

Adams Family History Part 4 – Significant Loss

Now that we have discussed the family of Laura Adams, we will move on to discuss her remaining siblings: Susan Arabella, William F., Milton Augustus, Reginald and Ralph. Susan Arabella or “Bella” married Simon Peter Wilson on December 23, 1911 in Amherstburg. According to the *Amherstburg Echo* “A pretty wedding took place at the Baptist parsonage Saturday evening, December 23rd, when Miss Belle Adams, fourth daughter of William Adams, and Simon Wilson, third son of Albert Wilson, were made man and wife, the Rev. Allen Peavey officiating. The happy couple have taken up housekeeping on King Street. They received many beautiful presents. Mr. Wilson is chef on a big Steel Trust steamer.” The 1921 Census lists Simon and Arabella with their daughter Lena.

According to Susan Arabella’s obituary “She was well and favorably known among a large circle of friends as a hard working and industrious woman, a faithful member of the First Baptist Church and took part in all its activities. She was born in Amherstburg, Bella Adams, daughter of William and Laura Adams. Her father died some years ago, but her mother is still living. She was married 19 years ago in the First Baptist church to Simon Wilson, son of Mr. Albert Wilson, the officiating pastor being the Rev. Mr. Peavy. They have lived continuously on King street. Mr. Wilson survives her, without family. She also leaves her mother, and the following brothers and sisters: Mrs. Lula Thomas, of Oberlin, Ohio; Ralph, Mrs. Gentry and William of Chicago; Mrs. George McCurdy of Amherstburg and Milton of Windsor. Her brother, Reginald Adams, died at her home on the 6th December last year. Funeral services for her were held at the First Baptist church on Wednesday afternoon by Rev. Mr. Edwards, followed by burial in Rose Hill cemetery. Much sympathy is extended the bereaved families.”

Susan Arabella's brother William Fenton was born on September 14, 1891 and married a woman named Marion. At the time of his death on February 18, 1931, he was living in Chicago and worked as a chef. His obituary states he died "February 18th, aged 39 years, the third member of the family of Mrs. Laura Adams and the late William Adams to die in two months. Reginald died here on December 6th and Mrs. S. Wilson on February 8th. The receipt of this news was a crushing blow to Mrs. Adams, the mother. It seems that Mr. Adams had been ill with pneumonia for a few days and was taken to the hospital just twenty-four hours before his death. The funeral took place in Chicago on Sunday. Mr. Adams after several years as chef on the lakes, settled in Chicago where he had a good position in a local hotel kitchen. He is survived by his wife, his widowed mother in Amherstburg; sisters Mrs. Lula Thomas, of Oberlin, Ohio; Mrs. Gentry, of Chicago; Mrs. George McCurdy, Amherstburg; brothers Ralph of Chicago and Milton of Windsor, to all of whom deep sympathy is extended."

Next is Milton Augustus Adams. According to Kathy Grant, he served in the CEF during WWI, enlisting in London, Ontario, on February 25, 1918. Milton's draft papers state that he was single and a cook living in Amherstburg. A few years earlier, on December 20, 1912, the *Amherstburg Echo* printed an article confirming that he was a cook, writing "Lake sailors are coming home to enjoy the comforts of their own firesides. William Adams and son Milton, Raymond McDowell, Norman Wilson, George McCurdy, James Monroe, Theo Foster, all first-class chefs, will cook up something for the home folks for the next few months. They have had a prosperous season." Milton's marriage record also reveals that he married Anna Washington, the daughter of James Washington and Anna Thompson. The couple was married on September 25, 1919 in Detroit and, at the time, Milton worked as a metal worker. According to the obituary for

Fern Marie (Adams) Roberson, Anne and Milton Adams had two daughters: Fern Marie Roberson and Dr. Aline Rivers Jones.

Milton's brother Reginald was born in September 1897 in Amherstburg. He passed away at the age of 33 on December 6, 1930 and was single and a labourer. As mentioned, the Adams family suffered great losses in a short period of time as three members of the Adams family passed away within two months of each other during the years 1930-1931. According to his obituary "Reginald Adams, youngest son of Mrs. William Adams passed away Saturday night at the home of his sister, Mrs. Simon Wilson, King St., in the 33rd year of his age. He has been ill for over a year with tuberculosis of the lungs, which developed from a heavy cold he contracted while working on the ice. A hemorrhage [sic] of the lungs followed the first attack of abscess and he gradually declined in strength till he was beyond hope. The funeral took place Tuesday afternoon from the house to the First Baptist Church, where services were solemnized by Rev. Mr. Burton and burial was in Rose Hill cemetery. Reginald was born at the family home on Murray street, September 22, 1898, and always lived in Amherstburg. At the time of his first illness he was employed on Bois Blanc island. His father died two years ago on 5th November last. Surviving him are his mother; and the following brothers and sisters: Lulu, Mrs. Robert Thomas of Oberlin, Ohio; Nellie, Mrs. Charles Gentry, of Chicago; Ralph of Chicago; Laura, Mrs. George McCurdy and Bella, Mrs. Simon Wilson of Amherstburg; William of Chicago and Milton of Windsor, to all of whom deep sympathy is extended."

Reginald's brother Ralph is the last child of William and Laura Adams that we will discuss. Ralph was born November 1892 and at the time of his passing in December 1968 he was a widower living in Chicago.

Much of this family history has discussed William Henry Adams, son of Ralph and Sarah Jane. Now it is time to discuss William's brother Augustus. He married Sarah Ellen Christian and worked as a clerk and later as a grocer. The 1911 Census lists Augustus Adams and Sarah Ellen (listed as Saliar E. Adams) along with their niece Annie Smith, but lists no children of their own. On March 30, 1894, the *Amherstburg Echo* writes that Augustus "who has been employed for a number of years as a clerk in G.T. Florey's grocery, will leave on Monday for Sandwich where he will have charge of the ship supply department of the store of Page & Desroalers(?). Gus has been for years connected with the Sunday School and church of the First Baptist church, as one of their best workers and will be greatly missed. His many friends unite in wishing him success. He is trustworthy and will undoubtedly give his new employers perfect satisfaction."

A few days later, on April 6, 1894, the *Amherstburg Echo* printed another story about Augustus which said "A very pleasant time was spent at the home of Mrs. Ralph Adams and son last Friday evening the gathering being a surprise prior to Augustus taking leave for his new field of labor. Miss Lottie Holbert presided at the organ. An appropriate address was read by J.H. Alexander, Gus' last instructor, followed by Rev. J.A. Holt and Captain James Smith. The present was a handsome spring upholstered rocking chair. The mother and son owe a thousand obligations to the good people of the 'Burg."

Before leaving Amherstburg Augustus was active in the Amherstburg Literary Society, where he acted as an Assistant Secretary in 1881 and also participated in several debates including whether "A thief is a greater curse to the community at large than a liar." The affirmative was led by Benjamin Green and the negative by Augustus Adams. A debate from April 1881 lists Augustus Adams on the affirmative side of a debate that asked which is more pleasing to the eye, nature or art? Augustus was the winner of the debate against D.H. Smith.

The *Amherstburg Echo* also writes that Augustus appeared in two dialogues and one chorus “and acquitted himself in good style and was each time greeted with hearty applause.”

In Augustus’ obituary further details are shared which reveal “Mr. Adams was born in Amherstburg, his father being Ralph Adams. The only member of the family now living is a brother, William H. Adams, chef on the steamer Plummer. The subject of this sketch was married in Amherstburg about 12 years ago to Ella Christian. Their union was childless. After the death of his mother they moved to Sandwich where he kept store near the Pittsburgh Coal Co.’s dock. Since last fall he had been employed in the White Lead Works, Detroit.”

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 where we will celebrate another amazing family.