

The Bush Family History Part 1 – From Kentucky to Amherstburg

This month's family history features the Bush family. Based on the records, the last name Bush was not an uncommon name in 19th century Essex County, so there will be four branches of the Bush family highlighted this month. The first comes from Fountain and Sylvia Bush, the second comes from Luther Bush and Maria Kirtley, the third is from George Washington Bush and his wife Susan, and the last is William Bush and his wife Maria Artis. I am treating each as separate branches because I could not find a definitive connection between the four families except for one detail between the first two Bush families listed above. In Thomas Bush's (son of Fountain) obituary, it mentions a Luther Bush, but does not refer to him as a sibling, cousin, etc. This was not enough to justify connecting the families, so I have left them separate.

I will start by discussing Fountain Bush. According to the 1861 Census, he was married to a woman named Sylvia (sometimes spelt Selia). I could not find any additional information for Fountain, but I did find a death notice for Sylvia printed in *The Amherstburg Echo* on March 12, 1875. It says "Bush – In this town, on Monday the 8th inst., Mrs. Sylvia Bush, widow of the late Rev. Fountain Bush, in her 61st year." I also found a few documents related to their sons Thomas and Moses. The 1881 Census lists Thomas Bush as living under the household of his uncle and aunt Royal and Tilitha Thompson. This Census states that Thomas was 45 years old and worked as a Constable. In the following Census for 1891, Thomas is listed as a 'common labourer.' I was also able to find Thomas' obituary in *The Amherstburg Echo* which was printed on September 9, 1898. It says "THOS. BUSH, one of the old colored residents of the town, died at his home, Seymore street, on Thursday evening of last week, aged 66 years. Deceased had been ailing for some time, but about four months ago suffered a severe attack of illness, from the effects of which he died. Mr. Bush was born in slavery in Boon Co., Kentucky, 66 years ago, but escaped

when about 22 years of age, coming direct to Amherstburg, where he has continuously made his home since. He was unmarried and his only relatives were two uncles, Ryall Thompson and Henry Kirtley, and one aunt, Mrs. Alexander, of Park street. The funeral took place on Friday afternoon, leaving his late residence at 2 o'clock for the Baptist church, where services were conducted by Rev. J.A. Holt, interment taking place in Rose Hill cemetery. The remains were born to their last resting place by Luther Bush, John Wesley, James Dodson, Henry Brown, Thos. Harris and Wm. Brantford.”

I was also able to find a few pieces of information for Thomas' brother Moses. According to his death record, he passed away on December 1, 1879 at the age of 35. This record also states that he was born circa 1844 in Amherstburg and worked as a mariner. On December 5, 1879 *The Amherstburg Echo* reported Moses' passing and wrote “BUSH – In Amherstburg on Saturday, November 30th, Moses Bush, aged 35 years. Funeral took place to the First Baptist Church, on Monday last. The Rev. Anthony Binge (Binga) preached an impressive sermon.”

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.