

# *family Dillard*

(1630 - 1783)

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## **d'Illard from France?**

Much controversy exists as to the origin of family Dillard. Some think the roots of the family are French, from the ancient family d'Illard, and specifically, from Carbonne d'Illard, a companion of William the Conqueror in the Norman invasion of England in 1066.

Others reject the Carbonne d'Illard connection and instead believe that family Dillard originated as French Huguenots who migrated to England, perhaps after the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572 when many Huguenots fled to England, or perhaps during other French religious wars in the 1620's.

Still others believe the Dillard line first originated in the Wiltshire area of southern England, and that the name Dillard is likely an alliteration of an English name such as Tiliard or Tilyard or some other similar name. Prior to the 1600's most people could not read nor write and hence, did not know how their names were spelled. Those who did write did so phonetically, with little regard to formal spelling rules such as we follow today. Name alliterations were common in those days.

The more serious genealogists claim that evidence suggests the first documented Dillard came from England and that no evidence, other than family lore passed down through the generations, exists of a French connection, and because of that it must be rejected. Although, there is scanty evidence of Dillards in England also.

## **Dillard in America**

George<sup>9</sup> Dillard (ca 1630 - ca 1704): George landed at Jamestown in the Virginia Colony after a voyage from England in 1650, or shortly before, likely as a young, illiterate indentured servant<sup>a</sup> (as were most immigrants of that period). 1650 was, indeed, very early in the colonization of the North American continent, and as such, George would be considered one of the original settlers.

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<sup>a</sup> **Indentured Servants:** Many persons were brought to the Colonies as indentured servants. Their passage fare would be paid in return for indentured servitude of four to seven years, depending on age and skills. After this period of servitude they became free and could own land.

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## **Jamestown and the Virginia Colony**

A historian has written, "*Gold, trade, tillage represent the three stages in the history of colonization, and the greatest of these ..... is tillage*". This was never more true than in the Americas. Shortly after the voyages of Columbus, Spaniards were exploring across the north and the south of the continent, raving it of its gold and treasures. Then came the Dutch and the French with their outposts, trading European goods with the Indians for furs. It was not until later that the English were the first to recognize the potential of the Americas as farmland, and it is for this reason alone that today we speak English and not the language of the Spanish, French, Portuguese, Scandinavian, or Dutch, all of whom had very early experiences in the New World.

England started later than other European nations, but was rapidly emerging as an economic power. Farsighted leaders recognized the natural resources available in the New World and the economic benefit that would accrue to England if they were tapped. A case for colonization was made and to promote it a propaganda campaign was launched, touting the New World as a virtual Garden of Eden. Several companies were chartered by the English for colonization purposes. Some adventurous individuals who wished to begin a new life were found to travel to the New World, and when there were not enough to fill the boats, the English would clear the jails to do

so. In 1605 explorative journeys were made and the first colonies attempted but soon aborted.

It was not until May, 1607 that the first enduring English plantation was established.<sup>a</sup> It was on the James River in Virginia, and was named *Jamestown*. Of the 144 persons who embarked on the trip in three vessels, only 105 survived the journey. When they arrived, life was even more trying. Of the 105 who landed, only thirty-eight survived through the year -- starvation and disease took its toll. The colony would have been abandoned, and almost was, if not for the leadership of Captain John Smith. John Smith was a soldier-of-fortune who had a propensity to alienate all about him into enemies. Nonetheless, he had the gifts of a frontiersman, including a knack for handling Indians, and the settlers were sensible enough to recognize it. They chose him as their leader, although later there was a plot to assassinate him but he made that largely unnecessary when he severely injured himself when he blew himself up with a barrel of gunpowder.

Over the years more ships came, pouring out new settlers. Many of them died, many others fled back to England on the next ship. But some remained and the Colony grew. By 1628 there were 2,500 living in the Virginia Colony. The Indians kept the population in check by massacring large numbers of the colonists, but eventually the Colony became better armed and eliminated the surrounding Indians. John Smith was once captured by the Indians and Chief Powhatan was about to declare a death sentence on him when Powhatan's fair daughter, Pocahontas, took a liking to Smith and wrapped herself in his arms, thereby saving his life.

The Colony floundered for years, never returning a profit to the London company that sponsored it, and the company failed. The King then took over control of the Colony and after instituting several progressive measures (offering headright grants and the establishment of a governing body), growth continued. The Colony did not become truly viable, however, until it was discovered how suitable the Virginia soil was for the growing of tobacco. With tobacco the economy boomed. Tobacco was planted up and down the James River, and up and down the coast. By 1630 they had created a glut on the world's tobacco market. Nevertheless, growth continued and more farms were established.

Tobacco not only saved the Virginia Colony, and with it solidified England's hold on the North American continent, but it ushered in another important page of American history. Profitable growth of tobacco demanded large estates and cheap, plentiful labor. On the other hand, the English population was small and the Jamestown settlers had come there not to be laborers, working for others. Land was plentiful and those who would have been laborers in England now chose to work at their own small, one-family tobacco farms. This certainly caused tensions between the laboring class and the entrepreneurial class, and it hindered the efficient production of tobacco and its profits. Several solutions were tried. First was the system of indentured servants. A planter would pay the expenses of bringing a worker from the old country. The worker would be bound to the planter for a period, often seven years, after which the worker would obtain his freedom along with a small plot of land. This system did not work well as it was expensive, the turnover was too great, and the workers were often unsatisfactory. Another solution worked better. Europeans had been buying African slaves for over a hundred years and the Spanish had been shipping large numbers to their colonies in South America for over fifty. In 1619 Dutch traders brought Africans to Virginia for the first time. Initially slave dealing was modest and the slaves were treated like indentured servants and given their freedom and land after a period of service. It was not until 1660 that Virginians began to follow the slave-handling example of the Caribbean and Latin American settlements, which now dealt in slaves on a huge scale. It was a tragic decision, but given the tobacco and the greed, perhaps inevitable.

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<sup>a</sup> It will still be thirteen years before the Mayflower sails to New England and lands the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock.

Tobacco wears out the land after seven years. This required planters to seek new lands and to push the boundary of civilization continually outward.

Jamestown was the first enduring English settlement in the New World, and the beginning of the Virginia Colony; tobacco with the aid of slave labor made it prosper, giving the English the preeminent position in North America; and from it spawned most of the growth throughout the colonies. Jamestown and the Virginia Colony did, indeed, play an important role in our history.

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After his indentured servitude obligation was fulfilled, George prospered. In 1665 he received a headright land grant<sup>a</sup> of 250 acres in New Kent County, Virginia (later King and Queen County), adjacent to land he already owned, located “upon branches of Tassitiomp Swamp”. Later land records refer to a “Geo. Dillard Plantation on the N. side of Mattapony River”.

Because of his servitude obligation and the necessity to establish himself in the Colonies, it is probable George married and began raising a family late in life. It is speculated he married about 1666 although no data exist on his marriage or his wife.

Despite the hardships, George succeeded and prospered. One genealogist sums up his life as follows: “*In [Colonial] Virginia, a land where many more than half the new people died, George Dillard was a survivor. Where there were four men to every woman, George had a wife. During a severe depression from 1660 until near the end of the century, George Dillard became a land owner, something achieved by a*

*small percentage of those who came as indentured servants and had to work four, five, or seven years ... to pay their transportation expense. We do not know the hardships George endured during those years when he had no personal freedom, when he had to do as his master directed, when he could not marry.”*

Little is known of George because in colonial America few records were kept and many of those that were kept were destroyed or burned. Nor is anything known about his wife or female children. He had five known sons, all of whom married and established families in the Virginia colony.

Edward<sup>8</sup> Dillard (ca 1672 - ): Edward was born about 1672 in New Kent County (later King and Queen County), Virginia. He married, but no information is available on his wife. They had four boys and an unknown number of girls.

He was listed as the owner of 150 acres of land in King and Queen Co., Virginia in 1704. Sometime after that he may have relocated to Orange Co. (later Culpeper Co.) where there are records of an Edward Dillard purchasing 190 acres of land in 1737.

Thomas<sup>7</sup> Dillard, Sr. (ca 1704 - ): Thomas was born about 1704 in King and Queen County, Virginia as the first son of Edward Dillard.<sup>b</sup>

In 1734 Orange County (now Culpeper County), Virginia was opened and land put on the market. The Virginia General Assembly offered incentives for the settlement of the land. This was a good offer for a young man newly

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<sup>a</sup> **Headright Grants:** In order to attract settlers, Virginia and other colonies granted land to those who paid the passage fare for settlers to come to the colonies from the Old World. One man could pay the passage for several persons (often as his indentured servants) and would thus be granted so much land “per head” – hence the term *headright grant*. In Virginia, each headright grant was worth fifty acres.

George Dillard (along with 106 other persons) was listed on the headright grant of Capt. Moore Fantleroy in Virginia, 22 May 1650, who received a 5,350 acre land patent for it. Because headright grants were negotiable and could be bought, sold, traded, and redeemed at will, it is not known when before May 1650 George Dillard came to America, or, whether he came with Capt. Fantleroy.

In turn, in 1665 George Dillard patented 250 acres of land resulting from a headright grant for the importation of five persons (three men and two women). And, in 1690 he received another headright grant of 150 acres for the importation of three more persons.

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<sup>b</sup> King and Queen County, where Thomas was born and his parents and grandparents lived, was very near where the first Virginia colonial settlers first arrived in 1607 and established Jamestown.

married, wishing to establish himself in life. In early 1735 both Thomas and his brother George purchased land there. Thomas purchased 550 acres on the Great Fork of the Rappahannock River, down Muddy Run, for £2.s15 (about \$7.15). Other family members followed them there in later years. In subsequent years Thomas was involved in other land transactions, some for over a thousand acres – in 1749 he sold 1,100 acres.

Prior to 1752 Thomas again migrated, this time to newly created Halifax County (later Pittsylvania Co.) where he purchased 400 acres. He was followed there by his two adult sons, James and Thomas<sup>6</sup>, Jr.

In 1752 Thomas, along with others, took an oath: "*The Teste: I do declare that I do believe that there is not any Transubstantiation in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper in the Elements of Bread and Wine at or after the Consecration thereof by any person whatsoever.*" All county and church officials were required to subscribe to *The Teste* to conform to the doctrine of the Church of England. Also required were oaths of loyalty to His Majesty's person and Government.<sup>a</sup>

He was Lay Reader at Little Fork in St. Mark's Parish (Church of England), and was Lay Reader, Vestryman, and Church Warden in Antrim Parish.<sup>b</sup> He was also a Justice of the Peace in Halifax and Pittsylvania Counties and an officer of the militia.

These data and other records show that Thomas was a prominent and prosperous landowner, active in community affairs as well as church matters; and from 1752 to 1755, during the French and Indian War, he was a Captain of the militia.

He married Winnifred<sup>7</sup> Nall (see page 34) in 1729 and with her had several known sons.

He executed his will while living in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and died there in 1774. In the will he distributed a number of different land parcels and over fourteen slaves between his children.

Thomas<sup>6</sup> Dillard, Jr. (ca 1732 – ca 1784): Thomas was born probably about 1732 in King and Queen Co., Virginia, and while still a small boy moved with his parents to Culpeper Co., Virginia. Then, in 1752, while a young adult, he followed his father to the newly opened territory of Halifax County (later Pittsylvania Co.), Virginia.

Thomas married Martha<sup>6</sup> Webb and together they had ten children, as is shown on the following page. (For information on Martha's family, see family Webb, page 35.)

Thomas became a prominent man in his community -- Sheriff of Halifax County and Justice of the Peace, Vestryman, and militia officer in Halifax and Pittsylvania County, and Church Warden in Camden Parish in Pittsylvania County. He commanded the Pittsylvania County Militia during the Revolutionary War. He was a Captain in the Revolutionary War and a Colonel in the Militia.

During his war activities he traveled to Kentucky and other wilderness areas to the west. He liked this country and in 1782/3 he moved his family to Greasy Cove, Washington County, North Carolina (later this area became Unicoi County, Tennessee) where he settled and died in 1784.

In his will, Thomas left several parcels of land to his children, including one thousand acres to his oldest son Benjamin. Each of the children received Negro slaves as an inheritance. Daughter Mary Ann's husband, Robert<sup>5</sup> Love, along with Thomas' wife were the executors of the will.

<sup>a</sup> Also taking these pledges at the same time as Thomas was Merry<sup>6</sup> Webb, another ancestor.

<sup>b</sup> For being a Reader at Saint Mark's Parish, Little Fork, Thomas was paid 1,000 pounds of tobacco, a common form of currency at the time in the area.

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**Thomas<sup>6</sup> DILLARD Jr. & Martha<sup>6</sup> WEBB**

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**Thomas<sup>6</sup> DILLARD Jr.**

Birth: ca. 1730, Essex Co., VA.  
Death: 23 Sep 1784, Greasy Cove, NC.  
Father: Thomas<sup>7</sup> DILLARD Sr (1704-1774)  
Mother: Winnifred<sup>7</sup> NALLE ( -1774)

**Martha<sup>6</sup> WEBB**

Birth: ca. 1739  
Death: 1819  
Father: Meredith<sup>7</sup> "Merry" WEBB Jr, (1697-1779)  
Mother: Elizabeth<sup>7</sup> MARTIN  
Ten Children

**Elizabeth DILLARD**

Birth: 1760  
Marriage: Charles HUTCHINS (1752-1823)

**Benjamin DILLARD**

Birth: 1761  
Death: 1850  
Marriage: Anne LYNCH ( -1816)  
Marriage: Christina KEITHER1797- )

**Winniesophia DILLARD**

Birth: 1763  
Marriage: James LOVE (1762- )

**Mary<sup>5</sup> Ann DILLARD**

Birth: 21 Sep 1767  
Marriage: 11 Sep 1783, Robert<sup>5</sup> LOVE (1760-1845)  
Death: 25 Mar 1842, Waynesville, N.C.

**Thomas DILLARD III**

Birth: 1769  
Death: 1827  
Marriage: Dorcas LOVE

**Stacy DILLARD**

Birth: 1772  
Death: 1800  
Marriage: Gabriel ELKINS (1766-1846)

**Martha DILLARD**

Birth: 1774  
Death: 1834  
Marriage: Thomas LOVE

**Ann DILLARD**

Birth: 1776

**Rebecca DILLARD**

Birth: 1778  
Death: 1820  
Marriage: Joseph BYLER Jr. (1772- )

**John Love DILLARD**

Birth: 1783  
Death: 1850  
Marriage: Sarah JACOB (1787-1860)

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Mary<sup>5</sup> Ann Dillard (1767 - 1842): Mary Ann was the fourth child of Thomas<sup>6</sup> and Martha<sup>6</sup>. In 1783, at age sixteen, she married Robert<sup>5</sup> Love. (See Robert<sup>5</sup> Love, page 27.)

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