

A Full Family Tree – The Hurst Family (Continued through Washington’s line) – Part 3

So far, we have looked at Jonas and Harriet’s children, but there is also information available on Jonas’ brothers, Washington Jr. and Alphonso Hurst. Washington Jr. was born circa 1852 and later married Annie Crosby on November 2, 1897 in Oakland, Michigan. According to their marriage record, Washington Jr. was a 45-year-old farmer and neither Washington nor Annie were married before. Annie was born in either the 1850s or 1860s and was the daughter of Caswell Crosby and Elizabeth Davis/Davies. According to Milo Johnson’s Book *New Canaan: Freedom-Land* Annie’s father Caswell was the son of Jonah Crosby who was born into slavery in Virginia in 1787. Jonah escaped and settled in Stark County, Ohio, but “Black Laws” that restricted the lives of African Americans forced him to leave Ohio and settle in Colchester Township in the mid-1840s. Jonah went on to marry a woman named Emma and the couple had three children: Mariah (1826), Caswell (1811) and Edmond (1821). They settled on a plot of land called Glebe, which was an area north of Colchester Village. Jonah and his sons Caswell and Edmond are all listed as farmers in the 1851 Census, but Emma is not listed which means that she likely passed away before the 1851 census was taken. Additionally, the 1851 Census lists Jonah as living in Caswell’s household, which was on the 4th Concession, lot 11 of Colchester Township. By 1861 Caswell’s farm consisted of 75 acres with 31 acres under cultivation. According to *New Canaan: Freedom-Land* Caswell and Elizabeth married while enslaved in Virginia. Caswell was also known as a respected citizen who was not only a farmer, but also a minister at the Harrow B.M.E. Church. Caswell and Elizabeth had nine children: Henry James (1834), Joshua Wright (1836), William (1841), John A. (1844), Ardon (1849), Elijah (1852), Theopolis (1855), Anne Elizabeth (1856) and Sylvester (1861).

Washington Jr. and Annie had at least one child, a son named Perle who, according to the 1901 Census was born sometime around September 1882. Perle lived to be roughly 53 years old, passing away in April 1935 in Walkerville (a part of Windsor) at Metropolitan Hospital (now Windsor Regional Hospital Met Campus). He is also listed as single and a labourer. Referred to as one of the best-known residents of the district, his obituary also states that he “was a good friend to everybody in Harrow and was a fixture about the town. He had a smile for everyone, and will be greatly missed by those who knew him best.”

In addition to Washington Jr. and Jonas there was also information available on their brother Alphonso and he will be the last child of Washington Sr. and Jemima Hurst to be discussed. Alphonso was born circa 1850 and was a labourer. He lived at Hillsville, Colchester South and toward the end of his life lost his sight; he was blind for roughly ten years of his life. Sadly, his luck did not improve because on New Year’s Eve 1929, a “sneak thief ... rob[bed] him of \$16.25 balance unspent of his first old age pension check for \$20 ... [Alphonso] could not identify the thief, though he thought he had on a rubber coat. He came in stealthily, man handled the old man as he lay on his couch, searched his clothing till he came to the back pocket, where the money was, and then hurriedly left the place.” Several months later he passed away in March 1930, but was described as a hardworking and thrifty man.

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 another family history.