Wills of Early Settlers of Cape May
From Abstracts of New Jersey Wills Vols. I & 2
1670-1730; 1730-1750 and from
† Cape May Records, Transcribed in the 1937 and 1938 Cape May
County Magazine of History and Genealogy (Blue Books)
(Compiled by J. P. Hand and Dr. Daniel P. Stites)

1687 Oct 28 Storer (Storey), John late of Cape May, now of Burlington mentions Daniel England sailor


1693 April 8 † Parsons, John (Elizabeth) Parsons, widow & relic of John Parsons, late of this county, presents inventory of estate of deceased (51 pounds) inv. John Shaw, John Richardson


1693 Dec 30 † Else, John of Cape May, glorer "my well beloved friend, Samuel Mathews Sen, sole exc. & most of estate, bequest to Thomas Gooing [Goodwin,Golding?]" inv. Tim Branreth & Jonathan Osborne

1694 Jan 19 † Raynor, Thirston of Cape May inv. Tim. Brandreth & Ezekiell Eldredge, includes Cows & "a share of craft".

1694 Dec 14 † Pyne, Jonathan of Cape May (wife Abegall) sole exc.overseers faithful friend, Joseph Holden, my loving brother in law, Jonathan Foreman "if my son Jonathan decease with out heirs, if ye child unborn be a son, to be his heir, other wayes, my dauter Abigall to be his heir. inv. two acres of land up ye river, the house & town lot, 300 acres at ye Cape & improvements, the shallop & rigging & all belonging thereto

1694? † Bancroft, Thomas "Being all impaniele & attested on a jury concerning the death of Thomas Bancroft, they give this report that they haveing vewed the dead corps & made diligent enquiery into ye cause of his death they find yt the sd Bancroft, being sick & weak, went forth of the house where he was, & went to the waterside, put of his clothes, went into the sea and was drounded But whether wilfully as intending to dround him selfe, or intending only to wash himself, & so was acsidentally drounded, they cannot understand."

1695 Apr 9 † Huit, Randall Sr. of Cape May (wife Doritney) "Randall, my eldest son, one dark brown horse with an "R" on the near shoulder & buttock, Doritney, my dear & well beloved wife, my house & improvements upon ye Cape Island" wtn. William Jacox, Sarah Jacox

1695/6 Mar 17 † Huitt, Doritey, deceased, letters of administran to Randall Huitt, son & heir granted by Joseph Holdin, & John Jervis

1695 Apr 22 † Fish, John, deceased letters of adm. to Elisabeth Fish, widdow & relic granted by John Jervis, Samuel Crowell, Justices of the peace

1696 Jan 12 † Fish, Elizabeth, deceased exc. William & Lidey Shaw letters of adm. granted by Mr. Samuel Crowel & John Jervis

1696 Jan 16 † Goodin [Goodwin], Thomas, deceased letters of adm. to Deborah & Oliver Russill excs. by Saml. Crowel & John Jervis

1696 Mar 17 † Badcock, Easter, deceased letters of adm. to John Townsend by Mr. Samuel Crowell & John Jervis

1696 Sept 15 Carman, John, deceased, (wife Elisabeth) letters of adm. to Elisabeth Carman, widdow & relic granted by Mr. Samuel, Crowell & John Jervis inv. includes: "cattle, a shear of a mill at town [New England Town], shear of a mill kreek, buildings, land, his shear of a whale craft"

1696 Dec 15 † Holden, Joseph, deceased (Hanah) letters of adm. to Hanah Holden, widdow & relic granted by Mr. Samuel Crowell & John Jervis inv. includes:"cattle, a shear of a mill at town [New England Town], shear of a mill kreek, buildings, land, his shear of a whale craft"

1697/8 Jan 19 † Short, Nathaniel, letters of adm. to Joseph Whilden, exc. granted by Saml. Crowel & John Jervis

1697/8 Jan 19 † Hoell [Howell], Edmund, deceased letters to son Edmund Hoell granted by Saml. Crowel & John Jervis

1697/8 Jan 19 † Guilyard, John, deceased letters to Nicholas Martinau [Huguenot], exc.granted by Saml. Crowel & John Jervis

1698 Dec 21 † Johnson, Oliver, deceased letters to William Seagrave granted by Mr. Saml. Crowel & Jacob Dayton

1702 Aug 29 Stubs, John mariner of Cape May his vessel to Rich. Downs, legacies to Richard Carr, Deborah Hand Peter Proeter. Execs. John Taylor, Thomas Hand, John Hickman 1704 Shamgar Hand administrator & principle creditor. (John Stubs is a mariner & trader holds no land in the county but his inventory shows that almost everyone in the county owed him money.)

1705 Apr 17 Hill, Philip of Cape May (widow Bridget Hill) inv. John Cresey, Josiah Stansbrow

1705 June 7 Dayton, Richard, Richd Downs adm. Fellow bondsmen Thomas Hand, Peter Corson

1705 June Gilbertson, Lubert (Giberson) bondsman James Steelman of Cape May inv. William Golden Jr. John Taylor

1705 Dec 11 Crawford, John son George Crawford adm. Son George Crawford who paid out…for two coffins one for the father and the father’s wife, who died a month before him. 14 shillings for wine for the funeral of Ezekell Eldridge

1707 Apr 15 † Dayton, Jacob, deceased, letters of adm. to Richard Downes, granted by Shamgar Hand, Arthur Cresse

1707 May 22 Swain, Richard formerly of Nantucket, late of Cape May, husbandman. Adm. Eldest son Jonathan

1707 June 4 Hand, Shamgar, (Jr.) of Cape May cooper (wife Abigail ) sons: Cornelius, William, etc. wife exc, with father-in-law Peter Corson & brother Cornelius as overseers

1707 Nov 24 Pulford, John (Mulford? but orig. will says Pulford) Cape May Co. inv. Sam Mathews, Wm. Shaw

1708 Aug 30 Badcock, Joseph of Cape May shoemaker (wife Mary) wttn. Sylvanus Townsend appr. Richd Townsend Joseph Ludlow (Ludlim, Lydlow)

1709 June 13 Gareson, Jacob inv. of the estate made by John Townsend ; all personal

1710 June 6 Eldridge, Ezekial. Capt. of New England Township of CMC, planter of Cape May mentions Joseph Yard will of made in Phila (wife Sarah) five sons and three daughters, not named. Wife sole executrix.


1713 Sept 28 Osborne, Jonathon of Cape May Co.cordwainer [shoemaker] (wife Mary)

1714-15 Jan 21 Hughes, Jedediah of Cape May Co.brothers: Humphrey, Constant, John,

1714 Jan 25 Mathew, John yeoman of Cape May (wife Charity) daughter Lishabe, sister Elizabeth Mathews, cousin William Mathews, brother Samael Mathews exec. Of real & personal estate wttn. George Crafford, Henry Stevens, John Taylor


1714 Nov 3 Hand, Thomas (proved)( dated 1707) of Cape May yeoman (wife Kathron) children Deborah, Alice, Prudence Crowel, John, Recompence, two others (George, Thomas, Jeremiah) 5 slaves adm. Recompence Hand, fellow bondsmen Richd.Downs, Christopher Church


1714-15 22 Feb Mason, William of Cape May " son-in-law principle heir legacies Daniel Brandreth, daughter-in-law Mary Raynor, Debberah Russel Tim. Brandreth, Mary Townsend

1714-15 16-Feb Mason, Sarah yeoman (sic) mentions Joseph Weldon (Whilden) sons: Jonathan Swain, Ebenezer Swain, Joshua Jacocks, James Jacocks, granddaughter Joanna Swain

1714- 15 Mathews, Samuel yeoman (wife Mary) etc children William, John, Samuel, Margaret, Elizabeth. land at Long Neck at Henry Stephens other real and personal


1714 Dec 29 Reaves, John of Cape May yeoman(wife Sarah) exec. Daughter Sary, legacy to John Ingrum when his time is up. Personal estate, wttn. Daniel Wells Henry leonard (56 yr. old) & Hannah Lenord.

1714 Dec 31 Cresse, A Mem., Zebulon, above named, has changed his name to Arthur at the father's desire Arthur, Jr. weaver " land at indian neck " (wife Mary) sole exec. Children James, Zebulon Elizabeth, Lydia, Mercy,
1714-15 6 Feb Goulding, Samuel of Cape May Co. (wife Sarah) sons: Joseph, Daniel, dau. Margaret

1715 Apr 29 Garison, (Garretson) Reman Cape May (wife Rebecker) sons: Jacob, Daniel, Garot, Joab, daugh. Mary, Elisabeth, Rachel. Exectrix wife real and personal estate Witn. Robert Townsend (27 years) Henry Linard and Abraham Benor

1715 Nov 24 Townsend, John (wife Mercy) mentions Andrew Godfrey

1717 May 29 Holden, Benjamin Cape May Co. yeoman (wife Mary) land: 200 ac. between John Hubbard & Will. Golden, "brother Joseph Golden is to pay for"

1718 Johnston, William (Johnson) Of Cape May yeoman daughter (Catren) "land between John Cresse & Benj. Hand Jr. at the lower side of Cape May", exc. Son William, with brother Benj. Leonard


1720-21 15 Mar Mulford, Ezekil C. M. C. (wife Abijah) sole exc. children: Jonathan, Ezekiel, Mary. real & personal estate (silver shoe buckles) Witn. Ebenezer Norcott, William Mulford, John Bradford Martha Carman of CMC, spinster, 17 years old, though not a subscribing witness, also swears to the execution of the will.

1721-22 7-Feb Learning, Thomas C. M. C. (wife Hannah) children Christopher (eldest son, under 14), Jane, Easter, Mercy, Phebe, Priscillah, Thomas real and personal estate (a negro man and due. Woman whose respective six children are disposed of) Executors the wife and brother Aaron Leamyng


1723-4 Jan 10 Crowell, Yelverton of CMC yeoman (wife Elizabeth) adm.

1724 June 17 Searle, John laborer (widow Joana) (he ran off to East Jersey), mentions Robert Perryman yeoman of Cape May

1725-26 Johnson, Samuel yeoman of C. M. C. (wife Abigail) Children Ebenezer, (underage), Josiah, Phebe, Abigail. Homestead, land in C.M.C., and in Darby Township, New Haven County, Conn. Wife sole exc. John Persons and Nathaniel Rusco overseers


1728 Nov 21 Johnson, Samuel yeoman of C. M. C. (wife Charity exc.) Children Samuel (under 21), Sarah, Hannah, Phebe, Charity, Susannah, real and personal estate witn. Daniel Walker, Benjamin Mareux, Henry Stites Jr.

1728 Sept 28 Taylor, John of C. M. C. bondsmen Debray Taylor, Henry Young. Debrah Taylor, late widow of Cornelious Hand, now wife of Jeremiah Hand debts paid to Jacob Garrison Jude Clarkson, William Hand, Saml. Richardson inv. Includes negro boy


1729 July 4 Church, Christopher of Phila. (later Cape May) saddler (wife Alice Hand) Church, (will written 1710) acct. of estate Alice Church, now wife of John Flowers children: Rode (Roda), Nathan, Silas, Patience, Susannah

1729 Nov 28 Osborne, Belaziel of C. M. C. brother Ananias, sole exc. and all my lands forever, movables to sister Ruth, brother Nathan

1729 Dec 29 Savage, James, of C. M. C sons John & Joseph both undr age, the first given into the care of Benj. Hand the other of Henry Stites, and both made exc. Legacy to Ruth, wife of Benj. Hand

1730 ? Swain, Zebulon yeoman of Cape May, brother Henry Stites, exc. Of the “worldly” estate and guardian of son Zebulon whom he is “to larn read rite & sifer” to the rule of three, the daughter to be placed in charge of mother Hanah Stites

1730 Apr 14 Crandol, John blacksmith fellow bondsmen: William Johnson with Elizabeth Crandol

1730 Holding, Jane of C. M. C. inv. Will. Johnson, George Taylor bond: Joseph Holden of Cape May
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Witnesses/Other Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec 31</td>
<td>Heuett, Joseph</td>
<td>of Cape May Co. (before 1730) adm. William Seagrave</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 8</td>
<td>Crafford, Joshua</td>
<td>of C. M. C. &quot;I give my house &amp; land unto my brother Benj. Crafford's son Eleser &quot;. wtn. John Flower, Jonathan Fourman, Thomas Hand. inv. Richd. Downes, Elisha Hand</td>
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<td>April 29</td>
<td>Corson, Peter</td>
<td>Upper C. M. C. yeoman adm. Deborah Corson spinster, inv includes bonds of Peter Corson Jr. &amp; Christian Corson</td>
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<td>Sept 6</td>
<td>Stites, Benj.</td>
<td>of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Elizabeth) sons: George, Benj., Jonathan. Fishing Creek, except two apple trees and land under them, which I have given to my two youngest sons, also debt due to me from Shamgar Hand. Daughters Deborah Paig and Martha. Exec. wife and George Stites</td>
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<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>Spicer, Jacob</td>
<td>of C. M. C. yeoman including fishery on my plantation in Gloucester (wife Sarah) heirs: son Jacob &amp; brother Thomas Spicer, all lands in West Jersey Co. excs. wife Sarah &amp; son Jacob</td>
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<td>Dec 1</td>
<td>Eldredge, Elisha</td>
<td>of C. M. C.brother Ezekiel sole exc. and whole estate, he to pay legacies to brothers Samuel, William, John, Jacob, and mother, sisters Lydia Eldredge, Bethia Parsons, Sarah Stites</td>
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<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>Richardson, Samuel</td>
<td>of C. M. C. (wife Elizabeth) to my brother Benj. Richardson all my lands, but if my wife be now with child, and it comes to age, then said land to belong to the child. brothers John, Jacob Richardson, exc. wife &amp; brother Ben</td>
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<td>Dec 11</td>
<td>Smith, Abigail</td>
<td>of C. M. C. widow of Thomas Smith int. adm. Aaron Leaming, witness Samuel Bustil, Robert Davis. &quot; Ebenezer Johnson, Phebe Johnson, &amp; Abigail Johnson, children of the said deceased by her former husband, Samuel Johnson, have renounced their right in favor of Aaron Leaming</td>
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<td>Mar 3</td>
<td>Parsons, John, Jr.</td>
<td>of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Bethia) wife personal estate, brother Robert Parsons real estate provided he pay my daughter Sarah Parsons 150 pounds upon her marriage day</td>
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<td>Jan 4</td>
<td>Edwards, William</td>
<td>of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Anne) sole exc. and to have real and personal estate</td>
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<td>May 16</td>
<td>Mackey, John</td>
<td>of C. M. C. int. adm. James Hathorn, fellow bondsmen William Johnson, both of C. M. wtn.: Humphrey Hughes, Samuel Swaine, Jacob Spicer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 21</td>
<td>Swaine, Lemuel</td>
<td>of C. M. C. whaleman (wife Jerusha) sons: Samuel, Reuben, daughters: Abigail, Elizabeth, Marcy, Lydia, Phebe</td>
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<td>Jul 17</td>
<td>Buck, Joseph</td>
<td>(wife Lydia sole exc) brothers Thomas &amp; John Buck</td>
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<td>Jan 10</td>
<td>Simkins, Ruth</td>
<td>of C. M. C. &quot;By these presents do cut off all former wills or deeds and appoint my son, William Simkins, sole executor &amp; heir to all my moveable estate (8 pounds)</td>
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<td>Dec 12</td>
<td>Corson, Jacob</td>
<td>Of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Amy) sons: Jacob, Peter, Jeremiah Corson. daugh.: Rachel, Amy, Martha, (minors) exc. wife Amy, son Jacob. wtn. John Willets, Joseph Badcock, Rich. Hoe Letters granted to Naomi Corson widow</td>
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<td>Apr 30</td>
<td>Townsend, Richard</td>
<td>of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Millicent) sons: John, Richard, Isaac, Silvanus, Jacob, Samuel, Daniel, daughters: Hannah Gregory, Millicent Townsend. (Grist mill to be shared by first four sons mentioned)</td>
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<td>Feb 9</td>
<td>Richardson, Benj.</td>
<td>of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Elizabeth) to have use of all my lands until my son Samuel will be 21, she to bring up &amp; maintain my two children unless she marries before that time, then I desire my brother Jacob Richardson, to take immediately my lands and to have use of my other estate, which is</td>
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hereafter given to my children. son Samuel to have all lands I live on, and to pay 20 pounds to his brother John, when of age

1738 Aug 11  Taylor, George of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Lydia) children: William, George, John, Matthias, Daniel, Lydia all underage) exc. wife and son William (now very ill) plantations to William and George

1739 Feb 11  Pratt, Jonathan of C. M. C. int.( inv. 11 pounds ) adm. Benj. Laughton [ Layton ] of Cape May

1739 Oct 30  Eldredge, Ezekial of C. M. C. Intestate administration granted to widow Elizabeth and son Ezekial

1740 Mar 31  Corson, John of C. M. C. int. (Susannah Corson adm.) wttn. Henry Young, John Willets

1740 July 9  Crowell, Barnabas of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Abigail) son Barnabas, all my lands, daughter Martha Havens, rest to my six children: Barnabas, Elisha, Daniel Crowell, Marey, Lydia, Sarah Crowell wttn: Nathaniel Hand, Joanna Hand, Abiah Ross

1740 Sept 1  Stites Jr., Henry of C. M. C. cousin Zibulon Swaine, son of Zebulon Swaine, late of Cape May deceased, sole executor and to have all my estate, real & personal inv. of " Henry Stites Esq. " includes livestock and whaleboat

1740 Nov 1  Church, Jeremiah of C. M. C. yeoman (Rebecca Church adm) bondsman Elisha Hand, John Stites

1741 July 4  Downs, William of C. M. C. mariner uncle Richard Downs Esq. of Cape May allreal and personal estate but if my brother should come to this country, my will is that he should have and enjoy my house and land wttn. Robert Edmunds, Abigail Dagg Fras. Taylor inv. includes 1/4 of a skooner (49 pounds) appr. John Dagg, Francis Taylor

1742 Oct 16  Parsons, Elizabeth of C. M. C. daughters: Elizabeth Hand, Charity Mulford, Abigail Stites, and granddaughter Mary Edwards to have my estate equally. Sons Jonathan Foreman & Robert Parsons to have 10 shillings apiece. son (in-law) Joshua Stites, sole executor

1743-44  Smith Sr., William of C. M. C. yeoman sons: John, William, "I have given each a plantation before", Richard, Jonathan, Daniel, Jeremiah, daughter: Elizabeth, wife of Samuel Foster. inv. includes negro man

1743 June 20  Stites, John of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Prisilla) land to cousin, Abisha Stites, son of Richard Stites of Cape May deceased, when twenty, & wife & daughter Margrit when twenty

1743 Oct 15  Learning Sr., Aaron of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Lydia) land throughout C. M. C] including saw mill at Manantico at Prince Maurice's River, exc. my three children: Aaron Jr., Jeremiah, Elizabeth, [not his wife Lydia Parsons Shaw Leaming who had children from her first husband William Shaw as well] inv. 1174 pounds, includes 12 negroes, 192 cattle, law & medical books etc.

1743 Dec 3  Camp, John of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Abigail) sons: Benj., Obidiah, Joshua, William daughters: Sarah & Mary exc. wife & John Shaw wttn. Elisha Hand, Robert Edmonds, Marah Edmonds

1744 Apr 1  Shaw, Benjamin of C. M. C. (wife Margatt) sons: Benj., Obidiah, Joshua, William daughters: Sarah & Mary exc. wife & John Shaw wttn. Elisha Hand, Robert Edmonds, Marah Edmonds

1745 May 22  Page, James of C. M. C. int (adm. Mary Page) fellow bondsman, Joseph Page, Elisha Hand, all of said county wttn; John Eldredge, James Whildin

1745 May 24  Cresse, John of C. M. C. int. (Priscilla Cresse adm) fellow bondsman Jeremiah Hand, wttn. Robert Cresse, Nathl. Jenkins Jr

1746 Apr 20  Garlick (Sr.), Joshua of C. M. C. yeoman (wife Lucy), "to have wool & leather at Elisha Hands's if she lives in Cape May" son John, grandson Richard Stites, (son of dau. Abigail Stites) daughters Abigail Stites, Phebe Smith, Rebecca Johnston (had children) & grandson Abenor Church (under age) mentions cattle at Cohansey, exec. daughter Abigail

1746 May 21  Stites, Zeruiah of C. M. C. int. adm. Richard Stites, fellow bondsman Elisha Hand

1746 May 21  Stites, Joshua of C. M. C. int. adm. Abigail Stites fellow bondsman Henry Stites wttn. Cornelius Schillinks

1746 July 31  Crawford, Benj. of C. M. C. yeoman son Richard, 100 acre plantation where I live, also 40 acres adjoining Chris. Lupton, [ Richard to bring up daughter Elizabeth until 18 ] legacies to son Eliezer, daughters Rachel, Sarah, Mary, Priscilla, Judith, Elizabeth exc. son Richard & Elisha Hand

1747 Mar 16  Whilden, Joseph of CMC yeoman (wife Abigail) land to sons Matthew & James to David, cedar swamp & also price of my negro man "Asse" and a negro woman. Legacees daughters Hannah, Rachel, Lois and my deceased daughter Mercy's children Ellis and Judith (Hughes) grandson Memuken Hughes, Willman and Isecar Crafford. Exec. James Whilden Richard Crafford. Inv. Includes3 slaves (100 pounds) appr. Thomas Hand Elisha Hand

1747 Mar 28  Downs, Richard of C. M. C. (wife Elizabeth) unto Downs Edmonds, grandson, all lands & tenements
forever, he pay 20 pounds to his brother Richard Edmunds, legacies to daughter Mary Edmons and the rest to grandchildren, Robert Edmons children and Randal Hute’s (Hewitt) children that he had by his first wife Hannah Downs exec. Cresse Elisha Hand Nathaniel Foster, Esq. Witn. Joshia Benj. Shaw. Obed. Shaw.

Blue shading identifies deaths during the year 1714 when over 40 individuals (out of 200-400) died from a plague