

Marshall Family History Part 1 – The Freedom Seeker

This month's family history will highlight the Marshall family, beginning with Alex Marshall. According to the Museum's family history collection, he married Maria Dayton. The binders also share that Maria passed away in 1885 while Alexander passed away in 1890, but we could not find their obituaries or death records to confirm this. Alexander was a native of Kentucky who escaped enslavement and came to Canada. Once here, he worked on the Theodore Langlois Farm in Malden (now Amherstburg). They had at least 14 children: Charles, Sarah, John, Lucinda, Alex, Harriet, David, Parthena Elizabeth (sometimes spelt Parcena), George A., Adelia/Cordelia, Alice, Ester, William, and Hezekiah. No information was available for Charles, except a note that says, 'in the States.' Additionally, Alex Jr. is listed as dying at a young age, and there was no additional information for John and George A. There was more information for the rest of Alex and Maria's children: Sarah, Lucinda, Harriet, David, Parthinia Elizabeth, Cordelia, Alice, and Hezekiah. Let's start with Sarah.

Sarah married Scipio Bell and their children include Joseph, Sarah, Priscilla, James Newton, Amanda, Mary B. (could be Bertha), John/Shaper, and William. The 1881 Census also lists James David, but it does not state his relationship to the head of household, so this could also be a grandchild of Sarah. The 1911 Census has a listing for Joseph Bell who appears with his wife Sarah and sons Clifford and Wilford. According to Sarah's death record, she was born in Windsor on June 26, 1864 and was the daughter of William Campbell and Annie Mason. Sarah passed away on February 18, 1920 at the age of 55 and was a Housewife. We could not find an obituary for Sarah Campbell Bell, but found one for her sister Laura Campbell which lists their siblings including Mrs. Mary Hall, Mrs. Delia Campbell, Joseph Campbell and Edward Campbell. Sarah Campbell was the first wife of Joseph Bell, but not the only. Joseph also

married Mary McKay, the daughter of Peter McKay and Etta Fogena, on October 6, 1821 in Windsor. At the time Joseph, whose middle name is listed as Icoum, was 62 years old and Mary was 39. Both are listed as widowed and Joseph worked as a Teamster. A few years later in 1928, the *Amherstburg Echo* printed "Joseph Bell, brother of the late Newton Bell, died in Windsor on Wednesday. He formerly lived on Fort street, Amherstburg." Joseph passed on October 10, 1928. A few days later on October 19, 1928, an obituary for Joseph Bell appears in the same newspaper saying "Joseph Bell, a brief mention of whose death was made in last week's Echo, passed away Wednesday morning, the 10th inst., at Metropolitan Hospital, Walkerville, aged 69 years. The funeral took place on Saturday afternoon from A.M.E. Zion Church, Windsor, Rev. Browning officiating. Burial was in Windsor Grove cemetery. Mr. Bell was a son of the late Scipio Bell, Malden, and is survived by his widow, two sisters and one brother, Mrs. Amanda Powell and Mrs. Bertha Garl, of Detroit; and Sharper Bell, of Malden. His first wife was Miss Sarah Campbell of Gesto."

The next child of Sarah Marshall and Scipio Bell is Sarah. According to her death record Sarah (Moore) passed away on March 25, 1925 in Eloise, Wayne, Michigan. Her date of birth is listed as December 29, 1858 in Canada. She is also listed as married (last name Moore), but her husband's first name is not mentioned. It is likely that Priscilla died at a young age because she is not listed beyond the 1871 Census.

Next is James Newton Bell who appears in the 1901 Census with his wife Hattie E. The next two Census lists for 1911 and 1921 list James and Hattie with their daughter Glenna May. On April 25, 1924, Newton Bell's name appears in the *Amherstburg Echo* because a "contract for ditching St. Arnaud street was let to Newton Bell and George Scott for \$76." A few years later, on May 6, 1927, Newton's name appears in the *Amherstburg Echo* again, but this time it is

in his obituary. According to his obituary, "The death occurred in Amherstburg Tuesday noon of Newton Bell, an old colored resident, who after being ill all winter, suffered two strokes of paralysis, on successive Saturdays before his death. Mr. Bell was a native of Malden, and was 65 years old. He was a son of the late Scipio Bell. Of the family two brothers and two sisters are living: Joseph Bell, of Amherstburg; John Sharper Bell, of Malden; Mrs. Garl and Mrs. Powell, of Detroit. Mr. Bell was married to Hattie Artis, of Colchester, and they had one daughter, Glenna May. They moved to town about twenty-five years ago, and have been living on Kemp street. Mr. Bell was a hard working, well known ditching contractor, and strenuous work brought on his last illness. The funeral took place yesterday (Thursday) afternoon to the A.M.E. Church, where services were conducted by the Rev. Mr. Frye, pastor, followed by burial in Rose Hill cemetery. To the bereaved wife and daughter and other relatives sincere sympathy is extended." The next issue from May 13, 1927 adds further details and says "Funeral services for the late Newton Bell were conducted at the A.M.E. church on Thursday afternoon by the Rev. E.S. Frye, pastor. A large number of friends and relatives from this community and also from Detroit and Windsor were in attendance as well as a lot of old friends who held the late Mr. Bell in high respect. During the service Miss Wava Davis rendered a very beautiful solo in very fine voice. Burial was in Rose Hill cemetery. The pallbearers were William Allen, Henry Chambers, Walter Mann, George Conway, Thomas Thompson and John H. Alexander jr."

The obituary for James Newton's wife Hattie Artis Bell was also available in the *Amherstburg Echo* on October 3, 1941. It says "Following a lengthy illness the death occurred at Grace Hospital, Windsor, of Mrs. Newton Bell of Amherstburg early Thursday morning. Deceased was one of the well known members of the colored community here. Her maiden name was Hattie Artis and she was born at Gilgal, Colchester South, 70 years ago. She had been

suffering from varicose veins and a weak heart. Her condition became serious and she was removed to Grace Hospital ten days before her death. Surviving are one daughter Glenna and one son Driffield. Funeral arrangements had not been made when The Echo went to press.” This record reveals that Glenna was not an only child and had a brother named Driffield who is not mentioned on the 1901, 1911 or 1921 Census. A few years after Hattie’s passing, her daughter Glenna put a lovely ‘In Memoriam’ in the *Amherstburg Echo* on October 12, 1944 which said “In memory of Mrs. Hattie Bell, who passed away October 2, 1941. Three years have passed since that sad day. When one we loved was called away. God took her home, it was His will. But in our hearts she liveth still. Sadly missed by her daughter. Glena.

The next child of Sarah Marshall and Scipio Bell is Amanda. The *Amherstburg Echo* mentions that she worked in Harrow as a cook at the Erie House, “when it was managed by Jos. Drummond some years ago, and is well remembered by nearly all of the people of this section. The Marshall family is also widely connected throughout the township.” A separate article from 1910 mentions that Amanda was married to Gordon Powell, the son of Lewis Powell, of Colchester South. The second article also mentions that she kept a “rooming house” in Detroit.

Amanda’s sister Mary B. could also be Bertha because we were not able to find information for Mary B. other than her being mentioned on the Census. What we do know is that Bertha married a man with the last name Garl/Garrel, but no first name is mentioned for her husband.

The next child of Sarah Marshall and Scipio Bell is John Sharper Bell. The 1901 Census lists Sharper living with his uncle Hezekiah and working as a labourer. The next Census from 1911 lists John (or Sharper) as single and 40 years old. On June 30, 1905, Sharper appears in the *Amherstburg Echo* which says “Business of the session of the High Court at Sandwich was

wound up Friday afternoon when the attorneys in the case of Sharper Bell vs. Pittsburg Coal Co., announced their willingness to settle by the payment of \$100 to Bell. The man was injured by the fall of coal at the company's coal dock at Sandwich. A Guarantee Company in which the Pittsburg Coal Co.'s men are insured against accident, were the actual defendants.”

A few years later, he appears in the *Amherstburg Echo* because of a house fire. The *Echo* reported “An overheated stovepipe, about 7 o'clock Sunday night, was responsible for the burning down of Sharper Bell's residence on the 7th concession. Mr. Bell was in Amherstburg at the time, but two men who boarded with him had just returned home and being cold made an unusually hot fire, and the burning out resulted. Neighbors gathered quickly and succeeded in getting out most of the household effects. There was no insurance.”

On September 18, 1936 Sharper Bell's obituary was printed in the *Echo* and said “Funeral services for Sharper Bell, who died in Hotel Dieu last week, were conducted at the home Saturday afternoon, and burial was in Rose Hill cemetery. Mr. Bell was born 65 years ago on the farm where he died, son of Scipio Bell and his wife Sarah Marshall. He never married, and is survived by two sisters. Mrs. Bertha Garrell of Malden, and Mrs. Mandy Powell of Detroit. He had been ill since spring, but was only in the hospital two weeks.”

Now that we have discussed Sarah Marshall Bell and her family, we will move on to discuss her sister Lucinda. The 1881 Census lists Lucinda with two of her children William (age 20) and Elizabeth (age 17). The following Census for 1891 lists Lucinda living in the household of Elie and Elizabeth Hywarden (Elizabeth is Lucinda's daughter) and their children Willianey, Lucindy, and William. At the time Lucinda is age 49 and listed with the last name Marshall. That changes in 1893 when Lucinda married Joshua Mickens. His obituary which was printed in the *Amherstburg Echo* on May 10, 1918 shares more details about Lucinda's husband and says

“Joshua Mickens, one of the best known colored men in South Essex, passed away at his home on the 9th con., Malden, late Sunday night. He was actively engaged in hard work until near the last, his death being caused by valvular disease of the heart. Mr. Mickens was born on the 8th concession 71 years ago. He spent his early years as marine fireman on the Great Lakes, and retiring from that spent his remaining years farming in Colchester South and Malden. He was first married to Miss Baylis and became the father of six children, two of whom are living. Mrs. M. Craig, of Windsor, and Susan, at home. In 1893 he was married to Miss Cinda Marshall who survives him, also leaves one brother, George, in Detroit. Funeral services were conducted Wednesday afternoon at the home by Rev. Peter Brooks, of Harrow, who delivered a powerful oration from the text: ‘In my father’s house are many mansions.’ Burial was in Mt. Pleasant cemetery.”

An obituary for Lucinda Marshall Mickens also appeared in the *Echo and Essex Free Press*, both sharing the same information. The former was printed on March 10, 1925 and says “Mrs. Lucinda Mickens, who has resided on the corner of the 9th concession and Middle Side Road, for the past 13 years, died there on Sunday evening, aged 84 years. The funeral was held on Tuesday afternoon to the colored Methodist church at Harrow for services, and burial was in the cemetery on the Harrow Colchester road. Mrs. Mickens’ maiden name was Lucinda Marshall. She was a native of Colchester South and was married there to her late husband, and lived there practically all her life, Mr. Mickens died seven years ago. She is survived by one daughter, Mrs. Highwardon, of Malden, and two brothers, David and Hezekiah Marshall, of Colchester South.”

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.