

return from Richmond, deliver George's bond to him. There is a small Payment of seventy two pounds of crop Tobo. endorsed on it, and placed to your Credit in my Books, arising from that little Sum being due to George for the Rents of the Snuff Mill, the two years my son Thompson was concern'd in it; upon an account between George & me; which, as I knew the Balc. either way was trifling, I had neglected to settle before.

I am, with Mrs. Mason's kindest Respects & my own to you, your Lady and Family Dear Sir, Your affectionate Kinsman & obt. Servt.

G. Mason"

The above letter was received and endorsed by Col. Fitzhugh with the note "concerning my Pohick Land". In a certain sense, George Mason's observations about land affairs being "mysterious" drew a cord of response from us in regards to **Eltonhead Manor!** That having been said, Mason's letter amply demonstrates that in 1787 Col. Fitzhugh was indeed trying to tidy up his affairs in Virginia with perhaps the idea of liquidating his assets there. George Mason refers to three of the Col Fitzhugh's tenants on his Pohick lands: ___ Christmass, John Saxton and Samuel Athie. We surmise that their rents, among other sources of income in Virginia, helped maintain Col. Fitzhugh's lifestyle in Maryland. Presumably, he would now be willing to forego their rents in favor of capital needed for land ventures in western Maryland and Kentucky. However, the above dispute would go on for at least five more years. In July of 1792 George Mason wrote to his son John imploring him: "Don't forget to bring up with you, from the Land Office, cypsy of our Friend Colo. Fitzhugh's Plats & Certificates of Survey for his land on Pohick Creek; which were return'd to the Land Office a little more than a year ago."(Rutland 1970, p.1268).

Another indication that Col Fitzhugh was actively pursuing lands in the west was the following indenture in 1787 (Provincial Court Land Records; Liber TBH#2, folio 583-584)

*"This indenture made November 1787 between William Fitzhugh Senior Esquire of Calvert County Maryland...and William Fitzhugh Junr. of current money of Maryland...doth hereby grant..Five Hundred acres of land being part of a tract of land lying in Washington County in Maryland containing 2500 acres granted to the said William Fitzhugh Sr. by the State of Maryland on July, 1785 called - **Addition To Edens Paradise Regained** as by patent on record..."*

Col. Fitzhugh was still living at **Mount Mill** in December of 1789, when he penned a letter to George Washington commenting that the "death of Mrs. Plater, Mrs. Fitzhugh's only daughter has occasioned great distress in our family" (Twohig 1990 p. 433). Indeed the death of Elizabeth (Rousby) Plater may have severed the last significant tie holding them to Tidewater Maryland. Afterward, the Fitzhugh's moved across the first ridge of mountains to settle in the northern extension of the Shenandoah Valley in Maryland. The family seems to have settled at **The Hive** near Chewsville in Washington County (Williams 1968, p. 140). Here Col. William Fitzhugh Sr. spent the

remaining years of his life, apparently nearly blind (Papenfuse et al. 1978, p. 322). However this does not seem to have prevented him from visiting old friends on occasion when he was in Annapolis. On November 18, 1794 William Faris, the Annapolis silversmith, recorded in his diary: "This Day my old friend Col'n Fitzchew, his son William & Mr. Hughs Dined with me, the Col'n & son went off in the evening, Mr. Hughs staid till near 8 o'clock" (Faris1933, p. 209).

The Mr. Hughs mentioned above by William Faris, could have been William Fitzhugh Jr.'s father-in-law Daniel Hughes of Washington County. The above also reinforces the view that of all his four sons, William seems to have remained the closest with his namesake throughout the rest of his life. Colonel Fitzhugh's wife, Ann, died the year after the dinner with William Faris took place. The Colonel would survive her for three more years, dying in 1798. William Fitzhugh was buried in the Episcopal Church graveyard in Hagerstown (Scharf 1882, p.1026). It seems from the number of acres he held in Kentucky at his death (see William Fitzhugh's Will, Appendix A), that the Fitzhughs may have been intending to settle there. But as we shall see, this was not to be. Although we were able to trace the move of Col. Fitzhugh and his family to Washington County, Maryland in the 1790s, one question still eludes us: exactly to whom did he transfer the bulk of **Eltonhead Manor** before he died in 1798?

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It is also important for us to trace other families at **Eltonhead Manor** after the Revolution to determine what was happening to the landholdings there. After all, the east side of **Eltonhead Manor** is the one we are most interested in. Although lacking extensive documentation of letters and wills which were available for the Fitzhughs and Platers, the lesser families did leave traces in the fragmentary abstracts of land records (Hutchins 1982). The winter after British General Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown, William Stallings was listed as owning 100 acres of **Eltonhead Manor** in the 1782 Assessment (Table 4). It was apparently not ideal land since it was assessed for only half the acreage. Like Col. Fitzhugh and his sons, he too may have realized that there were better opportunities elsewhere than in Calvert County. In November of 1785 he sold part of **Eltonhead Manor** (where the Stallings family of five whites and one slave were dwelling) to Jesse Dalrymple for £203 (Calvert County Land Records Book I, folio 4).

However some families stayed at **Eltonhead Manor** well into the Federal Period. In 1782 Mary Ireland was assessed for 200 acres of **Eltonhead Manor**. This must have been better land than William Stallings, since hers was assessed for full value (Table 4). On April 12, 1794 Gideon Ireland transferred 100 acres of land his father, Thomas Ireland, had left him to Mary Ireland (Calvert County Land Book I, folio 123). The next day she transferred the 100 acres back to him (Calvert County Land Book I, folio 124). Most likely this exchange was to establish clear title in the land records. The

Irelands also obtained more of **Eltonhead Manor** through marriage as we shall see below.

Another wealthy 1782 land holder (with 19 slaves) of **Eltonhead Manor** (Table 4), was Benjamin Elt, the assessor for the Eltonhead Hundred. Generally assessors were chosen who were fair-minded, and by law they worked during the first three months of the year to evaluate the worth of everyone worth living in the hundred. Since he was the tax assessor, at least we would expect that he made no un-intentional mistakes in his assessment. His total was £1200 Maryland currency (at 1776 value), the third most wealthy man in Eltonhead Hundred (after Col. Fitzhugh and Jesse Bourne). In both 1782 and 1783 he had 336 acres of **Eltonhead Manor** (as well as another 100 acres). He assessed himself for only half the normal value, so it must not have been ideal land. However, he did manage to have a heard of 25 cattle, the same as Daniel Rawlings (Table 4). Only William Fitzhugh and Jesse Borne had more head of cattle on their tracts of **Eltonhead Manor** (44 and 30 respectively) which were proportionally much larger than either Elt's or Daniel Rawlings. As far as wealth Benjamin Elt somehow managed to keep some silver plate (from the marauding British raiders) since he listed 32 oz. of it in the 1782 assessment. Judging from the number of whites he lists, he had one of the smallest families at **Eltonhead Manor** (other than two bachelors- Walter William Smith and Isaac Baker), with most likely a wife and a single child. Elt kept his parcel until his death (sometime before 1800) when he willed it to his wife Elizabeth during her lifetime (Calvert County Land Book I, folio 412).

The Breedens (also spelled in a variety of other ways from Breedings to Beadens in the records) represent a contrast to the wealthy families at **Eltonhead Manor** during the post-revolutionary period. No Breedens were mentioned by Stein (1976) in his History of Calvert County (other than in the section containing the 1782 Tax Assessment). From other sources (O'Brien 1992, p. 126 & 127), we know that Joseph Breeden served in the Revolutionary War. Also he had been married to Susanah Stallings on January 21, 1779 in Christ Church Parish in Calvert County by Rev. Francis Louder. It appears from the size of their family shortly thereafter, that one or the other had been married before and had children. Three years later, Joseph Breeden was listed as head of a family of six, living on 100 acres of **Eltonhead Manor** (Table 4). The Breeden family owned no slaves and the land was valued at half the normal price. Susanah's kin at **Eltonhead Manor** had barely more wealth (Table 4). Despite humble beginnings, the Breedens must have somehow prospered on their hundred acres of poor land. By December of 1797 Joseph Breeden was able to buy another parcel of land more than double the size from Ann Parran for just over £409. This was located on the east side of St. Leonards Creek and consisted of part of tracts called **Halls Resurvey** and **Bromegan**, and "sundry pieces of vacant land" (Calvert County Land Book I, folio 256). By the 1800 Census Joseph Breeden was not listed (however a Jeremiah and Thomas Beaden were on p. 416) and we presume he had died. In February 1809 his heirs (Thomas, Mark, Susanah and Joseph Breeden as well as John Gardner and his wife Elizabeth), sold together the 204 acres of the property

that Joseph Breeden (Sr.) had purchased from Ann Parran (and four acres from William Clare) to Abraham Parker⁴⁷. At the time of the sale of his real estate, all the heirs of Joseph Breeden were still living in Calvert County, except his son Thomas Breeden, who had moved to Tennessee (Calvert County Land Book I, folio 358).

Presumably John Clare II married Mary Hellen (the niece of Alexander Parran; see MD Wills; Liber 33, folio 255) and had three children, but died leaving no will. Mary Clare's will, probated October 29, 1774 (Appendix A), is the last Clare will we have before the Revolution when the record keeping was transferred to the county. Mary Clare bequeathed four of her Negro slaves to her three children John, Susan and Elizabeth (Appendix A). The two girls received three of the slaves and were under the age of sixteen when Mary Clare drew her will in October 1770. Interestingly, her will was witnessed by Daniel Rawlings Jr. and Mary Allen and certified by William Fitzhugh, Commissary General. The two men were neighbors of Mary Clare at **Eltonhead Manor** and we presume Mary Allen was living there too. Mary Clare's will reveals that she had a son John III and two underage daughters, Susannah (also spelled Susanna in the will) and Elizabeth (MD Wills; Liber 40, folio 187). Since no mention is made in the above will of a husband, Mary Clare must have been widowed by 1770. She had no land but owned six slaves: Nero, Judah, Jarrah, Macey, Hannah and Jenny. The land must have been divided earlier. It also indicates that she is the sister of David Hellen. The Hellen and Parran Families from which she descended both had considerable wealth, and at least some of this may have been eventually transferred to the Clares after the Revolution.

According to the 1782 Tax Assessment (Table 4) John Clare Jr. had a household of six whites and one slave with 107 acres of **Eltonhead Manor**. He is most likely the son of Mary and John Clare above, but we are uncertain why he would still use Junior after his father's death. Perhaps it had something to do with the fact that his uncle Isaac Clare already had a son named John Clare (1747-1804), according to the Christ Church Register (O'Brien 1992, p. 5). We know that John Clare Jr. enlisted during the Revolution by virtue of an "Act to Procure Recruits to Complete the Battalions & c" (Archives of Maryland Vol. XVIII, p. 338). In 1782 John Clare Jr. had only one slave, while Edmund Clare living nearby, had five slaves (Stein 1976, p. 363). The total assessment in the 1782 Census for John Clare Jr. was £189 and for Edmund Clare it was £100. This was very modest compared to Isaac Clare (he is the only other Clare listed as a taxable in Calvert County at that time) in St. Leonard's Cr. Hundred, whose total assessment amounted to £1162 in 1782 (Stein 1976, p. 348). Curiously, in 1783 John Clare Jr. had a set back of sorts. He lost not only 42 acres of **Eltonhead Manor**, but also a slave. Furthermore, the number in his household increased from six to nine people with his overall worth down to £48 (Table 5). John Clare Jr's cousin, John Clare

⁴⁷ In September of 1813, this 208-acre tract on the east side of St. Leonards Creek was sold by Marsham Parker to Luke Kiersted of Baltimore for \$835 (Calvert County Land Record I, folio 465).

Table 5. Owners of Eltonhead Manor Listed in the Tax Assessment of 1783

Owner	# Acres	Land Val.	# Slave	oz	# Hor.	# Cattle	Tot. Ass.	# free
David Avis*	143	157	3	0	3	5	258	6
John Avis*	72	27	1	0	3	3	72	<u>3</u>
Isaac Baker*	50	18	0	0	5	10	75	5
Isaac Royster Baker*	50	25	0	0	3	7	52	9
Jesse Bourne*	967+733s	1067	21	16	9	26	1738	6
Jes. Jacob Bourne*	200+364s	352	9	0	3	17	738	7
Margaret Bourne	200	150	3	2	?	5	257	<u>3</u>
Joseph Breeden	100	62	2	0	2	6	112	<u>5</u>
Jeremia Catterton	50	25	0	0	3	6	48	7
John Clare, Jr.*	65	20	0	0	2	10	48	9
William Crane*	30	19	0	0	1	13	27	5
Joseph Davis	170	128	1	0	1	2	51	5
Andrew Duke* (2t)	(108) 20	10	8	0	2	10	282	9
Benjamin Elt* (1t)	(100) <u>306</u>	153	10	12	5	15	581	3
Col. Wm.. Fitzhugh (1t)	(100) <u>2100</u>	1650	7	0	0	30	2303	<u>0</u>
Robert Grieves*	100	75	75	2	0	3	165	7
John Hungerford* (1t)	(100) 100	50	4	0	4	11	309	4
David Hunter, Jr.*	200	175	0	0	4	7	210	6
Mary Ireland (1t)	(100) 100	150	6	8	3	11	517	<u>3</u>
Thomas Lynes	50	125	1	0	3	5	61	5
James Poole?	200	175	1	0	8	22	281	5
Daniel Rawlings* (2t)	(250) 200	175	22	32	6	27	1052	10
John Rawlings*	300	262	16	3	8	22	976	11
Walter Wm.. Smith	33	20	0	0	0	0	20	<u>0</u>
Thomas Stallings	50	25	0	0	3	9	71	7
William Stallings*	100	50	0	0	3	8	79	7

Total: (other tracts) = (758) 6,983

123

142

* = a member of Richard Parran's militia company; (t) = other tracts not part of **Eltonhead Manor**.

appears to have married a Hance although the date is not given in the record (O'Brien 1992, p. 33). The 1800 Census lists a John Clare living in Calvert County with a household of ten people including five children, and possessing 24 slaves (Stein 1976, p. 251). Although the number of slaves might seem high⁴⁸, at the same time Elizabeth Clare and William Clare, living nearby, had 11 and 55 slaves respectively (1800 Census, Calvert County p. 416). We are uncertain which John Clare is listed in the 1800 Census and whether he was still at **Eltonhead Manor**.

Other landholders at **Eltonhead Manor** in 1782 and 1783 were still present at the turn of the century and were bringing up families. For example, David Avis had married Ann Ferguson in 1781 at St. James Church in southern Ann Arundel County (O'Brien p.131). By 1783 their family increased from four to six people and the 143-acre plantation they lived on had more than doubled in value, perhaps indicating a new house. David Avis is listed with one less slave in 1783 than the previous year. The 1800 Census indicates that David Avis and his wife had a family of five children and five slaves. The younger John Avis Jr, living nearby, had married Sarah Aisquith in 1780 (O'Brien p. 128,129). By 1783 he had lost two people in his household. One seems to have been his wife. In the 1800 Census he was widower, having two boys between the ages of 11-15 (and no slaves).

Less is available about other small landholders such as Isaac Baker and Isaac Royster Baker. The former was born in 1758, served as a private in the Revolution and was a pensioner (Newman 1938, p. 8). However, when they died or left **Eltonhead Manor** is unknown. Both of the above Bakers were not recorded in the 1800 Census for Calvert County in spite of listings for John Baker, Manning Baker and Thomas Baker. By almost every standard Jeremiah Catterton was the poorest land owner at **Eltonhead Manor** in 1782. Although he had 50 acres, he also had a household of five whites and was assessed for 43 £ (Table 4). By 1783 he had added two more mouths to feed as his household grew to seven (Table 5). How long Jeremiah Catterton, Robert Grieves, David Hunter Jr., remained at **Eltonhead Manor** after the Treaty of Paris was signed is also unknown. Their absence from the 1800 Census indicates that they were no longer living in Calvert County.

There may have been a cloud over the Hunter family's reputation (although it is not clear whether the Junior or Senior was involved in this incident) which encouraged them to leave Calvert County after the Revolution. David Hunter was mentioned as helping William Waller who was accused of collaborating with Gov. Robert Eden just before he left office by taking a letter for the Governor by boat to Virginia (Beirne 1954, p.185). Another landholder in 1782 at **Eltonhead Manor**, Walter William Smith, seems

⁴⁸ However, there does seem to be a discrepancy in the listings for slaves (above is the computer listing) between computerized and published indices of the 1800 Census. The originals have yet to be checked for accuracy.

to have cleared out by 1783, since no one (i.e. neither white nor slave) was listed as living on his 33 acres in the assessment (Table 5). There is a Walter Smith listed in the 1800 Census having a household of five children and five slaves. However, Walter Smith is listed in 1782 as having 1300 acres in St. Leonard's Hundred, including a plantation called **St. Leonard's**. Most likely it was this Walter Smith who was alive in 1800, rather than Walter William Smith, the owner of 33 acres **Eltonhead Manor** in the 1782 and 1783 tax assessments.

A comparison of the 1782 and 1783-tax lists for Calvert County (Tables 4 and 5) reveals there was a 37 % increase in the number of landowners at **Eltonhead Manor** in only one year. Furthermore the additional owners do not seem to be new people from outside the immediate area. In fact most of them had mustered together in Capt. Richard Parran's militia company in 1777 (Clements and Wright 1987, p. 149). What may account for this increase in ownership is that many were tenants before the Revolution. The economic squeeze brought about by a declining economy seems to have forced the wealthier landowners to sell small pieces of **Eltonhead Manor** which they most likely had been renting out previously. For example, Col. Fitzhugh is listed with 400 acres less than he had in 1782 (Table 4) and we suppose he split off some tracts for sale. Another reason for the sales may have been part of the more egalitarian philosophy which emerged at the time of the Revolution to lessen the gap between poor whites and the upper level gentry (Lee 1994).

The 1783 tax list can also be used to give us some insight into the ecological carrying capacity of **Eltonhead Manor**. After the Revolution many began migrating westward because of increasing pressure on the land around the Bay. It would be desirable to know in a pre-fossil fuel society at what point, in terms of population density, crowding was perceived. We made a simple calculation to derive a rough estimate. The list above shows that there was 5,886 acres of **Eltonhead Manor** plus 1,097 acres surplus owned by the Bournes yielding a total of 6,983. We also know that the number of whites plus slaves equaled 266. If we divide the total acreage (7,741 acres) controlled by the land owners above, including other tracts they owned, by the total number of inhabitants it gives us some idea how much land was involved in supporting them. The result is just under 30 acres per person. This suggests there may have been perceived population pressure at **Eltonhead Manor** before the absolute limits of growth (5-10 acres per person; Odum 1971) were approaching.

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Prominent land holders of **Eltonhead Manor**, like the Bournes, left less in the public record before 1800 than might be imagined. In the early 18th century Jesse Jacob Bourne had been a Quaker and was prohibited from holding public office. Even though the later Bournes are not listed in the Quaker records of Southern Maryland (Peden 1992), they seem to have shied away from politics and the public eye throughout the 18th century. Furthermore, the index of the Maryland Gazette reveals no mention of any members of the Bourne family in Calvert County, at least before

1761, the last year that Green (1989), abstracted. Aside from the wills and land records, both of which are fragmentary, we have precious little to tell us details of the Bournes or, more importantly, the disposition of their lands at **Eltonhead Manor**. In the 1782 Tax Assessment, Jesse Bourne is shown having 967 acres and if the surplus land is added, his holdings come to almost 1400 acres. We assume that this was Jesse Bourne who was then in his forties (he came of age about 1760), whose share of **Eltonhead Manor** had been under the administrative care of Thomas Ireland Jr. from the mid-1740' until the early 1760's (see above). The 1782 Assessment reveals that Jesse Bourne had split off 200 acres for Margaret Bourne sometime during the Revolution (Table 4).

As yet we know little about Margaret Bourne other than a few references in the land records (Hutchins 1982, p.26) and colonial probate records (Index 2 at MD Hall of Records). The earliest mention of Margaret Bourne we have found thus far is in November of 1771 when her final administration account of George Bourne's estate was filed in Prerogative Court (Test Proceedings; Liber 44, folio 321). We assume that the first reference is to the widow of George Bourne who, after his estate was settled, had purchased 200 acres of **Eltonhead Manor** from Jesse Bourne. In May of 1796 a Margaret Bourne is mentioned as the wife of George Bourne in a sale of land in Nelson County, Kentucky to Thomas Bourne for five shillings (Calvert County Land Book #1, folio 226). The later reference to Margaret Bourne appears to be the wife of George Bourne who came to maturity after the Revolution and who was the son of Margaret and George Bourne. This would account for the fact that no George Bourne from Calvert County had served in the Revolutionary War.

The year 1776 marks the beginning of a quagmire lasting over a hundred years when few wills exist for anyone dying in Calvert County. Family relationships have to be unearthed using available church records, family bibles (O'Brien 1992), and any references in the summaries of land records which were filed erratically in the land office in Annapolis (Hutchins 1982). After the collapse of the Proprietary government, all probate records were maintained by the counties. None in the Calvert Courthouse survived the 1882 fire. Fortuitously, the will of Jesse Bourne (we designate him as "II" for convenience), probated in 1797 was found in the Maryland Chancery Court Records (Appendix A). In it we find that, when Jesse Bourne II drew it in 1795, he had two three surviving children (Fig. 18). His two sons, Thomas and Jesse III, inherited all the real estate. The eldest, Thomas Bourne inherited his father's dwelling plantation (i.e his "lower plantation") while Jesse III inherited the his father's "upper plantation" with all the stock there.

For us the will is a keystone since we know from later land records that the "upper plantation" that Jesse Bourne III inherited from his father Jesse II, was adjacent to **Devils Woodyard** and it comprised most of what is now the present Cove Point LNG property. For Jesse Bourne II's wife Sarah Sr., however, her husband's will posed a serious problem. Although she was to receive a share of cattle and other livestock as well as slaves, she was given no land. By the terms of the will she would be dependent

the family was thrown into turmoil. But Dorcas Bourne would be the only child of Jesse Bourne III to reach maturity. We will explore this subject further when we take up this family group in the next century (following Chapter).

One more member of the Bourne family we have to say something about before we leave the 18th century is George Bourne. How he was related to Jesse Bourne II has not been determined, but most likely he was a younger cousin. In 1788 George Bourne of Calvert County supposedly advertized in the Maryland Gazette that he had 431 acres of land for sale, "including Little Cove Point". However, no improvements were apparently mentioned so this most likely was just acreage.⁴⁹ Five years later he finally found a buyer from the Eastern Shore. In May of 1793 he conveyed 431 acres of **Eltonhead Manor** to Benjamin Travers of Dorchester County MD (Calvert County Land Book I, folio 91). At first glance it might seem strange that someone would want to move off the Eastern Shore into Calvert County when the prevailing movement was outward. By this time economic stagnation in Southern Maryland had begun and members of society from the upper crust like Col. Fitzhugh to modest property owners were headed west. On the other hand, the Eastern Shore was still vital since it had been switching from tobacco to wheat and the economy did not really decline there until after the War of 1812.

The Travers (also spelled Traverse) family had its start in Dorchester County in the 17th century on Hoopers and Taylors Islands. Both islands lie within ten miles of Cove Point (Fig. 17) and it is perhaps not surprising that the Travers family had settled first in Calvert County when William Travers⁵⁰ married Elizabeth, the daughter of William and Mary Chapline. One of William I's sons, Matthew Travers married Elizabeth Hooper, the daughter of Henry Hooper II (Mowbrey 1984, p. 160-161) and appears to have maintained his dwelling plantation on Hoopers Island well into the 18th century. Many of the the descendants of this family took to the water and we have documentation that at least one met with disaster when he did. On November 18, 1762

⁴⁹The source of this information about George Bourne's advertizement in the Maryland Gazette was the **Eltonhead** file at the Calvert County Historical Society in Prince Frederick. However, we could not find this ad in a search of every issue of 1788 on microfilm at the Hall of Records in Annapolis. Several pages from that year were difficult to read on the microfilm because of water damage and the fact that two pages were mistakenly photographed on top of one another. It may well be that originals will have to be searched to verify this information. It seems strange that the tract would go unsold for so long!

⁵⁰ It is not clear when William Traverse actually settled in Maryland. There are three William Travers or Traverse listed as possibilities in the land records (Skordas 1974): a William (and Elizabeth Travers) transported in 1665 (Liber 9, folio 333); a William Traverse who immigrated to Charles County in 1669 (Liber 12, folio 333); and a William Traverse who was transported in 1672 (Liber 17, folio 422). In August of 1679, William Travers I, describing himself as being "of Patuxent" purchased a tract called **Shapleigh's Choice**, next to another called **Chaplins Holme** (which his wife inherited from her father) on Hoopers Island. By the time William Travers made out his last will in October of 1701, he and Elizabeth had six children: Matthew, William II, Thomas, Elizabeth, Mary and Sarah (Wills; Liber 11, folio 180). During the first half of the 18th century, William Travers' three sons jointly owned **Taylors Folly** on Taylors Island in Dorchester County where descendants of this family can still be located.

a report in The Maryland Gazette indicated that Matthew Travers of Dorchester County, fell off the bowsprit of a schooner he skippered, and was drowned in the Nanticoke River.

Five years before the Declaration of Independence, a Benjamin Travers (described as a Dorchester County planter) sold 50 acres of **Batchelors Delight** on Thoroughfare Marsh at Hoopers Island to Elias Craton (Dorchester County Land Records; Liber 24 old, folio 356). On July 24, 1775 his will stipulated that the land his father gave him should go to his sons Benjamin and Thomas, providing they pay their younger brother Donnard £7 each (MD Wills; Liber 40, folio 550). In March of 1787, Benjamin Travers and his wife Eleanor, along with Thomas Travers and his wife Sarah, conveyed a part of **Batchelors Delight** (adjacent land of John Travers, son of Jabus Travers, deceased) on Gunners Island Cove and the Hunger (now Honga) River to a Matthew Travers (Dorchester County Land Records; Liber NH#9, folio 261). In the next Dorchester record we have of him, in February of 1795, Benjamin Travers is described as being from Colberd (we read this as a phonetic spelling of Calvert) County where he transferred a Negro slave named Jacob to Thomas Travers of Dorchester County (Dorchester County Land Records; Liber HD #8, folio 214). Thus, we conclude that Benjamin Travers and his wife Eleanor must have moved to **Eltonhead Manor** shortly after they bought the parcel from George Bourne in 1793.

What motivated Benjamin Travers and his family to move to Calvert County? Perhaps the couple were looking for firmer ground where they could have a larger plantation, yet be close enough to sail back to Dorchester to visit friends and family. Another complicating issue must have been the sea-level rise and land erosion on Hoopers Island which by this time had converted parts of tobacco fields to marsh and open water. Quite possibly the experience of Matthew Travers drowning before the Revolution may have traumatized the family. Simply stated: maybe they wanted to get to a place where their children would not be so likely to take up a life on the water. Whatever his motivation for leaving Hoopers Island, Benjamin Travers did not live very long on his plantation at **Eltonhead Manor**. By the 1800 Census, Eleanor Travers is listed alone as the head of the family. At the time she had to cope with two young boys (aged from 11 to 15) and three girls (all under age 20) in her household as well as a large plantation with 11 slaves (U.S. Census Index for 1800, p. 424).