

The Lockman Family History Part 3 – The No. 2 Construction Battalion

Jerome Wellington Lockman married three times to Minnie Cunningham, Dolly Williams and Carrie Jane Dorsey. Jerome married Minnie Cunningham, the daughter of John Cunningham and Jennie Johnson, on September 23, 1903. His second marriage to Dolly Williams, the daughter of John William Williams and Ellen Carter, occurred on July 15, 1911 in Detroit. At the time, Jerome worked as a plasterer and Dolly worked as a domestic. Jerome's third marriage was to Carrie Jane Dorsey, the daughter of Benjamin Dorsey and Harriet Butler. In the 1921 Census, Jerome and Carrie are listed with Jerome's daughter Myrtle. It is likely that Myrtle is Jerome's daughter from his first marriage to Minnie Cunningham because Myrtle is listed as 19 years old, which is the same time of Jerome's first marriage.

Carrie Jane Lockman passed away on May 4, 1945 in London, Ontario. Her death record also shows that she lived in Windsor, was born on April 11, 1880 and was a housewife. Her obituary from May 7, 1945 in *The Windsor Daily Star* says "Carrie Jane Lockman, 65, died Saturday at the Ontario Hospital in London. She is survived by her husband, Jerome Kockman (Lockman), of 401 London street east, and one daughter, Mrs. John (Myrtle) Craig of 975 Mercer street. Funeral services will be conducted by the Rev. F.O. Stewart at the Thompson Funeral Home, 961 Ouellette avenue tomorrow at 3:30 pm. Burial will be in Windsor Grove Cemetery."

Jerome Lockman is part of a very important part of Canadian military history. He served in the No. 2 Construction Battalion, the first and only segregated Battalion in Canadian military history. Black men continuously tried to serve during WWI but were excluded and told that it was a 'white man's war.' After community protest, Black men were finally able to serve in the segregated No. 2 Construction Battalion, which was formed on July 5, 1916 in Pictou, Nova

Scotia and moved to Truro, Nova Scotia in September 1916. There was also a detachment that operated in Windsor, Ontario from September 1916 to March 1917. It should also be noted that approximately 700 Black soldiers were in non-segregated units (outside of the No. 2 Construction Battalion) and fought in battles such as The Somme, Ypres, Vimy Ridge, Hill 70 and Passchendaele.

According to Jerome's service records, he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Forces (CEF) on September 9, 1916 and served in England and France. He was discharged on October 28, 1918 "having been found medically unfit for service." His military records show that he fell off of a pile of lumber in France in October 1917 and injured his back. He carried his injury for about 3 months and then reported it. It appears that the severity of his injury was not taken seriously which is sadly something that many Black soldiers encountered.

Not only did Private Jerome Lockman serve in the No. 2 Construction Battalion, he was also involved in recruitment efforts. On September 27, 1916, *The Windsor Evening Record* printed "Looking For Recruits – A recruiting squad for No. 2 construction battalion, colored, composed of Lieut. L.B. Young and Ptes. R.S. Thomas and Jerome Lockman is touring the Chatham, Dresden and Buxton districts. Success has attended the efforts out of town so far. The squad will be gone about a week."

Jerome passed away on January 4, 1956 in Windsor. *Find a Grave* mentions another child of Jerome named Arthur Neil Lockman, but I could not find any documentation to confirm this. Jerome's obituary, which appeared in *The Windsor Daily Star*, on January 6, 1956, says "Jerome Lockman – A veteran of World War I, Jerome Lockman, 76, of ... Tuscarora St., died Wednesday in Hotel Dieu. Born in Windsor, Mr. Lockman has resided here all his life. He was a retired plasterer by trade. Mr. Lockman enlisted in September of 1916 in the No. 2 Construction

Battalion of the Royal Canadian Engineers. He later served in France with the Forestry Corps. Mr. Lockman was a member of Tanner A.M.E. Church and the North American Masonic No. 11, F. and A.M. His wife, the former Carrie Dorsey, died in 1943. Surviving are one brother Noble Lockman, Sandwich West; one aunt, Mrs. Louisa White, Windsor; one niece, Mrs. James [Joseph] Porter, and one nephew, Noble Banks, both in Windsor. Funeral services will be held Saturday at 11 a.m. in the James H. Sutton Funeral Home, 937 Ouellette Ave., to Tanner A.M.E. Church for service at 1:30 p.m., followed by a special service under the auspices of North American Masonic Order No. 11, F. and A.M. Rev. A.E. Scotland will officiate. Burial will be in the military section of Windsor Grove Cemetery.”

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 4.