

married before

A letter from John and Mary Bemister

Corfe Mullen, Sept. 25, 1826

Edward -

This is the Last Opportunity of hearing from us this year. I hope this will find you and all the family in good health as it leaves us at this present time. We had a very dry summr. The corn and hay crops are very bad. The Oat Crop has Scarce Oats enough to Sow the Land again. I hope that you have made a good voyage this year in the Fishing Trade. Oil is selling at a better price here at present. I Have Sent a Large Hamper to you and William Containing of Nuts, Kidney Beans, and Land Hardy Beans, 3 Bottles of Catsup and Apples and under Grown Onions to be parted between you Both. I hope it will all come safe to hand.

Pray give our Love to all the family and with all the Good Wishes of Health and Happiness From your Dutiful Father and Mother.

John and Mary Bemister

lived on Willis land

Bemister Lands in Corfe Mullen

On 2 Mar 1795 Mary Willis and John Bemister took anew a Tenement Customary for this term of Mary's life in the court roll 10 Mar 1767, formerly in the tenure of Richard Wateridgr. The renewal was for the term of her life and also for the lives of William Willis Bemister (age 6) and John Ridout Bemister (age 9) "and the life of the longest liver of them successively according to the Custom of the Manor...by the yearly Rent of Nine Shillings and Sixpence and for an Heriot whe it shall happen the Coat good.And by all other Burdens Works Suits Services and Customs therfore formerly done...(and they gave) to the Lord for a time Sixty-three pounds" [copy of court roll dated 3 Mar 1795 in possession of Lorraine Proudfoot, St. John's]

They Lived by the Sea by M. Elizabeth Squires, p. 24

John and Mary made their home at Corfe Mullen, Dorsetshire, where John was a gentleman farmer. Mary held a life interest in property at Lamb's Green in the Parish of Corfe Mullen. The tenement customary, dated 1767 when Mary was aged eighteen years, was renewed in 1795 from the Lord of the Manor's steward. John Ridout, and extended the life interest to include her two sons, John Ridout Bamister and William Willis Bemister.

Bemisters of Carbonear Family Reunion, 1999

John and Mary seem to have lived in Corfe Mullen on one of several pieces of land that Mary had rights to through inheritance. According to *Family Names of Newfoundland* by E.R. Seary, John Bemister was described as follows: "...probably the first Bemister to winter in Newfoundland, started the family which survived there until recently, and was buried at Corfe Mullen." The source was MUN Folklore--which was ultimately traced down to a student essay. We know of no family tradition to suggest that John Bemister was anywhere near Newfoundland or in any sense a seafaring man. The strongest evidence that he was not, apart from Mary's land that need to be worked, was the letter that John and Mary wrote to Edward in Sep 1862 with a "hamper" of food - in effect a 'care package' from dutiful parents. The letter is that of a gentleman farmer, concerned with the effect of the dry summer on crops and hardly that of a seaman or fisherman who would be concerned with storms and tides and fish.

Family Names of the Island of Newfoundland, E.R. Seary, Midwest Genealogical, Bemister -- Family traditions John Bemister (1747-1832), probably the first Bemister to winter in Carbonear, started the family which survived there until recently, and was buried at Corfe Mullen (Dorset); William Willis of Harbour Grace 1817; Edward,

planter of Freshwater (Carbonear) 1823; Reuben, of New Perlican
1859.