

Alexander Scougall
People of London Town, Maryland*

Captain Alexander Scougall was one of the many captains that called London Town home during the 18th century. Announcements of him or his ships in the paper indicate that he travelled all around the North Atlantic. He was involved with London Town (where he purchased two pieces of town land) and the South River area from at least 1735 through his death in January 1772.¹ Though he had a wife, Elizabeth, it is unknown when they were married.

Alexander Scougall's first known reference occurs in October 1735 when he announced that as "Commander of the Ship *Frederick* now riding at anchor in South River," he intended "to Export tobacco from Maryland to the Port of London in Great Britain" for "Six pounds ten Shillings per Ton." The tobacco would be consigned to a London merchant, Samuel Hyde.² *Frederick* is only the first of many vessels associated with Scougall. In 1745 Scougall is associated with the schooner *Bladen*; in 1747, the brigantine *Annapolis*; in 1750, the ship *Elizabeth*; in 1759, the schooner *Nancy*; and in 1760, the snow *Annapolis* (this last one may also be the one from 1747).³ During his time with these vessels he sailed for London, Barbados, the Carolinas, and New York.

Two interesting newspaper items, one from 1745 and the other from 1759 show how dangerous an occupation being a ship's master could be. In the first instance, Alexander Scougall is taken by the French while sailing to Barbados and taken to Martinico (a town in the Dominican Republic).⁴ Though it is not clear when he is freed, it had to have been by 1747 when he next appears in the *Maryland Gazette*. Fourteen years later, whilst sailing from the Carolinas to New York, his vessel experienced trouble and seems to have been abandoned in order to save himself and the other people on board.⁵

ANNAPOLIS.

The Schooner *Bladen*, Capt. Scougall, bound for Barbadoes, and the Brig. *Onflow*, Capt. Chapman, for London, both belonging to this Province, are taken by the French, and carried one into Martinico, and the other to Quebeck.

Maryland Gazette, 25 October 1745, page 4.

We have an Account, that the Schooner *Nancy*, of which Captain *Alexander Scougall* was Master, who failed from hence last Summer for *Carolina*, on her Voyage from thence for *New-York*, was lately cast away and lost near that City, but the People saved.

Maryland Gazette, 20 December 1759, page 3.

Two other interesting items from the *Maryland Gazette* show that even when Scougall made it safely to port, other challenges sometimes awaited him. In July 1750, Scougall placed an item in the paper announcing that some items had been stolen from the *Elizabeth's* mate, Joseph Trout. Some of the items stolen were: a case of 14 bottles with rum, a pair of red everlasting breeches, and some silver shoe and knee buckles.⁶ The other item of note occurred in May 1760

¹ Maryland State Archives (MSA), Special Collections, (All Hallow's Protestant Episcopal Church Collection) Parish Register 1711-1857, p. 59; MSA SC 2458 M 221.

² MSA, *Anne Arundel County Land Records (AACLR)*, Liber RD2, Folio 288.

³ *Maryland Gazette*, 25 October 1745, page 4; 7 July 1747, page 3; 11 July 1750, page 3; 26 April 1759, page 2; 15 May 1760, page 3.

⁴ *Ibid*, 25 October 1745.

⁵ *Ibid*, 20 December, 1759, page 3.

⁶ *Ibid*, 11 July 1750.

when a mariner, John Bird ran away from Scougall's vessel while it was lying off of Annapolis.⁷ Bird is just one of the many sailors and mariners who ran away from their vessels during the colonial era. It is not known if Bird was ever captured.

* As the research into colonial London Town's inhabitants is an ongoing process, the caveat is offered that additional information may be found at any time and that a correction of information might also occur at any time.

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