

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

JANUARY 1943—DECEMBER 1947



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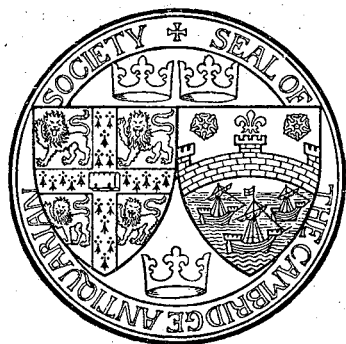
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**CAMBRIDGE
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EDITOR'S NOTE

The editor wishes to take this opportunity of expressing her thanks to Mr J. H. Bullock for the very great assistance which he has given her, throughout her term of office, in the production of the Society's publications. His advice has been invaluable and his help so constantly available that he has been, in effect, co-editor. Unfortunately the failing eyesight which all his friends so deeply deplore has prevented him from helping in the production of this volume, for the delay in producing which as well as for any shortcomings in its editing members are asked to accept the editor's apologies.



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No. 5 MARKET HILL, CAMBRIDGE

BY SIR ALFRED CLAPHAM, F.S.A., F.B.A.

THE house now called No. 5 Market Hill and standing about the middle of the east side of the Market Place is a timber-framed building perhaps of the seventeenth century or possibly earlier, but the actual timber structure is nowhere apparent and it can only be said that it is earlier than the ceiling, within it, dated 1688. The house is now the offices of the L.N.E. Railway and of R. I. Severs, printers. The old appearance of the front is shown in Rowlandson's View of the Market Place of 1801, but this view has transformed the hood over the front balcony into the round head of a window, which could never have actually existed owing to the ceiling-levels. This hood is an unusually early example of the shell-hood which is more typical of the age of Queen Anne, at any rate in the London area; it is dated 1688 and is carved with cherubs. The balcony, of the same period, is fenced with scrolled and twisted wrought ironwork of somewhat archaic character for that date. The finest feature of the house, however, is the elaborate plaster ceiling of the main first-floor room. This has a central and bordering panels enriched with modelling and bearing the date 1688. The central panel encloses an oval wreath of fruit and flowers, within which is a sky of conventional clouds with birds and a central mask. The bordering panels are gapped on each side to admit two cartouches of the Watson arms and two representations of the arms of the Drapers' Company, each within a wreath of bay. The border-panels have elaborate scrolled acanthus-foliage in which are represented a stag-hunt, a boar-hunt, a monkey and other animals and birds. The shields bearing the date have bay-leaf sprays.

The ceiling is of such unusual excellence for a house of this modest size and importance that it is evident that it is the product of a first-class craftsman, and, fortunately, it is possible to identify him with some degree of certainty. This is due to the survival of another and much more elaborate ceiling in the Old Library at Pembroke College, dated 1690 (two years after that at Market Hill) and recorded in the College Accounts as the work of Henry Doogood, plasterer. A comparison of the two ceilings will show a remarkable uniformity in the treatment of the conventional clouds, in the form of the bay-leaf sprays, in the stag and boar-hunts and in the form of the shields bearing the dates. These equations form a very strong case that the ceilings are from the same hand, as comparison with other con-

PLATE VII



No. 5 Market Hill, Cambridge

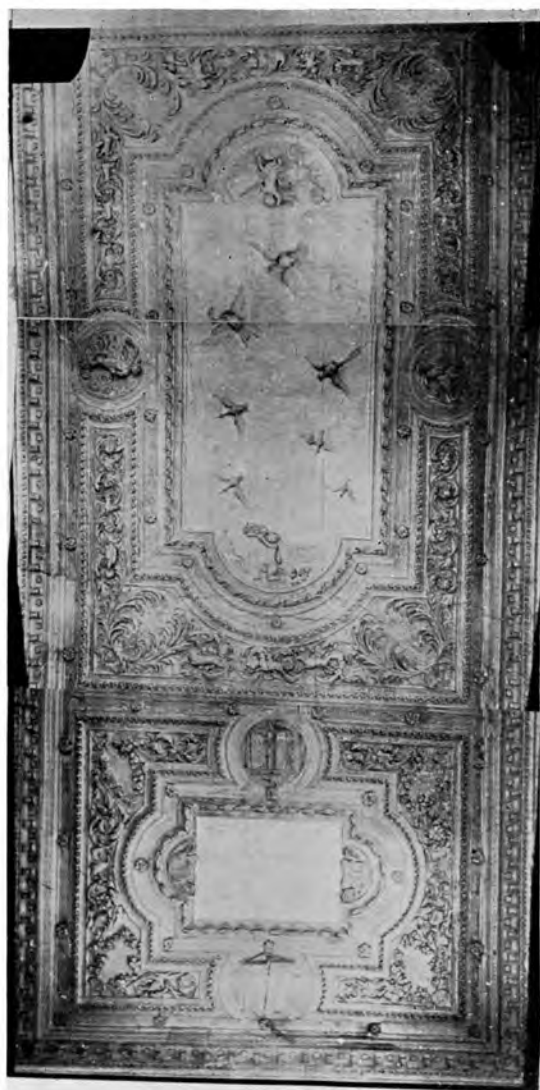


No. 5 Market Hill, Cambridge



No. 5 Market Hill, Cambridge

PLATE VIII



Pembroke College, Cambridge. Old Library

temporary, or nearly contemporary work in Cambridge presents no such close parallels, and this in spite of the fact that John Grove, who worked on Trinity Library, belonged to the same school and indeed collaborated with Doogood in certain other structures.

Henry Doogood was one of the distinguished and competent band of craftsmen who were trained and exercised in the erection of Sir Christopher Wren's City churches and other buildings. Doogood was presumably a Londoner, at any rate by adoption, and the fortunate survival of the Accounts¹ for the building of the City churches enables us to assess exactly his contribution to that work. He was engaged on the plasterwork of no less than thirty of these buildings, in twenty instances in collaboration with John Grove, in one in collaboration with John Combes, and in the other nine cases alone. As all these nine churches come late in the list, chronologically, it is possible that John Grove was then dead or had retired. Of the nine churches in which Doogood worked alone, Christ Church Newgate Street, St Swithin, St Margaret Lothbury, St Andrew by the Wardrobe and St Michael Paternoster Royal survived until the great blitz, from the effects of which two alone, St Margaret Lothbury and St Michael Paternoster Royal, escaped.

The plasterwork in these churches is not readily comparable with the work at Cambridge as, apart from the use of cherubs and cherub-heads, the decoration is largely confined to those flower and foliage-bands which vary little in the work of different craftsmen and are consequently not evidential as to authorship. It may well be that Doogood worked also on the plasterwork of the City Companies' Halls, but the evidence, though no doubt extant, is not readily available.

So far it has been possible to pursue the history of the work with some assurance, but the question still remains open for whom or in what circumstances work of this character came to be put up in Market Hill. The work itself supplies nothing but the date 1688, the family arms and the arms of the Drapers' Company. As to the family arms, they almost certainly are those of Watson, the only other two families bearing the same coat having no demonstrable connection with Cambridge. We should thus require a person of some wealth and standing of the name of Watson and by trade or descent a draper. No. 5 Market Hill is in the parish of Great St Mary, and the records of that parish show that a William Watson was churchwarden in the years 1679 and 1690; we may thus infer that William Watson is the person in question in the absence of any other competitors in the same parish.

¹ *Archaeologia*, Vol. LXVI, p. 1.

There were, however, at or about that time, two William Watsons of distinct families resident in, or connected with Cambridge, of which the one belonging to the second family¹ was the son of John Watson of Hull and brother of Thomas Watson, Bishop of St Davids. The ledger-stone of this William Watson at Cherry Hinton shows that he bore the same arms as those on the ceiling (*a cheveron between three martlets with three crescents on the cheveron*), and the pedigree of 1684 entered at the Heralds' College has a note that the arms, which are those of Watson of Rockingham, cannot be allowed. This family, however, does not concern us. The William Watson, who, as we shall see, set up the ceiling, used the same arms, almost certainly with an equal lack of justification, a practice which, common enough at the period, is not often found in two families of the same name and residing at the same time in the same place.

Turning now to the William Watson of Great St Mary's, the information relating to him and his family is preserved in the Day Books of the Corporation of Cambridge, in the Registers of Great St Mary's Church and in the will of the second William Watson entered in the Registry of the Archdeaconry of Ely. From the parish registers it appears that the first William Watson was buried at St Mary's on 21 August 1686 and that Margaret his wife was buried in 1680. His son William was baptized on 25 July 1665 and had at least five brothers and a sister;² one of the brothers, the Rev. John Watson, who became Vicar of Wittering (Northants), is mentioned in the second William's will. This William, 'son of William Watson Burgess deceased', was admitted a free burgess in 1686, as is shown by the Day Books,³ and served from 1696 to 1702 as an alderman,⁴ his removal being due to the fact that he had ceased to reside in the town for a twelvemonth. He had leases⁵ from the Corporation of various properties within their jurisdiction, and died in 1722, his

¹ H. P. Stokes, *A History of Wilbraham Parishes*. 1926.

² Jonathan, buried 11 April 1671; John, bap. 28 Nov. 1667; Joseph and Jonathan, bap. 9 Apr. 1671; Joseph, bap. 10 Feb. 1676-7, and Frances, bap. 19 Mar. 1675-6.

³ There is a second admission, apparently of the same person, dated 8 Jan. 1689, which may imply that the first admission did not for some reason come into force. The admission of 1686 gives the trade of the father as Linen-draper.

⁴ As recorded in the Day Books, 'he was sworn Alderman on Aug. 17th, 1696, and his office was declared vacant on Aug. 24th, 1702'. A note under 30 Jan. 1701-2 records that he 'hath departed and dwelt out of this town for the space of a year last past'. See also Cooper's *Annals*, pp. 39, 42 and 45.

⁵ Recorded in the Day Books. Land, etc., at Stourbridge, The Bow and Barnwell and extending down to 24 Aug. 1719.

will¹ describing him as a gentleman, possessing property in the counties of Cambridge, Hunts, Beds and elsewhere and referring to his only son Thomas Watson, his daughter Elizabeth and his brother the Rev. John Watson. According to the parish registers his wife was named Elizabeth, and the baptisms² of three daughters and one son between the years 1689 and 1693 are there recorded, though not that of the surviving son Thomas. That this second William Watson is the person who set up the ceiling in Market Hill in 1688 is rendered almost certain from a number of considerations. First, he was a person of substance and served for six years as Alderman; he is the only person of the name appearing in the Day Books or the parish registers during the period of 30 years after his father's death in 1686; the records of his father and himself are entered in the registers of Great St Mary's in which parish No. 5 Market Hill stands; and, finally, his father is described in the Day Books as burgess and linen-draper and the Drapers' arms with those of Watson appear on the ceiling. The first baptism of a child of the second William is recorded in 1689, and it is permissible to surmise that the redecoration in 1688 of the house on Market Hill was undertaken by him in anticipation of his marriage.

It has seemed desirable that the survival of work of such quality, together with its personal background, should be brought to the notice of the Society, as, though no doubt known to many, the building has not, so far as I am aware, found a place hitherto in any published record.

I am indebted, in the preparation of this paper, to the assistance of the late Mr A. T. Butler, *Windsor Herald*, and to Mr. Parfitt of the firm of Messrs R. I. Severs for readily granting me access to the building.

¹ Archd. of Ely, Original Wills No. 22. William Watson of Cambridge, dated 16 Feb. 1713. Admon. 1 June 1722. It refers to his daughter Elizabeth, wife of Richard Maris of Kimbolton, Apothecary, his only son Thomas Watson (a minor at date of will), his brother Rev. John Watson of Wittering (Northants) and his brother-in-law the Rev. Samuel Taylor of Conington (Hunts).

² Elizabeth, bap. 3 Apr. 1689; bur. 21 Dec. 1690; Elizabeth, bap. 30 July 1691; John, bap. 18 July 1693, bur. 1 Aug. 1693, and Susanna, bap. 15 Aug. 1695 and bur. 26 Aug. 1695.

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