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# THE POWELL FAMILY OF CASTLETON, PRIORY WOOD, AND DORSTONE, HEREFORDSHIRE

By A. D. POWELL

IN genealogy, documentation is everything. Each generation of a descent must be shown with reasonable certainty to link with the one before it. On the other hand, a stage is always reached, sooner or later, when the line stretches back no further. Earlier ancestors can only be conjectured. Provided there is good reason for the conjecture—and it is made clear no definite claim is established—it is sometimes useful to put on record what origins a family *may* have had, because such indications can help future researchers.

In the case of the Powell family of Castleton (which it will be convenient to call them throughout this article), there is reason to suppose they may be a branch of the Powells descended from Llywelyn Crûgeryr, discussed in various numbers of these *Transactions*. The latter lived, among other places, at Gladestry, Llowes and Clyro in Radnorshire, and Brilley in Herefordshire. I will here call them the Powells of The Travely, from the house in Llowes they inhabited for over two hundred years.

The records and pedigrees in possession of the present representatives of the Powells of Castleton were put into order by Miss Ann Powell, of Orchard Gate, Winforton, Herefordshire, who has kindly allowed me to give this account of them. I will try to sift the evidence for, and against, the two families having the same origin. At the end of the article the Powell of Castleton pedigree appears in tabular form. A few words of introduction may be helpful.

The Powell of Castleton pedigree begins with Thomas Powell of Brunant (Briwnant), a house in the parish of Llowes. In a copy of the administration granted at Brecon to his widow, Sara Powell, 20 Feb. 1726/27, he is described as "of Llowes in the County of Radnor, Gent.". The "Sureties" are "Thomas Williams of Llanbeder Painscastle" and "Johen Jones." In the inventory, filed at £326.5s., the "Apprisors" (i.e. creditors or perhaps just valuers) are "Thomas Williams" (no address) and "Thomas Pugh". We shall return later to these names.

Thomas Powell's burial is recorded in the Llowes parish register: "1727. Thomas Powell of Brunant was burd. Janry. ye 21st".

In the same PR we find: "Mary Powell wife of John Powell of Brunant" bur. 14 May, 1725; and, on 2 April, 1732, "John Powell of Breunant, widower" was buried. Obviously these two were husband and wife, but what relation were they to Thomas Powell of Brunant, who d. 1726/7 in the period between their deaths?

One's first thought is that Thomas Powell might have been a brother of John Powell, but I think it far more probable—indeed almost certain—that John and Mary were the *parents* of Thomas Powell and he predeceased them.

The reasons for this supposition are again to be found in the Llowes PR. On 15 Oct., 1716, "Elinor, dau. of Thomas Powell" was bapt.—and bur 1st Aug. 1718. In 1719, "September ye 11th, Thomas ye son of Thomas Powell was born and he was baptised upon the 19th instant". In 1723, "John ye son of Thos. Powell was baptzd. Sept ye 7th."



There is every reason to suppose these three, Elinor, Thomas and John, were all children of Thomas Powell of Brunant. Elinor, we know, died as an infant. Thomas may have died young too. He is not mentioned in the Powell of Castleton papers, but Thomas Powell, according to local custom, was likely to have called one son after himself. "John" was, in fact, the name of Thomas Powell of Brunant's heir—an additional reason for supposing John Powell of Brunant to have been his grandfather.

Last of all, Colonel Thomas Powell (whose papers provide much of the evidence, and is described below) wrote to his son, Thomas, then surgeon in Madras, on 15 July, 1829, from Hardwick, Clifford: "We are of honest but a poor stock springing from the *Brunant*. You are the *fifth generation*."

This rather suggests that the Colonel did not himself know further back than his ancestor John Powell of Brunant, d. 1732. The "poor but honest" description was certainly relative, and perhaps intentionally humorous.

The question now arises: were the Powells of Brunant relations in the male line of the Powells of The Travely?

Brunant, a homestead of much the same sort, is only about two miles from The Travely. It would be true to say that it is almost the only house on the hills of the parish of Llowes that is not known to have been inhabited by the Travely Powells at one time or another.

The Travely Powells seem to have been on a similar social level to the Brunant Powells, but the former in my experience never used the name "John". This is odd, because they were directly descended from Howell ap John (ap Ieuan ap Llywelyn Crügeryr) of Gladestry, who d. ca. 1535.

The Subsidy Roll for the neighbouring parish of Brilley, 32 Eliz. (1589/90), names Roger Powell (d. 1594) of the Travely family, and also "Lewis ap Poel and John his son". This "Lewis ap Poel" often witnesses wills and is sometimes called "Lewis ap Howel ap John", possibly a brother of Clement ap Howel ap John of the Traveley family. This could be the moment when the name "John" was introduced. A later John Powell is named in Radnorshire Tax Returns (1662—1689) for Llowes in the reign of Charles II. The entry (PRO.E. 179. 224/593) records: "Roger Powell, 1 (hearth), Roger William Powell, 1. John Powell, 1. Thomas Powell, 5." The date of the assessment was probably about 1665, though the fact that Thomas Powell (of the Travely) had 5 hearths, while his father, Roger, had only one, suggests that the date was either about 10 years later, or that Roger Powell had by then made over most of his property. Roger d. ca. 1674, a very old man.

Thomas Powell of The Travely d. ca. 1680. If the later date is accepted, the other Roger Powell in the Hearth Tax Return might have been his nephew, s. of his brother Miles. Roger William was probably his first cousin, s. of his uncle, William Powell of Brilley. In other words, three out of four Hearth Tax payers in Llowes were certainly Travely Powells. Was John too? In any case, was he father or uncle of John Powell of Brunant, d. 1732?

Let us now return to Thomas Williams of Llanbeder Painscastle, "Surety" and "Apprisor" for Thomas Powell of Brunant's admon. 1726/27.

This Thomas Williams seems almost certainly to have been: (1) "my great grand son Thomas Williams sonn of Henry Williams", named as

inheriting 20s. in the will of Roger Powell of Llowes (1685/6). (2) husband of Mary, dau. of William Powell of Bronydd, Clyro (d. 1715).

William Powell of Bronydd was grandson of Roger Powell (d. 1675/6), so that if his daughter Mary did marry Thomas Williams—and research I have done over a long period certainly points to that—they were first cousins. Mary (with her uncle, Michael Powell) was executor of her father's will, in which Thomas Williams was again one of three "Apprisors."

Thomas Williams was also witness of the will of Henry Powell of Gogia, Llowes (another Traveley Powell) in 1727, and "Thomas Williams and Mary his wife" were granted the admon. of Evan Powell of Clyro (unlikely to have been a member of either Powell families here dealt with) in 1716. Henry Powell of Gogia, above, had a sister Hanah, m. to Roger Williams. They had a s. William and a dau. Mary. Roger Williams was possibly a brother of Thomas Williams.

To return to Thomas Pugh ("Apprisor" of Thomas Powell of Brunant's admon.), one of that name was witness to the will of Mary Powell (widow of Thomas Powell of the Traveley) in 1698, and of Marmaduke Powell of the Traveley, 1728. This was possibly the same man.

These names, of course, prove no more than that the people connected with Thomas Powell of Brunant were also connected with the Traveley Powells. That is not surprising in a small parish, but it does on the whole strengthen the possibility of relationship.

On the other hand, it must be pointed out that, when Philip Powell, of the Traveley family, inherited the house called Ty-yn-y-Coed in Disserth in 1768, he was no relation of the old established Powells of Maesgwynne in Disserth, who claim descent in their armorial tablets in the church, not from Llywelyn Crûgeryr but Elystan Glodrudd, the more traditional Radnorshire progenitor.

My own feeling is that the Castleton Powells probably were of the same family as the Traveley Powells, but stemming off from another son of Howel ap John. At the same time it must be remembered that even towards the end of the 17th century in Radnorshire—and the middle of the 18th in many other parts of Wales—it was quite possible for the children of a "Howel" to take the name of "Powell".

The Powell of Castleton pedigree follows in chart form :

THOMAS POWELL of Brunant, Rads. gent., was probably s. of John and Mary Powell of Brunant, as described in the introductory remarks. He d. Jan. 1726/7, having, by his wife, Sara, had issue :

1. Thomas, b. 11 Sept. bapt. Llowes, 19 Sept. 1719 : probably d. young.

2. John, of whom presently.

1. Elinor, bapt. Llowes, 15 Oct. 1716 : bur. 1st Aug. 1718.  
the younger son,

JOHN POWELL of Castleton and Priory Wood, Herefords. bapt. Llowes, 7 Sept. 1723. m. 1st. Rebecca, dau. of—Winstone,<sup>1</sup> by his wife, Elisabeth, sister of George Mynd of Ash Ingon (Ashton Ingham?), Bridstow, Herefords. He is stated to have raised the Shropshire Militia. In a deed<sup>2</sup> of 19 April, 1788, he was "late of Castleton, now of Priory Wood" : properties in Llowes, apparently formerly owned by him are named as "Brewnant,<sup>3</sup> Pen y Lan, Gwrglodd Vach or Hendon's Meadow, Fwrndy and Pen Llan." By his wife, Rebecca, he had issue :



1. (Rev.) George, bapt. Clifford, Herefords., 6 July, 1746. matric. Brasenose Coll. Oxon. 24 May, 1781. B.A. 1785: Fellow of Balliol, 1786. M.A. Vicar of Abbotsley, Hunts.: Rector of Duloe, Cornwall: d. unmar. 20 Feb. 1830. bur. Balliol Chap. (M.I.) In his will (dated 1st Oct. 1826), left, with other charitable bequests, benefactions to Llowes, Clifford and persons suffering unjust imprisonment in Oxford gaol. M.I. Clifford churchyard.

1. Sarah, bapt. Clifford, 27 Feb. 1755. d. unmar. admon. granted to her brother, George Powell, 21 April, 1809.

2. Elizabeth, bapt. Clifford, 1757: bur. 13 May, 1773.

3. Jane, bapt. Clifford, 9 May, 1761: living in 1788. unmar.

He mar. 2ndly. Louisa (b. 18 April, 1750), dau. of — Da Buisson, by whom he had further issue:

1. John, b. 1768: apprent. to Richard Hardwicke, surg. of Hereford 14 July, 1788: appoint. surg. 69th Foot (later 2nd Batt. The Welch Regt.): served in Corsica and West Indies: d. unmar. of yellow fever during attack on San Domingo, 20 May, 1796. M.I. Clifford churchyard.

2. Thomas, of whom presently.

John Powell was bur. Clifford, 6 Feb. 1794/5. Louisa, his wife, d. 22 April, 1824. M.I. Clifford churchyard.

The younger son,

COLONEL THOMAS POWELL, D.L. J.P. of Priory Wood and Hardwick Court, Clifford: bapt. Clifford, 6 July, 1770: educ: Abergavenny and Hereford Grammar Schools: age 16 commiss'd 14th Foot (later West Yorks Regt.): Maj. 1797: Lt. Col. 1802: served on Continent (wounded at Dunkirk) and in the West Indies, where he purchased lands in Trinidad: retired to Hardwick Court: com'd Herefordshire Militia during threat of Napoleonic invasion: given freedom of Hereford. m. 1806, Ann Dew (b. 1760) widow of Tompkyns Dew Esq. of Whitney Court & 2nd dau. of Rev. Armine Styleman of Ringstead, Norfolk. She d. without issue, 1823. M. I. Whitney church. Colonel Powell was bur. Clifford 26 March, 1856, having had issue, by an earlier union<sup>4</sup> to one 'Mrs. E.B.' (living in 1805) a son,

(REV.) THOMAS POWELL, b. 29 Jan. bapt. 14 Feb. St. Joseph's, Trinidad 1802: apprent. to Mr. Carden of Worcester: M.R.C.S. 6 Sept. 1822: appoint. surg. H.E.I.C.S. 23 July, 1805 and went to Fort St. George, Madras: ordained, 1832: Rector of Dorstone, 1842-86: J.P. m. 1835, Clara (b. 1811), el. of three daus. of Rev. Thomas Prosser, Rector of Dorstone and Snodbill (whose family had the living since the 17th century) whom he succeeded: d. 7 Sept. 1886, having had issue by his wife, Clara (d. 1878. bur Dorstone):

1. Thomas, of whom presently

1. Louisa Boughton, b. 1840. d. 1849.

2. Clara Anne. m. 30 July, 1863, Sir Richard Dansay Green-Price, 2nd Baronet, of The Grove, Presteigne. She d. 12 Oct. 1917, having had issue.

The eldest son,

(REV.) THOMAS PROSSER POWELL, b. 12 Sept. 1837: matric. St. John's Coll., Oxon. 12 March, 1856: B.A., 1860: Asst. Chaplain, Buenos Aires, 1865-8: Vicar of Peterchurch, Herefords, 1875-87: Rector of Dorstone, 1887-1905: m. 7 Oct., 1868, Jessy Caroline (b. 1st Jan., 1845: d. 1927), o. child of Percy Davies, of Porthmawr, Crickhowell, Brecon, by his wife



Caroline (née Kempe). He d. 2 Nov., 1905, having had issue by his wife :

1. Thomas Percy Prosser, of whom presently.
2. (Rev) George Henry, b. 12 Jan., 1877 : educ. Cheltenham Coll. Merton Coll, Oxford. Wells Theological Coll. M.A. ordained 1903 : suc. his father as Rector of **Dorstone**, 1905 : 1st World War served 1914-18 as chaplain with Montgomeryshire Yeo. and with R.F.C. in Egypt : R.D. Abbeydore 30 years : Preb. Hereford Cathedral. m. 1907, Kathleen Maud, eld. dau. of Henry Beynon Crichton of Wyeclyff, Hay, by his wife Emma Charlotte (nee Llewelyn of Penllergaer, Swansea). He had by his wife issue :

- (1) George Llewelyn, b. 1910. unmar.
- (1) Ann Caroline, b. 1908 : unmar.
- (2) Priscilla Mary, b. 1911 : m. 1952, John Wilson, d.s.p. 1956.
1. Louisa Caroline, b. 15 June, 1871 : d. 6 April, 1877.
2. Gwendoline, b. 8 Mar. 1873 m. Oct. 29th 1898 Roland Holt Wilson, of Redgrave Hall, Suffolk, d. June 18, 1957 having had issue.
3. Jessie Merea. b. 12 Feb. 1875 : d. unmar. 29 Aug. 1933.
4. Mary Ermentrude, b. 20 Jan. 1878. unmar.

the eldest son,

THOMAS PERCY PROSSER POWELL, M.B.E., of **Dorstone**, b. 26 Dec. 1869 : educ. Charterhouse and Oxford : m. 1905, Evelyn Lucy Alice, 2 dau. of John H. Arkwright, of Hampton Court, Herefords : barr. Inner Temple, 1896, clerk of indictments on Oxford service : 1st World War, 1914-19, Montgomeryshire Yeomanry and 2 Div. Salonika and Palestine : Capt. D.L. J.P. C.A. (Vice-chmn. C.C.) Herefords : chmn. of quarter sessions : Wye board of Conservators. He d. 16 May, 1940, when the lands of **Dorstone** and Snodhill Manor were sold to 2nd Lord Brocket. He had issue by his wife :

1. Thomas Frederick, b. 20 July, 1906, m. Nov. 1941, Sheila Mary, dau. of Stewart Robinson, of Lyonshall, Herefords. They had issue a dau. Sara Peta, b. 2 Mar., 1944, m. 11 Sept., 1965 Raymond Avery, of London, and had issue.

2. Robert Douglas, b. 11 May, 1908. m. 20 Mar., 1952, Violet Ruth (b. 1931), dau. of Thomas Horsfall. They had issue :

- (1) Robert Andrew, b. 8 Sept., 1953.
- (2) Alice Lucy, b. 5 Mar., 1968.
1. Diana Merea, b. 5 Mar., 1910, m. 7 June, 1943, Claude Daubney, of Lincolnshire (widower, formerly husband of Louisa Appleyard, by whom he had one son, John) and had issue.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Rebecca Winstone, first wife of John Powell, was the daughter of Elizabeth Winstone, sister of George Mynd (one of the Parties). John Roberts was a nephew of G. Mynd by his sister Ann Roberts.

Thomas Birt (one of Parties) b. 1749, Preb. of Hfd. Cathedral, Vicar of Madley & Llantilo Crossenny, was son of Rev. James Birt, of Ledbury, etc. Thos. Birt's sister Margaret married a Peter Da Buisson of Glynhir, a family of Huguenot descent. (See Carmarthen Antiq., Lewis).

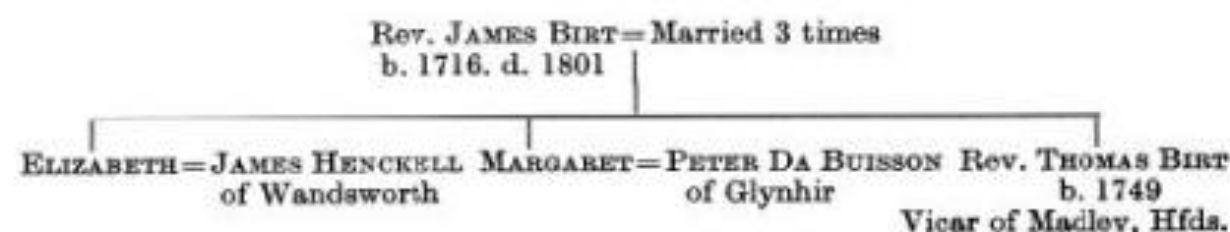
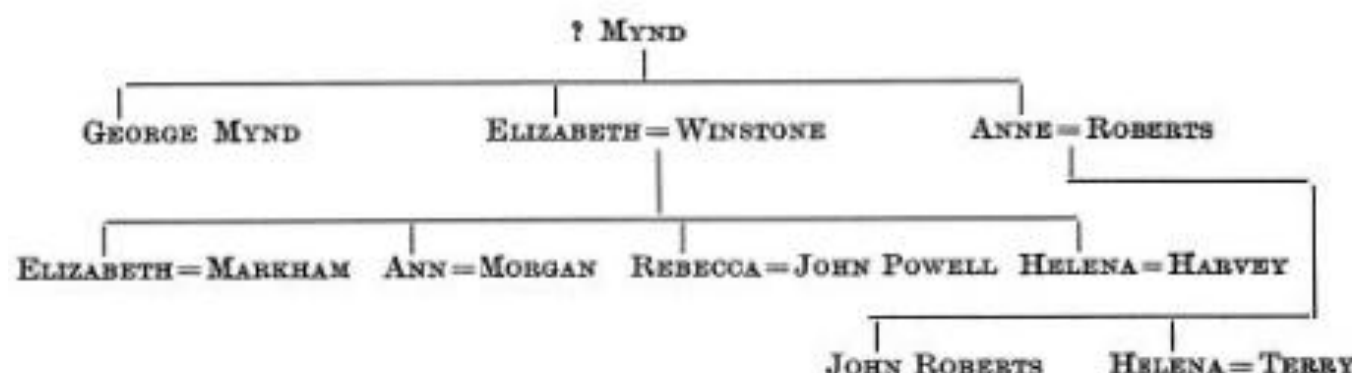
There is no record of Burial of Rebecca at Clifford. John's children by both wives are born very close in dates. Rebecca is not mentioned in the Deed as being 'deceased'.

It is possible Louisa was a sister of Peter Da Buisson.

Mrs. Powell (Louisa) has letters addressed to her at Rev. Birt's, Ledbury, & there are letters from him to John Powell about his sons THOMAS & JOHN, particularly his procuring Tom's Commission as Ensign & an account for his Uniform.

There are letters from a Sophia & Mary Price, dated 1805, No. 9, Downing Street, London, to their Aunt, Mrs. Powell (Louisa); Sophia mentions Father & Mother, brothers—William & Frederick, & Uncle Foster, & that she wishes her aunt knew her mother. The letters describe visits to Paris, etc., for the Emperor's Coronation.

Glynhir is in the Parish of Llandeblie, Carmarthenshire. An article on 'The da Buisson of Glynhir' by T. H. Lewis, *Carmarthenshire Antiquary*, Vol. II, p. 10ff.



2

## DEED

APRIL 19TH, 1788

The Parties :

1. JOHN POWELL late of Castleton, now of Priory Wood (Clifford, Hfds.), only son & heir of THOMAS POWELL late of Parish of Llowes, deceased.  
Sara his wife, also deceased,  
&  
LOUISA (Da Buisson) wife of JOHN POWELL
2. George Mynd of Ash in the Parish of Bridstow (Hfds)  
&
3. GEORGE POWELL only son & heir of JOHN POWELL by REBECCA (Winstone) his former wife.
4. SARAH & JANE POWELL daughters of JOHN & REBECCA.

&  
Properties in Llowes mentioned in the Deed :

1. BREWNANT heretofore purchased from Walter Jenkins.
2. PEN Y LAN
3. GWRGLODD VACH OF HENDON'S MEADOW
4. FWRNDY  
all purchased from Walter Jenkins, William Price & Sybil Price.
5. PEN LLAN. Purchased from Samuel Williams by John Powell.  
All now converted into one holding in the possession of Edward Farr as tenant of John Powell.  
In all—Four Messuages, Four Dwelling Houses, Four Barns, Four Stables, Four gardens, Six Orchards, 100 Acres Arable land, 100 Acres Meadow, 50 Acres Wood & Underwood, 100 Acres Furze, Heath & Common.



## The BRUNANT

<sup>3</sup>Presumably the property remained in the tenancy of Farris as Col. Powell writes to his brother George, at Oxford,—“Dec. 30th. 1826. Farr your tenant died about 6 weeks back.” & describes the farm buildings etc. as all being in a shocking state of repair. Apparently there was no proper form of lease. He proposes advertising the property in the local paper & bills at Hay. In another letter to his brother :—

April 28th. 1827. Having only one applicant, Col. Powell let the farm to him for £80 per annum for 3 years, afterwards to be at £100, the old rent.

Sept. 3rd. 1827. Col. Powell writes to his son Tom, in India, that he went to the Brunant to look after repairs & mentions Mrs. Probert, late Sally Farr, giving him a meal.

Nov. 3rd. 1827. Col. Powell to his brother : “I have been through Mr. Clive's calling upon me yesterday, enabled to obtain a frank to convey your half years rent from your Brunant tenant to 2nd August last”. A statement of repairs done on the property is included.

When Tom was with the East India Co. as Surgeon, his father, Col. Powell writes to him hoping he has made himself known to Mr. Clive, as his friend Clive had written to his cousin about him.

In a letter (undated) to his brother, the Col. mentions going to the Brunant to see how Probert was getting on & of meeting Sir John Cotterell to arrange a mortgage.

“The Brunant is now up for sale again. I hope to go & have a look at the house & cottage. I know the Agent so may be able to find out if there are any Deeds.”

<sup>4</sup>There is a persistent tradition in the family that “Mrs. E.B.” was illegitimate daughter of Napoleon Bonaparte, by a Corsican mistress, and that she was sent to England to be brought up, subsequently marrying a British officer, whose family lived in Devonshire. She is said to have met Colonel Powell in the West Indies and her husband is stated to have known nothing of their relationship, or the birth of the son to her. It has not been possible to find any register of the birth in Trinidad. This unusual story is certainly worth preserving.