



the national archives

# palaeography

---

## *further practice*

**Document 30: Court of Chancery: extract from  
Alexander Selkirk's deposition to the Examiners'  
Office, dated 1712**

(Catalogue reference: C 24/1321)

### **Contents**

About this document	1
Image	2
Transcript	4

## *About this document*

This document is an extract from Alexander Selkirk's deposition to the examiner's office, dated 1712. (Catalogue reference: C 24/1321)

It is believed that Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe was based on the life and experiences of the Scottish seaman, Alexander Selkirk. This extract gives an account of when Selkirk was marooned on the island of Juan Fernandez. This report is one of the surviving depositions in cases on the equity side of Chancery, which were taken by examiners of the court in and around London.

Please note:

- The document is written in a cursive mixed hand.







## transcript

[Margin] Jur[atus] 18 July 1712

1. Pro Cresswell Ar[migero] & ux[ore] c[ontra] Dampier & a[li]o[s]
2. Alexander Selkirke Mariner Aged 32 years or thereab[ou]ts lodging at M[aste]r
3. Thomas Roaquillos house near St Catherines in the County of Midd[le]sex being
4. p[ro]duced etc Saith.

[Margin] 2

5. That this Dep[onen]t sayled the voyage now in qu[est]ion on board the ship Cinque Ports
6. Galley as Ma[ste]r of her & she was then when she went out of the River of Thames
7. a good new ship in very good Condic[i]on as to Body Masts Sayles Furniture
8. Stores & all other app[er]tences only want[e]d sheathing & was very well fitted out in all things & was
9. reckoned to be then & was as this Dep[onent] believ[e]s then worth £2000 & she at
10. Kingsale in Irland joyn[e]d in Company with the ship St George in the Juwrry
11. menc[i]oned which was an old ship but in very good Condic[i]on & strong & fitted out for
12. ths[ai]d voyage in all things and stores & was compt[e]d to be worth & was as
13. this Dep[onen]t believ[e]s worth £4000. or thereab[ou]ts reckoning in her Body Masts Tackle
14. Stores & app[er]ten[c]es and this Dep[onent] saith that Charles Pickring went as Cap[tain] of
15. ths[ai]d Cinque Ports Galley ths[ai] d voyage & Michael Cobham went out
16. agent or Purser of her & the Defe[ndan]t W[illia]m Dampier went out the s[ai]d voyage Capt[ain]
17. of the s[ai]d ship St George & one Morgan was Purser or agent of her the sayd
18. voyage and this Dep[onent] saith that the first tyme this Dep[onent] [saw]? [ ] ships Duke and
19. dutchess was when this Dep[onen]t was the s[ai]d voyage upon the Island of John
20. Fernandez in the South Sea & Woods Rogers was the Capt[ain] of ths[ai]d ship Duke
21. & Carlington Vanbrugg was then agent of her & Stephey Courtney was
22. then Capt[ain] of the ship Dutchess but who was agent of her this Dep[onent] rem[em]bers not
23. and when this Dep[onen]t first saw the ships Duke & Dutchess they were both Good
24. ships & in good Condic[i]on & this Dep[onen]t hath credibly heard they cost fitting out
25. for their voyage to the South Seas £14000 or thereab[ou]ts & more Saith
26. not to this Juwrry

[Margin] 5.

27. That this Dep[onen]t doth beleeve there were severall orders or Instrucions given by or on the
28. behalfe of the Owners of the ship St George to the Def[endan]t Dampier as Capt[ain] of her
29. when he went out upon the s[ai]d voyage but what in P[ar]ticuler they were this Dep[onen]t
30. cannot now setforth But this Dep[onen]t saith that the s[ai]d ships St George & Cinque Ports
31. Galley sayled in Consortship from Kingsale upon the s[ai]d voyage to the South Seas
32. & that there were Articles or agreem[en]ts made or entred into between the Capt[ain]s &
33. officers or Companys of the s[ai]d ship for regulating themselves in the s[ai]d voyage
34. Alexander Salkirk