

The Cavendish Chapel and Crypt

This early 17th century chapel, designed by Huntingdon Smithson, is situated at the south-east corner of the church of St Mary & St Laurence in Bolsover. It is an addition to the original 12th century church and was commissioned in 1618 by William Cavendish to house the monument-tomb of his parents. His father, Charles Cavendish, had died in 1617 and his "sorrowful mother", Katherine, died later in 1627. In 1643, William's first wife Elizabeth was also buried here.

Henrietta Cavendish Holles Harley, the Countess of Oxford, had the second monument in the chapel built in 1727 as a tribute to her mother and grandparents. Her grandfather, Henry Cavendish, was William's son and the 2nd Duke of Newcastle.

Henrietta also added memorial inscriptions for two other ancestors whose coffins had been interred in the crypt.

By the end of the 19th century, 14 members of the Cavendish, Bentinck and Holles family had been entombed in the crypt,

although as early as 1823 it was claimed that, "the crypt, chapel and the monuments were going fast to ruin."

In 1897 most of the church was gutted by a fire but the chapel and crypt were, thankfully, largely undamaged by it.

The Cavendish chapel was opened up and became an integral part of the church in the 1920s when its private entrance was blocked up and the wall separating it from the main body of the church was demolished.

In 1947 the 7th Duke of Portland took five crumbling coffins away to Welbeck.

In 1960 a second fire devastated most of the church but again, thankfully, the chapel and crypt were saved.

In 1982, Lady Anne Bentinck (daughter of the 7th Duke of Portland) visited the church and declared that she was, "horrified at the condition of the chapel and crypt," but she disclaimed any financial responsibility for either. Allegedly she did not consider them of any great importance.

William Cavendish and His Wives

William was born at Handsworth Manor, South Yorkshire. A son of Sir Charles Cavendish, William was a writer, patron of the arts and Royalist army officer. He was created Viscount Mansfield, Duke of Newcastle by Charles II. He wrote plays and poems and works on horsemanship. For his devotion to Charles I he was known as "the Loyal Duke". William spent vast sums on the Royalist cause during the English Civil War and in building and rebuilding work at his great houses, including Bolsover Castle - his "pleasure palace". Although not buried at Bolsover, William is a key figure as he was responsible for the Cavendish Chapel. His second son, Charles, is buried in the crypt.

Elizabeth Basset of Blore (Staffordshire) was William's first wife. In 1613 aged 11 Elizabeth had been married off to a violent drunkard, Henry Howard. She had a stillborn child just before her husband's death in 1615. Now a rich widow, Elizabeth married William in



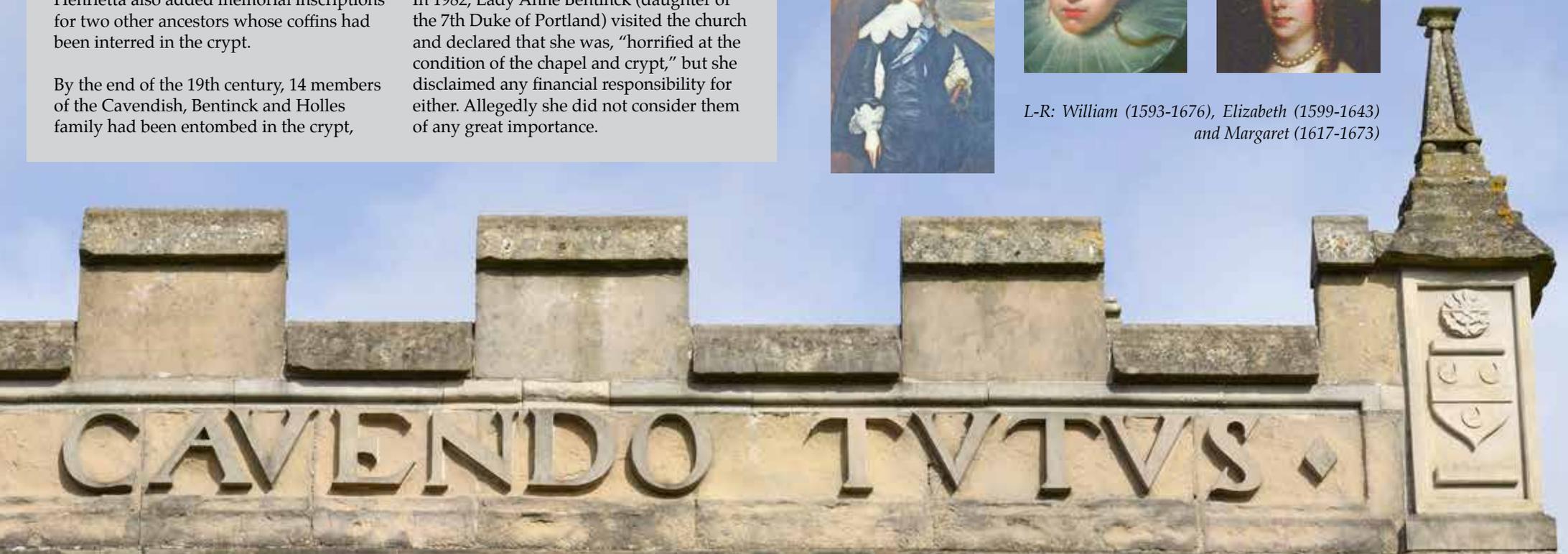
L-R: William (1593-1676), Elizabeth (1599-1643) and Margaret (1617-1673)

1618. It is claimed, "it was no love match but the calculated merger of the interests of two great landed families" however an affectionate relationship developed between them, William referring to her as his "Sweete Harte".

Margaret Lucas was William's second wife. They married while in exile in Paris - William took refuge there after the Battle of Marston Moor and Margaret, as Lady-in-waiting, had accompanied Queen Henrietta Maria before her husband Charles I was beheaded at Whitehall in 1649.

Margaret, known as "Mad Madge" was the first woman in England to publish plays, poems and books. She wrote about William's life at Bolsover.

William and Margaret were buried in Westminster Abbey in a vault under the monument that was designed for them by Grinling Gibbons.





Hardwick Hall and Welbeck Abbey

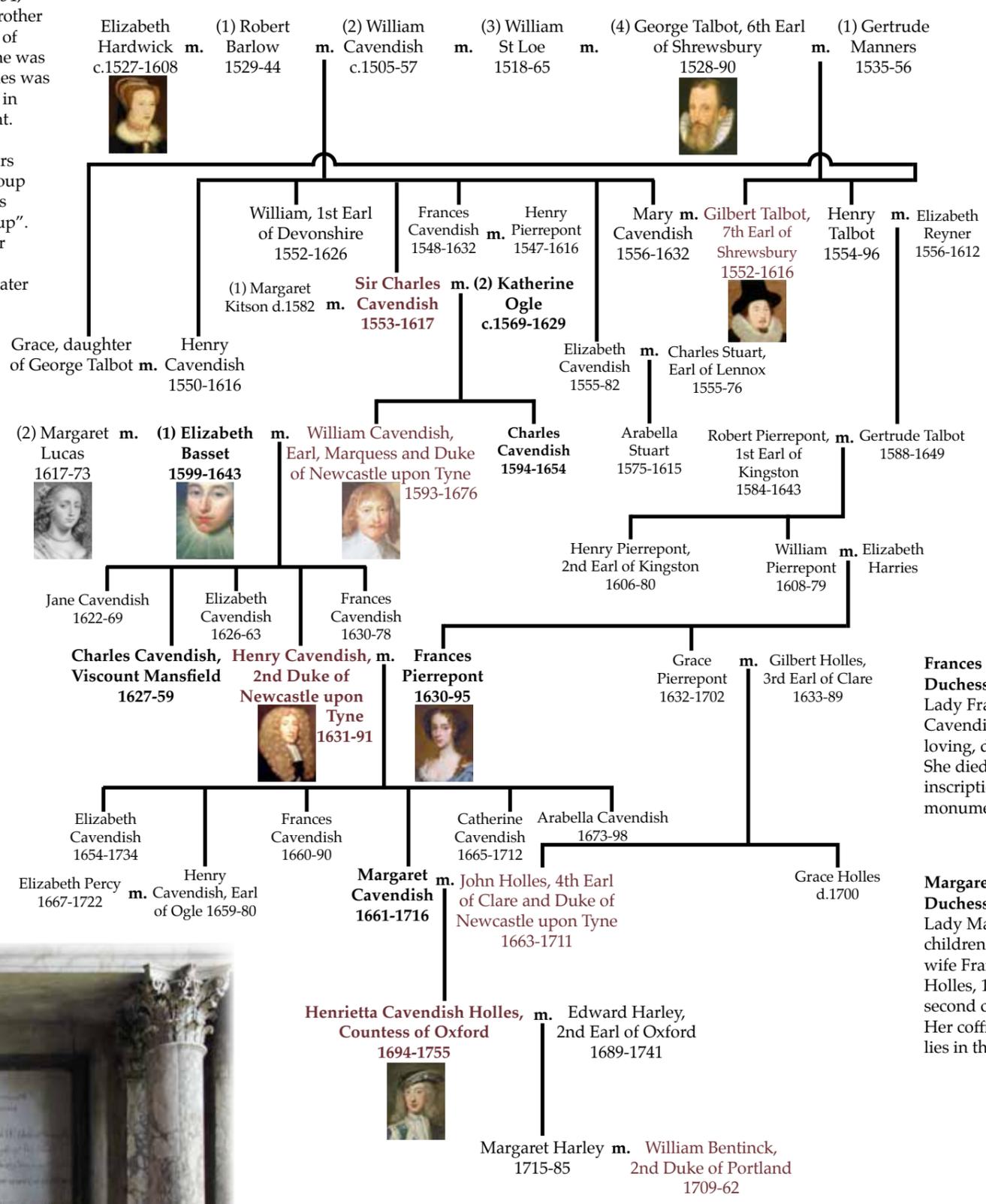
Sir Charles Cavendish (1553-1617)
 Charles was the youngest son of Bess of Hardwick and William Cavendish, the second of her four husbands. Charles acquired Welbeck Abbey and the ruins of Bolsover Castle in 1608 from his stepbrother, who was also his brother-in-law, Gilbert Talbot. Gilbert was Earl of Shrewsbury and lived at Sheffield Castle.
 Charles' epitaph, composed by Ben Johnson, in large letters on his tomb states that he was "happy - content - wise".



The Charles Cavendish Monument

The Cavendish Family Tree

Bold text indicates those with a memorial in Bolsover Parish Church.
 Dark red indicates the owners of Bolsover Castle.



Sir Charles Cavendish (1594-1654)
 This Charles was the younger brother of William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle upon Tyne. In 1619, he was knighted by King James I. Charles was MP for Nottingham in 1624 and in 1628 during the Short Parliament. Charles was a patron of mathematicians and philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes. His group of intellectual acquaintances was referred to as "the Welbeck Group". After the battle of Marston Moor Charles went into exile in Paris with his brother. His body was later interred in the crypt.

Charles Cavendish, Viscount Mansfield (1627-59)
 This Charles was the son of William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle upon Tyne and Elizabeth Basset of Blore. He was a politician and became MP for East Retford in Nottinghamshire from 1640-1644 during the infamous Long Parliament, which pre-empted the English Civil War. Charles supported the Royalist cause. After the battle of Marston Moor he went into exile with his father and uncle. After the death of Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector of the Republican Commonwealth, they returned to England. Charles died in 1659 just as Charles II was restored to the throne. His lead-lined coffin with inscribed cartouche was entombed in the crypt.

The Henry Cavendish Monument

Katherine Ogle (c.1569-1629)
 Lady Katherine was the daughter and co-heiress of Cuthbert 7th Baron Ogle and Catherine Carnaby, daughter of Sir Reginald Carnaby of Halton, Northumberland. Katherine was the second wife of Sir Charles Cavendish. Their son William became the 1st Duke of Newcastle upon Tyne and his brother Charles was knighted. On the monument we read that Katherine helped her two sons to commission the tomb for their father:
 "Piety, with her two surviving sons have dedicated this humble monument to his memory and do all desire in their time, to be gathered to his dust: Expecting the happy hower of resurrection, when those garments, here put of shal be put on glorified". Katherine's sister, Jane, is also mentioned on the tomb.

Frances Cavendish Pierrepont (1630-95) Duchess of Newcastle upon Tyne
 Lady Frances Pierrepont married Henry Cavendish in 1652 at Thoresby. She was a loving, dutiful wife and had six children. She died in London but her monumental inscription is on Henrietta's family monument in the Cavendish Chapel.

Margaret Cavendish Holles (1661-1716) Duchess of Newcastle upon Tyne
 Lady Margaret was the fourth of six children of Henry Cavendish and his wife Frances. In 1690 she married John Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle (of the second creation). Her coffin with its splendid cartouche lies in the crypt.



Henry Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Newcastle (1631-91)
 Henry was the second son of William Cavendish and Elizabeth Basset. Until 1676 he was known as Lord Mansfield. In 1660 he was elected as MP for Derbyshire in the Convention Parliament. Then in 1661 he was elected as MP for Northumberland in the Cavalier Parliament until he inherited the title of Duke of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1676. Although he inherited the title, William had tied Henry's financial inheritance up in building Nottingham Castle to the memory of his father, Sir Charles, who had been fond of the "romantic ruin".

Henrietta Cavendish Holles, Countess of Oxford (1694-1755)
 Lady Henrietta was reputed to be the wealthiest heiress in the country. She was the only child of Margaret Cavendish and John Holles, who became Duke of Newcastle when Henrietta's grandfather Henry died without a male heir. Henrietta married the 2nd Earl of Oxford and Mortimer and was mother to Margaret Bentinck, Duchess of Portland. Henrietta was said "to have [in] abundant measure the graces of amiability, considerateness and sincerity that made her generally beloved." She helped design the second monument in the Chapel.



Above: Inside the crypt (photo: Dave Wharmby). Below: Bolsover Castle





19th Century Cavendishes

Lieutenant-General Arthur Cavendish Bentinck (1819-1877)

Arthur was the grandson of the 3rd Duke of Portland. His commemorative plaque is on the east wall.

Lady Augusta Mary Elizabeth Cavendish Bentinck (nee Browne), 1st Baroness Bolsover (1834-1893)

Lady Augusta was born in Dublin. She was the second wife of Arthur Cavendish Bentinck. The title of Baroness Bolsover was created for her in 1880 with the remainder to her husband's male heirs. The barony became extinct in 1977 with the death of the 7th Duke of Portland. Lady Augusta was buried in the crypt. Her family dedicated the splendid Christ the King east window to her memory.



For more information please see www.bolsoverparishchurch.org

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