

**Private James Wadsworth©**  
**Regimental Number: 730632**  
**4th Canadian Infantry Battalion**

**born: 6 April 1879 – died: 20 March 1918**

James Wadsworth was born 6 April 1879, in Bickershaw, Lancashire, England, the only child of John Wadsworth and Sarah Jenks.<sup>1</sup> John was a gardener,<sup>2</sup> and had been baptized on 24 June 1855 in Badby, Northampton, England to James and Mary Ann Wadsworth.<sup>3</sup> Sarah was several years older than John, born about 1840.<sup>4</sup> John and Sarah married on 30 September 1878 in Abram, Lancashire, England.<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, Sarah died in April 1888 when James was just 9 years old.<sup>6</sup>

Six months later in October 1888, John married Emma Bull at Daventry, Northamptonshire,<sup>7</sup> and they had five children:

- Mary, who was baptized 18 May 1891 in Ribbleton, Lancashire;<sup>8</sup>
- Charlotte, who was born about 1893 in Ribbleton, Lancashire;<sup>9</sup>
- Thomas, who was born January 1895 in Leigh, Lancashire;<sup>10</sup>
- John, who was born January 1897 in Leigh, Lancashire;<sup>11</sup>
- Emma, who was born about 1899 in Chorley, Lancashire.<sup>12</sup>

In 1901 James was a 21-year-old agricultural machine painter, boarding with the Mills family in Leigh, Lancashire.<sup>13</sup> In early 1902, James married Annie Gregory at Leigh,<sup>14</sup> and early in 1903 James' father John passed away.<sup>15</sup> James and Annie had three children:

- Bessie, who was born November 1902 in Leigh;<sup>16</sup>
- Margaret, who was born 6 May 1904 in Leigh;<sup>17</sup>
- John/Jack, who was born 12 October 1907 in Leigh.<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps looking for a better future for his family, on 29 September 1910, James arrived alone at Quebec City, Quebec, on the SS *Lake Manitoba*, sailing from Liverpool. He listed his next of kin as his wife Anne, living in Leigh, and identified that he was going to Sunnyside, Utah.<sup>19</sup> Sunnyside was then developing as a major supplier of good coking quality coal and was a major supplier in the region.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps again deciding coal mining was not the best future for his family, on 24 March 1911, James arrived in Windsor, Ontario, traveling by train from Sunnyside, Utah, en route to Galt, Ontario.<sup>21</sup> In early 1911, Annie, the children, and James' brother Thomas were living in Leigh,<sup>22</sup> but on 4 June 1911, Annie and the children arrived in Quebec City aboard the SS *Megantic* to join James at Galt.<sup>23</sup> When the 1911 Census of Canada was taken, the family was together, living with the Chapman family in Galt.<sup>24</sup>

It was not until 20 March 1916 that James signed up for the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force in Galt. He was then 37 years old, a caretaker, with "black turning grey" hair.<sup>25</sup> He was recruited to the 111th (South Waterloo) Overseas Battalion, CEF,<sup>26</sup> but transferred to the 4th Canadian Infantry Battalion on 14 November 1916.<sup>27</sup> James was endowed with the Military Medal, as published in the *London Gazette* on 13 March 1918 just a week before his death:

For conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty during the operations at PASSCHENDAELE RIDGE, on November 5, 1917. On the night of the 5th, when his platoon was proceeding to the assembly area, Pte. WADSWORTH was acting as stretcher bearer. The platoon came

under some very heavy shell fire, scattering them and leaving several wounded. This man, with utter disregard of his own safety, went about dressing the wounded, some of whom were in a critical condition. His prompt attention and skilful appliance of the bandages undoubtedly saved lives and his calm, fearless, behaviour was a wonderful example to his comrades.<sup>28</sup>

James was admitted to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 19 March 1918 at the age of 38, and died the next day of shrapnel wounds to his left chest and peritonitis.<sup>29</sup> Peritonitis can result from any rupture of the abdomen, and as in James' case, can lead to a life-threatening infection throughout the body.<sup>30</sup> Just days after James died, No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station was evacuated and moved further behind the lines.<sup>31</sup> It is therefore likely that James was killed during a harsh attack of the advancing enemy during the "First Battles of the Somme."<sup>32</sup>

James was buried on 21 March 1918 in the Barlin Communal Cemetery Extension, Barlin, France, at Plot II, Row E, Grave 33. The extension was commenced by French troops in October 1914, but was taken over by Commonwealth forces in March 1916. In November 1917, Barlin began to be shelled and the hospital was moved back to Ruitz, but the extension was used again in March and April 1918 during the German advance on this front. The extension contains 1,095 Commonwealth burials of the Great War.<sup>33</sup>

In 1921, Annie and the three children were living together in Galt. Bessie, 17, was a shipper, and Margaret, 15, was a spinner.<sup>34</sup> In August 1921, Annie remarried John Robson, also an English expat.<sup>35</sup> Son John, a bus driver, died in 1932 at the age of 24 of a stomach ulcer with haemorrhage.<sup>36</sup> It is believed that both of the girls remained in Canada, eventually settling in Hamilton.<sup>37</sup>

© 2017 BIFHSGO

---

<sup>1</sup> "Wigan, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813–1911," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for James Wadsworth

<sup>2</sup> "1881 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for John Wadsworth, Registration district: Wigan, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 3, Piece: 3771, Folio: 48, Page: 1

<sup>3</sup> "Northamptonshire, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813–1912," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for John Wadsworth, Register type: Bishops Transcripts, Search Photos: Badby, Northamptonshire, England, Phillimore Ecclesiastical Parish Map: 7748

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> "Graham/Hayes Family Tree," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Sarah Jenks [*this family tree has transcribed the info with the following additional info: Lancs BMD Re: C7/1/209*]

<sup>6</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 21 January 2017), entry for Sarah Wadsworth, Registration district: Preston, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 8e, Page: 374

<sup>7</sup> "Graham/Hayes Family Tree," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Emma Bull [*this family tree has transcribed the info with the following additional info: Nat Registrar General Indexes 3b 218*]

<sup>8</sup> "Lancashire, England, Births and Baptisms, 1813–1911," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Mary Wadsworth, Reference number: Pr 3310/1/1

<sup>9</sup> "Lancashire, England, Births and Baptisms, 1813–1911," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Charlotte Wadsworth, Reference number: Pr 3310/1/1

- 
- <sup>10</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Thomas Wadsworth, Registration district: Leigh, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 8c, Page: 303
- <sup>11</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for John Wadsworth, Registration district: Leigh, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 8c, Page: 296
- <sup>12</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Emma Wadsworth, Registration district: Chorley, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 8e, Page: 371
- <sup>13</sup> "1901 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for James Wadsworth, Registration district: Leigh, Sub-registration district: Leigh, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 01, Household schedule number: 225, Piece: 3592, Folio: 23, Page: 38
- <sup>14</sup> "England and Wales, Marriage Registration Index," *FamilySearch* ([www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for James Wadsworth, Registration district: Leigh, County: Lancashire, Volume: 8C, Page: 401, Line Number: 24
- <sup>15</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1916–2007," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 29 January 2017), entry for John Wadsworth, Registration district: Wigan, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 8c, Page: 3
- <sup>16</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Bessie Wadsworth, Registration district: Leigh, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 8c, Page: 332
- <sup>17</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Margaret Wadsworth, Registration district: Leigh, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 8c, Page: 319
- <sup>18</sup> "England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837–1915," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for John Wadsworth, Registration district: Leigh, Inferred county: Lancashire, Volume: 8c, Page: 276
- <sup>19</sup> "U.S., Border Crossings from Canada to U.S., 1895–1956," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for James Wadsworth, Arrival port: Windsor
- <sup>20</sup> "Sunnyside Coal Mines, Whitmore Canyon," *UtahRails.net* (<http://utahrails.net/utahcoal/utahcoal-sunnyside.php>: accessed February 2, 2017)
- <sup>21</sup> "Border Crossings: From U.S. to Canada, 1908–1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2016), entry for James Wadsworth, Record Type: Manifests
- <sup>22</sup> "1911 England Census," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Annie Wadsworth, Registration district: Leigh, Registration district number: 460, Sub-registration district: Leigh, Enumeration district, institution, or vessel: 8, Piece: 23216
- <sup>23</sup> "Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865–1935," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Annie Wadsworth
- <sup>24</sup> "1911 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for James Wadsworth, Province: Ontario, District: Waterloo South, District number: 131, Sub-district: 17 - Galt, Sub-district number: 17
- <sup>25</sup> "Personnel Records of the First World War," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/first-world-war/personnel-records/Pages/item.aspx?IdNumber=294420>: accessed 25 January 2017) entry for James Wadsworth, Reference: RG 150 Accession 1992-93/166, Box 9980 - 14, Item number: 294420
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>27</sup> "Records of the Fourth Canadian Infantry Battalion in the Great War 1914–1918," compiled by Capt. W. L. Gibson, Paymaster and Historian, 1924, The Maclean Publishing Company Limited, University Avenue,

---

Toronto, *Internet Archive* (<https://archive.org/details/records00gibsuoft>: accessed 20 January 2017), page 219

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* page 269

<sup>29</sup> "No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* ([www.bifhsgo.ca](http://www.bifhsgo.ca): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Wadsworth, J.

<sup>30</sup> "Diseases and Conditions Peritonitis," *Mayo Clinic* (<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/peritonitis/basics/definition/con-20032165>: accessed 29 January 2017)

<sup>31</sup> "War Diaries of the First World War, 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13-1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* ([http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202\\_e.html&r=1&f=G](http://data4.collectionscanada.gc.ca/netacgi/nph-brs?s1=casualty+clearing&s13=&s12=&l=20&s9=RG9&s7=9-52&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect2=THESOFF&Sect4=AND&Sect5=WARDPEN&Sect6=HITOFF&d=FINDD&p=1&u=http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/archivianet/02015202_e.html&r=1&f=G): accessed 13 December 2016)

<sup>32</sup> "The First Battles of the Somme, 1918," *The Long, Long Trail, The British Army in the Great War of 1914–1918* (<http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/battles/battles-of-the-western-front-in-france-and-flanders/the-first-battles-of-the-somme-1918/>: accessed 17 December 2016)

<sup>33</sup> *Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, ([www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery](http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery) accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Barlin Communal Cemetery Extension

<sup>34</sup> "1921 Census of Canada," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Anne Wadsworth, Province or territory: Ontario, District: Waterloo South, District number: 137, Sub-district: Galt (City), Sub-district number: 32, City, town or village: Galt City

<sup>35</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Marriages, 1801–1928," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Ann Wadsworth

<sup>36</sup> "Ontario, Canada, Deaths, 1869–1938 and Deaths Overseas, 1939–1947," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Jack Wadsworth

<sup>37</sup> "Graham/Hayes Family Tree," *Ancestry* ([www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com): accessed 20 January 2017), entry for Bessie and Margaret Wadsworth