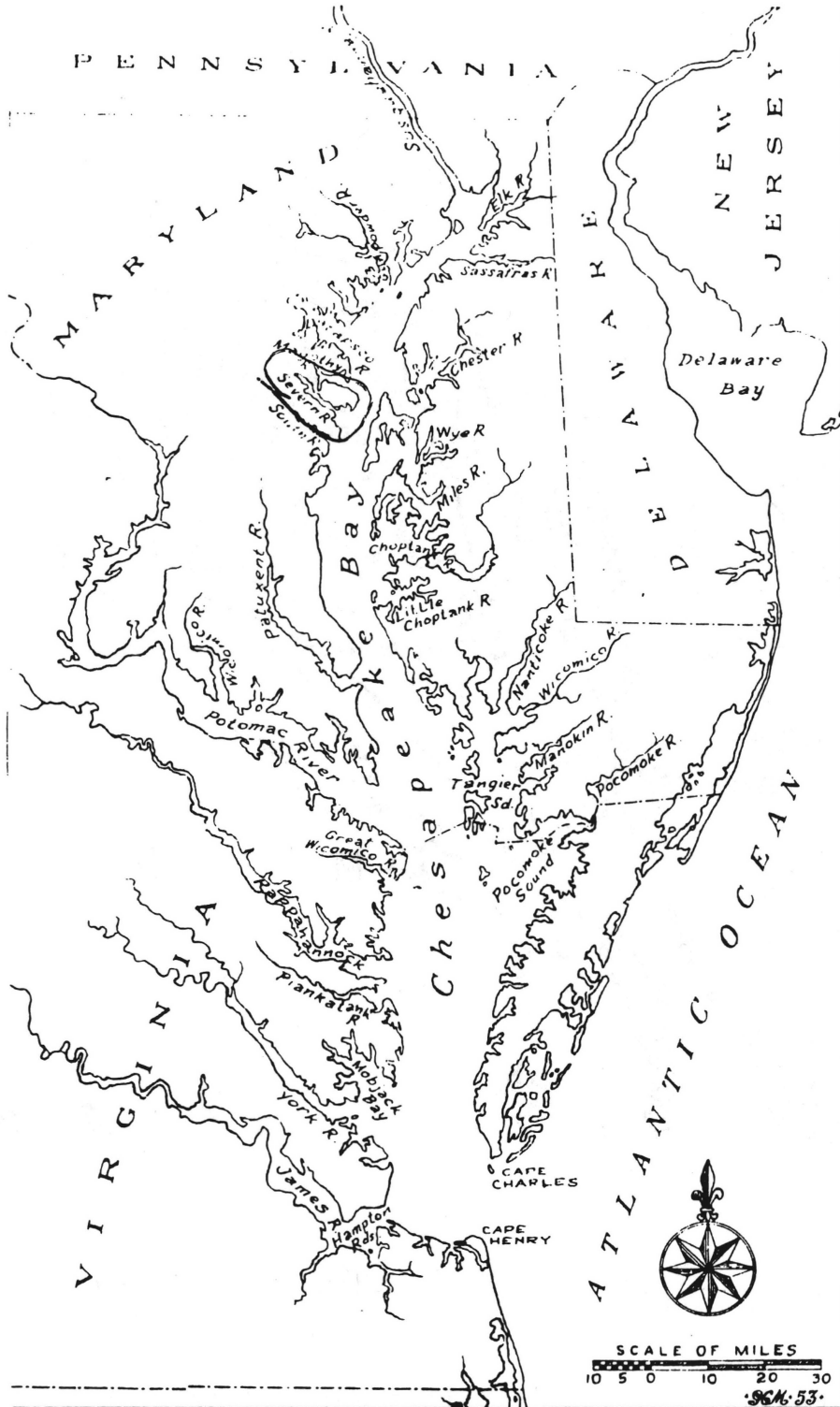


Source: H. C. Groome, Fauquier During the Proprietorship (1927, Reprint 1967).

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MAP VI

The Chesapeake Bay Area About 1700



On March 22, 1665/1666, William Beach and Richard Hatoff applied to the government of Virginia for a patent of 2200 acres of land, "lying in the county of Stafford upon the main line of the Quanticut Creek" (now known as Quantico), for the transportation of 44 persons, including a man named Thomas Bland. It is likely, then, that Thomas arrived in Virginia about 1665 or shortly before that date. This date would follow in sequence, if he was the same man who leased "Maryland Point" in Essex, England in 1659, and purchased "Richardson's Folly" in Anne Arundel Maryland, probably in-absentia.

But for the moment, the reader may recur to the Beach-Hatoff transaction. The area Beach and Hatoff claimed patent rights to, along the Quanticut Creek was, as the map on page 206A shows, south of Dumfries, Powells Creek and the Occoquan River, which is the general area where James Bland leased lands of Richard Gibson in 1687 and bought 600 acres of land in 1701.¹ This proximity cannot be overlooked in determining the possibility of a close relationship between James and Thomas Bland.

A person who immigrated to Virginia from England and then moved to Maryland would have been characterized by Maryland law as an emigrant, thereby eligible to apply for a land patent in Maryland, for transportation of self to the colony.² Thomas Bland did precisely that. On October 2, 1672, Thomas applied for and received 50 acres for "transporting himself into this province to inhabit."³ Thomas immediately sold the land, but that is not germane. Again, the land application

¹ Nugent I, p. 546; a true copy of the Beach-Hatoff application is provided in UMB II, p. 32.

² This insight was provided by Mr. Dawson, cited in UMB II, p. 24.

³ Maryland Land Office Records, Patent Liber 17, Folio 56, true copy provided in UMB II, p. 28.

could have come several years after Thomas' actual arrival in Maryland, indicating that he moved from the Stafford County area to Maryland sometime between 1666 and 1672.¹

These dates correspond to the dates Thomas applied to the Maryland bar for admission to practice law: sometime between 1666-1672.

¹ Thomas Bland appears never to have become a substantial landowner. Like James Bland, he was generally too much on the run during his years in Maryland to settle down for very long. On June 29, 1680, he secured 200 acres known as "Bland's Quarter," which was in Anne Arundel County, north of the Severn. (Dawson notes. A true copy of this transaction, Anne Arundel Records, Liber CB, No. 28, Folios 329-30, is provided in UMB II, p. 29.) Elizabeth Wheeler Frances and Ethel Sivley Moore, Lost Links: New Recording of Old Data from Many States (1945), p. 404, abstracts the will of John Wolmsley, in which his grandson, Richard Goodwin, is deeded land called "Gray's Increase" and "Bland's Quarter," and after several others, the land is to go to Elinor Bland. Mr. Leslie Dawson noted that he did not think this Elinor Bland was the daughter of James Bland of Stafford County, who married William Davis, probably about 1725. Mr. Dawson noted, citing Maryland records: "When Thomas Bland left Maryland...about 1700, 'Bland's Quarter' was in possession of Joseph Smith." (Letter, Leslie Dawson to Charles Bland, September 3, 1981.) Bland also received an additional 310 acres in Anne Arundel during 1680 (Dawson notes, citing Gust Skordas, Early Settlers of Maryland: A List Compiled from Land Patents, 1633-1680 (1968: Reprinted 1979), p. 45.) In 1697, sixty acres called "Crouch's Triangle" was mortgaged to Thomas Bland, but by then his time was about up in Maryland, and in what appears to have been his last action in the Maryland records, he assigned this property to one Philip Jones (Anne Arundel Records, Liber WT, No. I, Folio 18, December 16, 1699). In 1707, after his death, half of the lands surveyed in 1661/1662, called "Richardson's Folly," was reserved for the heirs of Thomas Bland, indicating that at an unspecified time, Thomas had sold off 100 of the original 200 acres. (Anne Arundel County Rent Rolls, p. 48, cited in UMB I, p. 31, and Wilson, p. 292. Significantly, the property for the heirs of Thomas Bland was held by Cornelius Howard; see discussion subsequently in Link II.) Leslie Dawson's exhaustive research of the Maryland records have turned up no other information about land owned by Thomas Bland. This would seem to establish Thomas Bland as a rather middling property owner, holding at the most between 600-700 acres of land. This would have been ample for his subsistence, but qualitatively and quantitatively inferior to the vast landholdings of the James River family at about the same time. In a time when land and its entitlements were the real sources of power, such a small estate left Thomas vulnerable to attack by the enemies he later made.

He claimed at the time of admission, among other things, to have studied at the British Inner Temple for six years,¹ and his application was persuasive enough to gain him license to practice in Maryland. Having established himself at law, Thomas then settled down for a sojourn in Maryland that would last for about thirty years (1666-1672 to 1699) and which was so tumultuous that Job himself would have pitied him. By 1670, Thomas was probably about 36, and undoubtedly had been married before, but must have been widowed, for one of the first things he did was to find himself a wife. The following is how events transpired to acquaint Thomas Bland with his new wife.

About 1650, Nicholas Wyatt, Matthew Howard and Edward Dorsey emigrated to Maryland from Virginia and settled at the "Middle Neck

¹ Whether or not Thomas ever actually studied law remains a mystery. There were later allegations that he had not, and Mr. Dawson's search of two sources, Alfred Jones, American Members of the Inns of Court, and Hamilton's "Southern Members of the Inns of Court," in North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. 10, p. 273, shows no evidence that he did. At Mr. Dawson's instance, I obtained a copy of W. G. Cooke, Students Admitted to the Inner Temple, 1547-1660 (1877) but found no record of Thomas Bland's admission. On the hunch that historians might have got things mixed up, I searched other sources for admission of Thomas to other Inns of Court but found none. Mr. Dawson stated on June 30, 1981: "In my opinion, Thomas Bland of Maryland had never been admitted to the Inner Temple but was masquerading as a lawyer in Maryland." On August 20, 1981, Mr. Dawson noted my negative findings in Cooke and stated: "To me, that is conclusive evidence that he was a fraud." This question is one of many enigmas in Thomas' life. He had a brother, Richard, who apparently did study at the Inner Temple (cf. Foster, p. 139). It may be that Thomas and Richard's father was an inspiration for both to study law, and that Thomas was simply never recorded (as Richard was not; the information about him comes from a marriage allegation). Alternately, it may be that Richard's profession gave the germ of a lie to Thomas which he nourished during his stay in Maryland. Richard, also, might have been a fraud.

Hundred," on the south side of the Severn.¹ Wyatt and Dorsey at least were Quakers. Particularly important here are Nichols Wyatt and Edward Dorsey. Wyatt had married a widow named Damaris _____, who had children by her previous marriage, as did Wyatt himself, particularly one daughter Sarah,² who as it happened, married Edward Dorsey.

Nicholas Wyatt died January 22, 1673/1674, leaving a will that had been made in 1671, and which named his wife Damaris as executrix, mentioning also Sarah Wyatt Dorsey and a son, Samuel.³ In Maryland, as in Virginia in the 17th century, one's estate could be a very perishable commodity, what with lawyers and doctors hovering around like vultures while a terminally ill man composed his will. Widows were seldom left long to their grief, and lawyers and doctors were particularly apt suitors: moving in on the widow of a deceased man was one way of building up one's estate, and in these circumstances, any legal transaction could be a highly suspect affair, wherein even momentarily absent heirs could lose valuable entitlements, to be recovered only after long and exhausting litigation.

¹ Dawson notes, citing Kelley, Quakers in Maryland, pp. 16-20. Edward Dorsey was in Portsmouth, Virginia about 1642, and removed to Anne Arundel Maryland about 1650. Dawson notes citing Founders and Patriots, p. 92. This would have been Edward Dorsey, Sr. who drowned in 1659, and his wife Anne. Both were Quakers. Dawson citing Newman, Vol. 2, p. 7, and Maryla Archives, Vol. 41, p. 7.

² Wyatt also had a son Samuel, who died in 1673. Dawson notes citing Dorsey Family, p. 190.

³ Maryland Records, Liber I, p. 546; Cotton 1:79; Kelly, pp. 16-20, and Warfield, 58, cited in Dawson notes.

Enter Thomas Bland, who in 1674 married Damaris _____ Wyatt, and got himself named administrator of Nicholas Wyatt's estate.¹ Since Thomas did not mention Damaris in his will of 1700, one must assume that she died sometime before he left Maryland in 1699. Since she was a widow when she married Nicholas Wyatt, Damaris must have been substantially older than Thomas, increasing one's suspicion that the marriage was another example of Thomas' opportunism rather than a love match. At any rate, Thomas became administrator of the estate of Nicholas Wyatt and undoubtedly influenced Damaris' disposition.²

None of this sat well with Edward Dorsey and his wife, Sarah Wyatt Dorsey,³ daughter of Nicholas Wyatt and step-daughter of Damaris _____ Wyatt Bland. In 1675-1676, the Dorsey's initiated a suit contesting the will on grounds that Wyatt was mentally incompetent when he made Damaris his executrix. Captain Cornelius Howard, who wrote Wyatt's will, testified that "the testator did not appear to be in condition at that time, to remember what he owned."⁴ Thomas Bland called among others testifying

¹ Dawson notes, citing Newman II, and Maryland Test. Proceedings, Vol. 6, p. 217.

² Ibid.

³ Sarah Wyatt Dorsey died in 1692, and Edward Dorsey died in 1705. Dawson notes, citing 15 Maryland Archives, p. 253. In 1662, Nicholas Wyatt, Cornelius Howard, Edward Dorsey and Elizabeth Sisson received land grants in Anne Arundel County. Dawson notes, citing Richardson, p. 320.

⁴ Dawson notes, citing Maryland Archives, Vol. 51, pp. 104, 153, 197, 219, 275, 312-319, 544-550; Vol. 66, pp. xxiv, 421, 481-482; Vol. 68, pp. 56, 249; Joshua D. Warfield, Founders of Anne Arundel County (1905), pp. 57-58, 163; Maryland Test Proceedings, Vol. 8, p. 75; Anne Arundel County, Liber II, p. 262, Cf. UMB I, pp. 31-35.

in his behalf, one Samuel Chew, who was later accused by the Protestant Copley government of being a Jacobite (apologist for King James II, who was deposed in 1688). Both Howard and Chew would later play roles in Thomas Bland's life. The case was decided in favor of Edward Dorsey, who was named administrator and promptly sued Thomas Bland and Damaris Wyatt Bland for an accounting of the estate's assets. A series of acrimonious suits and countersuits ensued and continued for several years. In one of the suits, Thomas enjoined Richard Hill, an Anne Arundel County Judge, as a party in seeking dismissal of Dorsey's charges. Hill successfully countered Bland's charges, claiming that they were vexatious and litigious, and succeeded in laying court costs to Thomas Bland.¹

Subsequently, Thomas and Damaris filed a suit against Judge Hill, who was executor for the estate of one Richard Gardiner, claiming that Hill had never paid Damaris for services as midwife to Gardiner's wife.² Damaris sued another woman for much the same reason. Such suits were not uncommon in 17th century Chesapeake society, but given the subjects involved, in the case of Thomas Bland and Damaris Wyatt, they may have given rise to a reputation that the couple was nettlesome and constantly involved in some quarrel. As in the case of Giles Bland's dispute with Anna Bennett Bland in Virginia, the personal grievance with the Dorseys, also involving Judge Hill, invariably began to spill over into the public domain, ultimately damaging Thomas' reputation. In 1681, Thomas Bland

¹ Ibid.

² Dawson notes, citing Maryland Archives, Vol. 66, pp. 26, 396; Vol. 67, p. 49, and Vol. 68, p. 20.

sued Judge Hill for slander, accusing Hill of stating in court that Bland was unfit to practice law and that he constantly stirred up litigation. Thomas did not appear at the subsequent trial, leaving an open field to Hill, who lambasted Bland with serious charges that stuck to his reputation, including the creation of doubt that Bland had ever been admitted to law practice.¹

Hill's charges apparently had some ground in Thomas Bland's performance as a lawyer. Mr. Dawson's notes show Thomas to have been active in the law until the 1690's, when he was discredited for political reasons. But the legal cases he handled, where there is any substance at all, seem to have come to bad ends, possibly because of Thomas' mishandling of them. Several examples may illustrate the point.

In 1679, Thomas was a lawyer for one Joseph Tilley in a suit against a practising lawyer. Whatever Thomas' judgment in taking on the court, and also taking account that the lawyer might have been protected to some degree by his peers, the Chancery court hearing the case, found Tilley's complaint so scandalous that it was ordered purged from the record and Thomas Bland was ordered to pay all court costs.²

During 1683-1685, Thomas Bland acted as court-appointed attorney for one Jacob Young, who was being impeached by the Maryland Assembly for consorting with the Indians. Young was spared from hanging, but left on more or less permanent probation, for he had to post bond and appear before the Assembly once each year for the rest of his life, to be examined and to assure them of his good conduct.³

¹ Dawson notes, citation uncertain. Cf. p. 209, note 1.

² Dawson notes, Maryland Archives, Vol. 51, pp. 293, 312.

³ Dawson notes, citing Maryland Archives, Vol. 7, pp. 380, 386, 393, 472, 475, 479, 485.

In 1685, Thomas Bland was an attorney for the defendant Tench in the case of Tench vs. Hopkins, in the Maryland provincial court. Tench won the case against Hopkins' charge of usury. Thomas did not remain with the case and it was ultimately overturned in 1698, after being appealed to the Maryland Court of Appeals, and to the Governor and Council.¹

Decisions such as this one ultimately weakened Thomas' reputation, and it is significant that this last decision was ultimately overturned in 1698, by which time Thomas apparently had no legal standing to practice law in Maryland, but was simply a propertyholder of modest dimensions. It is clear that Thomas was undone by associations in various events during the historical period that is known as the "Glorious Revolution," though his exact role in the revolution is obscure. Likewise, the motivation of Thomas' accusers remains opaque.

The basic facts of the Glorious Revolution, particularly as it touched upon events in Maryland, are as follows:

Charles II died in 1685, and was succeeded by his brother, James II a devout Catholic with a marginal amount of political sense, who attempted to return England to the days of Queen Mary's Catholicism. His inclination was first manifested when he set about introducing Catholics into key government positions. His actions alarmed the predominantly Protestant Parliament, which perceived that the gravest constitutional issues were building. Given its nature, however, Parliament tarried for awhile with James, anticipating that upon his death, Princess Mary, the grandchild of the Earl of Clarendon and married to the Protestant William of

¹ Dawson notes, citing American Legal Records, pp. 61-74.

Orange, would ascend to the throne. (Princess Mary and William of Orange are known in history as William and Mary.) This wait and see attitude was punctured, alas, when in June 1688, a baby son was born to James and his wife, making it certain that he would take precedence in the line of succession over Mary, if James remained King. Since the new son was certain to be raised in Catholicism, his birth occasioned a rare consensus in Parliament, which resulted in an invitation to William and Mary to take over the throne. A potential bloodbath was averted in December 1688, when James momentarily suspended his innate stupidity and fled the throne. The joint coronation of William and Mary occurred in April 1689, consummating the peaceful and "Glorious Revolution."¹

While the Glorious Revolution was generally peaceful, there were subcurrents and eddies underneath the surface calm that worked profoundly on many aspects of English life. This was especially true in Maryland, which in 1688 had a population of some 25,000, which was Protestant by about 20-1, but was ruled by a Catholic family. The transition of power from James, to William and Mary, set in train a 25-year period of Protestant rule in Maryland, which was marked in the beginning by ambivalence and instability. The Catholic Lord Baltimore, whose family had ruled Maryland from the outset, and who held the real power in Maryland in 1688, had nothing to gain, of course, from a Protestant takeover. He was, however, a pragmatist who had learned (as James II never did) to suspend sectarian belief when secular policy was at stake. He was backed, moreover, by Protestant as well as Catholic landowners,

¹ The general events of the Glorious Revolution are told in Michael Hall, Ed., The Glorious Revolution in America (1968), pp. 143-146, 167-170 and 192-195.

property holders and merchants who were anxious to preserve a stable environment in which to pursue their business interests. In February 1688/1689, Baltimore, who was in England at the time, drafted a proclamation of William and Mary to be read in Maryland, but the courier died en route, and Baltimore's order never reached Maryland. Consequently, Maryland dithered while the other North American colonies proclaimed William and Mary. By July 1689, the colony was sliding into serious instability. On the western side of the Chesapeake, especially in St. Mary's, Calvert and Charles Counties, but also in Anne Arundel, men of property, large and small, but outside the circle of government (men like Thomas Bland), began to coalesce around a man named John Goode. These counties composed the primary population centers and the government seat at St. Mary's City, which Goode's men seized. The Goode insurgents formed themselves into a Protestant association and elected delegates to a special Assembly which met in August 1689 (the regular Assembly had been postponed since December 1688, adding to confusion in the colony). The insurgent Assembly affirmed William and Mary, voted to establish lines of communication with Protestants in the other colonies. During the following year, until Goode and his allies sailed to England to persuade the king to take over the government, Maryland continued in a state of uncertainty. The insurgents persuaded the government in England to suspend Lord Baltimore's right of government and to replace him with a trusted Protestant, Sir Lionel Copley, in June 1691. This set the stage for twenty-five years of Royal Protestant rule in Maryland, mitigated by the Lord Baltimore's retention of charter land, and land taxes. In 1715, the then-Lord Baltimore converted to the Anglican church and the full rights of government were restored to the proprietor.¹

1 *ibid*

Thomas Bland's role in these developments is unclear. Certainly, they were not momentous, but they did contribute to his decline in Maryland. On July 25, 1692, Nicholas Greenberry, a staunch supporter of John Goode, who had participated in charges of treason against Judge Richard Hill (Thomas Bland's nemesis), filed a complaint of "a great cabal...(in Anne Arundel County) held by the Grand Leaders of the Jacobite Party," and he listed Samuel Chew (Thomas Bland's friend) and Edward Dorsey (Thomas Bland's enemy) as participants. Later, he addressed a letter charging misconduct by three men, including Thomas Bland and Henry Jowles.¹ Jowles had been involved in litigation that set him in opposition to Lord Baltimore, and was one of the leaders of the Goode insurgency, being himself a member of the Assembly and a colonel in the militia.² These charges seem to indicate factional disputes within the Copley coalition, rather than precise lines of division. But they were damaging enough apparently to permanently cripple Thomas Bland's reputation. In 1693, Thomas applied to Governor Copley for admission as an attorney to the provincial court, claiming that he had been a good citizen and had practiced law in Maryland for over twenty years. His application was rejected because he had, "upon the late revolution, applied himself a person disaffected to their majesties and the present government."³ There followed bitter recriminations as Thomas petitioned the council to be relieved of all charges against him, but his appeal was rejected, and he was left to his own devices.⁴

¹ Warfield, pp. 162-163. Cf. UMB I, p. 35; Wilson, p. 293; Leslie Dawson to Urilla Bland, August 18, 1975; and UMB II, p. 4.

² Hall, Ed., p. 145.

³ Dawson notes, citing Maryland Archives, Vol. 8, pp. 552-553.

⁴ Dawson notes, citing Maryland Archives, Vol. 20, p. 17.

Thomas may have been attempting to salvage his standing in Anne Arundel County when in 1696 he became a vestry member of the Protestant St. Anne's Church, and in the same year signed a petition that congratulated King William upon his recent escape from an attack by Jacobites.¹ But by then, Thomas was an old man, certainly in his sixties, without any substantial property and with no legal standing in his profession of law. His public life in Maryland was apparently ruined. The last known entry for Thomas Bland in the Maryland records was his disposition of "Crouch's Triangle," in December 1699.² Perhaps he was liquidating as many assets as he could, in preparation for his return to London where he lived out the year of 1700, making his will on November 25, 1700. He died soon after, for his will was proved January 13, 1700/1701.

The circumstances suggest that Thomas' departure from Maryland was inauspicious. Upon making his will, he styled himself a merchant rather than a lawyer. It may be that he did not want to leave any clues about his Maryland identity. Further, as Mr. Dawson points out, Thomas may have had to come clean in London, "where his friends and relations would know he had not studied at the Inns of Court, as he had claimed in Maryland."³

He left to a cousin, Sarah Pendrill, "all my plantations, mortgages houses, tobacco houses ect. in Anne Arundel County in the Province of

¹ Dawson notes, citing Maryland Archives, Vol. 20, p. 538, and Vol. 23, and Warfield 76; Cf. UMB I, p. 34, and Wilson, p. 293.

² Dawson notes, citing Maryland Test Proceedings, Vol. 18, p. 289.

³ Essay from an unused fragment on the Bland family, given to the author by Leslie Dawson. As the reader may have already guessed, Mr. Dawson allows Thomas Bland no quarter, and delights in pricking his pomposity.

Maryland." Mr. Dawson's researches of the record convinces him, and I agree, that no other Bland at that time, let alone another Thomas Bland, owned any land in Anne Arundel County.¹ This makes it a certainty that the Thomas Bland who made his will in London on November 25, 1700, was the same Thomas Bland who sold "Crouch's Triangle" in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, in December 1699.

Link II: Was Thomas Bland the Father of James Bland?

Urilla Bland and Leslie Dawson have done a truly remarkable reconstruction of the life of Thomas Bland of Maryland. Thanks to them, there is positive evidence for an extended period of time (1666/1672-1699) in Maryland, of a Thomas Bland who completes Link I of the three-part linkage necessary to join the Stafford County and James River Blands.²

Links II and III, however, are much more tentative, and while their solidity is plausible, they are complex and ambiguous. To complete Link II, a determination must be made, either through direct evidence or through powerfully developed indirect evidence, that Thomas Bland, of Maryland, was the father of James Bland, of Virginia.

¹ Will of Thomas Bland, Carlisle, p. 100; New England Historical and Genealogical Quarterly, Vol. 48 (January 1894), pp. 114-115; Waters, Gleanings, p. 815, and letter from Leslie Dawson to Charles Bland, November 19, 1980. Regarding "cousin Sarah Pendrill," an elementary caution bears repeating. Cousin, nephew and niece were used loosely and interchangeably in 17th century England. Sarah Pendrill was in fact Thomas Bland's niece. See discussion on pp. 231-232; Table XIV, p. 240A.

² Inasmuch as one link must necessarily build upon and interact with the others, it is impossible to praise Urilla Bland and Leslie Dawson enough for their tireless and thoughtful work. My own contribution, which has been to arrange their material into a narrative stream, is modest by comparison.

Any direct evidence of a "smoking gun," as it were, that would point to the parentage of James Bland has never been discovered. Further, given the fragmentary nature of English, Virginia and Maryland records, it is unlikely that any such discovery will be made. There is only one Thomas-James Bland father-son combination in England during the chronological range that concerns James Bland. He is James, son of Thomas, born in 1659 in the Addingham Parish of York County. The siblings of this James, however, make it impossible in light of information to be discussed presently, that this father-son combination is the one American genealogists are seeking. There are no other direct evidence indications that I know of which would link James Bland of Stafford County, Virginia, to any Thomas Bland.¹

The most compelling indirect evidence for a father-son relationship between Thomas and James Bland was supplied in seminal form through a letter from Christopher Johnston to Robert Linn Bland of December 14, 1905, in which Johnston outlined a complex chain of relationships between

¹ One possibility, unexplored at the time of this writing, is the back side of the will written by Thomas Bland of Maryland on November 25, 1700. The abstract of the will is reprinted in three sources. I have read the actual will which is not preserved in its entirety. If it is still preserved in its entirety, critical information could yet be yielded. Thomas says in the body of the will, "to every person whose name is inserted on the back of this will, one gold ring of the value of about ten shillings." The designees for those gold rings, if known, might clear up a great deal of ambiguity. In an attempt to find out who the designees were, I decided to go beyond the published abstracts of the will and order the will from the British Public Records Office. The will was ordered in late June 1981, and in September, I received a copy of the will of Thomas Bland "Scrivener," dated 1666-1667, which is of course the wrong will. Subsequently, I asked an acquaintance, Janet Henel, of Salt Lake City, Utah, to obtain a copy of the will from the Mormon Library. She did obtain a copy of the will from a microfilm record but no information from the back of the will was available. According to her, personnel at the Mormon Library indicated that the will had been copied from the British Public Records Office exactly as found, and they doubted that the backside of the will had survived. The will sent to me by Mrs. Henel was substantially as it is found in Waters Gleanings, p. 815. Obviously, the question cannot be resolved by less than a trip to England. Janet Henel to Charles Bland, October 25, 1981.

persons and property, which he said left the possibility of "a certain semblance of a connection between Thomas and James Bland." Johnston's information is quoted below, footnoted by the further elaborations that have emerged from the researches of Urilla Bland and Leslie Dawson:

"There is only one circumstance that seems to point to a connection between Thomas and James Bland, and it is after all a rather indirect indication. I think I mentioned it to you before, but it will do no harm to repeat it.

"John Sisson, Anne Arundel County, Maryland, Planter, will not dated, recorded 12 January 1663 (Wills, Liber I, Folio 197, Test. Proc Liber ID, Folio 173): 'To my wife, Frances Sisson, my plantation whereon I live, being 420 acres during widowhood, and afterward to my oldest daughter, Jean Sisson. To my dear wife, two trunks of wearing¹ apparel. Also, Katherine Davis, George Lundell,¹ and John Harrison (these were indentured serjants).² To my daughter, Jean Sisson, Richard Hill,³ Richard Warfield,⁴ John Harrison and John Bennett (indentured servants). To

¹ Or Lunnell. Robert Lunnell, probably a son of George Lunnell, was a co-surety with James Bland for the Estate of Edward Sisson, with Alice Sisson acting as executrix, on October 22, 1698 (Test. Proc. Lib. 18, Fol. 221).

² The parenthetical note about the indentures was by Christopher Johnston. If true, it is apparent from later records that descendants of George Lunnell had fulfilled their indentures and were prospering. The surety amount for James Bland and Robert Lunnell was 800 pounds, an enormous sum of money.

³ Possibly the same man who was called as a material witness by Thomas Bland in the matter of Nicholas Wyatt's estate, and who later challenged Thomas Bland's status as an attorney.

⁴ Richard Warfield, along with Thomas Bland, William Brown and Cornelius Howard, were the first vestrymen of St. Anne's Church in Annapolis, Anne Arundel County, upon its formation in 1696. In the same year, James Bland and Michael Brown served as co-sureties in the Administration of Thomas Meech, St. Mary's County, Maryland. John Sisson had transported Richard Warfield, who died in 1703, to Maryland as an indentured servant in 1663. Dawson notes, citing Newman, p. 346.

Elizabeth Sisson 200 Acres, given from my plantation in the island I bought of Mr. Edward Lloyd, residue of the estate to be divided, except 1500 pounds of Tobacco which Robert Leslie owes me, which I give to my daughter, Jean Sisson. My seal ring to my brother, Benjamin Sisson, my other rings to my brother Cornelius Howard.¹ Also, to the latter, my best hat. A 22/ gold piece to Richard Higgins. My Brother, Cornelius Howard, and Richard Higgins, overseers, to look after my wife and children that they be not wronged.'

"Just how Cornelius Howard was brother to John Sisson does not appear.² They might have been half-brothers (by the same sisters) or one may have been married to the other's sister. The 200 acres left for Elizabeth Sisson appears to be the tract which is identified in the following in the Rent Rolls of Anne Arundel County:

'Orphans Inheritance: 200 Acres resurveyed 21 May 1661 for Elizabeth Sisson on the South Side of the Severn River at a boundary by the Red Oak on a point by the road (sic) bay.

'This resurvey is by means of two assignments viz: 100 acres William Crouch and 100 acres John Howard, and after resurveyed into one as aforesaid possessors (1707), Edward Hall and William Fieldhall' (p. 55).

"The William Crouch here mentioned was the father of Joseph Crouch who in 1697 mortgaged 'Crouch's Triangle' to Thomas Bland,³ and you will observe that the first wife of Edward Lloyd was Alice Crouch, but whether there was any actual connection, I do not know. At any rate, it is clear that Cornelius Howard (father of the Cornelius Howard who held Thomas Bland's lands in 1707 for his heirs, is called the brother of John Sisson. Now,

1 It is unclear whether Johnston or some later reader made this underline on the original letter. Cornelius Howard, probably the son of John Sisson's "brother," was a co-vestryman for St. Anne's Church with Thomas Bland. He also held property that was originally part of "Richardson's Folly" for the heirs of Thomas Bland in 1707. The original Cornelius Howard witnessed the will of Nicholas Wyatt and supplied critical testimony in the dispute between Thomas Bland and Edward Dorsey over Wyatt's estate. Edward Dorsey and Cornelius Howard were appointed judges in Anne Arundel in 1680 (Dawson notes, citing Maryland Archives, Vol. 15, p. 253).

2 See Dawson to Urilla Bland, September 3, 1975, UMB II, pp. 2-3. Dawson, citing from Newman, p. 261, indicates that Cornelius Howard and John Sisson married sisters named Gorsuch; thus, they were brothers-in-law.

3 Sixty acres of land, Anne Arundel Liber WT, No. 1, Folio 18.

in 1698, when Alice Sisson filed her bond as administratrix of Edward Sisson, at St. Mary's County (probably her husband), James Bland was one of her bondsmen.¹ I have nothing further about this Edward Sisson, but he may have been of the family of John Sisson of Anne Arundel County, a nephew, for example, and thus there would be a certain semblance of a connection between Thomas and James Bland. It may be, as you suggest, that the Blands, Howards, Lloyds, Sissons, Crouchs and others all came from the Lower Norfolk County, Virginia. On the other hand, we must bear in mind that the evidence is by no means clear, and that after all these may be no more than an accidental coincidence."²

Does the above prove that Thomas Bland was James Bland's father? Admittedly, there is nothing in Christopher Johnston's evidentiary piece that directly confirms it, and although Urilla Bland emphasizes Johnston's first observation of a "certain semblance of a connection between Thomas and James Bland," she has not noted his qualifying statement that "after all, these may be no more than an accidental coincidence."³

Nonetheless, in my opinion, Christopher Johnston's evidence of a connection, coupled with the subsequent research of Leslie Dawson and

¹ Alice Sisson died in St. Mary's County, Maryland, leaving a will dated December 12, 1706, proved January 3, 1706/1707. She mentioned a granddaughter named Shonburt, a daughter named Hannah Jackson, and a grandson John Strauten, and sons Robert and William Lunnell. Robert Lunnell was co-surety with James Bland in the estate of Edward Sisson. These sons suggest that Alice Sisson had previously been married to a Lunnell (whose name was mentioned in the will of John Sisson, 1663). This summary was provided in a letter from Leslie Dawson to Urilla Bland, June 11, 1976, UMB II, pp. 22-23. Urilla Bland believed James Bland's wife, Margaret, was named Sisson. She has never proven the belief, but James and Margaret did have a daughter named Alice (Sisson) as well as one named Hannah (Jackson). Also, they had sons named William, and Robert (Lunnell), as did Alice _____ Lunnell Sisson. In turn, Robert Bland, son of James and Margaret, had sons named William, Robert and Edward (Alice Sisson's husband was named Edward). The maiden name of Margaret, wife of James Bland, will be discussed in Chapter VII. It may have been Lunnell or Sisson. The underlined portions were noted by Mr. Johnston.

² Christopher Johnston to Robert Bland, December 14, 1905.

³ Ibid.

Urilla Bland, corroborates a close relationship, and by elimination, a father-son relationship between Thomas Bland and James Bland. (The basis of my reduction of their relationship to father-son will be elaborated upon in the subsequent discussion about Link III.) One simply cannot ignore the compelling evidence that points to such a relationship.

First, one cannot overlook the extensive connections that appear to exist between Thomas and James Bland, when Christopher Johnston's evidence is joined to the supporting evidence developed by Leslie Dawson and Urilla Bland. As stated before, Maryland had a population of about 25,000 in 1688, not a great density for the area involved, and it is unlikely that there would have been very many discrete families of, for example, Sissons, Howards, Blands, Browns and Lunnells. Rather the interrelations would have been thick, making it likely that children of the elders continued the prior community contacts that had been developed.¹

Second, it is evident that Thomas Bland's first stop in the colonies was in Stafford County, Virginia, during 1665-1672, and that he stayed for a time or lived along the Quanticut River before moving to Calvert or Anne Arundel County. James Bland first appeared in the Maryland records in St. Mary's (the capital at the time) County in 1683 by which time Thomas was already settled in Maryland, but soon after, by 1687, James was in Stafford County, Virginia, where he leased lands at

¹ One key to understanding these interfamily relationships would be to develop a genealogical study of families such as these. To my knowledge, no such satisfactory study has been done.

the head of the Quanticutt. Though speculative, it is not unreasonable to assume that James left Maryland because of Thomas Bland's recurrent entanglements, which might have created a certain amount of danger by association. Alternately, Thomas' profound irascibility might simply have alienated his son and driven him away. In either case, Thomas might have at one time described the lands around the Quanticutt and expostulated upon the opportunities there for James.

Third, James himself, much like his father, seems to have been in some kind of constant embroilment (like father-like son). It is a matter of record that he was in a breach of contract suit with Richard Gibson, in which he was the defendant. Further, he evidently defaulted on a debt of 1,000 pounds of tobacco to Abraham Spicer in 1692, and as Spicer's claim said, "the said Bland, having absented himself out of this county...pl'f could not by legal course, recover his said debt."¹ Between his losses to Richard Gibson and Abraham Spicer, both of which came a'cropper about 1692, James must have thought it best to cut his losses and run while he could.

The above information fits neatly into the third set of circumstances that suggest a relationship between Thomas Bland of Maryland and James Bland of Stafford County, Virginia: Having fled Virginia, where did James go? By 1694, he was back in St. Mary's County, Maryland, where he remained apparently until 1701. During this time, particularly during 1699-1701, there is either a suggestion of relationship or remarkable serendipity or coincidence in the movements of Thomas Bland and James Bland. By 1699, Thomas Bland was fully discredited as a lawyer, and time had run out for him in Maryland. As stated before, the

¹ Wilson, p. 291, citing p. 308 of Stafford County, Virginia Records, 1689-1693.

last evidence of Thomas in Maryland was in December 1699. Thereafter, he returned to London where he made out a will on November 25, 1700 and died soon after. James Bland is not mentioned in Thomas' will, whose Maryland property was left to his cousins (nieces and nephews) Sarah and Laurence Pendrill. The Pendrills lived in England. Given Thomas' personality, one must assume that if the Pendrills had retained his confidence, they must be saints, and Thomas would have trusted them extensively, for example, to execute certain matters not specified in his will. In other words, the Pendrills might have been Thomas' conduit through extra-legal channels to any heirs he had in Maryland or Virginia. There would be implicit in such speculation Thomas' fear that his enemies might lay hold of parts of his estate before it ever got to his heirs, if it were handled otherwise.

The possibility Thomas might have feared the dissipation of his estate into hostile hands is reinforced by the nature of law in colonial times. An impeached or banished individual, as Thomas Bland was, often was considered legally dead, and was forced to forfeit property. But under these circumstances, Thomas' heirs could still lay claim to the property within a specified time, and by vowing their loyalty to the Crown, could take the property. When Thomas Bland left Maryland in 1699 or 1700, his property known as "Richardson's Folly" was in the hands of Cornelius Howard, who still held it in 1707, for the heirs of Thomas Bland.¹

So it appears that parts of Thomas Bland's lands and property were divided between the Pendrills in England, and Cornelius Howard in

¹ Cf. page 208, note 1, per letter, Leslie Dawson to Charles Bland, September 3, 1981.

Maryland. Further, as previously indicated, Thomas wrote some names on the back of his will, specifying that each of them should receive a gold ring, a cloak and dagger touch that further obscures who the true beneficiaries were.

Whatever machinations lay behind his will, it is known that Thomas' will was proved January 13, 1700/1701. Interestingly, in December 1701, James Bland, identified then as "now living at Poplar Hill in St. Mary's County, Maryland,"¹ purchased 600 acres of land on the south side of and at the mouth of Powell's Creek, in Stafford County, Virginia. Powell's Creek runs north of Dumfries, and lies cleanly between the Quanticutt and Occoquan Rivers (see map on page 206A), the original location of Thomas Bland's arrival in Virginia, and the area where James Bland leased lands in 1687. Urilla Bland's observation that James Bland might have used his father's legacy to purchase the Powell's Creek lands, though speculative, is supported by reasonable deduction, owing to the sequence of Thomas' departure from Maryland (1699), the date of his will (1700), and the date of James Bland's purchase of the Powell's Creek property (1701).² There remains the caution that there is no direct evidence that Thomas Bland left any bequest for James. As we shall see in the discussion on Link III, however, the man who was indisputably the father of Thomas Bland of Maryland, likewise left no bequest to his son, who may have alienated his father as he did many others (like father-like son).³

¹ Wilson, p. 291.

² UMB I, pp. 24-25.

³ As his will shows, however, Thomas Bland's father was a wealthy man who left large bequests for his grandchildren and daughter. That he evidently cut Thomas out of his will, leaving him nothing, may be owed in fact that Thomas went to Virginia and Maryland, and may be the reason Thomas lived a "root hog or die" life.

In conclusion, the essence of Christopher Johnston's evidentiary essay was to establish a "semblance of a connection" between Thomas and James Bland through linkages of common land and associates. Unfortunately, there are no land records extant to confirm land ownership of James Bland in Maryland during 1683-1687 or 1694-1701, because land records for this period were destroyed in a fire. But even if one proceeds on the basis of available information, the evidence provided by Urilla Bland and Leslie Dawson that reinforces Johnston's paradigm, elevates the suggestion of a "semblance" of a connection into a near certainty of shared interests in geography, time, land associates and money. In the absence of contrary proof, I am convinced that Thomas Bland of Maryland was the father of James Bland of Stafford County, Virginia.

Link III: Was George Bland of London the Father
of Thomas Bland of Maryland?

No, he was not! Beyond question, the father of Thomas Bland of Maryland, whose will was proved in London January 13, 1700/1701, was Thomas Bland of London, whose will was proved January 29, 1674-1675. But this elder Thomas Bland may well have been the son of George Bland of Arundel in Sussex County, England.

If Thomas Bland, who died in 1674/1675, was the son of George Bland, who died in 1648, then Urilla Bland's vision of unity would be complete. The father-son linkage between George and Thomas (the Thomas who was father of Thomas Bland of Maryland), however, is not clear. One may recall that Urilla Bland's vision was conceived by her friend Anna Donigan who matched names between the Thomas Bland, who was mentioned

in the 1618 Will of Adam Bland's son Thomas, and Thomas Bland of Maryland, and concluded that he was the father of James Bland and son of George Bland. Further on in her letter, Mrs. Donigan said to Robert (Linn) Bland, "we shall have to take a little sail over to England."¹ If Mrs. Donigan ever got to England, she would have found Bland men everywhere named Thomas, which is after all, one of the basic Christian names. She would have come away from England sobered by the complexity of the Bland family relationships, not only in London, York and Westmoreland counties, but throughout the country. Add to this the huge gaps in records genealogists can use to prove family lineages, and Mrs. Donigan might have returned to America to rethink her entire idea.

Yet it is entirely possible that the Thomas Bland who made his will on August 26, 1674, and died the following January, was the same grandson of Thomas Bland of London (1558-1618) who was mentioned in the latter's will.

Prior to discussion of the possible connection between George Bland, who died in 1648, and Thomas Bland, who died in 1674, it would be useful to outline two wills and information I have discovered of the family structure of Thomas Bland who died in 1674. The first step would be to quote in full the wills of Thomas Bland, of London (1674/1675) and Thomas Bland, of London and Maryland (1700/1701):

1. Thomas Bland of London, gentleman, 26 August 1674, with a codicil dated 30 October 1674, proved 29 January 1674. To my grandchildren, Jane and Sarah Moyser, two hundred and fifty pounds apiece,¹ to be employed at interest or laid out in buying of several annuities for them. To

¹ Letter, Anna Donigan to Robert L. Bland, 1905-1915.

² This bequest alone should provide some clue to Thomas' wealth, since one British pound in 1700 was worth about \$100 in 1980 American currency. In other words, Thomas left a bequest estimated at about \$25,000 each to his granddaughters.

my grandson Joseph Day, fifty pounds, to be employed to put him out to some decent calling when he shall attain to fifteen years of age. To my daughter Sarah Day, the wife of Joseph Day, one annuity or yearly rent charge of ten pounds by the year during her natural life, issueable and payable out of my lands and tenement in Mildenhall in Suffolk. I give to my son-in-law Joseph Day and Sarah, his wife, ten pounds apiece to buy them mourning. I appoint my son Richard Bland and my son-in-law Joseph Day and Sarah, his wife, to be executors and do appoint them to give all my linen to my grandchildren.

2. Thomas Bland of London, merchant, 25 November 1700, proved 13 January 1700. To my sister Sarah Day ten pounds every year during her natural life, she was living with my executors. Ten pounds to Mary Keemish if she shall live to be lawfully married. Ten pounds to _____ Keemish, my sister's grandson, at one and twenty. Twenty pounds each to Sarah and Margaret Bland, my brother's two daughters, if they live to be lawfully married. My cousin Lawrence Pendrill. To Ann _____, the servant in my cousin Pendrill's house, forty shillings. To my said sister, Sarah Day, ten pounds for her mourning clothes at my funeral. To every person whose name is inserted on the back of this will one gold ring of the value of about ten shillings. To my cousin Sarah Pendrill, the wife of Lawrence Pendrill, all my lands, plantations, mortgages, houses, tobacco houses ect., in Anne Arundel County in the Province of Maryland, and also, after the payment or other accomplishment of the said contingent legacies, all my negroes, cattle, horses, mares, household stuff, debts in money and tobacco, ready money, plate, goods and chattels whatsoever, either in England or in Maryland or elsewhere. And I make my cousin Lawrence Pendrill and Sarah, his wife, my sole executors.¹

Both Waters and Carlisle juxtapose the 1674 and 1700 wills. For purposes of clarity in utility, I shall refer to the two principals as the elder and younger Thomas.

¹ These wills are found in Carlisle, pp. 100-101; Waters, Vol. I, pp. 814-815, and New England Historical and Genealogical Quarterly, Vol 48 (Jan. 1894), pp. 114-115. The original will is filed at the Church of Latter Day Saints, Salt Lake City, Genealogical Society, Film No. 92425; British Public Records Office, Film #H.K. 2,059, Wills and Administrations at Somerset House, Prerogative Court at Canterbury.

The elder Thomas made no bequest to Thomas Bland the younger, who was undoubtedly his son, and no specific bequest to his son Richard, whom he did however name as co-executor, insuring him a third of his estate after specific bequests, along with his daughter Sarah, married in 1674 to Joseph Day. There is no mention of a wife (suggesting that she was deceased), or of any other children. From the record then, it would appear that Thomas the elder was a widower when he died in 1674, and had three surviving children, Thomas, Richard and Sarah.

Thomas the elder also mentions in his will three grandchildren, Jane and Sarah Moyser and Joseph Day. Although the will may be confusing on the point, further investigation indicates that all three were by his daughter Sarah. Sarah was born in 1642, in St. Dunstan in the West Parish,¹ whose parish records apparently did not survive the 1666 London fire. On September 9, 1662, Sarah secured a marriage license with Christopher Moyser of St. Martin's Parish, Ironmonger Lane, London, a bachelor aged 22. She was identified as "daughter of Thomas Bland of St. Dunstan in the West."² By 1674, the time of Thomas the elder's will, Sarah had become Sarah Day, and had an infant son, indicating that Christopher Moyser had been dead since no later than about 1671 (he may have died in the plague of 1665, or the fire of 1666). Sarah Bland Moyser and Christopher Moyser had two children, Jane and Sarah. Jane Moyser, whose birthdate is unknown, married Nicholas Kameys (Keemish) on April 27, 1684 at St. James, Duke Place.³

¹ Her brother Richard also is identified as living at St. Dunstan in the West, making it likely the parish residence of Thomas Bland the elder and his children. Entries for St. Dunstan in the West do not appear on the Latter Day Saints Microfiche collection.

² Foster, p. 952.

³ LDS Fiche Records, London, Moyser. Cf. William Phillimon, Marriages at St. James Duke Place, Vol. 2, 1684-1690.

It is evident from the will of Thomas Bland the younger that Nicholas Kameys and Jane Moyser had a daughter Mary and an unnamed son, "_____ Keemish, my sister's grandson," both of whom were minors. Since Thomas the elder did not mention any grandchildren by his son Richard in his will, though he made Richard his executor, one must assume there was no exclusion, and that Richard's two daughters, mentioned in the will of Thomas the younger, were unborn in 1674, the year in which as we shall see Richard took his second wife. Accordingly, this makes it very likely that Sarah Moyser, the minor child mentioned in Thomas Bland the elder's will of 1674, is the woman who later married Lawrence Pendrill.

Finally, it would appear that by 1673, Sarah Bland Moyser was married to Joseph Day. On January 25, 1673/1674, a son Joseph was born to them in St. Holborn's Parish.¹ Thomas the elder left a bequest to this infant, but rescinded it in a codicil dated October 30, 1674, which indicated that the infant Joseph Day was dead. By the time Thomas the younger made his will, Sarah Bland Moyser Day was still living, but there was no mention of her second husband Joseph Day, indicating he was dead.

In the will of Thomas the elder, his son Richard (called John by Carlisle) was named co-executor of his estate, and according to Carlisle, was entitled to one-third of the estate remaining after specific bequests were met.² By the time of the will of Thomas the younger, two unmarried daughters of Richard Bland, Sarah and Margaret were left

¹ LDS Fiche Records, London, Day.

² Carlisle, p. 100.

tentative bequests, but none is left for Richard himself, and Richard is not named as an executor. All of this suggests that Richard was dead by 1700.

Two pieces of information give some clue to Richard's age and birth-date. On March 31, 1664, a marriage license was recorded for Richard Bland, of St. Dunstan in the West, who is identified as a "24 year old silkman" (subsequent information indicates he was 20), and Elizabeth Disbrowe, of Cambridge County, to be married at St. Peter's Church, Paul's Wharf in London. This would suggest that Richard was born about 1644. The fact that the elder Thomas was silent about any children by Richard, but generous with children by Sarah, would suggest that Richard Bland and Elizabeth Disbrowe had no children, or if they did, the children were all dead by 1674.

On February 6, 1674/1675, Richard Bland, who is identified as a 30 year old widower "of the Inner Temple, gentleman," was granted a marriage license with Margaret Marshall, age 15, of St. Dunstan in the West. It is by Margaret Marshall undoubtedly that Richard's two daughters, Margaret and Sarah were born, and at the time of Thomas the younger's will, they were unmarried.

As to Thomas Bland of Maryland, the younger, his age is more difficult to ascertain. If, as is probable, he was the Thomas Bland who leased lands in Essex County called "Maryland Point," having relatives "who were planters in Virginia," as I believe he was, he would be somewhat older than his two siblings, Sarah and Richard. This conclusion is reached because in order to transact a land lease, he would have had to be at least 21 in 1659, and was probably somewhat older. My hunch is

that he was born about 1634. The name of his wife remains a mystery, and aside from his son James, who was probably born shortly before he leased "Maryland Point," Thomas had no known children.¹

These facts about the children and grandchildren of Thomas Bland, who died in 1674, make it obvious that he is the father of Thomas Bland of Maryland, who died in 1700. That leaves the critical question: was he, Thomas the elder, the son of George Bland? Let us consider a few key points by recurring to information in Chapter III.

George Bland (1589-1648) belonged to the fourth generation of the London progenitors of the James River Bland family. He was born August 10, 1589 at St. Martin's Ludgate parish and was buried at St. Antholin's parish on June 10, 1648. He was the only son born to Thomas Bland (1558-1618) who survived to adulthood. In his will, proved May 15, 1618, Thomas Bland named George his executor and specifically left "my messuages in Shoreditch to my son George and his son Thomas Blande."²

I suggested in Chapter III that George Bland married Anne Caunte, a widow of 24 in 1610. Now, if George had a son Thomas living when his father made his will in November 1617, obviously George's son Thomas

¹ James' birth is generally estimated at about 1655, though no one has ever produced evidence of it (Cf. p. 198, note 3). If my calculations about Thomas Bland's age are correct, and he would not likely have been married before age 21, James' age would have to be moved up slightly to about 1656. Thus, he would have been about 27 years old in 1683, when he first makes his appearance in Maryland. He would have been a small child in the early 1660's when Thomas Bland went to Virginia, transported to Beach and Hatoff. It is likely that he did not go there with his father, but came later. There is no other Bland among the Beach-Hatoff headrights.

² Will of Thomas Bland, Carlisle, pp. 135-136; Waters, p. 813; and New England Historical and Genealogical Quarterly, Vol. 48 (1894), pp. 111-112.

would have been a small child and could have been born only in a narrow band of time, from about 1611-1617. Using these parameters, I checked all the Latter Day Saints' birth records, and found only one such father-son combination, a Thomas Bland, born to George Bland at Aldingbourne Parish in Sussex County, England, on August 3, 1612.¹ Two things make it certain that this father-son combination was correct: (1) it is the only such combination in the 1611-1617 time span, and there were no other children by a George Bland recorded in that county;² (2) Carlisle states that George Bland "removed to Arundel in Sussex" and this father-son combination occurred in Sussex.

So, Thomas Bland, son of George Bland (1589-1648) was born August 3, 1612. Was he the same man whose will was proved in London on January 29, 1674/1675? There is no solid proof that he was. One piece of indirect evidence suggests he was not. But there are at least five good reasons why the two could be the same.

The negative argument has to do with a question of charity, human kindness and understanding, and sheer odds. In his will made on November 17, 1617, Thomas Bland (1558-1618) made extensive bequests to his son and grandson, as well as to members of his extended family, the living descendants of Adam Bland and Joan Atkyns. He also was generous with his step-children by Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley and Mary Catcher Moody, to whom he also left handsome bequests. In addition, he left bequests to the poor of Sundridge, Kent County, and St. Benet's Church near Paul's Wharf.³

¹ See discussion of the Family of Thomas Bland, pp. 28-35.

² Carlisle states, "George Bland...by...his wife...had one child only, named Thomas." P. 136.

³ See Note 1, p. 249, op. cit.

In his own will made May 16, 1648, George Bland leaves generous bequests for his son and his sister, Elizabeth Bland Holmwood, as well as to various half-brothers and sisters by both Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley Bland, his mother, and Mary Catcher Moody. Also, in a long and pretentious tombstone inscription, he asked to be remembered as the founder of the Alms House called "Bland's House," in Arundel, Sussex County, which was founded in 1631.¹

Both these wills speak of a large and generous nature by George Bland, as well as his father Thomas. Now, by 1648, George's son Thomas was thirty-six years old and, if he was the same man who died in 1674, George would have had at least three grandchildren, all of whom were minors and too young to have caused any durable animosity. Surely, a man as generous as George Bland appeared to be would have made some mention of his grandchildren, yet there does not appear to be any. Superficially at least, this would seem to suggest that Thomas Bland, son of George, had no heirs in 1648. If true, this fact would throw Urilla Bland's vision of unity into a cocked hat.

Several speculative points mitigate this finding. First, Carlisle, the only source I have seen for George's will, presents the will in abstract form only, and Carlisle sometimes has made transpositional mistakes.² George's will may have been misrepresented in Carlisle's work. Alternately, George could have simply omitted the children because they were minors.³

¹ Carlisle, pp. 137-138.

² For example, in referring to the son of Thomas Bland who died in 1674, Carlisle refers to him as John, when it is a certainty that his name was Richard.

³ According to Mr. Dawson, "The fact that a testator in a will mentions his children but does not mention his grandchildren, is not unusual. The testator usually assumes that the children will take care of the grandchildren." Leslie Dawson to Charles Bland June 30, 1981.

Mitigation of the negative leads to a discussion of the positive evidence that points, though very tentatively, to the possibility that Thomas Bland, born in 1612, was the same man who died in 1674. First, there is the simple question of age. It is plausible, though not conclusive, that a man born in 1612 could have lived to 1674, thus dying at age 62. Second, there would be a tradition of work in law that seemed to flourish in the descendants of Adam Bland. Thomas Bland (1558-1618) was said by Carlisle to be "in the law," and was probably the Under Sheriff of Middlesex.¹ Although William Bland (1566-1596) was a Skinner, both his sons, William and Samuel, as well as a grandson, Peter, were matriculated at Grays Inn.² Thomas Bland (1611-1678), first son of John Bland and Susan Deblere, was an attorney who studied at the Inner Temple, and though their standing in the profession is uncertain, Edward Bland (1613-1652) and Theodorick Bland (1629-1671) may have practiced law in Virginia. Since it is certain that Richard Bland, son of Thomas, who died in 1674, was "of the Inner Temple," one of the Inns of Court, and Thomas Bland of Maryland claimed to have studied for six years in the Inner Temple,³ these facts would seem to mesh, so that the sons of Thomas Bland who died in 1674 would show a certain similarity with many others in the family of Adam Bland.

Third, there is a question of wealth. There are many other Bland families in London besides the descendants of Adam Bland, but none that I can discern in which there is as much position in society (Adam and

¹ Carlisle, pp. 134-135.

² Cf. Chapter I, pp. 37-43.

³ It is fairly certain from evidence already presented, that Thomas Bland of Maryland did not study at the Inner Temple, or any of the Inns of Court, but falsely represented himself as having done so. Since there was such a strong tradition of legal practice in his family, Thomas may have felt compelled to fudge it.

Peter were Skinners to the Crown, and were succeeded by Thomas Langhorne, who married one of the daughters of Peter Bland (1557-1625), and wealth. The family's wealth was evidenced by the wills of Thomas Bland (1618), Peter Bland (1625), and John Bland (1627), as well as by Susan Deblere's complaint to the King in 1633 that she was being hounded by creditors even though she had already paid off 15,000 pounds (the rough equivalent converted from 1633 pounds to 1980 American dollars would be over \$1 million.)¹ The family's wealth is further surmised by John the Grocer's activity with the original Virginia Company, and his part-ownership of several commercial ships that sailed to Virginia, and by the vast land acquisitions in Virginia by John the Grocer's sons, John, Edward and Theodorick. Thomas Bland, in his will of 1674, left specific cash bequests of 570 pounds (about \$57,000, converted from 1674 pounds to 1980 dollars). In addition, he left various annuities, plus lands in Suffolk County. As far as one can ascertain, although there were many separate families of Blands in London during the 17th century, the family of Adam Bland and his descendants was the only one with that kind of wealth and concomitant social position.

Fourth, when Thomas Bland (1558-1618) made his will, he left "to son George my messuages, ect. in the parishes of St. Peters and St. Benet's near Paul's Wharf."² George, according to Carlisle, left all his property in St. Benet and St. Peter's near Paul's Wharf to his son, Thomas. The will of Thomas Bland in 1674 makes no mention of these lands and it appears that he lived in St. Dunstan in the West. Thomas'

¹ See p. 74, note 132.

² Cf. p. 249, note 1.

son Richard, however, obtained license to marry Elizabeth Disbrowe in St. Peter's Church, Paul's Wharf.¹ Also, George Bland was said by Carlisle to have had considerable real property in London, Lincoln, Essex, Hereford and Sussex Counties. Thomas Bland leased lands called "Maryland Point" in Essex in 1659.²

Fifth, and finally, aside from James Bland, there is no other evidence of a sustained effort by any English family named Bland, except Adam's, to settle in Virginia. This, coupled with the certainty that Thomas Bland, who died in 1700 in London, was the Thomas Bland of Maryland, and the certainty that the Thomas Bland who died in 1674 was his father, increases the possibility that one of these Thomases was the person who leased his lands in Essex County in 1659, having relations in Virginia who were "planters." Also, it increases the chances that Thomas of Maryland was related to the Adam Bland family of London and had a cousin relationship to the James River family of Virginia.

These indirect indications, though tentative, outline a strong possibility for a parent-son link between George Bland of London, and Thomas Bland of London who died in 1674, and also by extension, Thomas Bland who died in 1700, and James Bland who died in Stafford County, Virginia in 1708. It is neither proved nor disproved that the Thomas Bland who was born to George Bland in 1612, and the Thomas Bland who died in 1674 were the same man. But the arguments for the two dates belonging to the same man do strongly outweigh the single negative

¹ Foster, p. 139.

² Carlisle, p. 137.

argument. Thus, Link III of Urilla Bland's vision of unity is strongly suggestive, but only tentatively complete. I believe, but cannot conclusively prove, that Thomas Bland who died in 1674 was the son of George Bland, who died in 1648, and his grandson was James Bland who died in 1708 in Virginia.

If one accepts the linkage between Thomas Bland of London who died in 1674, and George Bland of London who died in 1648, then Urilla Bland's vision of unity is complete. It is my conviction that further research on the question, particularly in English and Maryland sources, will validate the connection. One should not, however, accept these conclusions at the expense of what appear to be other alternatives to the parentage of James Bland. The following three alternatives potentially bear upon the question of James Bland's parentage, but in every case, would very likely sever him from the above deduced line of descent from Adam Bland.

Paths Not Taken

Peregrine Bland

Only a modest amount of information about Peregrine Bland is available, but since he had an unusual name,¹ it seems safe to assume that there is considerable reliability in linking together the scant information available, into a cursory biographical portrait. His birthdate

¹ St. Peregrine was the patron saint of the incurably ill. Tobias Smollet found some humor in the name, which he gave to the hero of his story, Peregrine Pickle (1751).

TABLE XIV

THE ASSUMED FAMILY OF THOMAS BLAND OF LONDON: SEVEN GENERATIONS

(1) Robert or Roger Bland (dates unknown)	_____	
(2) Adam Bland (C. 1528-1594)	Joan Atkyns (C. 1530-1596)	
(3) Thomas Bland (C. 1558-1618)	Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley (1549-1593)	
(4) George Bland (1589-1648)	Anne Caunte	
(5) Thomas Bland (1612-1674)*	_____, about 1633	
(6-1)	(6-2)	(6-3)
Thomas Bland (C. 1634-1700), married (1) _____, about 1654; and (2) Damaris Wyatt in 1674.	Sarah Bland (1642-living in 1700), married (1) Christopher Moyser in 1662; and (2) Joseph Day, about 1672.	Richard (1644-was dead by 1700), married (1) Elizabeth Disbrowe (C. 1645-1673), by whom no issue; and (2) Margaret Marshall (1659-?)
Presumed Child of Thomas Bland by (1): (7-1)	Children of Sarah Bland by Christopher Moyser: (7-1)	Children of Richard Bland by Margaret Marshall: Margaret and Sarah, dates unknown.
James Bland (C. 1655-1708), married (1) _____; and (2) Margaret _____.	Jane Moyser, who married Nicholas Kameys and had at least 2 children: (a) Mary Kameys, called "Mary Keemish" in Thomas Bland's will, and (b) Sarah Moyser, who married Lawrence Pendrill. By Joseph Day, Sarah Bland Moyser had one son, Joseph (1673-1674).	

* George Bland (1589-1648) had one son, Thomas, born in 1612. He is assumed to be the same individual who died in London in 1674, and who was the father of Thomas Bland "of Maryland," who in turn is presumed to be the father of James Bland (C. 1655-1708).

TABLE XV

Seven Generation Line of Descent (Assumed) for the Bland Family's

Settlement in Maryland and Virginia

- (1) Robert or Roger Bland (dates unknown) = _____.
- (2) Adam Bland (C. 1528-1594) = _____
Joan Atkyns (C. 1530-1596).

THE JAMES RIVER BLANDS

- (3) John Bland (1572-1632) = Susan Deblere (1590-1664)
- (4) Theodorick Bland (1629-1671) = Anna Bennett
(C. 1639-1687)
- (5) Richard Bland (1665-1720) = Elizabeth Randolph
(?-1719)

THE STAFFORD COUNTY BLANDS

- (3) Thomas Bland (1558-1618) = Elizabeth Harrison
Yeardley (1549-1593)
- (4) George Bland (1589-1648) = Anne Caunte (dates
unknown)
- (5) Thomas Bland (1612-1674) = _____.
- (6) Thomas Bland (C. 1634-1700) = _____.
- (7) James Bland (C. 1655-1708) = _____ and
Margaret _____.

is unknown, as well as his place of birth, and extant English parish records yield no information about his birth. But it is known that he matriculated from Emmanuel College in 1614.¹ He entered Emmanuel February 26, 1613/1614. Characteristically, young men were about age eighteen when they entered college, therefore it is safe to assume that Peregrine was born about 1596. He died by drowning sometime in 1650,² and his will was proved January 19, 1650/1651;³ therefore, Peregrine's dates were about 1596-1650.

The first direct evidence of Peregrine's presence in Virginia is his witnessing a will for Joseph Ham in 1638.⁴ He was listed as a member of the House of Burgesses for Charles River County in 1639-1640.⁵ In 1642, Peregrine was granted 1,000 acres of land on the north side of the Pyanketanke River, in what later became Middlesex County but was then Charles River County, or York County. In the same year, another man was granted 350 acres of land in Charles River County for transporting seven persons to Virginia, including Peregrine Bland.⁶ It is likely that Peregrine came to Virginia about 1635 with enough money soon after to support the transportation of the twenty persons, for whom he was entitled to his 1,000 acre grant. The name of his wife, or when he married her is not certain, but it is known that he had a

1 Venn and Venn, p. 164.

2 Dawson notes, citing Lantz, Maryland and Virginia Heritage, Vol. 3, p. 199, and The Baltimore Sun, October 21, 1906, cf. UMB II, p. 22. Letter from Leslie Dawson to Urilla Bland, June 11, 1976.

3 Nugent III, p. 25.

4 WMQ (L), Vol. I, p. 77.

5 Stanard, p. 60.

6 Nugent I, pp. 132, 221.

daughter named Hope Bland, who evidently died about 1687.¹ She was sole heir to his property when he died in 1650, suggesting that his wife was already dead at the time of his death. The fact that his daughter was sole heir to the property appears to rule out any adult male heirs, thus apparently eliminating the possibility that Peregrine is the parent of James Bland of Stafford County.

It is known, however, that in 1658, one William Spencer held legal guardianship within York County (presumably, York County, Virginia which was formed from Charles River County in 1642) of "sons-in-law (stepsons)" Peregrine and Thomas Bland.² What this means is hard to decipher. Possibly, the Peregrine and Thomas mentioned were brothers to each other and either minor sons of Peregrine, Senior, or sons of a brother. But why would William Spencer be identified as a stepfather or father in law? One clue to the question's answer may lie in the will of Richard Spencer, made in London on March 17, 1645/1646.³ Spencer made a bequest to Sarah and Hannah Bland, daughters of his sister Katherine Spencer Bland. He also gave fifty pounds each to "the children of William Spencer, son of my said brother Jarrard Spencer."⁴ This William Spencer then would have been a nephew to Richard Spencer and his sister Katherine Spencer Bland. His appellation of step father or father in law may have been misleading. All of the brothers Richard Spencer mentioned were deceased, and William Spencer may simply have been the oldest surviving male, thus taking guardianship for (in the will) unspecified minor children.

1 Nugent II, p. 386, and III, p. 25.

2 VMHB, Vol. 2 (1893-1894), p. 198.

3 Waters, pp. 514-515.

4 Ibid.

This would make it plausible, though by no means certain, that Peregrine Bland senior was married to Katherine Spencer, who died sometime before 1645, and had by her at least three daughters, Hope, Sarah and Hannah, and perhaps two sons, Peregrine (his father's namesake) and Thomas. If this construction is correct, Peregrine senior's two sons would have been minors when he died, and his daughter Hope would have been the only adult child, thus would have been Peregrine's sole heir. Alternately, Hope could have been a child of Peregrine's by a former marriage. Linkage of Peregrine's family to the James River family remains problematical. There is nothing in the London parish records to show Peregrine's birth, and the London records are fairly complete respecting the Adam Bland family. It is marginally possible, of course, that the son Thomas who was a minor under William Spencer's guardianship in 1658, could have been Thomas Bland of Maryland (he could be as old as 15 and still be under guardianship). Whether a young man born in 1643 or thereabouts could show up in Maryland between 1666-1672, successfully pass himself off as a student of the Inner Temple and set up a law practice, is subject to question. Problems abound in this construction. And suffice it to say, such a young man could not have been the father of James Bland of Stafford County.

Thomas Bland of London, Scrivener

On October 2, 1666, Thomas Bland, who styled himself a citizen and Scrivener, made his will. He left to his wife, Mary, who was his sole executrix, all his property on Broad Street in the St. Peter the Poor Parish, which houses he said he had purchased from his wife before their marriage. He also left her property in Middlesex County and his leases

of warehouses on Broad Street, his shop at the Royal Exchange and two houses, one at Bell Alley and the other at Old Fish Street. Thomas was parsimonious with a sister Anne, who had married one Thomas Lee, and their son. Thomas Lee's "unfaithfulness" had caused him to suffer a great loss of estate during the great fire of London that year, so he and his family received only twenty shillings each.

Thomas lived on for another year, finally dying about December 1667.¹ The will is interesting for several reasons. First, Thomas left a small amount to a sister Anne and her family, and the balance to his wife Mary and "her heirs forever." There is no mention of any children by Thomas Bland and Mary.

Second, the considerable research that has gone into this particular couple² has shown beyond a shadow of reasonable doubt that Thomas' wife Mary was born Mary Bennett. Her life is linked to the Bland name in three ways. First, her marriage to Thomas. Second, she was born at Hart Street, St. Olaves Parish in London, placing her in strikingly close proximity to the family of John Bland (1612-1680, fourth generation) and his wife Sarah Greene. Third, her father Edward Bennett was the uncle of Richard Bennett of Nansemond County Virginia, who was the father of Anna Bennett (1639-1687), who married Theodorick Bland of Westover (1629-1671, fourth generation).³

¹ Carlisle, p. 99. Thomas' will was proved December 14, 1667.

² The best treatment of the question is Rupert Taylor, "The Parentage of James Day (died 1700) and Wife Mary of Isle of Wight County Virginia," *Tylers Quarterly*, Vol. XVI (1934-1935), pp. 239-242. Cf. *WMQ* (1) Vol. 7 (1902), pp. 211-15, 251-53.

³ One should note in Chapter III that Thomas Bland (1558-1618) married Elizabeth Harrison Yeardley, whose mother's maiden name was Margaret Bennett.

In tracing the lineage of Mary Bennett, the following is of importance. Edward Bennett, Mary's father, and his wife Mary Bourne were married about 1628, and had six children, all baptized at St. Olaves, Hart Street:¹

1. Elizabeth, baptized May 31, 1629. Elizabeth was buried at St. Olaves, August 27, 1636.
2. Silvester, baptized October 25, 1630.
3. John, baptized February 17, 1631/1632. John was buried at St. Olaves, October 3, 1650.
4. Mary, baptized between November 1632 and July 1633. (Dates deduced from baptismal dates of antecedent and subsequent sibilings. Mary's baptism does not appear in the St. Olave's parish record but other evidence makes it certain she is the child of Edward Bennett and Mary Bourne.) Mary died sometime after 1701.
5. Anne, baptized March 13, 1633/1634. Buried May 10, 1634.
6. Jasper, baptized July 3, 1635. Buried April 11, 1690.

Mary Bourne Bennett was shown by the St. Olaves parish registers to have been buried "a widow" on April 10, 1660. The date of Edward Bennett's death is not certain, but it is assumed to have been sometime before 1660. On April 8, 1663, a partition of fifteen hundred acres of land was made in Isle of Wight County Virginia, with 750 acres each awarded to Mary (Bennett) Bland and her sister Silvester (Bennett) Hill (see map on following page). Part of the land was awarded to Richard Bennett, and Theodorick Bland (1629-1671), son-in-law to Richard Bennett acted as attorney in the transaction.² The land was partitioned

¹ Taylor, p. 240, and St. Olaves, Hart Street Registers, 1563-1700, pp. 39, 40, 42, 44, 45, 167, 183.

² Theodorick Bland (1629-1671) was the attorney in this matter. Some writers have transposed Theodorick's name to Thomas, creating a false impression that Thomas of Maryland was the attorney in the matter. During my visit to the Virginia State Library, October 14-16, 1980, I studied the original land grant and found the attorney's name was Theodorick.

June 1 or September 30, 1664, and patented as distinct properties on May 21, 1668, several months after the death of Thomas Bland, the London Scrivener.¹ The land patent to the deceased Thomas Bland and Mary Bland carried the additional phrase, "& to the heirs of the said Mary," a conditional statement similar to the one in Thomas Bland's will of December 14, 1667. These two similar statements make it unlikely that Mary had any children by Thomas Bland. Rather, as the most diligent researcher of the question puts it, she very likely married before Thomas Bland, John Day of Fulham, Middlesex, probably soon after her eighteenth birthday. John Day made his will on September 15, 1657, leaving monetary bequests to four children: John, James, Elizabeth and Anne.² To his wife, he also left money and all property in Stepney Middlesex, to dispose as she should please. This suggests the source of property that Mary Bennett Day Bland sold to her husband Thomas before their marriage.³

On September 12, 1668, Mary Bennett Day Bland married Luke Cropley, a widower of about 35, in London. The marriage notice estimates Mary's age as about 36.⁴ In his own will of January 9, 1700/1701, James Day, her son, adds a codicil, calling her "ever honored mother, Mrs. Mary Cropley."⁵ This would indicate that Mary was still living in 1701, about

¹ Nugent I, p. 444, and II, p. 38. Taylor, p. 240.

² Taylor, p. 241.

³ Ibid. James Day, who called Mary his mother, in his will proved January 9, 1700/1701, and also called Silvester Bennett Hill his aunt, held property in St. Peter the Poor Parish, London, situated on Broad Street. These facts persuasively validate the argument of Rupert Taylor and invalidate UMB II, pp. 5-6, which argues that James Day married Mary daughter of Mary Bennett Bland. As stated, there is no substantial proof of any children born to Mary Bennett and Thomas Bland.

⁴ Foster, p. 359.

⁵ Blanche A. Chapman, Wills and Administrations: Isle of Wight County 1647-1800, Vol. 1 (1938), p. 59.

68 years of age. How long she lived afterward is unknown. What is germane to the question here about the parentage of James Bland is the persuasiveness of Rupert Taylor's argument that she had no children by Thomas Bland. This eliminates Thomas Bland and Mary Bennett Day as parents of James Bland of Stafford County, Virginia.¹

If Thomas Bland, the Scrivener, is eliminated as the father of James Bland, however, there are several circumstantial reasons why he could eventually be shown to be the son of George Bland (1589-1648). First, there is the matter of the proximity of Mary Bennett's family to the Adam Bland family on St. Olaves Hart Street, specifically, Adam's grandson John Bland (1612-1680). This kind of proximity could create the kind of conditions necessary for a marriage. Second, Thomas Bland, son of George Bland (1589-1648) had an uncle Lawrence Lownes (the notorious) who was, according to Carlisle, a Scrivener by trade.² Notwithstanding the odium with which Lownes was held by the family of John Bland the Grocer, he might have remained in good favor with other branches of the family, and could have had some influence on this Thomas Bland's trade. Third, there is a thick juncture of relationships between Mary Bennett Day Bland Cropley, through her parents, and Anna Bennett, daughter of Richard Bennett and wife of Theodorick Bland. The fact that Theodorick Bland served as the attorney in the partitioning of the land left by Edward Bennett to Mary and her sister Silvester argues at least plausibly for a blood or marriage relationship of some kind. Such a relationship could be that Theodorick Bland was the uncle of Mary Bennett's husband and also related to her by marriage.

¹ It is doubtful that either Thomas Bland or Mary Bennett Day Bland Cropley ever lived in Virginia. Mary simply owned land there.

² Carlisle, pp. 130-33.

All of these factors offer at least suggestive evidence of a connection between Thomas Bland, the Scrivener, and the Adam Bland family. If proved to be correct, however, it should be noted that the hypothesis advanced by Urilla Bland, and accepted in this chapter by the author, that James Bland of Stafford County descended from Adam Bland through his son Thomas, would be invalidated, for it seems beyond question that Thomas, the Scrivener, had no children by his wife Mary Bennett Day.

Further, I am convinced that a meticulous reconstruction of the several Bland families in London during the 16th and 17th centuries would reveal that Adam Bland had close relatives, perhaps brothers and sisters, who lived in London during his life, and perhaps also originating from the Orton-Sedbergh families. For example, while Alice Garmain was eliminated as a wife of Thomas Bland (1558-1618), there is an entry in the St. Gregory's parish record that shows a Thomas Bland marrying Alice Garmain on July 12, 1590. Similarly, there are several deaths of relatives reported in the home of Peter Bland, names which do not fit his family. In all, there are a number of distinct families of Bland in London during the 17th century. Clear delineation of relationships might answer the question of the parentage of Thomas Bland, the Scrivener, as well as shedding light on the possible linkage between the London family and James Bland.¹

¹ Discovery of several allied families of Bland in London, who could be linked to the Sedbergh-Orton family, would strengthen the case for James Bland, who died in Stafford County, being a descendant of the London family. J. F. Fuller, "Pedigree of the Family of Bland of Sedbergh, Yorkshire" (1913) filed in U.S. Library of Congress, establishes frequent use of the male name James in the family.

James Bland of St. Andrews Penrith, Cumberland County, England

As laborers and workers from the outlying counties and parishes of England poured into London during the 17th century, some found jobs, some ended up on the poor rolls, and some, invariably, found their way to the American colonies, contracting with ship captains and representatives of merchants and planters in the new world. Those who ventured to the new world between 1682 and 1692 were first filtered through a registration process, their names and other occupations recorded in some twenty-one large tomes known as the Lord Mayor's Waiting Books. Such an entry on March 17, 1684/1685 records two young men aged 22 who contracted for a four-year indenture in the American province of East New Jersey to Mr. William Dockwra. One of these was named James Bland, from St. Andrews Penrith Parish, in Cumberland County. This James identified himself as a "glazier and plumber."¹ A researcher interested in the Bland family would immediately ask the following two questions: Who was this James Bland? Was he James Bland of Stafford County?

In the 17th century, Cumberland County was a maritime province in the extreme northwest of England on the borders of Scotland, flanked on the south by Lancaster, Westmoreland and York Counties. As were most of the areas in the far north of England, it was low in population density, consisting primarily of small scattered towns that supported an agricultural base. Penrith was a small town with a hearth (home) count of 378 in 1664, located in southeast Cumberland County along the northern border of Westmoreland County. The chief economic pursuit in Penrith in the 17th century was sheep farming.

¹ Michael Ghirelli, Ed. A List of Emigrants from England to America: 1682-1692 (Baltimore: 1968), pp. vii-xi, 8, 36.

Penrith, as well as much of the southern Cumberland and northern Westmoreland county area, was devastated by a series of plagues between 1587-1640, including typhus, smallpox, influenza, famine, malnutrition, and its concomitant death by starvation.¹ This information points to a continuing atmosphere in which disease and death was an extremely common occurrence and a grim part of the everyday lives of residents of Penrith during the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Typically, the population was not mobile in those times. For the most part, residents of a particular place were born, raised, married there (particularly women, who were traditionally married in their own parish, although they might move to the groom's home after marriage), raised children, and died. In one town comparable to Penrith, Easingwold, in the North Riding of York County, one researcher estimated that between 1644-1813, sixty-seven percent of all marriages occurred within the parish, and only three percent occurred with a partner who lived more than twenty miles away.² Yet these residents of outlying towns and counties, particularly the young men, were the flotsam that was attracted inexorably to London, which offered work, adventure and in some ways, a processing point for other destinations: London, and from there, sometimes Virginia.

¹ Andrew Appleby, "Disease or Famine: Mortality in Cumberland and Westmoreland, 1580-1640," Economic History Review, Vol. 26 (1973), pp. 403-431, passim.

² Bessie Maltby, "Easingwold Marriage Horizons," Local Population Studies, Vol. 2 (1969), pp. 36-39.

Records for Cumberland County are hard to come by, but the Latter Day Saints' Collection shows the following family structure for four generations of Blands in St. Andrews Parish, Penrith, spanning the 17th century¹:

The first generation on record is represented by James Bland, dates unknown, who on June 4, 1599, married Alice Pattison. He had a son, James Bland, who was born on an unspecified date in 1600 and married Susan Cooke on December 16, 1620. This James Bland and Susan Cooke are the family's second known generation and they had eight children which comprised the third generation:

Third Generation:

1. Thomas, baptized November 28, 1621
2. James, baptized January 10, 1623/1624
3. Susan, baptized January 29, 1624/1625
4. Ann, baptized May 12, 1627
5. Henry, baptized February 15, 1630/1631
6. Agnes, baptized July 19, 1632
7. George, baptized July 3, 1636
8. John, baptized at an unspecified date in 1639

Some of these children, especially the first three, may have died in the severe famine in Penrith of 1623/1624. What happened to the others is uncertain except that the last two sons, George and John, grew to adulthood, married, and had families. George Bland in 1658 married Grace _____. This couple had between 1659 and 1675, a total of seven children (fourth generation), including Susan, baptized March 31, 1659; James, October 31, 1661; William, February 25, 1664; George, April 12, 1666; Margaret, January 7, 1669/1670; Elizabeth, October 5, 1671; and Jane, November 1, 1675.

¹ LDS Microfich Collection, Cumberland County. As always, the shape of families is limited in these records, which do not indicate dates of death or burial.

John, the younger brother of George Bland (third generation), appears to have married one Margaret Walton on February 12, 1660/1661, but had no children by her. When she died is uncertain, but about 1676, John remarried to Julia _____, and by her he had five children, including Margaret, baptized October 25, 1677; Thomas, November 28, 1678; Miles, August 8, 1680; Edward, May 11, 1685; and Arthur, March 7, 1689/1690.¹

There are some compelling correspondences in this information. First, since Penrith kept fairly complete parish records, it is all but certain that James Bland (fourth generation), second child and first son of George and Grace Bland, born October 31, 1661, is the same man who was recorded as a 22-year old in the Lord Mayors Waiting Book, on March 16, 1684/1685. For the sake of argument, suppose that this James Bland departed London soon after the entry was made. He would reach his destination of East New Jersey probably by May or June 1685. Suppose he started to work for William Dockwra right away. He could have worked off two years of his indenture by the summer of 1687, after which some change in his relationship with Dockwra, e.g., his escape, his purchase of his freedom from the indenture, or Dockwra's trading him, could have resulted in his leaving New Jersey, and appearing in Stafford County, Virginia by October 1687 to lease lands from Richard Gibson.² This is not an altogether incongruous assumption, as Map X showing the geographic relationship of East New Jersey, Maryland and Virginia, indicates.

¹ Latter Day Saints Microfiche Record, Cumberland County.

² This might explain the presence in Maryland in 1710 of an Arthur Bland, who was surety for a will in St. Mary's County July 5, 1710. Arthur was a son born to John Bland in St. Andrews Penrith, 1689/1690.

Still, there are three dogs in this manger. First, the St. Andrews Penrith registers show that a James Bland married one Isabel Lowther on October 18, 1691. The James Bland in Stafford County, Virginia, had a wife named Margaret, and three sons who were over twenty-one at the time of his will in 1708. If James Bland of St. Andrews Penrith was back in the parish in 1691, for whatever reason, and married this woman, then the possibility that James Bland of St. Andrews Penrith, born 1661, was the same James Bland who made his will in Stafford County, Virginia in 1708, is null.

Second, records in St. Mary's County indicate that a "James Blann" witnessed a will in February 1683/1684. Unless this is a James Bland that has no relationship to anything else, this fact is problematical. It would then require logically that James Bland was in Maryland by late 1683 (old style), returned to London sometime in the intervening year and then contracted himself as an indentured servant to Dockwra the following March. This is possible, but unlikely. James would have been racing back and forth across the Atlantic, and up and down England, with his own identity in hot pursuit after him.

Then too, there would be the necessity to explain the compelling set of circumstances that would bring this poor laborer so often into interlocking relationships with association of Thomas Bland of Maryland. In that case, one would have to stand poor Christopher Johnston on his head and agree that after all, those fascinating interrelationships between James and Thomas Bland, were "no more than an accidental coincidence."¹

¹ Christopher Johnston to Robert Bland, December 14, 1905.

These three obstacles make the possibility of this James Bland of St. Andrews Penrith, Cumberland County, being the same man who died in Stafford County, Virginia in 1708, seem rather awkward, but as an alternative possibility it should not be ruled out. For the present, however, one must conclude that explaining away those three obstacles would overwhelm logical thinking.

In conclusion, one must recur to the basic dimension of Urilla Bland's vision of unity, that Adam Bland is the common ancestral grandfather of all the Blands in America who descend from the colonial Virginia stock. My conclusion is that with the help of Leslie Dawson, Urilla Bland has proved the parentage of James Bland and probably, but not conclusively, the critical link between George Bland (1589-1648) and Thomas Bland who died in 1674. Descendants from James Bland of Stafford County, Virginia, should now be able, with some assurance, to trace their lineage back to Thomas Bland who made his will in London in 1617/1618, and by deduction to say that the two major Virginia Bland families are descended from Adam Bland.