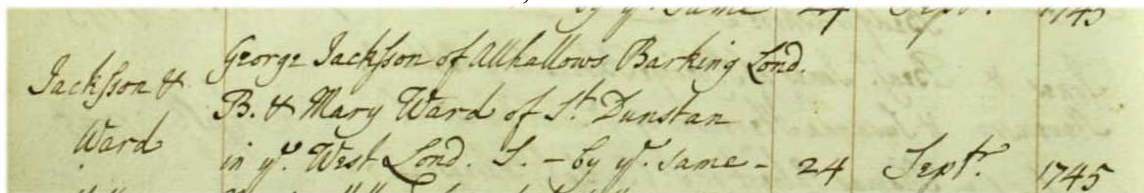


Sir George Duckett, Bart (formerly Sir George Jackson, Bart)

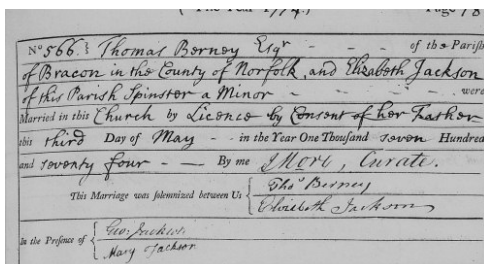


Sir George Duckett (formerly Jackson), first baronet, naval administrator and judge, was born 24 October 1725, probably in Yorkshire. He was the third but oldest surviving son of George Jackson (1687/8–1758) of Hill House, Richmond, Yorkshire, and Hannah, daughter of William Ward of Guisborough, Yorkshire. George entered the Navy Office as clerk to the clerk of the acts in 1743. In 1755 he became chief clerk to the clerk of the acts and from 1758 to 1766 was assistant clerk of the acts. On the recommendation of Prime Minister William Pitt, he was then transferred to the Admiralty as second secretary to the board and first clerk of the marine department. In 1768 he was made judge advocate of the fleet, a position he held until his death. He also served as a Member of Parliament for Weymouth and Melcombe Regis (1786–1788), and Colchester. He gained the Colchester seat with government support in 1788 and though unseated on petition, regained the seat at the 1790 election and held it until the 1796 election.

At the age of 19, he married his cousin Mary Ward (born c 1725) on 24th September 1745 at St Benets Paul's Wharf London,



daughter and heir of his maternal uncle, William Ward of Gisborough and they had three daughters. The first, Mary Jackson married General Richard Matthews and after his death in 1783, Richard Church, probably in India.



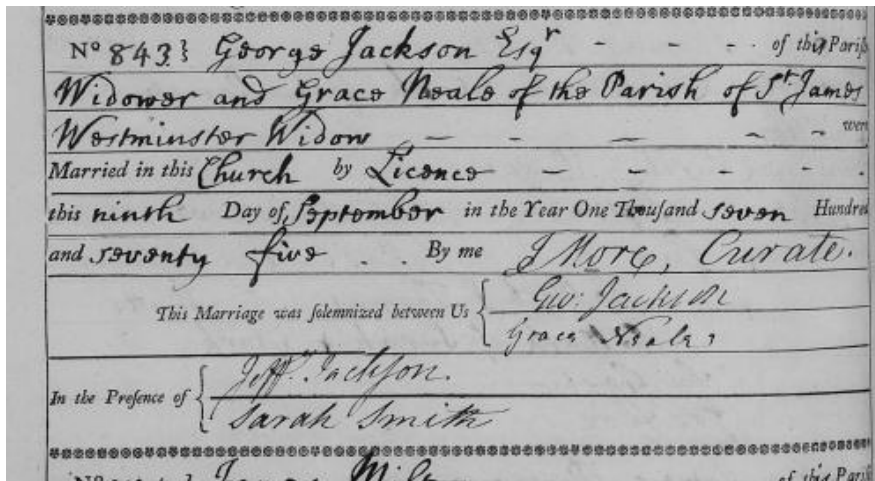
The second daughter was Catherine Jackson. She married Francis Longe of Spixworth Park, Norfolk at St Margaret's Westminster in 1772.

The third, Elizabeth Jackson, was baptised at St Olave, Hart Street London on 3rd May 1754 She

married Thomas Berney of Norfolk at St Margarets Westminster on 3rd May 1774. She had a daughter Elizabeth mentioned in Sir George's will as "Miss Berney"

(Mary Jackson died in 1754 and was buried at Islington.) A Mary Jackson was buried at St Margaret Pattens, Rood Lane London (near St Olave's) on 6th July 1754

Secondly, at age 49, he married Grace Neale on 9th September 1775 at St Margarets, Westminster, widow of Robert Neale of Shaw House Wilts, a daughter (bap 3.3.1746) of Gwyn Goldstone of Goldstone, Shropshire.



They had a son, George, born 17.7. 1777 and a daughter Esther baptised on 17.12.1779 at St Margarets Westminster, who died in 1798.

On 21st June 1791 Jackson (now 66 years) was created a baronet, Sir George Jackson of Hartham House.

On 3rd February 1797, aged 72, he inherited the Hartham estate of his second wife's maternal uncle, Thomas Duckett, at Corsham, Wiltshire. However, under the terms of the eccentric uncle's will (dated 27th February 1764), Sir George Jackson Bart had to assume the name and Arms of that family by royal licence in order to secure the inheritance. He became Sir George Duckett of Hartham House Bart.

His wife Grace died at 15 Upper Grosvenor Street on 2 March 1798 and was buried in Trinity Church South Audley St. He died at the same address on 15 December 1822 in his 98th year and was buried at Bishops Stortford

George Jackson was held in such high regard by all associated with the Navigation that the Lock Keepers' cottages proudly displayed a badge or door plaque bearing his initials. In Bishop's Stortford, both his surnames are remembered: first in Duckett's Wharf, a large housing and office development in (lower) South Street that is built partly on the original riverside wharf of the same name, and in the town's Jackson Square shopping

centre. His name is also perpetuated on the other side of the world: Cape Jackson in New Zealand and Port Jackson in New South Wales, Australia – better known as Sydney harbour. Both were named in his honour by his protégé, Captain James Cook, who set sail in the Endeavour in 1768 to chart the Southern Seas.

Cook's father was an agricultural labourer from Marton, North Yorkshire, and had been a dependant of the Jackson family. James became a stable-boy in George Jackson's sister's household at Ayton, Yorkshire. It was there that the influential Jackson gave the boy every encouragement to join the Royal Navy, which he did in 1743, and as we now know rose rapidly through the ranks to become one of our most famous sea captains and explorers.

Sir George built and owned Wharf House in the Causeway but seldom stayed there, preferring instead his other homes in Roydon and London. Despite this, Bishop's Stortford meant a great deal to him and his greatest wish was to be buried in St Michael's churchyard. When he died at his London Home in Upper Grosvenor Street in 1822, aged 97, (he was said to be the oldest householder in London) that wish was fulfilled. His epitaph there simply reads: 'Sir George Duckett Bart, Died 15th December 1822, Aged 97'.

Such was the gratitude of the town for what Sir George did, he has a memorial dedicated to him in St Michael's church.

This is the last Will and Testament of me Sir

George Duckett of Upper Grosvenor Street in the County of Middlesex
Baronet I give and bequeath to my grandson Thomas French Berney Esquire
the sum of Six thousand pounds of lawful money of Great Britain To my
Daughter Catherine Longe Widow the sum of five hundred pounds of like
lawful money To my Daughter Elizabeth Berney Widow the sum of five
hundred pounds of like lawful money and to my granddaughter Miss Berney
the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds of like lawful money And I direct that
the said legacies shall be paid out of my personal estate within six calendar
months next after my decease and I give devise and bequeath unto my son
George Duckett Esquire all my Manors messuages lands tenements and
hereditaments and all and singular other my estates and effects both real
and personal To hold unto my said son George Duckett his heirs executors
administrators and assigns respectively according to the tenure and nature
of the same estates And I hereby nominate and appoint my said son George
Duckett sole Executor of this my Will And hereby revoking all former and
other Wills by me at any time heretofore made. I declare this to be my last
Will and Testament In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and
seal this twentieth day of October in the year of our Lord One thousand eight
hundred and twenty (*sig:*) Geo Duckett The above writing having been first
distinctly read over to the said Sir George Duckett the testator in our presence
was signed sealed published and declared by him as and for his last Will
and Testament in the presence of us who all of us in his presence and in
the presence of each other have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses
thereto (*sigs:*) Geo Bramwell ~ Thos Farmer ~ Geo Dean McLeod 3 Paper Buildings

Inner Temple

Proved at London 31st December 1822 before the Worshipful John
Dewberry Dr of Laws & Surr by the Oath of Sir ~~John~~ George Duckett Bart
his Son the sole Executor to whom Admon was granted being first sworn to Admr.