

The Hall Family History Part 1 – A Brief Stay in Haiti

In last month's family history for the Chavis family, a man named Jessie Hall was mentioned. After completing the Chavis family history, I decided to do more research on the Hall family which will be featured this month. The oldest members of the Hall family that I could find are James Hall (the father of Jessie Hall) and his brother Richard. We'll start with James. According to Milo Johnson's book, *New Canaan*, "Based on the stories passed down through the family the Hall family came from Georgia, however, early family members were born in North Carolina."

According to an interview with John Hall, a descendant of James Hall, which appeared in the *Windsor Star* on July 18, 1974, "My father told me that my grandfather escaped during the war. They went five days without food as they travelled from Atlanta, Georgia, to the coast of New Orleans crossing rivers on rafts they made." James Hall and his wife Mary appear in the 1861 Census with two children named Nancy and Jesse, but I could not see any references to them in earlier Census lists. They each appear on the 1871 Census as well. Other documents suggested that James and Mary Hall may have had more children than are listed on the Census. Earlier I mentioned that James had a brother named Richard and his obituary mentions three nephews including Jesse Hall (mentioned above), along with William Hall of Jackson, Michigan and James Hall of Chicago, Illinois. No further documentation could be found to confirm whether William and James were the sons of James and Mary Hall, but it is certainly possible. William and James could also be the children from an additional sibling of Richard and James but, as I mentioned, there was no evidence indicating who they were or who their parents were.

I was also unable to find information for James and Mary Hall's daughter Nancy who is listed under their household on the Census, but I found a wealth of information on Jesse and his

descendants. Once I have finished discussing Jesse and his descendants, I will end this family history by sharing information on Jesse's uncle Richard (James' brother).

Jesse Hall, the son of James and Mary Hall, married twice. His first marriage was to Victoria Walker and his second marriage was to Mary Allen, the daughter of Benjamin and Nancy (Chavis) Allen, on June 23, 1885 in Colchester North. Mary Allen also married twice. Her first marriage was to Frank Norris and her second marriage was to Jessie Hall. No records could confirm that Mary Allen and Frank Norris had any children, but Mary and Jessie had fifteen children: James, Roman, Isabella, Mamie, Drusilla, Ida, Richard, Elmer, William, Harold, John, Mabel, Nellie, David and Cecil. I found records that mention James, Roman, Mamie, Drusilla, Richard, Elmer, Harold, John, Mabel, Nellie, David and Cecil.

Before discussing Mary and Jesse's children, I'll share more information on them first. Jesse passed away on October 7, 1921 in Colchester North at the age of 68. At the time he was a farmer and widowed. His death record also shares that he was born on November 14, 1852 in Malden and that his father James was born in North Carolina. I was able to find an obituary for Jesse T. Hall in both the *Amherstburg Echo* and *The Essex Free Press* so I will share both. The *Amherstburg Echo* says "Jesse T. Hall, a well known lifelong resident of this township, passed away on Friday, in the 60th year of his age. He was born in Malden and was reared in Colchester North. He was twice married, first to Miss Victoria Walker, who died several years ago, and afterwards to Miss Melissa Allen, who died on the 9th day of April, 1910. To them were born fifteen children, of whom five survive – James Hall, of Ypsilanti, Mich.; Elmer Hall, of Windsor; Ida Hall, of Detroit; John and Nellie Hall, at home. Deceased was a lifelong member and official of the A.M.E. church, New Canaan, and was a Past Master of Star Masonic Lodge; Past Grand S.W. of the Ontario Grand Lodge, F.&A.M. He was buried from the A.M.E. Zion church at New

Canaan on Monday by the members of Lincoln Lodge, No. 8 F.&A.M. the funeral sermon being preached by Rev. Fry, of Harrow, and Rev. C. A. Graine, of Amherstburg. The pallbearers were Jerry Harris, Amherstburg, Isaac Chavis, Colchester North, Peter Brooker, Amherstburg, Jonathan Strawthers, Windsor.”

The Essex Free Press article is lengthier and says “– Jesse Hall, one of the best known colored men of this section, and a resident of Colchester North for over 55 years, passed away at his home on the Malden Road west of Gesto, on Friday evening last. Mr. Hall was 69 years of age, and had been ill since last March with hardening of the arteries. He was born in Malden township, a son of Mr. and Mrs. James Hall, of the township. When a child his parents moved to Haiti, but remained there but three years, and on their return to Canada settled in Colchester North. Deceased residing in this township for about 57 years. He was twice married, first to Victoria Walker and secondly to Mary M. Allen. There was no children by the first wife, but fifteen were born to the second wife, of whom four died in infancy, and six after they had grown up. Mrs. Hall died eleven years ago and since then, five children have passed away. The surviving children are James, of Ypsilanti, Mich.; Elmer of Windsor; Ida, of Detroit; Nellie and John at home. The funeral took place on Monday afternoon from the family home on the Malden Road to the A.M.E. church at New Canaan with interment in the New Canaan cemetery. The services were under the auspices of the Masonic Order. Mr. Hall having been for years a member of Lincoln Lodge F.&A.M., of Amherstburg, and a number of the members of the order attended in a body, the paid bearers being six Masons, John Struthers, Isaac Chavis, L. Bush, Jerry Harris, Frank Artis and J. Bell. Rev. W.F. Seay conducted the services, and was assisted by Rev. Mr. Fry of New Canaan, and Rev. Mr. Graim, of Amherstburg. A large number of friends and acquaintances attended the funeral.”

I could not find an obituary for Mary Hall, but I did find her death record from April 9, 1910 in Colchester. Mary's death record also shares that she was born on May 14, 1866 in Colchester. Both Mary and Jesse were buried in Union Cemetery in New Canaan.

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.