

The Winslows: An American Family and Its Coat of Arms

by
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Introduction

“Yea, I have a goodly heritage.” (Psalm 16:6) In many ways, the story of the Winslow family in America is the story of many immigrant families to what is now the United States. Nothing especially exceptional or out of the ordinary. And yet, the Winslow family has established and maintained a sense of family, an identity, a “goodly heritage,” both through its family lines and the use of its heraldry, the Winslow coat of arms.

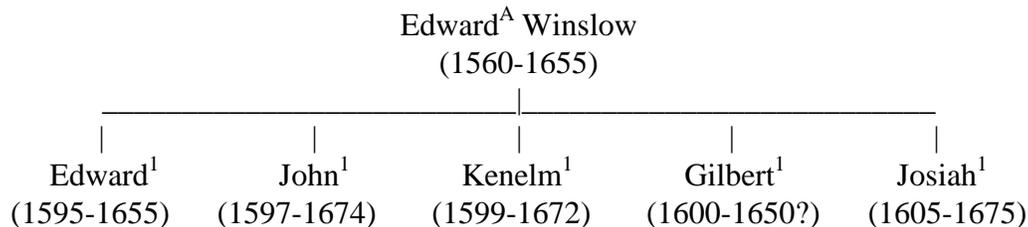
For those of you who may not have run across it before, and to explain some of the numbers and letters you will be seeing in this presentation, I will briefly describe the use of American genealogical generation notation

In American genealogy, the Atlantic Ocean is the dividing line. The original immigrant to America in a family is the first generation; his or her children are the second generation; his or her grandchildren are the third generation; and so on. Each individual is normally marked with the appropriate generation number in superscript following his or her given name(s).

Going back the other direction, to the family before the original immigrant, the generations are marked with letters in the same way as the numbers are, only in reverse. The parents of the immigrant are noted with an A; the grandparents of immigrant with a B; and so on.

The Five Winslow Brothers

The story of the Winslow family in America begins as a tale of five brothers: Edward, John, Kenelm, Gilbert, and Josiah, the sons of Edward and Magdalen Winslow.



Well, okay, it’s a tale of four brothers, since Gilbert returned to England and died there, childless.

Well, maybe a tale of three brothers. Josiah had a son, who himself had two sons (Josiah’s grandsons), but I have been unable (thus far) to trace them beyond that point.

There was also an older half-brother, Richard, who never left England, but since this presentation is about the Winslow family in America, we are not including him here.

So, in my best Monty Python imitation, let me say that: “Among our Winslow brothers are”

Entire books have been written outlining the descendants of the first three brothers through many generations. I can touch on only a few of these descendants in the time allotted today.

But these “few” include: two governors; two Admirals; one General; a Colonel; a WWI fighter pilot; at least four ministers of religion; an Egyptologist; two old houses; a famous architect; and a 21st Century graphic artist, all of whom are a part of this large extended family, brothers and cousins, and many of whom used as a part of that familial identity a coat of arms.

English Ancestry of the Winslow Family

Now, no one appeared in colonial America without ancestors; no one “sprung fully grown from the head of Zeus”, as it were. The Winslows, too, descended from others of that name:

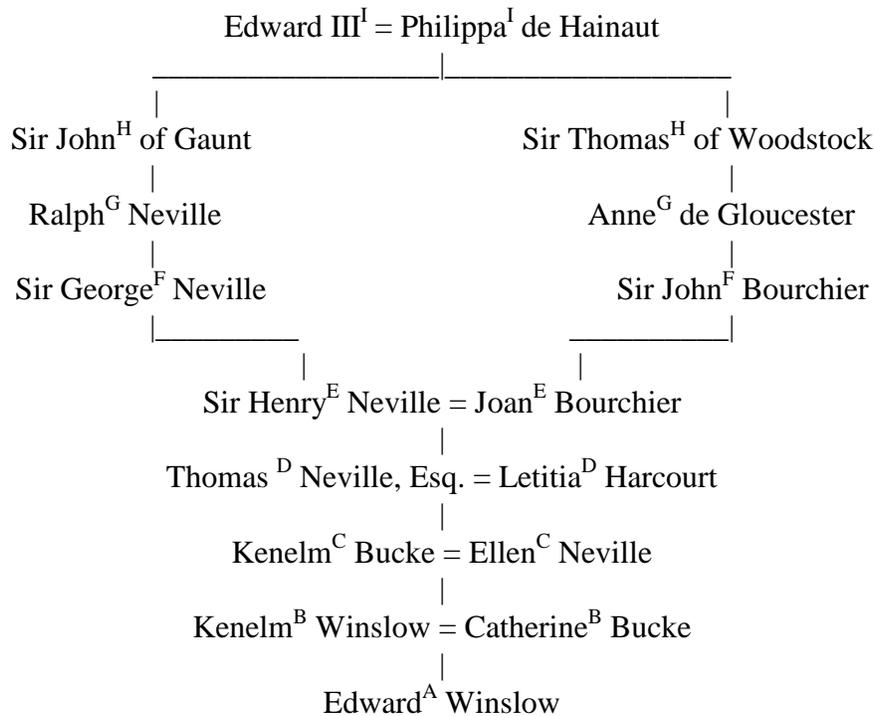
The immediate family of the immigrants has its origin in Droitwich, Worcestershire, England, a small town 15 km northeast of the City of Worcester.

The direct male line of the Winslow family as it has been traced so far goes back to the early 14th Century:

William^H Wyncelowe (ca.1300-????)
|
John^G Wynslowe (ca.1330-ca. 1375)
|
William^F Wynslowe (ca. 1372-aft. 1426)
|
William^E Wyncelow, Esq. (ca. 1416-ca. 1463)
|
Thomas^D Winselow, Esq. (ca. 1452-????)
|
William^C Winclow (bef. 1510-aft. 1544)
|
Kenelm^B Winslow (ca. 1543-1607)
|
Edward^A Winslow (Sr.) (1560-1655)

Through some female connections, the Winslows can also trace lines back to royalty, to King Edward III of England. Now, this fact alone is not all that special, really. In an article in 2006, it was noted that “[s]ome experts estimate that 80 percent of England’s present population descends from Edward III.”¹ (And we in America think of George Washington as “the father of his country!”)

¹ Crenson, July 3, 2006



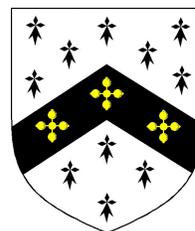
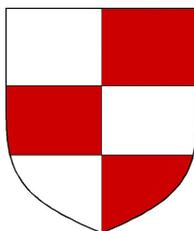
So the family's origins go back to the gentry and even into the nobility of England. Now, what of the Winslow coat of arms?

Burke's *General Armory*² gives three different coats with no specific attribution beyond the bare surname "Winslow":

Winslow. *Or a bend lozengy argent and gules.*

Winslow. *Per pale argent and gules a fess counterchanged.*

Winslow. *Ermine on a chevron sable three quatrefoils or.*



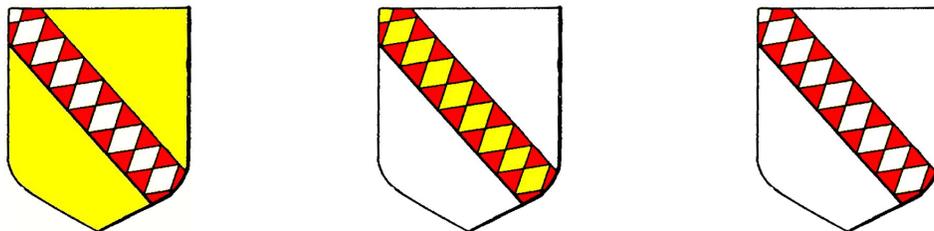
Which one of these arms, if any, were used by the New England branch of the Winslow family?

Not the third. I have not found this coat of arms used by any members of the Winslow family in America.

There is one possible example of a use of the second, which I will discuss below.

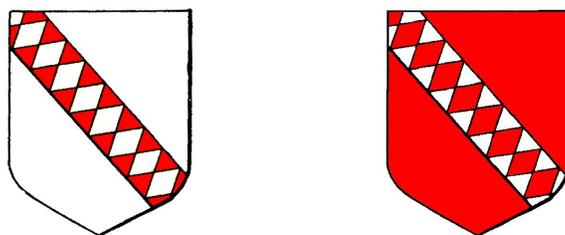
² Burke, p. 1124

The coat of arms which have been used by Winslow family members in America most closely matches the first coat given in Burke, though in varying tinctures:



Sometimes with the field or and the lozenges argent (as in Burke), which were the arms used by Governor Edward Winslow;³ sometimes with the field argent and the lozenges or; and sometimes with the field and the lozenges both argent.

This confusion as to tincture appears to be nothing new. In the “new Papworth”, the *Dictionary of British Arms*, there are two differing versions of these arms:



Wynselowe, de Cozheche, from Writhe’s Book: *Argent a bend lozengy gules and argent*,⁴ and Winslow, from Peter Le Neve’s book, *Gules a bend lozengy argent and gules*.⁵

No doubt, at least some of the confusion in the tinctures of the field and lozenges probably comes from the hatching, or more properly the lack of hatching, in many of the depictions of the arms.

Another variation that appears in depictions of the Winslow arms is that the bend is not drawn, or even blazoned, as lozengy, but rather as a bend charged with *lozenges conjoined*. Bolton’s *American Armory*⁶ gives several examples of the arms with the number of lozenges on the bend ranging from five to seven. Vermont’s *America Heraldica* gives the version with seven lozenges as “more exact”.⁷ I have found depictions ranging anywhere from five to eight lozenges.



³ Bowditch, 1938, p. 32

⁴ Chesshyre and Woodcock, vol. 1, p. 346

⁵ Chesshyre and Woodcock, vol. 1, p. 346

⁶ Bolton, p. 183

⁷ Valcourt-Vermont, p. 182

Adding to the general confusion is the occasional use of arms which are unrelated to the family. For example, on this headstone at Copp's Hill Burying Ground in Boston we have the name of Samuel Winslow, but the arms on it are in fact those of William Clark, whose headstone it was originally. This is a case of the reuse of a headstone by someone unrelated, a usage which was not uncommon at the time. (Ah, those thrifty New Englanders! Participating in recycling long before it became a popular thing to do.)

With all that as background, the arms most commonly used by various members of the family in the U.S. which I have discovered, whether in a color rendition, a hatched rendition (as here), or in blazon, have the field argent and the lozenges or.



So, just who were these brothers and their descendants? What is their “goodly heritage?”

Edward¹ Winslow

The eldest, and probably the best-known, of the five immigrant brothers was Edward Winslow. He came in 1620 with the Pilgrims on the Mayflower. He was delegated by his shipmates to deal with the Native Americans in the vicinity and he succeeded in winning the friendship of their chief, Massasoit. He served for many years as an agent of Plymouth Colony, traveling back to England several times in the pursuit of the Colony's business. He was selected as governor of the Colony in 1633, 1636 and 1644. He returned to England a final time in 1646. In 1653, Oliver Cromwell sent him to the West Indies as the chief of three commissioners of a military expedition there. Edward Winslow died of fever in the Caribbean in May 1654.

He is the only Mayflower passenger of whom we have a contemporary image, painted in London in 1651, at the time of the marriage of his son, Josiah.

Though he was buried at sea, a memorial plaque in the Old Winslow Burying Ground at Marshfield, Massachusetts (a town which he helped to found), gives a brief chronology of his life. Edward Winslow had only one son who grew to adulthood, about whom we will speak in a few moments, and one daughter.

The Committee on Heraldry of the New England Historic Genealogical Society has registered as number 185 in its Roll of Arms *Gold, a bend lozengy gules and silver* as the arms of Edward Winslow.⁸

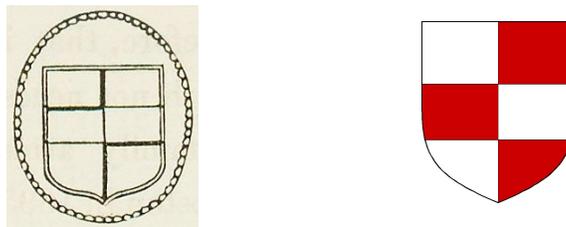


⁸ NEHGS, Part 3

John¹ Winslow

John Winslow, Edward's younger brother, came to America in 1623, and married Mary Chilton, a shipmate of his brothers Edward and Gilbert on the Mayflower. In 1657 he moved to Boston, where he became a successful merchant. John and Mary Winslow had six sons and three daughters.

Both William Whitmore, in the *Heraldic Journal*,⁹ and Charles Bolton in his *American Armory*¹⁰ note the use of a coat of arms on a seal on the will of John Winslow of Boston, in 1674. It being a seal, there are of course, no tinctures, but the outlines of the field division and charge match the Winslow arms in Burke of *Per pale argent and gules a fess counterchanged*.



It could be, of course, that the use of this coat is simply an indication that there were what we now call “bucket shop” heralds operating in colonial New England, something we are certain did occur a little later and which I touched upon at the Congress in 2004 in Bruges in my



presentation of the Gore roll, an 18th Century American roll of arms.

On his table tomb in King's Chapel Burying Ground in Boston there is a plaque on one side, on which appears the more commonly used Winslow arms with the lozengy bend. The plaque appears to be of a later date than his death, and hence may not be an accurate representation of the arms that he himself used. And, as in some other renditions, there is no hatching except for the gules of the bend, so we are left to guess at the remaining tinctures.

⁹ Whitmore, Vol. III, p. 91

¹⁰ Bolton, p. 183

Kenelm¹ Winslow

Kenelm Winslow, the third brother, came to Massachusetts in about 1629. He is said to have been a man of good condition, and engaged in the settlement of Yarmouth and other Massachusetts towns. He died on a visit to Salem on September 12, 1672. Kenelm and his wife, Mercy, had eleven children, at least four of whom lived to adulthood, married, and bore large families themselves (of eleven, eight, nine, and thirteen children, respectively).

Gilbert¹ Winslow

Gilbert Winslow, the fourth brother, came to Plymouth in the Mayflower with his elder brother Edward. He had part of the division of lands in 1624, but none in the division of cattle three years later in 1627, so it is assumed that he returned to England before that date. Gilbert's burial and probate records have been discovered at Ludlow, Shropshire, England. His estate was valued at just over £30, and was administered by his brother Edward.¹¹ The estate inventory of Kenelm Winslow mentions that he and his brother John were granted Gilbert Winslow's land. Since Gilbert's estate was administered by his brother Edward and his land in Plymouth, Massachusetts went to his brothers Kenelm and John, this suggests Gilbert did not have any children of his own.¹²

Josiah¹ Winslow

The youngest brother, Josiah Winslow, is thought to have come to America with his brother Kenelm in about 1629. He had five daughters, one of whom died young, and one son, who had two sons (Josiah's grandsons), but I have been unable (thus far) to trace them beyond that point

Looking now to some of the descendants of the immigrant brothers, we first have:

Josiah² Winslow

Josiah Winslow, the only son of Gov. Edward¹ Winslow who lived to adulthood.

He married, in 1651, Penelope Pelham in England. Josiah returned to Plymouth with his wife in 1655, the same year his father died in the Caribbean. Josiah was the 13th Governor of Plymouth Colony (1673-1680), and was the first governor of the colony born in the New World. Josiah and Penelope had only two children who lived to adulthood, a daughter Elizabeth and a son, Isaac.

¹¹ Johnson, <http://www.mayflowerhistory.com/Passengers/GilbertWinslow.php>

¹² Johnson, <http://www.mayflowerhistory.com/Passengers/GilbertWinslow.php>



His table tomb in the Old Winslow Burying Ground in Marshfield, Massachusetts, bears on its upper surface the Winslow coat of arms. Here again, the plaque may not be contemporary with the Governor, but is certainly an indication of which coat of arms his descendants believe him to have borne.

Isaac³ Winslow

Josiah's son, Isaac Winslow, became a judge and was for a time President of the Council of the Province of Massachusetts.

He built a house in Marshfield, Massachusetts, in 1699, which still stands, welcomes visitors and hosts events, has its own website (<http://www.winslowhouse.org/>) and it even has its own group on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=64559723098>)!

Gen. John⁴ Winslow

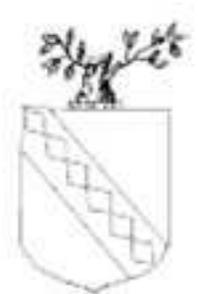
Isaac's son, John Winslow, was a Major-General in British Army who helped to remove some 6,000 French Acadians from Nova Scotia in 1755 as part of the infamous Great Upheaval.



In his journal, he termed that business "Very Disagreeable to my natural make & Temper." In 1757 Winslow returned to Massachusetts and civilian life. He served in several public offices in the colony, and died in Hingham, Massachusetts in 1774, just before the outbreak of the American Revolution.

Joshua⁴ Winslow

Joshua Winslow, Esq. (1694-1769), a great-grandson of the immigrant John Winslow, was a successful merchant and Justice of the Peace in Boston. This representation of his arms appears in the Gore Roll, an 18th Century roll of arms created by the Gore family of painters in Boston.



Isaac⁶ Winslow

A grandson of Joshua Winslow (and thus the great, great, great-grandson of John Winslow, the immigrant), Isaac Winslow, a prominent Boston merchant, commissioned a most interesting display of a coat of arms, motto, and crest, in the form of a silver cider pitcher made, as so many things are even today, in China. The cider pitcher is inscribed around the center in a cursive script with these initials and dates, the meanings of which are:

I & MBW 1801: Isaac Winslow married Mary Blanchard in 1801

IW to I & AW 1832: it was given by Isaac to his son Isaac and his wife Abigail (Barrell) Winslow in 1832

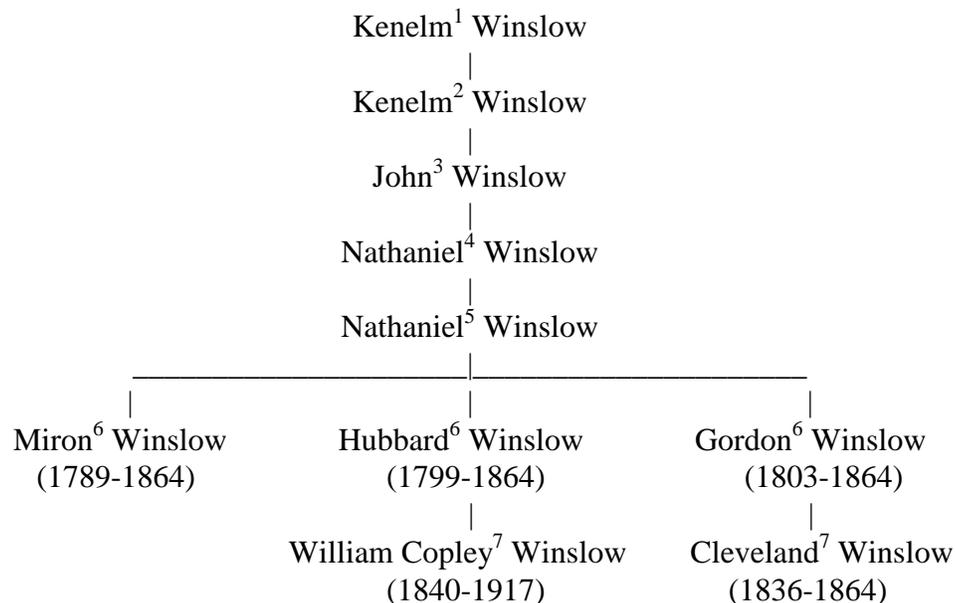
to IS & KW 1862: to Isaac S. and Kate Winslow in 1862

IE & MLW 1899: to Isaac E. and Mary L. Winslow in 1899

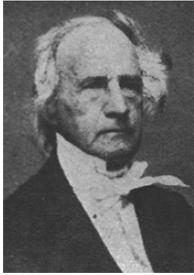
Thus we have inscribed upon the object itself its descent through four generations of the Winslow family. A “goodly heritage” indeed!

The Winslow coat of arms, crest and motto appear on side the pitcher, and a three-dimensional version of the crest, *Issuant from a torse the stump of a tree with branches* is used as the finial on the lid, creating a very pleasing use of heraldry on this family heirloom.

Now we come to three brothers who were also brothers in Christ, and two of their sons.



Miron⁶ Winslow



Miron Winslow was a preacher and missionary. In 1819 he sailed for Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), where he established a mission and later a seminary at Odooville. In 1836 he founded a mission at Madras, India, where he spent the remainder of his life establishing seven schools and a native college. He wrote several books, including: "Sketch of the Missions" (Andover, 1819); "Memoir of Harriet Lathrop Winslow," his wife (New York, 1835; republished in London, France, and Turkey); "Hints on Missions to India" (New York, 1856); "a translation of the Bible into Tamil" and a "Comprehensive Tamil and English Dictionary" which may be found on the internet today. The dictionary cost \$20,000 and took more than twenty years to create; it contains 68,000 words and definitions, of which about half are due to Dr. Winslow. He died on his way back to the United States at the Cape of Good Hope, October 22, 1864.

Hubbard⁶ Winslow

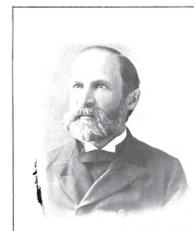
Hubbard Winslow (Miron's younger brother) was a graduate of Yale University in 1825, and he devoted much of his life to the advancement of higher education in Boston. He was an even more prolific writer than his brother. A few of his books include: "Doctrine of the Trinity"; "Controversial Theology"; "Philosophical Papers"; "Christianity applied to our Civil and Social Relations"; "Young Man's Aid to Knowledge", which was also published in England and had a sale of 100,000 copies; "Aids to Self-Examination"; "Mental Cultivation"; "Lectures to Sunday-School Teachers"; "The Appropriate Sphere of Woman"; "Natural Science and Revelation"; "Moral Philosophy"; and "Hidden Life". More than 250,000 copies of his tract, "Are You a Christian?" were issued.



As an aside, I was interested to discover that the publisher of many of his volumes was "D. Appleton and Company." (Alas, no relation!)

Dr. William Copley⁷ Winslow

Hubbard's son, Dr. William Copley Winslow, was graduated at Hamilton College and at the Protestant Episcopal General Theological Seminary in New York City. Like his father, he was engaged in preaching, lecturing, and writing for the press. He was vice-president and honorary treasurer of the Egypt Exploration Fund for America, and helped create a widespread interest in its work. He wrote numerous articles for the reviews and journals on exploration and related topics, and was regarded in his time as an authority on biblical, and particularly Egyptological, explorations. He wrote 22 works in 34 publications in 2 languages, including: *Governor Edward Winslow : his part and place in Plymouth colony; The truth about the Egypt exploration fund; The queen of Egyptology (Amelia B. Edwards ...)*; and *Egyptian antiquities for our museums*. He endowed the Winslow Lecture at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, to support lectures on classical archaeology. It was also through his efforts that the Boston Museum of Fine Arts received from Egypt a colossal statue of Ramses II.



Burke's *Prominent Families of the United States of America*¹³ and Crozier's *General Armory*¹⁴ both have him using the arms: [Argent] on a bend gules eight lozenges conjoined or, with the crest: A stump of a tree with [throwing out new] branches proper.



Gordon⁶ Winslow



Gordon Winslow (Miron and Hubbard's youngest brother), entered the ministry of the Protestant Episcopal church. When the American Civil War broke out, he enrolled as Chaplain of the Fifth New York Regiment of Volunteer Infantry at the age of 58 and served with the regiment (of which his son Cleveland later became colonel) for two years. After the original regiment was mustered out in May 1863, Gordon Winslow became a Sanitary Inspector and was instrumental with others in establishing the Sanitary Commission, holding the post of its inspector for the Army of the Potomac. (He is shown here with his wife outside his tent following the Battle of Gettysburg.) He was a member of several scientific bodies and contributor to their proceedings, and was active in philanthropic work.

Cleveland⁷ Winslow



One of Gordon Winslow's two sons, Cleveland Winslow, was a United States Army officer who served with the 5th New York Volunteer Infantry, otherwise known as the famed Duryee's Zouaves (with their colorful uniforms), during the American Civil War. Although a courageous battlefield commander (and noted for his fondness of flamboyant uniforms), he was a strict disciplinarian and thus generally unpopular with the lower ranking soldiers. He was promoted to major on September 24, 1862, and colonel on December 4 of that year. Returning to New York in early May 1863, the original regiment was mustered out after the expiration of its two-year enlistment period.

After reorganizing the 5th New York Infantry as a veteran battalion on May 25 of that year, Winslow was recalled to New York City to help suppress the draft riots the following month. Back with the Army of the Potomac, Winslow suffered a severe shoulder wound during the Battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia on June 2, 1864. He was brought back to Alexandria, Virginia on a hospital steamer. Escorted by his father Gordon Winslow, as already noted a representative of the United States Sanitary Commission, the elder Winslow fell off the steamer and drowned on June 7. Cleveland Winslow died of his wounds on July 7, 1864.

¹³ Burke's *Prominent*, p. 92

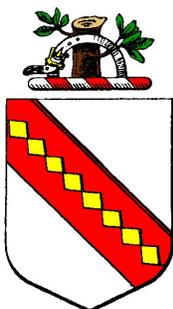
¹⁴ Crozier, p. 139

Mary Blythe Winslow. DD359 hunted German Uboats in the South Atlantic and also served as a convoy escort in the North Atlantic. At war's end she was redesignated AG127 and became a radar picket ship and testing anti-aircraft ordnance, being decommissioned in 1950 and finally sold for scrap in 1959.

I have not found that any of the ships named Winslow had for a badge the Winslow coat of arms, but historically that would certainly have been appropriate.

Chauncey Rose⁸ Winslow

Chauncey Rose Winslow of San Francisco, California, was the son of Augustus Sydenham Winslow, and a descendant of Kenelm Winslow. He was the 11th President of the Pacific Union Club, a private social club located at the top of Nob Hill (the "posh" section of San Francisco). This club figured prominently in the history of the west coast of the United States, and many outstanding citizens of California have been active among its membership.



*Matthews American Armory*¹⁵ notes Chauncey Rose Winslow using the arms *Argent, on a bend gules eight lozenges conjoined or with the crest A stump of a tree with branches proper, encircled with a strap and buckle.*

Carroll Dana⁹ Winslow

Carroll Dana Winslow, a banker and broker, was a decorated Lafayette Flying Corps pilot during World War I. He wrote a book, *With the French Flying Corps*, in 1917, in which he recorded his personal experiences and observations of his time with the Flying Corps. The book is written as if he is telling a story to a listener. There are many colorfully descriptive accounts of flight and the characteristics of each plane he flew. The book is considered a look back into the day-to-day life of early aviators. Carroll Winslow died of pneumonia in New York City in December 1932, at the age of 43.

*Matthews American Armory*¹⁶ cites Carroll Dana Winslow as using the arms *Per bend ermine and crusilly fitchy, overall a bend gules lozengy or.*



Lorenzo S.[?] Winslow

Lorenzo S. Winslow was born in Mansfield, Massachusetts. With my meager resources, I have not yet been able to trace his ancestry back beyond his father, George, but I assume that his file at the College of Arms in London will have a well-documented descent line.

¹⁵ Matthews, 1903, p. 13a

¹⁶ Matthews, 1911, p. 40b

He was the architect for the White House, the home and office of the President of the United States, for twenty years, from 1932 to 1952, supervising increasingly significant alterations and becoming somewhat of a celebrity, known for his partiality to tweeds, his love of the arts, his signature corn cob pipe, and his vintage car. He designed and reconstructed the West Wing Offices, a new East Entrance Building, a bomb shelter with tunnel leading to the Treasury Building, and other renovations. Said to be “tall, [and] personable,”¹⁷ he also got to hang out with some of the great people of the era.

First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt wrote that: “I had a most interesting talk with Lorenzo S. Winslow, the White House architect, today. I learned from him the reason why it was necessary to have the White House painted white. I had always heard that the sandstone out of which it was built had become so blackened by smoke, in the War of 1812, that it was decided to paint over the smoke. I did not realize, however, that sandstone is porous enough for the smoke to have penetrated to any great depth. Mr. Winslow says he has found, in doing certain renovating on the outside, that the stone was blackened to a depth of some two inches. Naturally, painting it was the only possible thing to do.”¹⁸

Lorenzo S. Winslow was granted arms by the College of Arms in England in 1958. These arms also appear in the Roll of Arms of the Committee on Heraldry of the New England Historic Genealogical Society as number 534,¹⁹ and are blazoned there as: *Silver a bend between two ancient crowns gules on the bend seven lozenges conjoined gold.*



Eric[?] And Harrison W.[?] Winslow

Finally, and bringing us all the way into the 21st Century, we have Eric Winslow and his son, Harrison William Winslow. Eric is a graphic designer in Denver, Colorado. Last year (2009) he designed a skateboard deck for his son, Harrison, which he’s had laser carved and will fill to make a flat surface.

In his own words on the design: “I thought I would use Harrison’s coat of arms I developed for him when he was born. I worked in a lot of symbols to represent him and that ties back to the symbols the Winslow family has been known for since before we came over from England on the Mayflower.”

“The symbol below the crest, ... [the label] stands for first born. The symbols inside the crest, starting from the upper left moving around clockwise, is a chevron which represents protection or faithful service. The acorn stands for antiquity and strength. The stump with the new limb growing out of it represents the new emerging from the old. And the last symbol on the inside of the crest is for constancy, or steadfastness.... The lion is the astrological sign of Leo, as well as dauntless courage which suits Harry’s personality when it comes to skate boarding and biking.”

¹⁷ Seale, Vol. II, p. 924

¹⁸ Roosevelt, Eleanor, August 31, 1944

¹⁹ NEHGS, Part Seven, p. 4

So he pretty obviously bought into one of those “the meaning of a coat of arms” sites (and falls into the common mistake of calling a coat of arms a “crest”), but he included in the design the crest of the Winslow family (the tree stump putting forth new branches) as well as the lozengy bend of the family’s coat of arms.



Conclusion

From the very beginnings of the Winslow family in America, from the immigration of a handful of brothers in the early 17th Century to Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies in New England, and through all the years since, a large and extended family has, like the tree stump in their crest, blossomed forth and branched out across the length and breadth of the United States of America, proud of their roots, and maintaining their family identity, their “goodly heritage,” through their genealogy and their heraldry.

This sense of identity holds true even if an individual does not have, because of female links in the line of descent, the Winslow surname. And you often find that even when the entire descent of an individual from one of the original immigrant brothers may not be given, the family identity will be maintained in entries such as: “descendant of Kenelm Winslow, brother of Gov. Winslow, of Mass[achusetts].”²⁰

²⁰ Marquis, p. 1169

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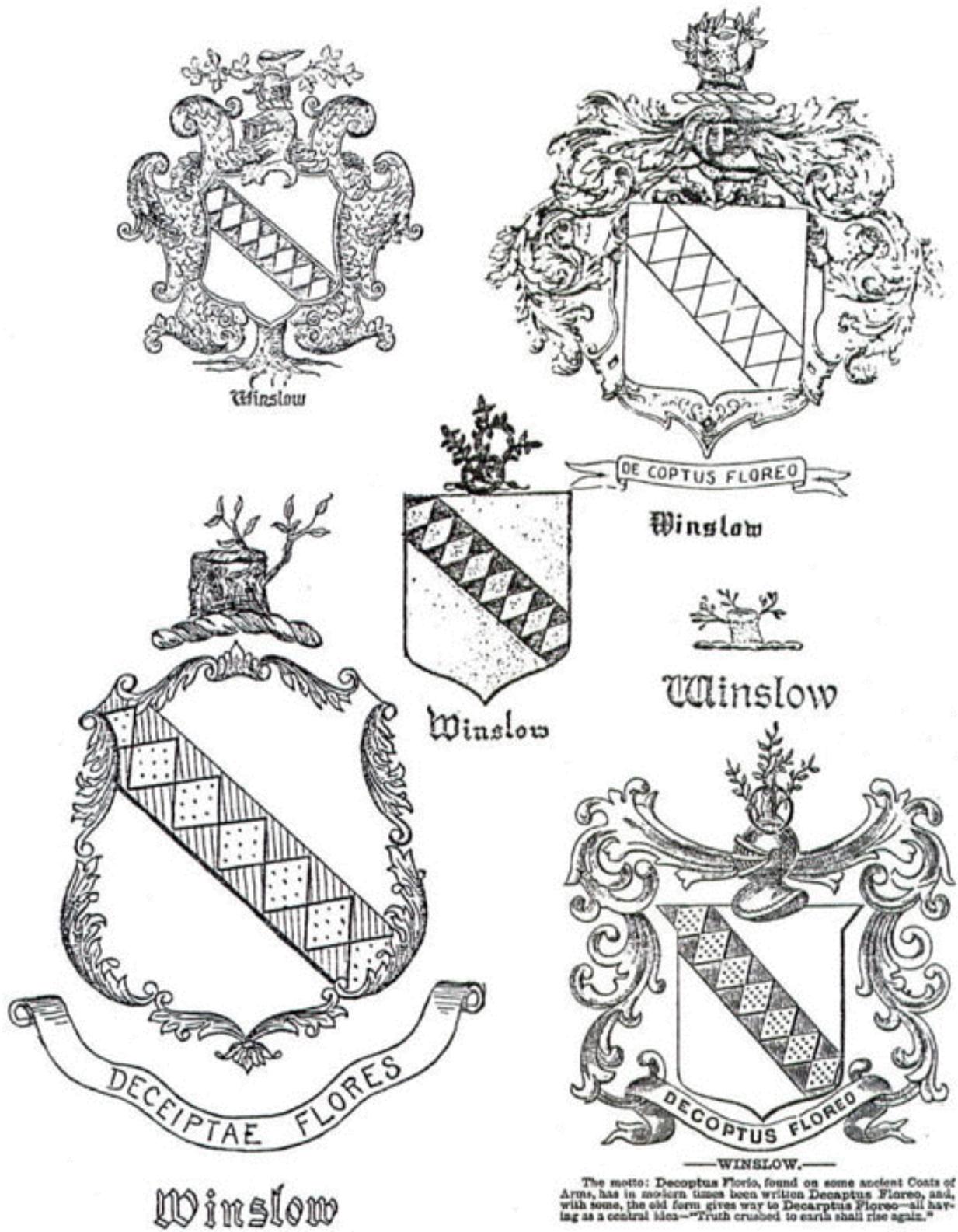


Plate 2: Depictions of the Winslow coat of arms