

# SIR JAMES WHITLOCK

At the beginning of his family history James sets down his motto "Oculis in solem, alis in Coelum" which if my latin is to be trusted translates "Look to the sun, else to the heavens". Roughly "Aim high". James started his *Liber Familicus* or Family Book Apr.18,1609. His intention was to set down for posterity events relating to his life as well as his family's. He was obviously successful as this book remains the major source of information regarding both this remarkable man and his ancestors.

James' father Richard was the fourth and youngest son of family holding land in both Wokingham, Berkshire and St.Bride's Fleet Street, London. His grandfather, also Richard Whitlock inherited both the Berkshire and London properties from his grandparents and it is likely both estates originally belonged to the wealthy De la Beche family.

Being a younger son James' father was sent to London to become a merchant and during a trip to France for Gascoyne wines in 1570 he fell sick and died on November 7,1570. Three weeks later on November 28 in a house on the Thames near to the Bear Key in the parish of St.Dunstan's in the East his wife gave birth to twins, William and James. James' mother was Joan Colte and the widow of Mr. Brockhurst, a London merchant. A very resourceful woman, James' mother managed her children's estate prudently and was able to send her children to Merchant Taylor's school and give each an education equal to any young gentleman of the time.

James went on to St.Johns College, Oxford and at 20 was admitted to New Inn and by 1594 had a degree in Civil Law from Middle Temple. Many of the friendships and alliances James made at Merchant Taylors, Oxford and Middle Temple were to last throughout his life.

On September 9, 1602 at Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire James married Elizabeth the daughter of Edward Bulstrode.

James' legal career prospered but in 1613 he spent some time in Fleet prison for speaking out against the Kings infringement of Parliament's authority. James' time in prison was short but he appears to have been more cautious thenceforth of becoming involved in political arguments.

In 1616 James purchased from Sir William Alford the Manor of Fawley Court in Buckinghamshire. The estate cost £9,000 and James and Elizabeth spent the next few years repairing and expanding the Manor.

James' star continued to rise and in October 1620 he was knighted by James I in the present of the ill fated Prince Charles. By 1624 James was sworn a King's Bench Judge.

James and Elizabeth had seven children but only three lived to adulthood. The eldest daughter, Elizabeth married Thomas the son of Sir Roger Mostyn of Flintshire, Wales. The youngest daughter Cecely married Edward Dixon of Hilden-in-Tunbridge, Kent. The only surviving son became the noted Lawyer, Parliamentarian and Ambassador, Sir Bulstrode Whitelocke.

James died at Fawley June 22, 1632. Following his death his son Bulstrode discovered his father had transferred all his personal estate to him to avoid it being taxed. James' will therefore was very short and contained only a few personal bequests.

James was very proud of his family's accomplishments and you can tell as you read his *Liber Familicus* he felt an obligation to further the family's fortune and leave it in a better condition than he received it. The

ground work laid by James & his wife formed the basis his son Bulstrode was to build on and some vestiges of which were to remain in place down to the present day.