

PULVERTAFT PAPERS

A Newsletter on the Pulvertofts & Pulvertafts

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EDITORIAL

In this issue I have included articles which I hope will interest those of you who are involved in the modern family as well as those who study earlier records such as the Pulvertofts of Lincolnshire.

Firstly I have assembled from a number of sources the second of my occasional series on notable members of the family, in this case William Godfrey Pulvertaft, my father; or, as he was addressed before his retirement, Captain W.G. Pulvertaft, OBE, ADC, Royal Navy. The photograph which I have chosen to illustrate the article was taken during the Second World War when he was a Commander. Secondly I have listed the inventories which I copied recently in the archives at Lincoln and given a brief glimpse of the sort of information which they contain. I hope to print other examples of how wills and inventories complement each other in future issues.

My thanks to those of you who have sent information to me during the year - it is always welcome and, with a family as small as ours, I never have too much.

WILLIAM GODFREY PULVERTAFT

Godfrey Pulvertaft was born in Cork on 29th June 1905 the eldest son of Amos William Pulvertaft and Clara Savage. He was baptised at St Pauls Church, Cork and attended Cork Grammar School before being sent to the nautical training school HMS Conway in 1919. He joined the Royal Navy in 1920, his initial training being at the Royal Naval College Dartmouth followed by engineering training at the Royal Naval Engineering College Keyham from 1923.

In 1928 he married Annie Joan Martin, the younger daughter of William Montagu Martin of Plymouth, the wedding taking place at Stoke Damerel, Devonport on 7th April. They had two children, Michael John and David Martin - See Volume 1, pages 28 & 29.

Also in 1928 he specialised in submarines and for the early part of his career served either in them - Submarine L11 (1929) and Parthean (1930) or their depot ships - HMS Medway (1931), HMS Cyclops (1934) and HMS Maidstone (1937). He became involved in torpedo tube design in 1939 when he was appointed to the Design Office at H.M.Dockyard, Portsmouth; a factory which was destroyed by enemy action early in World War II and which, the record shows, he committed himself to restoring to normal operation with the minimum delay.

In 1940 he was promoted Commander and in 1942 was appointed Engineer Officer HMS Medway and the First Submarine Flotilla, an appointment which changed dramatically when Medway was torpedoed off Alexandria in July that year. The incident is described in the biography of Max Horton [1] which includes a letter from Captain P.Ruck-Keene (Commanding 1st Submarine Flotilla)

[1] "Max Horton and The Western Approaches" by Rear Admiral W.S.Chalmers. 1954.

to Admiral Horton, then Flag Officer Submarines:

"... C-in-C had ordered Medway to sea; I sailed at dusk in order to get at least one night's start before the reconnaissance plane noticed our absence.

There were three mines laid the night before, but fortunately well marked; two of these were in the swept channel. We were swept out and got safely clear, although one of them went off astern of us and blew a tug [Pharos] to pieces and very nearly got Sikh [a destroyer] in whom I had sent Simpson and his staff.

Unfortunately when we were twenty miles out of Alexandria enemy planes returning from a raid passed over the Medway and one dropped flares which lit up the wing destroyer of our screen, and this probably gave our sailing away to his S/Ms.

When the torpedoes struck I was on the port side outside my cabin which is just under the bridge. I saw what I thought was a swirl of discharge 300 yards on the starboard beam. I heard afterwards from Baker in Corinthia that he saw the periscope standards break surface.

I think three torpedoes hit her [Medway] but I am not sure.

We know from a survivor in the Diesel engine room that the starboard side there was completely opened up.

She heeled over very quickly to about seventeen degrees and then stopped, and I thought she might hold. I therefore rang down to go ahead again and gave orders to flood port tanks and take the list off. But Pulvertaft came on the bridge not long afterwards and said that when I rang down "ahead" the water was already well over the manoeuvring platform in the Engine Room. She then started heeling steadily to starboard. When she was well over, I told all but the repair parties to abandon ship and later when the angle began to get alarming I told them to go too. She continued to heel till she lay almost on her beam ends, then her stern went under, and she rapidly reared up until she was almost vertical, then slid under at an alarming speed. She was about twenty - thirty yards away, and for a moment it looked as if she would come right on top of us.

The losses are much less than I first estimated, being only twenty-one killed and eight wounded; very lucky, as it was only a little over ten minutes from the time she was hit until she had completely gone and there were over 1000 aboard....."



WILLIAM GODFREY PULVERTAFT

The loss of HMS Medway was overcome by establishing a submarine base in Beirut and W.G.P. became the Base Engineer there until 1944. In the Birthday Honours list of 1943 he was appointed an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for good services resulting in the capture intact of an Italian submarine which surrendered off the Lebanese coast, an episode which is described in some detail in "The Secret Capture" pages 43 and 44. [2] He returned to England in 1944 to serve in the Torpedo and Mining Department at the Admiralty and later in the Department of Underwater Warfare, introducing him for the first time to Dorset, the county in which he and A.J.P. settled - first at "Moorside" in West Moors and in their retirement at Colehill, Wimborne.

In 1947 he became the Engineer Officer HMS Implacable the trials and training aircraft carrier, from which he was promoted Captain in 1949. He served as the Superintendent of the Admiralty Engineering Laboratory, West Drayton until 1953 when he became the Fleet Engineer Officer to the Commander-in-Chief Far East. His final appointment was as the Captain HMS Raleigh which was then the new entry training establishment for all Stoker Mechanics joining the Royal Navy. For the final year of this appointment he was also a Naval Aide de Camp to Her Majesty the Queen. He retired in September 1957.

He and A.J.P. returned to their house in West Moors where they settled into the local community and he soon became well known for his horticultural prowess. He was also the subject of a little media attention in 1962 when he became a postman in neighbouring Ferndown but, far from it being a nine day wonder, he remained with the GPO for several years before his second retirement in Wimborne. He died on 16th October 1971 at Wimborne.

[2] "The Secret Capture" by Captain S.W.Roskill, Royal Navy. Collins 1959.

PULVERTOFT INVENTORIES

In the last issue of these papers reference was made to the inventories which accompanied wills and administration bonds and which, for the Pulvertofts of Lincolnshire, are held in the Archives Office, Lincoln.

The inventory references are included in a card index which lists documents by parish, the search having been limited to those parishes known to be potentially fruitful. Twenty inventories or administration accounts have been found to date and are listed below. Most can be identified with Pulvertofts already included in these papers - many because their wills have been used in the construction of family groups. Previous references are shown in the right hand column.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>P.P. Reference</u>
Algarkirk			
John P	1624	128.359	Vol 1, p 10
John P	1580	65.141	Vol 1, p 66
Leonard P	1620	16. 73	Vol 1, p 12
Nicholas P	1618	14. 14	?
Thomas P	1607	8.107	Vol 1, p 12
Fosdyke			
Nicholas P	1541	9.285	Vol 1, p 66
Leverton			
John P	1539	3.123	-
Swineshead			
Henry P	1619	123.128	Vol 1, p 43
Rachell P	1620	123.431	Vol 1, p 43
John P	1546	15. 70	Vol 1, p 42
George P	1600	93. 89	Vol 1, p 43
William P	1577	61.477	Vol 1, p 42
Simon P	1565	44.171	Vol 1, p 42

Whaplode

Robert P	1586	1586.1013	Vol 1, p 4
Thomas P	1594	1590. 128	Vol 1, p 4
Thomas P	1605	1605. 67	Vol 1, p 4

Wigtoft

Richard P	1584	71.370	Vol 2, p 34
Thomas P	1624	129. 51	Vol 2, p 34
Elizabeth P	1625	129.406	Vol 2, p 34
Thomas P	1591	80. 68	Vol 2, p 34

Although these documents are not as informative as the wills themselves - particularly with respect to family relationships - they certainly add more flesh to the bare skeleton of a family tree.

Perhaps the best example is that of John Pulvertoft of Algarkirk, yeoman, whose will (Ref 1624/248) is fairly short but includes the names of his father, his wife, his children and two sisters while the inventory of his belongings (Ref Inv/128.359) runs to several pages and gives their value in considerable detail. As in most of the inventories, the goods are listed room by room and John appears to be reasonably well established with the Hall, the Best Parlour, the Little Parlour, the Study, the Cheese Chamber, the Buttrye, the Entry & Entry Chamber, the Milkehouse & Chamber, the Backehouse, the Milnhouse [?] & Chamber as well as a Storehouse, Yarde, Barne, etc. The total value of his goods is £181.3s.10d - a sizeable sum for a yeoman in 1624.

Funeral expenses are sometimes included, those in the administration account for Thomas Pulvertofte of Algarkirk dated 1607 (Ref AD/ACC 8/107) being:

Administrator's allowance (including victualls)	38s.
For minister, clarke, gravemakers & bellringers	2s.6d
For his coffin	2s.6d
For his grave being in the church	6s.8d

NOTES & QUERIES

The Guild of One-Name Studies was formed in 1979 to encourage the exchange of ideas and co-operative liaison between the growing number of family historians who concentrate their research on all references to a single surname, including proven variants. I registered my interests in the Pulvertoft and Pulvertaft family names as my research by that date met the basic requirements of the Guild and I was happy to answer any enquiries that might result from their registration. I have gained a great deal from the Guild since then, both in procedures and practices and from particular pieces of family information which fellow members have sent me.

At the Annual General Meeting this May, one of the guest speakers - Peter Laslett - spoke on "The History of the Family and the Position of the Elderly". He told us of the work which he is doing to analyse parish registers and that his findings now give a much clearer understanding of how the expectation of life has changed since the mid-16th century and what proportion of the population was over 60 at any one time. Life expectation at birth remained fairly constant up to the late 18th century - somewhere between 30 and 40 - and has virtually doubled since then. There has been a similar trend in the proportion of over-60s.

Apart from the obvious conclusion that society in earlier centuries was younger, he has found:-

- * The elderly were not usually supported financially by their offspring.
- * The incidence of married couples living with either of their parents is less than 5%
- * Most villages have an almost complete change of family names every 100 years.

Unexpected findings which may well allow a better understanding of the Pulvertofts of Lincolnshire one day.