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Genealogical Roll of Arms or Pedigree Scroll of the Waddsworth Family In English, illuminated manuscript scroll on parchment England (Lancashire), 1681

Parchment scroll composed of seven membranes of varying dimensions, pasted together and joined end to end, complete, ruling supplied as needed in ink within the roundels, written in a upright semi-Italic script within 110 roundels, joined together with red, blue, yellow, or green lines showing genealogical connections, designed to be read vertically, title at the top bordered in blue lines, blue lines continue length of the roll left and right, four small painted coats of arms, and one very large (10 x 7 1/2 inches or 240 x 180 mm.) finely painted family crest at the foot of the scroll, generally good condition, a few smudges and some dirt, verso (blank), darkened at end, custom box. Dimensions 4,443 x 415 mm. (14 feet, 7 inches x 16.3 inches), membranes 637, 620, 598, 605, 725, 605, and 653 mm. in length.

Fourteen feet long and seven inches wide, this vast pedigree scroll charts an ancient and possibly noble family lineage. Modeled on genealogical rolls of late medieval kings of England, the scroll details the history of the Waddsworth family of Lancashire, who claimed lineage from the time of William the Conqueror. Illuminated coats of arms and an elaborate family crest validate the family's nobility and status. Eye-catching and well-crafted, this scroll is an important symbol of elite power from an era of unrest and reform.

PROVENANCE

1. Made for the Waddsworth (or Wadsworth) Family of Lancashire in 1681 (recorded at the top of the roll). The most recent entry in the roll is Nicholas Wadsworth (1655-1702), who was married twice. His first wife Mary was buried at Broughton on 24 November 1681. His first son, Hugh of Haighton, was baptized at Broughton on December 15, 1678. Only his first wife is mentioned, and the two roundels for his heirs were not completed. This pedigree almost certainly was made for him, and it is likely a copy of a pedigree made for the visitation by Dugdale in his 1664-1665, submitted by his father Hugh, when he was nine years old (Raines, ed., p. 322). The family was Catholic, and in consequence of their taking the Jacobite side in 1715 their estate at Haighton, Lancashire was forfeited.
2. Sold by William H. Allen, Philadelphia, PA (twentieth-century typewritten description laid in).
3. Private collection, USA.

TEXT

[Center column], incipit, "Part of the Genealogie of the ancient and R^t Worshipfull Family of Waddsworth of Waddsworth [Waddsworth is written in another color of ink both times] in the county of Lancaster whose name flourished in a Knightly degree before the Conquest of England by William Duke of Normandy (afterwards surnamed the Conqueror) which was in the

year of the Lord 1066. And by marriages into very many ancient and Honorable Familys hath continued its glory untill this present year of grace 1681”;

[Smaller columns to the left and right of the center], incipit, “The names of some Families of note which among very many others are related to Waddesworth of Wadesworth [Waddesworth again in a different color both times], videlicet Bellington of Bellington, Brightwell of Brightwell, ... Welstrop of Welstrop”;

[First roundel], incipit, “Sir John Waddesworth of Waddesworth Knight living at ye time of the Conquest married the daughter and sole heir of Sir John Brograve Knight and by her had issue, ... [final roundel], Nicholas Waddesworth eldest son married the daughter of Alexander Osbaldeston of Osbaldeston Esq. now living at Haighton in Lancashire and had issue”; [the final row consists of two incomplete roundels for his children, labelled “Waddesworth son and heir apparent,” and “Waddesworth”].

ILLUSTRATION

Four small coats of arms, added at points where the family married into an important family:

1. Membrane one, following the first roundel recording the marriage of Sir John Waddesworth and the daughter of Sir John Brograve (coat of arms of Waddesworth and Brograve impaled; Argent, three lilies slipped and leaved azure; argent, three lions passant guardant gules, l'un sur l'autres);
2. Membrane one, Sir Robert Waddesworth knight second son went unto Richmond and there married the daughter and heir of Sir John Lasingbey of Lasingbey (Waddesworth and Lasingbey arms impaled [cf. Lazonby in Cumberland]; gules a fess argent, charged with three pillows(?), and three gold (wings?) on a bend sable);
3. Membrane two, John Waddesworth of Lasingbey second son married the daughter and heir of Sir Robert Erington of Elton (Waddesworth and Erington arms impaled; argent, three scallop shells azure in chief and two fess azure).
4. Membrane five, Robert Waddesworth ye second son married the daughter of ... [left blank] Savill of Bradsforth (Waddesworth and Savile or Savill arms impaled; argent, on a bend sable three owls of the field).

At the very bottom of the scroll is a very large crest of the Wadsworth family, including all the above arms quartered, with a knights helm above the coat of arms, set in red and white acanthus, and surmounted by a ram with horns. However, it is extremely puzzling that that the coat of arms used for the Waddesworth family here and in the smaller coats of arms elsewhere in the scroll is not the coat of arms confirmed by Dugdale in the visitation, “Gules, three fleurs-de-lys stalked and slipped, argent,” which modern sources depict as a red shield with three silver fleurs-de-lys. In our pedigree, we instead have three blue lilies with leaves and stalks on a silver ground, which in heraldic language would be, argent, three lilies stalked and slipped, azure, which is either a curious error on the part of the herald who prepared our pedigree, or reflects a change in arms used by the family.

The pedigree begins in the eleventh century at the time of the Norman conquest with a certain Sir John Waddesworth and continues until 1681. The family was originally from Yorkshire, and the name can be traced there in records at various times, mostly around Halifax. The first Wadsworth of Haighton Hall in Lancashire was Nicholas (d. 1665), younger son of Hugh, living there by 1622; see the last row of roundels on the sixth membrane, where we learn "Nicholas Waddesworth by the latter wife came to Haighton in Lancashire and married ye daughter of Rober Albine of Whittingham and had issue."

The Waddesworth family pedigree was recorded in Dugdale's 1654-1655 visitation. Hugh, the son of the Nicholas just mentioned (d. 1665), entered the pedigree; he lived at Haighton, and married Margaret, the daughter of Christopher, second son of Sir John Townley. Hugh's brother Robert listed in our roll as "Robert of Waddesworth second son of Nicholas" is recorded in the earlier pedigree with the note that, "he went beyond the sea to study," presumably at the English Catholic college to become a priest. Hugh's sons are listed as Nicholas, Robert, and Christopher. As noted above (Provenance), this Nicholas is the last person named on our genealogy; in a 1682 guild roll he was recorded as having two sons, Hugh and Robert (their roundels are not filled in on our scroll; see Fishwick, 1900, p. 360; Adamson, 1979).

Two members of this immediate family left a mark in history. In the first row on the last membrane in our pedigree, we find "James Waddesworth married ye daughter of Mr Castleton of Norwich and had issue." James Waddesworth (c. 1572-1623), was a Church of England clergyman, who converted to Catholicism while serving in Spain in August 1605. After a period of theological study at the University of Alcalá de Henares, he was granted a pension by the Spanish crown and given employment by the Inquisition. Wadsworth also converted his brother Paul (also known as Seth), who emigrated to Spain and was appointed consul of the English-speaking community at Sanlúcar de Barrameda in 1612. Wadsworth's emotive translation into Spanish of the parliamentary statutes enacted in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot, published in Madrid, gave offence to the British ambassador and embarrassed the Spanish authorities. The *Oxford Dictionary of Biography* states that James and his wife Susan had four children; our pedigree records the names of three sons, Hugh, James, and Gregory, and five daughters. Following his death, his eldest son Hugh, and his wife lived on his father's pension, while his two sisters entered convents: Katherine, a Brigittine convent in Lisbon; and Mary, a Benedictine convent in Cambrai.

The life of his son James (b. 1604, d. after 1656), is even more intriguing (this James is listed in the penultimate row of our pedigree). James became a Jesuit at the English College at St. Omer, and served as an interpreter in Madrid for Prince Charles. In 1625, however, he returned to England, renounced his religion, and became a spy for the Privy council. He wrote a memoir and made his living for decades by betraying Catholics to the crown (for money). After the civil war his fortunes declined precipitously; the date of his death is unknown.

As a modern genealogy of the family states, the more distant relatives of the Waddesworth family also include illustrious figures: "Anyone of the Wadsworth name shares a common ancestry with the poets William Wordsworth, Henry Wadsworth, Longfellow, the Genesee

branch of the Wadsworth family, and the Hartford family—founders of the Wadsworth Atheneum, and Yale University” (Wadsworth Family Chart, Online Resources).

Heraldic visitations were state visits to different regions of England specifically to confirm the validity of coats of arms used by families. As we have noted, the Waddesworth family was visited in 1664-1665 by William Dugdale (1605-1686), a herald from the College of Arms (for the visitation see, Raines, ed., 1873, vol. 3, p. 322). In 1555, Queen Elizabeth re-established the College of Arms by royal charter. She appointed three kings of arms and six heralds empowered to verify the ancestral claims of aristocratic families and their rights to display arms. Heraldic coats of arms were the symbols of elite power, and rising families from the gentry were eager to prove that they, too, had these rights. Between the years of 1560 and 1640, four thousand new armorial grants were made in England (Mingay, 1976), part of a pedigree “craze” as the newly created nobility commissioned fabricated genealogies to “clothe their social nakedness” (Stone, 1965, p. 23). The interest in family genealogy, continued after the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660, even though by then wealth and lifestyle were increasingly “proof” of the status of a gentleman and his family, rather than their right to a hereditary coat of arms. Within this context, our example of a late, but very carefully prepared, pedigree of an important English family, will be of interest to historians studying the status of families and political power in late seventeenth-century England.

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Holdsworth House in Halifax (owned by members of the Wadsworth family)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holdsworth_House

Wadsworth Family Chart

file:///C:/Users/laura/Downloads/Wadsworth_Family_Chart.pdf

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