

Armstrong Family Part 5 – Order of the Eastern Star

Thomas Cornelius Armstrong was born on May 23, 1902. He later married Meryle Kersey, the daughter of Robert Kersey and Minnie Clingman (daughter of William Clingman and Matilda Ridout). On September 12, 1935, the *Amherstburg Echo* printed “A notable event of Colchester South is the marriage of Miss Myrl Kersey, daughter of Robert Kersey, and Thomas Armstrong, son of Thomas Armstrong sr., of this place. We wish them much joy.” A few days later, on September 27, the *Amherstburg Echo* printed another article concerning Thomas and Meryle’s wedding. It says, “A surprise shower was given on Tuesday evening, September 24th, by Mesdames Edna Grayer and Margaret Taylor, for Mrs. Thomas Armstrong, jr., who was before her recent marriage Miss Meryl Kersey. This took place at the bride’s home in Colchester South. The evening was featured by the broadcast of the Louis-Baer fight, music and games, after which a delicious lunch was served. The bride’s sister, Mildred, assisted in opening the gifts.” Thomas and Meryle also had a daughter named Carol Mae.

Meryle was also a member of the Order of the Eastern Star. In the November 12, 1953 edition of the *Amherstburg Echo* an article titled “Prince Hall Chapter O.E.S. Installation” lists members installed into the Prince Hall No. 10 Chapter O.E.S. for 1954 at Central Grove Church. Meryle is listed as secretary, along with members of other families that have been written about in our family history series. They include: I.P.W.M., Mrs. Melinda Kersey; W.M., Mrs. Virgil Grayer; W.P., Robert Kersey; A.M., Mrs. Harvey Mulder Jr.; Conductress, Mrs. Clyde Scott; associate conductress, Mrs. Wylie Grayer; **secretary, Mrs. Thomas Armstrong**; treasurer, Mrs. Orville Taylor; marshall, Mrs. Marcellus Johnston; sentinel, Mrs. Walter Cayne; warden, Mrs. Wm. Kersey; Adah, Mrs. Gerald Grayer; Ruth, Mrs. David Talbot; Esther, Mrs. George Talbot and Electa; Mrs. Harvey Mulder Sr.” Do you recognize anyone listed?

A few years later, in 1956, the *Amherstburg Echo* writes about “The installation of officers of Prince Hall Chapter No. 10 Order of the Eastern Star ... November the fourth at the Municipal Building, Harrow with Bathsheba Chapter No. 9 O.E.S. of Detroit and Sister Mary Drake its Worthy Matron in charge.” In this article Meryle has changed roles and is listed as Associate Conductress. Others installed include: Sis. Melinda Kersey Worthy Matrons; Sis. Ethelda Talbot Associate Matron; Bro. Judson Mulder Worthy Patron; Sis. Evelyn Talbot conductress; Sis. Maggie Scott Secretary; Sis. M. Gertrude Mulder Treasurer; Sis. Agnes Payne Warder and Bro. Edward Abbott Sentinel. The star points were Sis. Marjorie Abbott Ada; Sis. Vida Mulder, Past Matron Ruth; Sis Wanda Mulder Esther; Sis. Glena Scott, Past Matron Martha and Sis. Giovanna Johnson Past Matron Electa.”

The article continues with a description of the event and says “Immediately after the installation ceremonies, the burning of the mortgage of Prince Hall Chapter and Prince Hall Lodge No 18 took place. Most worshipful Grand Master Bro. Lorne Millben of the jurisdiction of Ontario Prince Hall affiliation was in charge of this ceremony. He was assisted by his cabinet of Grand Officers. Rev. Joseph Brockington of Detroit was the guest speaker. Chapters in attendance were from Amherstburg, Windsor, Chatham and Detroit. The affair was a grand success. Proceeds from the day were one hundred and thirty-three dollars and fifty two cents for which Worthy Matron of 1856 Sis. Glena Scott wishes to thank everyone.”

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.