

**John Fenton Hudson**  
**1932, Captain, Royal Dublin Golf Club**  
**The 'Missing Photo' Challenge**

**Jillian van Turnhout**

It all started over a lunch I had with Tom Byrne, a member of the Royal Dublin Golf Club's Memorabilia Committee. Tom had undertaken to find a photo for each of their past Captains to ensure they had their pride of place in the Club's gallery. He was down to the last few. But there was one elusive person he could not find, the Captain of 1932 J.F. Hudson.

The Royal Dublin Golf Club is the second oldest Golf Club in Ireland. The Club was formed in May 1885, on the initiative of Scottish banker John Lumsden. Originally it was called the Dublin Golf Club, but six years later it became The Royal Dublin Golf Club. By that time, there were already 250 paying members. The annual subscription was a bit lower than today at £2 per annum! The Golf course was not in the same place as the current one: it was near the Magazine Fort in Phoenix Park, to the North West of Dublin. In 1889, the Club moved to its present home on Bull Island, in the North East of Dublin.

A key person in every Golf Club is of course the Club Captain. In most golf clubs, a gallery of their photos hangs in the Club House of the Royal Dublin Golf Club. But the gallery was not complete. The Memorabilia Committee, namely Tom, had been working to fill in the gaps. He explained he was having difficulty finding information on John Fenton Hudson, who lived in the early twentieth century, who never married and had no known siblings. Tom asked if I would be willing to accept the challenge to find his photo. I immediately accepted, not knowing the exciting quest I had agreed to undertake. I was to uncover a story of a man's life which started with much tragedy but ended with him held in high esteem for service to his community. He was born well before my time, but I am honoured to play my part to ensure his memory lives on.

My first step was to gather any easily known facts to build up a picture of who was John Fenton Hudson.

From the 1901 Census of Ireland<sup>1</sup>, we can find John Fenton Hudson living in *House 152 in Howth, Co. Dublin*. He is aged 31, a boarder and is employed as a Bank Clerk. He was born in Co. Wicklow, he is unmarried, and his religion is Church of Ireland.

By the time of the 1911 Census of Ireland<sup>2</sup>, John is now aged 41, living as a boarder at *House 19 in Sandycove Avenue, Kingstown* (now Dun Laoghaire). He is a clerk with the Royal Bank of Ireland (as it was then called). Interestingly, the head of Household, Georgina Hewitt, was supported by an income from Royal Bank of Ireland shares.

At this point, I tried both Bank of Ireland and online newspaper sources for a possible photograph but without success.

Turning to the Birth, Marriage and Death records, I established through [www.IrishGenealogy.ie](http://www.IrishGenealogy.ie)<sup>3</sup> and the services of the General Registration Office, that John was born on 7 March 1870 to Michael A. Hudson and

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1 National Archives of Ireland (2017) *1901 Census of Ireland*, Available at: [www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/Dublin/Howth/Howth/1270851/](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/Dublin/Howth/Howth/1270851/) (Accessed: 19 December 2017).

2 National Archives of Ireland (2017) *1911 Census of Ireland*, Available at: [www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Dublin/Kingstown\\_No\\_4/Sandycove\\_Avenue\\_East/97645/](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Dublin/Kingstown_No_4/Sandycove_Avenue_East/97645/) (Accessed: 19 December 2017).

3 Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, [www.IrishGenealogy.ie](http://www.IrishGenealogy.ie)

Martha Hudson nee Fenton. It is always wonderful when a piece clicks together at such an early stage of research – it was clear his middle name was a tribute to his mothers' family name. He was born at Thomastown near Arklow, Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow.

John Fenton Hudson was baptised on 17 April 1870<sup>4</sup> in in the Church of Ireland Parish of Donaghmore in Thomastown, Co. Wicklow. On the birth certificate, John's father, Michael, is listed as a farmer but interestingly by the time of his baptism and on all other records his father is recorded as a Gentleman.

I searched for possible marriage records for John Fenton but without success. It appears he never married. It was clear, I would now need to go back to his parents to see if they had other children i.e. siblings of John, and then trace each of their lines forward in the hope of finding a living relative to then see if they had a photo.

Turning to his parents, I found their marriage in 1867. On 26 April 1867, Michael Arthur Hudson married Martha Maria Fenton in the parish of Grange Gorman in the City of Dublin. They married according to the rites and ceremonies of the United Church of England and Ireland. The marriage was witnessed by Robert M. Hudson and Emily L. Fenton. At the time of marriage, Michael Hudson was already living as a gentleman at Thomastown, Wicklow and Emily Fenton lived at 5 Elbana Terrace, Dublin.

Knowing the date of their marriage, I turned to look for the possible births of their children. I found a 'female' Hudson born on 7 May 1872 to Michael and Martha Hudson of Thomastown, Co. Wicklow. I was later to discover her name was Tempe, a name I found that appears in each generation.

At this stage, there were no other siblings of John Fenton Hudson to be found in the birth or baptism records. As family historians will understand, records during this period are available but we often come across black holes and, so I didn't rule out the chance of finding another sibling. I decided to keep my focus on his parents to see if other aspects of their life or death gave me clues.

It didn't take long for me to find the death of Martha Maria Hudson on 17 July 1873, at age 32. She had been ill for the past year and, so it was likely the birth of Tempe Hudson was a contributing factor. At the tender age of three John Fenton lost his mother.

On 16 September 1874, Michael Hudson, now a widower, marries Hannah Beare in the Church of Ireland Parish of St George in Dublin. One hopes there was happiness in the home given they had at least two young children John, aged four and Tempe aged two.

However, in 1883, tragedy was to strike the family again. John Fenton had just turned 13 on 7 March and his sister Tempe, who coincidentally shared the same birth date, had turned 11. It was with great surprise I found the death record for their father, Michael Arthur Hudson, who died on 25 April 1883 at age 39. From the death record, I could see he was a widower. Hannah Beare, his second wife, had predeceased him. And then I looked to see the cause of death and a great sadness descended as I thought of young John and Tempe. As you will see his death certificate records the cause of death as "Suicide by cutting his throat being insane".

| Superintendent Registrar's District <u>Rathdrum</u>      |                               | Registrar's District <u>Wicklow</u> |           | 88                              |                         |                                       |   |  |                        |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1883 DEATHS Registered in the District of <u>Wicklow</u> |                               | in the Union of <u>Rathdrum</u>     |           | in the County of <u>Wicklow</u> |                         |                                       |   |  |                        |                               |
| No. (1.)   | Date and Place of Death. (2.) | Name and Surname. (3.)              | Sex. (4.) | Condition. (5.)                 | Age last Birthday. (6.) | Rank, Profession, or Occupation. (7.) | Certified Cause of Death, and Duration of Illness. (8.) | Signature, Qualification, and Residence of Informant. (9.) | When Registered. (10.) | Signature of Registrar. (11.) |
|  | 1883                          |                                     |           |                                 |                         |                                       |   |  |                        |                               |
| 1  | 1883<br>April                 | Michael                             | m         | Widower                         | 39                      | gentleman                             | suicide by cutting his throat being                     | Certificate received from Matt H. Lones                    | April                  | not certified                 |
| 5  | April                         | Albert                              |           |                                 | 40                      |                                       | throat being  | Coroner for the county                                     | April                  | not certified                 |
| 5  | Twenty-fifth<br>Wicklow       | Hudson                              |           |                                 |                         |                                       | suicide   | Wicklow registered<br>April 26 1883                        | 1883                   | not certified                 |
| 1  | 1883                          | bl                                  |           |                                 |                         |                                       |   |  |                        | not certified                 |

Through newspaper clippings, I was to find out more about the death of Michael Albert Hudson, in particular through a report in the Freeman's Journal on 27 March 1884.<sup>5</sup>

*"Michael Albert Hudson, J P, of Thomastown, near Arklow, who, died on the 25th April, 1883. The deceased was twice married, but his second wife had also predeceased him, and the next of kin were three children, all minors. By the will he assigned his property to three trustees — Robert Hudson, his brother, and Richard Fenton and G.R. Beare, his brothers-in-law — for the benefit of the children, and with power to manage the property during their minority.*

*Sometime in 1882 the deceased's father died, to whom he was greatly attached, and it was alleged that after the concurrence the deceased suffered from melancholia, and was, also subject of delusions with regard to his own state of health. He in consequence indulged in excessive quantities of chloral, and was for some time an inmate of the Maison de Sante, and it was while in that institution he executed the will.*

*On the 25th April, while walking on the Morrough at Wicklow, he terminated his life by cutting his throat. Under these circumstances parties interested deemed it necessary, to obtain the opinion of the Court to the validity of the will. Mr W G Toomey deposed to having prepared the documents from the deceased's instructions, and that he appeared at the time of perfectly sound mind, and conversed in a rational manner on many subjects. He mentioned apprehensions as to his state of health, was greatly depressed, and said he disliked being alone. Dr Stoker deposed to having seen [the] deceased on the day he executed the will and on several other occasions. He was under a delusion as to his own state of health, but on all other subjects was perfectly rational. "*

With the parents of John Fenton Hudson deceased I decided to follow the life of his only known sibling Tempe Hudson. And yet again, this sad tale continues as I found the death of Tempe Jane Hudson on 4 June 1888, aged 16. She was living with her maternal grandparents and had died of pleuropneumonia which is pneumonia complicated with pleurisy. She is buried in Mount Jerome cemetery<sup>6</sup> in Dublin and the headstone erected by her maternal grandfather shows how Tempe's grandfather, John H Fenton, lost his wife on 3 June 1888 and his granddaughter just one day later.

#### Inscription

<sup>5</sup> The British Newspaper Archive (2017) *Freeman's Journal*, Available at: [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000056/18840327/004/0002](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000056/18840327/004/0002) (Accessed: 20 December 2017).

<sup>6</sup> Ireland Genealogy Projects Archives (2017) *Mount Jerome Cemetery, Dublin, Part 49, No 7228*, Available at: [www.igp-web.com/IGPArchives/ire/dublin/photos/tombstones/1headstones/mt-jerome49.txt](http://www.igp-web.com/IGPArchives/ire/dublin/photos/tombstones/1headstones/mt-jerome49.txt) (Accessed: 20 December 2017).

“Erected by JOHN H. FENTON  
 To the Memory of his beloved wife TEMPE H. FENTON  
 who departed this life June the 3rd 1888 aged 78 years  
 and their Grandchild TEMPE JANE HUDSON  
 who died June the 4th 1888 aged 16 years  
 Also JOHN HOYSTED FENTON of Glen of Imaal, Co. Wicklow  
 who died 16th September 1896 aged 89 years”

Our John Fenton Hudson would have just turned 18 when his sister Tempe passed away. From the account of the death in 1883 of Michael Hudson, I could see John Fenton had two siblings. Who was the second sibling?

I once again turned to the birth and baptism records but without success. As Michael Hudson’s occupation was a Gentleman, I also looked through newspaper clippings for a possible announcement of the birth, once again without success. I decided to go back to the 1901 and 1911 Census to see if I could identify his sibling. Through tracing several different prospects, I was able to narrow it down to Robert Hudson in the 1911 Census of Ireland.<sup>7</sup>

The National Archives of Ireland

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**Residents of a house 3 in Ringacoltig (part of) Rushbrooke Terrace (Queenstown No. 2 Urban, Cork)**

Show all information

| Surname  | Forename | Age | Sex    | Relation to head       | Religion          |
|----------|----------|-----|--------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Hudson   | Robert   | 43  | Male   | Head of Family         | Church of Ireland |
| Hudson   | Annie    | 33  | Female | Wife                   | Church of Ireland |
| Hudson   | Knife    |     | Female | Daughter               | Church of Ireland |
| Bevin    | Sarah    | 27  | Female | Cook Domestic Servant  | Church of Ireland |
| Sullivan | Bessie   | 17  | Female | Nurse Domestic Servant | Church of Ireland |

On a side note, I saw Robert’s child was listed as ‘Knife Hudson’ in the transcription of the 1911 Census. Given the family history, I didn’t think this was a very appropriate nickname! Thankfully, upon inspection of the original record, I could see it was an understandable transcription error and her name was Tempe as you will see from Line Three below.

|   | Christian Name. | Surname. | Age, Sex, &c.          | Body to which they belong.] |
|---|-----------------|----------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
|   | 1.              | 2.       | 3.                     | 4.                          |
| 1 | Robert          | Hudson   | Head of Family         | Church of Ireland           |
| 2 | Annie           | Hudson   | Wife                   | Church of Ireland           |
| 3 | Tempe           | Hudson   | Daughter               | Church of Ireland           |
| 4 | Sarah           | Bevin    | Cook Domestic Servant  | Church of Ireland           |
| 5 | Bessie          | Sullivan | Nurse Domestic Servant | Church of Ireland           |

<sup>7</sup> National Archives of Ireland (2017) 1911 Census of Ireland, Available at: [www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Cork/Queenstown No\\_2\\_Urban/Ringacoltig\\_part\\_of\\_Rushbrooke\\_Terrace/406055/](http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Cork/Queenstown_No_2_Urban/Ringacoltig_part_of_Rushbrooke_Terrace/406055/) (Accessed: 20 December 2017).

From further research I was able to find Robert Hudson who was born circa 1868 in County Wicklow. He married Annie Elizabeth Dawson in 1909. Annie Elizabeth Dawson was born circa 1878 in Belfast. Robert died, aged 73, on 3 June 1941 in Rathdown and Annie died on 12 July 1961. In 1911, Robert's occupation was 'Brewers Agent'. From his death record, I could see Robert had worked for Guinness Ltd.

Robert Hudson and Annie Dawson had only one child, Tempe Vida Annie Hudson.

I had now found the possible niece of John Fenton Hudson and as my only remaining line I followed it with care. Tempe Vida Annie Hudson was born in 1910 in Cobh, Co. Cork. In 1944, she married Robert John Greacen Parr in St. Margaret, Westminster, London, England. Tempe's husband, Robert Parr, died 23 August 1954 in Waterford age 58. She died on 26 January 2000 in Co. Dublin.

So now, I was looking for their children. Tempe Hudson and Robert Parr were married in 1944 and by 1954 Robert had died. Therefore, if they had children they would have to be born between 1944 and 1954. Also, their distinctive names were a great help. I found Tempe and Robert Parr had three daughters. Two of whom had variations of the name Tempe in their first names. I now needed to check if these daughters had married, as this would give us the surnames to look for. I did this by looking for marriages from about 20 years after their births, and where the father on the certificate was "Robert John Greacen Parr". I found all three daughters had married. I decided to pause following this trail as I had still not been able to verify Robert Hudson was the brother of John Fenton Hudson.

I went back to my original line of research to see what more I could find out about John Fenton Hudson. Through newspaper clippings, I found many records of his service and golfing achievements.

A short article in the Irish Independent newspaper of 29 January 1929 marked his retirement and the occasion of a presentation to him to mark his service to the Royal Bank of Ireland. Most notable was his recent position for his last six years, as Manager of the branch at Fosters Place. He was clearly held in high regard.

In the death notice in the Irish Independent on 14 October 1947, it said "*Mr J. F. Hudson who died yesterday was one of the best-known men in Dublin golf circles. A retired bank official, he was honorary secretary of the Royal Dublin Golf Club for many years and guided the club's activities almost single-handed in the absence, during the war years, of the secretary.*"

The Irish Times newspaper<sup>8</sup> has an article on 14 August 1943 on 'Golfing Bankers' and a side portrait of 'Johnny' Hudson. In the article it noted the imposing task undertaken by John Fenton Hudson.

*"Johnny' Hudson is the best-known man at Dollymount. Retired banker, enjoying his well earned pension, he lives for little else but the Royal Dublin Club. Long ago the membership realised that he was the ideal man for the Hon. Treasurership, and no one would think of replacing him. Residing at Howth, he J.F. Hudson never missed a day at Dollymount, and when Mr Jack Scovell, another name known to Irish golf, relinquished the Secretaryship for the time being, 'Johnny' Hudson volunteered to take over the duties, which, needless to say he has done with thoroughness."*

On 2 August 1943, a fire razed the Royal Dublin clubhouse and an adjoining dwelling house. The Irish Times article of 14 August went on to say, "*The destruction of the clubhouse and the loss of everything in it, including some 5,000 golf clubs has thrown a heavy burden on him*". John Fenton Hudson went on to help the club raise the funds to rebuild and flourish.

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<sup>8</sup> The Irish Times newspaper archives, [www.irishtimes.com/archive](http://www.irishtimes.com/archive)

Shortly after his death in 1947, the “Report of the Committee” of the Royal Dublin Club records the high esteem he was held:

*“The Club sustained a great loss in the death of our Vice President and Honorary Treasurer, Mr John F Hudson. Mr Hudson gave many years of unselfish and devoted service to the Club. His kindly sympathy and ripe experience were constantly at the disposal of the Committee and Members alike. His loss cannot be replaced and he will be sadly missed”.*

His death certificate of 13 October 1947 shows he died at his residence ‘the Hutch’, Howth in the presence of Edna Ardagh. I looked to see if he left a Will. In the Irish Times on 27 April 1948, under ‘Irish Will’, I found *“John Fenton Hudson, the Hatch [sic], Dungiffan Road, Howth (retired bank manager) – 17,355 (estate duty, £2,908)”*.

I turned to probate records – firstly in Ireland and then England – to find the following record<sup>9</sup>: *“Hudson John Fenton of The Hutch, Dungriffan-road, Howth, Dublin died 13 October 1947. Probate London 30 June to Tempe Veda Annie Parr married woman and Edna Mary Ardagh widow”*.

Tempe Vida Annie Parr (né Hudson) was the main beneficiary of her uncle John Fenton Hudson’s will when he died in 1947. The other beneficiary is Mrs Edna Mary Ardagh of The Hutch, Dungriffin-Road, Howth (where John Fenton was living when he died). From newspaper clippings I could see that Mr John Ardagh who died in 1936 was also a Bank Manager and a member of the Golf Club.

I applied for a copy of his Will through the UK Government Probate Search Service<sup>10</sup> and was enthralled to read the details. He left his motor car, any furniture and £5,000 to his good friend Edna Ardagh and the remainder to his niece Tempe Vida Anne Parr”.

I had conclusively proven Tempe Vida Annie Parr was the niece of John Fenton Hudson. He clearly stated their relationship in his Will. I could now turn my attention back to Tempe Hudson and Robert Parr and their three daughters – his grandnieces.

After establishing the married names of John Fenton’s three grandnieces, I did a search to find out their whereabouts. To protect their privacy, I won’t go into details on how I succeeded. I wrote a letter to one of his grandnieces who still lives in Ireland. In my letter I explained my quest and wondered if firstly she knew of him through their mother and secondly, if by any chance she or her sisters had a photograph of him. Several days later, I received a lovely call from his grandniece Tempe. She said her mother often talked about her very happy days with Uncle John. John Fenton Hudson used to call out to them once a week and they would go for picnics and play games. She had always described him as a lovely man. Not just that, Tempe had a photo of him and was delighted to be able to share it with the Golf Club.

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<sup>9</sup> Principal Probate Registry. *Calendar of the Grants of Probate and Letters of Administration made in the Probate Registries of the High Court of Justice in England*. London, England

<sup>10</sup> UK Government Probate Search Service, <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/#calendar>



So, now his picture is proudly hanging in the gallery of the Royal Dublin Golf Club.

I would like to share my appreciation to the General Registration Office, the National Library of Ireland, the National Archives of Ireland, the Irish Family History Foundation, the Ireland Genealogy Projects Archives, IrishGenealogy.ie, The British Newspaper Archive, The British Library Board, The Irish Times archives and the UK Government Probate Search Service. Without the combination of these sources, I would never have succeeded.



November 2017, Tempe and her husband John, Jillian van Turnhout and Captain Peter Finnegan at Royal Dublin Golf Club in front of the past Captains gallery which now includes John Fenton Hudson.

To end this story, I was honoured to be invited by the current Captain of the Royal Dublin Golf Club, Peter Finnegan, and Tom Byrne to join the grandniece of John Fenton Hudson, Tempe Pearson, for a lunch to mark the inclusion of her granduncle's photo in its rightful place in the Club's photo gallery.

What I thought would be a simple quest brought me on a journey of tears and joy. It is with great pride that I know the service and commitment shown by John Fenton Hudson will not go unrecorded.