

## William Cooke

### *People of London Town, Maryland\**

A world traveler, William Cooke was born in Staffordshire, England. He visited “most Parts of Ireland” and served the Royal Navy in India, presumably during the Seven Years War.<sup>1</sup> In 1767 Cooke’s travels brought him to Maryland, where he indentured himself to the London Town based tailor Alexander Ferguson.<sup>2</sup>

Either wanderlust or his fondness for the bottle motivated him to ditch the obligations of Ferguson’s shop. On December 9, 1767, he ran away, prompting Ferguson to place an advertisement in the Maryland Gazette offering thirty shillings for his return. Cooke was described with “a small Lump in his Forehead, a mole on his left Cheek, thin Visag’d,” with “thin black Hair, tied behind, and curled.”<sup>3</sup>

Cooke was either captured or returned of his own volition. Within a year, he had fallen for an Irish servant woman on the South River, who served a Charles Stewart. On June 28, 1768, he married Elizabeth Cole at All Hallows Parish in a service administered by Reverend David Love.<sup>4</sup> Elizabeth had just finished her indentured servitude under Stewart a few months before, but Cooke may still have had years until his freedom.

Perhaps impatient to be free, William ran away again on New Year’s Day, 1769. Taking his wife, they ran from the South River. Ferguson again placed an advertisement for Cooke’s return, speculating that he may have been running to Philadelphia, or to his brother in law Hugh Miriarlie’s weaving business in Frederick.<sup>5</sup>

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\* 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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<sup>1</sup> *Maryland Gazette*, December 10, 1767, page 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Maryland Gazette*, January 5, 1769, page 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Maryland Gazette*, January 21, 1768, page 3.

<sup>4</sup> Maryland State Archives, Maryland Indexes, Marriage References, MSA S 1527, Accessed 5 December 2016, <<http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/stagserv/s1500/s1527/html/ssi1527c.html>>.

<sup>5</sup> *Maryland Gazette*, January 5, 1769, page 3.