

# GEORGE WHITLOCK of FARLEY, WILTS

## b.1833

In the collection of Michigan birth and marriage certificates send in by Lawrence Otis there were two relating to Edith I. Whitlock. CERT1808 records the marriage of Edith I. Whitlock and Fred Blair at Grand Rapids, Michigan Nov.28,1894. Edith is shown born in Manister, Michigan, the daughter of John Whitlock(sic) and Mary Parsons. CERT1856 confirms Edith was born in Manister, Michigan April 26,1868 the daughter of George Whitlock and Mary Parsons, her parents were born in England.

In addition there is CERT1816 that records the marriage of Anna C. (Whitlock) Reed and G. Lockwood Dickinson married Feb.17,1909 also Grand Rapids, Michigan. Anna C Whitlock was likely Edith's older sister and she is shown born in England, also the daughter of George Whitlock and Mary Parsons. This confirms the John Whitlock shown on Edith's marriage record should have read George Whitlock.

Consulting the Michigan census file, I found this family on the 1880 census for Grand Rapids. All the family except Edith are shown born in England. Edith had five older siblings Joshua, Mary E., Annie C., William Parsons and Sarah. This also confirmed the above Anna C. was definitely Edith's sister.

Looking for a Whitlock/Parsons marriages in the Whitlock Marriage Register, I found a George Whitlock married to a Mary Parsons December 26,1853 at Farley, Wiltshire. This took me to the Wiltshire census file. On the 1851 census there was a George Whitlock age 18 apprentice living with Joshua Parsons and his wife Mary. George is shown as a son in law, born in Hornhill, Dorset. This seems to imply George's mother may have been Mary who married secondly to Joshua Parsons.

I was unable to find a George Whitlock born about 1833 with a mother Mary.

At this point I needed some help and I sent a query off to our two Pitton experts, Muriel Allen and Quintin White to see if they might have anything that could assist with this mystery.

Muriel came back with information that Joshua Parsons was born about 1806 the son of Silas Parsons. Joshua Parsons and Mary Whitlock were married in 1846. Muriel also provided the 1861 census information that showed George was a cordwinder (shoemaker) - it is assumed this was what he was apprenticing for in 1851. Muriel also pointed out that the 1881 census shows Mary Parsons age 72 a widow and dairywoman. Living with her is her son James Parsons age 31.

Quintin provided additional marriage details for George's marriage to Mary Parsons December 26, 1853, Farley, Wilts. George was 21 a bachelor and shoemaker - father UNKNOWN. Mary was 23, single the daughter of William Parsons. Quintin speculates that George may have been the George Whitlock age 17 in 1851 Ag Lab, Lodger living with Stephen Whitlock. I rejected this as we know George was a shoemaker by 1853 when he married and it makes more sense he would be the one shown as an Apprentice in 1851.

Quintin makes the point the George was likely illegitimate due to the "father unknown" shown on his marriage record. But who was his mother? The 1851 census implies this was Mary but Quintin provides an original copy of the 1841 census when George would be 7 or 8. Mary is shown age 30 an Ag Lab born in the county, living with Silas Parsons age 75 and his son Joshua Parsons age 35. There is no son George age 7 or 8 living with them. Mary later marries this Joshua Parsons.

Quintin points out there is a George Whitlock age 7 on the 1841 census living with John Head & Elizabeth (Whitlock) Whitlock. He is recorded after the youngest daughter, age 2 and his surname Whitlock is shown (which it is not for all the other children). While John Head Whitlock did not have a sister Mary Whitlock, his wife Elizabeth Whitlock did. Mary Whitlock bpApr.6,1806 Salisbury, Wilts. Elizabeth says she was born in Milford on most census records. These two were the children of William Whitlock and his second wife Ann Offer whom William married July 5,1802 St.Martin, Salisbury. While the birth year is not a direct match for Mary, that is not unusual. I am more concerned that Mary lists her place of birth as Pitton as well as born 1809 consistently in every census.

In her next email Muriel provides what is likely a clincher that Mary is George's mother. The 1871 census shows Mary Parsons age 62 with her grandson, Joshua Whitlock age 16 living with her. We know this Joshua is the son of George Whitlock and Mary Parsons.

Finally Quintin provides a date of death for Mary (Whitlock) Parsons. She died Nov.17,1884 age 76. As a way of confirming the circular connection of many of these Pitton families, Quintin notes that Mary's son James married Philida Whitlock, the great aunt of the late country writer, Ralph Whitlock. James and Philida Parsons came to Canada and settled in Calgary.

Taking all this great information and trying to sift out what is important is not easy. I think I am fairly sure George was the illegitimate daughter of Mary Whitlock and that Mary was not married before. The 1846 marriage record would likely confirm this. Why George's birth place is given as Dorset I am not sure. Quintin speculates that Mary may be been working at Hornhill Hall, near Stalbridge, Dorset as a servant and she gave birth to George there. This does make sense. She then returned to Pitton and her extended family. It would also make sense that young George might have been living with one of his aunts and this would explain him showing on the 1841 census with John & Elizabeth (Whitlock) Whitlock.

I therefore favour the theory that Mary was the daughter of William Whitlock and Ann Offer and was a sister to Elizabeth Whitlock, the wife of John Whitlock. If the 1846 marriage certificate shows Mary was single and the daughter of William Whitlock that would confirm this theory.

SOURCES: R2857; R2858; X6734