

## STANLEY family, of Penrhos, Anglesey

The Stanleys came into contact with Anglesey through the marriage of [Margaret Owen](#) of Penrhos near Holyhead to Sir John Thomas Stanley (1735 - 1807) in 1763. Margaret represented a once powerful family in commote Talybolion, one of its most vigorous members being the John Owen who died in 1712, who was strong enough to withstand the influence of the [Meyrick family of Bodorgan](#) in western Anglesey and favour the fortunes of the [Bulkeley](#) family of Baron Hill, especially in the county elections of 1708 and 1710. He was followed by an ineffective son and still more ineffective grandsons: one indeed was a great gardener, another somewhat of an artist, a third of weak mind, and the fourth, Hugh Owen father of Margaret, of poor health throughout his life. Had it not been for the connection between the Owen family and the house of Bodewryd through the marriage of John Owen's son to Ann, sister of [chancellor Edward Wynne](#), the old family and its resources would have long ago petered out.

Sir John Stanley of Alderley in Cheshire came from one of the minor branches of the Stanleys of Derby; while the latter ran a course of steady even uneventful prosperity, with an occasional giant arising amongst them, the Stanleys of Alderley and Penrhos were more picturesque, versatile, and unexpected in their ways: one of them, the 3rd baron who died in 1903, became a Mohammedan, and had a Mohammedan mosque erected in Talybolion. The eldest son of Margaret Owen was made a peer in 1839; Edward his brother (1780 - 1849) became bishop of Norwich (1837-49); his son was Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, the famous dean of Westminster from 1864 to 1881. The 1st baron himself had some noteworthy sons: EDWARD JOHN STANLEY, the 2nd baron (1802 - 1869), who held several offices in Whig administrations, being president of the Board of Trade from 1855 to 1858, and his twin brother WILLIAM OWEN STANLEY (1802 - 1884), M.P. for Anglesey (1837-47), for Chester (1850-7), and for the Anglesey boroughs from 1857 to 1874, a gentleman who was deeply versed in the ancient things of Celtic archaeology, as witness his numerous articles in the earlier *Archæologia Cambrensis*. The sister of these two was the wife of [William Edward Parry](#), the adventurous captain who explored the farthest recesses of the Arctic. The greatest of the family, the 4th baron (who became also earl of Sheffield in 1909), was EDWARD LYULPH STANLEY (1839 - 1925), vice-chairman of the London School Board from 1897 to 1904, and one of the most prominent figures of the educational world; at the end of his life he was willing and proud to act as chairman of the Holyhead county school governors. The 5th baron was his son, ARTHUR LYULPH STANLEY (1875 - 1931), Member of Parliament for a time and governor of Victoria from 1914 to 1920.

This bald chronicle does little to illustrate the great part played by the Stanleys in applying the Enclosure Acts in north-western Anglesey, in facilitating the coming of the railway to the island, and in developing the port of Holyhead and communications with Ireland.

### Author

Thomas Richards, (1878 - 1962)

### Sources

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*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 1922-30

### Images

John & Chas. Watkins, [Arthur Penrhyn Stanley](#)

Hills & Saunders, [Arthur Penrhyn Stanley](#)

Coflein: [St Cybis's Church, Holyhead: William Owen Stanley memorial, high viewpoint from the front](#)

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