

# PULVERTAFT PAPERS

A Newsletter on the Pulvertofts & Pulvertafts

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## Editorial

*Having devoted most of the space in the last two issues to several varieties of Pulvertafts - 'modern', 'early Cork', and 'early American', I am returning in this issue to the Lincolnshire Pulvertofts. The article on the Pulvertofts of Swineshead continues the theme of printing what I know of localised family groups with the intention of discovering more about them and in the hope that this may lead to the groups being linked and perhaps to a connection between the Pulvertofts and the Pulvertafts.*

*With this issue I complete the first three years of these papers and it is interesting to look back and see how much they have contributed to my study of the two families. I have certainly learned a great deal from the letters which have resulted from the papers and of course I have continued to delve into the historical records, in Lincoln and the libraries and societies which specialise in family history. I am confident that I have enough material to continue the papers for several more years, but nevertheless, keep the information flowing please!*

## The Pulvertofts of Swineshead

While there are references to Pulvertofts living in Swineshead as early as 1400, the best documented period is that between the mid-16th and 17th centuries when several members of the family made wills and thus left records of their families and circumstances in more detail than might otherwise have been expected. The first, John Pulvertofte, "taylor" (C C Lincs 1547-248), bequeathed livestock and household goods to his wife Issabell and children Symonde, Rychard, Roose, Cataron, Issabell, Johane and Anne.

His wife survived him by some ten years, making a very similar will (C C Lincs 1558-ii-52), but describing their family somewhat differently. She mentions Symon, Richard, Isabell (whom she names as Isabell Elward), and Anne but she makes no mention of Rose, Katharine or Joan and she makes her son William Pulvertofte supervisor of the will. While there is perhaps nothing too significant in these differences, it is worth noting that despite their usefulness, wills do not necessarily refer to every member of a family. As it happens, Isabell also named four granddaughters - Isabell, Elizabeth & Alice (children of William) and Johan (dau. of Simon) and she gave the will a personal touch in her bequest to her daughter Anne: "... three kye, that is to say my greate Rugged Cowe, a black sterne cow, and a red flecked cow called Volantyne." The two wills form the basis of the family group shown on pages 44 and 45.

Next come the wills of Symond Pulvertofte, "taylor" and William Pulvertofte, "husbandman" (C C Lincs 1565-62 & 1577-i-22 respectively). Simon bequeathed money, livestock and household goods to his wife Cicelie and four children Harrie, Thomas, Tobie & Joanne - all minors when he wrote his will - while William made similar

bequests to his wife Alice and his children Alice, George & Thomas. One bequest implies that he had been married twice; another that his son Thomas had a daughter (though he does not name her). Whether these are the Simon and William who are named in the earlier wills is not certain but there are several pointers; Simon's trade and the mention of a daughter Joan and a brother William, and William's inclusion of a sister Isabell and a daughter Alice. For the purpose of the pedigree overleaf, they have been assumed to be the children of John and Isabell.

The next will is that of George Pulvertofte, husbandman (C C Lincs 1600-98) who left his living to his wife Anne and a selection of household effects to his daughters Ann & Roose. Also attached to the will is a list of his debts, amounting to 8s., and commitments including: rent to Christopher Holland at Mayday - 22s., 20 stone of hemp to Thomas Sharp to be delivered at Whitsontide and 26s. 8d. to John Welche to be paid at Lammas next. A glimpse of the seasonal nature of a husbandman's life.

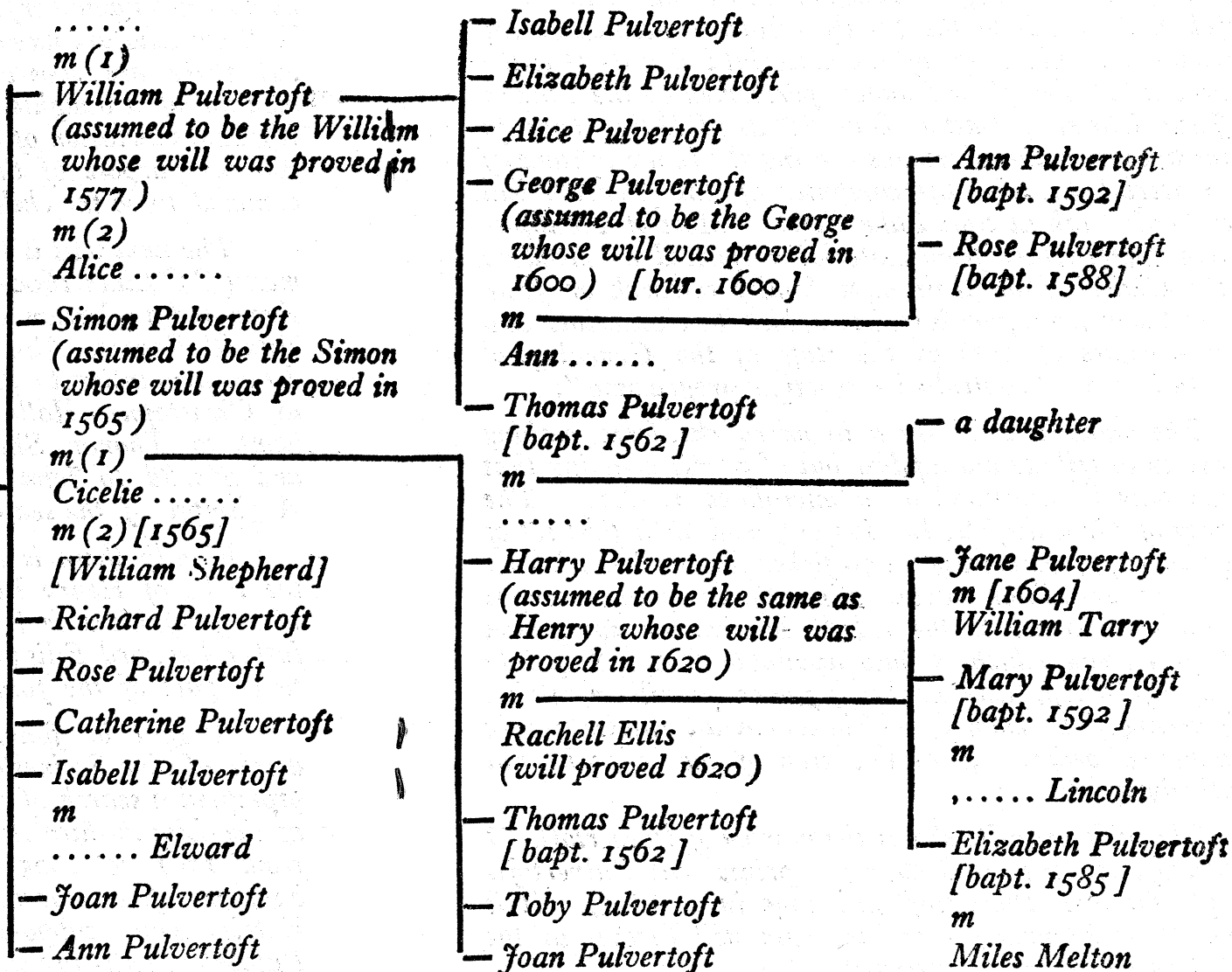
Finally there is a small group which emerges from the wills of Henry Pulvertoft, husbandman (C C Lincs 1620-307), his wife Rachell (C C Lincs 1620-56) and her father Leonard Ellis (C C Lincs 1587). They are assumed to be part of the family as shown overleaf.

As will be found on page 47, the I.G.I includes details of nine Swineshead baptisms, a concentration which prompted a search of the bishops transcripts for the parish at the Lincolnshire Archives last March. Only the period from 1561 to 1605 was searched but ten Pulvertoft baptisms, four marriages and five burials were found. Entries which support the family group drawn up from Pulvertoft wills are shown in brackets.

# The Pulvertofts of Swineshead

*[Events shown in square brackets are from the Bishops Transcripts for Swineshead 1561-1605]*

*John Pulvertoft  
(will proved 1547)  
m  
Isabell .....  
(will proved 1558)*



## The International Genealogical Index

Formerly known as the Computer File Index, the International Genealogical Index (IGI) is one of the more useful modern aids to the family historian because of the enormous size and scope of the material indexed. It is the by-product of Temple ordinances performed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS) - perhaps better known as the Mormons - being the index to some of the material filed in the computer of the Genealogical Society of Utah at Salt Lake City. Most of the information comes either from material submitted by members of the Church from their own family research or from entries taken from parish registers, bishops transcripts and modern copies of both by the staff of the Genealogical Society in their "controlled extraction programme".

The index itself is issued in microfiche form, making it easy to distribute and update but of course meaning that it can only be consulted on a microfiche reader. The Society of Genealogists, London obtained their first set of fiches in 1977, comprising 1,699 fiches for the British Isles with over 25 million entries. Since then they have bought the revised indexes as the LDS programme has grown and the edition which is now available (the 1981 print) has 2,985 British fiches containing over 45 million entries. It is arranged by county, within which all entries are in alphabetical order. A total search of the index is thus relatively quick.

The table opposite shows the number of Pulvertofts & Pulvertafts in the 1978 & 1981 prints (all Pulvertofts except for one Pulvertaft marriage in London). It is hoped that the numbers will increase still further as the LDS programme is continued.

County	Parish	1978 Print		1981 Print	
		Bapts	Mars	Extra Bapts	Extra Mars
Bucks.	Colnbrook	-	-	2	-
Herts.	Cheshunt	-	-	-	1
Lincs.	Algarkirk	12	-	-	-
	Aslackby	2	-	-	-
	Fleet	-	-	-	1
	Fosdyke	-	-	7	2
	Gainsborough	-	1	-	-
	Gedney	5	-	-	-
	Horncastle	3	1	-	-
	Kirton	7	-	-	-
	Lincoln	-	1	-	1
	Pinchbeck	-	-	-	1
	Spalding	-	-	-	1
	Swineshead	-	-	9	-
	Wainfleet	-	-	1	-
Whaplode	6	-	-	1	
Wigtoft	-	-	9	5	
London		1	-	-	3

Before coming to too many conclusions, it is useful to know what proportion of parish records have so far been published in the IGI. An analysis of its scope published in the Genealogists' Magazine (Vol 21 No 3) suggests for the period assessed that some 34 per cent of Lincolnshire baptisms have so far been included and only 17 per cent of the marriages. A useful source for Pulvertoft family distribution and size, but plenty of scope for more!

## Notes and Queries

*I am sure that all members of the family are asked from time to time "What is the origin of your surname?" While I have been offered no sensible explanation for the Pulvertaft name, I have heard a number of suggestions for that of Pulvertoft. When a laugh is called for there is - 'Pulver' is from the Latin meaning dust, and 'toft' is a small hill, therefore it means 'dustheap'!*

*Over the years I have consulted a score or more reference books on surnames, none of which has mentioned either surname. There are, however, clues elsewhere, such as: "Toft is a Danish word describing a homestead having a small enclosure". (The Place and River Names of the West Riding of Lindsey, Lincolnshire by T.B.F.Eminson) and "But the houses were not built literally together. They were not built wall to wall. Each was set in a narrow messuage or toft, which left some room for outbuildings and a garden. Behind the houses there would be certain closes or crofts used perhaps by the villagers who held them to supply further herbage for stock. 'Toft and Croft' is a phrase common in the charters." (English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century by G.C.Homans)*

*Thus the parishes near Boston of Fishtoft, Wigtoft and Brothertoft sound natural and Pulvertoft doesn't seem unusual. Furthermore, with many 14th century references prefixed by a 'de' - de Polwircroft 1338, de Polwirtoft 1339 and de Pulvertoft 1392 - a place-name origin seems likely.*

### Obituary

*It is with deep regret that the death is recorded of Annie, wife of Arthur Stanley Pulvertaft, on 1st April 1984 at Florida, Transvaal, Republic of South Africa.*