

The Foster Family Part 4 - “the soul of honour and the acme of industry”

Now that we’ve discussed George H. and his wife and children, we’ll return to discussing his remaining siblings (James W., M. Louisa, Elizabeth, Sarah and Levi). James W. Foster was born circa 1842 in Amherstburg and he married Elizabeth Alice Butler, who was the daughter of William H. Butler, who fled to Canada in the early 1830’s, and Anne Calvert who was from England. James W. and Elizabeth were married on August 20, 1867 in Detroit, Michigan. According to a letter found in the Museum’s Foster family binder, it says that James, Elizabeth and their children moved from Amherstburg to Monroe, Michigan in 1878. Of their children, we know of two children: J. Ernest who passed away on August 1, 1896 and is buried in Rose Hill Cemetery in Amherstburg and Maria H.

James’ sister, M. Louisa, was born circa 1844 in Amherstburg. She married the Reverend Henry Jacobs. According to her obituary, she had a son named Roland. Louisa’s sister Elizabeth is the next child of Levi and Elizabeth Foster, but there was no information available for her. Elizabeth’s sister Sarah was born circa 1852 and passed away on November 5, 1863. She is buried at Rose Hill Cemetery in Amherstburg.

The last child of Levi and Elizabeth is Levi Wellington Foster who was born on May 18, 1855 in Amherstburg. Sadly, Levi Jr.’s mother Elizabeth passed away shortly after he was born. As a result, Levi Jr. was raised by his father’s brother John Henry Foster and his wife Emma Collins. He married Lilian Belle James on July 15, 1888 at Elysian, Minnesota. The couple had five children: Henry Oliver (July 16, 1891 – December 14, 1891); Edmund James (August 7, 1892 – November 22, 1970) who married Ellen Ralston and had two daughters, Mary and Geraldine; Hazel Louella (b. June 12, 1894) who married George Hedglin on June 25, 1917 and

had four children; Joseph Henry Foster (August 10, 1904 – November 18, 1958) who married Stella M. Smith on October 16, 1929 and had three children, Rose Ellen, Joseph Wayne and Steven Donald; and George Robert (January 4, 1906 – January 29, 1906).

Levi Foster Sr., as mentioned, married a second time to Lucy Harris. In addition to Lucy's daughter, Julia, from a previous marriage, the couple had three children: Annie Elizabeth; John and Thomas. There was no information available for Thomas, but we have several things to share about Annie and John.

Levi and Lucy's daughter Annie Elizabeth Foster was born circa 1858 in Amherstburg and married James L. Hyatt, the son of Mary Ann Sims. James Hyatt was born in Martinsville, Ohio and came to Canada with his mother in 1861. Annie Elizabeth and James were married in Colchester Baptist Church on May 3, 1875 and soon after moved to Windsor. The couple had ten children: Marion Everett (1877-1878); James Cary (1880-1882); Foster Llewellyn (1882-1887); George Hewitt (1884-1934) who, according to his draft registration card for WWI, worked for Lincoln Motor Co.; Annie Louise (1887-1933) who married 1. Boiseau 2. John Wilkinson in 1908 (son of Isaac Wilkinson and Mary Steel) and 3. John Shreve in 1925 (son of Felix Shreve and Matilda Hatter); Gladys Mabel (1890-1972) who married a Mason named Charles Washington (son of Charles A. Washington and Emily Westsell) and had three children named LeRoy, Chad and Hyatt; J. Lyle (born 1892) who married Velma Mosbey and had a daughter named Margaret Louise; Violet Alice (born 1894) who married Edward Mobbs and had four children of which we know three named Marguerite, Victoria and Edward; Eunice Beatrice (1897-1966) who married George Kersey, son of George Kersey and Effie Davis, and had four children named Effie Ann, George H., Wanda and Lyle) and Guy (1898) who was a pilot in the RCAF during WWI.

According to records from the Museum's Hyatt Family binder, James L. Hyatt was a deacon at the First Baptist Church in Windsor for over 50 years. This was in addition to working as a Foreman for Alex Cameron and John Curry – banking and real estate. James' wife Annie loved flowers and plants so he built her a large greenhouse at the side of their home which became Annie's business called Hyatt Green House. Their sons ran the flower shop and made funeral and wedding flower arrangements for several years. This helped them pay their way through college.

Sadly, Annie Elizabeth Foster passed away on February 19, 1911. The Museum's Hyatt Family binder includes details on the sudden passing of Annie Hyatt, as written by her son George H. Hyatt. He writes "Mother died very suddenly last night. She left home in company with Aunt Louise & Violet to go to church but she did not get far from home when she took sick but insisted on going on so when she got to the ferry deck she thought that she was feeling much better but when within about a block of the church she felt worse & Auntie had to almost carry her to get her to the church & then sent for a Doctor but when he got there he said that she was very sick & before anything could be done she had passed to the Great Beyond. She seemed to be in the best of spirits yesterday & in fact she remarked just a short while before she ... was feeling fine."

Annie's brother John Arthur Foster (a marine chef) was married to Annie Elizabeth Stevens and they had several children including Theodore, Annie, John, Ella, Elenore, and Bessie. Theodore (1883-1927) became a marine chef, while his sister Annie (born 1887) married Joseph Paulson. Annie's brother John, according to his marriage record, worked as a decorator and married Marjorie Katherine Laura Alexander (a stenographer and daughter of John Henry Alexander and Annie Louise Crawford) on February 7, 1921. John and Marjorie had at least two

children: Jack and Pat. John's sister Ella married John Bell and had two sons named Robert and Floyd. Ella's sister, Elenore Foster, was born in September 1885, while Bessie Eileen Foster was born on September 30, 1897. Bessie married Willard Maier, and had at least three children named Zeke, Dwight and Betty. It should also be added that in the 1920s, Bessie was appointed an "industrial nurse in the town for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co."

According to Annie Stevens Foster's obituary, she was a "highly respected, hardworking and thrifty citizen. The manner of her death was totally unexpected. She had spent a short time with her daughter, Mrs. Mayer, who lives across the street from her, and was just going out the door to return to her own home when she collapsed on Mrs. Mayer's steps and expired before her horror-stricken family could remove her. Heart failure was the cause of death. Mrs. Foster's maiden name was Annie Stevens. She was a daughter and the last of the family of the late Ezekiel Stevens, a prominent and highly influential citizen of Amherstburg in his day. She had two brothers, Lincoln and Malachi, both of whom predeceased her. She was married about forty years ago to John Foster, a lake cook. He died ten years ago, leaving her with a family of five – Ella, Mrs. A.M. Bell, of Windsor; Theodore, who lives at home; Annie, married in Winnipeg; John and Bessie, Mrs. Mayer of Amherstburg. Mrs. Foster was the soul of honour and the acme of industry. Following her husband's death she engaged to do the work of many families in Amherstburg, and by her thrift and economy improved her home so that it is one of the neatest, most comfortable and attractive in that part of the town. She acquired considerable means and other property. Of late years she gave up a good deal of her work, but retained the janitorship of the Bell Telephone office and the Imperial Bank. She performed these duties as usual Saturday and returning home, looked well to her own house as befitted a good housewife, not complaining

either of being unduly weary or of any illness. The sudden cutting off of her life has caused widespread sorrow.”

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.