

WADSWORTH

Wadsworth, Wardsworth, Wordsworth, Wordworth, Waddyswort, Wodsword, Waudswort, Waddesworth, Watisworth, Adsworth, etc.

Note about the spelling of all names: Always read the names phonetically. Spelling was not standardized until late in the 1800s. Surnames are sometimes spelled differently by the same person in the same document. In the case of the surname Wordsworth, several correspondents from England insisted their names were always spelled Wordsworth because it is the gentrified version of the name. However, the records do not bear that out. Further, pronunciation and accents differed a great deal from what they do today, and clergy and other record keepers spelled the names the way they sounded to them.

From a research report dated 23 Aug 1983 [in Box 43] from Wildra Welch about the Wads/Wordworth name:

“The Wadsworth/Wordsworth name is very common and it was my first step to determine whether or not these names are the same or two distinct surnames. In my examination of several different parishes I have concluded that they seem to be the same surname, only being different in that one clerk or the other decided which it should be. The spelling seems to be the same throughout the parish, Wadsworth in Tankersley for instance, while it is Wordsworth in Silkstone. The fact that the two names are separated on the IGI is insignificant. Having had a great deal of experience with the computer with a great variety of names, those in charge often file very similar names separately. For instance: Berryman is filed separately from Berriman although most any fool can see that they are the same name. Even Beriman is not in the same listing as Berriman. You probably noticed that Wordsworth and Wardsworth are filed together. Wadsworth should actually be the same name as Wardsworth, since the English use a different dialect in different parts of their country.”

And from my report of 12 June 1983: “The Culleton collector of these materials noted that he found the name Wordsworth spelled several ways: Wadsworth, Wardsworth, Wordsworth and Waddysworth. He was convinced that, at least in that part of Yorkshire, the different spellings were all related. There is the slightest chance that we might descend from landed gentry on the Wadsworth line like Uncle James said we were...”

Wadsworth Pedigree

Thanks to the Endowment House Records, we know that George Allen Wadsworth was the son of William Wadsworth and Hannah Wilkinson and grandson of James Wadsworth and Frances Thornhill. He filled out the information himself, listing himself as son and grandson. Note that he gave his name as George Allen Wadsworth. If you will recall, he was christened as George Wadsworth and took the middle name Allen, the surname of his first wife, to separate himself from another George Wadsworth. George's Endowment House records were recorded in the 1850s, so he was using Allen as a middle name at least by then.

George Allen Wadsworth ⇨ William Wadsworth ⇨ James Wadsworth ⇨ WHO?
Self Son Grandson

As you will see, much time, money and energy has been spent in an effort to find James Wadsworth's parents. Because of the TIBs and the letter from David Wadsworth [GAW p 95], we knew James was born about 1768, but to whom and where?

The earliest research report in Box 43 is dated 1953 when Mom and Dad, Myrtle Joy Wadsworth and Lory M Free, engaged Frank Smith of the Genealogical Society in Salt Lake City to do research on family lines. At that time, patrons would contract with the agent in Salt Lake

City – in this case Frank Smith - who would send the request and money to researchers in England. When the research was completed it was sent by mail to the agent where it was analyzed, and a report was sent to the patron. [No computers, no Internet, no digital copies, not even zerox machines until many years later.]

A christening [or infant baptism as it is called in other churches] for James Wadsworth b abt 1867 was not found, even though 85 parishes in the Deanery of Doncaster, Yorkshire, England were searched.

“All 85 parishes in the Doncaster Deanery have been searched for an 11 year period 1762-1772 but the christening of James Wadsworth [said to have been born 1767/8] has not been found” reported Frank Smith in a letter dated 26 Feb 1963 [his parentheses]. {To see how I found James' christening, see my report dated 12 June 1983 in the Research Report folder #1 in Box 43. Please note that this and other three-ring binders from Frank Smith are full of research reports, correspondence, parish registers, probates, etc. on all family names LFK.}

Eventually, the christening of James Wadsworth was found in Kirkburton, Yorkshire, England 22 Feb 1768 to John Wadsworth.

George Allen Wadsworth ⇨ William Wadsworth ⇨ James Wadsworth ⇨ John Wadsworth
Self Son Grandson Great grandson

But which John Wads/Wordsworth?

Two John Wadsworths were having children at the same time in Kirkburton parish where James b 1768 was christened, so I approached Ray Madsen at the Family History library in Salt Lake City. He took me to a map of that area. It soon became clear that the children of John Wadsworth chr 14 Sep 1738 of New Mill, Kirkburton, son of Mary Wordsworth, comprised one family. In a letter dated 3 Sep 1984 from Dorothy J Lodge was a photocopy of this John's marriage to Mary Langley [Rangeley?] both of Kirkburton 18 Dec 1758. This John is NOT ancestral. But the other one is.

Our John Wads/Wordsworth family included these children:

Esther chr 25 Dec 1759 of Cinderhills, Woodall, Holmfirth, Kirkburton, Yorkshire
 Thomas chr 31 Jan 1762 of Cinderhills, Holmfirth, Kirkburton, Yorkshire, England
 Betty chr 4 May 1766 of Holmfirth, Kirkburton, Yorkshire, England
James chr 22 Feb 1768 of Lydiak of Woodall, Holmfirth, Kirkburton
 Hannah chr 16 Jul 1769 Kirkburton bur 3 Aug 1769 of Lidget [Lydiak], Kirkburton

The marriage for our John Wadsworth was eventually found nearby in Penistone: John Wordsworth to Hannah Mitchel 24 Nov 1755. In this record John was listed as “of Bradfield” in the record I searched. Since their first child born in Kirkburton was born some 4 years after the marriage, it seemed logical there would be earlier children. So Penistone parish records were searched for other children of John and Hannah Wads/Wordsworth, and Elizabeth chr 6 Jan 1756 in Penistone was found, though no others were. Note that Betty is usually a nickname for Elizabeth, so it is possible Elizabeth chr 1756 died before Betty was born in 1766, but we have not yet found that burial. Often if a child died, another child in the same family would be given the name of the deceased. This is at least partly because of naming patterns. Occasionally people did give their children nicknames as their given names.

Also in Kirkburton, we found the burial of “Hannah wife of John Wordsworth of Lidget” [same as Lydiak; spelling was not standard for places either]. She was buried 29 Sep 1769, about two months after baby Hannah died. We also found a burial for Thomas Wordworth [sic] 25 Sep 1763. So by 1769, John Wordsworth had lost his wife Hannah, son Thomas, daughter Hannah and perhaps Elizabeth, leaving him with Esther, about ten, Betty about 3 and our ancestor, James, about 1 year old. It would be true to pattern if he remarried, but such a marriage has not yet been found, nor has John Wordsworth’s burial been found. Kirkburton parish records would be a good place to resume this search.

I then began a search for a John Wadsworth born by or before 1735 [since he married in 1755 and was probably old enough to do so], and found several, some in Penistone. But one transcription of the parish registers said he was from Bradfield, Yorkshire, England. Bradfield is very close to Kirkburton. There was a christening there of a John Wordsworth 1 Oct 1727 son of a William Wordsworth.

There was a William Wordsworth who married Anne Stead in that parish. After a great deal of research, it appeared that William Wordsworth and Anne Stead were our John’s parents. However, the wills of the Stead grandparents made it very clear that William and Anne’s third child was NOT John but was another William. So no matter what has been published anywhere at any time, William Wordsworth and Anne Stead are NOT ancestral. These wills are fully transcribed and in Box 43.

Will of Thomas Steade of Burrow Lea, Ecclesfield, YKS, dated 25th February 1738 [1739] and probated 29th March 1740 includes this line: “to Elizabeth, Thomas and William,

children of my daughter Wordsworth.” So as of 1738/9 William Wordsworth and his wife Ann Stead did not, after all, have a son named John. The will of Thomas Stead’s wife, Elizabeth Creswick Stead of Burowlee, Ecclesfield, YKS, dated 3rd April 1747 and probated 24th November 1748, removes all doubt as to who she is: “To my daughter Ann Wadsworth one plain ring...to my son in laws William Wadsworth...to my five children Thomas Stead, Nicholas Stead, Ann Wadsworth, Elizabeth Woodhead and Mary Stead...” [Wills in the folder “Bradfield Docs” in Box 43.]

However, this leaves the possibility that the John Wordsworth chr 1727 in Bradfield, son of a different William than the one who married Ann Stead, could be ancestral, unless he died young enough to be left out of his grandparents’ wills. Another William Wordsworth family in

Bradfield has not yet been found, nor has a very young John Wordsworth’s burial or tombstone.

Then there are the Penistone christenings of John Wadsworth. One John Wordsworth was chr 7 Mar 1732 in Penistone, son of John Wordsworth. Other John Wordsworth christenings in Penistone include 2 Jun 1725 and 9 Aug 1733, both sons of John Wads/Wordsworths. So burials would need searching as well as marriages. But none of these christenings were in the right place according to the marriage record which named Hannah’s husband as of “Bradfield.”

In a research report dated 23 Aug 1983, Wildra Welch reported: “I took a look at the marriage of James Wadsworth & Frances Thornhill 7 Mar 1791 at Penistone in hopes that record would give a residence, but no luck there. Then a look at the mrg 24 Nov 1755 at Penistone between John Wordsworth & Hannah Mitchel. This was very difficult and we had to use a magnifying glass to try to determine the residence of the groom. We finally decided he was of Bradford. Then we turned the reel and found another page where the entry was more clear. It definitely did say he was of Bradford. I was unable to obtain the roll of film that had this parish so could not check it. However, it seems to be on the I G I and there is no James there. We also searched Silkstone, being under the impression that it was not on the I G I. Later determined that it is there, but that parish too did not contain a christening for James in 1769 or near-by...From the searches I have made it seems we must draw the conclusion that James chr 22 Feb 1768 at Kirkburton is your ancestor.” [See also the research reports by Helen VanderBeek dated 15 Aug 1983 and 12 Jun 1983 to see how the 1768 christening of James Wadsworth of Kirkburton was found.]

So I was back to the same position I stated in a 20 Jan 1985 research report: “Find the parents and family of John Wordsworth. Ray Madsen of the genealogical society spent a good deal of time with me determining which children belonged to which parents, etc. on the John Wordsworth family group sheet...so that I feel that this sheet is as right as it can be. We could add in the corner of the sheet: ‘Surrounding parish registers have been searched without finding conflicting information.’ Indeed, this family is the only

Wordsworth/Wadsworth family with a James in the right place at the right time that we have been able to find period. While in

England we searched both original records and printed records concerning

Wordsworth/Wadsworth. There are some snobs of course who maintain they are different families, but that won't hold water, because they are interchangeable in the original records. Anyway, there are several possibilities for John's parents."

Edward Bellamy's letter of 11/4/84 says: "I managed to get over to the library at Huddersfield to check on the James W you mentioned. The Kirkburton registers are on microfilm and I enclose a copy of the page which contains the only likely reference I could find around that period. You will see the name is spelt Wordsworth born in a parish called Lydiate in Woodall [now long gone] which I understand was near Rochdale."

The following column explains how important the parish names were in determining which John Wadsworth is our ancestor. The "hangers-on" of genealogical information separate truth and fiction.

Use the bits and pieces, the "hangers-on" of genealogical data to clarify individuals and lead to more documents.

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Which John Wadsworth was James Wadsworth's father? It was the little bits and pieces, the hangers-on of genealogical data, that revealed James' one true father.

James Wadsworth was baptized 22 Feb 1768 in Kirkburton, Yorkshire, England, son of John Wadsworth.

The parish registers and an early family letter left no doubt that this particular James Wadsworth was my ancestor.

But who was James' father? Kirkburton parish registers indicate this James, the only one of this time and place, was the son of a John Wadsworth. But there were two Johns having children at the same time in this parish. The mother's name was not given in these early records, but the place of baptism was.

Holding the long list of John Wadsworths' children, I approached a professional researcher for help. The professional researcher pulled out a huge, very detailed map of Kirkburton parish which included many miniparishes only a mile or two apart.

The parish registers showed many children on my list were baptized in New Mill, one of those miniparishes within Kirkburton. Obviously, they represented one family. The other John Wadsworth's children were baptized in Penistone, Holmfirth and Kirkburton itself. James, baptized in Kirkburton, belonged to the second John Wadsworth. The bits and pieces attached to the parish registers of Kirkburton had revealed James Wadsworth's father.

Another bit of information sometimes “hung on” to parish registers was the father’s occupation. That bit made it easy to tell Peter Wilkinson the shoe maker’s kids from Peter Wilkinson the cutler’s kids. Like now, people did change jobs, but if a man started out as a laborer he probably would not become a gentleman or attorney or physician. But a laborer could well be a cutler, chair maker or brick maker.

Kirkburton and Bradford were not far from the industrial town of Sheffield, England. Some of the industrial occupations listed in the 1700s of that area were “bodymaker,” “bose maker,” “fork grinder,” “razor smith,” “staymaker,” and “cutler.”

William Broadbent was listed in Sheffield, England parish registers as a cutler. So, paying attention to that hanger-on of information, I turned to “Apprentice and Freeman Records of the Cutler Company” in *History of the Company of Cutlers in Hallamshire in the County of York, Vol II* by Robert Eadon Leader, printed in Sheffield in 1906. William Broadbent was in that book, the son of John, apprenticed to Sam Turner, knifemaker for seven years in 1797.

William’s father John’s apprenticeship was in the book, and his father’s and his. Those cutler records took me back to Wayne Broadbent, born about 1590!

Parish registers, probates, the Culleton Collection, and tax records proved the cutler ancestry was true and provided names of children and wives with their baptisms, marriages and burials. Six generations found, because I paid attention to a little bit and piece, the addition of the word “cutler” to an ancestor’s record.

The little bits and pieces of data in censuses lead to many other records. For example, in the 1930 census of the United States, item 7 of the census form asks if the home is “owned or rented.” If it is owned, deeds will be available. Item 15, “age at first marriage” can reveal a second marriage. Item 16, “attended school or college...” may lead a researcher to school and college records. “Year of immigration...,” item 22, has allowed me to find people in Ellis Island records whose names had changed. And item 23 leads to naturalization records. Of course, “occupation” and “industry” lead to union and professional documents. If the person was a veteran, the wonderful world of military records spreads wide.

Bits and pieces, the hangers-on of genealogical records, can make the difference between accurate pedigrees and completely bogus ancestry. Record the bits and pieces and let them work for you.^[1]

Continue Wadsworth research with these steps.

Anyone who would like to continue the Wadsworth research should consider taking the following steps. And I do hope someone will feel excited about doing it.

First, go back to Kirkburton parish and all its little towns, churches, and residences to find the burial of John Wadsworth, another marriage for him if there is one, a burial of his oldest child, Elizabeth, etc. Look at histories, genealogies, parish registers, wills, tax lists, anything and everything covering the critical time period of 1750 to 1775 for every Wads/Wordsworth by any spelling and for every Mitchel by any spelling. The Family History Library in Salt Lake City has a substantial collection of such items.

Second, if step one confirms or at least does not disprove that John Wadsworth who md Hannah Mitchel is indeed the father of our James, continue with this second step. It would be wise for the researcher to see a photocopy of the actual 1755 marriage entry between John Wadsworth and Hannah Mitchell to make sure it does say Bradford rather than Bradfield.

**There was a John Wadsworth christening in Little Horton, Bradford, Yorkshire, England
5 Mar**

1726 to Christopher Wadsworth and Jane Calvert. Another child of this Christopher is Christopher Wadsworth chr abt 1730 in Bradford. However, I have not searched the Bradford parish registers myself. This must be done.

This parish should be searched for other John Wadsworths. If the John Wadsworths in Bradford are all accounted for, that is they were either buried before they were old enough to marry and father our James, or if they married someone else in or near Bradford parish, continue with the next steps.

The next researcher must answer these questions before accepting the above: Was John Wadsworth chr 1726, son of Christopher buried in Bradford too early to father the above family? Did he marry in this or another parish showing he was a different man than the one who married Hannah Mitchel? Is there any reason he could not be the same person as the man who married Hannah Mitchel? And is there a will or land record showing he did marry Hannah Mitchel? And was the man who married Hannah Mitchel the son of Christopher Wadsworth? Are there other John Wadsworths of Bradford who could be our ancestor?

So the Christopher Wadsworth who married Jane Calvert in Bradford is most likely to be our John's father – if our John Wadsworth is indeed of Bradford. The actual image of this christening can be found at [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com). A copy is in Box 43.

If our John Wadsworth is not from Bradford...

If our John Wadsworth is of Bradfield, his father could be William. However, the Bradfield christening could also represent another child of William and Anne Stead Wadsworth who died before his grandfather, Thomas Stead, wrote the will mentioned above. Perhaps another John Wadsworth can be found in Bradfield, though I didn't see one.

There are at least three possible John Wadsworth christenings in Penistone. At first glance it looks like they might all belong to the same family, each named for a baby who died. If it can be shown that our John did not come from either Bradford or Bradfield [which I doubt], Penistone is the next logical location to look for him.

Box 43 contains a file called “John – possible Wadsworth Analysis” of family members showing many possible John Wads/Wordsworths.

Results

As of 8 May 2012, our Wadsworth pedigree may look like this, but I wouldn't add Christopher to my database until further research has been done. [The name Christopher is not duplicated in our family, so much care must be taken before accepting him as an ancestor.]

George Allen Wadsworth à William Wadsworth à James Wadsworth à John Wadsworth à Christopher Wadsworth [?]

This report can be found in GEORGE ALLEN WADSWORTH - PILLEY TO PANACA 30TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION starting on p 95 of the new part of the book.

Sources

Bedford, Edwin Jackson. *Genealogical Memoranda Relating to the Family of Wordsworth*. 1881. Pedigree of Wordsworth Family of Penistone, etc., County York, FHL 1702216 #2. Has errors.

Box 43 with overflow in Boxes 42, 69 and 91. *Wadsworth Research Collection* including parish registers from Frank Smith and other professional researchers, probates, Culleton Collection entries, Research Reports, etc. from 1953 when professionals were first engaged by Lory and Myrtle Joy Wadsworth Free to the present. In poss of Helen LaRae Free Kerr of Spanish Fork, UT, kerrworks@sfcn.org.

Claremont Archaeology Society Genealogy Materials. Mss 14D GSf 894681 including Wordsworth - Kirkburton and Peniston Part 1: extracts from parish registers etc. 1644-1738, in Claremont Archaeological Society: Leeds, Yorkshire, England. St Paul's MS 307, Family History Library SLC, FHL 894634.

Harleian Society. *Familiae Minorum Gentium*, Vols 1-4. *Hunter's Pedigree – A Continuation of Familium Minorum Gentium*. *Universal British Directory*. Archive CD Books. 5 Commercial Street, Cinderford, Glos. GL14 2RP. England. CDs in poss LaRae Free Kerr. www.archivecdbooks.org.

Smith, Frank. *Research Binders*. Research director for lines of Lory M and Myrtle Joy Wadsworth Free. The last time I visited with him, I asked him for his notebooks pertaining to our family. He went over to the shelves, pulled them off and handed them to me. Therefore, several of his notebooks are in Box 43. LaRae Free Kerr.

Temple Index Bureau Cards. Data transcribed from early temple records onto cards. They were in use before Internet, phones that could take pictures, even before copy machines. Genealogical Society of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT. The Wadsworth TIBs I refer to here were extracted by Diane Meilstrup about 1982-3 though we had earlier copies of them from hired researchers.

Whitehead, Geoffrey. *Personal pedigree*. HNC 54 Mount Crescent, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF2 8QQ Eng, 6, copy in poss LaRae Free Kerr, Letter dated 21 Feb 2002. Some errors.

[1] Kerr, LaRae Free. *Its All Relatives Columns*. This book includes the columns I wrote over more than five years that were published in the *Logan Herald Journal*, *Las Vegas Desert Saints*, *Provo Daily Herald* and two ezines at various times. Visit www.freefamilyhistorybook.com or www.itsallrelatives.org.