

The Brown/Nelson Family History Part 3 – The Great Lakes Chef and Local Baker

Now that we have discussed John and Sarah (Chancellor) Brown's first two children (William R. and John S.H.), we'll move forward by discussing their only daughter Sarah Elizabeth Brown who was born on September 6, 1861. Sarah Elizabeth married James Nall on April 18, 1888 in Amherstburg's First Baptist Church and the ceremony was conducted by the Reverend J.A. Holt. According to the *Amherstburg Echo*, their wedding was the largest church wedding solemnized there considering "The Baptist Church in town was crowded, on Wednesday evening, on the occasion of the marriage of [James] Alfred Naul to Miss Sadie [Sarah Elizabeth] Brown, of Anderdon. The body of the church, the choir platform and the pulpit were all fully occupied to witness the important event."

Sarah's husband James Alfred Nall was the son of Alfred Nall and Ellen Foster, and he was born in Amherstburg on November 16, 1861. James lived in Amherstburg for almost his entire life, until he moved to Windsor on Church Street, a few years before he passed away in April 1920. In his early life, James was a chef on the Great Lakes and for a few years was a master chef on the flagship of the Northern Navigation Company. James also had a bakery on the corner of Seymore and Gore streets in Amherstburg. An article from April 1911 in the *Amherstburg Echo* says "James Naul turned out his first batch of bread in the Cox baker, corner Gore and Seymore streets, Saturday, since which he has been kept on the jump, for everyone who was treated to a loaf and realized how good it was, will not be happy without Baker Naul's staff of life. He is also turning out a delicious line of cakes and other fancy cooking, which is growing in favor daily among particular customers. Mr. Naul expects to drive out foreign competition entirely by giving the public a better article than is being imported."

In 1911, to gain more business, James had an ad printed in the *Amherstburg Echo* that said, "Ladies, give us 24 hours' notice and we will supply your parties with lemon, strawberry, pineapple or frozen fruit sherbets packed in freezers in quantities to suit. James A Nall, baker and confectioner, corner Seymore and Gore streets."

James was also a member of the Masonic lodge and according to a June 1904 article from the *Amherstburg Echo*, James "attended the great high Masonic meeting in Detroit, last week. He took the 32nd degree in Wolverine consistory and left Monday to take the position of chef on the C.P.R." See Nall family history for more details <https://amherstburgfreedom.org/family-histories/nall-family/> .

Sarah Brown and James Nall had two children: Margaret Ellen Louis who was born on March 9, 1897 and James Chancellor Nall who was born on June 24, 1892. Sadly, Sarah passed away in Amherstburg on September 18, 1910 due to heart and kidney issues. According to her obituary from the *Amherstburg Echo* "Mrs. James Nall passed peacefully away at her home on Sandwich street, Sunday night about 10:30. Though suffering for a year or two with kidney and hear trouble, it was not generally known that two weeks ago Thursday she was suddenly seized while eating dinner, and was confined to bed from that time. Mrs. Nall's maiden name was Sarah Elizabeth Brown, and she was a daughter of the late John D. Brown, of Anderdon. Of a family of five only one brother, John H.S., and her aged mother are left in addition to Fremont Nelson, an adopted brother. She and Mr. Nall were married in the First Baptist church by the Rev. J.A. Holt in 1888, and their popularity was attested by the largest church wedding ever solemnized there. This popularity followed throughout her married life and she became endeared to a large number by her untiring devotion to the path of duty, her kindness and quiet work both in church and the Sabbath school. To Mr. and Mrs. Nall were born two children. John Chancellor and Margaret

Ellen. The former died three years ago, and his death preyed on the mother so much that her health was broken. For several years the deceased had been a useful member of Ruth Chapter No. 4., of the Order of Eastern Star, and a Past Matron of the Chapter. Last month she was elected Royal Grand Matron of the Grand Chapter, O.E.S. of Ontario. The members of Ruth Chapter, O.E.S., had charge of the services both at the residence and at the First Baptist church, and were assisted by Mrs. Kelly, of Windsor, who by the death of Mrs. Nall becomes Royal Grand Matron for Ontario, and a large delegation from Windsor Chapter. There was a very large attendance of friends. Among those from out of town were: J.L. Hyatt, Mrs. Hyatt and daughter, Mrs. Dunn, Mrs. Odey, Mrs. Brooks, Mrs. Wm. Kenny, Mrs. Norrid, Mrs. C. Wilson, Miss Emma Weir, Gordon Nall and wife, Mrs. Dodson, Mrs. Mary McDowell, of Windsor; Wm. Jones and wife and Mrs. Bromley, of Sarnia; Mrs. Roman Smith and daughter, of Cleveland, O. The services were conducted by Rev. T. Jesse Henderson, assisted by Rev. E.E. Thompson, of Windsor, and Rev. A.W. Hackley, of the A.M.E. church, Amherstburg. The pallbearers were J.H. Alexander, Walter Anderson, Moses Brantford, F.H.A. Davis, William Jones and Aaron Saunders.”

Sarah was very devoted to her organizational work within and outside of the church. She acted as treasurer for the First Baptist Church in 1896, joined the Amherstburg Ladies Sewing Circle and the Amherstburg Guild (which stemmed from the Baptist Church), in addition to becoming a charter member and Royal Grand Matron of Amherstburg’s Ruth Chapter #4, Order of the Eastern Star. Her memorial described her as “a loyal supporter of ... the societies of which she was identified.”

Following Sarah’s passing on September 18, 1910, James Nall moved to Windsor. A few years later, on February 26, 1913, he married Minnie Odey/O’Dey in Windsor. Minnie was a

widow whose maiden name was Larter. Her parents were Milton, a farmer, and Docha (Warden) Larter. While living in Windsor, James worked in the dry-cleaning business and was a devout member of the church. He was also a Past Master of Amherstburg's Lincoln Lodge (Masonic) and for years was a deacon of the Amherstburg First Baptist Church. After moving to Windsor, he became the chairman of the deacon's board of the First Baptist Church in Windsor.

Sadly, James met an unfortunate end, and according to his obituary from April 1920 "James A. Nall, native of Amherstburg, where he lived from the time of his birth in 1861 until three years ago, died Saturday morning at his home on Church street, Windsor, after a stroke of apoplexy, and the treatment he received during his last few hours on earth through the mistake of the Windsor police was most distressing to his friends in Amherstburg, who had known him for many years as an upright Christian gentleman. It seems he was returning late Friday evening from a special revival of the First Baptist church of which he was a deacon, when he was seized with a stroke of paralysis. A mounted policeman reported the matter to the Windsor police who at once jumped to the conclusion that the man was intoxicated, and had him removed to the Windsor police station, where without attention he was left lying on the floor of one of the cells at night. His family made diligent search for him and it was not until early morning they found him in a dying condition there, and he passed away shortly after he was brought home. Mr. Nall was a son of the late Alfred Nall of Amherstburg, and of the family the following are living: Walter and Gordon, of Windsor; Forest, of St. Louis; Mrs. Theresa Stevens, George and Mrs. Hattie Lambert, of Cleveland; Mrs. Nora Baker, of Windsor; Mrs. Mattie Flenoy, of Detroit, and Mrs. Grace Odey, of Windsor. Early in life he became a chef on the Great Lakes and for some years was master chef on the flagship of the Northern Navigation Co., and on retiring conducted a bakery on the corner of Seymore and Gore streets, in Amherstburg. He was first married here

to Sarah Brown, daughter of the late John S. Brown, and they had one daughter, Marguerite, who still resides in Amherstburg, and a son Chancellor, who died here about ten years ago. A few years ago, after his wife's death, he took up his residence in Windsor, and was married there to Mrs. Odey, who survives him. He was interested there in a dry cleaning establishment on Church street. Mr. Nall was a devout church member and for years was deacon in the First Baptist church, Amherstburg, and up to the time of his death was chairman of the deacons' board of the First Baptist church, Windsor. Many from Amherstburg and vicinity attended the funeral services which were conducted from the First Baptist church, Windsor, Monday afternoon, interment being in Windsor Grove cemetery. The funeral was under the auspices of Lincoln Lodge, No., 8 F&A.M., of Amherstburg of which deceased was a Past Master. They were assisted by North Star Lodge, No. 7, and North American Lodge, No. 11, and led by Lee's band of Detroit, while Masonic honors were given at the grave. Mr. Nall was much interested in Masonry, was a Past High Priest of Ebenezer Chapter No. 4, R.A.M.; Past E.C, Damascus Commandery, No. 4; member Wolverine Consistory, No. 6; S.P.P.S, Morocco Temple No. 13; N.M.S, Detroit' and Victoria Chapter, No. 3, O.E.S., Windsor and Ruth Chapter O.E.S., Amherstburg. He was highly respected by all who knew him and there is general mourning over his sudden death."

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 4.