Marmaduke Mister

and the Mister Family Story

A family history of two probable buccaneering journeys



By Capt. Billy John Mister

Historical account • family record • source-based interpretation

For Jules

A note of thanks

Jules,

Thank you for being beside me through this long journey: the years of searching, the books I've bought, and all the stories and discoveries I've shared with you along the way. You've listened patiently through it all. This manuscript means so much to me, and your support is part of what made it possible. I'm grateful I get to share this story with you.

As long as our stories are told, we live forever.

With all my love,

Billy

Marmaduke Mister on the Revenge and the Bachelors Delight

The Circumstantial Case for John Fitzhugh Millars Account

A family history of two probable buccaneering journeys

by Billy J. Mister 12 October 2026

Conclusion No surviving muster roll names Marmaduke Mister, so his service cannot be proved in the strict documentary sense. The independent chronology nevertheless supports John Fitzhugh Millar's essential account. Cook and Davis's buccaneers reached Virginia with three prizes in April 1683. Marmaduke recorded three coordinated Bachelor tracts on 15 June. The best prize was refitted in Virginia as Revenge and sailed on 23 August under a plan to seize a better ship in Africa. Only after that capture did the replacement become Bachelors Delight. The sequence makes Marmaduke's participation in both journeys a serious circumstantial conclusion rather than a family story invented after the fact.

What the Evidence Can Show

This account tells the two journeys that Marmaduke Mister most likely made. It follows Millar's reconstruction, but it keeps the boundary between record and inference visible. The voyages, ships, dates, land entries, and principal buccaneers are documented. Marmaduke's name is not found in the surviving voyage narratives. His place in the story rests on timing, geography, the money implied by his land, and the extraordinary cluster of Bachelor names he entered between the two expeditions. [1-5]

That distinction matters because pirate companies rarely left complete crew rolls. The surviving accounts name captains, navigators, surgeons, and men involved in memorable incidents. They do not list every one of the fifty-two to seventy men who left the Chesapeake. Marmaduke's absence from those narratives lowers certainty, but it does not exclude him.

The First Journey Across Darien

The story probably begins with the English buccaneers who crossed the Isthmus of Darien around 1680 and entered the Pacific, then called the South Sea. Their passage was an ordeal of wet tropical forest, flooded rivers, hunger, and exhausting marches. Once on the Pacific side, the company seized vessels and attacked Spanish shipping and settlements. Disputes divided the men into smaller parties, and several future leaders of the 1683 expedition emerged from this network, including John Cook, Edward Davis, William Dampier, and Lionel Wafer. [2, 4, 7, 8]

Millar's account places Marmaduke among the unnamed men moving through that world. No extant list proves the identification, but this first expedition explains something the land records alone cannot: how a young Eastern Shore man could have returned with portable wealth large

enough to establish himself quickly. Buccaneer shares were paid in captured coin, plate, cloth, and other goods. They could be divided far from any formal port and carried home in a chest.

After the South Sea companies broke apart, Cook and Davis's party continued through the Caribbean. Dampier says that the men divided captured goods, seized Captain Tristan's vessel, and then took two more prizes. One carried wine. Another was strong enough to serve in a new South Sea voyage. In April 1683 they reached Virginia with their prizes. The plural matters: this was a small captured flotilla, not one ship making an isolated call. [2]

The Virginia Interval and the Land Purchase

The April arrival created a narrow window before the next expedition sailed. The company sold wine, refitted the best prize, gathered men, weapons, and supplies, and prepared to leave from the Virginia Eastern Shore. Marmaduke's land transactions fall directly inside that interval.

Tract	Acres	Record date	Ownership note
Tilbury	150	8 June 1683	Marmaduke Mister
Bachelor's Contrivance	150	15 June 1683	Marmaduke Mister
Bachelor's Delight	250	15 June 1683	Marmaduke Mister and James Wyeth
Bachelor's Invention	250	15 June 1683	Marmaduke Mister

The four land entries total 800 acres. [1]

On 15 June, Marmaduke entered three adjoining or associated names built around the word Bachelor: Bachelor's Contrivance, Bachelor's Delight, and Bachelor's Invention. A single familiar phrase might be coincidence. Three coordinated names entered on one day look deliberate. They suggest that Bachelor already carried meaning for Marmaduke and his associates before Cook's men captured the Danish vessel that later bore the same name. [1]

James Wyeth shared the 250-acre Bachelor's Delight entry. His later absence from the readily located record is intriguing, but it does not prove that he sailed or died in battle. For this argument his role is secondary. The important fact is that Marmaduke appears in a coordinated group of Bachelor land names during the precise interval between two buccaneering voyages.

What the Land May Have Cost

A Maryland land patent did not necessarily require a cash purchase resembling a modern real-estate closing. Rights could arise from warrants, assignments, headrights, service, or payment of the province's caution money. A rate associated with the 1683 period was about 200 pounds of tobacco for each 100 acres. At that rate, 800 acres represented roughly 1,600 pounds of tobacco. The 250-acre Bachelor's Delight tract represented about 500 pounds, divided in an unknown proportion between Marmaduke and Wyeth. [14]

Using farm prices of roughly six-tenths to one penny per pound for Maryland tobacco in the early 1680s, 1,600 pounds of tobacco was worth approximately four to six pounds thirteen shillings sterling. No single modern conversion is exact. A consumer-price comparison places that amount in the neighborhood of 1,000 to 2,000 present-day U.S. dollars. An earnings or labor-value comparison produces a much larger figure, roughly 15,000 to 30,000 dollars. The second range

better conveys the effort required to accumulate the sum, but neither range is a modern market value for 800 acres. [14, 15]

The point is not that Marmaduke needed a fortune equal to the land's value today. The point is that he needed substantial resources at a young age, along with the ability to survey, record, and secure several tracts in quick succession. A buccaneering share offers one plausible source. It is not the only possible source, and no surviving account traces a particular coin or piece of plate from a prize chest into the land office.

The Second Journey on the Revenge

While Marmaduke's land was being entered, Cook's company prepared the best of its captured vessels for sea. The ship was fitted with eighteen guns and called Revenge. Dampier places the departure from Accomack on 23 August 1683 with about seventy men. Cowley's printed account gives Cape Charles and fifty-two men, while one manuscript version gives Smith's Island and August 4. These accounts differ in date and place, and neither supplies a complete crew roster. [2, 3, 16]

In that manuscript, Cowley says he was hired in Virginia in June 1683 under the pretense of taking the ship to Petit-Guâve. After leaving Smith's Island, Cook and the company disclosed their real plan: Guinea first, to obtain a better ship, then the South Sea. [16]

If Marmaduke sailed again, he had spent only a few months ashore. He would have converted part of his earlier share into land, left the property behind, and joined a voyage whose leaders already intended to return to the Pacific. The Virginia ship name at departure was Revenge. The later name Bachelors Delight belonged to a replacement they had not yet captured.

The Planned Capture in Africa

Cowley's firsthand account supplies the crucial detail. After leaving Virginia, the insiders disclosed their design: they would sail to Guinea, obtain a better ship, and then proceed for the South Sea. In other words, the African capture was not an improvised decision made after reaching the coast. The company crossed the Atlantic intending to steal a vessel suited to the greater voyage. [3]

Near Sierra Leone they found the Danish ship Charlotta Amalia. Danish research identifies her as a Guinea trader under Captain Thomas Thorsen. Cook's smaller English vessel overpowered her in late 1683. The buccaneers transferred into the larger prize, disposed of their old vessel, and eventually called the captured ship Bachelors Delight. [3, 6]

This order of events is the heart of the naming argument. Marmaduke's three Bachelor tracts existed in Maryland before the African capture. Cook's company had already planned to take a replacement ship. The later ship name therefore could reflect a name or identity agreed upon before the men ever reached Africa. The documents do not identify the person who proposed it, so this remains an inference. But it fits the chronology better than the older story that Marmaduke named his land years later after returning on a ship already called Bachelors Delight.

Around Cape Horn and Back into the South Sea

Aboard their stolen Danish vessel, the company crossed the Atlantic again and forced its way around Cape Horn. The route exposed the men to cold, violent seas, damaged rigging, illness, and the danger of being driven away from land for weeks. Once in the Pacific, they resumed the life of the earlier expedition: searching for Spanish shipping, taking coastal prizes, and moving between isolated islands and anchorages where water, food, and repairs could be found. Lane and Bradley

place the expedition within the second wave of English and French buccaneering on the coasts of Peru. [7, 8]

Cook died during the voyage, and Edward Davis took command. Under Davis, the company ranged along the Pacific coast and accumulated plate, coin, and goods through raids and captures. The men lived for years inside an unstable floating partnership. Captains changed, companies divided, ships separated, and sailors transferred from one vessel to another. This fluid organization helps explain why a man could participate for years without appearing in the few names an author chose to record.

The Return to the Chesapeake

By 1688, Davis, Wafer, John Hinson, and Peter Cloise were making their way back into the English colonies. Wafer says they reached Philadelphia, traveled down the Delaware River, carted their chests across the neck of land to the Bohemia River, and descended Chesapeake Bay toward Virginia. Captain Simon Rowe stopped them near the mouth of the James River. Virginia records describe plate, money, and goods valuable enough to trigger years of petitions, imprisonment, and litigation. Part of the disputed property was eventually directed toward the proposed College of William and Mary. [4, 5, 9-12]

Millar's reconstruction says that members of the company were left at Atlantic ports with their shares before the vessel was sold in Philadelphia. A later Sussex County account, expressly derived from Millar, says that crewmen were put ashore near what became Laurel and used the name Bachelors Delight for a plantation. The underlying contemporary citation has not yet been recovered, so the Sussex detail should be treated as a published lead rather than a proven fact. It is important, however, that the story belongs to Millar's work. It was not invented by the present Mister family research. [13]

If Marmaduke returned separately, the narratives may never have had reason to name him. He could have left the company before the arrests, returned by another vessel, or remained connected to the venture without completing every leg. Somerset County records place him back in the region after the voyage period. What survives is the footprint of his land and its names, not a sailor's discharge paper.

Why Millars Account Is Persuasive

The case does not depend on one matching name. It depends on the way several independent facts meet in a narrow period. Veterans of the first South Sea expedition arrived in Virginia with captured goods and three vessels in April 1683. Marmaduke recorded 800 acres in June, including three coordinated Bachelor names. The best prize was prepared as Revenge and left in August. Cowley says the leaders had already planned to steal a better ship in Africa. After doing so, they called the replacement Bachelors Delight. The same buccaneering leaders later returned through Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Chesapeake Bay with treasure. [1-5]

There are reasonable alternatives. Bachelor was not a unique phrase, and another vessel of that name sailed to Hudson Bay in 1682. Marmaduke may have obtained land through family, trade, credit, or ordinary work. He may have known the buccaneers without sailing with them. Those possibilities prevent absolute proof. They do not readily explain the three coordinated tract names, their date between the voyages, the unexplained resources, and the later use of the same phrase by a company that had recruited and refitted in the Chesapeake. [6]

The most defensible family conclusion is this: John Fitzhugh Millar was probably correct in substance. Marmaduke Mister likely belonged to the Chesapeake circle surrounding Cook and Davis. He may have earned a share on the earlier journey across Darien, invested part of it in Maryland land, and sailed from Virginia on Revenge for the expedition that captured and renamed Bachelors Delight. The record is circumstantial, but the chronology is unusually coherent.

Sources and Research Notes

The source notes distinguish contemporary accounts from later histories. Contemporary sources establish the voyage sequence and land dates. Later writers help interpret the record but cannot replace the missing muster roll.

[1] Settlers of Maryland 1679 to 1783, p 457, entry for Marmaduke Mister. Index supplied by Billy Mister. It lists Tilbury on 8 June 1683 and Bachelor's Contrivance, Bachelor's Delight, and Bachelor's Invention on 15 June 1683. Online source

[2] William Dampier, A New Voyage Round the World, 1697. Firsthand account of the earlier Isthmus network, division of captured goods, April 1683 arrival in Virginia with prizes, fitting out of Revenge, and August departure. Online source

[3] William Ambrosia Cowley, Voyage Round the Globe, published 1699. Firsthand account of the departure aboard Revenge and the plan to obtain a better vessel in Guinea before proceeding to the South Sea. Online source

[4] Lionel Wafer, A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America, 1699. Firsthand account of the Isthmus and of the 1688 return through Philadelphia, the Delaware River, Maryland, and Chesapeake Bay. Online source

[5] Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia. Official record of the seizure, claimed Pennsylvania and Maryland route, plate and money, imprisonment, petitions, and proposed journey to England. Online source

[6] Asta Bredsdorff, Fregatten Charlotte Amalias maerkelige skaebne, reproduced in Per Christensen, ed, Gluckstadt Dreams Ships and Men, 2016. Danish study of Captain Thomas Thorsen and Charlotta Amalia. It independently supports the identity and seizure of the replacement vessel and notes a separate 1682 Hudson Bay ship called Bachelors Delight. Online source

[7] Kris E Lane, Pillaging the Empire, chapter 5. Modern scholarly synthesis of the South Sea buccaneers and the transition from Caribbean privateering to Pacific expeditions. Online source

[8] Peter T Bradley, Pirates on the Coasts of Peru 1598 to 1701, chapter 7. Regional study of the second wave of English and French buccaneers from 1683 to 1689. Online source

[9] Donald G Shomette, Pirates on the Chesapeake, pp 84 to 92. Detailed secondary account of the Davis, Wafer, and Hinson case based on official records. Online source

[10] Lloyd Haynes Williams, Pirates of Colonial Virginia, 1937. Regional history useful for Chesapeake context and documentary leads. Online source

[11] Edmund Berkeley Jr, Three Philanthropic Pirates, 1966. Focused study of Davis, Wafer, Hinson, and the funds later connected to the College of William and Mary. Online source

[12] Jamie L H Goodall, Pirates of the Chesapeake Bay, 2020, pp 29 to 31. Modern narrative synthesis of the Davis, Wafer, Hinson, and Cloise episode. Online source

[13] John Fitzhugh Millar, Buccaneers Davis Wafer Hingson and Dampier and the Ship Bachelors Delight, 2010, and Delmar Historical and Arts Society, Was Laurel Settled By Pirates, 2013. Millar is the source tradition for the Atlantic-port dispersal and Sussex County story. The local account attributes its claim to his research but does not reproduce an underlying contemporary citation. Online source

[14] Maryland State Archives land record guidance and Russell R Menard, Farm Prices of Maryland Tobacco 1659 to 1710, Maryland Historical Magazine 68, 1973. Used to explain caution money, tobacco as a payment measure, and the approximate early 1680s farm-price range. The exact legal basis and consideration for each Mister tract would require inspection of the original patent and warrant files. Online source

[15] MeasuringWorth United Kingdom comparison calculator. Used only for broad present-day consumer-price and earnings comparisons. Such conversions illustrate scale and are not appraisals of the land. Online source

[16] William Ambrosia Cowley, Virginia manuscript (T8525a3), departure narrative, transcribed in “Cowley Manuscript Comparison,” WhaleSite, https://whalesite.org/GT/TEXTS/TURNLAMB.htm (accessed 13 October 2026).

Accomack as a Pirate Haven

A short addendum to the Mister family story

When William Dampier wrote that the buccaneers sailed from “Achamack in Virginia” in August 1683, he was naming a settled and governed part of colonial Virginia—not an empty coast. The Eastern Shore had been organized as a Virginia county in the 1630s. After a period under the name Northampton, it was divided in 1663: Accomack County covered the northern part of the Shore, and Northampton County the southern part. By the time of the Revenge voyage, Accomack was an established county with courts, officials, landowners, farms, and working waterfronts.[1]

Accomack was also known as a place pirates frequented. The chain of barrier islands, coves, and inlets along the Atlantic side offered secluded anchorages and places to shelter or refit. Jennings Cropper Wise’s history describes the seaside islands as having been occupied by pirates for many years and notes that pirates frequented the area.[2] The colonial government’s actions support that picture: in 1688 the Council ordered Gilbert Moore to patrol the seaside because of pirate danger; in 1699 Colonel John Custis reported that a pirate ship anchored between Smith’s and Mockhorn Islands and that armed men came ashore to steal livestock.[3] An earlier Council entry also records a report that Captain Symon Row had taken “a Pyrat in Accomack.”[4]

This is the setting behind Dampier’s place-name. “Accomack” could mean the northern county, but the name was also commonly used for the Eastern Shore as a whole, even when Northampton was the formal county name.[5] So his wording fits a shore with an established colonial community and a reputation as a pirate haunt. It does not, by itself, identify the exact creek or island where the Revenge lay, and the 1688 and 1699 incidents are later evidence of the same regional danger—not proof that Marmaduke was involved in those particular events.

Sources

[1] Library of Virginia, “Accomack County Microfilm,” county formation and name history; Jennings Cropper Wise, Ye Kingdome of Accawmacke (1911), pp. 167–68.

[2] Wise, Ye Kingdome of Accawmacke, pp. 185–87, “The Pirates.”

[3] Ibid.; see also Darrin L. Lowery, Archaeological Survey of the Atlantic Coast Shorelines Associated with Accomack County and Northampton County, Virginia (Virginia DHR, 2003), pp. 90–91.

[4] Executive Journals of the Council of Colonial Virginia, vol. 1 (1680–1699), p. 90; the attached Council-journal image.

[5] Wise, Ye Kingdome of Accawmacke, p. 167. Dampier’s departure wording appears in A New Voyage Round the World (1697): “August 23 1683 we sailed from Achamack in Virginia under the command of Captain Cook bound for the South Seas.”

Augustine Herrman's 1670 Map of Virginia and Maryland

Published in 1673 - Detail showing Virginia's Eastern Shore



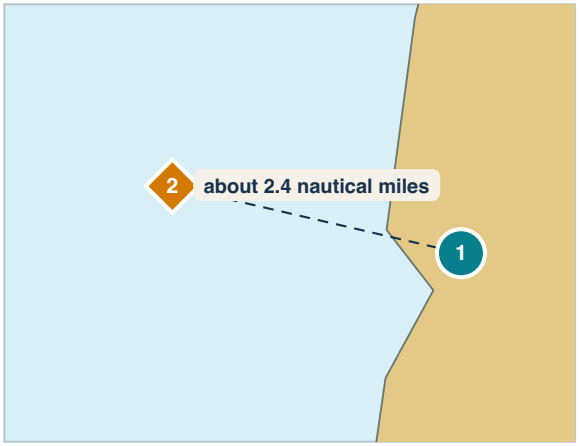
Scan: Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, G3880 1670 .H4. See Darrin L. Lowery, *Archaeological Survey of the Atlantic Coast Shorelines Associated with Accomack County and Northampton County, Virginia* (Virginia DHR, 2003), fig. 1.13, p. 94.

Virginia's Southern Eastern Shore, 1683

Old Accomack ('The Towne'), Virginia Smith Island, and the probable anchorage of the Revenge



Cherrystone area close-up



1 Old Accomack / 'The Towne'

37.2859 N, 76.0108 W

Present Cherrystone campground area. This is the best modern pin for the seventeenth-century settlement.

2 Probable Revenge anchorage

37.2950 N, 76.0600 W

Reconstructed offshore roadstead, selected to represent deeper water near the old settlement.

Historical basis

Cowley placed 'Smiths Iland' at 37 deg 20' N. Dampier said the expedition sailed from Accomack. The old settlement called 'The Towne' stood between Cherrystone Inlet and King's Creek, in what was Northampton County by 1683.

Important: the anchorage coordinate is an informed estimate, not a surviving ship's-log position. Shorelines and depths have changed since 1683. Do not use this map for navigation.

The Bachelor’s Delight: Return, Sloop, and Uncertain Fate

What the surviving account says about the 1688 return - and what remains a family-history hypothesis

Best-supported conclusion: Davis and some companions reached Philadelphia and later went toward Virginia, but the evidence does not show the Bachelor’s Delight itself reaching either place or being sold in Philadelphia. Its fate and abandonment point remain unknown.

The 1688 route in Lionel Wafer’s account

Wafer’s 1699 narrative says that after sailing along Brazil toward the Caribbean islands, he and others boarded Edwin Carter’s **Barbados sloop**. He says they went in Carter’s vessel to the Delaware River and Philadelphia, where he arrived in May 1688. After staying there, Wafer says he came back down the Delaware with Captain Davis and John Hingson; they carried their chests overland from Apokunnumy Creek to the Bohemia River and continued down the Chesapeake toward Point Comfort, Virginia. Wafer does not name the island or port where he met Carter.

A sloop was a small sailing vessel; the term commonly described a one-masted craft, though 17th-century vessel names and rigs were not always used consistently. “Barbados” identifies the vessel’s Caribbean association, not the Bachelor’s Delight.

What this says about the ship

A later Crown finding, summarized from the colonial papers, says Davis and his companions “abandoned their ship and went to Virginia.” It gives no abandonment location and does not say the ship was sold. One later reconstruction places the abandonment at Barbuda, but Wafer’s firsthand account does not identify Barbuda; that location is unconfirmed. The oft-repeated Philadelphia-sale story appears in a 2010 William & Mary alumni article, but the contemporary account and the government finding do not substantiate a sale there.

The August 14, 1688 Marmaduke Mister record

The first known record placing Marmaduke in the area after the expedition’s return is a Somerset County court entry dated **August 14, 1688**. It names “Marmaduck Mister” among twelve men impaneled and sworn as a jury. This was about three months after Wafer reached Philadelphia in May and about seven weeks after Davis, Wafer, Hingson, and Peter Cloise were arrested near Hampton Roads. The timing and Chesapeake location make it plausible that Marmaduke returned with the wider company and may have been one of the unnamed “others” who boarded Carter’s Barbados sloop. He could then have separated from the Virginia-bound men and settled in Somerset County.

Historical conclusion: This is meaningful circumstantial evidence, especially when combined with the absence of a known Marmaduke record during the voyage years. However, Wafer does not name Marmaduke, and the court record does not identify him as a sailor or buccaneer. His presence aboard the sloop remains a strong working hypothesis rather than documented fact.

Evidence at a glance

Established by the sources	Not established
Dampier says the expedition sailed from Accomack in 1683. Wafer reached Philadelphia in May 1688 aboard Carter’s Barbados sloop. A Somerset court record places Marmaduck Mister there on August 14, 1688.	That the Bachelor’s Delight reached Philadelphia or Accomack, was sold there, or that Marmaduke was aboard Carter’s sloop.

Sources

1. Lionel Wafer, A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America (1699), pp. 223-224, primary account, digital transcription: Darwin Online. 2. “The Voyage of the Batchelor’s Delight (1683 to 1691),” Sailing the Black Flag, including references to Calendar of State Papers Colonial, vol. 13 and the 1692 Privy Council decision: research summary. 3. John Fitzhugh Millar, “The Unreliable Legend of the Batchelor’s Delight,” William & Mary Alumni Magazine (Summer 2010): article. 4. Archives of Maryland, vol. 91, p. 55, Somerset County Judicial Records, August 14, 1688: court record.

THE VOYAGE: TWO SHIPS

Revenge and the captured replacement vessel, 1683



Revenge

VIRGINIA PRIZE • 1683

Cowley describes the smaller vessel with 8 guns and 52 men; its exact hull and rig are unknown.



Bachelor's Delight

CAPTURED REPLACEMENT • 1683

The company captured the Danish Charlotta Amalia near Sierra Leone and renamed her. This is an interpretive reconstruction.

These are illustrative reconstructions, not exact historical portraits.

THE RETURN: TWO SMALL CRAFT

The Barbados sloop and the proposed shallop journey



Barbados sloop

PHILADELPHIA • 1688

Lionel Wafer says he and companions boarded Edwin Carter’s Barbados sloop, which carried them to Philadelphia. The exact vessel is unknown.



Shallop

PROPOSED ROUTE • UNCERTAIN

A period-inspired reconstruction for the proposed Chesapeake Bay passage by four men later arrested. The exact boat and route are uncertain.

The sloop and shallop refer to separate episodes. The shallop voyage is a hypothesis; this image is an illustrative reconstruction.

The 1688 Seizure

What Edward Davis, Lionel Wafer, and John Hinson had with them when they were arrested

On 22 June 1688, a royal warship stopped the vessel carrying Davis, Wafer, Hinson, and Peter Cloise near the mouth of the James River in Virginia. Officers searched the three men's chests and seized their valuables. The surviving summaries attribute the listed goods to Davis, Wafer, and Hinson; they do not itemize property belonging to Cloise. [1]

Itemized goods reported in a later account

Edward Davis	3 bags of Spanish pieces of eight; 142 lb of broken silver; silk stockings and fine linens.
Lionel Wafer	3 bags of Spanish currency; 37 silver plates; silver lace; 84 lb of broken silver; dishes.
John Hinson	2 bags of Spanish currency, including 800 pieces of eight; 106 lb of broken silver; fine linens and cloth.

The Library of Virginia summarizes the total as about **3,590 pieces of eight**, alongside substantial gold and silver, and notes that Davis later valued the property at more than £4,000, excluding a cache of pearls and precious stones. [1]

What that could represent in 2026 U.S. dollars

Reported total	Illustrative 2026 purchasing power
More than £2,300	**about $984,000**
More than £4,000	**about $1.71 million**

How I estimated it: This is a consumer-price illustration, not a claim that the treasure had a precise modern market value. I used the 1682 sterling reference rate of one Spanish dollar (piece of eight) = 4s 6d, or about 4.44 dollars per pound, then applied the 1688-to-2026 price-index factor of $1 to $96.27. The inflation series uses estimated British-pound-equivalent prices before 1774. Colonial exchange rates differed and changed, so the result is approximate; comparisons based on wages or the economy's size can produce much higher figures. [2-4]

The two historical totals are not identical: the £2,300 figure is a reported valuation of the itemized goods, while the Library of Virginia reports Davis's later estimate above £4,000 and says it excludes pearls and precious stones. They should be read as separate reported valuations, not added together. [1]

Sources

[1] Katharine E. Harbury, “Edward Davis,” *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, Library of Virginia (published 2016). Open source.

[2] Jamie L. H. Goodall, *Pirates of the Chesapeake Bay: From the Colonial Era to the Oyster Wars* (The History Press, 2020), online excerpt, “Edward Davis, Lionel Delawafer, John Hinson and Peter Cloise.” Open excerpt.

[3] Jonathan Barth, *The Currency of Empire: Money and Power in Seventeenth-Century English America* (Cornell University Press, 2021), on colonial piece-of-eight exchange rates. Cornell record.

[4] Official Inflation Data, “$1 in 1688 to 2026,” accessed October 17, 2026; and MeasuringWorth, “Five Ways to Compute the Relative Value of a U.K. Pound Amount,” for the limits of historical purchasing-power comparisons. Inflation data | MeasuringWorth method.

EVIDENCE TIMELINE / SOMERSET COUNTY, MARYLAND

Marmaduke Mister: First Known Post-Return Record

The earliest post-return appearance identified in the records gathered so far is August 14, 1688. Entries from the next day corroborate his continued activity in court.

DATE	ARCHIVE PAGE	RECORD / SIGNIFICANCE
August 14, 1688	**Vol. 91, p. 55**	**Earliest identified appearance: "Marmaduck Mister" is named on the jury in the William Knock case.**
August 15, 1688	Vol. 91, pp. 60-61	Named among petitioners concerning the Morris orphans; offers to take Jenckin Morris as an apprentice and teach tanning, reading, and writing.
August 15, 1688	Vol. 91, p. 62	With John Hambly, enters a 40-pound sterling bond tied to Thomas Morrison appearing in court and establishing that he was a freeman.
August 15, 1688	Vol. 91, p. 63	Named again as a juror in Walter Lane's case against James O'Broughton and his wife.

WHAT THIS SUPPORTS

If Marmaduke was among the party that departed in 1683, no record of him has yet been located in the sources reviewed between that departure and the ship's return. His first identified post-return appearance is the August 14, 1688 court entry in Somerset County.

Limit of the evidence. These court records do not mention the ship or state when it returned. “First known” means the earliest appearance located in the records reviewed; it does not prove that no earlier record exists.

Source: Maryland State Archives, Archives of Maryland, Somerset County Judicial Records, vol. 91, pp. 55, 60-63. The August 14 jury entry is on p. 55; the following-day entries are on pp. 60-63. Consult the manuscript images to verify transcription.

BACHELOR'S DELIGHT

Broad Creek / Laurel area - Maryland

1711 COMPENSATION VALUE COMPARISON

Expressed in today's U.S. dollars

TODAY'S ESTIMATED U.S. DOLLAR VALUE (2026)

ABOUT US $5,100–$6,000

rough modern buying-power equivalent of the recorded tobacco award

What the record says

A 1711 survey and valuation for the Nanticoke reservation at Broad Creek assessed 2,660 pounds of tobacco for the owners' 130 acres of Bachelor's Delight. This was compensation for land taken into the reservation, not a documented cash purchase price. The record names the owners collectively; it does not show that Marmaduke Mister personally received the whole award.

How the estimate is built

Recorded award	2,660 lb tobacco
Nearby Maryland farm prices (1709-1710)	0.85-0.90 pence per lb
Implied sterling value	about £9.42-£9.98 at those nearby prices
Alternative legal-rate benchmark	1 penny/lb = £11 1s 8d; fixed legal rate documented for 1696-99
Today's U.S. dollar comparison	roughly 406x UK consumer-price adjustment; £1 about US $1.33 (18 Oct 2026)

Read this as a scale estimate, not an appraisal

The 0.85-0.90d market proxy comes from the closest published annual Maryland prices (1709 and 1710); a 1711 farm price was not located. For the price conversion, the UK long-run consumer-price series implies roughly a 406x change from 1711 to 2026; sterling is then converted at the stated exchange rate. Very long-run price comparisons are approximate. This does not estimate today's market value of the 130 acres, nor prove who collected the award or how it was divided.

Sources

1. Delaware Public Archives, SC-280: Collected Research Materials, 'The Nanticoke Indians,' pp. 137-138, quoting Maryland Provincial Court, Land Records, Liber T.P. No. 4, fol. 110 (Dec. 1711).
2. Maryland State Archives, Court Records of Prince George's County, 1696-1699, preface (fixed legal value and market-price context).
3. U.S. Census Bureau, Historical Statistics of the United States, table Z 583 (Maryland tobacco: 1709 = 0.90d/lb; 1710 = 0.85d/lb).
4. Bank of England long-run inflation methodology; ONS-based UK CPI continuation; GBP/USD conversion dated 18 Oct. 2026.

BACHELOR’S DELIGHT VOYAGE: THREE PERIOD MAPS

Three maps connected to the voyage; the first gives the clearest published route overview.

1. Cowley’s circumnavigation route (published 1699)

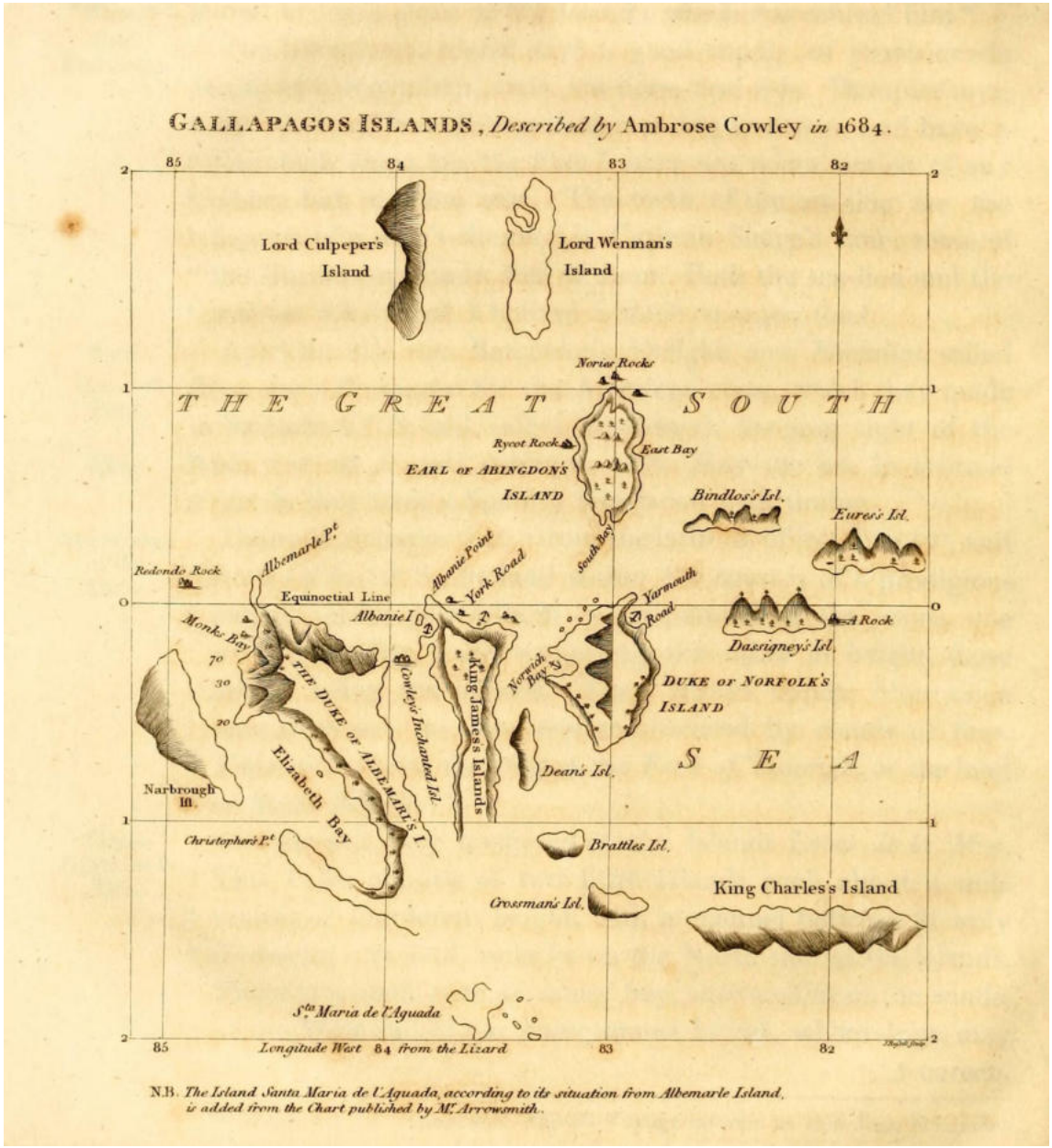
Herman Moll’s map traces William Cowley’s 1683–1686 voyage around the world. It leaves out the initial England-to-Virginia passage and the final return from the Netherlands to England.



Source: Herman Moll, route map in William Hacke, A Collection of Original Voyages (1699); map image via Wikimedia Commons.

2. COWLEY’S GALÁPAGOS CHART

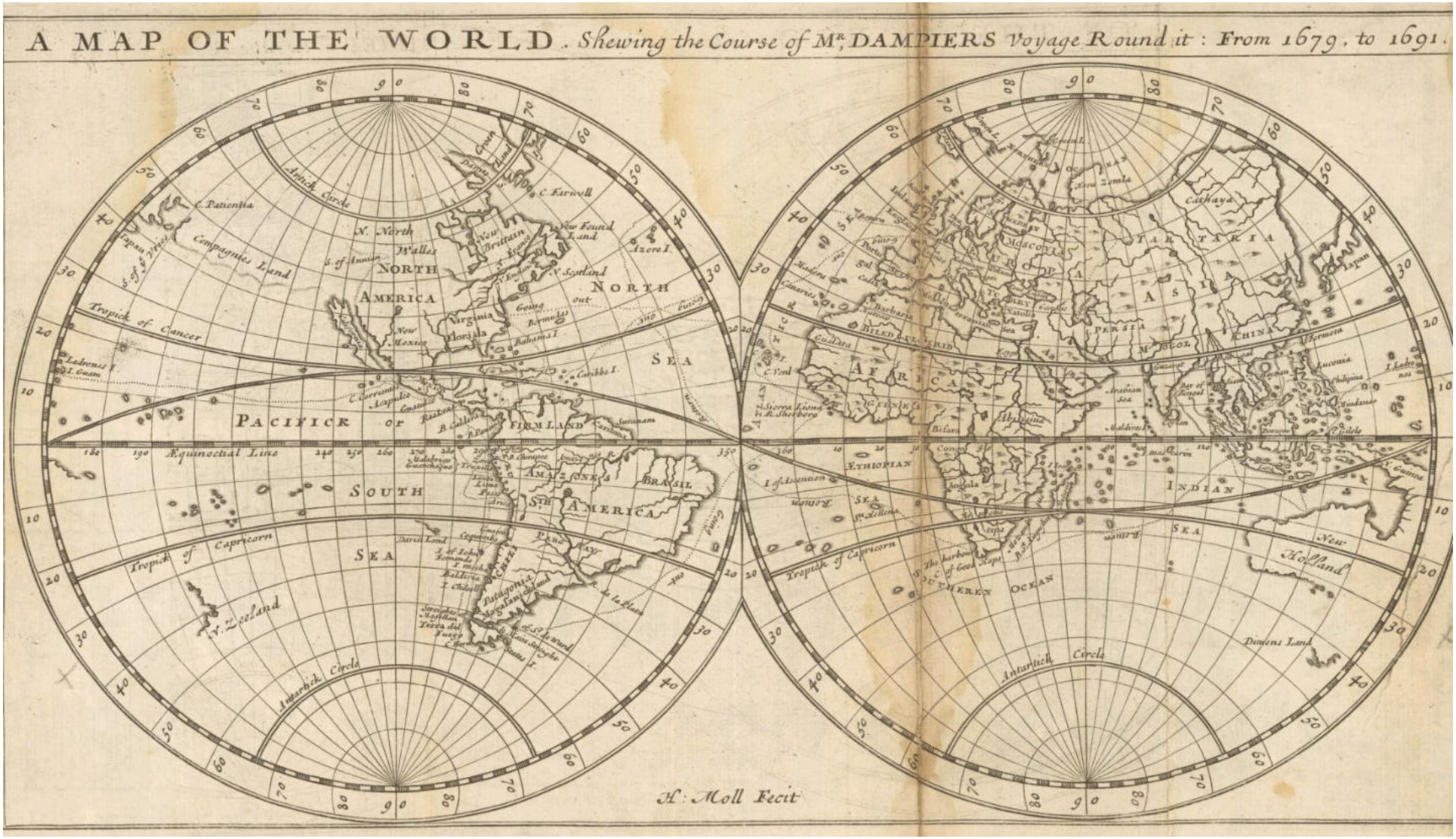
Based on Cowley’s survey during the voyage, this chart is associated with 1684. The image shown is a later engraved revision of his chart.



Map: John Russell, Gallapagos Islands, described by Ambrose Cowley in 1684 (1816 revision).

3. DAMPIER’S WORLD-VOYAGE MAP (PUBLISHED 1697)

This map shows Dampier’s larger 1679–1691 journey, which included time aboard the Bachelor’s Delight. It provides context, but does not trace only that ship’s voyage.



Together, the maps show the expedition’s broad route and the islands Cowley charted; they are not precise ship-tracking records.

Map: Herman Moll, A Map of the World, Shewing the Course of Mr. Dampier’s Voyage Round it (1697).

Guayaquil and the Pacific Buccaneers of 1687

Historical addendum

The 1687 attack on Guayaquil gives the Pacific portion of the family story a documented setting. It shows the kind of multi-national buccaneer companies moving along the Spanish Pacific coast.



Miniature city scene reproduced from Clave! Turismo Ecuador. This is a modern museum diorama, not a contemporary view of Guayaquil in 1687. [3]

The raid in late April 1687

A letter written by Guayaquil's governor, Juan Álvarez de Avilés, describes raiders entering the river before dawn with boats and canoes. The governor reported about 450 attackers, described as men of several European and American backgrounds, and said that the raiders carried more than 250 residents, including prominent families, to Puná. His letter recounts the city's defeat, ransom demands, and fires that destroyed much of the town. [1]

The date is recorded slightly differently. The letter is dated April 25 and its title identifies the assault as April 21, but the body says the enemy entered on Sunday, April 20, at four in the morning. James Burney's account also dates the city's capture to April 20. "Late April 1687" is the safest wording unless a specific source's date is being quoted. [1][2]

Where Edward Davis and Bachelor’s Delight fit

James Burney’s narrative separates the raiding party from Davis’s later arrival. Burney says a prize vessel belonging to Edward Davis, carrying eight of Davis’s men and supplies, joined the English and French buccaneers before the assault. Davis himself arrived later at Puná aboard Bachelor’s Delight, after Guayaquil had fallen, and joined the group there. This supports a connection between Davis’s company and the episode, while distinguishing his later arrival from the attack itself. [2]

> **Suggested passage for the family story**
>
> "By 1687, Guayaquil had become a target of the buccaneer companies operating along Spain’s Pacific coast. A French-English force captured the city in late April and carried prisoners to Puná. James Burney’s account places a prize vessel from Edward Davis’s company, with eight of his men, among the raiders before the assault; Davis himself arrived aboard Bachelor’s Delight after the city had fallen. The episode illustrates the shifting alliances and dangers of the Pacific world during the broader expedition."

The miniatures as illustrations

Clave! Turismo’s article describes a "Pirates in the Gulf" diorama and says Guayaquil was sacked on six occasions, but it does not give dates for all six episodes. These modern museum miniatures evoke historic streets, ships, and coastal life; they are illustrations, not evidence that a particular scene depicts the 1687 assault or a named vessel. [3]



Historic street diorama [3]



Ship miniature [3]



Coastal shelter diorama [3]

Sources

[1] Juan Álvarez de Avilés, report to President Lope Antonio de Munive, Guayaquil, April 25, 1687; Archivo General de Indias, Sección Quito, legajo 159, fols. 48-53. Transcription: Wikisource transcription

[2] James Burney, A Chronological History of the Voyages and Discoveries in the South Sea or Pacific Ocean, vol. IV (London, 1816), chapters XXIII-XXIV. Project Gutenberg text

[3] Clave! Turismo Ecuador, "Miniature Guayaquil," article and source of the photographs. Clave article

The William Dampier Stamp

Ecuador | Piratas del Golfo y Galapagos | US$1.00 | 2006



Photograph of the Ecuador stamp supplied with the family-history materials.

What the stamp shows

The stamp names William Dampier and Ecuador's postal service, gives a US$1.00 denomination, and carries the Spanish title Piratas del Golfo y Galapagos ('Pirates of the Gulf and Galapagos'). A ship appears beside a map-like background. The stamp is a 2006 issue in this commemorative series. [1][2]

What the ship identification can support

The stamp does not name the vessel. A 2012 post in a ship-stamp collectors' forum suggests the ship is Bachelor's Delight, but phrases that as 'most probably.' No official identification confirming the vessel was located. Treat Bachelor's Delight as a possible interpretation, not a fact established by the stamp. [3]

How it fits the Guayaquil story

This is modern commemorative artwork, not a seventeenth-century portrait or eyewitness image of the 1687 attack. It links Dampier to Ecuador's Gulf and Galapagos maritime history, while leaving the ship's identity open.

Sources

[1] Ecuador Stamps, 2006 Piratas del Golfo y de Galapagos (series listing).
[2] Adrienne Mason, The Pirate Naturalist, Hakai Magazine, April 22, 2015 (Dampier stamp and 2006 issue context).
[3] ShipStamps.co.uk, Bachelor Delight, post dated August 13, 2012 (collector's tentative ship identification).

Pirates and Quince Jars in the Galapagos

A short evidence note on the 1684 buccaneer visit to Santiago Island

What the story says

A Galapagueana article from the Charles Darwin Foundation looks at small Spanish-style ceramic jar fragments collected on Santiago Island. It revisits a colorful claim that buccaneers left a huge quantity of quince marmalade in jars at James Bay (now commonly called Buccaneer Cove), and asks how much of that story is supported by contemporary accounts.

Evidence	What it supports	What it does not establish
Dampier's voyage account	The buccaneers captured three Spanish ships carrying flour. One had 7-8 tuns of quince marmalade aboard. They later went to the Galapagos and stayed about 12 days.	It does not say the marmalade was unloaded or buried on Santiago.
Dampier on supplies	They put ashore 5,000 packs of flour as a reserve for later use.	The recorded stash was flour, not marmalade. The account gives no burial place.
Ceramic fragments	Spanish-style jar fragments exist in the Maruri collection; similar fragments were noted by Colnett in 1793 and Heyerdahl's team in 1953.	The fragments alone cannot identify their original contents or prove they were from this particular capture.

How to read the "buried marmalade" idea

The article traces the claim to Thor Heyerdahl and Arne Skjølsvold's 1956 discussion, which links Captain Clinton Baverstock's reported jar discovery near Buccaneer Cove to Cowley and Dampier's 1684 visit. The article notes that Heyerdahl's account does not identify its manuscript source clearly. Dampier's own narrative confirms the marmalade was captured, but only explicitly says that flour was put ashore as a reserve. David Henry's 1774 account repeats the marmalade detail and the Galapagos stop, but likewise does not say the jars or marmalade were buried.

Careful conclusion

A pirate-era connection to the jar fragments is plausible, and the captured quince marmalade is documented. A specific burial of marmalade on Santiago is not documented in the voyage accounts cited here. The article leaves open the possibility that jars were left behind, but treats that as a question, not a proven fact.

Why this matters

This is a useful distinction for treasure-history research: a captured valuable or unusual cargo is not, by itself, proof that it was buried. Here the written account specifically identifies flour as the reserve left on the islands. The marmalade-and-jars story may preserve a local memory of pirate activity, but its details need to remain labeled as conjecture unless another source confirms them.

Sources cited by the article

Edgardo Civallero, "Pirates and jelly," Galapagueana / Charles Darwin Foundation, published and updated 1 Dec. 2021. The article quotes William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (1937 reprint), and David Henry, *An Historical Account of All the Voyages Round the World* (1774), vol. 1, pp. 301-302; it also references James Colnett (1798) and Heyerdahl & Skjølsvold (1956).

Article: https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/contents/cont001c.html

Could Dampier's Castaway Stories Have Influenced *Treasure Island*?

A historical possibility - not an established fact

Short answer: It is plausible that Stevenson knew the castaway tradition recorded by William Dampier, and the parallels with Ben Gunn are striking. The evidence cited here does not prove that Dampier or Alexander Selkirk directly inspired Stevenson.

Three stories that can be confused

Person or character	What the record says	Connection to Ben Gunn
Will, the Miskito castaway	Dampier says Will was left on Juan Fernandez in 1681 and found by his former shipmates in March 1684, after living alone for more than three years.	A close real-life parallel for a man marooned for about three years and later found by seafarers.
Alexander Selkirk	Selkirk was left on Juan Fernandez in 1704 and rescued in 1709 by Woodes Rogers's expedition. Dampier was part of that expedition.	Later writers explicitly compared Selkirk's castaway experience with Ben Gunn. This is not proof of Stevenson's source.
Ben Gunn	Stevenson's fictional castaway says he spent three years alone on Treasure Island after being marooned by pirates.	The three-year isolation and rescue provide the strongest broad resemblance to Dampier's account of Will.

Why the Dampier connection is worth considering

Dampier's account is not merely a story about a castaway surviving alone. It describes Will's return to the English buccaneer party: Will prepares food for the visitors, and he is joyfully reunited with Robin and the crew. Ben Gunn, too, is found by a returning ship's party after years alone. The shared setting of remote Pacific islands, buccaneering voyages, isolation, and rescue makes the comparison reasonable.

There is also a Selkirk connection. John Masefield's 1906 introduction to Dampier's book draws a comparison between the isolated Selkirk and Ben Gunn. A modern article goes further and says Stevenson used Selkirk as Ben Gunn's prototype. Another history blog says Stevenson read Dampier's accounts. Those are leads for the possibility, but the blog claims are secondary sources; they do not provide direct evidence from Stevenson that he took Ben Gunn from either man.

What keeps this from being a firm conclusion

Stevenson's own essay, *My First Book: Treasure Island*, explains that the novel grew out of a map he drew. He describes the map as the chief part of his plot. That account identifies the story's immediate starting point, but it does not rule out his having borrowed details, atmosphere, or character ideas from earlier voyage literature. No direct statement by Stevenson identifying Dampier, Will, or Selkirk as Ben Gunn's model has been found in the sources listed below.

Careful conclusion

It is fair to say: Dampier's account of Will, the later story of Selkirk, and Ben Gunn share notable castaway themes. Stevenson may have known or drawn on this material, and some writers have proposed that connection. The evidence supports a plausible influence, not a proven one. Will and Selkirk were different men, and neither should be identified as Ben Gunn without qualification.

Sources and further reading

1. William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (1697), Chapter IV, “Of a Moskito Man left there alone three years.” Primary account of Will.
https://www.gutenberg.net.au/ebooks05/0500461h.html

2. John Masefield, introduction to William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (1906 reprint). Includes a retrospective comparison of Selkirk and Ben Gunn; also discusses Dampier as a possible source for Defoe.
https://www.gutenberg.net.au/ebooks05/0500461h.html

3. Robert Louis Stevenson, “My First Book: Treasure Island” (1894). Stevenson describes the map as the novel’s starting point.
https://surface.syr.edu/libassoc/206/

4. “Robinson Crusoe’s Isle (but not really),” Yacht Mollymawk (2020). A modern article asserting that Selkirk served as a prototype for Ben Gunn; useful as a lead, but not primary evidence.
https://yachtmollymawk.com/2020/06/robinson-crusoes-isle/

5. KathyGoesToBristol, “Bristol’s Buccaneers, Pirates and Privateers” (2011). Says Dampier’s accounts were read by Stevenson; a useful lead, but a personal blog rather than direct evidence.
https://kathygoestobristol.blogspot.com/2011/10/bristols-buccaneers-pirates-and.html

Prepared as a cautious research note. The historical parallels are real; direct literary influence remains unproven.

Two Buccaneer Expeditions

A chapter-by-chapter family reading of James Burney's account

This paper follows two separate adventures described in *History of the Buccaneers of America*: the 1680 crossing of the Isthmus of Panama and the later voyage that began in Virginia in 1683. Burney's Chapters VIII–X cover the first expedition; Chapter XI pauses for events elsewhere in the Caribbean; Chapters XII–XVII follow the second expedition and its long Pacific campaign. The book ends with the company reaching the West Indies, so the final section also uses other historical accounts to explain the later return toward Philadelphia, Maryland, and Virginia.

Possible origins and ways he might have joined

The surviving voyage accounts do not identify the unnamed family ancestor's birthplace or say when he joined the buccaneers. Several routes are possible. He may have come from England and settled in the Chesapeake; he may already have lived on Virginia's Eastern Shore, perhaps in or near Accomack County; or he may have been a sailor who met the company in the Caribbean. The first expedition gathered near the Samballas and Golden Island before crossing the Isthmus, making that a possible meeting place for someone already in the region. The later expedition began in Virginia, so a man living on the Eastern Shore could have joined there. A land record placing a man of this family in the region by 1683 makes the Chesapeake possibility worth considering, but it does not prove his birthplace or his participation. These are possibilities for a family story, not facts established by Burney.

The story begins before either Pacific voyage. Chapter VII describes the buccaneers' recent activity around the Caribbean and the raid on Porto Bello. Burney opens the next chapter with crews gathering near the coast of Darién, ready to attempt another crossing into the Pacific. (Burney, ch. VII–VIII)

Chapter VIII — Gathering at the Samballas and Golden Island

After the raid on Porto Bello, English and French buccaneer vessels gathered around the Samballas, now known as the San Blas Islands, off Darién. They met with Indigenous people of Darién, who had their own reasons for opposing Spanish control. Plans shifted as the alliance discussed where and how to cross the narrow land bridge between the Caribbean and the Pacific.

The English party chose to make the crossing from Golden Island. The chapter describes the Mosquito Shore people and their maritime skills, including their use of canoes and knowledge of the coast. For the expedition, local knowledge, boats, food, and guides would matter as much as weapons. A newcomer might have joined the assembled company here, but no source names the family ancestor among the men at the island. (Burney, ch. VIII)

Chapter IX — The difficult crossing

On April 5, 1680, about 331 buccaneers landed on the Isthmus from Golden Island. They carried guns, pistols, cutlasses, and only a small supply of bread. Indigenous allies traveled with them and helped obtain food. The route led through dense forest, wet ground, rivers, and rough trails. The party had to keep moving while carrying arms and supplies, with hunger and exhaustion always close.

The men captured the Spanish fort at Santa María, which guarded the river route toward the Pacific. As the expedition continued, disputes over leadership arose. Captain John Coxon became commander for part of the march, and the group pushed on by canoe and on foot until it reached the South Sea in April. The crossing was an achievement in itself: the men had carried an armed force through a difficult landscape where the Spanish expected them to be stopped. (Burney, ch. IX)

Chapter X — Raids along the Pacific coast

Once on the Pacific side, the buccaneers captured small Spanish vessels and gathered food in the Bay of Panama. They attacked settlements and ships, but the party did not stay united. Coxon and some of his followers returned across the Isthmus to the Caribbean. Richard Sawkins took command of the remaining force, and after Sawkins was killed during an attack near Pueblo Nuevo, Bartholomew Sharp became leader.

Not everyone wanted to follow Sharp. A group of roughly sixty to seventy men crossed back over the Isthmus and reached the West Indies. The larger party continued down the Pacific coast, stopping at islands and ports, seeking food and prizes. They suffered a major defeat at Arica, where a Spanish fort repulsed their attack and Captain Watling was killed. Sharp then led the survivors around Cape Horn and back toward the Caribbean. Burney's chapter thus gives two different homeward paths from the 1680 expedition: some men returned overland to the Caribbean; others stayed with Sharp for a far longer sea voyage around South America. (Burney, ch. X)

Chapter XI — Caribbean events between the expeditions

This chapter turns away from the English Pacific party and describes developments among French buccaneers in the Caribbean. Burney discusses efforts by French authorities to restrain raiding, Henry Morgan's role in Jamaica, and the attack on Veracruz by Van Horn, Granmont, and De Graaf. These are not another stage of the 1680 expedition, and Burney does not connect the family ancestor to them.

The chapter is useful as background. Governments were trying to control privateering and buccaneering, while crews continued to look for opportunities at sea. Burney says the pressure helped make voyages to the South Sea attractive to men who wanted to operate far from established colonial authorities. That leads into the next expedition. (Burney, ch. XI–XII)

Chapter XII — From the Caribbean back to Virginia, then toward Africa

Burney connects the two adventures through John Cook. Cook had been among the men who returned from the 1680 expedition across the Isthmus. In the Caribbean he served aboard a privateering vessel, rose to quartermaster, and later took command of a captured ship. William Dampier and other men from the earlier expedition joined him. By 1683 the company had brought its prize goods to Virginia, where they sold them and kept the vessel they planned to use for a new voyage.

They called the ship the Revenge. Burney says she carried eighteen guns and about seventy adventurers, including Cook, Edward Davis, Dampier, Lionel Wafer, and Ambrose Cowley. The published accounts differ on some departure details: Burney follows Dampier's August 23, 1683, departure from the Chesapeake, while Cowley's Virginia manuscript says the party sailed from Smith's Island on August 4. Cowley also says he was hired as master and was initially told they were bound for Hispaniola. The ship then stopped at the Cape Verde Islands and sailed to the coast of Guinea, where the crew captured a larger Danish vessel near Sierra Leone. They transferred aboard her, named her the Batchelor's Delight, and burned the Revenge. This was the start of the second Pacific adventure. (Burney, ch. XII; Dampier, 1697; Cowley, 1699 and Virginia manuscript)

Chapter XIII — Juan Fernández, the Galápagos, and a change of captain

After rounding Cape Horn, the company reached Juan Fernández in the Pacific. There they encountered William, a Mosquito Indian who had been left on the island during the earlier expedition and had survived there alone for more than three years. His reunion with his countryman Robin and the returning sailors was one of the chapter's memorable human moments.

The ships continued to the Galápagos Islands, where Cowley charted islands and the crews sought water, food, turtles, and other supplies. They then sailed north toward the coast of New Spain. Captain Cook, who had been ill, died near Cape Blanco in July 1684. The crew chose Edward Davis, formerly quartermaster, as the new captain. If the family ancestor stayed with Cook's company, this is the point where his service would have continued under Davis. That is a plausible family inference, not a named identification in Burney. (Burney, ch. XIII)

Chapter XIV — Davis leads the company

Davis took command while the expedition cruised along the coasts of New Spain and Peru. The company needed water, food, and safe places to anchor; sickness also weakened the crews. Other buccaneers joined them, while Captain John Eaton eventually separated to sail toward the East Indies. The expedition tested bays, rivers, and anchorages, and Davis's force grew as more groups crossed the Isthmus from the Caribbean to the Pacific.

Burney's chapter shows how the second adventure became a larger, shifting fleet rather than one ship sailing alone. The Batchelor's Delight remained a central vessel, but the company's strength depended on alliances, captured ships, and the arrival or departure of other crews. The men moved through a chain of coastal stops while watching for Spanish ships and looking for a worthwhile target. (Burney, ch. XIV)

Chapter XV — The Spanish fleet and the attack on León

In 1685, the Spanish treasure fleet entered the Bay of Panama while Davis and the buccaneers were nearby. The two forces came close, but the Spanish fleet avoided a full battle until its treasure was safe ashore. The buccaneers then sailed to Quibo. Disagreements grew, and the English and French groups separated for a time.

Davis and his remaining allies later joined an expedition against León in Nicaragua. They captured and burned León and then attacked Ria Lexa. Afterward, the large gathering broke apart because a single force was difficult to feed and command. Dampier chose to leave Davis and sail with Captain Swan, whose plan was to continue toward the East Indies. The chapter marks another turning point: the men who had crossed the Isthmus together were now choosing different captains and destinations. (Burney, ch. XV)

Chapter XVI — Sickness, long sailing, and Guayaquil

Davis's smaller group sailed on from Ria Lexa. Fever spread through the company, and many men became sick. At Amapalla Bay, they built shelters for those who were ill and went ashore to search for supplies. Wafer, the surgeon, described crossing a hot river on the way to a cattle farm. The crew later stopped among the Galápagos and continued along the Peruvian coast.

Davis eventually joined French buccaneers near Guayaquil. Their combined force faced Spanish warships in a long engagement that Burney describes as lasting seven days. Neither side won a decisive victory, and the buccaneers later divided their plunder. They separated to return toward the Atlantic by different routes. Burney emphasizes that the homeward journey was not a single voyage made by the whole company together. (Burney, ch. XVI)

Chapter XVII — The final Pacific passage and the return toward home

In 1687, Davis returned to the Galápagos to repair and provision the ship. The crews gathered food, cured fish, and prepared for the long passage. Sailing south, they sighted distant land. Burney reviews the uncertainty over whether this was the same land later called Easter Island. The ship then stopped at Juan Fernández before Davis and his crew eventually reached the West Indies in 1688. This is where Burney's chapter-by-chapter account leaves them.

Other records help carry the journey home farther. The voyage had turned west-to-east around Cape Horn, then north into the Atlantic and the Caribbean; from there, some returning men traveled up the Atlantic coast. A Library of Virginia biography reports that, early in 1688, Davis and two longtime shipmates, Lionel Wafer and John Hinson, went to Philadelphia and then south to Maryland. That gives the family reader a link to the Chesapeake and Virginia after the Pacific voyage, but it does not establish that every crewman came home with Davis or that the unnamed ancestor was among this particular party. (Burney, ch. XVII; Dampier, 1697; Wafer, 1699; Library of Virginia, "Edward Davis")

What the two journeys may mean for the family story

The two expeditions offer a possible path through which a Chesapeake man could have gained experience, money, and connections at sea. A man who joined the 1680 crossing could have returned to the Caribbean with one of the groups and later reached Virginia. The second voyage began from Virginia in 1683, and it carried several veterans of the first expedition. If the unnamed ancestor sailed with Davis after Cook's death, he may have remained with the company through years of Pacific cruising and the eventual return toward the Caribbean and Chesapeake. The voyage accounts establish the expeditions and name many participants, but they do not identify him. His exact starting place, the ship he first joined, and how long he stayed with Davis remain open questions.

Sources and further reading

- James Burney, History of the Buccaneers of America (London: Payne and Foss, 1816), Chapters VII–XVII, especially VIII–XII and XIII–XVII. Digitized text: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/37116/37116-h/37116-h.htm
- William Dampier, A New Voyage Round the World (London, 1697). Firsthand account of the earlier crossing, the 1683 departure from Virginia, the Pacific voyages, and the crew's later movements.
- William Ambrosia Cowley, "Cowley's Voyage Round the Globe," in William Hacke, Collection of Original Voyages (London, 1699); Cowley's Virginia manuscript, transcribed at https://galapagos.to/TEXTS/TURNERMS.HTM. The manuscript gives the Smith's Island departure date of August 4, 1683.
- Lionel Wafer, A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America (London, 1699), a firsthand account of parts of the expedition and of life around the Isthmus and Pacific coast.
- Library of Virginia, "Davis, Edward (d. after 1692)," Dictionary of Virginia Biography, https://www.lva.virginia.gov/collections/dvb/bio/davis-edward-d-after-1692. Used for the 1688 movement to Philadelphia and south to Maryland.
- Settlers of Maryland, 1679 to 1783, p. 457, land-record entries for 1683. The record supports a Chesapeake-area possibility by that date; it does not establish birthplace or participation in either voyage.

What the Buccaneers Ate and Drank

A source-based inventory of the 1680 Darien expedition and the 1683-88 Revenge / Batchelor's Delight voyage

This list follows the two journeys described in the family expedition account: the 1680 crossing of the Isthmus and Pacific cruise, then Cook and Davis's voyage from Virginia aboard Revenge and later Batchelor's Delight. Period accounts mix meals actually eaten with provisions found, traded for, or captured; the list marks that distinction where possible.

JOURNEY 1 - Darien crossing and the 1680-82 Pacific voyage

Food on the Isthmus and around Panama

- **Travel ration:** four cakes of bread called "dough-boys" per man.
- **Supplied by Darien allies:** plantains, other fruit, and venison. Along the route, households gave travelers ripe plantains or sweet cassava root.
- **Hunted food:** wildfowl and "warre," identified as peccary, a wild hog-like animal.
- **Chepillo Island:** plantains and hogs; fresh water was available.
- **Taboga and nearby islands:** pineapples, oranges, lemons, pears, mammees, coconuts, hogs, and poultry. The accounts say nearby live stock was eventually used up.
- **Captured cargo:** flour, poultry, wine, sugar, and sweetmeats. These are recorded as provisions or cargo; the account does not confirm that every item was eaten.

Food farther along the Pacific coast

- **Quibo:** red deer, sea turtles, and oysters, including very large oysters.
- **Juan Fernandez:** goats were eaten, with about 100 salted for later use. Fish, seabirds, crayfish, and lobsters were plentiful; seals and sea lions were also present as potential food.
- **Huasco:** 120 sheep, 80 goats, and 200 bushels of corn were taken aboard.
- **Later captured provisions:** cocoa-nuts (coconuts), fruit, wine, brandy, and oil. Other captured food is described only as "provisions."

Drinks

- Fresh water gathered from rivers, streams, and island sources.
- Wine and brandy taken from captured ships. A buccaneer reportedly died after heavy drinking ashore at La Serena; the account does not name the drink.

What the Buccaneers Ate and Drank

Journey 2 - Cook and Davis, from Virginia into the Pacific and back toward the Atlantic

JOURNEY 2 - Revenge / Batchelor's Delight, 1683-88

Atlantic crossing, Cape Verde, and Guinea

- A Dutch vessel near Virginia yielded six casks of wine and other provisions. At Sal, the crew obtained fish and goats. At St. Nicholas they traded for goats, plantains, bananas, and local wine; they dug wells for fresh water. They also obtained unspecified provisions at Mayo.
- The captured long-voyage ship carried brandy, water, provisions, and other necessities. At Sherbro, the crew bought rice, fowls, plantains, sugar-cane, palm-wine, and honey.
- During extreme cold near Cape Horn, Cowley reported that the men drank as much as three quarts of burnt brandy per man in 24 hours.

Juan Fernandez, the Galapagos, and the Davis campaign

- **Juan Fernandez:** goats, fish, wild vegetables, and fresh water; seals and sea lions were described among the available food resources.
- **Galapagos:** fish, sea and land tortoises, flamingos, turtle doves, and iguanas were described as food resources. Flour and sweetmeats were stored there.
- **Amapalla Bay:** maize, cattle, fowls, plantains, and hog plums. A captured ship in the Bay of Panama carried Indian corn, salt beef, and fowls.
- **Taboga and Ria Lexa:** chocolate and sugar; at Ria Lexa the buccaneers received 150 head of cattle and found 500 packs of flour.
- **Cocos Island and Peru:** coconuts and fresh water at Cocos; beef sought from a farm at Amapalla; wine, fruit, flour, oil, chocolate, sugar, and other provisions at Ilo; strong Peruvian wine at La Nasca.
- **Galapagos, 1687:** flour, cured fish, and salted land-turtle meat were taken aboard. They saved land-turtle oil in jars and used it like butter.

Drinks

- Fresh water gathered or loaded at islands, rivers, and watering places.
- Wine, palm-wine, and brandy. The Peruvian wine from Pisco / La Nasca was described as strong and similar to Madeira.
- Coconut milk, made by scraping coconut, adding water, and squeezing it.

Cowley and Eaton after the crew split

Cowley later left Davis and sailed with Captain Eaton. His account of Guam describes coconuts, potatoes, yams, plantains, bananas, soursops, oranges, lemons, honey, hogs, pumpkins, rice, and red pepper. He also describes chocolate and coconut milk. These foods belong to Eaton's branch after the split and cannot be assumed to have been eaten by a crewman who stayed with Davis.

Source note: James Burney, *History of the Buccaneers of America*, Chapters IX-X and XII-XVII; Basil Ringrose, journal extracts quoted by Burney; William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World* (1697); William Ambrosia Cowley, *Voyage Round the Globe* (1699). Items described as provisions or local resources are not all confirmed meals.

The Flag of the Bachelor’s Delight

Edward Davis and the Spanish fleet • Bay of Panama • May 1685



What the flag represented

This image represents a flag described in James Burney’s 1816 history of the buccaneers. Burney writes that, during the 1685 encounter with the Spanish fleet in the Bay of Panama, Edward Davis’s ship—the Bachelor’s Delight—flew a white flag bearing a hand and sword.

Burney directly links the flag to Davis’s French commission: France was then at war with Spain, and Davis flew the flag while claiming authority to fight Spanish forces under that commission. In context, it marked his claimed French authorization, rather than serving as a generic pirate flag. Davis had become captain of the Bachelor’s Delight after John Cook’s death in July 1684.

The commission did not make the buccaneers safe if captured by Spain; Burney notes that Spanish authorities could reject such commissions. Burney records a hand and sword painted on the white flag, but does not say whether that device was an official French emblem or explain its separate meaning.

A note about this picture

The illustration is a modern reconstruction based on Burney’s written description. No claim is made that this is the original flag or an exact copy of its historical artwork.

Sources

James Burney, *History of the Buccaneers of America* (1816), ch. XV, pp. 177–178. Project Gutenberg, gutenberg.org/ebooks/37116 • Library of Virginia, Dictionary of Virginia Biography, “Edward Davis.”

BACHELOR’S DELIGHT

A painting by Mark Myers



Modern artistic depiction; the painting is not a period image of the vessel.

A MISTER FAMILY STORY / POSSIBLE NAMESAKE

Queen Charlotte Amalie

The queen whose name may have been carried by the prize ship



Queen Charlotte Amalie of Hesse-Kassel, portrait dated about 1680 and attributed to Jacques d'Agar; Rosenborg Castle, Copenhagen.

Charlotte Amalie (1650-1714) was Queen of Denmark and Norway from 1670, when her husband Christian V took the throne. She was queen when Cook's company captured its prize off Sierra Leone in 1683; Christian V was the reigning king.

Danish maritime historian Asta Bredsdorff identifies the captured vessel as the Danish Guinea ship Charlotte Amalia, later renamed the Batchelor's Delight. If that identification is right, the ship was almost certainly named in the queen's honor. Cowley's firsthand account confirms the capture but calls the prize only a "new Ship of 40 Guns," so the ship's earlier name is not established by that passage. This is why the family story can make the connection while marking the evidence honestly.

WHY THE PORTRAIT HELPS

This catalogued portrait shows the queen who was on the Danish throne as queen consort when the ship's story begins. It is the person, not a portrait of the vessel.

Portrait: Jacob d'Agar (attributed), ca. 1680, Rosenborg Castle; public-domain image via Wikimedia Commons; Royal Danish Collection biography records her queenship, 1670-1699. Ship identification: Asta Bredsdorff, “Fregatten Charlotte Amalias mærkelige skæbne,” M/S Museet for Søfarts årbog 34 (1975), 22-41. Cowley's firsthand narrative is transcribed at Cowley, chap. I; for the unresolved identification, see Sailing the Black Flag.

WILLIAM MISTER OF SMITH ISLAND

PITCHCROFT PURCHASE - SEPTEMBER 15, 1729

William Mister, a Somerset County planter, was already living on Smith Island by 1720. On September 15, 1729, John Evans and Annabella, his wife, conveyed to him the Smith Island tract called Pitch Croft. The deed describes approximately 100 acres bordering the Chesapeake Bay and Smith Island Thoroughfare. This purchase established the Mister family at one of the island's best-known early properties.

THE PITCHCROFT DEED

Grantors: John Evans and Annabella, his wife
Buyer: William Mister, planter
Property: Pitch Croft, Smith Island
Size: About 100 acres
Record:
Somerset County Land Records, SH 182-184

Key wording:

"...unto the said William Mister and to his heirs and assigns forever...all that tract or parcel of land called Pitch Croft...containing by estimation one hundred acres more or less."



Original deed, Liber SH, page 182 (detail)

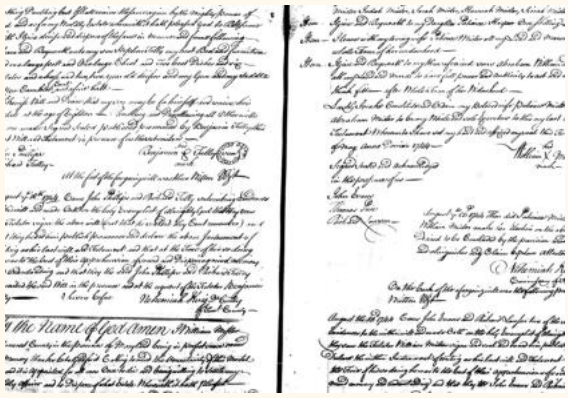
THE FAMILY NAMED IN HIS WILL

William's will, dated August 4, 1744, identifies his wife and eight children.

Wife: Patience Mister (traditionally Patience Harris)

Children:

- **Abraham Mister** — reported born about 1718
- **Judah Mister Evans** — reported born about 1720
- **Sarah Mister** — reported born about 1722
- **Hannah Mister Evans** — reported born about 1724
- **Patience Mister Warren** — reported born about 1726
- **William Mister** — reported born about 1728
- **Dinah Mister** — reported born about 1730
- **Marmaduke Mister** — reported born about 1732



William Mister will, 1744 (detail)

WHY THIS RECORD MATTERS

The deed places William Mister on Smith Island as a landowner in 1729. His 1744 will connects that property to the next generation: William and Marmaduke inherited the land after their mother's widowhood, while the will also names their siblings. Together, the deed and will document the Mister family's early roots on Smith Island.

PRIMARY RECORDS

Somerset County Court (Land Records), Liber SH, pp. 182-184, MSA CE102-21, deed dated Sept. 15, 1729. William Mister will, dated Aug. 4, 1744 and proved Aug. 22, 1744. Approximate birth years and Patience's maiden name are family-history estimates; the deed and will establish the names and relationships shown.

A MISTER FAMILY HISTORY PROFILE

Marmaduke Mister



c. 1732 – before 21 April 1798
Smith Island landholder • Tory picaroon • wartime intermediary

Marmaduke Mister lived where the Chesapeake’s creeks, sounds, and political loyalties met. His paper trail begins with family land, places him inside a British aligned raiding network in 1776, and ends with Maryland paying him after he brought American prisoners from Tangier Islands. The record supports a complicated man: rooted landholder, local “picaroon,” and survivor of a civil war fought on water.

100	£38	1776	£9
ACRES AT PITCH CROFT	PAID FOR SIBLINGS’ RIGHTS	SWORN WAR DEPOSITION	MARYLAND PAYMENT, 1782

DOCUMENTED TIMELINE

1744 — Named in father William’s will; land to pass after widowhood.

1762 — Buys Abraham and William’s rights in Pitch Croft.

1776 — Witnesses place him with Wheland’s loyalist raiders.

1782 — Brings American prisoners; receives permission and £9.

1783 — Tax roll lists Pitchcraft, 100 acres.

1798 — Death occurred before 21 April, according to compiled probate research.

DATE NOTE

Family chronology and later research often place his birth about 1732; library cataloging for Leonard Szaltis’s genealogy uses 1722. William Mister’s 1744 will proves the parent–child relationship but does not state Marmaduke’s age. This profile uses c. 1732 and keeps the conflict visible.

Prepared 19 October 2026 • Primary records are separated from family tradition throughout.

LAND & ROOTS

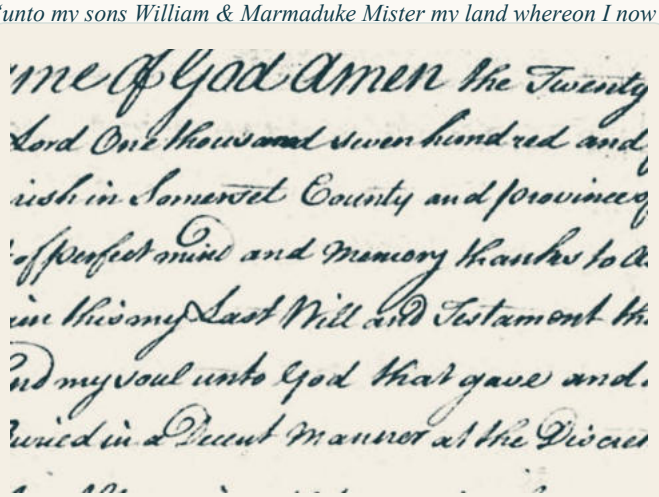
Pitch Croft: the fixed point in his story

Three records trace the property from family inheritance to consolidated ownership and wartime survival.

1744 • INHERITANCE

William Mister's will left the land where he lived to sons William and Marmaduke, equally divided after their mother Patience's widowhood. William was to receive the part with the buildings. Marmaduke also owed sister Dinah livestock under the will. The document anchors Marmaduke inside the Smith Island household before his own deeds appear.

"unto my sons William & Marmaduke Mister my land whereon I now

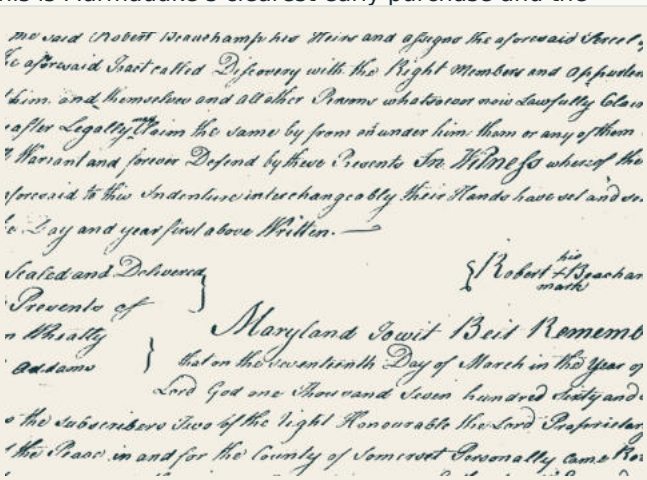


William Mister will, 1744 — family and land clause. Scan reproduced for research context.

1762 • CONSOLIDATION

On 17 June 1762, Abraham Mister and wife Alice, together with William Mister and wife Comfort, conveyed their rights in Pitch Croft to Marmaduke for £38 current money of Maryland. The deed describes 100 acres between North End, Pitchle Hammock, Dogwood Ridge Creek, Chesapeake Bay, and Smith Island Thoroughfare.

This is Marmaduke's clearest early purchase and the



Somerset County Land Records C, p. 127 — opening of the 1762 Pitch Croft conveyance.

1783 • STILL HIS LAND

Maryland's 1783 tax assessment lists:

Marmaduke Mister — Pitchcraft — 100 acres — Little Annamessex, page 124

That entry matters because it follows the worst years of the Revolution. Whatever happened on the water, Pitch Croft remained the stable economic base attached to his name. It also supports continuity between the 1762 deed and his later life.

WHAT THE BOUNDARIES TELL US

The deed's boundaries are maritime: creeks, hammocks, the Bay shore, and the thoroughfare. They describe a property whose value depended on water access. That geography helps explain how a resident could be farmer, boatman, trader, and raider without moving far from home. "Pitch Croft" and "Pitchcraft" are spelling variants in the surviving record.

The 1776 deposition: the pirate in the record

The evidence is testimony sworn by captured mariners, not a later island tale.

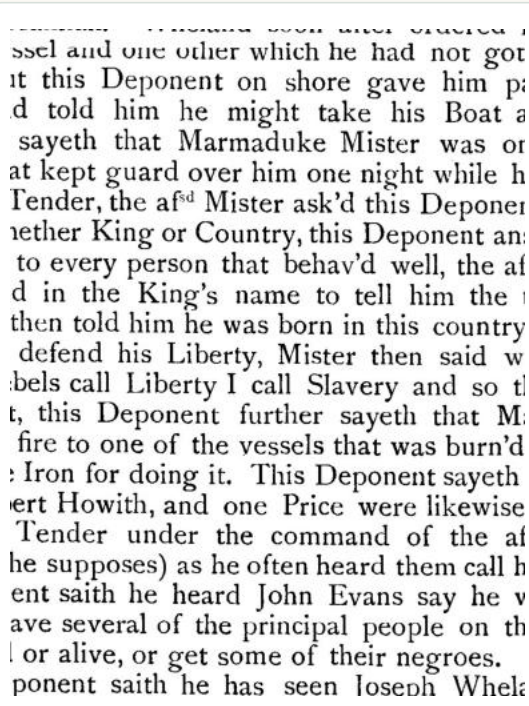
27 JULY 1776 • SMITH ISLAND

Joseph Mariman and Captain Moses Yell had been carrying plank and tar when weather drove them toward Smith Island. Mariman testified that Joseph Wheland's men intercepted them and took them to schooners lying in a creek. About twenty men were sharing plunder.

At Richard Evans's house, Marmaduke Mister and others arrived for supper. The prisoners were then sent aboard under guard. On the tender, Yell later swore that Marmaduke was one of the guards and demanded to know whether he supported "King or Country."

> *"what those damn'd Rebels call Liberty*
> *I call Slavery"*
>
> — Moses Yell's deposition, Archives of Maryland, vol. 12, p. 156

The same testimony says Wheland offered Marmaduke the iron from White's sloop if he saw it burned; Yell then stated that Marmaduke set fire to one of the vessels. Together, the depositions place him inside the loyalist raiding group in a specific incident, performing guard duty and participating in destruction of captured property.



ssel and one other which he had not got
it this Deponent on shore gave him pa
d told him he might take his Boat a
sayeth that Marmaduke Mister was or
at kept guard over him one night while h
Tender, the afsd Mister ask'd this Deponer
ether King or Country, this Deponent ans
to every person that behav'd well, the af
d in the King's name to tell him the
then told him he was born in this country
defend his Liberty, Mister then said w
bels call Liberty I call Slavery and so t
t, this Deponent further sayeth that M
fire to one of the vessels that was burn'd
Iron for doing it. This Deponent sayeth
ert Howith, and one Price were likewise
Tender under the command of the af
he supposes) as he often heard them call h
ent saith he heard John Evans say he v
ave several of the principal people on th
or alive, or get some of their negroes.
ponent saith he has seen Joseph Whela

Printed archival transcription of Yell's sworn statement, p. 156.

WHAT "PICAROON" MEANS HERE

Eastern Shore histories call the loyalist raiders Tory picaroons: small boat crews who used coves, creeks, and island knowledge to seize goods and vessels. "Pirate" is the enduring family label. The cited records prove Marmaduke's participation with Wheland's British aligned group, but they do not show a letter of marque issued personally to Marmaduke. The most precise description is therefore loyalist picaroon and maritime raider.

THE RECORD HAS LIMITS

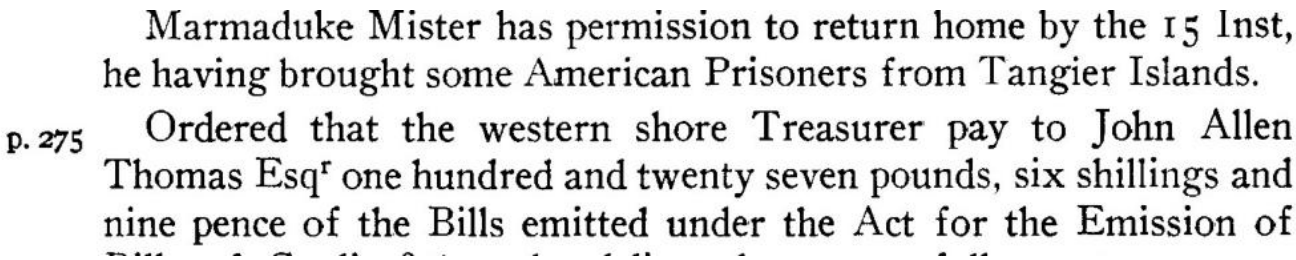
A deposition records what a sworn witness said. It is powerful direct evidence, but it is not a conviction and does not by itself establish every later story told about Marmaduke. The Blackbeard gold tale belongs to island tradition; the 1776 guard duty and vessel burning belong to the documentary record.

From loyalist guard to Maryland intermediary

Two entries six years later show the state accepting his service and paying him.

9 MAY 1782

The Maryland Council recorded that Marmaduke had "brought some American Prisoners from Tangier Islands" and gave him permission to return home by the 15th. The wording is brief, but the act is substantial: the same government whose 1776 papers preserved accusations against loyalist raiders now treated him as a useful intermediary.



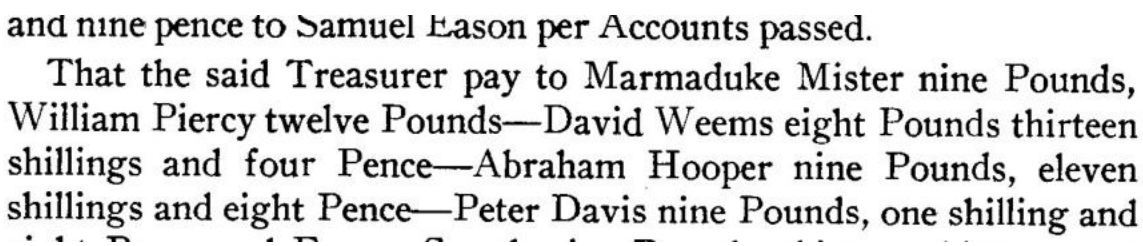
Marmaduke Mister has permission to return home by the 15 Inst, he having brought some American Prisoners from Tangier Islands.

p. 275 Ordered that the western shore Treasurer pay to John Allen Thomas Esq[r] one hundred and twenty seven pounds, six shillings and nine pence of the Bills emitted under the Act for the Emission of

Archives of Maryland, vol. 48, p. 160. The permission follows the Council's entries for 9 May 1782.

10 MAY 1782

The next day the Council ordered the western shore treasurer to pay Marmaduke Mister nine pounds. The associated Maryland State Papers item is cataloged as an order to pay and receipt by Marmaduke Mister (MSA S 1004-61-14389). Read together with the prior day's permission, the payment supports the later family account that Maryland compensated him for this service.



and nine pence to Samuel Eason per Accounts passed.

That the said Treasurer pay to Marmaduke Mister nine Pounds, William Piercy twelve Pounds—David Weems eight Pounds thirteen shillings and four Pence—Abraham Hooper nine Pounds, eleven shillings and eight Pence—Peter Davis nine Pounds, one shilling and

Archives of Maryland, vol. 48, p. 161. "Pay to Marmaduke Mister nine Pounds."

HOW TO READ THE CHANGE

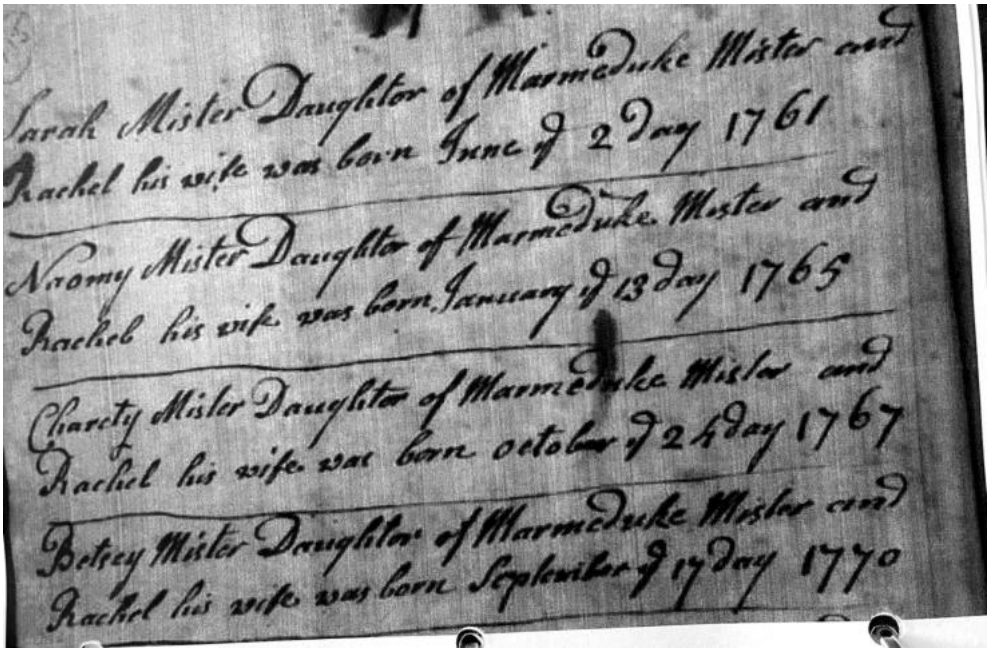
Leonard Szaltis summarizes Marmaduke as a man who fought on both sides. The primary records show the endpoints: loyalist activity in 1776 and assistance to Americans in 1782. They do not explain his motive. Self preservation, profit, shifting allegiance, family pressure, and the collapse of British power are all plausible, but none can be proved from the cited entries.

A careful story line: Marmaduke did not simply vanish when the picaroons disbanded. By May 1782 he had performed a service Maryland recognized, obtained permission to go home, and received payment. The documentary trail therefore supports both parts of his reputation: raider and reconciled islander.

FAMILY RECORD

Four daughters named in the parish register

This family-supplied image replaces estimated dates with a direct record of parentage and birth.



Coventry Parish register image supplied by the Mister family. Rotated and contrast adjusted for readability.

TRANSCRIPTION

Child	Recorded birth	Parentage written in the register
Sarah Mister	29 June 1761	Daughter of Marmaduke Mister and Rachel his wife
Naomy Mister	23 January 1765	Daughter of Marmaduke Mister and Rachel his wife
Charity Mister	24 October 1767	Daughter of Marmaduke Mister and Rachel his wife
Betsey Mister	17 September 1770	Daughter of Marmaduke Mister and Rachel his wife

What this page proves: Rachel was Marmaduke’s wife and the mother of Sarah, Naomy, Charity, and Betsey. It also supplies exact birth dates for all four. What it does not prove: it does not name Arrabella or Delitha, identify Rachel’s maiden name, or settle the later sons’ mother. Those questions remain separate from this record.

FAMILY & LEGACY

A corrected reconstruction of his household

Four daughters are documented; the later household remains provisional.

SPOUSES

1. Rachel — the parish register directly identifies her as Marmaduke’s wife and mother of four daughters. Her maiden name is not established by this page. Public trees that combine her with a later wife as “Rachel Sara Evans” should not be treated as a primary record.

2. Sarah Bennett (tentative) — compiled Eastern Shore research places a later marriage about 1775; other trees call her Sarah Evans. Her identity and the placement of the later sons still need a direct record.

CHILDREN: DOCUMENTED AND RECONSTRUCTED

Name	Birth	Evidence status
Sarah	29 Jun 1761	Parish register: daughter of Marmaduke and Rachel.
Naomy	23 Jan 1765	Parish register: daughter of Marmaduke and Rachel.
Charity	24 Oct 1767	Parish register: daughter of Marmaduke and Rachel.
Betsey	17 Sep 1770	Parish register: daughter of Marmaduke and Rachel.
Severn Reid	c. 1775–1849	Compiled family research; the user’s direct Mister line descends through Severn.
William	date unsettled	Compiled research identifies a later son; direct birth record not located here.

Unverified additions: Arrabella and Delitha appear in public trees but are not on the supplied parish page. Stephen Mister was Marmaduke’s nephew, son of Abraham, despite occasional claims that he was Marmaduke’s son.

LATER REPUTATION

Frances W. Dize’s Smith Island, Chesapeake Bay reports that religious services were later held in Marmaduke’s home and presents him as a reformed picaroon. This is valuable island history, but it is a later narrative rather than a contemporary government record. The Blackbeard gold story belongs in the same tradition category.

SELECTED SOURCES

Primary records: William Mister will, dated 4 Aug. and proved 22 Aug. 1744; Somerset County Court Land Records C, pp. 127–127a, MSA CE102-28 (17 June 1762); Archives of Maryland, vol. 12, pp. 152–156 (Mariman and Yell depositions, 27 July 1776); Maryland 1783 Tax Assessment, Little Annamessex p. 124; Archives of Maryland, vol. 48, pp. 160–161 (9–10 May 1782); Maryland State Papers, Series A, MSA S1004-61-14389; Coventry Parish register image supplied by the Mister family.
Published and compiled research: Henry C. Wright, Maryland Eastern Shore Vital Records, 1751–1775, p. 87; Gail M. Walczyk research files and MilesFiles; Leonard Szaltis, The Descendants of Marmaduke Mister (2019); Szaltis, Chesapeake Bay Privateers in the Revolution (2019); Frances W. Dize, Smith Island, Chesapeake Bay (1990).

The Mister Family Lineage

From Billy John Mister back through the Deal Island line

This record puts the names and dates from the supplied family-tree screenshots in generational order. The direct line runs from Billy John Mister through Rodger, Phillip, George, William James, Richard James, Bennett Witty, Severn Reid, Marmaduke, William, and Marmaduke. The relationship from Bennett to his father Severn is also supported by a Maryland historical survey describing a 1839 transfer from Severn and Keziah Mister to their son Bennett. Other dates and later-generation links are recorded as shown in the family tree unless a source note says otherwise.

Direct line

Gen.	Name	Dates	Relationship / note
1	**Billy John Mister**	1976–living	Self
2	**Rodger J. Mister**	1949–living	Father
3	Phillip E. M. “Edgie” Mister	1923–1999	Grandfather; preferred name Edgie
4	**George W. Mister**	1890–1954	Great-grandfather; also identified online as George William
5	**William James Mister**	Dec. 1863–3 Apr. 1950	2nd great-grandfather
6	**Richard James Mister**	Oct. 1843–1896	3rd great-grandfather
7	**Bennett Witty Mister**	1807–1849/1850	4th great-grandfather
8	**Severn Reid Mister Sr.**	1785–1855	5th great-grandfather
9	**Marmaduke Mister**	1722–1798	6th great-grandfather
10	**William Mister**	1690–1744	7th great-grandfather
11	**Marmaduke Mister**	1660–1725	8th great-grandfather

How to read the generations. “Grandfather” is Phillip E. M. (“Edgie”) Mister in the supplied tree. He disliked the name Phillip and preferred Edgie. Each great-grandparent number then moves one generation farther back. The two Marmadukes are separate ancestors: the younger Marmaduke (1722–1798) is William’s father; the older Marmaduke (1660–1725) is the younger Marmaduke’s father.

Family details in order

The information below combines the labels and dates shown in the supplied screenshots with the historical and genealogical sources listed on the final page. Where the screenshots give a relationship or date that has not yet been checked against an original record, it is identified as a family-tree entry.

Marmaduke Mister, 1660–1725

The tree places Marmaduke at the start of this documented-in-the-tree line and names William Mister (1690–1744) as his son. A compiled Mister family-history page reports that Marmaduke acquired land in 1683 in what is now Delaware and later became associated with the Smith Island area. Treat those early details as secondary research leads pending review of the original land and court records.

William Mister, 1690–1744

The tree identifies William's wife as Patience Harris (1693–1757) and names their son Marmaduke. The compiled family-history page likewise connects William with Patience Harris and gives William's death as before August 1744.

Marmaduke Mister, 1722–1798

Marmaduke was William Mister's son and Severn Reid Mister Sr.'s father. The supplied tree names Rachael S. Evans (1744–1834) as Marmaduke's wife. A handwritten family-register page you supplied names four daughters of Marmaduke Mister and Rachel his wife: Sarah, born 2 June 1761; Naomy, born 13 January 1765; Charity, born 24 October 1767; and Betsey, born 17 September 1770. The page supports the couple and the daughters' parentage, although its original book or record has not been identified. The tree gives Rachel's dates as 1744–1834; a compiled family-history page gives 1725 as her birth year. Both claims are retained pending record verification. A separate compiled page also gives a different birth year for Marmaduke, so the 1722 date should be checked against underlying records.

Severn Reid Mister Sr., 1785–1855

Severn was Marmaduke Mister's son and Bennett Witty Mister's father. A Maryland Historical Trust survey reports that Severn and Keziah Mister transferred the Deal Island plantation to their son Bennett in November 1839. This record supports the Severn-to-Bennett relationship independently of Marmaduke's entry.

Bennett Witty Mister, 1807–1849/1850

A Maryland Historical Trust survey says Severn and Keziah Mister transferred the Deal Island plantation to their son Bennett in November 1839. Bennett lived there with his family until mid-century. The will abstract you supplied names his wife as Mary W. and lists his children below. The abstract's date range appears to be 9 December 1849 to 9 January 1850; this conflicts with a separate tree date of 1 December 1849, so the exact death date remains unresolved.

Children named in Bennett’s will abstract

Category	Names / information
Sons	William Severn; George Washington; Richard James; Jacob Thompson
Daughters	Keziah; Elizabeth; Parmelia; Ellen; Teresia; Mary Ann
Wife	Mary W.; the abstract says she received one third

Richard James through the present family tree

Richard James Mister (October 1843–1896) is named as Bennett’s son in the will abstract. The supplied tree places William James Mister (December 1863–3 April 1950) as Richard’s son, then George W. Mister (1890–1954) as William James’s son. A FamilySearch profile identifies George as George William Mister, born 15 December 1889 in Baltimore, and names William James Mister and Mary Arinthia Hitchens as his parents. It reports that George lived in Deal Island in 1910 and Wenona in 1940, and died in 1954.

The supplied tree continues from George to Phillip E. M. (“Edgie”) Mister (1923–1999), Mervin Mister (1927–2001), and William J. Mister (1930–1985). Edgie disliked the name Phillip and preferred Edgie. The tree shows Rodger J. Mister (1949–living) as Edgie’s son, and Joe Mister Jr. (1972–living) and Billy John Mister (1976–living) as Rodger’s children. These later links are transcribed from your tree screenshots. Family confirms that Edgie Mister in the FamilySearch profile is the same person listed as Phillip E. M. Mister in the supplied tree.

Records and source notes

- **Family tree screenshots supplied by Billy Mister, IMG_8660–IMG_8666.** Used for the direct-line labels, family dates, Bennett will abstract, and the later descendants. The will image is an abstract; the original will has not yet been examined.
- **Handwritten family-register page supplied by Billy Mister, IMG_8667.** Transcription: Sarah Mister, daughter of Marmaduke Mister and Rachel his wife, born 2 June 1761; Naomy Mister, daughter of Marmaduke Mister and Rachel his wife, born 13 January 1765; Charity Mister, daughter of Marmaduke Mister and Rachel his wife, born 24 October 1767; Betsey Mister, daughter of Marmaduke Mister and Rachel his wife, born 17 September 1770. Original record type and provenance not yet identified.
- **Maryland Historical Trust, Bradshaw House, Inventory of Historic Properties, S-46 (PDF).** Reports Severn and Keziah Mister transferred the plantation to their son Bennett in November 1839, citing land record LH 218. https://apps.mht.maryland.gov/medusa/PDF/Somerset/S-46.pdf
- **Maryland State Archives, Somerset County Register of Wills, JP 5, 1837–1859.** Catalog entry for the will volume that covers Bennett's period; use it to locate and verify the original will and probate date. Series T2538-3; archival listing: https://guide.msa.maryland.gov/pages/series.aspx?id=T2538
- **FamilySearch, George William Mister (1889–1954).** Compiled profile with nine listed sources, including a 1940 census, a 1917–1918 draft registration, and a Find A Grave index. It names William James Mister and Mary Arinthia Hitchens as George's parents. https://ancestors.familysearch.org/en/LR1H-2KN/george-william-mister-1889-1954
- **Mister Family History, "Family Tree."** Compiled family history used as a secondary lead for the early line and William Mister with Patience Harris. Some dates differ from the supplied tree and should be checked against original records. https://misterfamilyhistory.weebly.com/family-tree.html



Julia Mister and Billy Mister



Left to right: Conner Mister, Joe Mister, Billy Mister, Cole Mister



Joe Mister, Marmaduke, Joe Mister, and Billy Mister at the Deal Island family reunion pirate talk.