

The Holbert Family History Part 2 – Civil War Veteran

So far, I have discussed John, William, Tolliver, Nancy, Harvey, and Caroline Holbert. It is now time to continue by discussing Joseph, Simon, Lewis, and Rebecca. Joseph was born on March 8, 1827 and he married Caroline Hedgman, the daughter of John Hedgman and Charlotte Boyles (a separate records says Holmes), who was born on March 8, 1834 (some records say July 8, 1944). On July 14, 1882, the *Amherstburg Echo* printed an interesting article about Caroline's father, John, which said "We see cases mentioned in Oxford and Halton of men 80 and 89 years old voting at the late Dominion elections, but none of them can compare with the case of John Hedgeman, an aged colored man of Amherstburg who voted in the Second Ward for Mr. McGregor. He is said to be 105 years old."

Joseph Holbert also appeared in the *Amherstburg Echo* including a brief article on February 25, 1898 which says "On Saturday night last, Rev. Jos. D. Holbert was surprised by a goodly number of the members of the First Baptist church. They brought with them baskets well laden with good things for which the reverend gentlemen returned his sincere thanks. A very pleasant evening was spent in music, singing, etc." In this article Joseph is referred to as a Reverend. A note from the Museum's collection says that Joseph was called to the ministry around the age of 20. His obituary appeared in the *Amherstburg Echo* on April 30, 1909 and shares even more details. It says "Rev. Joseph D. Holbert, for the past fifty years a resident of Amherstburg, died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Miller, Detroit, on Tuesday last, in the 83rd year of his age. The remains have been brought to the home of his son David, and the funeral will take place this Friday afternoon at 2 o'clock to the First Baptist church for service and interment will be in Rose Hill cemetery. Mr. Holbert was a native of the South, and came to

Amherstburg in the early 50's. He took part in the American Civil War and drew a substantial pension. One brother lived and died at New Canaan, and he has a sister, Mrs. Rebecca Boyd, of this town. His wife died a few years ago. Surviving him are two sons and two daughters. David, of Amherstburg; John, Lottie (Mrs. Miller), of Detroit, and Maud (Mrs. Herod), of Grand Rapids. Mr. Holbert was one of the most highly respected men in Amherstburg. He was a deacon of the First Baptist church and for some years resident pastor. He was elected a member of the Public School Board, and gave splendid service in educational affairs for many years. Recently, owing to a new rule regarding those who drew pensions from the United States, he went to Detroit to live with his daughter, Mrs. Miller. His death was due to old age." A further note in the Museum's collection states that Joseph served "in the Civil War he was Sergeant in Company 'H', 102 Regiment Michigan Coloured Infantry, and was mustered out in 1865 at Charleston, South Carolina."

Caroline passed away a few years before and her obituary was printed in the *Amherstburg Echo* on April 30, 1909. It says "In Amherstburg, Tuesday, April 27th, 1909, Caroline, wife of Rev. Joseph Holbert, aged 65 years, 9 months and 19 days. Deceased had been an invalid for 17 years suffering from paralysis. She failed rapidly during the last ten weeks but the end came unexpectedly. She was born in Malden, was the youngest daughter of the late John Hedgman and was the last surviving member of the family. She was united in marriage to Rev. Joseph Holbert in 1868 and had been a resident of Amherstburg since that time. Besides her aged husband she leaves to mourn her loss two daughters, Mrs. Robert Miller and Mrs. Maud Jackson, of Detroit, and two sons David and John, of Amherstburg. She was a woman of quiet demeanor and had a host of warm friends. The funeral will take place on Friday afternoon, April 30th, at 2 o'clock, to the First Baptist Church, interment in Rose Hill cemetery."

Caroline and Joseph Holbert had at least four children. The 1881 Amherstburg Census lists Joseph and Caroline with their children Charlotte, David, John and Maud E., who will be discussed next. Charlotte/Lottie appears in an *Amherstburg Echo* article on October 3, 1884 which mentions her talents as a singer. It says, "A Grand Concert and exhibition will be given in the New Town Hall, Amherstburg, on Wednesday evening, October 22nd, under the auspices of the young members and friends of the Baptist church. The programme will consist of laughable farces dialogues, vocal and instrumental music. Two star singers from Detroit are expected ... Don't fail to come and hear the two popular soprano singers, Miss Lottie Holbert and Miss Annie Green. Come one, come all. Doors open at 7 p.m. Curtain ... at 8. Admission 25 cts."

Charlotte married Robert Miller and they appear on the 1910 Michigan Census with their son Clark who, at the time, was a 21-year-old Bookkeeper. Also listed on this census is Charlotte's sister Maud Holbert who worked as a waitress. Charlotte and Robert may have had more children, but I could not find evidence beyond their son Clark.

There were several documents found for Joseph and Caroline's next child, David. He married Bertha Green, the daughter of John Green and Maggie Brooks, on March 8, 1897 in Detroit (see Green Family History <https://amherstburgfreedom.org/green-family/>). As a young woman, Bertha was involved with the Amherstburg-based Young People's Social Club which was part of the Nazrey Church. In 1892, she was elected as Vice President of this organization. Years later, in 1924, the *Amherstburg Echo* records that Bertha, along with Mrs. H.D. Banks, were delegates from the First Baptist Church for the Baptist Association in London. The *Echo* also mentions Bertha's participation in the Order of the Eastern Star and not only that she attended the Grand Chapter O.E.S. in Chatham but was also re-elected the Grand Royal Matron. In January 1926, the *Echo* reported that "The Women's Guild of the First Baptist church met in

the home of Mrs. B. Holbert on January 12th for the purpose of closing all business for the year 1925 and election of officers for present year. For the year 1925 the Guild raised \$331.70. During the fifteen years the Guild has been in progress its achievements have been many in doing for the church, the sick and the needy. The last year's greatest accomplishment was the gift of a beautiful Heitzman piano to the church. Officers elected for the years: Hon. Pres., Mrs. B. Holbert; President, Mrs. E. Stokes; Hon. Vice-Pres., Mrs. J. Saunders; Vice-Pres., Mrs. E. Thomas; Chaplain, Mrs. B. Holbert; Treasurer, Mrs. E. Kirtley; Secretary, Mrs. B. Hall; Asst. Sec., Mrs. M. Bank; Finance Committee, Mrs. B. Holbert, Mrs. F. Johnson, Mrs. B. Wilson. The Guild extends a vote of thanks to all who helped her in her undertakings and especially the merchants of Amherstburg, who are always so liberal." The Women's Guild began as the Church Aid Society in Amherstburg which was a mixed-gender society that began in 1850 out of the First Baptist Church. From the Church Aid Society came the Amherstburg Guild in 1899, and then the Women's Guild in 1909.

Sadly, Bertha Green Holbert passed away on September 25, 1928. Her death record also mentions that her date of birth was July 1, 1880. A few days later, on September 28, the *Amherstburg Echo* printed Bertha's obituary which said "Mrs. Bertha Hulbert aged 48 years, prominent in colored church and fraternal organizations of Amherstburg and wife of Mr. David Hulbert died at her home, Kemp avenue, late Tuesday night. Since last October she had been suffering from heart trouble, but on Tuesday seemed somewhat improved; however in the evening she suffered a severe attack and died about midnight. She was born in Amherstburg, the daughter of the late John Green and his wife, Margaret Brooks. Thirty years ago she was married to David Hulbert. At an early age she became a member of the First Baptist Church and has been very active in church work ever since, occupying many positions of responsibility in the church

and church societies. At the time of her death she was clerk, honorary president of the Guild, and honorary president of the Women's Missionary Society. She was also a member of Ruth Chapter, O.E.S., and for four years was Grand Worthy Matron of this Order for Ontario, resigning this position because of ill health. She is survived by her husband, who is in the employ of Falls & Son; one son, Joseph, chef of the steamer Queen City; her mother, Mrs. John Green; three sisters, Mrs. Myrtle Green, of Amherstburg; Ruth, Mrs. John Cole, of Cleveland; and Esther, Mrs. Henry Balfour, of Maidstone; also two brothers, Edmund and Denzil, both of Cleveland. The funeral services will be held this afternoon (Friday) at 2 p.m. in the First Baptist Church. Rev. Talbert will be in charge, assisted by Rev. Edwards, pastor of the church. Interment will take place in Rose Hill cemetery." A separate obituary found in the Museum's collection, printed October 2, mentions "Owing to the prominence of the deceased in the church work and in the Order of the Eastern Star, the attendance was very large and a number of letters and resolutions of condolence and eulogy were read from societies of the local church and also from churches in Windsor, North Buxton and other places. Mrs. William Wilson sang 'There is No Night There.'"

Decades later, on December 8, 1955, the *Amherstburg Echo* printed an obituary for Bertha's husband David Holbert which says "Funeral services were held Saturday afternoon for David Joseph Holbert, who died at his residence on Perry St., Amherstburg, in the First Baptist Church. Mr. Holbert was born in Amherstburg and was a resident of this district all his life. He was employed as a maintenance man at Bob Lo Island. Mr. Holbert was a member of the First Baptist Church. He was also a member of Lincoln Lodge No. 8 A.F. and A.M. His wife, Bertha, died in 1928. A son, Joseph, died in 1946. Surviving is one brother, John, in Detroit."

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 3.