

Turner Family History Part 3 – Justice of the Peace

Now that I have discussed Julia, William H., and Rosina, I will discuss their siblings James E., Elizabeth Georgina, and Louisa. James was born on May 6, 1841 in Amherstburg. He married Melissa McCurdy, the daughter of Nasa and Permelia McCurdy, on April 9, 1867 in Essex County. Their children include Emily, Everett, James, George, Hattie, Maud, Myrtle E., Anna A., Clarence Alanzo, and Durward Clifford. Before discussing their children, there are a few documents to share about James and Melissa. According to his death record, James Edward Turner died on January 7, 1922 in Colchester North. His obituary from the *Essex Free Press* shares more details and says “James E. Turner, an old resident of New Canaan, who has been failing for some time, passed away on Saturday last at his home on the Malden Road. The funeral was held on Tuesday, with interment in Amherstburg cemetery. Deceased was 82 years of age. Mr. Turner, prior to moving to New Canaan over 40 years ago, kept a store in Amherstburg and was for some years a J.P. He was married to Miss McCurdy, who survives with six children – James and Hattie (Mrs. Sharp), of Detroit; Clarence, of Buffalo; Clifford and George of New Canaan, and Maud (Mrs. James Scott) of Harrow. He also leaves a sister Mrs. Matthews, of Sandwich. The funeral services were conducted in the A.M.E. church at Amherstburg on Tuesday by Rev. W.F. Seay, of New Canaan, prior to interment in the Amherstburg cemetery.”

I was also able to find an obituary for Melissa McCurdy Turner printed in the *Essex Free Press* on July 9, 1926 which says “Mrs. Melissa Turner, widow of the late James Turner, for many years a resident of New Canaan, passed away at her home in Windsor on July 1st. She is survived by two daughters and four sons, Mrs. Hattie Sharp, of Detroit; Mrs. James Scott, of Harrow; James, of Detroit; George of Cleveland; Clarence of Buffalo; and Clifford, of Windsor.

Funeral was held from her late residence, 739 McDougall Street, Windsor, on Saturday afternoon to the Windsor A.M.E. Church with interment in Amherstburg Cemetery.”

As mentioned, James and Melissa’s children included Emily, Everett, James, George, Hattie, Maud, Myrtle E., Anna A., Clarence Alanzo, and Durward Clifford. I wasn’t able to find information for Emily, Everett, James, and Myrtle, but I did find information for George, Hattie, Maud, Anna, Clarence, and Durward Clifford. George married Eva Brooks, the daughter of Peter Brooks and Laura Smith, on December 3, 1909 in Cuyahoga, Ohio. At the time, George was a Sailor and Eva worked as a Dressmaker. I could not find an obituary for George or Eva but *Find a Grave* shares a photo of George’s headstone which lists his date of birth and death, 1875-1943.

George’s sister Hattie is next. On January 6, 1899, the *Amherstburg Echo* reported “A very quiet but pretty wedding took place at the residence of James Turner, J.P., when his daughter Hattie was united in marriage to Anthony Boyd of Montpelier, Ohio. The bride was tastefully attired in white silk mull over taffeta. After the ceremony all sat down to a sumptuous repast. Mr. and Mrs. Boyd will make their future home at Montpelier, Ohio. Mrs. Boyd will be greatly missed by her friends but New Canaan’s loss will be Montpelier’s gain.” Hattie and Anthony had a daughter according to the birth record for Maud Garnet Boyd who was born on December 25, 1899. Maud later married George Henry Coates and their special day was briefly reported in the *Essex Free Press* on January 10, 1919 which says “Coats – Boyd- At the brides home, New Canaan, on Christmas Day, December 25th by Rev. Sylvester Ware. George Henry Coats to Miss Maud Garnett Boyd, all of New Canaan.” Maud’s obituary from November 29, 1954, in the *Windsor Daily Star* states “Mrs. Maud Garnett Coates, 54 wife of George H. Coates, of 447 Elliott east died Sunday in Grace Hospital after a brief illness. Born in New Canaan, Ont., she had been a resident of Windsor for 32 years coming here from Detroit. Mrs. Coates was a

member of the Missionary Society and Emergency Club of the A.M.E. Church. She is survived by her husband; her mother, Mrs. Hattie Byrd, of Detroit; one son, G. Alger, at home; six daughters, Mrs. Fred Gibbs (Lorraine), Gary, Indiana; Mrs. Roy DeShield (Barbara), of Toronto; Betty Jean, Sharron Patricia, Judith and Gwendolyn, all at home; one brother Ralph Sharp of Detroit and two grandchildren. The body will rest at the James H. Sutton Funeral Home, 937 Ouellette until Wednesday at 11 a.m. when it will be transferred to the A.M.E. Church at Mercer and Assumption to rest from noon until services at one o'clock. Rev. W.H. Jones and Rev. G.W. Barber will officiate. Burial will be in Rosehill Cemetery, Amherstburg."

Records show that Hattie married more than once. She also married a man with the last name Sharpe, and they had a son named Ralph Burton Sharpe (born 1904) who is mentioned in the previous paragraph. Ralph's obituary appeared in the *Windsor Star* on September 26, 1977, and says "SHARPE – Ralph Bertrand, 73 years, September 22, 1977 in Detroit. Dear son of Mrs. Hattie Byrd (deceased 1965). Dear nephew of Mrs. Trewery Turner, Detroit; Mrs. Edna Turner Jones, Windsor. Several nieces and nephews also survive ... Interment Rose Hill Cemetery, Amherstburg." Hattie married a third time to Scott Byrd (1887-1953).

Hattie's sister Maud is the next child of James E. Turner and Melissa McCurdy. Maud was born on April 22, 1881 in Colchester North. She married J.H. Scott, the son of J.G. and Mary A. Scott, on May 12, 1901 in Colchester North. On November 23, 1955, Maud's obituary appeared in the *Windsor Star* which says "SCOTT – Maude Evelyn, 74 years, entered into rest at Grace Hospital on Monday, November 21, 1955. Beloved wife of James Scott; dear mother of Mrs. R.W. Banks (Gladys) of Detroit, Clyde of Colchester South, one son Percy (predeceased), one sister Mrs. Hattie Byrd of Detroit; ten grandchildren. Resting at the J.H. Madill Funeral Chapel, Harrow, until Thursday, thence to the family residence at Colchester until noon Friday

when the body will be in state at the A.E.M.E. [sic] Zion Church, Colchester where the funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. Rev. C.L. Morton officiating. Interment, Central Grove Cemetery.”

Maud’s husband James Henry Scott’s obituary also appeared in the *Windsor Star* on October 8, 1968 and says “SCOTT – James Henry, 92, of Detroit died Monday at home after a lengthy illness. He was born in New Canaan and had lived in Detroit the past four years, moving there from Colchester South. He was a retired farmer. He was a member of St. Mark’s AME Zion Church, Colchester. His wife Maude predeceased him. Surviving are: a son, Clyde, of Colchester; daughter Gladys Banks of Detroit; a sister, Mrs. Clifton (Elizabeth) Newton of Ypsilanti, Mich.; 10 grandchildren, 22 great-grand-children and two great-great-grandchildren ... Burial Rosehill Cemetery, Amherstburg.”

Maud and James had three children named Percy, Clyde and Gladys. Percy passed away on December 21, 1932 in Detroit at the age of 31. He was single and was born on October 10, 1901. Percy’s sister Gladys passed away on July 27, 1988 in Warren, Michigan. Her death record states that she was born on July 15, 1903. Gladys’ obituary from the *Windsor Star* says “BANKS -Gladys May, 85 years, died July 27, 1988 at BiCounty Hospital, Warren Mich. Beloved wife of the late Ruel Banks (1975). Dear mother of Mrs. George Dennis (Frances) of Windsor, Mrs. Evalaine Baylis of New Westminster B.C., Mrs. Ethelwyn Scott of Windsor, Ellsworth Banks of Anderdon Twp., Mrs. Henry Reed (Esme) of Detroit, Mrs. Darlene Wright of Detroit, Winston Banks of Toronto, Veale Banks of Toronto, Mrs. Lola Moore of Detroit and the late Ruel Banks Jr. (1982). Dearest sister of Clyde Scott of Harrow and the late Percy Scott (1933). Twenty-seven grandchildren, 38 great-grandchildren and 5 great-great-grandchildren.” It was just a few months later that Gladys’ brother Clyde passed away on December 18, 1988. According to his obituary

which appeared in the *Windsor Star* he was 83 years old and was predeceased by his wife Glenna (1969) and son Clyde (1955). His obituary also says that he was survived by two stepsons and two stepdaughters, but they are not named.

Maud's sister Ann was born on July 15, 1884 in Colchester North. Maud's brother Clarence married Truvery Bowlin, the daughter of Walter Bowlin and Mae Venables, on February 2, 1914 in Cuyahoga, Ohio. At the time, Clarence worked as a cook. Clarence and Truvery also lived in Buffalo as was reported in the February 24, 1922 issue of the *Essex Free Press* which says "Mrs. Clarence Turner, of Buffalo, has been the guest of her mother-in-law, Mrs. Jas. Turner, Malden Road." The *Essex Free Press* also reported Clarence's passing in the December 24, 1948 issue. The obituary shares that the "Funeral services were held on Wednesday, for Clarence Turner, aged 52, of Buffalo, N.Y., owner of a restaurant and former resident of New Canaan, who died on Thursday of last week in Buffalo, after a long illness. Services were held at 1pm at the James H. Sutton Funeral Home, Windsor, with the Rev. Mack Brown officiating, and burial was in Rose Hill cemetery, Amherstburg. Mr. Brown [Turner] lived in Buffalo for many years, going there from New Canaan, where he was born. Survivors are his widow, Mrs. Trewary Turner, two sisters, Mrs. Hattie M. Bird of Detroit and Mrs. James Scott, of Colchester, and one brother Clifford Turner, of Windsor."

The last child of James E. Turner and Melissa McCurdy is Durward Clifford Turner. He was born on November 25, 1895 in Colchester. He married Edna Scott, the daughter of Laban Scott and Jessie Franklin, on November 4, 1918 in Colchester. The *Essex Free Press* reported on August 22, 1919, the birth of Clifford and Edna's child but no name is mentioned. Further research reveals the child's name and the name of their other children. The *Windsor Star* shared G. Laverne Matthews' obituary on November 21, 2002 which is the unidentified child previously

mentioned. The obituary says “Passed November 20th at Hotel Dieu. Born August 13, 1919, Colchester, Ontario. Beloved wife of Russell Matthews (1986). Beloved mother of James Russell (1990), Mary (1951) and Karl Turner (1996). Daughter of Clifford Durward Turner (1949) and Edna (Scott) Turner (1994). Sister of Thelma Leona Gibson (2000), Helen Ann Turner (1986) and Edna Virginia Harris (1977). Loving and caring grandmother of Patrick and Shawn Matthews, Marnie Burns and Cory Dodd; great grandmother of Kayla and Khalil; Mother-in-law of Neen Matthews-Jackson (Clyde Jackson) ...Church Mother of The Upper Room Tabernacle ... Interment at Puce Memorial Cemetery.” This means that James and Melissa’s children were G. Laverne, Thelma Leona, Helen Ann and Edna Virginia.

The *Essex Free Press* mentioned that in March 1924 “Clifford Turner, who has been on the Keeley farm, will have an auction sale on Wednesday, the 19th inst. and will move to the city. Dolph Brush has rented the Keeley place. There is no further mention of Clifford in the press but *Find A Grave* states that he passed in 1949. Decades later, Clifford’s wife Edna passed away as was reported by the *Windsor Star* on April 26, 1994. It states “JONES (TURNER) – Edna 93 years died April 25, 1994 at Windsor Wester Hospital. Beloved wife of the late Clifford Turner (1949) and the late George Jones (1973). Dear mother of Laverne Matthews, Thelma Gibson and the late Helen Turner (1986) and the late Virginia Harris (1977). Also predeceased by 1 brother James Scott (1969). Loving grandmother of 4 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great granddaughter. Mrs. Jones was a member of the Upper Room Pentecostal Church, The Evelyn Parker Senior Citizens Group, a volunteer of the Canadian Red Cross. Mrs. Jones worked many years at the Prince Edward Hotel ... Interment Puce Memorial 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.