

Monique Bellingham – Lyme’s Canadienne

by Keith Shaw

Introduction

Monique Bellingham was born in North America in the 18th Century which is very unusual for a long term resident of Lyme Regis. Her story is a fascinating tale covering the lives of one family over four generations and three thousand miles and, what’s more, she played an important role in the development of the town.



Here is the only known picture of Monique. It is a bad photocopy of a poor original. It is in the Museum’s archives with a note saying that the original is in Bridport Museum but it has no record of it. It is thought that she was probably in her sixties when it was produced.

The Baby family and Canadian History

Monique Baby was born in Detroit, Wayne County in 1777. Her parents were Jacques Duperon Baby who had been born in Montreal and Suzanne de la Croix Reaume who was born in Detroit which was, at its formation, part of New France. Jacques was descended from the first French settlers and was thus a Canadien with an “e” and so Monique was a Canadienne.

Following the fall of Quebec in 1759, and Montreal in 1760 all the remaining French holdings became part of British North America. It was not until well after the war of American Independence that US forces took control of Detroit in 1796.

This was a time of great political changes in the Great Lakes area. In 1763, after the First Treaty of Paris which ended the “Seven Years War” it was officially designated as “Indian Territory” before being combined with the Province of Quebec in 1774. In 1783, the Second Treaty of Paris acknowledged the independence of the United States and placed the new frontier along the centre of the Great Lakes. British loyalists emigrated from the USA into what we now call Ontario in such numbers that they became the majority and in 1791 the Province of Quebec was split into the western province of Upper Canada (the “British” part) and the eastern province of Lower Canada (the “French” part).



After “The Conquest” of 1760, which is how the Canadiens referred to the British take-over, Jacques Duperon Baby, Monique’s father, settled in Detroit where he was a merchant and fur trader but his role was also much wider. He was a landowner and a local official and he was appointed, in 1777, to be an officer and interpreter in the Indian Department and then, in 1778, to be a militia captain and judge. In 1787 he was appointed as Lieutenant-Colonel of the militia and in 1788 he was given a seat on the land board for the district of Hesse. It is clear that Jacques embraced the new regime. Whether this was “from the heart” or just for practical purposes is not known.

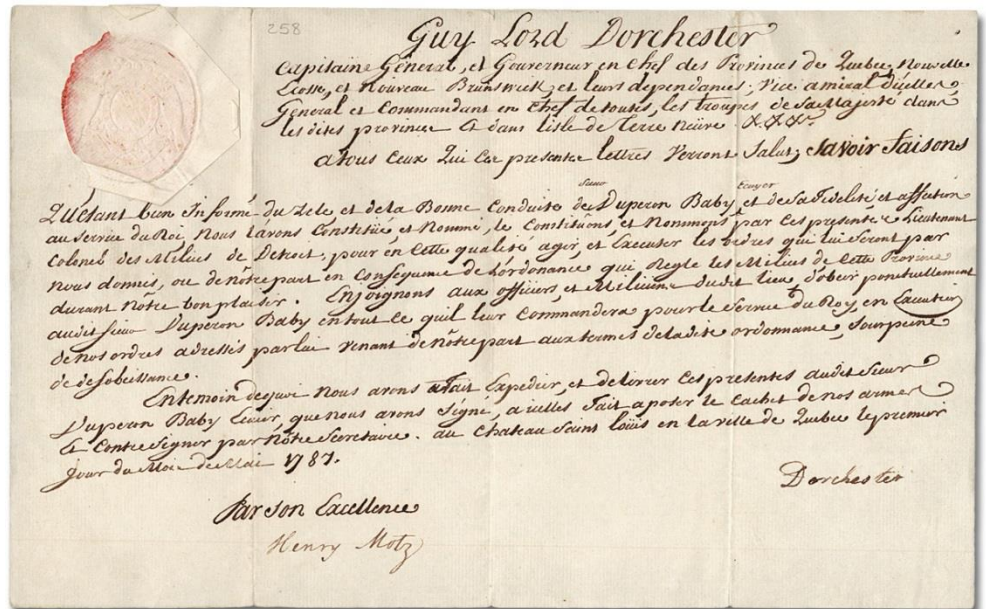
The picture below shows Jacques appointment document as Lieutenant Colonel of the Militia in 1787. Note that it is still written in French although it is 27 years after “The Conquest” and that it is

signed by Guy Lord
Dorchester.

Jacques maintained links with his merchant brothers in Montreal and the family consolidated their economic position with alliances, both commercial and matrimonial, with both Canadian and British families in Detroit and Montreal. Their descendants continued to play a role in the political and economic life of the region throughout

the late 18th and the 19th century. He died in 1789 and appears to have been admired by all and sundry. A fellow fur trader, the British born John Richardson said of him: "Poor Baby died at Detroit about the first of August, universally regretted. He has not left such a Frenchman behind him."

Jacques and Suzanne Baby had many children. Depending on the source, there were somewhere between 19 and 22. Monique was the fourth youngest. Her eldest brother James (Jacques) was appointed to the first Executive and Legislative Councils of Upper Canada in 1792 and her brothers Francois and Jean Baptiste were Deputies in the Legislature. The picture below shows the first meeting of the Legislature.

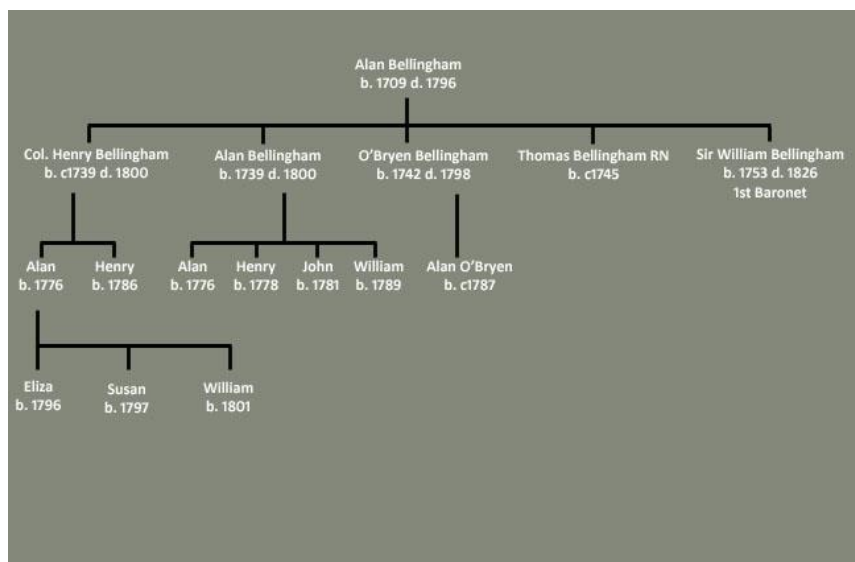


The standing figure between the two soldiers is, according to the picture's legend, James Duperon Baby. However, James was just 32 in 1792 and the portrait is of someone much older. The picture wasn't painted until the mid-20th Century and it is possible that the artist made a small error and painted in the other Jacques, Monique's father instead of her brother.

The close links between the Baby family and the British Regime are shown by Monique's three younger brothers: Daniel, Antoine and Louis all joining the British army where Daniel reached the rank of Major General and the other two were commissioned. Daniel spent some time living in London and died there in 1858.

Monique, like her sisters Suzanne, Therese and Archangel married an officer in the British Army. In 1795, Monique married Alan Bellingham, eldest son of Colonel Henry Bellingham in Detroit. Henry Bellingham was lord of the manor of Castle Bellingham in County Louth, Ireland. Whether Monique's wedding was a "matrimonial alliance" or a "love match" is not known, possibly the latter as they were very young, but the resulting marriage was quite troubled. Their first three children were born in Canada: - Eliza, Susan and William.

Castle Bellingham and the Bellingham Baronetcy



Alan Bellingham's father, Col. Henry Bellingham, did not have a title but there was one in the family. Sir William Bellingham, Henry's youngest brother, was created 1st Baronet of Castle Bellingham in 1796 by William Pitt the Younger to whom he was private secretary. William Bellingham had a very successful career. He was "controller of the storekeepers' accounts" for the Royal Navy and oversaw the provisioning of the Vancouver Expedition. Bellingham Bay and the city of Bellingham in Washington State are named after him. He was a wealthy man and had married Hester Cholmondeley, a great-granddaughter of Robert Walpole. He died childless in 1826.

The Castle Bellingham estate was not profitable and although, unlike his brother William, Henry Bellingham had sons, he was not wealthy. When Henry died in 1800, Alan decided to leave his young daughters Eliza and Susan and his pregnant wife Monique in Canada and return to England to sell his commission. After some time with no news, Monique was understandably concerned; Alan Bellingham was now the head of the Castle Bellingham estate and heir to the Baronetcy. Would a fur trader's daughter from Indian Territory be welcome into the Bellingham clan? Suzanne Baby advised her daughter to go and join Alan and be introduced to his family. Monique was obviously uncertain about this because she decided to go on a

pilgrimage before she took her three young children and set sail for England on L'Active, the last ship of the autumn in 1801. On the ocean two ships were becalmed and one informed the other of their passengers and announced that Captain Bellingham was aboard travelling to Quebec. The captain of L'Active announced that he had Mrs Bellingham on board travelling to England to join her husband. Alan joined his family and they all sailed east to Ireland and Castle Bellingham (below) never to return to Canada.



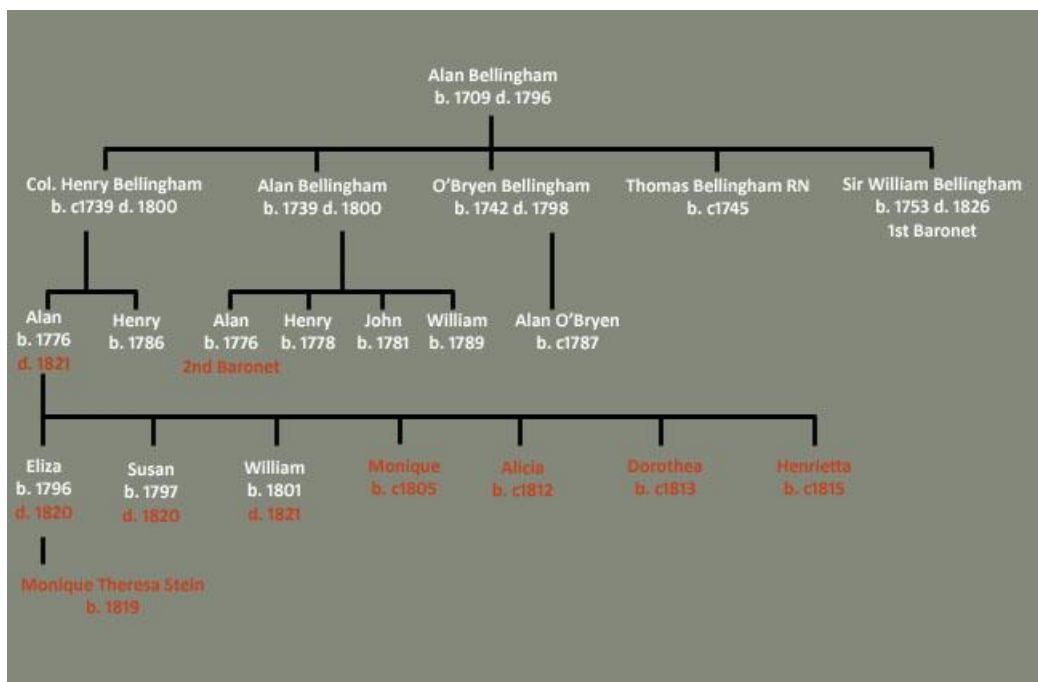
Times, however, were still hard and after seven years of mounting debt and the birth of another daughter, Monique, the couple were forced to move out of the castle. They went to Rothbury in Northumberland where the family had a house and rented out the castle to Sir William and his wife. (Rothbury is near the village of Bellingham from which the “de Bellingham” family originated and, like the village, the family name is pronounced “Bellinjum”.) Alan & Monique were however, eventually, able to move back to Castle Bellingham. Then in 1815 Alan Bellingham “gave up his wife and provided her and her children with a pension according to the articles of settlement”. Why this separation happened is unclear; they had had three more daughters, Alicia who was born at Rothbury, Dorothea and Henrietta who were both born in Louth. Alan Bellingham went to live in London where he died in 1821. He is buried at St. Mary Abbot’s Church in Kensington.

Monique and her children

In order of birth her three eldest children were:

- a) Eliza who was born in 1795. In 1817 she married a man twenty years her senior; a wealthy man older than her mother. He was John Stein Esquire of Clonmel, Co. Tipperary. In 1819 she gave birth to a daughter, Monique Theresa (known as Little Monique) in Edinburgh. Eliza died in Nice in 1820 and Monique was raised by her grandmother.
- b) Susan who was born in 1797. She also died in 1820. We know little about her apart from a Valentine card sent anonymously to her in 1817. She was buried at Castlebellingham.
- c) William who was born in 1801. He joined the British Navy and although some reports say he died in India, the official Royal Navy report states “Ensign Bellingham died of fever at Caffre Drift, Cape of Good Hope March 25th 1822.” He was buried at Grahamstown.

After Alan left, Monique again struggled financially. She asked Sir William and his wife for support but this was not forthcoming. Eventually she was forced to sell the estate to him and so the property and the Bellingham Baronetcy were united. It is doubtful that the sale made Monique a rich woman.



Monique lost her three Canadian born children in two years and her estranged husband had also died in this period. With the death of Alan and William all hope of inheritance from the wealthy Sir William had also disappeared (when he died in 1826, the Baronetcy was inherited by Alan's cousin Alan Bellingham 2nd Bart.). She moved once more to England with her four younger daughters and her granddaughter. In 1824 she was in Bath, then at Clifton in Bristol and finally in Lyme Regis by the late 1820s. We might assume that it was just the social London – Bath – Lyme circuit that brought her here but there was another reason.

The Bellinghams in Lyme Regis



Cyril Wanklyn, Lyme's great historian, tells us that Monique Bellingham lived for many years at High Cliff Lodge which was later known as Little Cliff and is now called Upper Cobb House. Wanklyn also states that John Stein lived at High Cliff, which may well be the reason Monique came to Lyme, and he also tells us that a Captain Henry Boteler lived at Gates Hill Cottage which was renamed Holme Cleeve and now called Gatesfield. All of these properties are grouped together on Sidmouth Road as shown in the picture above.



Henry Boteler (shown left) was the nephew of an Admiral and he was a Naval Captain. Following the end of the Napoleonic wars there was a surplus of naval officers and Henry was assigned to command the coastguards in west Dorset and east Devon. In fact, he took over responsibility from another naval Captain who “retired” to Lyme, Richard Spencer. It is through Boteler that we first learn of the Bellinghams in Lyme Regis. Boteler wrote a diary for a short period in 1827. In the diary he wrote what has been transcribed as “Billingham in the evening”. Bellingham is often mis-transcribed as Billingham. Could it be that someone had introduced Henry Boteler to Monique and her daughters and he had gone to their house that evening? From that point, there is a change in the nature of his diaries as his interests and writing moved from work to pleasure. At the end of 1829, Henry Boteler married Monique’s youngest daughter, Henrietta. He was 34 and she was about 14.

Going back to Wanklyn’s assertion of where the Botelers lived; the Botelers definitely lived elsewhere in Lyme early in his career, probably on Cobb Road and possibly in Orchard Cottage which housed the head of the Coastguard in later times, before moving to Gatesfield as his family grew.



Henrietta (shown left) took over writing Henry’s diary and whereas from Henry we got an insight into the working life and leisure time of a Coastguard commander with: “Rode to Abbotsbury”, “Received quarterly accounts”, “30 or 40 tubs floating off Abbotsbury”, “proceeded to Colyford to meet an informer” etc.; from Henrietta we get a fascinating look into life in Lyme in 1830, at least life in the higher echelons of society with: “Met Kate R on The Walk, she was in high delight watching the waves beat over the Cobb. Mr Waring joined us.” [Catherine Rankin and Henry Franks Waring were later married and he became Town Clerk.] and “... a desperate wet evening, raining most tremendously. The poor steam packet will get it. Came home in a chair.” We also learn of the excitement that was caused when “Old Mr Stein” came to stay at his Lyme House, High Cliff. Stein’s main residence was Chalmington Manor near Cattistock and when he came to Lyme servants had to be hired for him and the house prepared. It’s hard to credit that Stein was Henrietta’s brother-in-

law; he was nearly forty years older than her. We also know from that from her cottage she could watch Henry sail home along the coast from Bridport in the Coastguard cutter; the Anne. This is another indication that Orchard Cottage was their home as the view towards West Bay is excellent.

John Stein Esq. of Clonmel was, in fact, a Scot. He was from a Scottish Whisky family and had been sent to Ireland by his family for business reasons. Why he ended up in Dorset is not known but he was wealthy and sometimes used his wealth beneficially. In 1832 he was owner of a shipbuilding yard in Lyme. At that time, Coade’s Road down to the harbour was a toll road. Stein bought it and handed it over to the town. It became known as New Road and then Cobb Road. It also became clear from a court case disputing his will after his death that he had settled an annuity for life on Monique Bellingham presumably to assist with the cost of raising little Monique. (Interestingly, the case involves a Mr Jameson and a Mr Haig, both well-known whiskey brands today) At other times he was less generous. From the National Archives we learn about the case of Elizabeth Gummer who had a child in 1833. An order was made on the father, Mr Stein made an arrangement with the parish officers and paid £45 in full on the understanding that 2s was paid to the mother a week to support the child. The document states “On the 20 December 1833 the sum of £45 received in full for all claims and demands of the churchwardens and overseers of Lyme Regis on the bastard child of Elizabeth Gummer, single woman. The parish thus exonerate and discharge all liabilities for Stein to provide or maintain that child”. However, three years later Miss Gummer left the parish and, also in the National Archives, there is a letter from Richard Thomas, Vestry Clerk, Lyme Regis to the Poor

Law Commission, referring to the case of Elizabeth Gummer. "The board of guardians have directed that the weekly payment should discontinue. Mr Stein has asked for an account of what monies have been paid out of the £45 on account of the child and asked for a return of the balance". It is not known if he sent the money on to Elizabeth. John Stein died in London in 1854 and is buried in Highgate Cemetery.

From Henrietta's diary it is clear that her sister Dorothea (or Dolly) is away, in fact she was travelling in Europe with her new husband for much of 1829 and 1830. She had been married in the Parish Church in February 1828 and her husband was Harry Burrard Farnall. Farnall was directly descended from Edward 1st (18 generations) and his brother owned Burley House in the New Forest. He offered himself as a candidate for Parliament "for Lyme in the Liberal interest" in 1832 and may have won but stood aside in favour of William Pinney. He was the first mayor of Lyme to be elected after the Municipal Reform Act and, because of their support for the reform, both he and Pinney had their lives threatened in a letter which is now in the National Archives. Farnall was responsible for the building of Burley Villas on Silver Street. One was lived in by him and his wife, the other was rented out. These villas are now known as Burley and the Old Vicarage. Interestingly, Farnall was gifted at art and I wonder if he was actually involved in the design of the villas. Below is Farnall's drawing of the interior of the Parish Church. The original is in the church.



Although not a Roman Catholic himself, Harry Farnall included a chapel when he built Burley Villa and this was used for Catholic services. He also donated money to build the Lady Chapel at the Catholic Church after Dorothea died in 1840 and it was completed in 1851.

Henrietta also writes about going to church in Axminster and sometimes of how this was foregone because the weather was poor. Following the Reformation there was no Catholic Church in Lyme Regis and Catholics had to travel to worship in Axminster or Chideock. Monique Bellingham reportedly had found £100 in the desk of her son, William, when he had died and she used this money to start a building fund for a new church in the town. She also persuaded Bishop Baines to agree to there being a resident priest in Lyme and probably helped with his funding. The Foundation Stone was laid in April 1835 and the first mass

in a yet unfinished church of St. Michael and St. George, was said in August 1837. The modern day church is shown below.



Dorothea and her mother, who died in 1856, are interred in a vault under the Lady Chapel (below left) as is Alicia.



Monique's other daughters and little Monique all made good marriages.

Monique married John Stuckey Lean in 1831. He was a banker of Stuckey's Banking Company which became the Bristol and Somersetshire Bank. They did not have any children. John died in 1869 in Corston, Somerset and Monique died in 1884 at Morley Cottage in Lyme Regis. Morley Cottage was where Elizabeth Philpot and her sisters lived and is now the Mariners Hotel.

Alicia married John Carey in 1849. He was a doctor born in Dublin. He practised in Lyme Regis and they lived at Little Park on Hays Lane. They had no children and Alicia died in 1864 in Lyme Regis.

In 1852 little Monique became the second wife of William Maskell. He was a mediaevalist; an M.A. from University College, Oxford, an extreme high churchman and a leading member of the Oxford Movement in the Church of England. He was eminent enough to appear in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. He was rector of Corscombe, Dorset, from 1842 to 1847 and

vicar of St. Mary Church, near Torquay from 1847 to 1860. Maskell published an Ancient Liturgy of the Church of England 1844, and other works, which placed him in the front rank of English ecclesiastical historians. However, he questioned the jurisdiction of Privy Council deciding on matters relating to doctrine and became a Roman Catholic in 1860. He lived in retirement in Madron in Cornwall and devoted himself to literature and collecting mediaeval service books and objects. He became a Justice of the Peace and deputy



Lieutenant of Cornwall. Having married quite late in life, Monique Maskell had no children and died in 1895.



We left Henrietta Boteler in full flow; writing her diary. She seems to have lived her life happily in Lyme. Henry was unable to get a permanent naval command but from 1837 to 1841 he was the Additional-Commander of the Temeraire and Ocean guard ships at Sheerness. In 1838, the Temeraire was sold by the Admiralty and she was towed up the Thames to be broken up, a voyage which was so wonderfully painted (above) by JMW Turner.

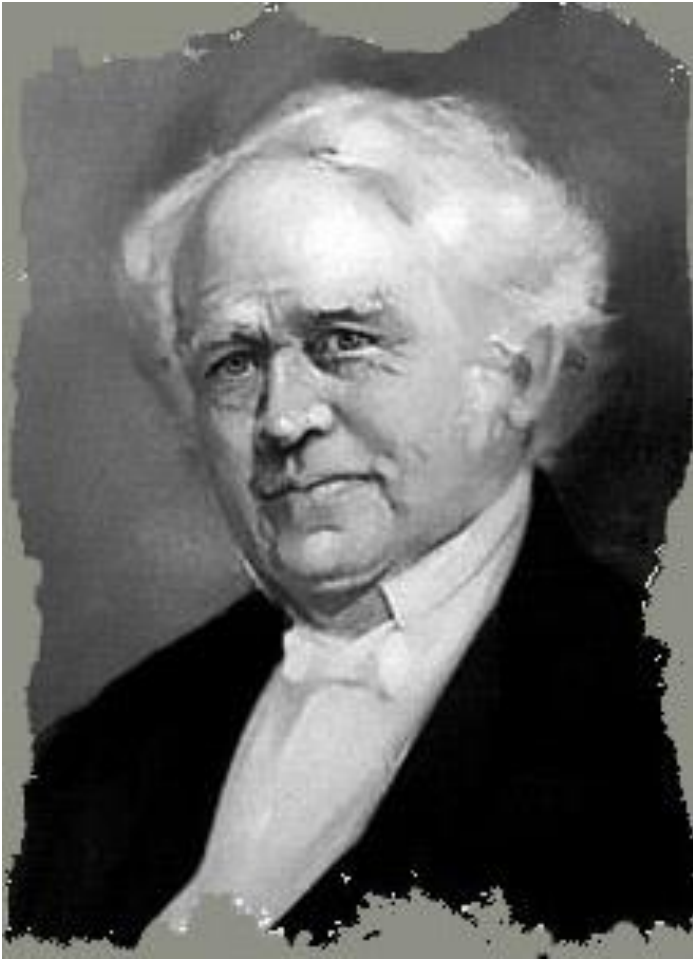
Following this assignment, Captain Boteler returned to command the Coastguard in Lyme until the end of 1846. He then, too, lived out his days in Lyme as a half-pay Captain RN, dying in 1861. Henry and Henrietta had three daughters and a son with the eldest not being born until 1843. The youngest girl, Henrietta Elizabeth Pasqualina Boteler married Robert Philpot; a great nephew of the fossil collecting Philpot sisters and older brother of TED Philpot who built Lyme Regis Museum. They lived in the Philpot sisters' home of Morley

Cottage and Monique Stuckey Lean was living with them there when she died.

The Boteler family in Charmouth

After Henry's death, Henrietta continued to live in Gateshill House and the census shows her there in 1871. At some point before 1881 and after her daughter's marriage to Robert Philpot, the family moved to Charmouth. From the 1881 & 1891 censuses it appears that they lived in Stanley House (4 Prospect Place – above) and after Henrietta died in 1882, William and Martha moved across The Street to Beech House (right) where Reginald Pavey records that they looked after Captain Manning, Cardinal Manning's nephew who lodged with them.





In 1893 William married Sabina Smyth who was described in Kelly's Directory of 1895 as one of the four "chief landowners" in Charmouth. Sabina had



been, the second wife and widow of Arthur Gazelee Smyth and was the daughter of Robert Towns (above). Towns was a self-made man, a mariner who had become a ship's mate at 16 and a master at 17. He saved enough money to build his own boat, The Brothers (top right), and used it to make his fortune trading with New Wales. He settled in Sydney, married Sophia Wentworth, half-sister of William Charles Wentworth who was a poet, explorer, journalist and statesman who was said to be the first native born Australian to be "known" outside Australia. It was in Sydney that Sabina was born.

Towns later became a banker, a farmer and founded the city of Townsville in Queensland. Sometime after his death, the citizens of Townsville gained permission to move Towns' gravestone from Sydney and placed

it on the highest point of their city as a tribute to its founder (above).

Sabina died in 1898 and William moved back to Lyme where he and his sister lived in Cumberland Cottage (left) on Charmouth Road. They both died in the early 1900s and are buried with their mother a few yards from their last home, in the catholic area of Lyme Regis cemetery.



Conclusion

Monique Bellingham lived out her days at High Cliff Lodge. She had a fascinating life. Despite her troubled marriage and financial instability, she raised her daughters to make good marriages. However, she should most be remembered for being instrumental in providing Lyme with the beautiful church (right) that graces the top of Silver Street and that Nikolaus Pevsner found worthy of inclusion in his Dorset volume of *The Buildings of England*.

Notes and Sources

Mémorial des familles Casgrain, Baby et Perrault du Canada by Philippe-Baby Casgrain, 1898.

Information from which is available in English via Google Translate at <http://genealogiequebec.info/testphp/info.php?no=193667>

Debrett's Baronetage of England – Revised Corrected and Continued by George William Collen Esq. 1840. This

gives the family tree of the Bellingham's as shown but excluding Alan, Monique and their daughters. Alan is mentioned as "male issue" of Henry and their son, William is mentioned because the line "became extinct on the death of his (Henry's) grandson, William-Henry, in 1822". It is interesting that neither Alan nor Monique are mentioned in a book written only nine year's after Alan's death. Could there have been some sort of scandal which caused them to be written out of the family's history? Later genealogical work on the family is often incorrect about this part of the family which may support this view. The web-site thepeerage.com omits Henry and family completely and <http://bellinghamroot.tripod.com/bellingh/> includes Henry and his children but has no marriage or children for Alan.

Nick Reddans's Newspaper Extracts – Part 03 which gives BMD information from Irish Newspapers in the 18th and 19th centuries. Found at http://members.iinet.net.au/~nickred/newspaper/np_abst03.htm

The Boteler Diary – Lyme Regis Museum

Lyme Regis, a Retrospect by C. Wanklyn, 1927

http://www.freshford.com/charmouth_home.htm

The Buildings of England – Dorset by Nikolaus Pevsner, 1972

Revision 3 created June 2015 to include new research on the Boteler family in Charmouth.

