

The Dunning–Carruthers Lineage

Scottish Origins, Colonial Identity, and the Separation of the Dunning and Downing Families

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Y-DNA Lineage: I-BY189111 → I-FT191896 → I-FT192732

Abstract. *This study establishes the paternal descent of Theophilus Dunning (b. Edinburgh, 15 October 1618) from the Carruthers of Holmains, Dumfriesshire, through a documented non-paternal event in which his biological Carruthers lineage was absorbed into the Dunning household of Edinburgh tailor Johnne Dunning. The argument rests on three independent and mutually reinforcing evidentiary pillars: (1) primary Scottish records tracing a continuous chain from George Carruthers, 6th Laird of Holmains, through his younger son James and James's natural son, to the Edinburgh tailor community where Theophilus was born; (2) colonial Massachusetts records documenting three consecutive generations of Dunning family involvement in the leather and textile trades, together with a consistent Presbyterian religious identity that marks this family as distinctly Scottish in the Congregationalist landscape of the Bay Colony; and (3) Y-DNA evidence placing male-line descendants of Theophilus — drawn from all three branches of his grandson Benjamin Sr.'s line — on the same specific Holmains branch, haplogroup I-FT191896, as Gary John Carruthers FSAScot, a documented armiger of Clan Carruthers. These three lines of evidence converge to confirm that the Dunnings of colonial New England carried Carruthers blood under an adopted surname. This study also definitively separates Theophilus Dunning from two distinct Theophilus Downing individuals — one a son of Emanuel and Lucy (Winthrop) Downing of Salem, the other a fisherman of Marblehead — whose records have been incorrectly merged with the Dunning line for generations.*

I. The Problem: A Century of Genealogical Confusion

For well over a century, published genealogies, compiled databases, and user-submitted family trees have tangled three entirely separate colonial-era individuals into a single composite figure. The confusion centres on the name Theophilus — a distinctive biblical name that nonetheless appears in three distinct Massachusetts households within the span of a few years. The consequences have been significant: a Scottish Presbyterian artisan family has been misidentified as English Puritans, a fisherman's wife has been wrongly placed in the Dunning tree, and fabricated information has been laundered into mainstream genealogical databases.

This study untangles the confusion systematically, working from primary records outward to genetic evidence. The three Theophiluses are:

Feature	Theophilus Downing son of Emanuel and Lucy Winthrop	Theophilus Downing The Fisherman	Theophilus Dunning Our Subject for this Study
Baptism / Arrival	13 Jan 1642, Salem	Land grant 1642, Marblehead	Pound Keeper, Boston 1644 ¹
Parent(s) Listed	"Sister Downing" (Lucy Winthrop)	Elin (Ellen) Downing	Not in Salem church records
Church	First Church of Salem (Congregationalist)	Congregationalist (Marblehead)	Presbyterian (Boston)
Occupation	Son of wealthy lawyer/politician	Fisherman	Pound Keeper; leather trade
Known Child	No further record	Benjamin Downing, baptized 17 Nov 1646	Benjamin Dunning, b. 17 Jan 1647
Y-DNA	R1b (English)	R1b (English)	I-Y6851 (Carruthers/Scottish)
Location	Salem	Marblehead	Boston / Salem

¹ *Salem Town Records, Vol. 1 (1634–1659), Salem Public Library Archives. Record available for independent verification.*

Each of these men left a distinct documentary trail. The Dunning line — our subject — is the one most frequently misrepresented, and the one for which the strongest combined evidence now exists.

How the Errors Entered the Record

Two specific mechanisms created the confusion that propagated through the 20th-century genealogical literature:

The false arrival date. The Founders and Patriots of America Index records Theophilus Dunning as arriving in Massachusetts on 13 March 1642. A review of primary documents reveals that this date is the baptism date of a child recorded as “*Theophilus s. Sister Downing*” in the First Church of Salem — almost certainly Theophilus Downing, son of Emanuel and Lucy (Winthrop) Downing, baptized during his father’s absence in England. The transcription error transformed a Congregationalist infant’s baptism into an adult man’s arrival date, and swapped Downing for Dunning in the process.

The Elin/Ellen misattribution. Salem Vital Records list a Benjamin baptized 17 November 1646 to *Ellen Downing* in Marblehead — a child of Theophilus Downing the fisherman and his wife Elin. Essex County court records from 1647 include a warrant for the arrest of “Elin, wife of Theophilus Downing” — placing this woman firmly in the fisherman’s household. Despite this, multiple published genealogies inserted Elin into the Dunning family tree. The warrant is reproduced below.

Nuncupative will of Richard Woodman of Lin, deceased, proved. This will was printed in *The Antiquarian*, volume III., page 72. Joseph Redknapp swore to the inventory.

Thomas Abree of Salem to have $\frac{1}{4}$ part of house, etc., sometime of the widow Wathen, deceased, for the use of Ezekiel Wathen, who is committed to him.

Rafe flogge presented for speaking falsely and dealing corruptly in his place (witnesses: Jacob Barney, Elias Stileman, sr., Henry Hericke and Natha: Pitman); also, for swearing falsely that Mr. Norrice tore a paper out of Mr. Gutch’s book and indignantly threw it into the fire; etc. (witnesses: Rob: Gutch and his wife). Acknowledged to Mr. Norrice before Jo: Gednye.

Salem presented for want of a staff for the constable.

Nicolas Penion* presented for beating his wife. Witnesses: Ezekiel Gilbert and Lewis Evans.

Benjamin Hearndale* presented for beating his wife. Witnesses: Ezekiel Gilbert and Henry Collens.

Robert Blood* presented for abusing William Knight, who had impounded his cattle (witnesses: Isaac How and Sara Hall), and for abusing Henry Rodes, Hugh Burt, jr., and Henry Rodes.

Mathew Boomer*, servant to Mr. Edmond Nedum, presented for striking at his master with a pitchfork. Witnesses: John Blood and Robert Blood.

Nicolas Penion* presented for common swearing. Witnesses: John Jacksell and John Hardman.

John Blood* presented for uttering mutinous words in a public place, tending to a disturbance of the peace.

Lynn presented for want of a staff for the constable.

Gloucester presented for want of a pair of stocks, pound, and staff for the constable.

Manchester presented for want of a staff for the constable.

*Lynn presentments.

The constable of Wenham presented for sending a prisoner from Wenham to Salem on the Lord’s day.

Wenham presented for neglecting to send a juror.

Warrant to arrest wife of Mathew Nixon, wife of William James, and Elin, wife of Theophilus Downing, 13:6:1647. Served by Henry Skerry, constable of Salem.

Christopher Aveye and Richard Window of Gloucester presented for living from their wives. Witnesses: William Vinson (also, Vincent) and Andrew Lister (also, Lester). R. W. was acquitted.

Richard Window of Gloucester was fined for cursing, saying, “There are the brethren, the Devil scald them.” [Witnesses: Hewgh Roberts, Andrew Lester and Will: Sariant.—*Files.*]

George Tucker of Marblehead fined for swearing, being drunk, and disguised with drink at Marblehead. [Witnesses: Andrew Lester and William Sariant.—*Files.*]

Mathew Coe, Morris Somes, John Wakely and David Wheeler presented for breaking the Sabbath, hunting and killing a raccoon in the time of the public exercise. M. S. and J. W. fined; the others did not appear. [Witnesses: Andrew Lester and Tho: Larckin.—*Files.*]

Thomas Bowin (also, Bowing) of Marblehead fined for sailing from Gloucester harbor on the Lord’s day, when the people were going to the morning exercise, having hay in his boat. [Witnesses: Will Vincent and — Studley.—*Files.*]

Nicholas Penyon (also, Pynyon), Nicholas Russell, John Pedricke, John Hardman (also, Heardman), Quinton Pray of Lin, Richard Sticke and Richard Praye were fined [and the wife of Nicholas Pynnyon was presented.—*Files.*] for swearing. [Witnesses: Joseph Gincks and John Chaksell.—*Files.*]

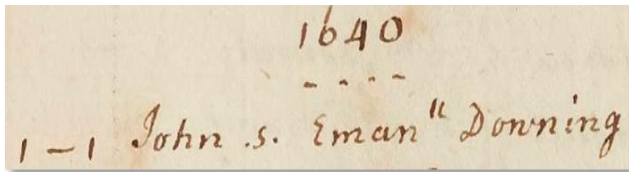
Nicholas Penyon (also, Pynyon) presented for absence from meeting four Lord’s days together, spending his time drinking and profanely. His wife was bound to good behavior, but having broken her bond is to be severely whipped.

The Essex Antiquarian, p. 28. The boxed entry reads: “Warrant to arrest wife of Mathew Nixon, wife of William James, and Elin, wife of Theophilus Downing, 13:6:1647. Served by Henry Skerry, constable of Salem.” This record places Elin exclusively in the fisherman’s household.

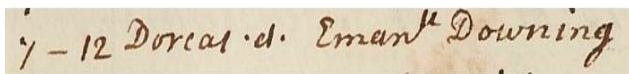
Frederick Virkus's Abridged Compendium of American Genealogy further compounded matters by labeling Theophilus Dunning as 'The Fisherman' — a title belonging exclusively to Theophilus Downing of Marblehead, documented in Marblehead town records, the Essex Registry of Deeds (Book 7, Leaf 68), and the land grants of 1642 and 1685.

The First Church of Salem Records: What They Actually Show

The original manuscript, reproduced below, makes the shift visible to the naked eye:



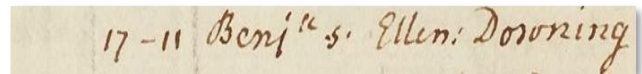
1640
1 - 1 John s. Eman" Downing



7 - 12 Dorcas d. Eman" Downing

Theophilus s. Sister Downing

8. Hannah d. Sister Downing



17 - 11 Benj" s. Ellen Downing

- John s. Eman" Downing — 1 Jan 1640
- Dorcas d. Eman" Downing — 7 Dec 1640
- Theophilus s. Sister Downing — 13 Jan 1641/2
- Hannah d. Sister Downing — 8 Jul 1644
- Benj" s. Ellen Downing — 17 Nov 1646

The shift from 'Eman" Downing' to 'Sister Downing' is the critical observation. Emanuel Downing is documented as traveling to England in early 1642 and again in 1644, aligning precisely with those two baptisms recorded under his wife's church designation.

First Church of Salem, Church Record Book #1 (Essex Institute Manuscript). Left panel: 1640 entries recorded under 'Eman" Downing' (Emanuel). Right panel: Theophilus and Hannah recorded under 'Sister Downing' — Lucy Winthrop Downing acting as presenting parent during Emanuel's absences in 1642 and 1644 — and Benjamin recorded under 'Ellen Downing,' a distinct maternal figure in a separate Marblehead household. The shift in designation is visible in the original hand. Source: Congregational Library & Archives.

<https://congregationallibrary.quartexcollections.com/Documents/Detail/church-records-1629-1843-first-church-in-salem-mass./56071?item=56214>

'Sister Downing' is Lucy Winthrop Downing acting as presenting parent in her husband's absence. The 19th-century transcribed Vital Records reduced this to a blank dash, losing the attribution entirely and opening the door to misidentification. Benjamin Downing (17 Nov 1646) stands clearly apart: his record names Ellen Downing and his baptism took place in Marblehead. He belongs to the fisherman's family. Theophilus Dunning appears in none of these Salem records — because he was Presbyterian, not Congregationalist.

II. The Scottish Record: Establishing the Carruthers Connection

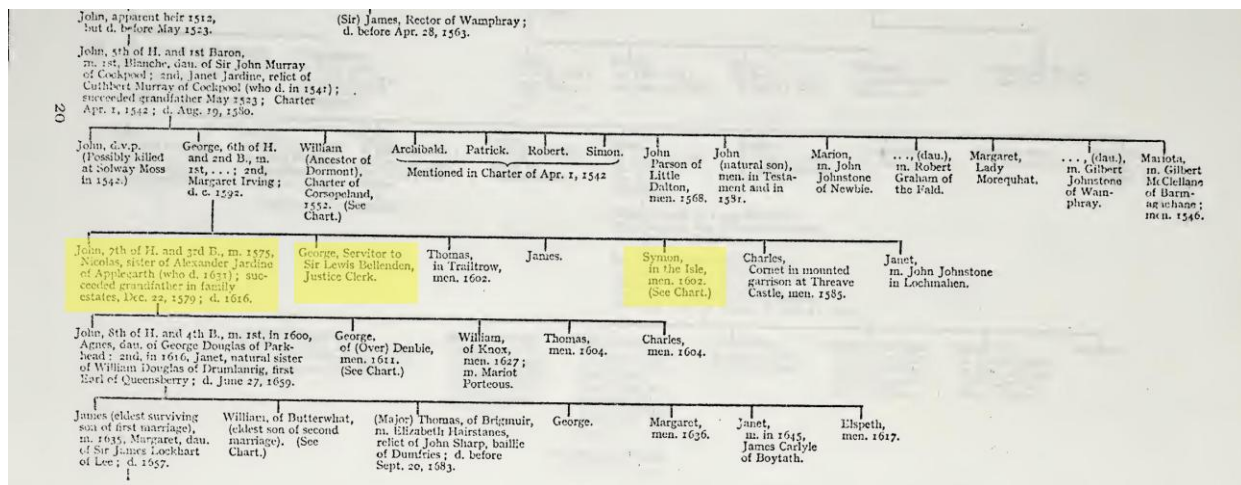
The case for Carruthers descent begins in Dumfriesshire and Edinburgh, where a chain of primary records — family succession documents, Edinburgh apprenticeship rolls, and the Edinburgh Old Parish Register — places the relevant individuals in the same occupational and social world at precisely the right times.

George Carruthers, 6th Laird and 2nd Baron of Holmains

George Carruthers succeeded his brother following the Battle of Solway Moss (1542) and is documented continuously in Dumfriesshire charters, sasines, and legal instruments until his death before 22 May 1592. The Records of the Carruthers Family record his seven children:

- John — heir, 7th Laird
- George — servitor to Sir Lewis Bellenden, Justice Clerk
- Thomas — in Trailltrow
- Symon — of Isle
- Charles — cornet at Threave Castle
- Janet — wife of John Johnston of Lochmaben
- **James — younger son (the ancestor in the present lineage)**

Under Scots primogeniture, James as the youngest documented son received no land and no office. Non-inheriting younger sons of landed families routinely migrated to Edinburgh’s urban trades or entered guild apprenticeships. The documentary trail of James follows exactly this path. The Holmains family chart from the Records of the Carruthers Family is reproduced below, showing James among the children of the 6th Laird:



Records of the Carruthers Family — Holmains genealogical chart. The row showing George, 6th of H. and his children includes James (the ancestor in the present lineage) alongside John (7th Laird), George (servitor), Thomas, Symon, Charles, and Janet.

James Carruthers, Younger Son of George

The *Records of the Carruthers Family* document James as a younger son of George, 6th Laird, active in the late 16th century. One complication arises from a contemporary James Carruthers appearing in Glasgow records as a merchant-burgess (1589–90), identified as husband of Elizabeth (Bessie) Arneil and father of Friar James Carruthers (recorded 1566). This Glasgow family is self-contained, geographically separate from Edinburgh’s tailor community, and too early in generation to be the father named in the 1600 apprenticeship record. It is fully excluded from the present lineage. James, younger son of George of Holmains, stands as the sole documented Carruthers of the correct generation and region consistent with the Edinburgh records that follow.

The 1600 Edinburgh Apprenticeship Record

The Register of Edinburgh Apprentices, 15 April 1600, contains the following entry:

“Carruderis, James, son natural to James C., with John Carruderis, tailor — 15 Apr. 1600”

Carruderis, James, son natural to James C., with John Carruderis, tailor
15 Apr. 1600

Register of Edinburgh Apprentices, 15 April 1600. “Carruderis, James, son natural to James C., with John Carruderis, tailor.” National Records of Scotland.

‘Natural son’ in Scots legal usage denotes an illegitimate child — born outside formal marriage but acknowledged. A boy apprenticed at the customary age of 14–16 in 1600 would have been born approximately 1584–1586, making him 32–34 at the time of Theophilus’s birth in 1618 — well within normal fathering age. The record also establishes a functioning Carruthers presence within Edinburgh’s tailoring trade at the same time and in the same district as Johnne Dunning’s workshop.

Johnne Dunning, Burgess Tailor of Edinburgh

Johnne Dunning is documented in two independent Edinburgh records establishing him as a credible, established craftsman in the decade before Theophilus’s birth:

Register of Edinburgh Burgesses, 7 February 1598/9: “Johnne Dunning, tailor (hagbute), by right of wife Ewfan Mathewsoun, dr. of umq. Wm. Mathewsoun, B.” Confirms Dunning as a fully admitted burges of Edinburgh, with militia service (hagbute) indicating civic standing.

1406-1700]	Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses.	167
	Dunlop, Mr. Wm., B. and G., principall of the Colledge of Glasgow, gratis (husband of Sarah Carstairs, sister of Princpal Wm. Carstairs, “Cardinal Carstairs” (see the tomb in Greyfriars’ Churchyard)	5 Apr. 1605
	Dunluce, Randall, Viscount. B. and G., (C.I. Banquet)	23 June 1633
	Dunnet, Andw., B. and G., servitor to Mr. Robt. Stewart, adv. (in B. reg. 15 Dec. 1695; “wryter”)	13 Dec. 1695
	„ George, B. and G., servitor to Mr. Alexr. Swenton of Mersington, gratis	5 July 1694
	Dunning (Dinning, Dying), Alexr., B., coppersmith (hagbute), as p. to Patk. Meyne, cooper, B. (p. 26 June 1573)	9 Aug. 1603
	„ David, B., saidler, be r. of w. Cristiane, dr. to Wm. Makbaxter, B.	19 Dec. 1572
	„ David, G., saidler, B., before the decret arbitral	19 Sept. 1592
	„ James, B., servitor to Sir Alexr. Gibsone. (Margin—“Vile 22 Marche 1654,” where the entry appears)	14 Dec. 1653
	„ Johnne, B., tailyor (hagbute), by r. of w. Ewfan, dr. of umq. Wm. Mathewsoun, B.	7 Feb. 1598-9
	Duns, Thomas, B., servitor to my Lord Yester (Chas. I.)	30 Aug. 1641
	Dunster, Charles, B. and G., servitor to Lt.-Genl. Wm. Drumond	28 Nov. 1683
	Dunsyre (Dunsyre), Alexr., B. and G., gentleman, “oschear (usher), daylie waytīr”	23 June 1633
	„ Johne, M. B., second s. of fr.	8 Dec. 1500
	„ Robt., B. and G., senior, as s. and hr. appr. of Wm. D.	18 Sept. 1487
	Dupoque, Mr. (Bimb), B. and G., one of the mīns. of the French church in this city, gratis (see La Fèvre)	9 Sept. 1696
	Durhame, Adam, B. and G., mt., s. to dec. Sir James D. of Lufnes, as p. to George Sinclare, one of the present baillies of this city, gratis, by act of C. of 13 inst.	10 Aug. 1687
	„ Adolphus, B. and G., mt., as p. to dec. Walt. Cheisty of Dalry, mt., B. and G.	22 Feb. 1689
	„ Sir Alexr., Lord Lyon of Arms, B. and G., gratis	6 Feb. 1661
	„ Alexr., B. and G., s. to Sir James Durhame of Duntarvie, gratis	31 May 1664
	„ Mr. Michael, B. and G., doctor of medicine, gratis, by act of C. of this date	15 Jan. 1555-6
	„ Mr. Wm., B. and G., master of the Greit hall (C.I. Banquet)	23 June 1633
	„ Mr. Wm., B. and G., of Omochie (C.I. Banquet), by act of C. of this date	23 June 1633
	Durie (Duirie), David, B., cuik (muskit)	23 Aug. 1643
	„ David, G., cook, B. of before	1 July 1637
	„ David, B. and G., mt., as p. to dec. Jon. Young, mt., B. and G.	27 Apr. 1681
	„ Geo., B., tailyour, gratis, by gift of Archd. Douglas, provest	4 Oct. 1561
	„ James, B. and G., mt. (corslet), by r. of w. Jonet, dr. to umq. Thomas Watsone, mt., B. and G.	7 May 1634
	„ John, B., taylor, F.C.	24 Oct. 1555
	„ Robert, B., lister (muskat), as p. to Thomas Wilsone, lister, B. (15 Feb. 1615); sd. Thos. Wilsone sovertie for extemis	9 Sept. 1629
	„ Robt., B. and G., mt., by r. of dec. fr. James D., mt., B. and G.	10 Nov. 1675
	Durlo, Robt., B. and G., gratis (D.C.S.D.H.)	12 May 1693
	Duscoull, Alisona de, G., “facta est soror gilde tanquam heres quondam Roberti Duscoull fratris sui” (was made gild sister as heir of unquhyle Robert Duscoull, her brother (P.R.). (A woman, gild sister)	17 Mar. 1406-7
	Dusse, Sextus, servitor to Mr. A. Castrò (p.v.)	22 July 1637
	Dutche, Patk., B., sklaiter, as p. to Wm. Scott, sklaiter, by act of C. of 18 Dec.	30 Dec. 1579
	Duval, Claud, B. and G., servitor to the Duke of Lennox, gratis	20 Aug. 1662
	Dykes, Jas., B. and G., servitor to the Lord Drumond	22 July 1685
	Dymers, Jon., B. and G., barbor chirurgiane to Jon. Murray of Lochmaben, one of his maj. bedchamber, gratis (James V.I. Banquet)	30 June 1617

Roll of Edinburgh Burgesses, 1406–1700 (tradeshouselibrary.org), p. 167. The Dunning entry includes “Johnne, B., tailyour (hagbute), by r. of w. Ewfan, dr. of umq. Wm. Mathewsoun, B. — 7 Feb. 1598-9” confirming his burges admission.

Edinburgh Apprentice Register, 10 December 1606: “John, son to John M., in Castlemadye, with John Dunning, tailor.” Confirms the workshop was still active and taking apprentices eight years after burgh admission, placing it directly contemporaneous with James Carruthers’s period of activity in the city.

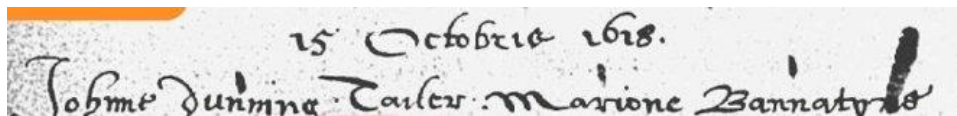
Both Johnne Dunning’s workshop and James Carruthers’s apprenticeship operated within Edinburgh’s High Street craft districts — compact, densely organized communities where guild membership, shared workshop spaces, and overlapping family networks made movement between households routine.

Marion Bannatyne and the 1618 Birth Record

The Edinburgh Old Parish Register (Parish 685/1) contains two entries dated 15 October 1618 that are central to this case:

- Marriage record: Johnne Dunning, Tailor — Marion Bannatyne (FR718), Parish 685/1, Ref 430/117
- Birth record: child born to Johnne Dunning / Marionne Bannatyne FR474 — gender U, Parish 685/1, Ref 20/231

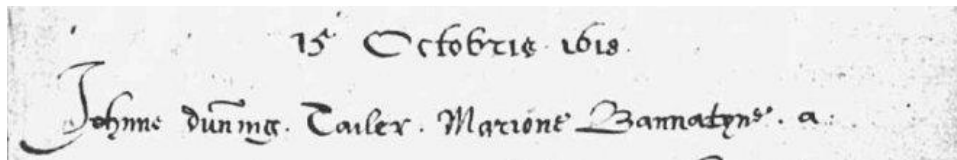
The coincidence of date — marriage and birth on the same day — is the documentary signature of a pre-marital conception. The child was born before the formal marriage was completed, confirming conception outside of wedlock. Johnne Dunning’s acknowledgment of the child on the day of marriage and the conferral of his surname constitutes the non-paternal event (NPE) at the heart of this lineage. The original manuscript records and the official NRS transcription are reproduced below:



Edinburgh OPR, Parish 685/1

Marriage record, 15 October 1618. “Johme Dunning, Tailer, Marione Bannatyne”.

National Records of Scotland.



Edinburgh OPR, Parish 685/1

Birth record, 15 October 1618. “Johme Dunmg. Tailer. Marione Bannatyn”. Same date as the marriage above.

Surname DUNNING	Surname DUNNING
Forename -----	Forename JOHNE
Parents/Other details JOHNE DUNNING/MARIONE BANNATYNE FR474 (FR474)	Spouse Name MARIONE BANNATYNE/FR718 (FR718)
Gender U	Date 15/10/1618
Birth Date 15/10/1618	Parish Number 685 / 1
Parish Number 685 / 1	Ref 430 / 117
Ref 20 / 231	Parish Edinburgh
Parish Edinburgh	

ScotlandsPeople official NRS transcription confirming the marriage and birth.

The Bannatyne family belonged to Edinburgh's merchant-burgess class, which regularly intermarried with established craftsmen. Their social world overlapped directly with that of both the Dunning workshop and the Edinburgh tailor community in which James Carruthers had been active since 1600. The naming of the child Theophilus is consistent with Scottish Reformation and Presbyterian practice, in which distinctive biblical names were sometimes assigned to children of irregular birth.

The Documented Chain: Scotland to Massachusetts

Generation	Identity & Role	Location	Date
George Carruthers	6th Laird & 2nd Baron of Holmains	Dumfriesshire	d. before 22 May 1592
James Carruthers	Younger son of George; non-inheriting under primogeniture	Edinburgh	Active c.1580–1600
James Carruthers	Natural (illegitimate) son; apprentice tailor	Edinburgh	Apprenticed 15 Apr 1600
Theophilus Dunning	Born to Marion Bannatyne; surname from Johnne Dunning's household (NPE)	Edinburgh	Born 15 Oct 1618
Benjamin Dunning Sr.	Sealer of Leather, Boston; Shoemaking, Fairfield CT	Salem / Boston / Jamaica L.I.	Born 17 Jan 1647
Michael Dunning	Cordwainer (shoemaker)	Jamaica L.I. / Orange County, NY	Born c.1685

III. Colonial Massachusetts: Three Generations of Continuity

The Scottish records establish the origin of the line. The Massachusetts records confirm its continuation — through three independent and mutually reinforcing types of evidence: civic documentation, occupational inheritance, and religious identity.

Theophilus Dunning in Salem and Boston

The earliest colonial record of Theophilus Dunning places him in Salem by March 1644, documented as Pound Keeper — a civic position requiring literacy, property ownership, and community trust. This constitutes direct documentary evidence of Theophilus as a named individual in the colonial record, independent of any Downing family association, and predates the birth of his son Benjamin (January 1647) by three years. The Massachusetts Bay Colony formally codified the office of Sealer of Leather in 1646, the year before Benjamin’s birth.

Theophilus does not appear in the First Church of Salem records. This is not an absence of evidence — it is evidence of absence from a specific congregation. A Scottish Presbyterian family worshipping outside the Congregationalist structure would simply not appear in those books, and the Dunnings’ absence is entirely consistent with — indeed, expected from — a Presbyterian immigrant household.

Benjamin Dunning Sr.: Sealer of Leather

Benjamin Dunning (b. 17 January 1647, Salem) provides the most direct colonial documentary evidence of the family’s trade identity. On **12 March 1682**, the Boston Town Records record his election as **Sealer of Leather** — published in *Town Officials of Colonial Boston*, page 64, where his name is listed among the Sealers of Leather for the Town Meeting of 12 March 1682/83:

64 TOWN OFFICIALS OF COLONIAL BOSTON	
TM, Aug. 25, 1682 (7:157) Rate Commissioner Dr. Elisha Cooke	Thomas Bevis Obadiah Read Mr. John Eyre John Ballantine Joniah Terrey John Winchester, Jr. (MR) William Eastin (RM)
FM, August, 1682 (7:157) ¹⁴ Town Commissioners Mr. John Saffin John Joyliffe Mr. Anthony Stoddard Capt. Elisha Hutchinson Mr. John Fairweather Capt. Thomas Beattie Capt. John Walley	Clerks of the Market Joseph Holmes James Pecker Joseph Davis Samuel Sexton
FM, Sept. 20, 1682 (7:157) Town Commissioner Dr. Elisha Cooke ¹⁵	Surveyors of Highways John Bull Nathaniel Oliver Lieut. Edward Willis William Colman Thomas Gardner, Sr. (MR) Edward Kibby (MR) John Wiswell (RM)
TM, Mar. 12, 1682/83 (7:158-59) Moderator Capt. Thomas Beattie Selectmen Capt. Thomas Beattie Deacon Henry Allen Lieut. Daniel Turtill John Joyliffe Capt. Theophilus Frary Capt. Elisha Hutchinson Mr. Nathaniel Greenwood	Sealers of Leather James Maxwell John Marston, Jr. Samuel Lockman Benjamin Dunning Water Bailiffs Mr. John Scarlett Mr. Timothy Prout, Sr.
Constables John Barnard Samuel Briggs John Bennett Mr. Thomas Savage (Ref)	Packers of Flesh and Fish John Dinsdale Adam Dinsdale Measurer of Salt Francis Hudson

¹⁴ This meeting, related in MS. Town Recs. and RR, may have been held Aug. 28.
¹⁵ In place of Mr. Anthony Stoddard, refused.

Town Officials of Colonial Boston, p. 64 (detail). Benjamin Dunning listed as Sealer of Leather, Town Meeting of 12 March 1682/83. Full page reproduced in Appendix A.

The Sealer of Leather was a regulated municipal role requiring expert knowledge of tanning processes, leather grading, and quality standards. Under Bay Colony law, it was illegal to buy or sell hides not inspected and stamped with the Sealer’s official metal seal. The appointment presupposed professional standing within the leather trade and the trust of the community.

By 1687 Benjamin had relocated to Fairfield, Connecticut, where town records read: “Benjamin Dunen hath this day land given him upon his dezire to come and live in this town... of making shoos... continue so long as ye town sees caus.” He then moved to Jamaica, Long Island, appearing in records in 1699 and 1708.

The Sons of Benjamin Sr. and the Third Generation

Benjamin Dunning Sr. had three sons: Benjamin Jr. (b. 1679), John (b. 1681), and Michael (b. 1685). Their divergent paths illuminate both the geographic spread of the family and the gradual process of religious assimilation expected of third-generation Scottish immigrants in New England.

Benjamin Jr. and John relocated to Connecticut. On 30 May 1703, both were baptized together as adults at Stratfield Church (now First Church of Bridgeport, CT), conforming to the dominant Congregationalist denomination of their new community. This is the expected pattern: Presbyterian identity, strong in Theophilus and maintained through Benjamin Sr., yielding to social and civic pressure in the generation that established itself in coastal Connecticut. Adult baptism into Congregationalism in 1703 was not apostasy — it was the practical step of men integrating into the civic and religious life of a new colony.

Michael, by contrast, went to Orange County, New York, where he is recorded as a cordwainer — a shoemaker — in New York occupation records of the early 18th century, and is part of the group that founded Goshen, Orange County, in 1719. Away from Connecticut's more uniformly Congregationalist environment, Michael retained the family's Presbyterian identity. The geographic divergence of the brothers maps directly onto the religious divergence.

That Presbyterian identity held for two full generations before partial assimilation in the third is precisely what the historical record of Scottish immigrant communities in New England would predict — and it reinforces rather than undermines the Scottish Presbyterian origin argued throughout this study.

The sibling relationship of Benjamin Jr., John, and Michael is confirmed by the Stratfield Church baptism abstract, is uncontested across all three descendant branches, and is independently corroborated by Y-DNA concordance among testers drawn from each line — providing three independent confirmations of their shared paternal identity.

Occupational Continuity: Summary

Person	Occupation	Period	Significance
Johnne Dunning	Burgess Tailor, Edinburgh	1589–1606+	Head of tailor household; took apprentices; militia service (hagbute)
Theophilus Dunning	Pound Keeper, Salem/Boston	1644	First colonial record; civic trust role; trade inspection context
Benjamin Dunning Sr.	Sealer of Leather, Boston; Shoemaking, Fairfield CT	1682–1687	Elected municipal role requiring expert leather knowledge
Michael Dunning	Cordwainer (Shoemaker)	c.1710s	Third generation leather craft; Orange County, NY

IV. Y-DNA Evidence: Scientific Corroboration

Documentary evidence establishes the lineage. Genetic evidence confirms it. Y-DNA testing — which traces the direct paternal line from father to son across centuries — provides independent and scientifically rigorous corroboration of the documentary chain. Crucially, the three Dunning testers represent all three branches of Benjamin Sr.'s line, providing replication across independently descended male lines.

The Testers and Their Branches

Tester	Branch	Descent From	FTDNA Kit
Dirk Dunning	Benjamin Jr. (b.1679) line	Benjamin Dunning Sr. (b.1647)	#B265575
Lyle Dunning	John (b.1681) line	Benjamin Dunning Sr. (b.1647)	#92294
John Dunning	Michael (b.1685) line	Benjamin Dunning Sr. (b.1647)	#123380
Gary John Carruthers, FSAScot	Holmains armiger line	John Carruthers, 5th Laird (b. ca.1494)	#124112

The Haplogroup Finding

Male-line descendants of the Salem Downing family (Emanuel's line) and of the Marblehead fisherman both carry R1b — consistent with English Puritan origins. Male-line descendants of Benjamin Dunning Sr. (b. 1647), tested across all three of his sons' lines, carry a completely different haplogroup: I-Y6851, a subclade of I1. The specific SNP path is:

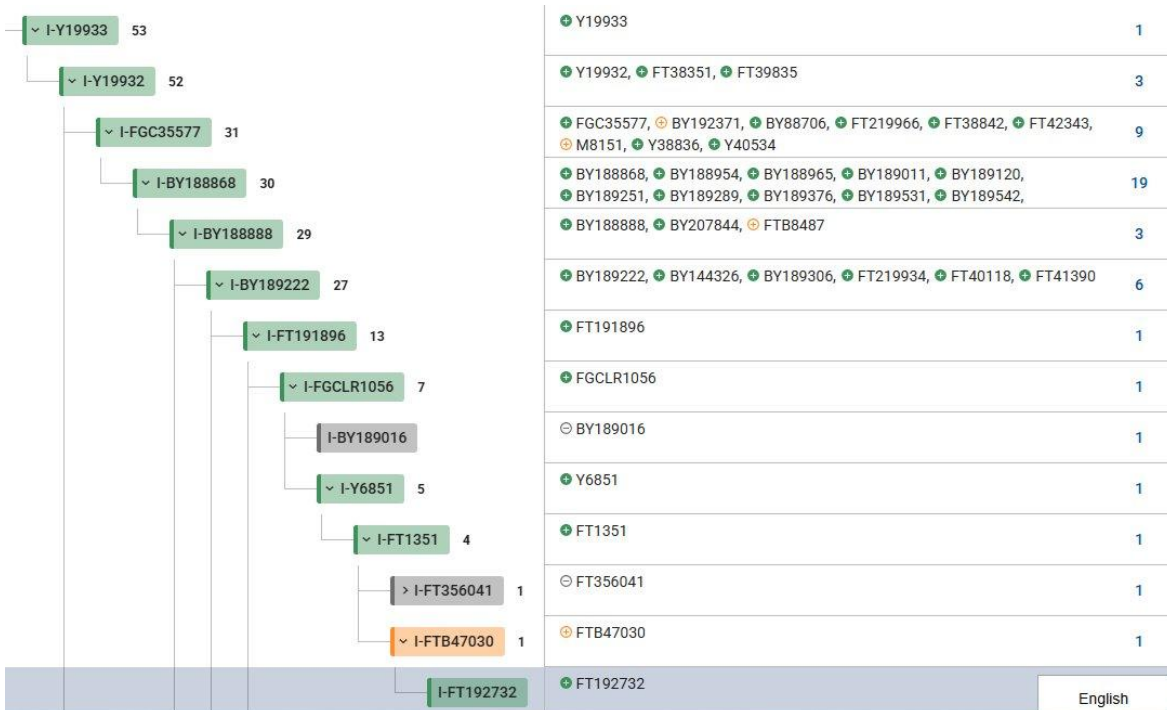
I-CTS11603 → I-FT191896 → I-BY189222 → I-Y6851

The Dunning and Downing lines are biologically unrelated — their Y-DNA signatures are in entirely separate haplogroup branches with no recent common ancestry.

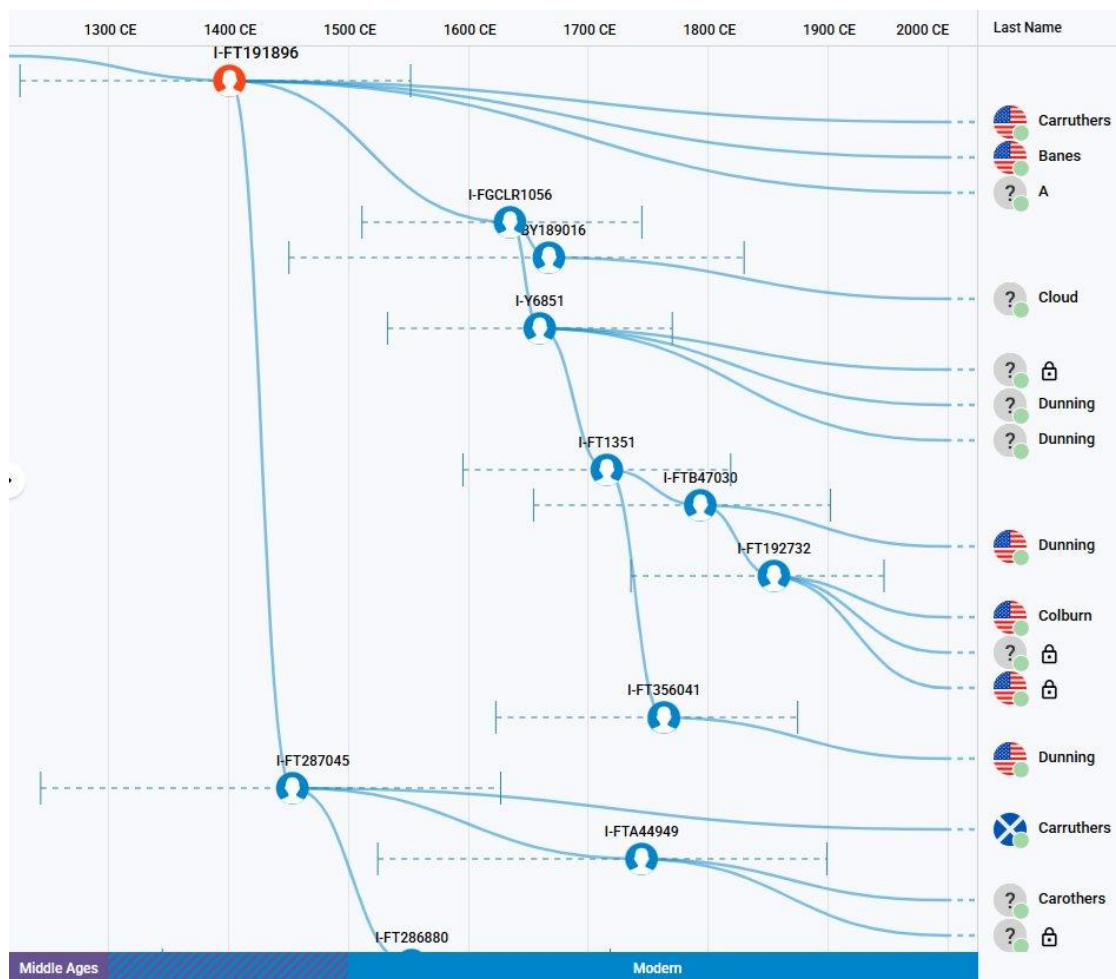
The Holmains Branch: I-FT191896

The critical finding is not simply that the Dunning line carries I1 — the haplogroup is broadly distributed across northern Europe. What matters is the precise subclade and the population of testers who share it. The FamilyTreeDNA Block Tree for haplogroup I-FT191896 shows that above this branch, all testers carry Carruthers/Carothers/Crothers surnames. The three Dunning testers — representing the Benjamin Jr., John, and Michael branches respectively — all sit within this Carruthers-specific group, on the same branch as Gary John Carruthers FSAScot.

The SNP Block Tree and Estimated Date Tree are reproduced on the next page:



FTDNA SNP Block Tree. The path I-BY189222 → I-FT191896 shows the Holmains Carruthers-specific branch. Dunning testers and Gary John Carruthers FSAScot share placement on I-FT191896. The submitter's personal branch I-FT192732 is shown at lower right.



FTDNA Estimated Date Tree rooted at I-FT191896 (c. 1400 CE). Carruthers surnames descend directly from the root. Dunning surnames branch from the I-Y6851 / I-FT1351 / I-FT192732 cluster with estimated divergence dates consistent with the documented NPE of 1600–1618 in Edinburgh. Colburn appears on the I-FT192732 branch alongside Dunning.

The Most Recent Common Ancestor (MRCA) of the Dunning and Carruthers testers falls within the patrilineal descent from John Carruthers, 5th Laird and 1st Baron of Holmains (b. ca. 1494) — at the generational position consistent with the 1600 Edinburgh NPE documented in Section II. The fact that all three of Benjamin Sr.'s lines independently return the same Holmains-specific haplogroup eliminates the possibility of a testing error or single-branch anomaly.

Statement of Gary John Carruthers, FSAScot, Armiger

“I, Gary John Carruthers, FSAScot, am an armiger of Clan Carruthers with a documented paternal-line descent from John Carruthers, 5th Laird & 1st Baron of Holmains (born circa 1494). I have reviewed the Y-DNA results of these Dunning men, and I confirm that they and I share the same paternal Y-DNA lineage on the FamilyTreeDNA Block Tree, with both of us placed on the branch defined by haplogroup I-FT191896, which is specific to the Holmains Carruthers line. It is my opinion that the Dunning Y-DNA results are consistent with a male-line descent from John Carruthers, 5th Laird & 1st Baron of Holmains, notwithstanding the later surname change to Dunning. I have no objection to this statement being included in any documentation submitted to the Chief of Clan Carruthers or to the Court of the Lord Lyon.”

What the DNA Confirms and What It Does Not

The Y-DNA evidence confirms:

- The paternal line of Theophilus Dunning's male descendants is genetically identical to the paternal line of the Holmains Carruthers family
- This result is replicated independently across all three branches of Benjamin Sr.'s line
- The Dunning and Downing families are biologically unrelated through the male line
- The MRCA between the Dunning and Carruthers testers falls at the generational position consistent with the NPE documented in Edinburgh circa 1600–1618

What the DNA cannot independently confirm is which specific James Carruthers was the biological father. That identification rests on the documentary evidence in Section II. The DNA corroborates the documentary chain precisely, but the two types of evidence are doing different work, and the distinction matters for scholarly integrity.

V. Evidentiary Assessment

Genealogical claims vary in their strength, and transparency about that variation is a hallmark of responsible research. The evidence in this study falls into three tiers:

TIER 1: DIRECTLY DOCUMENTED

George Carruthers had a younger son James (Records of the Carruthers Family; Dumfriesshire charters to 1592)

A James Carruthers, natural son of James Carruthers, was apprenticed to a tailor in Edinburgh on 15 April 1600 (Register of Edinburgh Apprentices)

Johnne Dunning was a burgess tailor in Edinburgh, admitted 7 Feb 1598/9, with active workshop to at least 1606 (Edinburgh Burgess Roll; Apprentice Register)

Marion Bannatyne gave birth to a child and married Johnne Dunning on the same day — 15 October 1618 (Edinburgh OPR, Parish 685/1; confirmed by ScotlandsPeople NRS index)

Theophilus Dunning was Pound Keeper in Salem/Boston by March 1644 (Salem Town Records, Vol. 1)

Benjamin Dunning Sr. was elected Sealer of Leather in Boston on 12 March 1682 (Boston Town Records; Town Officials of Colonial Boston, p.64)

Benjamin Dunning Sr. relocated to Fairfield, CT by 1687, referenced in connection with shoemaking (Fairfield Town Records)

Benjamin Jr. and John Dunning were baptized as adults at Stratfield Church, CT on 30 May 1703 (Stratfield Church baptism abstract)

Michael Dunning is recorded as a cordwainer in Orange County, NY occupation records (early 18th century)

Dunning male-line descendants from all three branches of Benjamin Sr.'s line share haplogroup I-FT191896 with Gary John Carruthers FSAScot on the FTDNA Block Tree

TIER 2: STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY CONVERGENT CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE

James, younger son of George of Holmains, is the elder James named in the 1600 apprenticeship record (geographic consistency, generational fit, exclusion of the Glasgow James Carruthers)

The natural son James apprenticed in 1600 is the biological father of Theophilus (occupational environment, generational position, Carruthers presence in the same Edinburgh tailor community)

The family's Presbyterian religious identity represents a direct cultural inheritance from Lowland Scotland

The three-generation occupational progression (tailor → leather inspector → cordwainer) reflects deliberate craft transmission within a single family household

The partial religious assimilation of Benjamin Jr. and John in 1703 reflects the expected third-generation immigrant pattern, consistent with Scottish Presbyterian origin

TIER 3: CONFIRMED BY Y-DNA INDEPENDENT OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The paternal lineage of Theophilus Dunning is biologically identical to the Holmains Carruthers line

Confirmed independently across all three branches of Benjamin Sr.'s line (Benjamin Jr., John, and Michael)

The Dunning and Downing families are completely unrelated through the male line

The MRCA between Dunning and Carruthers testers is consistent with a branching event in the late 16th or early 17th century

VI. Conclusion

The evidence assembled in this study — spanning Dumfriesshire charter rolls, Edinburgh guild records, the Old Parish Register, colonial Massachusetts civic documents, and Y-DNA from testers across all three branches of the Dunning line — converges on a single conclusion: Theophilus Dunning, born in Edinburgh on 15 October 1618, was a Carruthers of Holmains by blood, raised under the Dunning surname through a documented non-paternal event.

He was not English. He was not Puritan. He was not a fisherman. He was a Scottish Presbyterian artisan from a Lowland border family who crossed the Atlantic as an independent tradesman and established a multi-generational family identity in the colonial leather trade. His son Benjamin Sr. became one of Boston's civic leather officials. His grandson Michael worked the same craft as a cordwainer in Orange County, New York. The Presbyterian faith traveled with the family for two full generations before Benjamin Sr.'s sons Benjamin Jr. and John conformed to Connecticut's Congregationalist norm — while Michael, in New York, maintained the Scottish faith of his forebears.

He has been confused for a century with two men named Theophilus Downing — one a wealthy Puritan's son baptized in Salem, the other a fisherman of Marblehead. The primary records, read carefully and in their original form, separate these three individuals without ambiguity. The Y-DNA, replicated across three independent male-line branches, removes any remaining doubt about biological identity.

The Dunning family of colonial New England were Carruthers. The evidence is documented, convergent, and independently corroborated.

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