

## **Sketch: Who is William Fletcher of Mitcham, Surrey?**

*Question – Is there a relationship between William Fletcher of St Lawrence Jewry (London), and William Fletcher of Mitcham Surrey (London)? This sketch begins with information about William Fletcher Sr of St Lawrence Jewry, and considers a possible connection to William Fletcher of Mitcham, Surrey. In the past, researchers have suggested that they are father and son. A more recent look at the Will of William Fletcher of Mitcham Surrey would deem the father-son relationship unlikely. Pam Garrett*

In 1642, William Fletcher Sr, of the parish of St Lawrence Jewry in London, joined with two friends, Thomas Hutchins (Hutchings) and Thomas Harris, to invest in the "Irish Adventure". The following year, 1643, William Fletcher Sr died. At the time of his death he probably left two young sons, William Fletcher Jr who was christened in 1638, and Benjamin Fletcher who was christened in 1640. Both boys were christened at the church of St Lawrence Jewry in London.

In the years 1653-54, when the Fletcher boys might have been in their teens, a drawing was to be held for land in Ireland, and the status of their dead father's claim to land was reviewed. At that time, three statements were presented, found in the Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland - Adventures for land, 1642-1659, Volume 4:

(1) 19 July 1653; Deposition by Christopher Webster, of Beckingham, in Kent, gentleman, aet 36 or thereabouts. He well knew Wm Flesher, of London, "linen draper", deceased, and Benjamin Flesher is his eldest son and heir. His father made no assignment by will of his Irish adventure. P ½ Signed (Hol.) and certified and dated by Robt Aylett, Ibid. 238.

(2) Certificate by Tibbs; Flesher's will does not bequeath his Irish adventure. It was proved 20 June 1645. P. 1.2; Signed (Hol.) Endd. Ibid 239. (I have not been able to locate this)

(3) Note by W Tibbs; He has perused the last will of Wm Fletcher, of Mitcham, in Surrey, dated 1 Dec 1653, and proved 14 Jan 1653-4. It contains no bequest of his Irish adventure. Wm Fletcher, of Mitcham, is the eldest son and heir of the said Wm Fletcher; P.1 Signed (Hol.) by Tibbs and with note that Wm Fletcher the elder was free of the company of clothiers; P. ½ Endd. SP Ireland 291, 121

This introduction of William Fletcher of Mitcham in the county of Surrey is of interest! When I discovered this record, I was hopeful that he might provide new clues for family relationships for Benjamin Fletcher - a man I have been pursuing for years.

Unfortunately, after studying the 1653 Will of William Fletcher, and a few other related records, I seriously question whether he could be the same as the William Fletcher Jr who was christened in 1638 at St Lawrence Jewry.

If William Fletcher Jr was born shortly before his 1638 christening date, then he would have been about age sixteen in 1653. If William Fletcher Jr was living in 1653, why did his step-father, Christopher Webster, state that his younger brother Benjamin Fletcher (christened in 1640) was the "oldest son and heir"? The Will of William Fletcher of Mitcham is dated 1 December 1653, and is proved in the following month. The Will makes it clear that he is already a grandfather.

My study of William Fletcher of Mitcham county Surrey is very incomplete. But, I submit a few records below, for consideration. He may eventually prove to be a relation to the William Fletcher family of St Lawrence Jewry. Both families were in the cloth trade - William Fletcher of Mitcham being a Mill owner, and William Fletcher of St Lawrence Jewry being a linen-draper.

1633, June 21; Petition of certain Stroudwater clothiers, of co. Gloucester, to the Council. By a late proclamation concerning the true making of cloth, it is commanded that no gig-mills or moseing-mills, after Midsummer Day next shall be used, the intent whereof petitioners conceive to concern white cloth only, for that may be strained by the mills if presently after set in the tenter and dried ; but coloured cloth, and especially red cloth, must be fully wrought to the proof being white, which being afterwards boiled for effecting the colour thereof will thereby shrink to the utmost. Petitioners dealing only in red cloth, without the use of the mills they now use for moseing and working cannot uphold their trade, on which many hundreds of poor people depend. Pray the Lords to grant them a further time for taking down their mills and the use thereof for the purpose aforesaid. [Signed by Thomas Davis, William Fletcher, Thomas Webb, Robert Ridler, and eight others. One page.]

[source] Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Charles I.

1635; The Master of the Robert was Robert Frampton and arrived [in Portsmouth] from London on 20th November 1635 with the following cargo for Josias Fletcher: 6 chaldrons sea coal, 1 last of hemp, 18 barrels of tar, 8 cwt of cable yarn, 1 tun of vinegar, 2 tuns of red, iron.

note - Josias Fletcher is a possible brother of William Fletcher of Mitcham.

1651; Mr. William Fletcher and Mrs Jane Haward, y the one of Micham, ye other of Tandridge, mar. 3 Feb. 1651.

[source] Extracts from the Parish of Streatham, Surrey.

[pam garrett's comment] Consider whether the William Fletcher who was christened in 1638, could be the same who was married in 1651.

1653; Henry Hunter, Grocer [Nominated: Lord Mayor Fowke, Alderman Sir J. Wollaston, William Fletcher (Clothworker)]

Sworn and discharged May 3,1653; fine of 6400; (Rep. 62, fo. 288 b).

[source] he Aldermen of the City of London Temp. Henry Iii.-1908. With Notes on the Parliamentary Representation of the City . . .

1654; Will of William Fletcher, Gentleman of Mitcham, Surrey; 14 January 1654; PROB 11/240/60 (see link at close of this sketch)

note - Mitcham is a district in South London, located within the London Borough of Merton. A suburban area, Mitcham is located on the border of Inner London and Outer London, and was historically in the county of Surrey.

1660?; Hearth tax: Kent & Surrey

Wallington Hundred: Mitcham

Mr William Fletcher 15 hearths[141]

note #141 - Mr William Fletcher. William Fletcher was a gentleman of Mitcham (PROB 11/363 Bath 60-123 Will of William Fletcher, Gentleman of Mitcham, Surrey 23 June 1680)

1661; Administration of the Will of Josias Fletcher, gentleman of South Shields, county Durham, England, by his widow Elizabeth Fletcher.

note - Josias Fletcher is a possible brother of William Fletcher of Mitcham.

1680; Will of William Fletcher, Gentleman of Mitcham, Surrey; 23 June 1680; PROB 11/363/240. Held by - The National Archives, Kew.

note - This is probably William Fletcher Jr, son of William Fletcher who died in 1653-54.

Do you want to know more?

[Will of William Fletcher or Mitcham, county Surrey, England](#)

[Link to William Fletcher of Mitcham, county Surrey, England](#)

[Link to William Fletcher Sr of St Lawrence Jewry, London](#)

[Link to William Fletcher Jr, born about 1638, St Lawrence Jewry, London](#)