

PULVERTAFT PAPERS

A Newsletter on the Pulvertofts & Pulvertafts

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EDITORIAL

A few months ago I decided that the link between the Pulvertofts of Lincolnshire and the Pulvertafts of co Cork had been eluding me for long enough and that I ought to put more effort into establishing the connection, even if that meant employing a professional researcher in Dublin. I naturally turned to my Irish mentor - Michael Leader - to ask if he had any friends that he would recommend.

Typically, he not only suggested how I might make contact with a researcher, but also asked whether I had searched the Irish Civil Registration Indexes at the Family History Centre of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in London. While I had used the Centre on several earlier searches, I had not realised that they had any Irish records and I set off without delay. Sure enough they have microfilm copies of the indexes - Marriages from 1845 to 1921 and Births and Deaths from 1864 to 1921.

My first findings are recorded on pages 62 & 63.

ROBERT GUY PULVERTAFT

Guy Pulvertaft was born in Cork on 31 May 1907, the second son of Amos William Pulvertaft and Clara Savage and brother of William Godfrey Pulvertaft (q.v. Vol 2, No 6 of these papers). He was baptised at St Pauls Church, Cork and, after early education there, studied at Weymouth College, Caius College Cambridge and St Thomas's Hospital London. He was awarded Master of Arts, Doctor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degrees and became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1934.

He married Helen Elizabeth Boyd Willock (Betty) in 1934, having met her during his first year at Cambridge. They had four children; Kerry Boyd (who died an infant), Elizabeth Clare, Alison Noreen and Roger William who provided them with eight grandchildren - See Volume 1, page 29.

In 1937 he was appointed consultant orthopaedic surgeon to the Grimsby, Scunthorp and Louth hospitals and became the civilian orthopaedic specialist to the Royal Air Force in 1943. It was during his period at Grimsby, a town of fish factories and the attendant fish-gutting, that he treated many a sliced hand and dropped his general orthopaedic practice to develop his growing interest in hand surgery. He was also stimulated by similar but more advanced work being undertaken by the pioneer American hand surgeon, Stirling Bunnell, whose skills he studied when he visited him in San Francisco. Many years later, in 1963, he was made a Stirling Bunnell Memorial Lecturer.

He moved from Grimsby in 1947 to the Harlow Wood Orthopaedic Hospital in the West Midlands and then to the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary where he gradually built up a new specialist unit to treat injuries and disorders of the hand. In an obituary in the Journal of Hand Surgery, one of his colleagues wrote: "As all hand surgeons are

aware, this was, and still remains, one of the most challenging fields of surgery demanding the highest degree of technical skill, dedication and the endless patience only possessed by relatively few surgeons. Guy possessed all these qualities

In addition to his consultant posts he held a host of other appointments including: Hunterian Professor of the Royal College of Surgeons (1947), Cripple Care lecturer Capetown (1960), Sterling Bunnell lecturer San Francisco (1963), Watson-Jones lecturer Royal College of Surgeons (1967)

He was one of the group who met at the Athenaeum in 1952 when they decided to form "The Hand Club" - which continued as a dining club for some years. In 1956, when a number of younger hand enthusiasts - all senior registrars at the time - formed "The Second Hand Club" he joined them as he could see the necessity for such a forum to disseminate knowledge and encourage the growth of hand surgery. A combined meeting of the two Hand Clubs was held at the Royal College of Surgeons in 1958 but it was not until 1968 that the British Society for Surgery of the Hand was formed with Guy Pulvertaft as its first president. He was also vice-president of the British Orthopaedic Association in 1968 and 1969 and president of the International Federation of Societies for Surgery of the Hand in 1970-1971.

He received an honorary degree of MD from the University of Gothenburg in 1968 and his Master of Surgery degree from Cambridge in 1970. He was an honorary member of the American and Colombian Societies for Surgery of the Hand, the Argentine Association of Surgery, the Peruvian Orthopaedic Society and the Medical Society of Lisbon.

For many years he was a member of the editorial



ROBERT GUY PULVERTAFT

boards of the British Journal of Surgery, the Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery and the American Society for Surgery of the Hand. He also edited books and articles on hand surgery and was instrumental in developing a training programme in hand surgery.

At the time of his retirement from the National Health Service in 1972 he was appointed a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, but this did not mark the end of his teaching. He spent several years paying prolonged visits to leprosy hospitals in Ethiopia and setting up Hand Centres in Kuwait.

For much of his working life he and his wife, Betty, lived in Hazelwood, she becoming deeply involved in local government. On his retirement they moved to Duffield and it is there that her life is commemorated in the Gray Recreation Ground by "The Betty Pulvertaft Adventure Playground", unveiled by Guy Pulvertaft in 1984. His life is remembered in a library, opened after his death in the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary.

Guy died on 11th August 1986 and it is perhaps typical of his service to others that the Sunday before he died he was at St John's Hazelwood - ringing the church bells, reading the lesson and welcoming the visiting preacher. In an obituary in the Times which supplemented that which had described his professional achievements, a friend wrote:

"Guy was a healer of souls as well as hands, and a deeply religious person who lived by his Christian faith. He was always interested in other people, and his main concern led him to countless kind acts. He was a superb raconteur and generous in the extreme. Though his nature made him not seek the forefront, by being himself he was there anyhow."

He was buried at Hazelwood on 18th August 1986.

IRELAND - CIVIL REGISTRATION INDEX - BIRTHS

A microfilm copy of the Civil Registration Indexes for Ireland is held at the Family History Centre of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in London. As with the records for England and Wales, there are separate indexes for births, marriages and deaths; the early ones spanning a year each, the later ones being split into quarters. The Births Index was the first to be searched for Pulvertaft and Polvertaft entries (and spelling variants) from its first volume in 1864 to its last in 1921. The following entries were found:

| Year | Qtr | Name and Place | Vol | Page |
|------|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|------|
| 1866 | | PULVERTAFT, Thomas John. Cork | 15 | 155 |
| 1869 | | PULVESTAFT, Isabella Martha. Cork | 5 | 192 |
| 1870 | | PULVERTAFT, James Bogan. Cork | 20 | 148 |
| | | PULVERTUFT, James Bogan. Cork | 20 | 148 |
| 1872 | | PULVERLAFT, Robert George. Cork | 15 | 141 |
| 1873 | | PULVERTAFT, Robert John. Cork | 5 | 196 |
| 1874 | | PULVERTAFT, Richard. Cork | 10 | 173 |
| 1876 | | PULVERTAFT, George Thomas. Cork | 10 | 193 |
| 1877 | | PULVERTAFT, Elizabeth Agnes. Cork | 5 | 160 |
| 1878 | 1 | PULVERTAFT, Herbert Adams. Cork | 5 | 150 |
| | 4 | PULVERTAFT, Mary Anne. Cork | 5 | 124 |
| | | PULVERTAFT, Richard. Cork | 5 | 153 |
| 1879 | 3 | PULVERTAFT, Emily Louisa. Cork | 5 | 161 |
| 1881 | 3 | PULVERTAFT, Agnes Maud. Cork | 5 | 151 |
| | | PULVERTAFT, Mary Anne. Cork | 5 | 150 |
| 1882 | 2 | PULVERTAFT, Amos William. Cork | 5 | 138 |
| 1883 | 4 | PULVERTAFT, James Mahoney. Cork | 5 | 138 |
| | | PULVERTAFT, Kathleen Rose. Cork | 5 | 138 |
| 1884 | 1 | PULVERTAFT, Ilie Maude. Cork | 5 | 125 |
| 1885 | 1 | PULVERTAFT, Edith. Cork | 5 | 176 |
| | | PULVERTAFT, Mary. Cork | 5 | 176 |
| 1887 | 1 | PULVERTAFT, Sarah Victoria. Cork | 5 | 165 |
| 1888 | 2 | PULVERTAFT, Florence Emily. Cork | 5 | 162 |
| 1888 | 2 | PULVERTAFT, Margaret. Cork | 5 | 150 |

| | | | | |
|------|---|-------------------------------------|---|-----|
| 1890 | 1 | PULVERTAFT, Arthur Stanley. Cork | 5 | 155 |
| 1891 | 4 | PULVERTAFT, Mable Constance. Cork | 5 | 113 |
| 1893 | 1 | PULVERTAFT, William Gordon. Cork | 5 | 125 |
| 1894 | 2 | PULVERTAFT, Thomas Norman. Cork | 5 | 118 |
| 1895 | 3 | PULVERTOFT, Grace E. Dublin, South | 2 | 575 |
| 1897 | 1 | PULVERTAFT, Robert J.V. Dublin, Sth | 2 | 621 |
| 1899 | 2 | PULVERTAFT, Vera Gertrude. Cork | 5 | 129 |
| | 3 | PULVERTAFT, Thomas C.B. Dublin, Sth | 2 | 574 |
| 1900 | 1 | PULVERTOFT, Robert William. Cork | 5 | 165 |
| 1902 | 3 | PULVERTAFT, Ethel. Cork | 5 | 142 |
| 1905 | 3 | PULVERTAFT, Godfrey. Cork | 5 | 148 |
| 1907 | 1 | PULVERTAFT, Mary. Cork | 5 | 133 |
| | 3 | PULVERTAFT, Robert Guy. Cork | 5 | 137 |
| 1908 | 2 | PULVERTAFT, John Allen. Cork | 5 | 102 |
| 1911 | 3 | PULVERTAFT, Charles Norman, Cork | 5 | 131 |

What emerges from this informative index is that:

* Although there are three births registered in Dublin South, they are all known to relate to members of the Cork family (Vide Vol 1, p 28). Thus we can now say with certainty that all the Pulvertafts born in Ireland over the period of almost 50 years were of the Cork family.

* Despite there being two PULVERTOFT entries, and three other spelling variants, they all relate to PULVERTAFTS.

* Four births were found which were previously unknown; James Bogan (1870), Richard (1874), Elizabeth Agnes (1877) and Richard (1878). Perhaps the Marriage and Death Indexes will shed some light on them shortly.

Several changes in detail will have to be made to the pedigree on pages 27 to 30 of Vol 1, such as:

* Thomas John (M14Q) was older than his sisters, Isabella Martha (M12Q) and Mary Anne (M13Q).

* Robert George (M16Q) was older than his sister, Mary Anne (M13Q).

* Laddie (M34R) is probably Robert William (b 1900).

Generally the index confirms the Cork pedigree.

NOTES & QUERIES

My thanks to Tom Pulvertaft for passing to me a letter form a colleague in Denmark concerning Danish runic inscriptions on standing stones in the south of Sweden - old Danish territory he points out. He says that:

"At one of the Gårdstånga stones is written:

ÞNIFX HX NIFX.....

Þulfr and ulfr erected these stones after Asmund Lippe their friend. The stones are from the last part of the Viking period 900 - 1050. There is only one snag in it; the þ seems to have been pronounced th. There is a real p in the runic alphabet; however, this was never used as a starting letter before a vowel in a nordic male name, only in celtic names.

So þulfr (or perhaps ulfr) might be PULVER."

And so, as Tom says, "I may have found the earliest record yet of the family." And there was I believing that the Anglo-Irish connection was a difficult one.

Marriage

Congratulations to Jeremy Pulvertaft Stephenson, son of Dr Richard and Diane (nee Pulvertaft) Stephenson, and Rosemary Caroline Booth who were married at St Mary's Church, Stowe School on 5th May 1990.

Obituary

It is with deep regret that the death is recorded of Professor Robert James Valentine (Robin) Pulvertaft OBE, MD, FRCP, FRCPATH on 30th March 1990 at Macclesfield, Cheshire.