

Copy of a letter sent to Cynthia Hemer in South Africa when she was doing research into the Hemer family which is also connected to the Pollard family; letter is dated 30.07.1959 and was written by Ada to Enid. This written account was later inserted onto a family tree which Cynthia drew and of which quite a few copies were made. (The reason for the retype is that the only copy that I have is getting very faded and the information needs to be preserved and recaptured).

Malcolm Pollard in George, South Africa 1999/05/14.

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30.7.1959

Dear Enid,

I am afraid you will think that I've certainly taken my time to reply to your letter but if you were down here you would know the reason of the delay and excuse my seeming rudeness; this time of the year is usually very busy for me, although I don't let for bed and breakfast, or do any of the things like my neighbours, am far too old for that and if I were thirty years younger I would not do it, for it has become such a mania with some that they appear to be money mad, for most of them don't need to do it.

Also I had to make a few enquiries about some of the things of which you asked, for there are no written records as to dates, etc. So please don't think that all that I say is quite correct as to the year in which it happened but consider that it is an approximate date. I asked young Ambrose if Uncle Tom, your Grandfather, was the first Pollard in Mevagissey, for I was not quite sure after reading your Family Tree whether he was or not, for your reference to the Squire of Egloshoyle I had never heard of before, but if you could establish whether he was a son or grandson of him, it would mean a very important clue.

First I will tell you what I know to be authentic, for have heard father speak of it many times also Edwin, Capt. Pollard.

Mr. Thomas Pollard was the Preventive Officer for Mevagissey, usually called in those days a maltent, the same word now used in ship yards for an instrument to draw out, so you can easily see the connection. He was a Wadebridge man who came here sometime in the early 1830's, and after a while married Elizabeth Lelean, my Grandfather's youngest sister, so my fathet was of course a first cousin to all their children. I never heard that Aunt Elizabeth had more than eight children, and they were:

Thomas	Sarah John	John Lelean	William
'	d. at	'	d. when
Thomas	Port Hope,	John Edwin	15
'	'	'	
Susan	Canada	Charles	,
'			

William  
 |  
 Ambrose  
 |  
 Mary Sarah

Harry Martin  
 |  
 Arthur  
 |  
 Annie

Nicolas      Elizabeth  
 |                |  
 Kate Body   Elizabeth  
 |                Pomeroy  
 Martha  
 Harris        b. 1878  
 |                d. 1879  
 Elizabeth

Louisa            Caroline  
 Lenora            |  
 |                    -  
 Elizabeth  
 |  
 William Henry  
 |  
 Ernest  
 |  
 Stanley John  
 |  
 Gladys May  
 |  
 Enid Carrie

*Re-interpretation by Andy Lelean*

Thomas   Thomas   Susan   William   Ambrose   Mary Sarah	Sarah d. at Port Hope Canada	John Lelean   John Edwin   Charles   Harry Martin   Arthur   Annie	William d. when 15
Nicholas   Kate Body   Martha Harris   Elizabeth	Elizabeth  Elizabeth Pomeroy b.1878 d.1879	Louisa Lenora   Elizabeth   William Henry   Ernest   Stanley John   Gladys May   Enid Carrie	Caroline

Now then to return to the Wadebridge ancestry for there are a number of families by the name of Pollard there and in the surrounding district, but never did I hear that your Grandfather was connected with the Squire of Egloshoyle, either as a son or grandson, but there is a story that they used to tell in Wadebridge years ago of a Lieut. Pollard, which might be one of the missing links in your family history. This particular Pollard was a Lieut. in the navy in 1805 and must have been a man of good family to be in the navy as an officer in those days, and his speciality was his remarkable accuracy in shooting, for he seldom missed his target. At the Battle of Trafalgar he was on the Victory and when Nelson fell it was seen from the deck who had fired the shot and that the marksman was still in the shrouds of the Santa Christians (if that was the name of the enemy ship). Before leaving the deck of the Victory to take Nelson to the cockpit, Captain Hardy called out, "Pollard aloft and get him" - and Lieut. Pollard with a gun sprang up into the Victory's shrouds and in a few minutes the officers and men on the deck of the flagship saw the man on the enemy ship drop from the shrouds, Pollard's bullet had done it's work. Now could this man have been one of Squire Pollard's sons and the father or uncle of your Grandfather? A visit to Egloshoyle or Wadebridge Church records might pay you well, if you want to find out whether there was a son named Thomas from a marriage contracted about that time, for I think your grandfather was born in the first decade of the last century.

And now the Leleans. We think, but can't absolutely prove it, that we are descended from the Huegenots who fled from France after the massacre of Black Bartholomas.

A number landed in the district at the mount of the Tal it is believed, and with them was a child named William Lelean; the refugees moved inland and settled in St. Ennys near Redruth and in the year 1600 William was married to a yeoman's daughter and it is believed that it was from his second son Martin, born in 1603, that we are all descended. The date of the coming of the Leleans to Mevagissey is uncertain, but they were farming at Trewinney in 1753, the date of the first coming to Mevagissey of John and Charles Wesley, when the crowd treated them so badly. James Lelean was the friendly farmer spoken of in John Wesley's Journal, who took them away from the mob and afterwards entertained them for days at his house. It was from William, the second son of this James Lelean, that we are descended and I enclose the ancestry list of our particular bit only, for William had a very large family, and I can't possibly get them all in with their descendants, for in the next generation they became almost a legion.

James Lelean of Trewinney.

William

John (who made the great swim)

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Jane  
(Mrs Davies)

Sarah  
(Mrs Cary)

John

Louisa  
(Mrs Furse)

John & Matthew  
(My uncle and father)

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Elizabeth  
Married Thomas Pollard  
of Wadebridge, the  
Preventive Officer for  
Mevagissey.

That rather badly written list is my grandfather, John Lelean, and his four sisters, of whom as you see your own grandmother is the youngest. I think she died in 1876 or 1877 but her husband outlived her by many years for he died either in 1889 or 1890, but there is no headstone to mark the correct dates. I well remember him, though I was only a small child, both in his own home and when he used to come up here on summer Sunday evenings, after he had been to chapel. Father had a great regard for his Uncle Tom and knew his real worth.

You ask who was the man that made the great swim. Why, that was John Lelean, the father of my grandfather, John Lelean, and your grandmother Elizabeth Lelean. As you know smuggling was very rife in those days and few looked on it as anything but honest trading for they paid for the goods, and the only thing they evaded was the customs duty, which they loathed. The Government thought differently about it of course, and caught as many as possible, you may be sure that the punishment when caught while indulging in this business was not fining or imprisonment but press-ganging into the navy.

Great-grandfather and his men were caught while on one of these expeditions and were sent into the navy. Luckily, as it turned out, all the six being drafted to the same ship. After being away from England for some time, the ship returned and came into Plymouth Sound, that was Great-grandfather's chance for he was now on familiar ground and knew what to do. Secretly he instructed his men to wait until they got their money (for though they were there as prisoners really, they used to receive pay like the rest of the crew) and on the night they were

paid, to tie the money and their boots around their necks and meet him on the deck at a certain time. Everything went as he had planned and in the dead of night they lowered themselves down the side, until as the last one was descending the rope broke and he fell with a tremendous splash into the water. The night picket for that part of the ship, realizing what was happening, instantly fired, causing the swimmers to dash away wildly and in the confusion and darkness they missed the direction which Great-grandfather had given them, the result of this was that they lost touch with one another and when Great-grandfather landed on the Mount Edgecumbe side he was alone and he could neither hear or see any of his crew, after waiting for sometime he knew he must go for when daylight came he would be spotted and recaptured, so climbing the cliff he walked along until he came to cover and hid in the vegetation until it was safe enough to make another break. Hunger was one of the great snags and he knew he must eat to keep up his strength for the tramping and swimming which he must do for a cliff journey to get to Mevagissey, so he had to risk calling at isolated cottages once or twice to buy some things. Eventually on the third or fourth day he reached the land above Polruan, and hid in the bracken intending to wait until night when he could swim across the estuary, and land on the Fowey Side. While he was lying on the cliff he saw a boat appear only a little way out, and he felt sure that she was a Mevagissey fishing boat. To gain his attention, he gave the Mevagissey smuggler's call and for a short while she did not appear to hear for she made no reply, but after he had repeated it a few times, he could see that she was altering course and edging in towards land. He then got up and showed himself, scrambled down the cliff, jumped into the sea and swam off to the boat, they hauled him aboard and that night he was home in Mevagissey, where they hid him until all enquiries were at an end. The rest of the crew all turned up in the course of time and were never recaptured for Mevagissey in those days had a warren of hide-outs and no one dared to turn informer, but few wished to for they were all in it. Was it not strange that a man with such a story in his past, should, many years later, have a son-in-law, your grandfather, sent there to Mevagissey to try and suppress these practices? Have often thought that was one of the funniest parts of the story and wondered if the two did not learn a lot from one another, for they must sometimes have discussed it. They did not, however, have a very long acquaintance, for he died before reaching old age and before your grandmother, who was his youngest child, had been married for any lengthy period.

To come to things of the present day - I had not heard of May's death and am indeed sorry for Cynthia, for she will miss her mother badly. Since Will's death they have been much to one another, for I could see that when they were home in 1956, but am glad she did not have a long illness, or suffer greatly, as that is hard for everyone to bear. You know a bit about that side of life, for you had it with your own mother and Bessie. Cynthia appears to be a clever and capable girl and doubtless will now carve out her own life.

Am glad that you are so much better. Last year I thought you looked much too thin for real good health and would have liked to see you stones heavier, but perhaps you don't want that now as it is the fashion to be slim, but all the same I should like you to put on a bit.

Now I really must bring this epistle to a close, or you will tire of reading it, but I hope it has helped to enable you to fit things together.

Love,

Ada (signed).

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