

Tower Talk

Newsletter



Picture of the 'Mary Ann,' which sailed from Ipswich, England, in May and arrived at Boston, Massachusetts, on June 20, 1637, bringing John Tower to the United States.

By The Tower Genealogical Society

Chartered in 1909



Tower Family Crest

The Coat of Arms is a shield with three castle towers, a chevron with three roses, a knight's helmet above the shield and a Mason's square and compass above the helmet. These represent the Masonic Order of the Roses, a Scottish order.

Letter from the editor

Hello Cousins!

My name is Gloria Holmes Cooper and I am the new editor of our Tower Talk Newsletter. I hope to be able to take over from Roxanne Summers the well done newsletter she has given us in the past.

My Tower roots are from my maternal grandmother, Myrtle Tower Beherrell. I was very close to my Grandmother, she was a great inspiration to me all my life in many ways. I lived next door to her on the family farm in Lynnfield, Massachusetts, where nearly all my aunts and uncles and cousins lived. I spent many summer afternoons just hanging around listening to her and my mother, Laura Beherrell Holmes discussing our family roots over tea in her little house that I loved, the 'Wee Butt and Bin', (a Scottish term for it's construction) that she and her sons bought in 1936.

Grandmother was a wealth of information. She had compiled and published a book of family genealogy in 1967 but I had not seen it until a cousin in Canada, Ron Tower of Sackville, New Brunswick sent a copy of it to me a few years ago. I began researching the family genealogy several years ago, and the names Grandmother had mentioned over the years meant very little to me until that time. I had of course, met many current Tower family relatives on several trips "down home" to Canada where Grandmother had been born and had left most of her family before moving to the United States sometime after 1925. She then made the trek home just about every summer to check on her family especially her parents, William Alma and Minnie Augusta Tower. Her parents were both Tower, distant cousins and both from the long line of Joseph Tower and Judith Briggs who had sailed from Attleboro, MA to settle in New Brunswick, Canada in 1761. I'd met my great grandmother Minnie as a child but I don't remember, I was only 3 when she died. On a recent trip 'down home' with my granddaughter Jamie I had the opportunity to visit the cemetery in Rockport, New Brunswick, Canada in which many of my ancestors are buried. It gave me a strange sense of belonging being among these ancestors from as far back as the 1700's. I have heard many stories from Grandmother about them and in the future I'd like to share some of them with you.

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***We would love to hear your stories
and share them with our extended family.
Please feel free to contact me at: gcooper52@aol.com***

President's Message

By Patricia Brown

Hi Everyone,

It is with great pleasure that I can announce that Gloria Holmes Cooper of Colorado will be our new newsletter editor and board member. I made the appointment about 4 weeks ago. This newsletter will be a collaboration between Roxanne and Gloria. The TGS Board and members have been very grateful for all the hard work Roxanne has done with the newsletter on behalf of the members. The newsletter will go back to being monthly just as soon as all logistics are completed.

This month I wish to share with you two items that were sent to me. The first was sent to me by Kay Kinnan and highlights the way a last name may change based on the region the individual lives in. The second is a poem regarding genealogy and searching for those hard to find family members sent to me by a cousin on my paternal side. (pg 3) I hope you enjoy these tidbits and bytes this month.

This sound byte was sent in by Kay Kinnan.

"This is a marvelous quote that I've paraphrased from a lecture I heard by Lloyd Bockstruck, retired Dallas Public Genealogical Librarian on July 26, 2010 about an example he gave from H. L. Mencken's book written on the United States that I wanted to share with all of my genealogy friends!"

In colonial times, immigrant Ian Ferguson, a Scotsman, comes to New York City. He becomes an indentured servant in Albany, NY-- a predominantly German community. The census taker there, of German descent, lists him as Johann Fehrstein. Johann finishes up his servitude and becomes quite well off as a flint maker and moves to Philadelphia. This very same person has his will recorded beginning "I, John Flint,"

Sometime later his grandson, Peter Flint, leaves the family flint making business in Philadelphia to expand it in the city of New Orleans. In the 1820 and 1830 U.S. Census he is listed in New Orleans as Pierre Offluciel, as the census takers were of French origin. Finally this same person moves to Texas where in the U.S. Census he is found as Peter Gun. (You see, as Lloyd Bockstruck said, the flint making business was actually the business of making guns.)

This example was for all of us genealogists to beware not only of the spelling of names, but of the many translations as well!



The old Tower homestead in Hingham, Massachusetts about 1830's. Notice the yoked oxen in the front yard and two of the Tower relatives in front of the house.

Bless Those In-Laws!

By Margaret G. Irwin

Maiden names are fleeting,
They're almost never there,
For when the ladies marry,
Names vanish in thin air.

There is no way to search for her,
'Less her given name is strange.
Without a maiden name to use,
The quest will vainly range.

With luck, when she is newly-wed
With a babe upon her knee,
Her husband's in-law brother
Will join the family.

And magically you have the name
She was known by at her birth.
To the family historian,
It's a pearl of priceless worth.

Or, as she reaches middle age,
With prosperity to share,
Her ailing, aged parent
Will come to her for care.

And there you have been given
The very clues you lack
To trace her lineage in the past,
Through decades going back.

So, no more in-law humor!
No kinfolk boo-ed and hissed.
They are the greatest help of all
For the genealogist

From Pat Brown reprinted from
September/October 2008 issue of
Everton's Genealogical Helper



Almond J. Tower

This is a photo of Almond J. Tower, born about 1828 in Joliet, Illinois, the son of Asa Tower. He is the great-grandfather of James R Wright. James submitted this photo to me along with a letter in which he wrote:

"I wish I could send you more information about my great grandfather but I did not hear my father or my grandmother ever speak of him. The Towers were not a close knit family and the only other Tower I knew was a brother William Tower who lived with Mary for a time. My father was the only one to help Mary in her last years and he inherited the picture from her. Mary Tower married three times and had children from two of the marriages so it was a mixed up family in trying to sort out both lines. I have slowed down in doing the research into the uncles and aunts so I am afraid I am not much help in giving information about Almond."



Genealogy From A to Z

By David Tower



If you do any genealogical research, historical reading, or dictionary browsing you might find some of the following terms. Some are old, some are new, some are borrowed and some are blue.

(I'll have to remember those words they might make a good song title or wedding speech.)

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A.K.A.—Also known as; alias.

Base-born —A base-born individual, an illegitimate child.

Bounty Land—Land promised as an inducement for enlistment or payment for military services. A central government did not exist when the Revolutionary War began, nor did a treasury. Land, the greatest asset the new nation possessed, was used to induce enlistment and as payment for military services. Those authorized to bounty land received a Bounty Land Warrant from the newly formed government after the war.

Consanguinity—The degree of relationship between persons who descend from a common ancestor. A father and son are related by lineal consanguinity, uncle and nephew by collateral sanguinity

Dower—Legal provision of real estate and support made to the widow for her lifetime from a husband's estate. The widow becomes a dowager. A dowager however can be any lady of dignified bearing.

Et ux—"and wife."

Feme sole—Unmarried woman or a married woman with property independent of her husband.

Good sister—Sister-in-law.

Holographic Will— A holographic or olographic will is handwritten and signed by the individual that the will belongs to.

Instant— Of this month.

Julian Calendar— Calendar named for Julius Caesar and used from 45 B.C. to 1582, called the "Old Style" calendar; replaced by the Gregorian calendar.

Knave— Servant boy

Loco parentis— In place of the parent or parents.

Marita—Married woman, wife. maritus bridgroom, married man.

Nuncupative will (abbreviation nunc.)— Oral will declared or dictated by the testator in his last sickness before a sufficient number of witnesses and afterwards put in writing.

OS—Old style calendar.

Progeniture—A direct ancestor.

Quod vide (abbreviation q.v.)—Directs the reader to look in another part of the book for further information.

Relict/ relicta—widow

S.P. Sine prole—Without offspring

Tithable—A person taxable by law.

Uxor.—Wife, spouse, consort.

Virgo—Used to describe an unmarried woman in English and European marriage records.

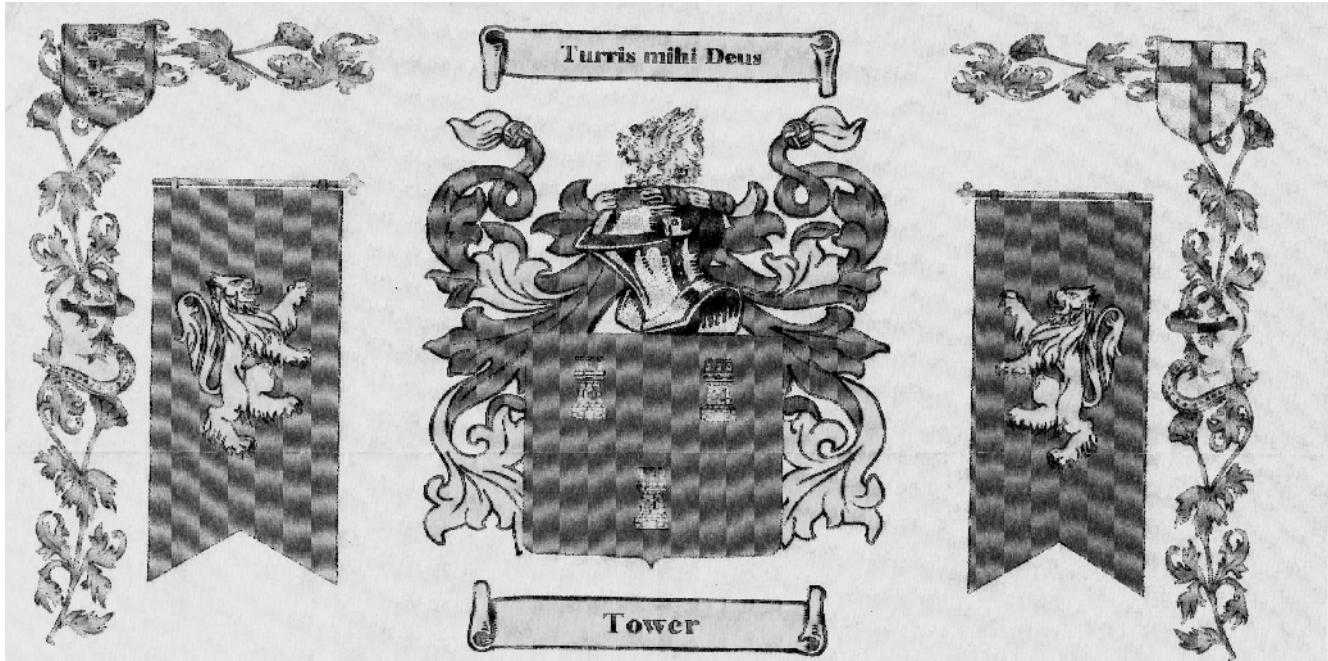
White rent blackmail—Rent to be paid in silver.

X—Any mark that looks like that letter, such as a mark made by a person who cannot read or write.

Yeoman—Farmer; freeholder who works a small estate; rank below gentleman.

ZZZ—Implies that you may be asleep after reading these definitions!

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The chronicles of England show the early records of the name Tower to be derived from the Norman race. The name appears in England from about 1066 AD and it's history is interwoven within the majestic tapestry which contains the history of Britain.

The Domesday Book (compiled in 1086 by William the Conqueror). The Ragman Rolls, the Wace poem, the Honor Roll of the Battel Abby, The Curia Regis, Pipe Rolls, The Falaise Roll, tax records, baptismal, family genealogies, and the local parish and church records establish that the first record of the name Tower was found in Lancashire where they were seated from ancient times, and were the Lords of the manor of Lowick of Lofwick. William of Tours accompanied William the Conqueror at the battle of Hastings, and was granted estates under Tenant in Chief, the Baron of Kendall. Some branches of this distinguished line remain in Lancashire while other branched south to Sowerby in Lincolnshire, and Isle of Ely. Others of this family adopted the name Lowick and Lofwick and remained in Lancashire.

The name Tower occurred in many references but from time to time spellings included Town, Towers, Toure, Toures, Lowick, Lofwick and many others. Scribes recorded and spelled the name as it sounded. It wasn't unlikely that a person would be born with one spelling, married with another, and buried with a headstone which showed another spelling.

The Normans were commonly believed to be of French origin, but more accurately, they were of Viking origin. The Vikings landed in the Orkneys and Northern Scotland about the year 870 AD. under their King Sturgud the Stout. Later, under their Jarl, Thorfinn Rollo, they invaded France about 911 AD. The French king Charles the Simple, after Rollo laid siege to Paris, finally conceded defeat and granted northern France to Rollo. Duke William who invaded and defeated England in 1066 was defended from the first King Rollo of Normandy.

The surname Tower emerged as a notable family name in the county of Lancashire where the name proliferated in the Furness Preston area. Meanwhile in Lincolnshire John Towers was Lord of Sowerby and they also acquired the manor of Hinton in the Isle of Ely. They also settled at Crollinghall in Cumberland to the north. Later they settled at Weald Hall in the county of Essex and Huntsmore Park in Buckingham. The name Towerson is not related. Of the Sowerby branch Thomas Towers was the Lord of the Manor in 1352 and they also branched out to Thymock in the county of Lincoln and were resident there in 1640. They also branched north to Scotland where William Towar was seated in Auchmunezie in 1633, as recorded in the Aberdeen Poll Book. William De Tours was made prisoner in a battle on the March of Scotland in 1359. John of Tours had a safe passage between Scotland and England. William de Towris witnessed a St. Leonard's charter in 1457, and Peter de Towris was a witness in Edinburgh in 1462. Thomas Touris was Bailie of the Barony of Dunkeld in 1508, his name was spelt Towris, Thouris, and Towres.

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George Townis held land in Haddington in 1558, and Sir George Touris was retoured as heir of his father John Touris of Innerleath in 1605. Outstanding amongst his family at this time was William de Tours. The surname Tower contributed much to local politics and the affairs of England and Scotland. During the 12th century many of these Norman families moved to Scotland . Later in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries England was ravaged by religious and political conflict, the Monarchy, the church and Parliament fought for supremacy. The unrest caused many to think of distant lands.

In Ireland, settlers became known as "Adventurers for land in Ireland". They undertook to keep the Protestant faith, occupying the land of the Irish. In Ireland the family settled in Kentstown in county Meath, Finglas in county Dublin, and Bushy Park near Borris-O-Cain in the county of Tipperary.

The democratic way of life of the New World beckoned many. They sailed aboard the fleet of sailing ships known as the "White Sails". In North America, migrants which could be considered kinsman of the family name Tower, or variable spelling of that same name included Joane Tower who settled in Virginia in 1670, John Tower settled in Boston Mass. in 1637, John Tower settled in New England with 5 children in 1641, Patrick Tower settled in Boston in 1652 Robert Tower settled in Virginia in 1654 Thomas Tower settled New England in 1652, Edward Tower settled in Virginia in 1635, James and Elizabeth settled in Virginia in 1654. The family also settled in Pennsylvania and California. Michael Lowick settled in Virginia in 1607. From the Port of arrival settlers joined the wagon trains westward. During the American war of Independence some declared their loyalty to the crown and moved northward into Canada and became known as United Empire Loyalists. Meanwhile at the family name was highly regarded in the social stream. There were many notables of this name Tower. Major General Philip Thomas Tower, CB, DSO, MBE, Colonel, Commandant, Royal Regiment of Artillery, Graham Ford Towers CC (Canada), CMG, Governor, Bank of Canada 1969 now residing in Rockcliffe, Ontario.

Medievalonline gave this response on 5/29/2000:

"After researching the coat of arms we found four Knights who bore the Tower crest. Sir John de Towyeir, born county Leicester first wore the Coat at Dunstable Tournament in 1308 and again at the battle of Borough bridge in 1322. Sir Richard wore the same coat of arms in 1375 with additions of a fess and an argent added to the crest. The coat of arms appears again in 1402 and is associated with Sir Gerald Touret and finally in 1424 in association with Sir Geoffrey Sackville. "

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A Welcome to New Members

Amy K. Hall,
14 Carling Rd., Framingham, MA 01701

Her lineage: Amy Hall (11), Francis Hall (10), Ella A. Brown (9), Elwood F. Brown (8), Henry Brown (7), Free-love Morse (6), Freeloze Dexter (5), Sarah Whipple (4) Jeremiah Whipple (3), Hannah Tower (2), John Tower (1)

Michael McKensie Tower
2 Hawthorne Hollow Cir., Conroe, TX 77384

His Lineage: Michael Tower (12), Donald O. (11), Howard O. (10), Nathan E. (9), Almond J. (8), Asa (7), Asa (6), Peter (5), Peter (4) Jeremiah (3), Jeremiah (2), John (1)

Claire Richardson Bennett
Royal Harbor Ct, Fort Myers, FL 33908

Her Lineage: Claire Bennett (10), Walter Richardson (9), Bertha Tower (8), Joseph (7), Lemuel (6), Benjamin (5), Joseph (4), Benjamin (3), John (2), John (1)

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