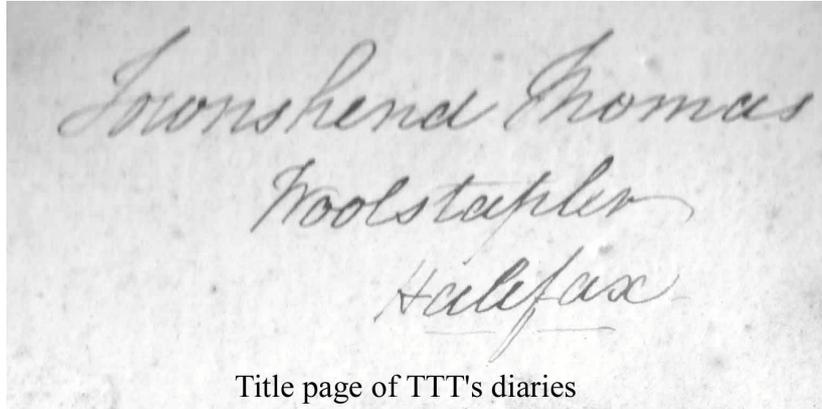


Thomas Townshend Thomas and his relationship with the Townshend Family

1. Thomas Townshend Thomas (TTT) (1794-1859) worked as a woolstapler in Halifax. His 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.



2. 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.
3. In this article I am particularly concerned with the relationship between TTT and the Townshend family.

TTT visits Birmingham

4. TTT made numerous trips from Halifax mainly to the area around Warwick in his business as a woolstapler (A woolstapler being the middleman between the farmers and the manufacturers). It was on these trips that TTT often used to call in on a Mr. Townshend living at Shireland Hall, Birmingham before travelling onto Warwick – perhaps not surprising that he broke his journey after a night in the coach.
5. The earliest relevant diary entry for Sunday 29th March, 1835 reads as follows

29th At Birmingham all day. At church morning dined at Shireland hall. Mr T not at home.

A bit further on (Wednesday to Friday 26th–28th August, 1835) we have

*26th Started for Birm at 1 o'clock noon got to Manchester at 6 left there at ½ past 8 came to Birm 6 o'clock morning went to Carters White Horse dined at the Heath Mr T arrived at home in the evening
27 dined at the heath with Mr. Townshend*

28th Dined at theHeath with Mr. Townshend.

6. The question is who was this Mr. Townshend and what was his relationship (if any) with TTT ? The diaries give some a number of clues.

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 til 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..

10. The death certificate for Mrs 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.

Mr and Mrs Townshend’s children

11. From references in the diaries and on other papers.
- (a) Ben Townshend – Diary entry 15th July, 1838
 - (b) Thomas Townshend Junior - Mother’s death certificate
 - (c) Susan – Diary entry– 30th January, 1840
 - (d) Richard – Diary entry – 20th Dec 1840
 - (e) Jane and Herbert – 25th December, 1840

The Family Scandal

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

13. 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. Richard's father was William Thomas and Richard's father was Richard – both fathers were deceased. One of the witnesses was a B, Townshend.

14. However within 18 months things appear to have been patched up when John marries Richard Herbert Townshend's sister Kitty. (19 December, 1839) also by licence at St Pancras Middlesex. Unfortunately John didn't live too long with his will being proved 18th January 1844 (date of death not yet found). In his will he 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 in favour.

Questions to be answered

- (1) Although we don't have any definite proof it does seem most likely that these Townshends who keep appearing in Thomas family records are of the same family as TTT's mother – but it isn't clear what that relationship is precisely. The hypothesis is that TTT's mother Elizabeth is a sister of the Mr. Townshend living at Shireland Hall and subsequently the Heath, Birmingham and also perhaps a sister of the Richard Townshend the father of Richard Herbert Townshend and Kitty (Catherine Townshend).

- (2) What was Mr. Townshend Christian name ? It is a distinct possibility that it was Thomas – as his son is referred to as Thomas jnr. (junior). If that is the case then there is a marriage listed on the IGI for a Thomas Townshend marrying an Elinor Herbert in Meath, Ireland in 1804 (record submitted by a member of the LDS church). The date could fit as the Eleanor that died in 1837 would have been 21 at the time and would explain the fact that she had a catholic funeral service. There are also records of a Thomas (engineer) and Eleanor Townshend living at Kings Lynn in the period 1818 to 1822 but confusing one of the children born there was a Richard Herbert Townshend baptised in 1820. This cannot be the Richard Herbert Townshend living in Highgate and marrying Catherine Thomas as his father was Richard and it is unlikely anyway as he was born around 1807.

An interesting possibility is that if Mr. Townshend was Thomas Townshend and that he was an engineer then he might be the Thomas Townshend that was involved in building various canals around Birmingham in the 1820s.

- (3) What were the Townshends doing around Halifax at about the time that Elizabeth Townshend met and married William Thomas (1786). Is it possible that they were involved in building some of the local canals such as the Calder and Hebble Navigation ?

Further history of Richard Herbert and Catherine Townshend

15. Following their marriage it appears that Richard and Catherine moved to Devon. Based on census records they appear to have had at least three children.

- (a) Arthur born approx. 1839 in Hampstead. Census records show
 - (i) 1861 living with his aunt Catherine Thomas (nee Townshend) in Kent Square Hampstead (age 22).
 - (ii) 1871 living with his aunt at Lawn Road Hampstead (age 32).
 - (iii) 1881 married and living at Lancaster Road, Hampstead.
- (b) Alice born approx. 1846 in Stoke Damerel
 - (i) 1861 living with her aunt Catherine Thomas (nee Townshend) in Kent Square Hampstead (age 14)
 - (ii) 1871 living with parents at Stoke Damerel (age 24)
 - (iii) 1881 – living with husband Thomas Joseph Bullen at 5 Maitland Park Villas, St Pancras. (age 34)
- (c) Bernard born approx. 1851
 - (i) 1861 living with his aunt Catherine Thomas (nee Townshend) in Kent Square Hampstead (age 10)
 - (ii) 1871 living with parents at Stoke Damerel (age 20)
 - (iii) 1881 married and living at Stafford Road Portsea (age 29)