

The Growing Grayer Family – Part 4

Livinia's brother Forrest was born in Colchester South on November 20, 1893. He married Ida Belle Chavis on November 1, 1916. Ida was born on August 14, 1900 in New Canaan, Colchester North, and she was the daughter of John Franklin Chavis (son of Wiley Chavis and Clarissa Ann Evans) and Caroline Melinda Harris (daughter of Thomas James Harris and Mary Ann Pearl). Ida's father John Franklin Chavis was previously married to Phoebe Milton, but she passed in 1888, the same year that Ida's mother Caroline Melinda Harris's first husband, Albert White, passed away. Additionally, after Ida's mother Caroline passed away, her father John Franklin Chavis married for a third time to Dianah Scott/Galloway in 1910.

Forrest worked as a farmer but was also employed at Ford Motor Company. In March 1918, Forrest's father James Hatfield Grayer sold Forrest one acre of his fifty-acre farm on the 3rd Concession for \$1. The Grayer Homestead farm had horses, cows, pigs, ducks, geese, and chickens. Forrest's wife Ida was a homemaker, but she also helped manage the family farm and worked as a domestic in the Harrow area. Both Forrest and Ida financially contributed to their family's income. Forrest also never drove a motor vehicle but chose to drive a team of horses using various kinds of wagons, buggies, and sleds as transportation. To supplement his farm income, during the summer months, Forrest also travelled to different farms in Harrow on Thursdays and Fridays, purchasing fruits and vegetables from local farmers. He would then rise early on Saturday mornings, drive his loaded freight wagon to Amherstburg where he sold his product, making a substantial profit. What a smart businessman. Forrest also later drove a variety of used milk wagons rather than a freight wagon which was slower. Forrest was often accompanied by one or two of his grandchildren who would assist him by going door to door with baskets of fruits and vegetables. It was a family effort.

Forrest and Ida had ten children: Thelma Beatrice (born April 12, 1918 and married Erwin Mulder); Alma Mercilla (b. October 30, 1919 and m. Floyd A. Walls); Freeda Mae (b. September 5, 1921 and m. Albert Crutchfield); Melda Elaine (b. October 22, 1923 and m. James Arthur Mulder); Floreen Winnifred (b. October 15, 1925 and m. David Daniel Johnson); Forrest Melvin (b. February 6, 1929 and married Virginia Adelaide Payne and Donna Jean Ramsey); Ethora Ann (b. February 28, 1932 and m. Robert Walker, George Mitchell and Roy Lee Cohen); Ida Margaret (b. April 18, 1934 and m. Hiram Cecil Miller and Robert Spidell Jr.); James William (b. October 12, 1937 and m. JoAnne St. Pierre, Agnes Ford and in a relationship with Sandra Rutter); Maryannette (b. December 4, 1942 and m. Lee A. Young and Alonzo McCullers).

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 5.