

IN SEARCH OF A NAME

[Part 1]

I started off life by being totally confused. My father said I was Wilfreda 'Waddle' but it was spelt WADDELL. Then I learnt my father's name. It was 'Alexander Woodall Waddell' and I was told 'WOODALL' was the way they spelt it in 1600. Other children called my mother 'Mrs ODDLE' but grownups called her 'Mrs WEDDELL'. The school then decided to call me 'Freda' as the other children started calling me 'Ducky' It was all too much for me and left me with a sense that I did not belong to anyone. This was further enhanced by the fact that this all occurred in Canada before I was ten when we came to Ireland. There I started meeting relatives for the very first time. So I tended to look at relatives in a different light from those reared in a family group. As I got older I often wondered how much of an individual is but a reflection not only physically but emotionally and mentally of the generations that went before. We really know little of what they were like.

I know my father was proud of the fact he had served in India, proud of his ancestry, had real religious faith and a sense of public duty. He was argumentative, dictatorial and extremely frustrated by my mother. She having been supported by her family for the first eighteen years of her life and always given what she wanted would sulk if something was not to her choice. Although she had some sight after operations on her eyes she still wanted to be spoilt and Dad adored her and I really felt left out at times. She wanted me to stay a baby for her to spoil and my desire to explore both physically and mentally went against the grain. After my father's death she considered me her exclusive property – not something that made for an easy life.

When I was about 12 my father asked me to copy an old family tree. This I did but my gut feeling was that there was something wrong. Life intervened and left me with little time to ponder. But it was always there in the back of my mind. Retirement loomed and I looked objectively at what I do with my new life style. I had a frail husband rather older than myself to consider and had to accept the constraints that would place on my activities. However it did not stop me starting my research. At this time I lived in London so how would I start? The old family tree was based on family papers in an old tin trunk. There were copies of wills, letters. Land deeds, bills – the accumulation of nearly 400 years in one place – I knew it was but a portion that had been there when my grandfather died. My aunts cleaned up the study and two cartloads were dumped in the lake.

This was in the North of Ireland – it was obvious we were incomers but there was no direct indication of our origins except for a legal document that was totally unrelated to anything else. It was about a claim for a barony called Wahull in Bedfordshire and showed their descent from 1066. There was no way of knowing how it came to be there except it might have come from my great great grandfather Reeves who was as nose-y as me – his research was into ancient Irish History.

Initially I decided to see what the phonebooks of the UK would reveal as to the present distribution of the name. It showed me that if I went to Scotland it would be Waddell or Weddell. Waddle and Woodall appeared in the north of England – then Woodall and Udall further south. Odell and Wodhull appeared around Bedfordshire and Waddell again in Kent. I had my London pensioner's travel pass so could move all over London visiting libraries, the Record Office at Kew, The British Library, Chancery Lane, Somerset House, Births, deaths and Marriages, the Library in the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey to name but a few. I have ended up with a file for every county in England. And I found over a hundred variations in the spelling of the name.

This was becoming a 'one name' study. I needed help so I turned to the telephone directories for the whole of the UK. I wrote to all the Irish addresses - mostly in the north. Put the Scotch ones aside and chose a selection of those in England so that I covered the areas where the main names were concentrated and sent out a circular letter. Amazingly 60% replied – how could I keep track of them? This was when the personal computer was in its infancy so I bought an Amstrad and I was on my way.

We also bought a motor home. In this we travelled the length and breadth of the British Isles seeing the country and finding where many of my 'names' had lived as well as haunting the libraries and record offices we came across. We only turned for home when it got too cold. Our dog had a wonderful time. Later I went across to France for a wedding and on the way south of Poitiers suddenly spotted a signpost marked Vyvonne. That was the key that unlocked my efforts to connect the Wahulls of Bedfordshire with my Scottish ancestors. It had taken 26 years.

When it came to our name dialect, locality, snobbery, lack of spelling rules, and then standardization has all played their part. I have had to be open-minded and also attempt to evaluate the landholdings of any particular person as this could show there had been a marriage. This especially applied in the middle ages before surnames evolved. Heraldry has played a big part because it was original material and early heraldic bearings really indicate a lot. Most people start with themselves and work back through the generations until they fizzle out. But the interesting thing about my research was that I was working in two directions. Firstly back on all my Irish material which I eventually managed to link with

Scottish records. But at the same time I was trying to extend the Wodhull pedigree, just in case it would provide a link to my Scottish research.

The Wahull pedigree started in the 12th century, so I turned to the Domesday Survey and found that two brothers Seier and Walter de Lens, grandsons of Count Eustace of Boulogne had come to England with King William 'The Conqueror'. He was their step-uncle as their father had married secondly Adele, William's sister. But he was killed in 1054 and left a baby girl, Judith, later Countess of Northumberland, their stepsister. They were given land in five counties including Bedfordshire where their castle was at 'Wadhelle' now called Odell

With that lineage I realised they were part of the bluest blood in Europe as they were descendants of the Emperor Charlemagne of the Holy Roman Empire, but also descendants of the early Scandinavians who had settled in Flanders. Count Eustace II, their uncle was related to the Saxon Kings of England as well. His first wife had been Goda the sister of King Edward the Confessor.

I thought it was because of this background, and the fact they were quite young in 1066, that they are unrecorded in English history after 1066. But I was wrong. Seier, was involved with his grandfather in the uprising by the Men of Kent and made himself scarce by going to Scotland whose Queen, Margaret was a Saxon princess. Walter might well have been hostage for his grandfather's good behaviour as he moved around with King William. I found his name as witness to some of the early English cathedral charters. In Flemish records he is called '*Gautier le Vieux*' - 'Old Walter' and I found he did go back home to Flanders.

Seier was welcomed in Scotland and given land on the Firth of Forth from where his family took their name - Seton. They are a family well recorded in the history of Scotland until Elizabethian times, when having remained faithful servants of Mary Queen of Scots, they became but a name their descendants are proud to bear.

Walter the Fleming, the Baron of Wahull, named in the survey of 1068 could have been a son of either of the brothers. In Scotland there was Walter '*Dougal*' - 'The Dark Stranger' and 'Walter' *The English*'. In Flanders there was Walter '*le Jeune*' - The Younger. They were the 'jet set' of that era and probably went on the Crusades that started in 1086. It is evident that they had descendants in all three countries. Their cousins were the first two rulers of Jerusalem. In medieval times with no surnames as we know them younger sons usually took the name of the land that was their wife's dowry or a gift from the sovereign and in many cases they used that coat of arms as well. So I find that many of the families who incorporate the 'de Lens' crescents of 'de Wahull' go back to a marriage with the family

In England when a baron dies his death is recorded along with the name of the heir and his age, These records go back to the Norman era so the first baron was succeeded eventually by Simon who died in 1166. He and his wife gave a church to the Knights Templars and money to a convent at Godstow, Oxfordshire where his two daughters were nuns and among his sons was one called William who I suspect was the Fitzsimon who was with John de Lacy and was given land near Downpatrick in County Down. I found 'de Lens' had been there before and witnessed John de Courcy's charter for Nendrum Abbey.

Simon's granddaughter married a de Malherbe of Tacleston, Norfolk and that land passed to her nephew John d'Uvadale – pronounced 'Oudal' This family died out in Norfolk after the Black Death and eventually were in Surrey, Hampshire and Dorset. One of the sons married and moved into Staffordshire where the name became Udal and Woodall. When King Henry VIII was around he complained '*His servants John Woodall, of the Council of The North at York and Sir William Uvadale of Wickam, secretary of the Star Chamber, were so alike in mein and manner he could scarce tell them apart*'

Another double take was when one of my family Gilbert Waddell –Deputy Inspector of the Indian Police, from Magheralin, County Down met up with a Colonel Jackson in India, who it transpired had a great grandmother called Amelia Waddell Her family originated from the Jedburgh in Scotland. Back to the de Wahull family- Simon the next Baron died in 1196 having fallen overboard at Acre while on Crusade.

And so to King John's reign when the then baron married a daughter of a Frenchman Hugh de Vyvonne whose wife was Mabel Malet. He was a cousin of the 'de Lusignan' family. whose Count was the second husband of Eleanor, King John's widow. And suddenly the information starts to dry up. It could be because several generations of the barony inherited when very young or it could be because a cousin was the Thomas de Gurney involved with 'the murder' of King Edward II in 1327

Baron John de Wahull d 1295 who was one of the Magna Carta barons married Agnes de Pinkenay, daughter of Alice de Lindsay. She was a granddaughter of Marjorie of Huntingdon, a granddaughter of the King of Scotland. So there was a Scottish connection and English records of both Edward I and III name de Wahulls in Scotland.

It is likely a lot of my difficulties in tracing family members during the Wars of the Barons is because they did not have a common allegiance and some even switched sides several times. The same thing happened when the Reformation started and during the Commonwealth. This effected families for generations. The Barons are named through the Tudor period. Queen Katherine Parr was aunt to one of the wives. A

daughter, mistress of the bedchamber was married to Thomas a cousin of Queen Jane Seymour and the widow of an Uvadale married Jane Howard's father. Talk about keeping up with the Jones family – Dad always said we were the Jones family as Mother's maiden name was Jones.

Religious differences during the Commonwealth sent sons to America and closer to home near Limerick in Ireland where they became Odell – a spelling still found as well around Bedfordshire and the surrounding counties. Other variations on the name occur with these families that still use the crescent of Lens in their coats of armour. I refer to Dowdell, Dillon [de Lens] Odell and Preston of Gormaston.

The interesting thing I discovered when I searched through early Scottish heraldry was that there were coat of arms for Waddells -most of them based on the earliest I found which is '*Gules [red ground] a fess checky argent and azure [a central band across the shield checked silver and azure] between three buckles or [three gold buckles]*'. This I read as red for Boulogne; silver and blue checky is for La Marche, land held by Lusignan and Vivonne with the buckles for Malet. William de Malet was William the Conqueror's commander at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. A younger son of the 'de Wodhull' Barony would not have used the 'crescents' in Scotland as they were in the arms of the Seton family but he could use the arms of his two female ancestors who were heiresses in their own right.

Walter de Wahull and Heloise de Vyvonne had a son called Walter de Forz. Forz is a place south of Lusignan and not far from Vyvonne. He married Matilda, grand-daughter of the Earl of Derby and they had four daughters. She was descended from '*Strongbow*' de Clare who invaded Ireland The earliest de Forz in England [sometimes written as *de Fortibus*']; William was a crusader friend of King Richard the Lionheart. He was married to an heiress called Hawise the daughter of the Earl of Albermarle, William 'Le Gros' who died 1170 and William became the second Earl of Albermarle. His son was constable of Rockingham Castle and died enroute to the Holy Land, leaving the 4th Earl, whose 6 children all died before their parents. One was Adeline who married Prince Edward 'Crouchback' 1st Earl of Lancaster and she is buried with him in Westminster Abbey. They had no children so the fact that a Wahull was called 'de Forz' indicates a relationship with the second Earl. who was either uncle or father of Hugh de Vivonne.

That brings me to spelling. Rules about spelling only came into being when Samuel Johnston wrote his Lexicon in the 1750s. And when you look at ancient spelling it is often difficult to decipher. Nowadays in Scotland everyone is called Waddell but two distinct pronunciations exist - WADDle and WeDELL. In England it became Wodhull and the earliest documents of my family name us as Woddall. There is mention of the family in Fife,

Perthshire, Lanarkshire and the Lothians from the 14th century. However in the past it was suggested we were Gwydell – ancient Celts – the Scotti who invaded Scotland, or that we stem from a place now called Stow in Midlothian which used to be Wedal. But it was church land so those called Wedal could have been clerics. And as clerics in Scotland could have families the name Weddell may have originated from that – especially after the reformation when clerics were again free to have families.

Part II

This is about my Waddell/Woddall family in Ireland. There is nothing grand about them – all they did was marry rich wives, have large families and die bankrupt. My father went into the Indian Army, then realised the days of the British Raj were over, so came back to Ireland wanting to farm but Grandfather said 'Islanderry' which is near Dromore County Down was an estate not a farm. Dad left Ireland, bought land in Albert Canada which he lost in the Great Depression of the 1930's.

The news he had cancer made him decide to return to Ireland because he knew my mother could not manage on her own. I had three siblings but they all died after birth – no one at that time knew how to treat the Rhesus negative condition. Nearly all my cousins are older than me and their siblings are in New Zealand and Australia. My father was one of nine children- grandfather was a bank manager – the first in the family to 'work'. He was not very sociable –the only thing he belonged to was the Masonic Order – he was Treasurer for Co Down. His wife 'Winnie' Murphy had an income of £500 a year so he had no incentive to work after World War I. When asked to go out looking for business, he resigned saying he would not grovel. Granny seems to have been related to nearly every Quaker in Ireland including Ernest Shakelton and in her youth had visited many of them. She ran a book club for many of her friends as there were no local libraries in those days. I do not think she was very interested in cooking as none of her daughters could cook a decent meal. She used to make all her children's clothes – at one stage they all had outfits made from itchy navy blue serge.

His father, Charles Douglas, was a Colonel in India and loved drawing – I have given my collection of his work to the British Library – they were drawn in India, China and Burma. I kept a sepia sketch he did of a backdrop he painted for an amateur theatre production in Bristol –when they lived at Clifton and a watercolour of a sepoy lying sleeping on the sands at Aden before they opened the Suez Canal. The two boys went to Bristol Grammar School. Great grandpapa became an alcoholic and died in a nursing home in Hammersmith London while his wife moved to Eastbourne with the two sisters who never married.

And like many young men Charles Douglas had a secret. While back in England serving with the Lifeguards at Windsor Castle he had a girlfriend called Emma by whom he had a son Charles. She died and the child was brought up by her relatives and eventually he had a pub in Henley on Thames. Charles Douglas visited the boy but no doubt his wife – another Emma, daughter of Bishop William Reeves, never knew his story. I have made contact with his descendants in Canada.

Charles Douglas had an only sister Eliza Jane, who was governess to the children of Robert Scott, the Master of Balliol College in Oxford. She would have known the original 'Alice in Wonderland'. She married as his 4th wife of Rev St John Tyrwitt who had been born in Windsor Castle when his father was commandant of Windsor Castle.

Their father was Charles Waddell, who went to Oxford and then joined the East India Company. He died of fever having married Mary the daughter of a surgeon Dr Henry Harris of Madras who wrote an early English/Hindoo dictionary – the manuscript is in the British Museum. Charles's eldest brother was in the Artillery with the Duke of Wellington in Spain. Major James George never married. He was Treasurer for Down and built the road around the lake at Islanderry – the original road was quite close to the house. I used to wake up in the night hearing horse's harness jangling and wheels creaking but when I got up and looked out of the window there were only rabbits and badgers playing on the lawn in the moonlight.

Another brother – a midshipman, died at sea off the African Coast, while the youngest brother was a clergyman, - the typical role for sons of gentry at that period. The sisters Mary Jane and Catherine Mead carried on running the estate after JG died. They employed all the old ladies to weed the avenue and gave them a red flannel petticoat at Christmas. They had a hen boy – he got 6 pence a week. Springfield [Ballykeel House] the second house on the property was in bad repair and had been sold to a Rev Dolling who restored it.

My great great grandfather was Robert who was Commissioner for Tithes. His first wife was his stepsister Elizabeth Douglas and his second wife was his cousin Jane Maitland. He had a lot of children -15 in all and died bankrupt owing £9,800 – need I say more? The reason was his father James, High Sheriff for County Down d 1794. He married his first wife in St Georges Hanover Square in London. Letitia Freeman came from Essex and no doubt was bored by her Irish existence and had an affair with one of the servants. James divorced her by private Act of Parliament and married the wealthy widow Douglas of Grace Hall Lurgan, Theodosia St George, whose marriage settlement left £700 to each of the four children of the marriage. When James died he left the same to the five children of his first marriage and the three children of his housekeeper, The total

was £84,000 – the principle was not paid off until the 1920s and there was no money for any daughter's dowry. They all ended up as old maids. There is no record of the names of the housekeeper's children.

One of my prized possessions is a mathematical exercise book dated 1767 which belonged to a Robert Waddell. And like any other boy he scribbled in the back pages and drew pictures. Another hand wrote cookery recipes in it as well. I don't think it belonged to the Robert Waddell, James's father who had married an heiress as well – Mary the daughter of Sir Cosslet Stoddard. A map of Dromore from 1790 shows how much of it was Waddell and Stoddard property. He formed the Islanderry Infantry under Lord Rawdon when there was reason to believe there would be a French Invasion in 1798. He possibly had fought in the American War of Independence. At home he was also a Grand Juror and land agent for Lady Clanwilliam a daughter of the Magills of Gillhall, the next property to Islanderry. He had a share in one of his nephew Robert's ships which brought flaxseed from New York. It was called 'The Waddell'. His brother Robert had married a Hamilton from Donegal and moved to property at Magheralin near to Lurgan and Waddells still live there now who intermarried with Lily Langree's in-laws.

One of the sons of the family was a Hugh who fought a duel and fled to Boston with his son Hugh. The son settled in North Carolina, fought with young George Washington against the French, was a General during the American War of Independence and whose descendant, Captain James Iredell Waddell of 'The Shenandoah' cost the British millions of pounds when he broke the rules of neutrality - he used Australian seamen to carry on fighting in the Pacific after the Revolutionary War was ended.

The previous generation was John Waddell who married a Ross from Rostrevor, the son of another John whose first wife was an Amelia sister of Sir Alexander Cairns, a Scottish banker who had gone to London, where he got in a mess and fled to his cousins in Donegal. A Cairns became a burgess of Belfast and latter a Member of Parliament

It then becomes very difficult to unravel the records. Another Waddell married his Cousin Waddell from Monaghan and the oldest copies of wills I found named Waddell cousins from Monaghan as executors. There are still Monaghan Waddells and some moved into Armagh and Fermanagh. The Waddell's in south Down were kin to us in Scotland but moved to Ireland at a later period. Helen Waddell, the medieval author and many of those who went to America like 'The Blind Preacher of Virginia' were part of this family

Before that another John Waddell married a Nesbitt whose family bought their land in Donegal from King James I of England – the records of that family go back in Scotland to long before anyone else. He was the first

who could have been born at Islanderry. His eldest son Alexander married a Roman Catholic so his children could not inherit and the land passed to a child of the second marriage to a Mure [Moore] of Carlingford. His father, Alexander Woddall d1635 married Elizabeth Hamilton from Thornhill in Lanarkshire. Those Hamiltons were related to the family at Dalzell Later they became the Dukes of Hamilton. They first lived at Ballymonarch a townland next to James Hamilton. later Lord Clandeboy but they must have fallen out with him because I then found them in 1622 at Lisnasure, next to Islanderry, land belonging to the Irish Lords of Iveagh. Family tradition has it that we played cards with them and they lost but had 'no silver' to pay their debt so we took over the lands at Islanderry and Ballykeel. The 1641 rebellion by the Irish was defeated and most of the Irish were evicted so we held onto the land and eventually bought English title deeds.

According to our records a James Woodall was the first in Dromore and I was told that was in 1603 but I can find no more written information about him. He might have been a butter merchant or a soldier. Some of the land at Moffathills was sold in 1634. I found there was a 'sasine' a land lease naming Waddell land both at at Moffathills near Airdrie in Lanarkshire and our Waddell land in Ireland. At last I knew we had come from Scotland. I have been there. The house is but a pile of stones but the farm buildings have Roman foundations. There is also a Roman signal post on top of the hill near where one can see signs of a prehistoric burial mound as well. I don't think we were there then.

Other Waddells in Ireland all come from the same district of Lanarkshire originally but some are Presbyterians and some are Roman Catholics but my family were all Church of Ireland and in the past that meant you really could not know each other – the trouble with Ireland and Scotland is that they had so little material wealth that their name was the most important thing they had. Now we have so much will people remember their past?

I live in Oxfordshire now and even here I have found roots. At Mollington I found Wodhulls who married cousins of Sir Walter Raleigh, watched across the valley the first battle of the Civil War at Edgehill, and nursed the wounded. Reeves cousins were town Clerks at Woodstock, Master of New College Oxford, and owned land at Eynsham. A cousin built the Bishops Palace at Witney. Crusading sons held Cassington, cousins embattled their home at Bampton and owned land now a zoo.

It does not matter where I go in England Wales Scotland Ireland and even the Channel Isles – I find the footprints of my ancestors It has been quite a journey for me but I have learnt a lot about myself, and much more about the history of the British Isles. It makes me proud that I now know a little of how my ancestors are woven into the fabric of this great nation. Good Hunting to all who read about this journey. [2012]