

1. Families Associated with Marbury Hall

The word 'Marbury' derives from two Old English words: 'mere' (lake) and 'birig' (house); hence, the house by the lake.

The Merburie (Marbury) Family

During the 13th century, the Merburie family owned a lot of property and land in mid Cheshire. Members of the Merburie family were Sheriffs of Cheshire and in 1413 and 1414 Sir Lawrence de Merburie presided over the court in Northwich. Their first house, made of timber and thatch, remained as the family home until a more substantial house was built early in the 16th century.

Richard Savage, 4th Earl Rivers of Rocksavage (ca1660-1712)

When the last male heir of the Marbury family died, his sisters sold the manor and lands at Marbury in 1684 to Richard Savage. Richard was the second son of Thomas Savage, 3rd Earl Rivers and became Lord Colchester on the death of his elder brother Thomas.

In 1681, Richard entered Parliament as member for Wigan and procured a commission in the Horseguards in 1686. In 1694, he succeeded his father as 4th Earl Rivers.

In 1679, Richard married Penelope Downes, by whom he had a daughter Elizabeth. He also left several illegitimate children. As he had no legitimate son, the earldom passed on his death to his cousin, on whose death around 1735, all the Savage family titles became extinct.

Richard's daughter Elizabeth Savage married James Barry, 4th Earl of Barrymore, and this provided the link between the Barry and Savage families, which led to the Barry family becoming owner of the Marbury estate.

The de Barry Family

The de Barry family is a noble family of Cambro (Welsh)-Norman origins, which held extensive land holdings in Wales and Ireland. The founder of the family was a Norman Knight, Odo, who assisted in the Norman conquest of England during the 11th Century. As a reward for his military services, Odo was granted the lands of Manorbier, Penally and Begelly in Pembrokeshire and around Barry, South Wales, including Barri (Barry) Island just off the coast, and named after the 6th Century Saint Baruc.

At the end of the 11th Century, Odo built the first motte-and-bailey (a wooden hall surrounded by earthworks) at Manorbier. His son William Fitzodo de Barri later rebuilt Manorbier Castle in stone and the family retained the lordship of Manorbier until the 15th Century.



Manorbier Castle, Pembrokeshire – built 12th Century by William de Barri

William's fourth son was Gerald di Barri, known as Gerald of Wales, a 12th Century scholar. Gerald gives the origin of his family's name, de Barri, in his *Itinerarium Cambriae* (1191): "*Not far from Caerdyf is a small island situated near the shore of the Severn, called Barri, from St Baroc.....From hence a noble family, of the maritime parts of South Wales, who owned this island and the adjoining estates, received the name of de Barri.*"

Many of Odo's family members assisted in the Norman invasion of Ireland and two of his sons acquired large estates in Ireland for their services. Philip de Barry was given a large portion of territory and built Barryscourt Castle near Carrigtwohill, County Cork, in 1206.

Philip fortified his castle so as to make it impregnable. He became jealous of a gentleman called Hodnett, who built Belvelly Castle on the opposite side of the channel separating the Great Island from the mainland. He gathered together friends, both English and Irish, and took Belvelly Castle in a severe battle in 1329 and gave the name of Barrymore to the Great Island.



Barryscourt Castle Entrance, added in the 15th Century, County Cork, Ireland

The de Barry's lands in various parts of County Cork were divided amongst branches of the family. The Barrymores, (Barra mór or 'Great Barry' in Irish) were the most powerful branch.

Shortly after his marriage in 1621, David Barry, first Earl of Barrymore, commenced the construction of Barrymore Castle, Castletyons, County Cork, and moved the Barrymore home some 25km north, from Barryscourt to Castletyons, where the family also held extensive properties. Barrymore Castle remained the Irish residence of the Barrymores until 1771, when it was burned down and never rebuilt.



*Ruins of Barrymore Castle, Castletyons, County Cork
Built 17th Century by David Barry, 1st Earl of Barrymore*

James Barry, 4th Earl of Barrymore (1667-1748)

James Barry, 4th Earl of Barrymore, inherited the extensive land and property in Cork.

James married Elizabeth Savage and following the death of Elizabeth's father Richard Savage in 1712, James bought the Marbury Estate, along with the land previously owned by the Marbury family, from the trustees of his father-in-law's will, three years later for £21,000.



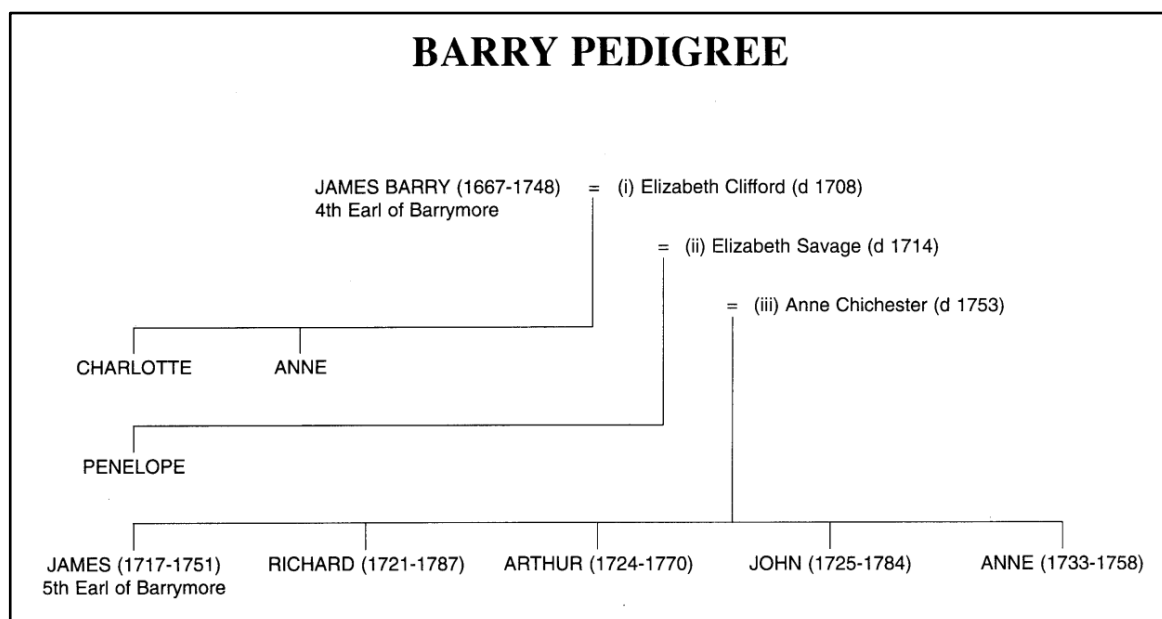
James Barry, 4th Earl of Barrymore

This full length portrait of the 4th Earl of Barrymore, dated 1720, hangs on the staircase landing in Tatton Hall.

The painting is one of ten paintings of Cheshire gentlemen who met at Ashley Hall to decide which side to support in the first Jacobite Rebellion. Fortunately for themselves and their estates they chose in favour of King George. The portraits, commissioned to commemorate their resolve, hung in Ashley Hall until their transfer to Tatton in 1860.

James was very fond of horse racing and a confirmed secret Jacobite follower. His family eventually moved into Marbury Hall twenty years later. The 1754 inventory shows the mansion had been encased in brick, had additional wings and more than fifty rooms.

This building continued to be the home to Earl Barrymore's descendants until the major changes and remodelling which were to take place in the middle of the 19th century.



Barry Family Pedigree (Courtesy of Geoff Buchan)

Richard Barry (1721-1787)

Upon his father's death in 1748, Richard Barry, his second son, inherited Marbury. He married Jane Hyde from Cork. Two years after the wedding, both she and their young son died of smallpox. Richard never recovered, remaining a widower until his death in 1787.

John (Smith) Barry (1725-1784)

John Barry, (1725-1784), the fourth son of James Barry, 4th Earl of Barrymore, married Dorothy Smith, which was the start of the Smith Barry family.



Hon. John Smith Barry, by Francis Cote



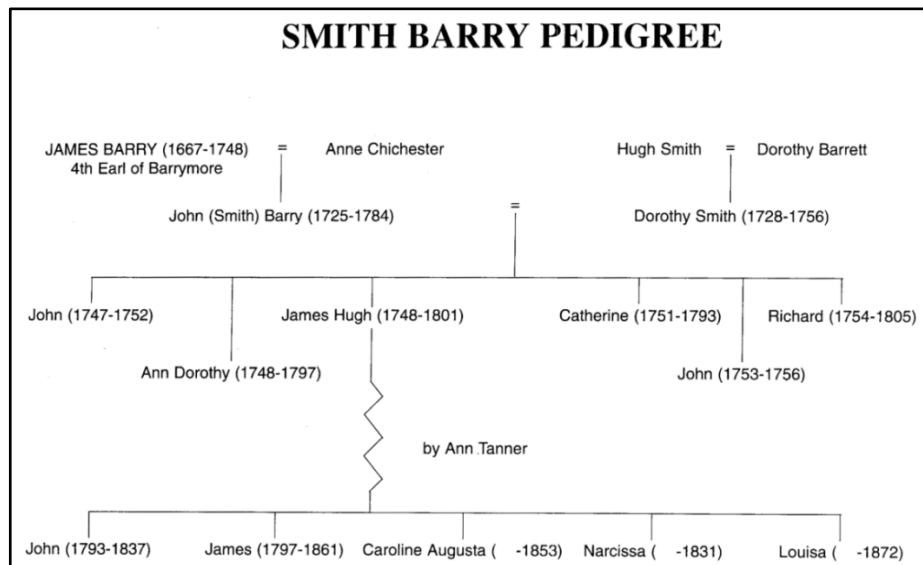
Dorothy Smith, born 1727

In 1749, John bought the site for Belmont Hall and commissioned James Gibbs to design the house, which was completed in 1755.



Belmont Hall, Cheshire – now let to Cransley School

John Smith Barry died in 1784, before his elder brother Richard (who died in 1787), so John Smith Barry never inherited the family estate.



Smith Barry Family Pedigree (courtesy of Geoff Buchan)

James Hugh Smith Barry (1748-1801)

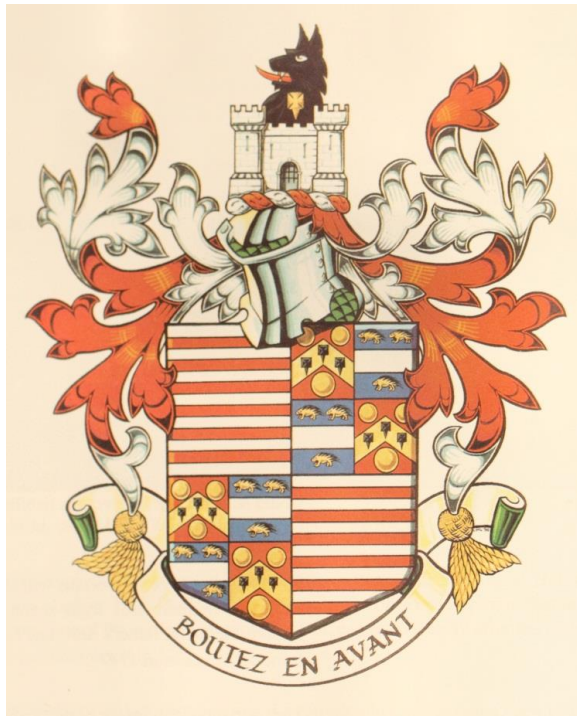
Following the death of his father John Smith Barry in 1784, James Hugh Smith Barry inherited Belmont Hall and continued to live there.

Three years later, on the death of Richard Barry in 1787, James Hugh Smith Barry also inherited the family's estate in Cork as well as the Marbury estate.

As a young man on the Grand Tour, between 1771-6, James Hugh Smith Barry had travelled widely in Europe and the Middle East, borrowing large amounts of money and amassing a huge collection of ancient statuary, vases and paintings, mostly by Italian masters. The collection was initially housed in Belmont Hall (now let to Cransley School), where James lived.



The left hand portrait of James Hugh Smith Barry by Pompeo Batoni was painted against a backcloth of the city of Rome, with James posing in the uniform of the Tarporley Hunt Club. The right hand portrait by Angelica Kauffman was painted in Rome in 1780.



*The Achievement of Arms of Smith Barry of Belmont
(based upon the personal seal of James Hugh Smith Barry)*

James Hugh Smith Barry spent little time at Marbury but clearly intended to make changes to the Hall. In his 28 page will of July 1799, eventually found in a trunk at Belmont Hall, he directed his executors to catalogue his collection and remove it to Marbury, providing it with a gallery and custodian. He also willed that all his five children, whose mother was Ann Tanner, be made legitimate and known as Smith Barry.

James Hugh Smith Barry died in 1801, two years after making his will. Belmont Hall was sold to Henry Clark, who sold it to the Leigh family.

The wishes in his will were not carried out in full, although the valuable collection was moved from Belmont Hall to Marbury Hall.

John Smith Barry (1793-1837)

James Hugh Smith Barry's eldest son, John Smith Barry, became heir in 1814. He preferred to live on the family estates in Ireland.



Fota House, Arboretum and Gardens, County Cork

Fota House was originally a two-storey hunting lodge set in a large estate near to Barryscourt Castle. When the Barrymore's family home was at Castlelyons, they used Fota as a base for fishing, shooting and yachting. John Smith Barry commissioned architect, Sir Richard Morrison to create the current mansion in the 1820's and the family made Fota House their primary residence.

Whilst he preferred to live at Fota House, John Smith Barry did contribute an important early engraving of the Georgian Marbury Hall to George Ormerod for his tome 'History of Cheshire', published in 1819. It shows the hall as remodelled by the 4th Earl of Barrymore. A large sculpture, surely from Smith Barry's collection, is under the portico on the engraving.

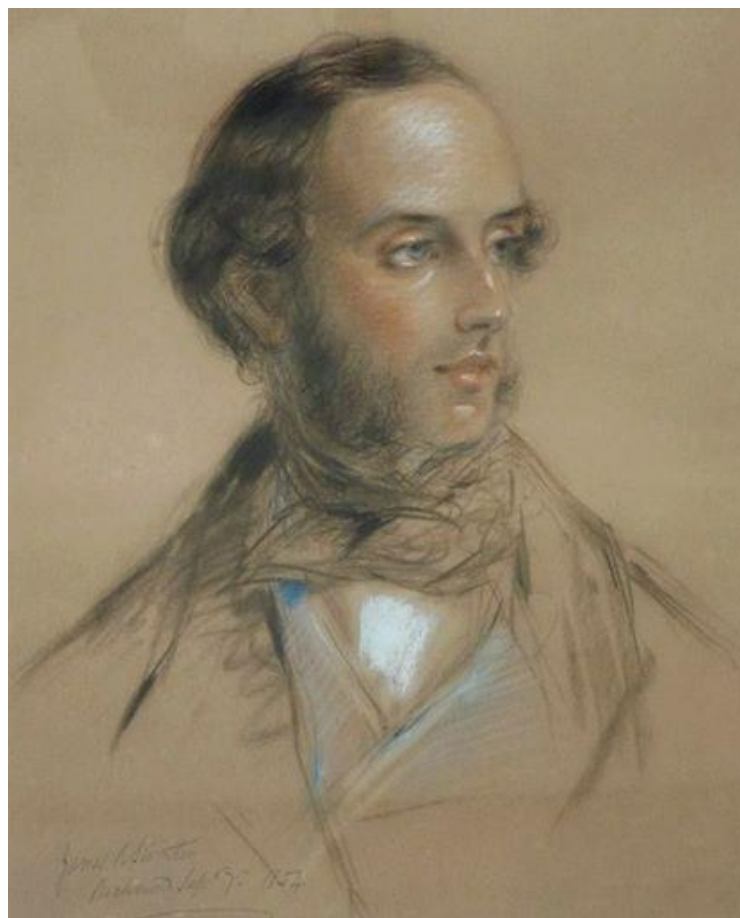
James Hugh Smith Barry (1816-1856)

When John Smith Barry died in 1837, his eldest son, another James Hugh, inherited the estate.

James Hugh Smith Barry had the formal gardens at Fota House laid out, started an arboretum and had an orangery built. Around the same time that this work was being undertaken in Cork, he made the decision to carry out extensive changes to the buildings and parkland at Marbury.

In the 1840s, using the services of Anthony Salvin as architect and James Nesfield as landscape gardener, the extended 18th century house was transformed in the style of a French chateau.

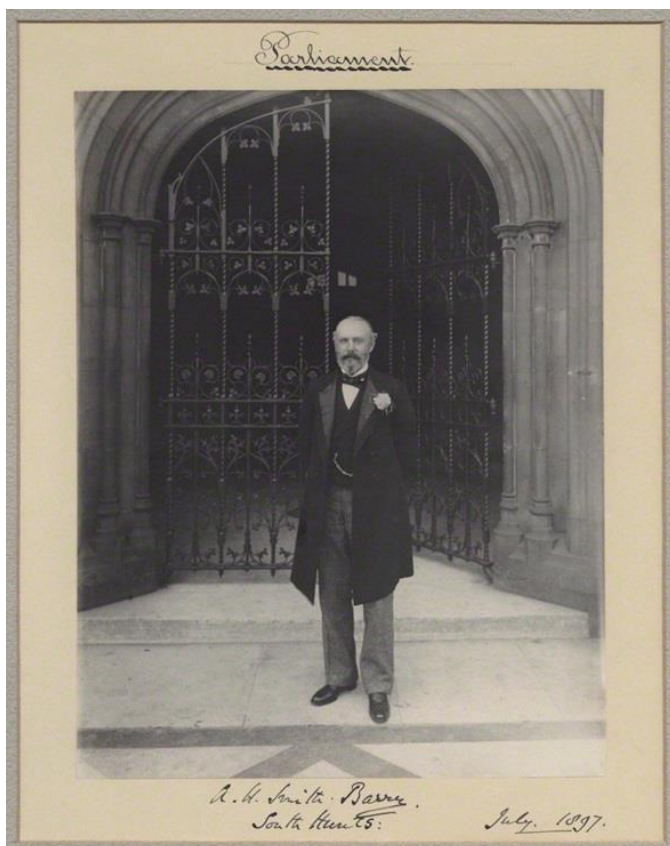
Both Salvin and Nesfield were highly regarded nationally in their respective fields and were prolific in their work in England. The re-modelling cost £7,700 and housed his grandfather's 1770's valuable and grand collection. The house had elegant, spacious rooms, an impressive staircase and intricate plaster work.



*James Hugh Smith Barry (1816-1856)
by
James Rannie Swinton, signed and dated 1854*

Arthur Hugh Smith Barry, Baron Barrymore (1843-1925)

The coming of age of James Hugh's son, Arthur Hugh Smith Barry, as the heir to Marbury in 1864, was celebrated in Comberbach village and the churches of Witton and Great Budworth rang their bells in celebration. Festivities lasted for three days and included dinners, processions and a grand ball.



*Arthur Hugh Smith Barry, 1st Baron Barrymore
by
Sir John Benjamin Stone, July 1897*

Arthur and his family continued to live some of their time in Marbury Hall and he had a prestigious public and political career, including becoming a Privy Councillor in 1896 and a Baron in 1902.

Arthur Hornby Lewis (1843-1914)

In 1891 Arthur Hugh Smith Barry leased Marbury Hall to Liverpool born Arthur Hornby Lewis, who was a JP in Cheshire and High Sheriff of Cheshire in 1905/6. He was also a member of the Cheshire Hunt, President of the Northwich Division of the Conservative Association, Chairman of the Glasgow Iron and Steel Company and Chairman of the Liverpool Silver and Copper Company. He and his wife were kind and hospitable and ran many events for different sections of the community. The local children from the villages had parties at Christmas and were each given a present. As many as 140 children attended. When Arthur Hornby Lewis died in 1914, Arthur Hugh Smith Barry returned to live at Marbury.

Robert Raymond Smith Barry (1886-1949)

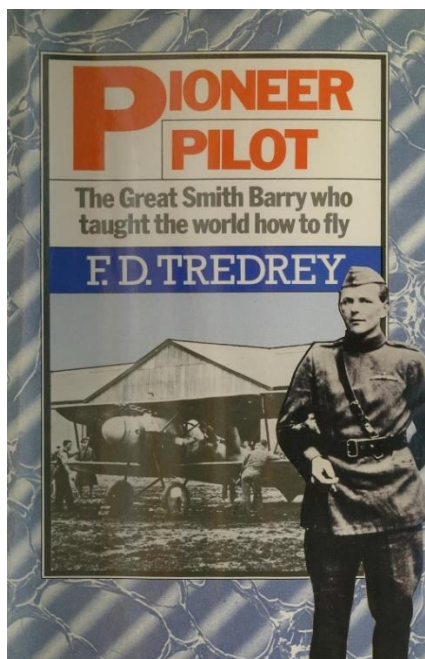
Robert Raymond Smith Barry was the only child of James Hugh Smith Barry (1845–1927), the younger brother of Arthur Hugh Smith-Barry (1843-1925). Robert's parents had homes in London and Wiltshire. Robert was born in Mayfair and raised in considerable comfort at Stowell Park near Wilcot in Wiltshire.

The 1911 census finds him in the family home in London and he had his first flying lesson at Larkhill on Salisbury Plain, which led to his subsequent career in the Air Force.

Having no sons, Arthur Hugh Smith Barry bequeathed the Marbury estate to his nephew Robert Raymond Smith Barry in 1925.

In 1925, the same year that he inherited the Marbury estate, Robert leased Conock Manor in Wiltshire, a few miles from his parents' home at Stowell Park.

Robert and his wife Charlotte lived at Conock Manor and never lived at Marbury. He was more interested in aircraft and flew his aeroplane to and from the Marbury estate to visit, felling parts of the Lime Avenues to make way for his runway. He served in both World Wars and was a pioneer in the development of training for pilots. His training schedules were adopted by flying schools throughout the world.



This book by F D Tredrey tells of Robert Smith Barry's flying career.

Robert sold the Marbury estate in 1932 and moved some of the marbles to Conock:

'On the south-facing veranda (at Conock), he placed a crowded line of marbles he had transferred from Marbury Hall, which he had sold. Over the stables he mounted a Marbury clock, and above it, a gilded fox weathercock'.

Robert lived at Conock until 1941, the year that Charlotte died. He remarried in September 1945 and moved to Durban, South Africa, where he died on 2nd May 1949.

Robert Raymond Smith Barry had no children from either marriage and was the last of the Smith Barry family to own Marbury Hall and estate.

Mr Thomas Place, The Salt Union and Mr George Smith

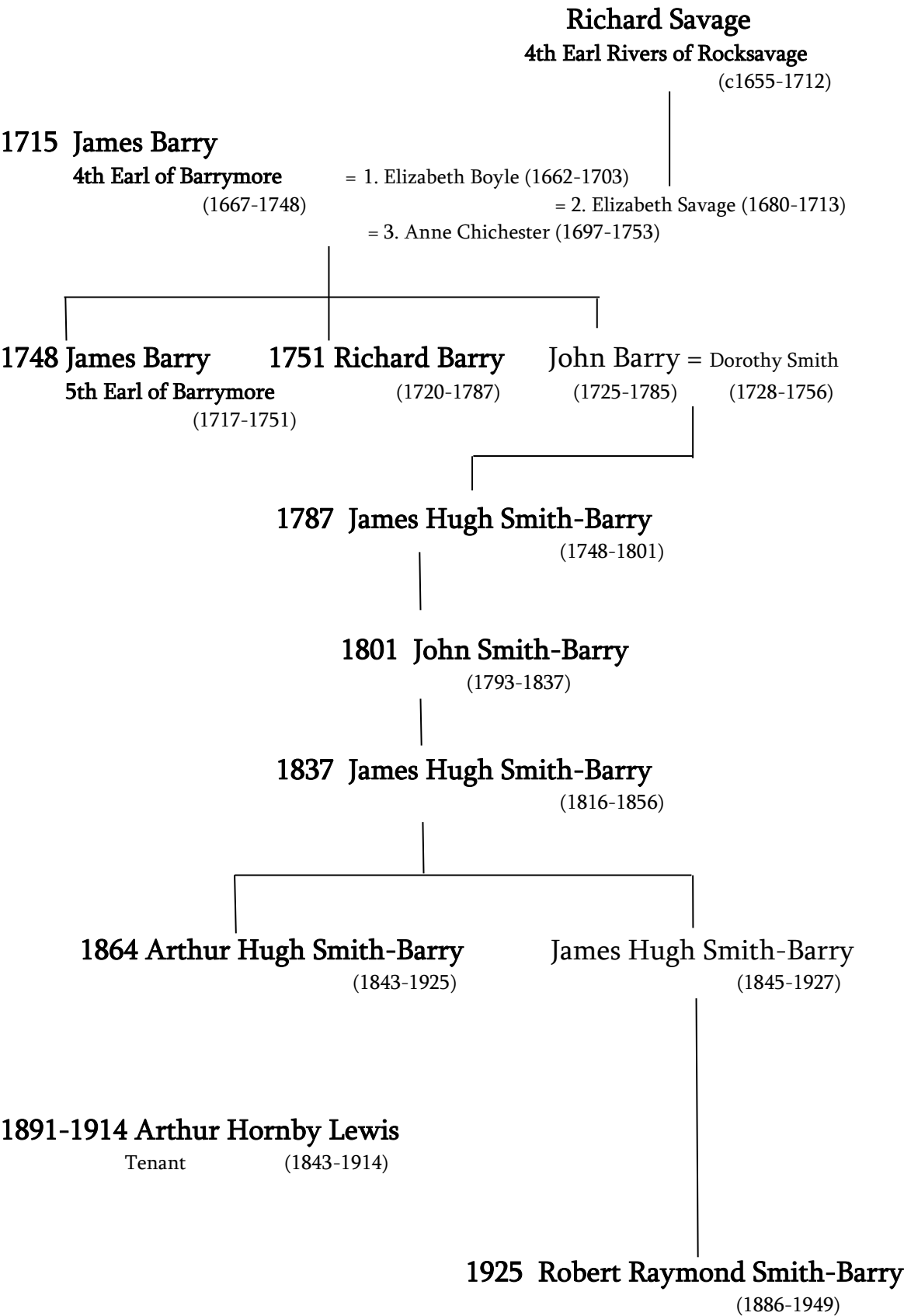
The Marbury estate was sold to Mr Thomas Place of Sowber Gate, Northallerton in early 1932. The Marbury portion of the estate was sold on more or less straight away to The Salt Union, who had no use for the Hall itself and sold the Hall and Parkland to Mr George Smith on 29th April 1932. George Smith ran it as a Country Club during the next six years prior to its requisition as a military camp at the start of World War II.

The Fota estate in Ireland passed out of the Smith Barry family following the death of Dorothy Elizabeth Bell (1894-1975), daughter of Arthur Hugh Smith Barry, 1st Baron Barrymore, and the last of the Smith Barry's. It was sold to University College Cork and now consists of Fota House, arboretum and gardens, the five-star Fota Island Resort, with its championship standard golf course, and a wildlife park.

Families Associated with Marbury Hall

From early 1200s William de Merebirie's descendants lived at Marbury

1684 Last male heir of Marbury family died, estate sold to



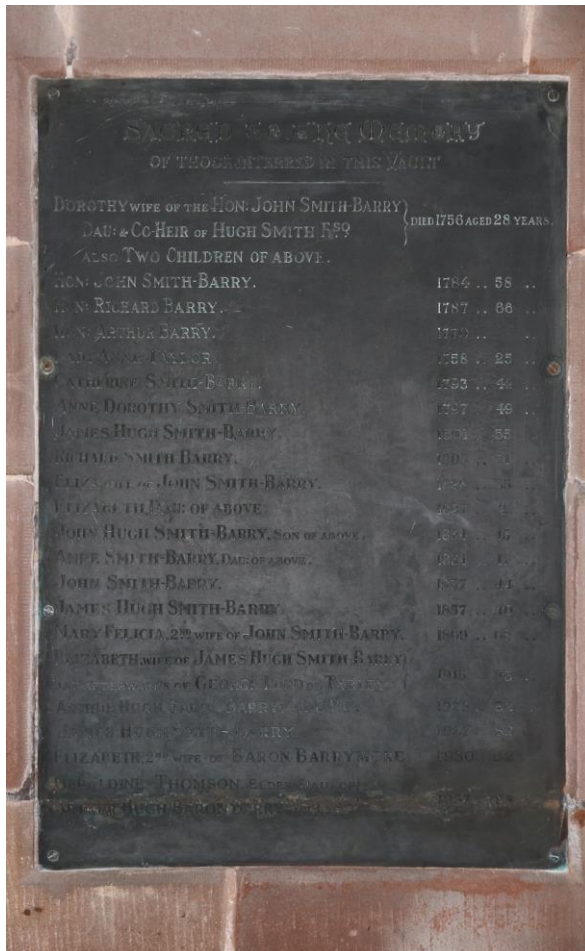
St Mary and All Saints Church, Great Budworth

No chapel was ever built at Marbury in spite of the codicil in James Hugh Smith Barry's will of 1799, requesting his trustees to provide a 'plain, neat chapel with vault or burial place at Marbury'.

It is not known when the first church was built in Great Budworth, although in 1086 the Domesday Book recorded a priest and in about 1130, the church became the property of Norton Priory.

The Lady Chapel and the adjoining aisle were built in the 14th century and survived the later rebuilding of the rest of the church. It became the burial place of the Dutton family, the Smith Barrys of Marbury and Belmont Halls and the Leycesters of Tabley House.

Some 23 members of the Smith Barry family are buried in a vault in the Lady Chapel. A memorial tablet on the wall of the Lady Chapel lists their names and ages at death.



Memorial Tablet to the Smith Barry Family
(Lady Chapel in Great Budworth Church)

SACRED TO THE MEMORY THOSE INTERRED IN THIS VAULT		
DOROTHY wife of the HON JOHN SMITH-BARRY		
DAU & CO HEIR of HUGH SMITH ESQ		Died 1756 aged 28 yrs
also TWO CHILDREN OF ABOVE		
HON JOHN SMITH-BARRY	1784	58
HON RICHARD BARRY	1787	66
HON ARTHUR BARRY	1770	
LADY ANNE TAYLOR	1758	25
CATHERINE SMITH-BARRY	1793	42
ANNE DOROTHY SMITH-BARRY	1797	49
JAMES HUGH SMITH-BARRY	1801	55
RICHARD SMITH-BARRY	1805	51
ELIZA wife of JOHN SMITH BARRY	1828	35
ELIZABETH Dau of above	1827	2
JOHN HUGH SMITH-BARRY Son of above	1834	15
ANNE SMITH BARRY Dau of above	1834	17
JOHN SMITH-BARRY	1837	44
JAMES HUGH SMITH BARRY	1857	40
MARY FELICIA 2nd wife of JOHN SMITH-BARRY	1869	68
ELIZABETH wife of JAMES HUGH SMITH-BARRY and afterwards of GEORGE LORD of TABLEY	1915	93
ARTHUR HUGH BARON BARRYMORE P.C	1925	82
JAMES HUGH SMITH-BARRY	1927	82
ELIZABETH 2nd wife of BARON BARRYMORE	1930	82