

# GRIZEL (COLEMAN) WHITLOCK (1705-1759)

After more than 30 years trying to determine which Mr. Whitlock was the husband of Grizel Coleman I have a theory that I think makes sense. As with most solutions to long standing problems, the clues have been there in front of us for years.

My theory is that the John Whitlock who shows in the Registers of St.Peter's, New Kent Co., Virginia (our R0849) is most likely the husband of Grizel Coleman and I will lay out why I think this is likely.

Firstly we need to understand how this area of Virginia evolved. New Kent County was created 1654 from York and part James City Cos. It was a parent county for Hanover Co. (created 1720, King and Queen Co. created 1691). New Kent County is adjacent to King William County, created 1700 from King and Queen Co. It was a parent county for Caroline Co. (created 1727 from Essex, King William and King and Queen Counties) St.Peter's Parish also evolved becoming the parent of St.Pauls Parish in 1704. After 1720 St.Paul's Parish was in Hanover Co. Thus while many of these different county names and parish names show in our records it is important to realize many refer to the same places or places that are contiguous to each other in a very small area of Virginia. (See Fry-Jefferson Map 1751- R3434)

It is not known when St.Peter's Parish was formed but the registers commence in 1680. The Whitlock entries start in 1706 with the baptisms of several negroes belonging to John Whitlock. Robin 1706, Dick 1708, Betty 1710, Frank 1712, Molly 1715 (died 1715) . In 1716 the death of the emigrant James Whitlock born in London, England about 1650 is recorded for March 29, 1716. The next reference is for Harry a negro belonging to Joe (sic) Whitlock 1727 then David 1729. In 1736 John Whitlock's daughter Fanny died. Also in 1736 is the baptism of Watlington a negro belonging to John Whitlock. In 1737 a negro girl Jack and in 1738 a negro boy Matthew.

This shows us that John was an adult owning slaves at least from 1706 until 1716. He was therefore likely born in the 1680's and as the emigrant James' death is recorded in the same parish it makes sense that he was likely a son of the emigrant James. John likely married in the 1720's and there is an unconfirmed record that he died in King William Co. in 1746. (The Will of Nathaniel Herne tells us that James was likely in Virginia prior to 1677.)

The significant clue here is the record for the negro Harry born June 20, 1727. In Grizel's will 1759 she leaves a negro named Harry to her two daughters. Grizel's inventory totals £68 of which most of that value is negro Harry at £55.

There are just too many co-incidences here for the connection not to be likely. Grizel was born in 1705 in King & Queen Co. so likely married in the 1720's. Her eldest son was named John and John's eldest daughter was named Frances. She was a widow by 1750 and was shown as "of King William Co." in 1751 when she purchased land in Goochland Co. The biggest clue is the negro Harry as we know there was a negro Harry that belonged to John Whitlock. Harry would have been 32 when Grizel died and he is the only negro listed in her inventory and Harry was important enough to be left to her daughters.

The John Whitlock shown in the New Kent Parish registers has been known for some years but which family descends from him has been unclear. This connection through the negro Harry is the first time a possible link to this John has had any merit. The fact the death of the emigrant ancestor James Whitlock (1650?-1716) is shown in the same Parish Register as John is too much of a co-incidence not to conclude that he is James' son. I also think it is significant that the records of births of negroes belonging to John

Whitlock stops after 1716 when James died and does not recommence until 1727 when Harry's birth is recorded.

One other explanation for this could be that the second set of negroes born 1727 to 1738 belonged to another John Whitlock, possibly a son of the first one. I think this is unlikely as there are only negroes belonging to John Whitlock registered during this time period and no mention of a wife or other children. It also seems unusual that there would be no differentiation between them if there were two John Whitlocks.

The other John Whitlock living in the same area at this time is the one who had been granted land by the Pamunkey Indians as early as 1699. There is record of him in April 1702 being granted 233 acres in Pamunkey Neck for transporting five persons including a John Whitlock. While you could include yourself as one of persons being transported and entitling you to land, it is known John Whitlock was already there in 1699 so there may have been two John Whitlocks involved here. This John Whitlock heads the WHITLOCK35 chart and seems an unlikely candidate to have been a son of the emigrant James Whitlock (1650?-1716) as he was arriving in 1702 and James' children would have been born in Virginia. The only scenario that would work would be for John Whitlock to be transporting another John Whitlock in 1702. Unfortunately no descendant of the WHITLOCK35 family has yet taken the DNA test to determine if the families share the same DNA. All these Whitlocks lived in a very small area of Virginia at the same time.

If this theory makes sense it likely only provides a husband for Grizel but does not make it clear which John Whitlock he was. Again DNA testing may shed more light on this and confirm if the John Whitlock who may have been Grizel's husband was related to the emigrant James Whitlock as I suspect.

I will be interested in comments.

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