

A Full Family Tree – The Hurst Family (Continued through Washington’s line) – Part 1

Because there is so much information available on the Hurst family, we’ve decided to change things up a bit by continuing the Hurst family’s history into March, but this time through Washington Hurst, a relative of Ransom Hurst who was discussed in last month’s edition. There is no concrete evidence available that states who Washington’s parents were, but an 1823 land deed lists the names Soloman and A.L. Hurst, who purchased property and a coffin for Washington Hurst. It is certainly possible that Soloman and A.L. Hurst are his parents, but this is not a proven fact. The earliest record we have for Washington Hurst is the 1851 Census which lists Washington Hurst, a 54-year-old farmer (born circa 1797-1801), his wife, Jemima/Gemima Crosby (age 41), and children: Elizabeth (14), Urias/Uriah (13), Hannah (11), Jonas (8), Arminthy (6), Washington Jr. (3), and Alfonzo/Alphonzo (1). The Census for Colchester Township also lists Washington Sr., Gemima, Elizabeth and Urias as being born in the United States, while everyone else listed was born in Canada West (Ontario). According to family lore, Washington and Jemima left Virginia, with their oldest child, Elizabeth (born in Virginia circa 1838), due to the oppression against free Blacks and property owners. Along the way, they had their second child, Urias, in Ohio (circa 1839). Once the family arrived in Colchester, they purchased land on the 3rd Concession. The 1861 Personal Census lists the family again, apart from Elizabeth who likely married and was possibly living in another household. That same year, the Agricultural Census gives us further information on Washington who owned 24 acres of land in 1861 in Colchester and all 24 acres were under cultivation. Of his 24 acres of land, 15 acres was “under crop” and 9 acres was “under pasture.” The value of his land at that time was \$480 and this farm was passed down through the generations.

As mentioned, Washington and Jemima/Gemima had at least seven children. There was little information available on four of their children: Elizabeth, Urias, Hannah and Arminthy, but based on the 1851 Census we can estimate their birthdays and birth place. Elizabeth was born circa 1838, Urias was born circa 1839, Hannah in roughly 1840-1842 and Arminthy circa 1845-1846. Elizabeth and Urias/Uriah were born in the US, while Hannah and Arminthy are listed as being born in Ontario. We were able to find more information on their three siblings: Jonas, Washington Jr. and Alphonso which we will discuss next.

Jonas was born in the 1840s in Colchester South and several documents list different years of birth. The 1851 Census lists his year of birth as 1843, while his obituary says 1844. Additionally, the 1901 census gives the exact date of October 8, 1847. According to their marriage record, Jonas Hurst and Harriet Marshall married on May 4, 1863 in Essex, Essex County. Harriet was the daughter of Alexander and Maria Marshall. Some records list Maria's last name as Dayton, while others record the name Dontkee, or something similar, but the writing is difficult to read. According to Harriet's obituary from September 1918, she had at least two brothers and one sister: David and Hezekiah Marshall of Colchester South and Mrs. Lucinda Mickens of Malden. Although born in Colchester, Harriet moved to Amherstburg around 1897 and remained there for the rest of her years. Harriet's husband Jonas, a farmer, passed away several years before Harriet, in January 1902 and the *Amherstburg Echo* states that he was "one of the best known ... men in Amherstburg."

We have identified 13 of their 16 children: Albert, George, Jonas Jr., Edward, Gary, Ann, Norman, Charles, Early, Della, Hattie, Mina, and Elizabeth. We were lucky enough to find further details for nine of them: Albert, George, Gary, Norman, Early, Charles, Della, Hattie and Mina. The only evidence that we could find of Albert was his death record which states that he

was the son of Hattie Marshall and Jonas Hurst, born in Colchester around 1878 and a 35-year-old labourer who passed away on May 18, 1913 in Amherstburg. Albert is also listed in his brother Gary's obituary. Albert's brother George was born in Malden Township circa 1875 and became a farmer. He married Nellie Hywarden, who was the daughter of Eli Hywarden and Elizabeth Marshall, on May 16, 1898 in Harrow. George and Nellie's marriage record also says that Nellie was born circa 1881 in Colchester South.

George's brother Gary is the next person to be discussed. He married a widow named Mamie Bow, the daughter of James Hughes and Catherine Stockley, on October 2, 1916. Gary was a 42-year-old labourer, while Mamie was a 40-year-old house keeper who was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Gary sadly passed away in December 1930, suffering from dropsy and lung trouble. His obituary says that he was born in Amherstburg and lived his whole life in the same neighborhood.

There are a few documents that list Gary's brother Norman, including the 1920 Census for Toledo, Ohio. It lists Norman as a "Roomer" in the household of Joseph Miller. The census also lists him as a 53-year-old widow who moved to the US in 1919. He is listed as a labourer who did "General Work." Norman's obituary confirms that he lived in Toledo for a few years and that he married twice. Unfortunately, the names of his wives are not listed, but it does state that they pre-deceased him, explaining why he is listed as a widow in the 1920 Toledo Census. This document also mentions that he had a son (no name mentioned), who survived him, but it is possible that he could have had more children. Before his passing, Norman came back to Amherstburg because his death record lists Amherstburg as the location of his passing on March 3, 1924.

Early is the next in line. According to his death record from December 1932, he was born on February 28, 1877 in Colchester. He married Edith Thompson on March 21, 1906. Edith was the daughter of Royl Thompson (mother not listed) and neither Edith nor Early were previously married. Early was 29 at the time of their marriage while Edith was 24. The couple had a daughter named Margaret Elizabeth who was born on May 31, 1906 in Amherstburg. Margaret later married Stanley Allen in March 1922. Stanley was born in Colchester North and was the son of William Allen and Victoria Brooker. At the time of their marriage, Stanley was nineteen and Margaret was sixteen. Interestingly, both are listed as labourers on their marriage record, which is not often an occupation associated with women at that time, if an occupation is listed at all. Often women are listed as housewives or without an occupation, but Margaret demonstrates that women worked outside of the home and contributed financially to their families.

What we publish is not a complete history of any family and is based on the documents that are available. We welcome photos and information to fill in the gaps. See you next week for Part 2.