

JOSEPH WHITLOCK OF PITTON, LEASE 1785

The concentration of Whitlocks in and around Pitton in Wiltshire has made this region the area of origin for Whitlocks all over the world. This goldmine of Whitlock ancestors in one place has also made this one of the toughest to pin down with any degree of confidence just which of the many Whitlocks is your ancestor. An advantage of so many being descended from the same place is there are many researchers with which to share your research and try out your latest theories. Needless to say there is going to be some controversy!! While the normal sources of census and parish registers are useful, for most families further sources have had to be consulted to confirm relationships with any degree of assurance.

A great example of one of the alternative sources is the indenture sent in by Quintin White of New Zealand. It is from the Dorset Record Office, dated the 14th day of April 25 Geo.III (1785). It details the lease of a cottage and garden in Pitton at that time in the tenure of Abraham Fry.

The Lease is from the Earl of Ilchester to Joseph Whitlock. As was the custom, the lease was for the lives of several persons to a maximum of 99 years and the references to these lives is where the genealogical value of the lease becomes apparent. In this case the Indenture states “from the date thereof for and during and unto the full end and term of ninety nine years from thence next ensuing and fully to be compleat and ended if the said Joseph Whitlock aged twenty six years John Whitlock son of Jonathan Whitlock and nephew of the said Joseph Whitlock aged three years and William Whitlock son of Robert Whitlock of Pitton aforesaid labourer aged seven years any or either of them shall so long have to live”

As it would be unusual for each of these persons mentioned not to be related, you can use other records to determine the family connections. In this case the signer of the lease Joseph Whitlock (signed Josh) is age 26 in 1785. This would make him the Joseph Whitlock baptized at Pitton January 21,1759, the son of Jonathan Heade & Elizabeth (Olden) Whitlock. John Whitlock aged three was baptized at Pitton April 2,1782 the son of Jonathan & Elizabeth (Pope) Whitlock. This Jonathan Whitlock was baptized February 18,1753 the eldest son of Jonathan & Elizabeth (Olden) Whitlock. He was therefore a brother to Joseph and his son John was a nephew to Joseph as mentioned in the lease. Jonathan Heade Whitlock was baptized at Pitton January 19,1725 the son of Robert & Elizabeth (Head) Whitlock.

The last relation is William Whitlock aged seven, son of Robert Whitlock. The only William that fits is William born June 20,1777 and baptized at Pitton July 8,1777 the son of Robert & Hannah (Whitlock) Whitlock. The question therefore is how is this Robert related to Joseph Whitlock. The only Robert that appears to fit is Robert Whitlock baptized at Pitton June 23,1737 the son of Robert & Elizabeth (Head) Whitlock. We assume this is the Robert Whitlock who married Hannah Whitlock November 2,1761 at Pitton. This Robert was therefore an Uncle to Joseph Whitlock and his son William mentioned in the lease was Joseph's cousin.

While the relationship between Joseph and his brother Jonathan was known, the document has allowed us to place the Robert Whitlock who married Hannah Whitlock in 1761 with more certainty. This is of course assuming there were not two Robert and Hannah Whitlocks born having children in the 1770's!! We assume not.

Of the three lives mentioned in the lease, young John aged three appears to have died before 1790 as there is another son name John baptized September 12,1790. We are not sure what happened to William the son of Robert. Joseph Whitlock married Ann White July 4,1786 and lived until December 5,1829. This family is detailed on our WHITLOCK03 chart showing Joseph Whitlock is an ancestor of several of our Pitton family researchers.

Our thanks to Quintin for this very interesting and useful document. It is by the uncovering of these types of records that we will eventually be able to have a clear picture of how the many Pitton Whitlocks are related to each other.

Some of you may be wondering why this Pitton, Wiltshire document is filed in the Dorset Record Office. This illustrates an important research clue when looking for manorial records. Many manorial records are filed in the county in which the Lord of the Manor had his county seat. In this case the Earl of Ilchester was based in Dorset so the records of his estates are therefore held in Dorset.

Source: R2310