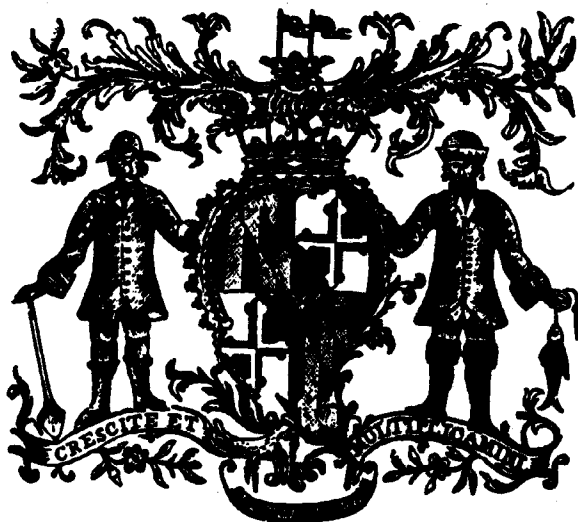


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1635–1789



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tee of Observation, Baltimore County, 1776; chief judge, Baltimore City Court, appointed 1791. **MILITARY SERVICE:** captain, Baltimore County Militia, by 1776; major, Baltimore Town Battalion, Baltimore County Militia, commissioned on May 25, 1776; lieutenant colonel, Baltimore Town Battalion, Baltimore County Militia, 1777–1781 (commissioned on September 12, 1777); captain, Volunteer Troop of Light Dragoons, Baltimore County Militia, by October 1781. Nicholson undertook the last command at the request of the “youth in his neighborhood,” even though it meant accepting a lower rank. **WEALTH DURING LIFETIME.** **PERSONAL PROPERTY:** assessed value £1,222.17.6, including 13 slaves and 24 oz. plate, 1783; charged with 14 slaves, 1790. **ADDITIONAL COMMENT:** Nicholson was an executor of the estate of his father-in-law, *John Ridgely* (by 1724–1771), which was not settled until 1787. His financial troubles during the late 1780s were apparently exacerbated by Ridgely’s outstanding debts. In 1791 Nicholson mortgaged 16 slaves, livestock, plantation equipment, and household furniture to Charles (Carnan) Ridgely. **LAND AT FIRST ELECTION:** 513 acres in Baltimore County, one-half interest in 135 acres in Anne Arundel County, and one-third interest in the lease of a lot on Fell’s Point, Baltimore Town (all by purchase), plus an undetermined number of lots in or near Baltimore Town left to his wife by her father. **SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN LAND BETWEEN FIRST ELECTION AND DEATH:** purchased 25 acres in Baltimore County, 1775; sold Mary’s Baltimore Town lots in 1775 and the Anne Arundel County land in 1779; charged with 4 improved lots in Baltimore Town, 1783. In partnership with *Charles Ridgely* (1733–1790), *Darby Lux* (?–1795), *John Sterett* (1750/51–1787), *Samuel Chase* (1741–1811), and three others, purchased the confiscated Nottingham Ironworks in 1782, giving Nicholson a one-eighth interest in ca. 4,000 acres of land in Baltimore County; mortgaged his 539 acres in Baltimore County to his brother-in-law, John Ridgely, to secure settlement of the estate of his father-in-law *John Ridgely* (by 1724–1771) in 1786; mortgaged the one-eighth interest in the Nottingham Ironworks to *Charles Ridgely* (1733–1790) in 1788; obtained the release of the mortgage on the 539 acres in 1789 and immediately sold 531 acres of the land plus a certificate of survey for an additional 106 acres in Baltimore County; purchased another 530-acre tract, which included a grist mill, in Baltimore County, 1789; mortgaged this 530-acre tract and sold his ironworks interest (already mortgaged)

to Charles (Carnan) Ridgely, 1791. **WEALTH AT DEATH. DIED:** between March 10 and May 2, 1792, in Baltimore County. **PERSONAL PROPERTY:** TEV, £2,076.16.5 current money (including 19 slaves, 1 servant, at least 3 books, 54 oz. plate, beehives, 2 and one-half tons of “ship stuff,” and 74 barrels of “fine flour in the mill”). Most of this property was already mortgaged). FB, £2.9.3. **LAND:** probably 30 acres in Baltimore County.

NICHOLSON, FRANCIS (1655–1727/28). **BORN:** in 1655, in Yorkshire, England. **IMMIGRATED:** on July 6, 1694, as governor; first visited Maryland in the fall of 1692 as lieutenant governor. **RESIDED:** in St. Mary’s City, St. Mary’s County, 1694; Annapolis, Anne Arundel County, 1695 until 1698/99 when he moved to Virginia. **FAMILY BACKGROUND.** **FATHER:** probably Thomas Nicholson of Downholme, Yorkshire. **PRIVATE CAREER.** **EDUCATION:** literate. **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION:** Anglican; energetic promoter of the established church; member of the Society for Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. **SOCIAL STATUS AND ACTIVITIES:** enjoyed support of Charles Paulet, later Duke of Bolton, in whose home he was raised as a page; served as chief executive of five colonies; member of the Royal Society; knighted in 1720. **OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE:** military officer and colonial bureaucrat. **PUBLIC CAREER.** **PROVINCIAL OFFICES:** Council, 1691/92–1693/94; lt. governor, 1691/92–1693/94; governor, 1693/94–1698/99. **MILITARY SERVICE:** ensign, King Holland Regiment, 1678, in Tangiers, where he was promoted to captain, 1680–1683/84; captain under Edmund Andros in New York, 1686/87; general, led expeditions to northern colonies, 1708/9, 1710, 1711. **OUT OF COLONY SERVICE:** Council of Dominion of New England, 1687–1689; governor, Dominion of New England, 1688–1689; lt. governor of New York, 1689–1690; lt. governor of Virginia, 1690–1692; captain general and governor of Virginia, 1698–1705; governor and lt. general of Nova Scotia, 1712–1715; governor and major general of South Carolina, 1720–1725. **STANDS ON PUBLIC/PRIVATE ISSUES:** attempted ambitious reforms of provincial and local government; brought back into office men who had opposed the Protestant Associates’ Revolution in 1689; moved the capital of Maryland to Annapolis, 1695; target of alleged conspiracy and attempted rebellion, 1696–1698, led by *John Coode* (ca. 1648–1708/9); helped to found William and Mary College, Virginia, and King Wil-

liam's School, Annapolis. **WEALTH AT DEATH.** DIED: on March 5, 1727/28, in London, England.

NICHOLSON, JOSEPH, JR. (?-1786). BORN: in Kent County, of age by 1755; probably eldest son. NATIVE: third generation. RESIDED: in Anne Arundel County by 1755; Kent County by 1757 (Chestertown, Kent County, by 1769 until at least 1770); Queen Anne's County by 1776 until death (at "Chesterfield," part of which later became Centreville). May also have lived in Queen Anne's County during the early 1760s. **FAMILY BACKGROUND.** FATHER: Col. Joseph Nicholson (1709-ca. 1787) of Chestertown, Kent County, a merchant; son of William Nicholson (?-1719) of Anne Arundel County, a merchant, and wife Elizabeth (?-1716/17). MOTHER: Hannah (ca. 1708-?), daughter of *James Smith* (ca. 1683-1760) and wife Sarah Hynson. Hannah was the granddaughter of *John Hynson* (?-1705). Hannah married first, in 1725, Edward Scott (?-1729), son of *Edward Scott* (?-1725). STEPMOTHER: by 1772 Mary (?-ca. 1799), daughter of *William Hopper* (1707-1772). BROTHERS: William; James (ca. 1736-1804), captain of the Maryland ship *Defence* and a senior officer in the Continental Navy, 1778-1783; *Benjamin Nicholson* (?-1792); Samuel (1743-1811), a captain in the Continental Navy, 1776-1783, who married in 1780 Mary Dowse of Boston; Thomas (?-1783), who married in 1774 Rachel, daughter of *John Ridgely* (by 1724-1771); and John, a captain in the Continental Navy. HALF BROTHERS: Edward Scott (1726-?); *John Scott* (ca. 1727-1790); and Joseph Hopper Nicholson, Jr. SISTER: Elizabeth, who married Charles Gordon (?-1787). HALF SISTERS: Mary (by 1772-by 1797); Henrietta, who married first, John Bracco, Jr. (ca. 1763-1797), son of *John Bracco* (?-1794), and second, Robert Goldsborough, son of *John Goldsborough* (1711-1778). NIECE: Frances Nicholson, who married *Joshua Seney* (1756-1798). MARRIED on July 28, 1757, Elizabeth (1739-1806), daughter of *William Hopper* (1707-1772) and first wife Esther Sweatnam (?-1740). Elizabeth was the stepdaughter of both Mary Anne Wright (?-1747) and Sarah Dockery (?-ca. 1775). Her half brother was *William Hopper* (by 1747-1806). Her sisters were Mary (?-ca. 1799); Henrietta (?-by 1772); and Sally (?-1761). Her half sisters were Mary Ann (1742-?), who married second, *James Bordley* (?-ca. 1793); Dorothy. CHILDREN. SONS: Joseph Hopper (1770-1817), a member of the Maryland House of Delegates, 1796-1798, a representative in the U.S. Congress, 1799-1806, and

chief judge of the sixth Maryland Judicial Circuit, 1806-1817, who married in 1793 Rebecca, daughter of *Edward Lloyd* (1744-1796); William H., and James. DAUGHTERS: Esther, who married first, Dr. John Hindman (?-by 1794), son of *Jacob Hindman* (by 1713-1766), and second, William Chambers (?-1837); Sarah (1776-1840), who married Dr. Pere E. Niel (Noel) (1768-1814). **PRIVATE CAREER.** EDUCATION: probably studied law in Annapolis during the mid-1750s. RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION: Anglican; held pew in Chester Parish Church, Kent County, 1772. SOCIAL STATUS AND ACTIVITIES: Gent., by 1770; Esq., by 1776. OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE: lawyer, admitted to the following courts: Mayor's Court, Annapolis, January 1755; Queen Anne's County, November 1755; Cecil County, by March 1757; Kent County, by November 1757. **PUBLIC CAREER.** LEGISLATIVE SERVICE: Conventions, Kent County, 1st, 1774, 4th, 1775, 5th, 1775; Senate, Eastern Shore, Term of 1776-1781: 1777, 1777-1778, 1778-1779, 1779-1780 (did not attend), 1780-1781. OTHER STATE OFFICES: Councils of Safety, Eastern Shore, 4th, 1776, 5th, 1776-1777. LOCAL OFFICES: sheriff, Queen Anne's County, 1760-1763; clerk of indictments, Cecil County, in office November 1769; Committee of Correspondence, Queen Anne's County, 1774. OUT OF STATE SERVICE: delegate, Continental Congress, 1777 (elected in December 1777, but did not attend; resigned on December 22, 1777). **WEALTH DURING LIFETIME.** PERSONAL PROPERTY: assessed value £1,045.0.0, including 15 slaves and 197 oz. plate, 1783. LAND AT FIRST ELECTION: 95 acres in Kent County and one-half of a lot with a house in Chestertown, plus ca. 275 acres in Queen Anne's County owned jointly with his wife (lot and land in Kent County by purchase and patent, land in Queen Anne's County through his wife as part of her inheritance from her grandfather, William Sweatnam). SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN LAND BETWEEN FIRST ELECTION AND DEATH: In further divisions of the Sweatnam land in 1779, Joseph and Elizabeth received title to an additional 290 acres in Queen Anne's County and a one-third interest in 10 additional acres in that county on which there was a grist mill. The grist mill was to be rebuilt and the profits shared equally among Joseph and Elizabeth, Joseph Nicholson, Sr., and wife Mary, and William Charles Niell. Joseph deeded his interest in all the Queen Anne's County land (except the mill land) to his wife in 1781. **WEALTH AT DEATH.** DIED: will probated on November 11, 1786, in Queen Anne's County. **PERSONAL PROPERTY:**