

# Tracing the Towneleys 2024



## Introduction

The last edition of Tracing the Towneleys was published in 2004 and since then both free and subscription based web-sites have developed to provide help in finding links with ancestors and the museum no longer has any information about the Towneley family not readily available elsewhere.

These genealogy websites provided lots of advice on ways to provide evidence to help users extend their family history charts and share the results with each other. The family history records often include speculative links with no evidence to support this guess work.

This edition replaces the *Family branches* and *Other Townleys – spreading the net* sections of Tracing the Towneleys 2004. The main purpose of this re-write is bring the following guidance to the front -

***One should never trust anything written on a pedigree chart without seeing original evidence that can confirm it.***

One should verify the facts with as many sources as possible.

The purpose of the updated family branch section is to replace numerous errors in the 2004 edition and to highlight the work of Mary Burton Derrickson McCurdy in providing much additional evidence to support the pedigree charts produced during Sir William Dugdale's visitation of Lancashire in 1664/5. No attempt has been made here to confirm all the evidence in the Dugdale's charts but several additional sources have been added.

The purpose of the updated Other Townleys section is to provide a much shorter section together with evidence supporting the claim that the Townley Balfour family of Ireland were possibly descended from the Barnside branch.

No attempt is made here to identify any of the many sources available through subscription based web-sites. Only freely available web-sites are used here. The most useful source is the *Ancestor Search in the County of Lancashire* [<https://www.lan-opc.org.uk/Search/indexp.html>]. (The Lancashire Parish Clerks website was started in March 2004, just at the time the last edition of Tracing the Towneleys was being completed and continues to be regularly updated.) Other generally useful sources include

- National Archives [<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>]
- JSTOR [<https://support.jstor.org/hc/en-us/sections/360009699953-Free-Access-to-JSTOR>]
- The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire [<http://rslc.org.uk/out-of-print-publications/>]
- Victoria County History of Lancashire Vol. 6 [<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lanes/vol6>]

## The family branches

The best place to start a description of the Townley family branches is with the entail dated 13th April 1560 when John and Mary agreed to give all their lands to trustees for

*"the use of the said John and Mary and of their heirs males of the body of the said John Lawfully begotten And for default to the use of the said Lawrence Towneley for term of his life And after to the use of Henry Towneley son and heir Apparent of the said Lawrence Towneley and the heirs Male of the body of the same Henry lawfully begotten And for default to Robert Towneley one other of the sons of the said Lawrence and his heirs male.. {repeated for the other brothers Lawrence, Charles, Richard and for Robert the brother of Lawrence the father} .. And for default to Edmund Towneley of Royle and his heirs males And for Lack to Thomas Towneley bastard son of Sir John Towneley Knt. And his heirs male And for default to Barnard Towneley bastard son of John Towneley brother to the said Sir John and his heirs males And for default to John Towneley the elder als Dyneley bastard son of Richard Towneley Esq. and his heirs male and for default to one John Towneley the younger one other of the bastard sons of the said Richard Towneley and of his heirs males And for default to John Towneley of Dutton and his heirs males And for default to the right heirs of the said John Towneley Esq. for ever Except £20 yearly xcell of the said premises to Dame Frances Towneley".*

Only five of those mentioned in the 1560 entail produced descendants who provided evidence during Sir William Dugdale's visitation of Lancashire in 1664/5.

- The descendants of Henry, heir of Lawrence are the **Barnside branch**.
- The descendants of Lawrence, brother of Henry are the **Stonehedge branch**.
- The descendants of Edmund of Royle are the **Royle branch**
- The descendants of Bernard, son of John Towneley the younger, are the **Hurstwood branch**.
- The descendants of Henry, brother of John Towneley of Dutton, are the **Dutton branch**.

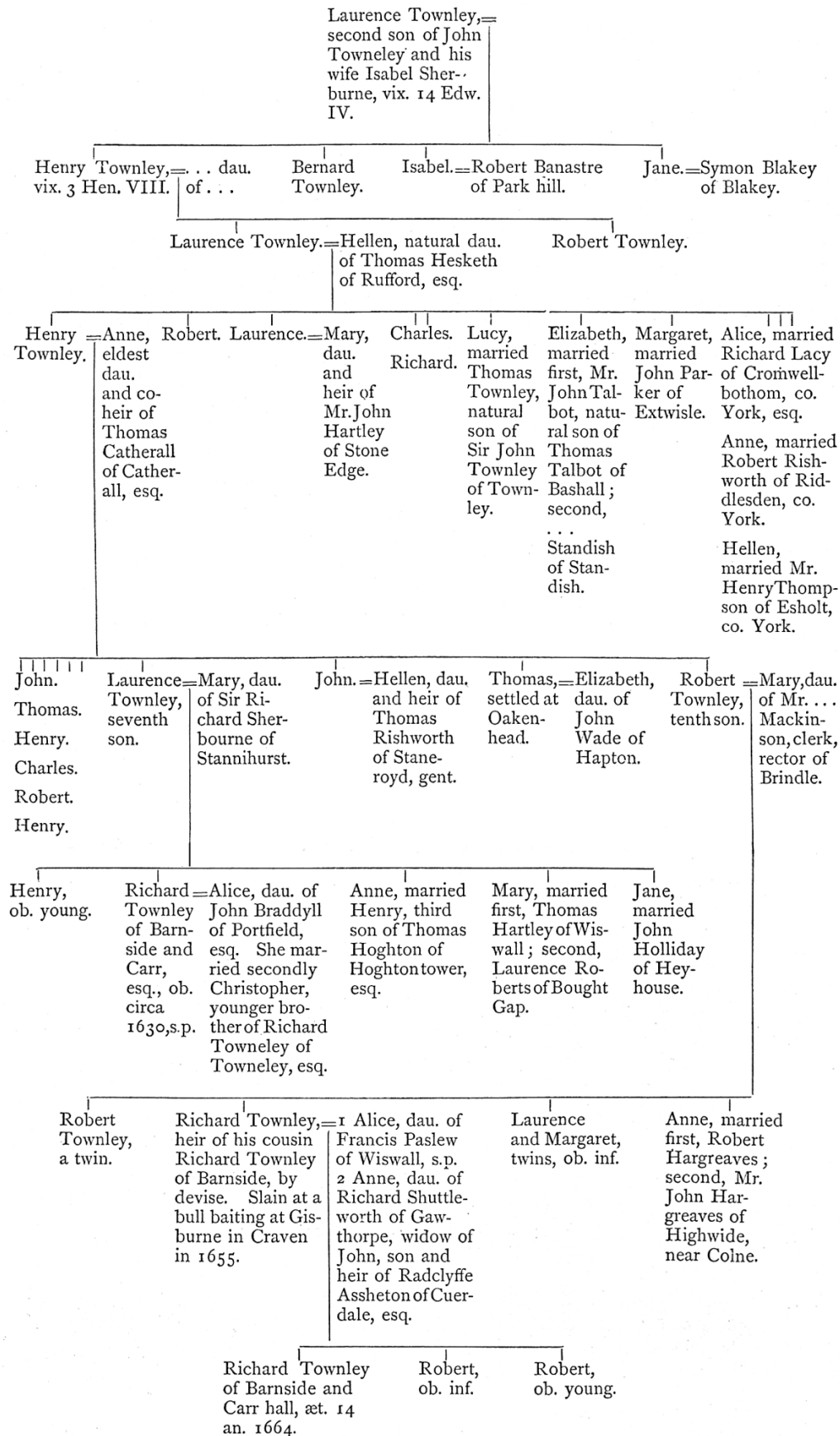
The pedigree charts below are from the transcript edited by Rev. F. R. Raines and published by the Chetham Society in 1873 (Remains historical and literary connected with the palatine counties of Lancaster and Chester Old Series Volume 88).

The Stonehedge pedigree chart was the key in 1969 when Mary Burton Derrickson McCurdy identified the 17<sup>th</sup> century ancestors of the Townleys of Virginia as being from the Stonehedge branch. She published an account of the Barnside and Stonehedge pedigree charts in 1973, providing much additional evidence to support those charts. ["A discovery concerning the Townley and Warner families of Virginia" and "The Townleys and Warners of Virginia and their English connections" - Virginia Magazine of History and Biography Vol. 77 no. 4 for October 1969 and Vol. 81 no. 3 for July 1973 ]. Available on-line from JSTOR.

## Barnside branch

### Townley of Barnside.

Arms. — Argent, a fess sable, three mullets in chief of the second.



Farrer's description of Barnside in Volume 6 of *The Victoria History of the County of Lancaster*, under Foulridge (pages 544-8), provides much evidence for the 1664 pedigree. Mrs McCurdy adds information on Lawrence Townley of Barnside and his wife Joan from Farrer's Court Rolls of the Honour of Clitheroe Vol. I, published in 1897, (Vol. I and III available via Google Books.) Lawrence died in 1530 and his son Henry died in 1531 and was succeeded by Lawrence, husband of Hellen or Ellen Hesketh. Lawrence died in 1565, succeeded by Henry, husband of Ann Catherall.[At this point Mrs McCurdy moves on to his brother Laurence, founder of the Stonehedge branch.]

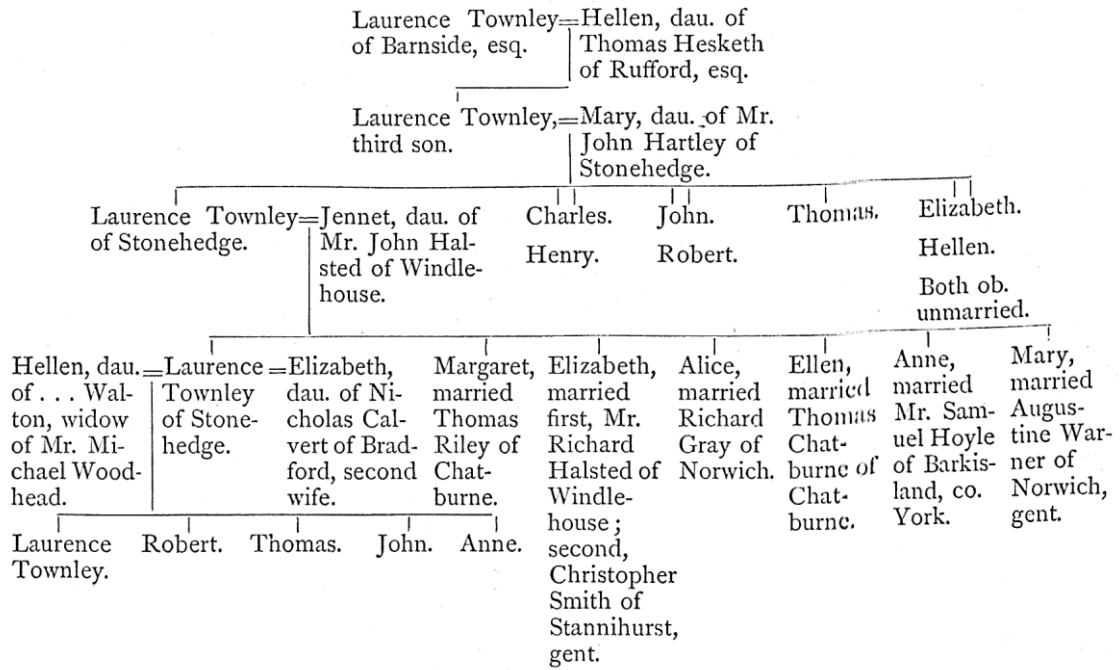
Parish records supporting the Barnside pedigree starts with the marriage of Henry and Ann Catherall at Whalley on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1559. Henry was buried at Colne on May 10<sup>th</sup> 1616 and an inquisition post mortem on August 29<sup>th</sup> 1616 reported his son Laurence (aged 40) was the heir. [Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire Vol.16 available on-line.] Lawrence died on September 9<sup>th</sup> 1623 and an inquisition post mortem on January 15<sup>th</sup> 1623/4 reported his son Richard (aged 26) was the heir. [Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire Vol.17 available on-line.]

Richard Townley was buried at Colne on May 26<sup>th</sup> 1630. Farrer records that he devised his estate to his cousin Richard who married Alice Paslew at Colne on August 7<sup>th</sup> 1642. Alice was buried at Whalley on July 18<sup>th</sup> 1644. There is no parish record of Richard's second marriage recorded in the visitation record but Richard's son was baptised at Padiham on May 27<sup>th</sup> 1649. This Richard married Katherine Wall at Goosnargh on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1679. Farrer tells us that they had one son (Richard, baptised at Goosnargh on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 1681) but then the male line ended and his grand daughter Margaret married John Clayton of Little Harwood and the Barnside and Carr lands went into the Clayton family.

## Stonehedge branch

### Townley of Stonehedge.

Arms. — Argent, a fess sable, three mullets in chief of the second, a mullet for difference.



Mrs McCurdy provides a detailed account of the pedigree chart, which appears to have included additions by John Hopkinson (1610-1682). On page 340 of the 1973 article, she begins at the top of the chart with Lawrence, third son of Lawrence Townley of Barnside, summarising his will, probated January 19<sup>th</sup> 1597/8. It is in good agreement with the chart apart from the given name of the wife and the small change in name order of Henry and Charles. She provides evidence for the daughters of Lawrence, second master of Stonehedge, suggesting that Elizabeth's second husband, Christopher Smith was of Stonirakes in Burnley parish rather than of Stannihurst. She could not find the marriage record for Alice. There is no will on record for Lawrence, who was buried at Colne on February 12<sup>th</sup> 1654/5.

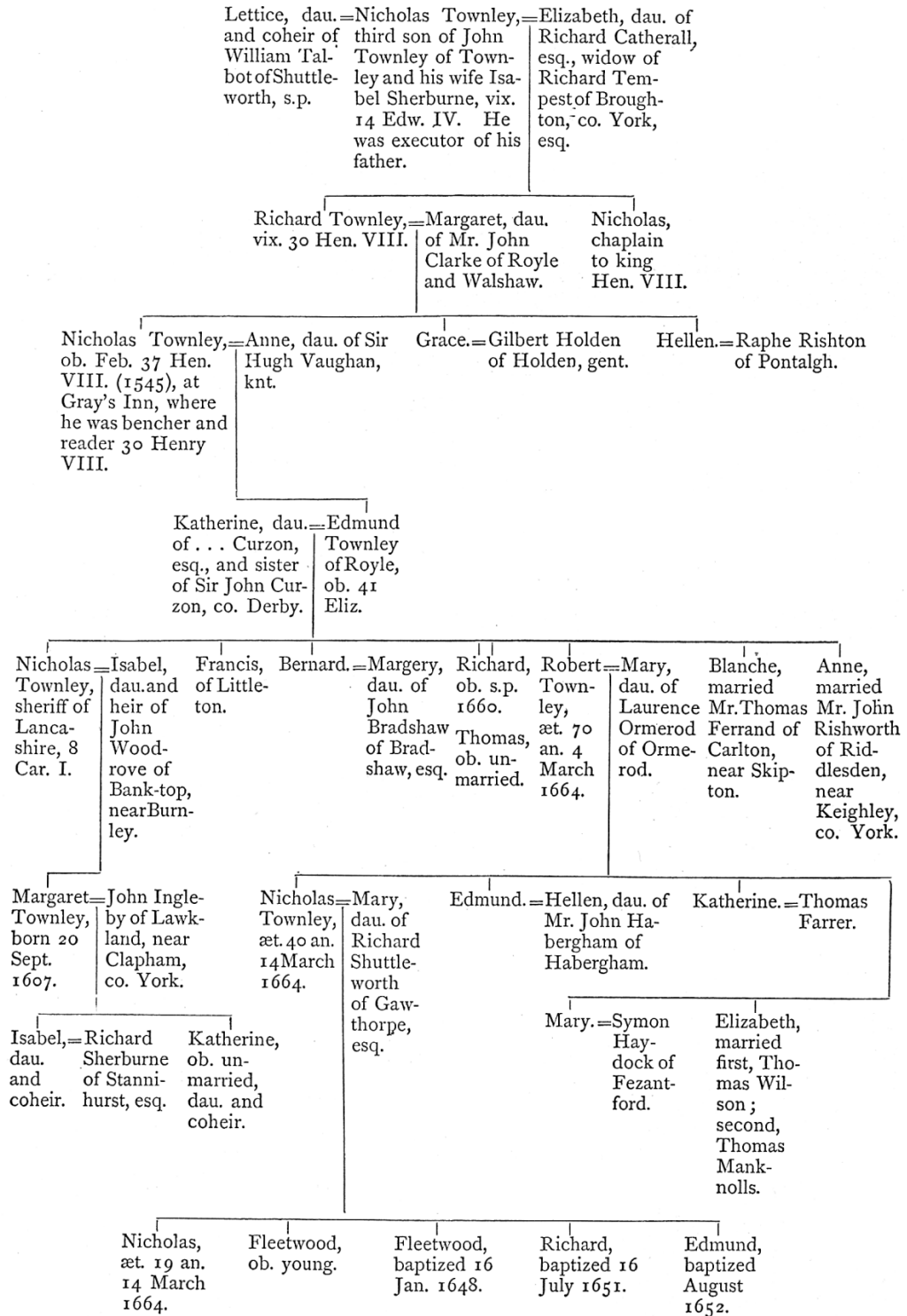
The third Lawrence Townley of Stonehedge was baptised at Colne on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1611 and married as his first wife Alice Calvert in 1632. Alice Calvert, rather than Hellen was mother of Laurence, Robert, Thomas, John and Anne at the foot of the chart. There are baptism records for Anne, Laurence, Thomas and Richard (not shown in the visitation chart). There is no baptism record for Robert, who Mrs McCurdy shows to be the eldest son and born around 1637. There is also no baptism record for John, born around 1650. John is believed to be the progenitor of a line of Townleys in Virginia. It seems that Alice's death and Lawrence's re-marriage occurred after John's birth. There are baptism records another three of Lawrence's children (Henry, Ellin and William) between 1652 and 1658 that are not recorded in the visitation chart.

Lawrence was buried at Colne on November 11<sup>th</sup> 1672 and Stonehedge passed to his third son Thomas. From baptisms and burials we find he had four sons and two daughters. When he died in 1697, Stonehedge went first to his second son John and then to his third son Richard in 1706. Richard married Mary Hartley at Colne on November 14<sup>th</sup> 1706 and baptized six children at Colne between 1707 and 1722. His last two children were born at Malkin Tower rather than Stonehedge. At the time of his death the Colne burial entry of February 16<sup>th</sup>, 1726/7, specifies that he was of Malkin Tower, White Moor, and was lately of Stonehedge. This is the last entry in the Colne registers connecting any Townley with Stonehedge.

# Royle branch

## Townley of Royle.

Arms. — Argent, a fess sable, charged with a mullet of the first, in chief three mullets of the second.



Manchester, 14 March 1664.

Nicholas Townley.

Farrer's description of Royle in Volume 6 of *The Victoria History of the County of Lancaster*, pages 445-6, provides some evidence for the 1664 pedigree. According to Farrer, Nicholas Townley (c.1574-1645), eldest son of Edmund Townley, was at first Catholic but about 1630 conformed to the Anglican Church and so became qualified to act as Sheriff of Lancaster in 1631-2. Nicholas bequeathed the estate to Nicholas, son of his brother Robert, rather than to his daughter or the son of Francis of Littleton, Robert's elder brother.

Lancashire parish records supporting the visitation chart begin with Bernard, son of Edmund, baptised at Burnley on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1587. Edmund was buried at Burnley on April 28<sup>th</sup> 1598. Nicholas's will was proved at York in June 1645. It mentions Nicholas, son of his brother Robert, and Nicholas, son of Nicholas of Littleton and is witnessed by his brothers Bernard and Robert. The parish burial records of St Peter, Burnley, appear to be in conflict, recording Nicholas Townley, Gent., being buried on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1650 and his abode being Townley. A record dated June 3<sup>rd</sup> 1645 records the death of Nicholas Townley als Lawe.

After Nicholas, son of Robert, died in 1682, Royle passed from father to son for a further three generation to Thomas Townley (1706/7-1772) and then to his brother Edmund, who died unmarried in 1796. Thomas had one daughter, Anne who married Robert Parker in 1756. On Edmund's death, Royle passed to Anne's family who by then has changed their name to Townley-Parker.

Francis of Littleton had one son Nicholas who died in 1687. Nicholas had 8 sons, of whom the 8<sup>th</sup> son Richard who emigrated to America in 1683 and established a family in New Jersey [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard\\_Townley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Townley)].

Nicholas's 7<sup>th</sup> son Charles Townley (1636-1719) was the grandfather of Sir Charles Townley (1713-1774), Garter King-of -Arms [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles\\_Townley\\_\(officer\\_of\\_arms\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Townley_(officer_of_arms))].

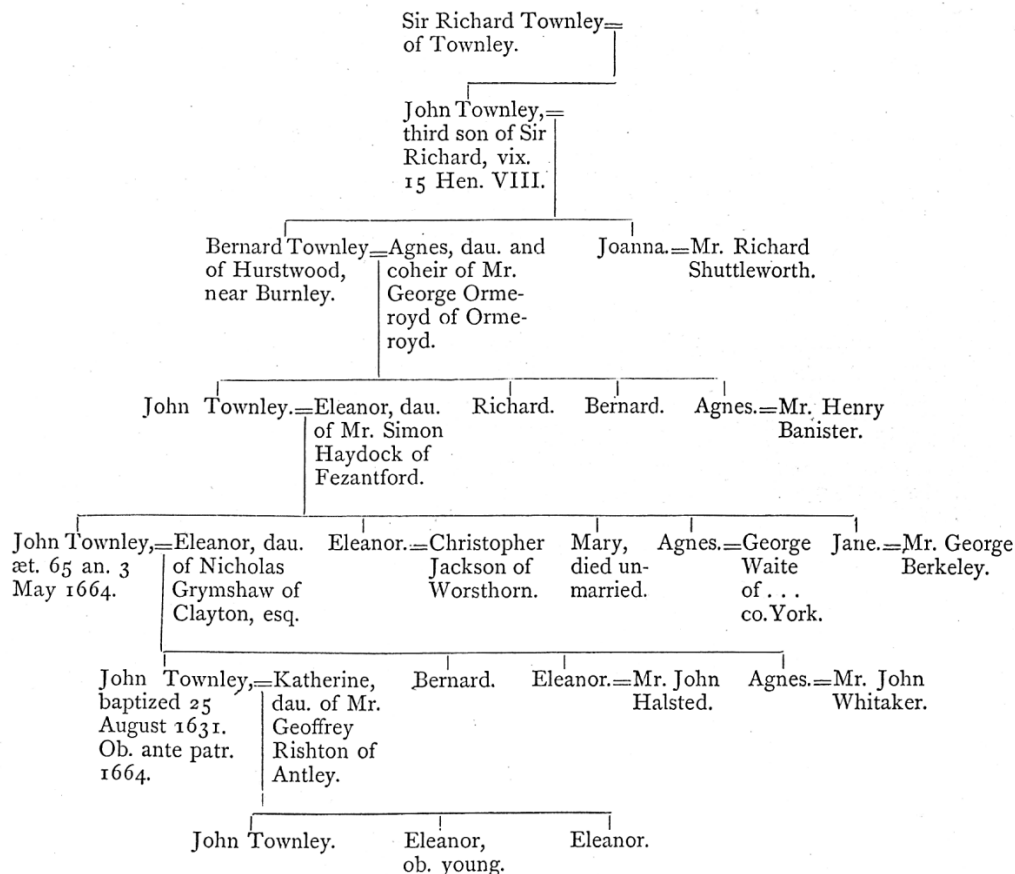
In 1769, Sir Charles recorded his own pedigree chart detailing all of the Littleton descendants except those in America. A copy was included in James Usher's 'History of the Lawrence-Townley, and Chase-Townley estates in England' published in 1883 (available from the Internet Archive [<https://archive.org/details/historyoflawrenc00ushe>]).



## Hurstwood

### Townley of Hurstwood.

Arms. — Argent, a fess sable, three mullets in chief of the second.



*John Townley.*

According to Farrer's description of Hurstwood in Volume 6 of *The Victoria History of the County of Lancaster*, pages 473-478, Bernard Townley acquired the land at Hurstwood through marriage to Agnes Ormeroyd in 1550. An inquisition in 1619 claimed she died on 3 December 1587 and he died on 1 August 1603 and that John, the heir, was at the time of the inquisition was 55 years old and so was born around 1564. The St Peter, Burnley, parish register cannot confirm these dates.

Some evidence for the Hurstwood chart is available from the St Peter, Burnley, parish register. John married Eleanor Haydock at Burnley on 7 February 1583/4. He was buried at Burnley on 4 March 1627/8. Richard, John's brother is probably the mason who lived in Habergham Eaves and was buried at Burnley on 16 January 1621/2. John's sister Anne (named Agnes in the chart) married Henry Banister on 18 May 1584 at St. Peter's, Burnley.

John's eldest son was baptised on 30 Mar 1599. His wife, Eleanor, was buried at Burnley on 24 November 1658 and he was buried at Burnley on 20 July 1664, his eldest son, born in 1631, having been buried earlier in the year on May 1<sup>st</sup>. John the younger and Katherine Rishton married at Burnley on 8 Nov 1655. The legality of this marriage was in doubt for they were married again at Whalley on 3 Nov 1656, not long before the

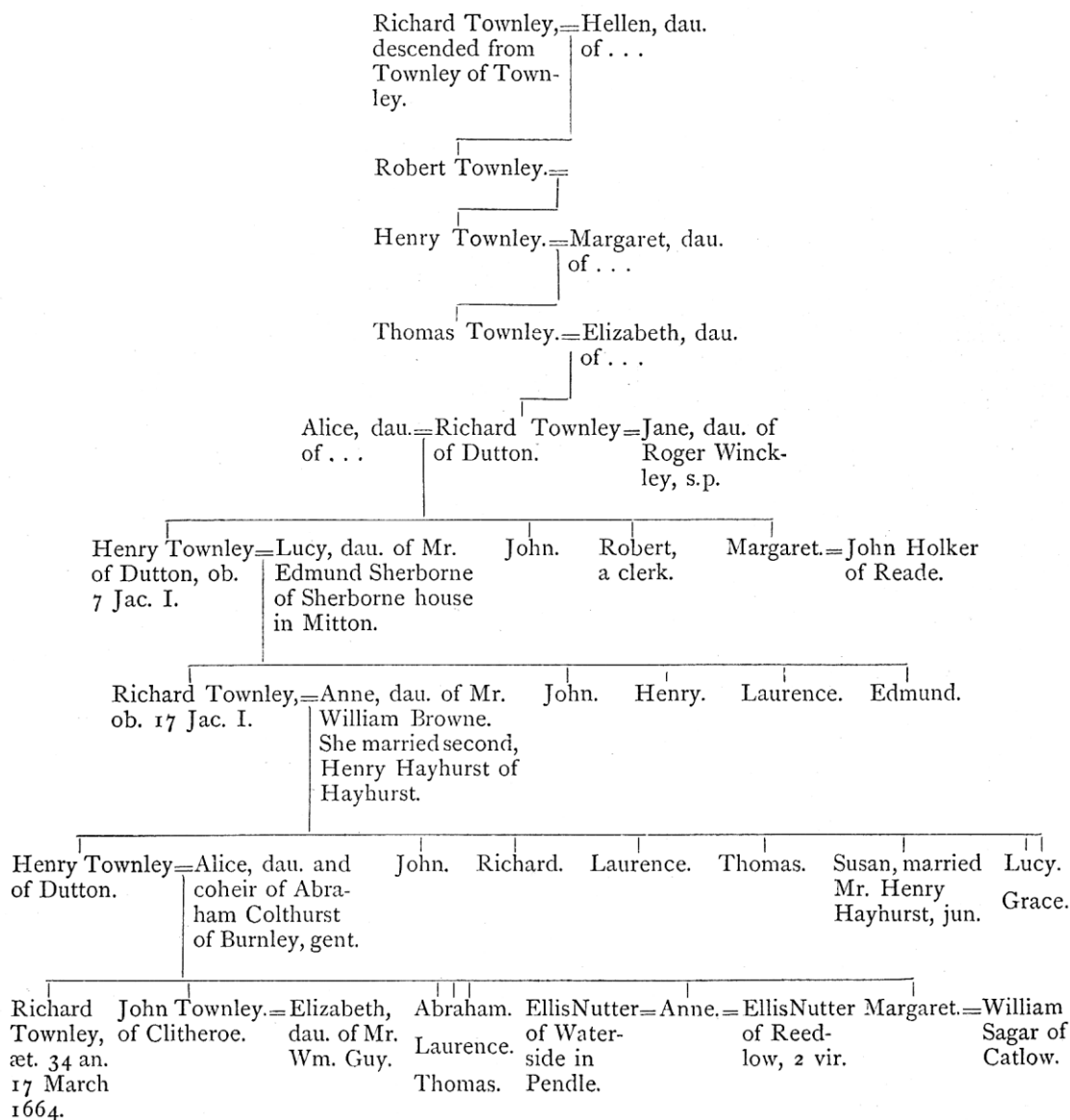
baptism of a daughter at Burnley on 16 Dec 1656. There is no baptism record for their son John, but he must have been around 1660 as he matriculated from Oxford University on March, 1677-8, aged 18 and was admitted to Gray's Inn on 22 November 1678.

The Hurstwood branch ended with John. He married Helen Brooke of Newhouse Hall at Northowram Church, Huddersfield on 4 August 1681. They had two son, John who died aged 15 in 1700 and Bernard who died in his first year. There were two daughters, Ellen and Catherine, who both married. John died in 1704 and Helen died in 1719, both being buried in Huddersfield. Hurstwood passed to Catherine's husband Richard Whyte, deputy-governor of the Tower of London and eventually the Hurstwood land was purchased by Charles Townley in 1803.

## Dutton

### Townley of Dutton.

**Arms.** — Argent, a fess sable, three mullets in chief of the second, with a rose on the fess, proper.



*Manchester, 17 March 1664.*

*Richard Townley.*

This branch is best described in '*The history of the parish of Ribchester*' published in 1890. Here Tom C. Smith wrote

“Considerable doubt as to who was the first representative of this branch of the Townleys of Townley has existed. But Christopher Towneley, to whose patient industry antiquarians are so much indebted, states " *that these three Townleys (John, Robert, and Henry) were ye sons of Richard Townley; and that this Robert was the first Townley of Dutton*”

Smith continues to confirm Henry as Robert's heir but does not provide any evidence to back up the descent from Henry to Thomas and then Richard as described in the 1664 visitation. However, he does identify John rather than Henry as being the eldest son of Richard. This is the John Townley of Dutton who appears in the 1560 Towneley family entail. John died around 1562 and Smith provides extracts from John's will. Smith provides further evidence to support the visitation chart down to Richard, aged 34 on March 17<sup>th</sup> 1664 and goes on to report he died unmarried in April 1670. His brother Abraham inherited his estate and the last member of the Townleys of Dutton to live at Dutton Hall died there in 1799.

In his will, Abraham mentioned his brother John Townley of Clitheroe and Lawrence Townley of Burnley. These were mercers and both created trade tokens that are now in the British Museum coin collection [John Townley half-penny 1667 issued in Clitheroe; Lawrence Townley half-penny 1669 issued in Burnley].

Abraham's second son, Richard Townley (baptized at Ribchester August 21<sup>st</sup> 1681 settled in Rochdale. He was steward to Alexander P. Butterworth of Belfield Hall, who left him the Belfield Estate on his death in 1728. His grandson, Richard Greaves Townley (1751-1823), inherited the manor of Fulbourn in Cambridge. Details of the Belfield/Fulborn branch of the Townley family who followed careers in the diplomatic service and the Anglican Church, can be found at British History Online – Fulbourn: Manors and other estates [<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/cambs/vol110/pp136-143>] and The History of Parliament Members Biography- Richard Greaves Townley (1786-1855) [<https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/townley-richard-1786-1855>].

### **Other Townleys**

Two pieces of evidence in the National Archives suggest that there were people with the name Townley who were not descended from the Townleys of Lancashire. The earlier one, dated 1339, shows Adam Ingram, and Roger de Townley, merchants of Chester, were owed £8 18s. by Simon le Archer [C 241/111/2]. The second, from the period 1493-1500, shows Edward, son and heir of Richard Townley, being plaintiff in a case regarding twelve mansion places in Silver Street, London. [C 1/228/7].

The written name Townley has changed over time just as the spoken language has changed. Records of the family of the Deans of Whalley show both Tunlay and Tunley. The name originates from a common topographical description "town field" and it would be rather surprising if the place name were confined to Burnley. In fact, there is another Tunley in Lancashire, in the parish of Eccleston. Henry and William de Tunley paid taxes there in 1332 [Victoria County History vol6 p.176].

[Townley Hall](#) is a Georgian country house, 5 km west of Drogheda, County Louth in the Republic of Ireland, built for the Townley Balfour family. [Blayne Townley \(1705-1788\)](#) took the surname Balfour to inherit property from his nephew, William Charles Balfour. Townley Hall was built by his grandson, [Blayne Townley-Balfour](#). Blayne Townley was son of Blayne Townley (1665-1722), who married Lucy, daughter of Charles Balfour in 1692. Blayne Townley the elder was the son of Henry Townley, who was living at [Athclare Castle](#) in 1661.

Henry Townley had four brothers and two sisters, all mentioned in the will of brother Faithful Townley, dated 1651. There appear to be no records giving the names of their parents. Henry Townley's will, proved 24 February 1691, is sealed with the Towneley arms. The Towneley arms were also to be seen at Athclare Castle, where the family lived in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Later, the Townley Balfours of Townley Hall displayed the quartered arms of the Townley and Balfour families.

There appears no firm evidence linking this branch with any of the other branches but the earliest mention of a member of the Townley family in Ireland provides a likely link. In 1537, Lawrence Townley appears in letters patent granting to him and Thomas Stephyns the office of Collectors of the Customs and Poundage in the Ports of Dublin and Drogheda. [Calendar of the State Papers relating to Ireland, of the reigns of Henry VIII]. In October 1534, William Skeffington had landed a large army in Ireland to put down a rebellion centred at Drogheda, 27 miles north of Dublin. It appears that Lawrence Townley was part of that army and this was his reward. It is possible that this Lawrence Townley was the same person who purchased Barnside, previously a monastic property, from John Braddyll in 1545.

When Mellifont Abbey in Ireland was suppressed in 1539, the property was let to Lawrence Townley before being passed to William Brabazon in 1546 and then Edward Moore in 1566. Edward Moore established a fortified dwelling on the site and his descendants remained there until it was sold to the Townley-Balfours in 1727. Townley Hall is just over a mile from the site of Mellifont Abbey.