

Thomas Townshend Thomas and his relationship with the Townshend Family

(The diary entries are in *Italics* and are as written except where some punctuation has been added to clarify).

These are the main players in the article.

1. Townshend siblings
 - a. Elizabeth Townshend – married William Thomas (4a)
 - b. Thomas Townshend – married Eleanor (probably Herbert) (5a)
 - c. Richard Townshend – married Hannah (possibly Herbert) (5b)
 - d. Sarah Townshend – married Adam Casebourne (4c)

2. Children of Richard Townshend (1c) and Hannah (5b)
 - a. Richard Herbert Townshend – married Catherine Thomas (3e)
 - b. Catherine Townshend – married John Thomas (3a)

3. Thomas siblings (parents William Thomas and Elizabeth Townshend)
 - a. John Thomas – married Catherine Townshend (2b)
 - b. Richard Thomas
 - c. Thomas Townshend Thomas (referred to as TTT in text)
 - d. William George Thomas
 - e. Catherine Thomas – married Richard Herbert Townshend (2a)

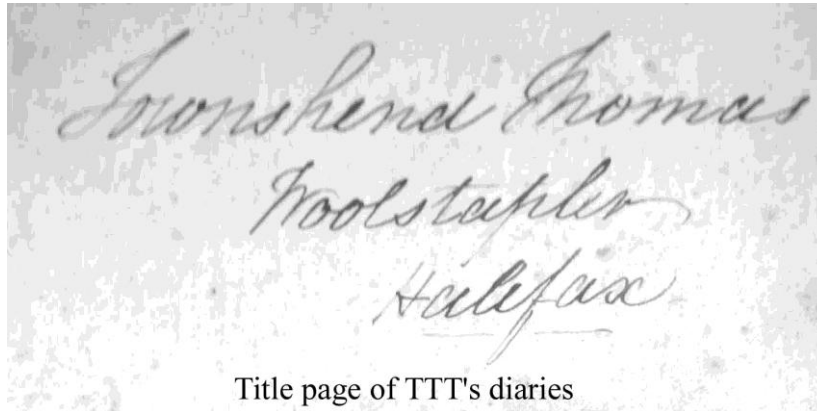
4. Others
 - a. William Thomas - married Elizabeth Townshend (1a)
 - b. Thomas Casebourne
 - c. Adam Casebourne – married Sarah Townshend (1d)

5. Townshend wives
 - a. Eleanor (probably Herbert) – married Thomas Townshend (1b)
 - b. Hannah (possibly Herbert) – married Richard Townshend (1c)

Written by Dick Thomas and updated January, 2010

Thomas Townshend Thomas

1. Thomas Townshend Thomas (TTT) (1794-1859) worked as a woolstapler in Halifax. He was my 2 x great grandfather.
2. TTT's diaries which exist for the period between March 1835 and November 1842 are mostly related to his business activities but there are also glimpses of his private life.



3. TTT's mother was Elizabeth Townshend (born around 1767 and died 1842). Little is known of her early life but she married William Thomas, a joiner, on 15th October, 1786 in Halifax Parish Church. According to the marriage records she came from Northowram but it is not at all certain the family came from there as explained below. Once or twice she is mentioned in the diaries such as 29th May, 1836 "*At church morning & evening. My mother dined with us today*" – and again the same entry a week later on 5th June.

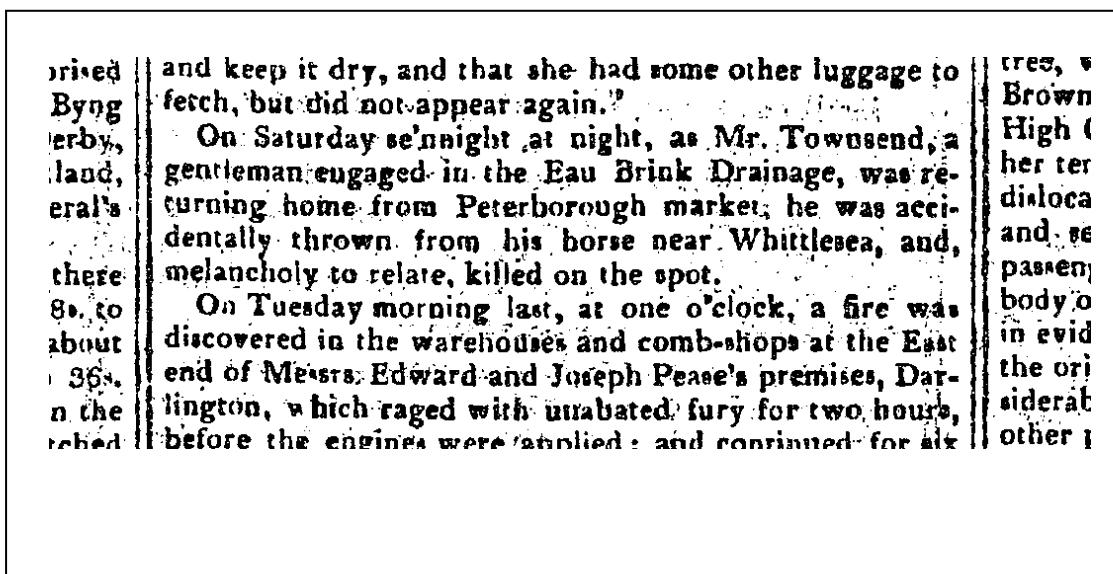
It is most likely that she was living with her granddaughter Hannah Hemingway in the High Street, Halifax in 1841 (Class: *HO107*; Piece *1300*; Book: *7*; Civil Parish: *Halifax*; County: *Yorkshire*; Enumeration District: *18*; Folio: *4*; Page: *1*; Line: *18*).

Elizabeth died on 6th August, 1842 of old age.
4. In this article I am particularly concerned with the relationship between TTT, his siblings and his close relatives in the Townshend and Casebourne families.
5. The Townshend family's origins are obscure and many of the descendants have also vanished from the radar. They were however for a short period in the first half of the 19th century involved with civil engineering, particularly canal and railway construction, at one of the most interesting periods. They knew Telford, the Rennies and Robert Stephenson and worked with these gentlemen on numerous projects in different parts of the country.
6. I have based my story here around TTT's diaries enhanced by information I have gleaned from other sources.

lad of 14, was playing in the ruins when he was hit by falling masonry and later died of his wounds.

10. Thomas Townshend was born around 1770. Research at the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) shows that by 1794 he was in the service of John Rennie working on the Lancaster Canal. In the period 1796 to 1802 he was Resident Engineer on the Rochdale Canal and for much of the following decade he was involved with engineering works in Ireland.
11. Whilst in Ireland he appears to have married Eleanor (there is an IGI entry for such a marriage to an Elinor Herbert at Meath in 1804 and I am tempted to treat this as quite likely – both because of the fact that it is known that he was in Ireland at the time and that at least one of their children was baptised with a second name as “Herbert”). It also appears that there was a local landowner Mr. R. Herbert who gave some stone holy water fonts to St. Finian's Catholic Church in Clonard in 1807. Clonard was close to the track of the Royal Canal on which the Townshends were working at the time and it was also where Richard Herbert Townshend was born in 1807 – see below.
12. After his return to England he was appointed surveyor of the Witham Navigation Company (Lincoln to Boston) in 1812 and subsequently he was the superintendent at the Eau Brink drainage in 1819 (ICE records). Baptism records for All Saints, King's Lynn show the baptisms of some of their children John (1818), Richard (1820), Herbert (1820), Edward and Eleanor (1822).
13. Thomas Townshend's brother Richard was also involved in the Eau Brink Cut construction but he died in 1818 “whilst being professionally employed” on these works. Richard's son (Richard Herbert Townshend) was at the time only 11 years old, but was sent to be a pupil with his cousin, TTT's brother, John Thomas. At the time John was the Superintendent of Works for the construction of the new Naval Dockyard at Sheerness – a position he appears to have held from around 1813 to the completion of the works in 1830.

Richard Herbert Townshend (full name according to his marriage certificate) was the son of Richard Townshend and Hannah – this suggests that possibly Hannah was also from the Herbert family and they got married whilst Richard was working in Ireland – as we believe did Thomas Townshend his brother.



14. The Dictionary of Civil Engineers (volume 1) says of Thomas Townshend that “... **Townshend had been associated with his brother in his Irish work, but the latter died in 1818, while working on the Eau Brink cut, leaving his son Richard (1807-1888), to be trained by Thomas.**”
15. By 1825 Thomas Townshend was working on the Birmingham Canal and it was probably about this time that he moved to Birmingham to live. This canal work lasted about 6 years and it was after that he started to take on railway work but one has to wonder if he took on more than he bargained for.
16. Monday 14th August, 1837 –
At Birmingham all day. I saw Mr Townshend he had some very awkward work on hand with the Grand Junction railway compny. By what I could learn they were behaving very bad to him.
17. This work was the Tring Cutting for which Thomas Townshend was the main contractor. He unfortunately got caught by the increases in labourer’s wages at the time leading, in October, 1837, to Thomas Townshend being made bankrupt owing £ 24,212. Apparently within 7 months the creditors had been paid off.
18. What is clear from the ICE papers is that Richard Townshend’s cousin was John Thomas and that Thomas Townshend was his uncle. As an aside to this story but relevant elsewhere the ICE papers also make it clear that Thomas Townshend had a nephew Thomas Casebourne.

The Dictionary of Civil Engineers says of Richard Townshend (Ba) “**After leaving Sheerness, Mr Townshend continued in the office of his uncle Mr. Thomas Townshend, and his cousin, Mr. John Thomas M.Inst C.E., and was employed**”

and of Thomas Casebourne it says “**He was trained as a civil engineer, almost certainly by his uncle Thomas Townshend under whom it is known to have worked on the Eau Brink cut (1818-1821)**”

More from the diaries – TTT’s brother John Thomas

19. After the completion of the Sheerness works (1830) John Thomas lived in Highgate and appears to have been involved on a number of canal and railway projects (Aqueduct to carry the high level canal between London and Birmingham, the London to Brighton railway line and the Tring cutting) – many of these in association with his uncle Thomas Townshend or his cousin Richard Townshend.
20. John is mentioned numerous times in the diaries. In many cases it is clear that John was very much the head of the family (as the eldest brother) and often gave orders that TTT presumably felt honour bound to carry out.
21. One example from TTT’s diaries Saturday 5th March 1836 – Monday 7th March 1836.

5th - Market at Hx as usual. Mid withers quoted at 17 £ I received a letter from brother dated Tring wishing me to go to Bradford about some railway waggon wheels belonging to Mr. Townshend

7th – I went to Waddington & Crossland at Bradford and found 20 sets of railway wheels had gone to London by the Selby compy fly boats the other 20 sets would go on the 10 inst.

Death of Mrs Townshend – wife of Thomas Townshend

22. TTT's diary entries of 26th – 27th November, 1837 record

26 Sunday I went to Christ Church in the morning and dined at Carters Brother Richard came here today to attend the funeral of Mrs Townshend we spent the day together and stayed all night at Carters – Richard Townshend came from Highgate to attend the funeral also my Brother John did not come.

November 26 According to Mr Townshend desire a Mourning Coach attended at Carters this morning and took us all up to Mr. Townshends we breakfasted there and about ½ past ten we started there were 5 Mourning Coaches and hearse – we went to the Catholic Chapel Birmin and went through the ceremony there. The body was then taken out of the Chapel and placed in the hearse and taken to Handsworth Church and buried there all the family attended . We returned to the Heath and dined there. We stayed till 10 o'clock and then came to the White Horse. I was very glad to see Mr Townshend after the funeral to be very much better than I expected

27th Breakfasted with my Brother Richard and dined at Carters after dinner I came to Warwick and my Brother Richard went to Highgate.

23. The death certificate for Mrs (Eleanor) Townshend records that she died of “paralysis” on 19th November, 1837 at the age of 54 years at Heath Cottage, Birmingham Heath. Thomas Townshend Jr son of Heath Cottage, Birmingham Heath was in attendance.
24. Thomas Townshend died on 3rd May, 1846 aged “about 70” of pneumonia. His will was proved in London on 4th June, 1846.

Mr and Mrs Townshend's children

25. From references in the diaries, baptism records and Thomas Townshend's will one can piece together the children of Thomas and Eleanor Townshend although the correct order of their respective births is not certain.
26. The will published 4th June, 1846 states “.....I give and bequeath the residue of my personal estate whatsoever and wheresoever and of what kind soever to be equally divided between my children Benjamin, Thomas, John, Richard, Herbert, Edward, Catherine, Susannah,

Hannah, Eliza and Jane for their own absolute use and benefit respectively...”

27. The will names the male children first then the females so taking that order we also have other references to the children:-
- (i) Benjamin - - Diary entry 15th July, 1838
 - (ii) Thomas – was informant on his mother’s death certificate.
 - (iii) John – born 22.6.1818 baptised 17.8.1818 (King’s Lynn All Saints records). 1841 census living at Birmingham Heath with father aged “20”.
 - (iv) Richard – baptised 17.1.1820 (King’s Lynn All Saints records) Diary entry – 20th Dec 1840.
 - (v) Herbert – born Sept 1820 baptised 3.9.1820 (King’s Lynn All Saints records). Diary entry 25th December, 1840.
 - (vi) Edward – born 28.6.1821 baptised 5.9.1822 (King’s Lynn All Saints records).
 - (vii) Catharine – 1841 Census living at Birmingham Heath with father aged “25”
 - (viii) Susannah. Diary entry– 30th January, 1840
 - (ix) Hannah (no other reference)
 - (x) Eliza (no other reference)
 - (xi) Jane – 1841 Census living at Birmingham Heath with father aged “20”. Diary entry 25th December, 1840

It is likely that there was also Eleanor born 6.8.1822 baptised 5.9.1822 (King’s Lynn All Saints records). She is not in the will - suggesting she may have died earlier.

The Family “Scandal”

28. This concerns Richard Herbert Townshend, his sister Catherine and mother Hannah as well as TTT, brother John and sister Catherine

29. 24th March, 1838 - Diaries

Memorandum – Richard Townshend left Highgate today by my Brother John’s commands he would have been with him 20 years had he stopt till October next.

25 I went to Holloway Church in the morning and dined at Highgate with my brother John. John Townshend was here all day.

26th March Monday This day after breakfast our sister Kitty walked out to a neighbour house of the name of Walters a wine merchant in Highgate, met Richard Townshend I suppose by appointment and ran away with him to be married. My brother John and myself kept in the house all day at Highgate – he told both Mrs Townshend & her daughter Kitty that Richard Townshend should never enter his

house anymore, for my part I have not the least doubt that both Mrs Townshend and her daughter was aware of what were going on, and that they helped the matter forwards than otherwise.

30. The reference to “20 years.. till October next” is interesting as it ties up exactly with the fact that Richard had been sent as a pupil to John in 1818 after his father died.
31. The marriage certificate for Richard and Kitty shows:-
Richard Herbert Townshend married Catherine Thomas by licence on 26th March. 1838 at St Pancras, Middlesex – both were of full age – Richard was a civil engineer. Catherine’s father was William Thomas and Richard’s father was Richard – both fathers were deceased. One of the witnesses was a B. Townshend.
32. Within 18 months things appear to have been patched up when John Thomas marries Richard Herbert Townshend’s sister Kitty. (19 December, 1839) also by licence at St Pancras Middlesex. Unfortunately John didn’t live too long and died 5th January, 1844. His will, proved 18th January 1844, makes it quite clear that despite having a number of other brothers and sisters (but apparently no children) his sister Catherine and her husband Richard are certainly back in favour.

Death of Brother Richard

33. In addition to the connections between Thomas Townshend and his three nephews John Thomas, Richard Herbert Townshend and Thomas Casebourne set out above there is another nephew (and brother to TTT and John) – Richard Thomas who was also a civil engineer. Not much is known about him other than he was the Resident Engineer at Kingstown Harbour (Dublin) until his untimely death on 24th April, 1838.

27th April, 1838 – This evening I received a letter from my brother John dated Highgate 26th April announcing the melancholy death of my poor Brother Richard. He died at Kingstown Harbour near Dublin where he had been for nearly 23 years as Resident Engineer and very much respected by all who knew him. He left a wife and 5 children. I received orders from my Brother John to go to Kingstown immediately and he would if possible meet me there.
29th April – Sunday at home all day prepared for starting for Ireland.
30th April Monday – I left Halifax at 7 o’clock this morning by the Perseverance coach at 7 o’clock – got to Manchester 20 minutes before 11 and arrived at Liverpool at 12 dined at the Bull Hotel, Dale Street and started at 5 o’clock by the mail packet for Kingstown arrived at Kingstown at 6 o’clock the following morning. I called upon my Brother George who was working at Liverpool and he went with me to Ireland.
1st May – arrived at Kingstown at 6 clock this morning by the Thetis Mail Packet from Liverpool. Stopt at Armstrong Hotel, Kingstown, got breakfast there went into Dublin with Charlotte my Brother Richard’s oldest daughter – the other three daughters were at Henry Dobbs with there (stet) Mother where they

have been since my poor Brother was interred which took place at Monkstown church on Thursday last the 26th April. he was buried this early on account of decomposition taking place soon after his death. I went with Henry Dobbs to a Mr Cannon Land Agents of D'Olier Street, Dublin – a person of my Brother Richard acquaintance who accompanied us to get an interview with Col. Burgoyne the Chairman of the Board at Kingstown – in order to get my brother Richard son William his father's situation as Resident Engineer at Kingstown. The Colonel was out and we were to call the following day. We dined and took tea at Dobbs and returned to the Inn at Kingstown the same evening with Charlotte.

May 2nd I again went into Dublin this morning with brother George saw Cannon and went with him to see Colonel Burgoyne to the Customs House and the Castle about Richd son William but could not see the Colonel – dined with Henry Dobbs and returned to the Inn at Kingstown in the evening. I got my tea with Charlotte my brothers oldest daughter.

May 3rd This morning we went to the Cemetery where my brother is laid. the funeral took place on Thursday the 26th April he died on Tuesday previous the Cemetery is about a quarter of a mile from Monkstown church. He was laid in a vault there and would be removed from thence in about 6 weeks into a grave in the same place where he has a son & daughter laid. he was carried to the place by the workmen at the Harbour at their out request by whom he was much esteemed - & by all who knew him. he was 48 years old on Feb 6th

attended with Mr Cannon the Board of Commissioners of Kingstown Harbour held in the Customs House Dublin for the purpose of getting my Brother Richard's son William his fathers situation. Saw Col. Burgoyne Chairman he told us that William was too young and was not properly qualified for the situation he being then at college in Glasgow but at any other time after he had made himself properly qualified for an Engineer they would not fail to recommend him – they told us that they were petitioning the Treasury for a gratuity of 200 £ for Mrs Thomas.

Having received a letter from my Brother John that he was not well and should not come to Kingstown as yet and desiring both my Brother George and self to return home, we left Kingstown by the Lucifer MailPacket at ½ past 5 this evening for Liverpool.

May 4th We arrived at Lpool this morning at 6 oclock. I went to the Bull Hotel, Dale Street got breakfast and wrote my Brother after dinner. I left Lpool at 2 oclock by first train got home at 9 oclock same evening. My Brother George stayed at Liverpool where he was working.

34. Evidently the idea of getting William into his father's post was unsuccessful. Mr. Barry Duncan Gibbons took over the job and remained there until his death in 1862.

Further history of Richard Herbert and Catherine Townshend

35. Following their marriage it appears that Richard went to Italy to survey the proposed railway between Leghorn and Florence via Pisa – it is not known

whether Catherine accompanied him but in 1839 their first child Arthur was born in Hampstead. In the 1841 census they are living in Woolwich where Richard was by then employed to superintend the construction of a cofferdam and dry dock at HM Dockyard. Early in 1844 after the death of John (his cousin and master) he was selected to work as the assistant to the Resident Engineer at Devonport – and in 1853 he became the Superintending Civil Engineer.

36. In 1861 he was appointed to proceed to the West Indies including Jamaica, Antigua, Barbados and Bermuda and thence to Halifax, Nova Scotia to report on the condition of the Government's establishment in each of those places. He also visited Boston and New York during his time there. As a result he doesn't of course appear on the 1861 census when his wife and Jessy are living 7, St Michaels Terrace, Stoke Damerel (Devonport).
37. He also made a six month trip to Ceylon in 1871 to advise on the contemplated harbour improvements there before returning to continue his work in Plymouth. He finally retired in 1878.
38. Based on census records they appear to have had at least four children.
 - (a) Arthur born approx. 1839 in Hampstead. Census records show
 - (i) 1841 living at Woolwich with parents (aged 2)
 - (ii) 1851 – not found
 - (iii) 1861 living with his aunt Catherine Thomas (nee Townshend) in Kent Square Hampstead (age 22).
 - (iv) 1871 living with his aunt at Lawn Road Hampstead (age 32).
 - (v) 1881 married and living at Lancaster Road, Hampstead.
 - (b) Jessy Catherine born approx. 1845
 - (i) 1851 – living at Stoke Damerel with parents
 - (ii) 1861 – living with mother at Stoke Damerel
 - (iii) 1871 – not found
 - (iv) 1881 – Living in Portsea with children – husband on board HMS Euphrates (a troop ship).
 - (c) Alice born approx. 1846 in Stoke Damerel
 - (i) 1851 – living at Stoke Damerel with parents
 - (ii) 1861 living with her aunt Catherine Thomas (nee Townshend) in Kent Square Hampstead (age 14)
 - (iii) 1871 living with parents at Stoke Damerel (age 24)
 - (iv) 1881 – living with husband Thomas Joseph Bullen at 5 Maitland Park Villas, St Pnacrass. (age 34)
 - (d) Bernard born approx. 1851

- (i) 1851 – living at Stoke Damerel with parents
- (ii) 1861 living with his aunt Catherine Thomas (nee Townshend) in Kent Square Hampstead (age 10)
- (iii) 1871 living with parents at Stoke Damerel (age 20)
- (iv) 1881 married and living at Stafford Road Portsea (age 29)

The Casebournes

- 39. The entry in the diary for 1st April, 1835 had long puzzled me “*My Aunt Casebourne died aged 63*”.
- 40. Clearly either William or Elizabeth had had a sister who had married a Casebourne – but I couldn’t find any reference until, quite by chance, I discovered another engineer Charles Townshend Casebourne when looking for information on the Townshends and their canal building activities. The juxtaposition of Casebourne and Townshend immediately caught my eye.
- 41. Further research at ICE soon revealed that Charles’ father was a Thomas Casebourne another prominent engineer of the time.
- 42. Thomas was born in 1797 at Hemel Hempstead, Herts. In early life he devoted himself to engineering pursuits, and was a favourite pupil of Mr. Telford, by whom he was employed as assistant on several works. The Dictionary of Civil Engineers says “...**He was trained as a 'civil engineer', almost certainly by his uncle Thomas Townshend under whom he is known to have worked on the Eau Brink Cut (1818-1821). Townshend being Resident Engineer.**”
- 43. This gave fairly strong evidence that Thomas Casebourne’s mother had been a Townshend and a very likely candidate for “Aunt Casebourne”.
- 44. The IGI gives Thomas’ birth as 14th October, 1797 and baptism at Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire on 10th April, 1798 to “Adam Casebourn and Sarah.”
- 45. The marriage entry for 24th February 1797 at Holborn St Andrew finally confirmed that Adam Casebourne had married a Sarah Townshend. Sarah Townshend being the Aunt Casebourne who died in 1835

