

ORIGINS OF THE SURNAME WHITLOCK

In putting together the article on the Mostyn family I came across the expression "*Richard ap Hywel, was the first to be known by what became henceforth the family surname*" This made me curious to know the various origins of the name Whitlock used by various branches of the family. How long have each of them actually used the name?

In my December 1993 article I mentioned: *The transition to surnames took place fairly quickly. By 1100 the records show about 45% of persons recorded, both humble as well as great, Saxon as well as Norman have surnames. By 1200 this figure is at least 90% and by 1300 it is 99%*

While there are references back to 1066 in the Domesday book, continuous documented use of the name is much harder. In the *Pre-1538* file which lists all references to the name pre-1538 there is one reference in the 900's, 9 in 1066 (Domesday book), one in the 1100's, 45 in the 1200's, 92 in the 1300's and 75 in the 1400's

1300's Witlox of Holland: The WHITLOCK90 chart descends from Johannes Witloc born 1300 in Omstreeks, Holland. How closely related the origin of Witloc and Whitlock are is still being debated.

1400's the Whitlocks of Wokingham: We can trace the WHITLOCK02H family back to John Whitloke who married Agnes dela Beche about 1454.

1530's Whitlocks of Devon: The WHITLOCK01 chart can trace back Whitlocks living in Alwington, Devon in the 1530's

1780's the Whitlarks - The Whitlark family of Buckinghamshire had their name morph over several generations to Whitlock or Whitelock. The oldest records show this name was originally Whiteclerk.

1820s the Swedish Whittlocks - we know from records in the 1820's that the Swedish Wittlocks adopted the name Whittlock at that time when Swen Swenson changed his name to Whitlock. For some reason persons in Swedish army working on the river boats were entitled to take the name Whitlock.

1860's-1880s' - slave origin Whitlocks - Following the American Civil War - many former slaves took the name Whitlock as a surname, likely from the name of a plantation or owner. So far I have only been able to confirm one family that did this but it is likely there were many.

While most persons inherit their surname from their parents there are some persons who decide to adopt a different surname for a variety of reasons. When immigrants came to North America many started their new life in a new country with a new surname. For what ever reason persons took the name Whitlock as their own, there descendants became part of the Whitlock Family Association and our goal remains to determine as much information about their origins as they wish to know, even if that information indicates that the origin of their surname was not Whitlock but some other name. The current DNA project is already showing several different origins of the name. Everyone's origin story is going to be slightly different but for some time in their family's history they were known as Whitlocks. That's all that matters.