

BILL OF COMPLAINT 1549 RE: MANOR OF BECHES

In the Berkshire Volume of the Victoria County Histories there is a reference to William Whitlock son of William Whitlock suing his younger brother Richard Whitlock in 1549. John Cook recently discovered the National Archives at Kew hold the documents relating to this lawsuit and he was able to purchase a copy of them for us. There are three separate documents written on parchment mostly in English with some Latin. I did a rough transcript of the documents and hopefully between John and I we will eventually be able to produce a fairly comprehensive version of these documents.

Even with just the rough transcript I have done it is fairly clear what the issues were.

The dispute centers around the Will of William Whitlock (1510) the father of the two sons, William and Richard. This family is detailed on our WHITLOCK02H chart, The Whitlocks of Wokingham, Berkshire and as the son William did not show on the charts I had this dispute attributed to the next generation where there was also two sons William and Richard. These documents make it clear that the William whose Will was dated December 20, 1510 was the son of John Whitlock & Agnes De la Beche and is shown married to a Crowdrey. Unfortunately we have not found a copy of the Will from 1510 which is referred in the 1549 Bill of Complaint.

It appears from the documents that this dispute had gone on for some years and there is reference to an award made in 1541 to settle the issue.

William Whitlock in his Will of 1510 apparently made allowance for his eldest son. The son William and his wife Thomazine and their son William were to have possession land and an orchard and a croft named Harpies "in Okyngham aforesaid by the kyngs high waie" [Okyngham = Wokingham] for their lifetime. After their decease, this portion of the estate was to return to his brother Richard's heirs who were to inherit the whole of the Beches Manor.

The allowance to William & Thomazine Whitlock included revenue from manor lands and "six loads of wood yerelie to him delyvered, at the dwellyng hous of the same playntif [William] in Okyngham aforesaid and that the said Thomasyn shall receive yerelie after the deathe of said playntif her husband one annuitie of vjs viijd paid & two loads of wood out of the said manor & other the p'mysses to the said Richard before awareded duryng his naturall lif w't a chanse of distres for no payment of the said (pevall?) annuylye and loads of wood"

The son Richard was ordered to pay his brother William any amounts required by their father's will that remained outstanding and William's claim was dismissed.

It is not clear why William and Thomazine Whitlock were omitted from the family trees and is not mentioned in *Liber Familicus*. His younger brother Richard married Jane (Johanna) Grove and their children were born at Beches. James Whitlock begins *Liber Familicus* written in 1609 with "My father Richard Whitelock was the fourth sun of Richard Whitelock, and was born in the ancient seat of the Whitelocks, called Beeches, situate neer Okingham, a market towne in the countye of Barkes, whiche hathe continued in our blud sithence the year of our Lord 1231"

We do not know what happened to the elder son William & his wife Thomazine or their son William. I

have a Will of a Thomazin Whitlock from 1562 but there is nothing in it to indicate a connection to William, plus William and Thomazine would have to have been married before 1510 to be mentioned in William Whitlock's will so Thomazine would be over 70 in 1562.

We know Richard Whitlock died in 1556 and have a copy of his Will (R2755). (See June 2008 issue of WFA Newsletter.)

Our thanks to John Cook for uncovering these documents and sharing them with us. Hopefully in our further searches we will be able to track down a copy of William Whitlock Will of 1510.

SOURCES:R2755; R3441; R0063