

**7259 George Benjamin Townson d 28 January 1916**



In Loving Memory of  
**GEORGE BENJAMIN TOWNSON**  
WHO DIED JANUARY 28<sup>TH</sup> 1916  
AGED 44 YEARS  
To which had been added:  
AND OF HIS WIFE  
CAROLINE TOWNSON  
DIED 8 NOVEMBER 1965 AGED 96

*So his wife was a widow for nearly 50 years.*



In the **1881 Census** living at 18 Church Street, Barrow, next door to William Ashburner (72) Shipbuilder, were Benjamin Townson (49) Cabinet Maker, born Ambleside, Westmorland; Rose M. Townson (47), born Bolton-le-Moors, Lancs; Margaret J. Townson (15) Scholar, born Barrow; Charles Townson (11) Scholar, born Barrow; George B. Townson (9) Scholar, born Barrow; and Hannah Marsden (24) General Servant, born Rock? Hill, Staffs.

Benjamin Townson was Mayor of Barrow-in-Furness twice: 1885-6 and 1886-7.

"*Oxford Men and Their Colleges*" gives George Benjamin Townson, born Barrow-in-Furness, Lancs. 1 August 1871, matriculated 20 October 1890 at St. Mary Hall.

The firm of Townson & Ward have an entry in the website of the *Furniture History Society*:

<https://bifmo.furniturehistorysociety.org/entry/townson-ward-1876-1881>

***Townson & Ward***

*Town Hall Buildings, Duke Street & Cornwallis Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Lancashire; cabinet makers, cabinet carvers & gilders (fl.1876-81)*

*Listed in The Furniture Gazette Directory, 1876 & 1877. An advertisement for an experienced young man as leading salesman in cabinet and carpet department [The Furniture Gazette, 8 January 1881].*

*The advert on the right is from the Barrow News 4 May 1929.*

The **1891 Census** has the Townson family at Abbots Field, Abbey Road. Margaret J. Townson is no longer at home; Charles Townson (21) is an architect, and George B. Townson (19) is a student. There are two servants: Hannah Bigg (21) General Servant (Domestic), born Chorley, Lancs; and Mary Reed (15) Kitchen Maid, born Barrow.

The **1901 Census** has the family at the same address. Father Benjamin Townson is described as a Furniture Manufacturer; Rose Mary (65) is still present, and Margaret J. Townson (35) Single, has reappeared. Charles (31) is Manager of a Furniture Factory, and George Townson (29) is the Secretary of a Furniture Factory. There are two servants: Alice Ullock (21) Housemaid, born Lindal in Furness; and Sarah Farnworth (23) Domestic Cook, born Dalton in Furness.

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Established 1859 Phone 48 Barrow



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| <b>FURNITURE</b><br>The finest selection of Adjustable Easy Chairs in the trade. Model 4r made in our own factory. 31/6                      | <b>FLOOR COVERINGS</b><br>A special purchase of Inlaid Linoleums, entirely new designs. 3/9 per sq. yard.                                                       |
| <b>CHINA &amp; GLASS</b><br>Tudor Tumblers 1/10; per 12<br>1 1/2 pt. Jugs to match 1/3<br>1 pt. " " 1/-<br>Shelley Tea Sets, 21 pieces 23/11 | <b>LINENS</b><br>Hand embroidered 13-piece Luncheon Sets in four colours. 8/11 set.<br>Special purchase of 'Osman' Pillow Cases 20" x 30" 1/- each; 1/11; pair. |
| <b>SOFT FURNISHINGS</b><br>A wide range of Shadow Tissues for Loose Covers and Curtains. 31", 1/11; 50" 2/11 yd.                             | <b>IRONMONGERY</b><br>Fibre Week-end Cases 22" 6/11; 24" 7/6; 26" 7/11<br>Spring Cleaning Requisites.                                                           |
| <b>SPORTS &amp; GARDEN</b><br>SEE OUR WINDOW DISPLAY.                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>TOWNSON &amp; WARD Ltd.,</b> COMPLETE HOUSE FURNISHERS, BARROW & ULVERSTON.                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                 |

George B. Townson married Caroline Clark at St. Mary's, Dalton, on 23 October 1904. (*Cumbria BMD*)

The **1905 Electoral Register** has entries for Charles Townson, of 145 Abbey Road, Barrow, who owns 50 Crellin Street, Barrow; and George Benjamin Townson, of Abbotsfield, who owns 48 Crellin Street, Barrow.

The **1911 Census** sees George Benjamin Townson (39) living at 264 Abbey Road, Barrow. He is Secretary of a Home Furnishing Company, born Barrow-in-Furness, Lancs. His wife is Caroline Townson (41) born Dalton-in-Furness, and they have been married for six years. They have no children, but there is a servant: Martha Brocklebank (23) General Domestic servant, born Millom, Cumberland.

The **National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations) 1916** has:

**TOWNSON** George Benjamin of 1 Crosslands-villa Barrow-in-Furness **Lancashire** died 28 January 1916 Probate **London** 26 April to Frank Thompson Clark rates collector and Caroline Townson widow. Effects £6782 13s 9d.

Caroline Townson (née Clark) had her origins in Dalton. In the **1871 Census** living in an unknown location in Dalton are Francis H. Clarke (38) Assistant Overseer, born Portsmouth; Sarah M. Clarke (35) born Ulverston, Lancs; Annie S. Clarke (12) Scholar, born Ulverston; Frank T. Clarke (7) Scholar, born Ulverston; Maggie Clarke (5) Scholar, born Ulverston; Lucy Clark (3) born Dalton; and Catherine Clark (1) born Dalton.

In the **1881 Census** the Clarks are living at 4 Fair View, Dalton. Head of the Household is Francis Henry Clark (48) Assistant Overseer, born Portsmouth, Hants; his wife is Sarah Margaret Clark (45), born Lancaster, Lancs; Margaret Clark (15) Daughter, born Ulverston; Lucy Clark (13) Scholar, born Dalton; Caroline Clark (11) Scholar, born Dalton; William Henry Clark (7) Scholar, born Dalton; Maude Mary Clark (4) Scholar, born Dalton; and Ann Banks Thompson (70) Widow, Mother (in-Law), born Ulverston, Lancs.

While most of the family are still at 4 Fair View in the **1891 Census**, where Francis H. Clark is now an Accountant; Caroline is staying with her widowed sister Annie S. Ashburner (32) Widow, Living on Own Means, at Ellislea (sic). Other members of the household are Margaret Ashburner (7) born Dalton; Caroline Clarke (sic) (21) no occupation recorded; and Sarah E. Shaw (20) General Domestic Servant, born Dalton.

By the **1901 Census** Caroline is back with the rest of the family, who have moved to 3 Fair View (or it has been renumbered). Francis H. Clark (67) Widower, Rate Collector, shares the house with Frank T. Clark (37) Rate Collector; Maggie Spedding (35) Daughter, no occupation recorded; Caroline Clark (31) Hospital Nurse; Maud M. Clark (24) no occupation recorded; Ethel M. Spedding (7) Granddaughter; and Amelia J. Smale/Small (22) General Domestic Servant, born Dalton.

In the **1939 Register** Caroline Townson (DoB 1 or 6 Nov 1872 or 1875 – both of which are wrong) is living at Thornleigh Boarding House, Esplanade, Grange-over-Sands. She is a widow and living on Private Means. There are five other residents, one of which is her sister Annie S. Ashburner (DoB 8 June 1858) Widow, Incapacitated.



**B. TOWNSON,**  
CABINET-MAKER, UPHOLSTERER, CARVER,  
FRENCH POLISHER, & GENERAL DECORATOR,  
**TOWN HALL BUILDINGS,**  
**DUKE STREET, BARROW-IN-FURNESS,**

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BARROW AND DISTRICT YEAR BOOK, 1913.

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Ulverston, 15.

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Two adverts for the Townson's firm. On the left is an advert from 1886, stating that they had been in business "upwards of Thirty Years". Presumably the business started elsewhere in the town, since Duke Street had yet to be built in 1886, and on the right from the Barrow and District Yearbook 1913. Note the telephone numbers: Barrow 48 and Ulverston 15. But how many people in Barrow could phone them?



Sankey negative C41a: Townson & Ward looking down Cornwallis Street (left) & Duke Street (right). Across the top it reads (L-R) "Townson & Ward Carpet Warehouse Townson & Ward Limited Townson and Ward Carver Upholsterers". Round the corner on Sidney Street it reads "Ironmongers". This block, 53-57 Duke Street, is currently (2023) the Furness Building Society.

No-one is certain why Edward Sankey took photographs of graves in the period 1910-1920 and later. Were they advertising the skills of his friend William Hull, or later Hull and Fairbairn? Were they to be made into postcards that the bereaved family could send to members who were not able to attend the funeral?

The historic photographs are from the Sankey Family Photographic Collection, courtesy of Cumbria Archives.