

Tower Talk

Newsletter



Picture of the 'Mary Ann' that sailed from Ipswich, England arriving in Boston, Massachusetts June 20, 1637 bringing John Tower to the United States

By
The Tower Genealogical Society
chartered in 1909

From the Editor's Desk



Hello Cousins!

Well, it looks like I have some humble pie to eat!

I've been told the photo of the "Old Tower Homestead" published in the last newsletter wasn't the old Tower homestead at all and I was also reminded that photography wasn't even invented in 1830! A really nice way to start off my editorial debut, huh? Please forgive and let me set the record straight.

The photo of the house I said was the old Tower homestead was actually the home of of Alvin and Lemira Goodell Tower and their son Schuyler in Monroe, MA. Schuyler Tower is the TGS president Pat Brown's and TGS treasurer, Carol Marchegani's great grandfather. The photo, they told me, was probably taken around 1880 since their great grandfather was born in 1868. The house has remained in the family down through the years and is currently owned by another great granddaughter and her husband.

I've loved reading the genealogical information that people have sent and I hope you all enjoy the new information in this issue which has added to the on-going saga of the Almond J. Tower legacy. I'm hoping to hear from more folks with information about their particular branch of the Tower clan in the future. It is a great honor to be counted as belonging to this great family!

On another note, I would like to be able to get the newsletter published monthly and I hope to in the future, but for now I'm still getting acquainted with the new publishing software for my Mac provided by TGS. I hope to have the basic format down with the publication of this month's newsletter, along with working out a few other glitches.

On behalf of all the TGS Board members I'd like to wish you all our very best wishes for a

Merry Christmas
and a wonderfully
bright and prosperous
New Year!

Gloria Holmes Cooper

Tower Genealogical Society
Newsletter Editor



Seasons
Greetings



*The 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.*

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From our resident genealogist

Dave Tower



A Genealogist's Nightmare

In my last article I had a note as follows:

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. (more on this in the next issue of the Newsletter.)*

For those of you who hunt around in genealogical data you will often see birth dates printed as 20 February 1751/52. This could mean that it was unknown whether the person was born in 1751 or 1752 but it usually means (and it should mean) that the person was born on 20 February 1751, a date in the Julian or old style calendar which would coincide with 20 February 1752 in the new style or Gregorian Calendar.

Extracted and adapted from Wikipedia.

The calendar we use today has undergone a number of changes from its original inception with most of the changes being brought about by the Roman Catholic Church. The Gregorian calendar continues the previous year numbering system based on the Anno Domini system, which counts years from the traditional Incarnation of Jesus, and which had spread throughout Europe during the Middle Ages. This year numbering system is the predominant international standard today and the internationally accepted civil calendar. It was introduced by Pope Gregory XIII, after whom the calendar was named, by a decree signed on 24 February 1582, a papal bull known by its opening words *Inter gravissimas*.

The reformed calendar was adopted later that year by a handful of countries, with other countries adopting it over the following centuries. The need for the Gregorian reform stemmed from the fact that the Julian calendar system assumes time between vernal equinoxes is 365.25 days, when in fact it is about 11 minutes less. The accumulated error between these values was about 10 days when the reform was made, resulting in the equinox occurring on March 11 instead of March 21. Since the equinox was tied to the celebration of Easter, the reform in the calendar was undertaken by the Roman Catholic Church to realign the vernal equinox with Easter. The Gregorian calendar modified the Julian calendar's regular cycle of leap years, years exactly divisible by four, including all centurial years, as follows: Every year that is exactly divisible by four is a leap year, except for years that are exactly divisible by 100; the centurial years that are exactly divisible by 400 are still leap years. For example, the year 1900 is not a leap year; the year 2000 is a leap year. (Will your genealogical software program accept a date of 29 February 1900?) In addition to the modification of mean length of the calendar year from 365.25 days to 365.2425 days, the Gregorian calendar was required to deal with the fact that the error due to the difference between these lengths (10.8 minutes) had been accumulating steadily. The Gregorian calendar therefore began by dropping 10 calendar days, to synchronize the calendar and seasons again. England was one of

The calendar we use today has undergone a number of changes from its original inception.

the last European countries to change from the Julian to the Gregorian Calendar.

Britain and the British Empire (including the eastern part of what is now the United States) adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1752 by which time it was necessary to correct by 11 days. Wednesday, 2 September 1752 was followed by Thursday, 14 September 1752. If you have dates in your genealogical files that fall in this date range and pertain to people in the U.S.A. or Great Britain they have to be old style Julian dates. The British tax year (new years day) was on April 6 on the Julian Calendar.

That became March 25 when they adapted the Gregorian Calendar. Much of the double dating, old style/new style and genealogical date confusion occurred during this changeover period between January 1 and March 25. January 1 1752 (the revised new year) in the Gregorian Calendar was January 1, 1751 in the English Julian Calendar because the year didn't change in that calendar until March 25. Thus you will often see dates such as 20 February 1751/52. Now, if that isn't confusing enough, think of what happened when we purchased Alaska from the Russians who were still using the Julian Calendar.

In Alaska, the change took place on Friday, 6 October 1867 which was followed by Friday, 18 October and the next day was Friday, 18 October again. Instead of 12 days, only 11 were skipped, and the day of the week was repeated on successive days, because the International Date Line was shifted from Alaska's eastern to western boundary along with the change to the Gregorian calendar. If you had ancestors born in Alaska a day apart 7 October 1867 and 8 October 1867 under the Julian Calendar their birth dates would be the same (18 October 1867) under the Gregorian calendar. What would you enter for their birth dates?

Events in continental western Europe are usually reported in English language histories as happening under the Gregorian calendar. For example the Battle of Blenheim is always given as 13 August 1704. confusion occurs when an event affects both. For example William III of England arrived at Brixham in England on 5 November (Julian calendar), after setting sail from the Netherlands on 11 November (Gregorian calendar). and Cervantes apparently died on exactly the same date (23 April 1616), but in fact Cervantes predeceased Shakespeare by ten days in real time (for dating these events, Spain used the Gregorian calendar, but Britain used the Julian calendar). This coincidence, however, historically encouraged UNESCO to make 23 April the World Book and Copyright Day.

When all is said and done, Einstein was correct in more ways than one. Time is relative. Think of what genealogists will have to consider in the future as space travel approaches the speed of light and space travelers age at different rates. We'll see notes in genealogical histories that refer to dates as old style, new style and space style.

The Continuing Saga of Almond Tower...

As a new member the Tower Genealogical Society, it was fun to receive my first Tower Talk Newsletter, October 2010. I was even more excited to open to the third page and see the large photo of Almond J. Tower, especially since he was my great-great-grandfather. I did not have a photograph of him so that was a welcome addition to my wall of old family photos in my study. I did however, note what I believe are some errors in the write-up provided by James R. Wright and I would like to correct the record.

James R. Wright was sketchy on what he knew about Almond and his wife Mary. I have some collaborating information, as well as, conflicting information. Charlemagne's Tower's account on the John Tower family says on page 418 that Almond was born in Cummington, MA not in Joliet, Illinois. However, at some point he did move to Joliet since I have a photo of his son's, Nathan Eugene Tower, family with the photographer's logo showing Joliet.



Almond married Mary U. Corwin on 28 Sept 1852 according to Charlemagne Tower, page 581, and I can confirm this from my grandmother's family tree list that she made for me when I was a little boy around 1960. Almond died in 1869 at the age of 41, the same year as their seventh child's birth according to Charlemagne Tower, page 581. Here lies an interesting mystery.

According to my grandmother's memory, Mary was married to William (the brother James Wright mentions)

and she does not mention Almond. However, I am wondering if Mary U. Tower moved in with William and his wife, Mary A. Tower for a while after she lost her husband and family provider. I imagine it was quite difficult since she had seven kids between 1 and 15 years old.

In any case Mary U. Tower moved from Joliet to Boulder County, Colorado with her son Nathan Eugene Tower after 1880 since she and her seven children appear in the 1880 Homer, Illinois census and then reappears on the Boulder County, Colorado census in 1900 and 1910 with her eldest daughter, Eva.



Mary U. Tower's Headstone located in Jamestown near Boulder, CO. is confirmed as the wife of Almond Tower according to Charlemagne Tower's Genealogy Page 581

This past summer I visited Jamestown, near Boulder, CO and was able to locate her headstone, and several other Tower's in the town's cemetery. Her headstone states her name as "Mary U. Tower" having died on Dec 20, 1917, age 84, which confirms Charlemagne's date for her birth. If she married several times, after Almond as implied by James Wright, her family didn't reflect it on the headstone. I don't think she was married before Almond since she married him when she was 18 years old. If she married William, then her name would not have changed. However, the 1870 Homer, Illinois census shows Mary U. Tower living with her seven children without a husband. Then the 1880 Homer, Illinois census shows her (no husband) living with her oldest daughter, Eva, and my great-grandfather Nathan Eugene Tower and his wife, Lizzie.

So I see no William or any other husband in her life from 1870 until her death in 1917. As far as my research has uncovered, she was married once and all seven children were by her husband Almond J. Tower.

Michael McKenzie Tower, PhD
(Donald, Howard, Nathan, Eugene, Almond, Asa, Asa, Peter, Peter, Jeremiah, Jeremiah, John Tower)

Letter from the President

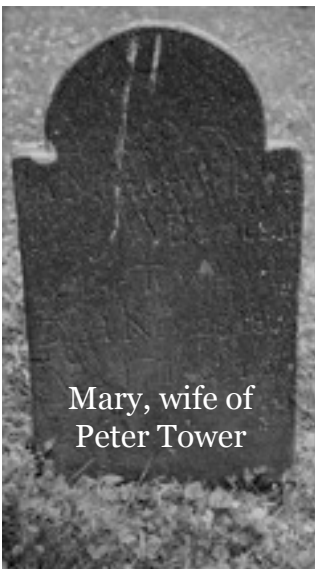
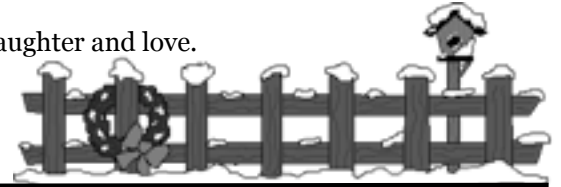
Hello Cousins!

It hardly seems possible that another year is almost at the end. It seems the older we get, the more we say that, too!

The Holiday season is here and family and friends will gather together from near and far to spend this special time together. This is an ideal time to carefully listen to the stories that our older, wiser family members have to tell. Some of you may wish to videotape the stories of how they were raised. Others, with better memories than mine, will commit their stories to memory. Either way, the stories are saved for the future generations. This is very important for those who strive to preserve family history. You can find many clues in the stories that will help you sort through all the census records, birth and death certificates, obituaries, and death certificates. It may also point your "blocked wall" research in another direction when you hear that the family moved to another state.

From my family to yours, we hope that your holidays are merry and full of laughter and love.

Patricia Brown
TGS President



Mary, wife of
Peter Tower



*More information about the
Almond J. Tower line*



These are all photos taken in Bryant Cemetery courtesy of **Olive Hoffman.**

All appear to correspond to the family line of Almond Tower.

Dody Tower

(see letters to the editor) mentions several of these people in her letter.

Letters & E-Mails

Re: Almond Tower

Almond J. Tower was not born in Illinois. He was born 18 May 1828 in Cummington, Massachusetts. His parents: Asa Tower, b. 15 Oct 1784 in Weymouth, Massachusetts, d. 15 Dec 1855 in Cummington, and Clarissa Bates, b. 8 Aug 1792 in Cummington, d. 21 Jun 1865 in Cummington, are both buried in Bryant Cemetery in Cummington, as are his brothers: Orlando Bemis (1825-1827) and Asa Bemis (1830-1843). I have photos of the gravestones.

Peter Tower (1729-1814), his wife Deborah Stowall (1726-1780), and their 10 children came to Cummington, Massachusetts in 1779, the year that "Township # 5" was incorporated as the Town of Cummington. (The town was named for Lt. Col. John Cumming, who purchased the land for his group of 27 proprietors in 1762. It was first settled in the spring of that year. Col. Cumming never came to Cummington.)

Deborah died the next year, and Peter married Mary Shaw in 1781. Mary was 44 at the time. There is no record of a child being born to them, but the 1790 Federal Census lists a boy under 16 living with them. Sometime before his marriage to Deborah Dyer (1766-1851) on 25 Dec 1783, Peter's son Asa (1762-1843) went to Weymouth, Massachusetts. Their first two children were born there: Asa Jr. (1784-1855), and Polly (1787-?). Both were baptized in the First Church of Christ, North Precinct, Weymouth, on 27 Jan 1788. Soon after Peter returned to Cummington with his family. His third child, Hannah, was born there 23 Sep 1789.

Asa Jr. married Clarissa Bates in Cummington on 23 Nov 1815. They had 8 children. Only the births of the first 4 are recorded in Cummington's Vital Records. Tower Genealogy, Vol. I says all were born in Cummington, and this seems very likely as the death of child # 5, Orlando Bemis, is reported in the Vital Records. He drowned in a tub of water when he was 18 months old.

Almond J. Tower, child # 6, is a puzzle. He was born 18 May 1828 and died 28 Sep 1869. His birth is not reported in Cummington's Vital Records, and he appears nowhere in the 1860 Federal census. Child # 7: Asa Bemis (1830-1843); Child # 8: Mary Sophia (1834-?).

My husband Austin's 3rd great grandfather was Stephen Tower (1755-1826). He was Asa Sr.'s brother.

I have photographed MANY Tower graves in Cummington, including Peter's, Asa Sr., Asa Jr., Asa Jr.'s children: Orlando Bemis and Asa Bemis. Most are in Bryant Cemetery (near the homestead of the poet William Cullen Bryant), some are in Dawes Cemetery, and some in West Cummington Cemetery. I plan to go back to Bryant in the near future. It's only about 40 minutes or so from my home.

I think the Tower Newsletter is great!

Dody Tower



Dear Gloria,

I was just reading the latest issue of Tower Talk when I came across the part in your letter referring to the cemetery at Rockport, N.B. My mother was born in Rockport, about two miles before you get to the cemetery. All my grandparents on my mother's side, (Read) are buried there, along with some aunts and uncles. Many are the times I spent at Rockport at my Grammie's farm. Those were the "Good old days"

One of the strange things about Rockport is that when it was a vibrant farm community with a lot of people working the farms the roads were dirt, there was no electricity. After most of the people left, mostly young people who went "West" looking for work, the government paved the roads and brought in "Hydro", the Canadian word for power

I can vividly remember my mother taking me in tow and with my uncle driving her, going to all the farms visiting her old friends. That part of the summers I didn't like!

My mother's maiden name was Margaret Olive Read. She was one of nine children, having one sister and seven brothers. Small world, ain't it?

If I can give you any more info about the Rockport area, let me know.

Yours truly

Dale H. Snowdon Sr.

PS: We always referred to the cemetery as being in "Lower Rockport".

Looking for a great
gift idea for a
relative?



How about a TGS
Membership?

Contact:

Katy Conway or **Carol Marchegani**
Membership Chair or Treasurer
foundit4you@yahoo.com cmarchtgs@hotmail.com

or log on to:

www.TOWERGENEALOGY.com

Announcements

Birth

Dean and Krista Tower Maylot of Worcester, MA are the proud parents of a daughter, Ariana Louise Maylot, born October 13th. Grandparents are: David and Martina Maylot and George Tower of Readsboro, VT and Regina Pate of Bennington, VT. Great Grandparents are the late Kenneth and Mary Tower of Monroe, MA.

Marriage

Cody Dupre-Wise and Danielle Jean Thayer married September 30th in So. Readsboro, Vt. Cody is the son of Jean Dupre and the late Kyle Wise of Clarksburg, MA. Danielle is the daughter of Kim and Nicole Thayer of Readsboro, VT, granddaughter of Priscilla Tower Thayer of Readsboro, VT and Clifford R. Thayer of Williamstown, MA.



100th Birthday Celebration

Alta Mabelle (Sherman)(Baker) Berry

[David Olin Sherman, Maryette Tower, Alvin Tower]

With nearly 50 relatives, friends and neighbors attending, Alta celebrated her 100th birthday October 3, 2010 at Poet's Seat Health Care Center in Greenfield, MA. Alta was born October 4, 1910 in Orange, MA, graduating from Orange High School, class of 1929, continuing with Fitchburg Normal School (Now Fitchburg University) and graduating in 1931. While teaching positions were scarce, she obtained a job teaching nursery school in Sterling, MA. She later returned to Orange where she worked in the town's assessors office and later in the office of a local manufacturer. After marriage she was a substitute teacher in the Orange elementary schools. She and her husband, Clevis C. Baker, moved to Connecticut in 1954 where she worked on the switchboard at Windham Community Memorial Hospital in Willimantic. After her husband's death in 1955 she continued to work at the hospital in various secretarial positions including admitting, pharmacy and others and upon retiring continued as a volunteer at the hospital.

Alta has been active in many different organizations including her church, member of local and state grange, fire auxiliary, library association and senior citizen groups. She enjoyed singing and was a church choir member for several years. She enjoyed flower arranging, baking many kinds of treats for family, friends and bake sales, sewing, knitting, crocheting, weaving, caning and other crafts. Due to arthritis and macular degeneration she has had to curtail many of the things she formerly enjoyed.

Alta loved to travel and has traveled to Newfoundland, Churchill, Manitoba on the Hudson Bay to see polar bears, through the Erie canal and up the St. Lawrence Seaway, Alaska, Australia, and New Zealand and with her second husband Henry C. Berry traveled to his birthplace in England bringing back numerous photos.

At the age of 89 she sold her Connecticut house and returned to MA buying a house in the town next to where she was born. She continued to drive back to Connecticut to visit old friends and neighbors until her 90th birthday but voluntarily gave up her license after knee replacement and diminished eyesight made it unsafe for her to drive.

Irene B. Tower



Irene B Tower, 90, wife of the late John H. Tower, died November 7, 2010 after a long illness surrounded by her loving family at Bangor Healthcare Facility, Bangor, ME. Born March 18, 1920 in N. Providence, RI, she was the daughter of Felix and Rosa (Poirier) Bessette. She is

survived by 4 daughters; Roselyn Irene Palmer of Summerville, SC, Janice and Gerald Pehoviak of Hebron, CT, Ronda-Rae Babcock of Berwick, ME, Bonnie Henderson of Newburgh, ME and 2 sons, Barry and Karla Tower of Patten, ME, Timothy Tower Sr. and wife Bonnie of Concho, AZ. IN addition to her parents and her husband, she was predeceased by her son, the late John Tower Jr., her sister Jeanette Levesque and her brother Raymond Bessette. She also leaves her sister, Mariel Lane of Lincoln, CA 15 grandchildren, 26 great grandchildren and 1 great great grandchild, and several nieces and nephews.

Irene loved music and could play most instruments by ear. She enjoyed family gatherings and spending time with her children and grandchildren.

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