

April 15, 2022



# UPCHURCH & ALLIED FAMILIES ASSOC.

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## FROM THE EDITOR

It's always a good time for a story from our founder, Phil Upchurch. In this edition he explains the background on the Upchurch Clans and how the clan numbering came to be. I spring from clan 14—JOHN U. III / JOHN U. VII Subclan.

On page 4, Linda Upchurch Sparks, Upchurch Tree Master, thanks volunteer associate tree masters for their efforts in the first quarterly report in 2022. Some of us remember the 1950's (as I do) and Linda gives us a link to the National Archives to access the newly released 1950 U.S. census records, before they become fully available on [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com).

We are unique. We relate to each other both genetically and in an historical context. My job is to print common interest stories, large or small— in this case, genealogy and family history to our newsletter in a pleasing way. You could help me out if you would send us a memory to share, an historical picture, photos of your loved ones or a story to be shared with UAFA.

*Cindy Hale*



## BACKGROUND ON UPCHURCH CLANS IN AMERICA

*By Robert Phillip Upchurch, PhD*

UPCHURCH BULLETIN VOLUME 27. NUMBER 1. Page 9. January - June 2006

The concept of dividing the Upchurch family in America in Clans has been very useful as a tool for communicating with each other about our relatives and ancestors. The family is growing ever larger and more dispersed which means we are forced to think in terms of the family having some kinds of divisions. Keep in mind that as of 2038 our Upchurch family will have been in America 400 years. That is a lot of family history to think about.

Given the above circumstances, it is fortunate that the concept of Upchurch Clans was introduced early in the Upchurch Bulletin and that it has been followed and fleshed out since. Certainly hundreds and more likely thousands of present-day members of the

family can tell you the Clan to which they belong. Let us now reprise the clan concept.

We arbitrarily decided that all members of the fifth generation of the Upchurch family in America should be the Head of a Clan and that their Clan should be known by their name - as the NATHEN U. CLAN, the GEORGE U. CLAN, and so forth. These individuals are all Great-great grandchildren of Michael Upchurch I, who came to America as a 14 year old boy about 1638. So far 22 members of the fifth generation have been found and named. Thus, we have 22 Upchurch Clans in America. Some of these are "one person" clans as we are yet to find descendants for them. This is especially true for some of the females. They tended to get married and to be lost to us as their Upchurch name faded from view. With the recent event of the Internet and E-mail we have hopes of

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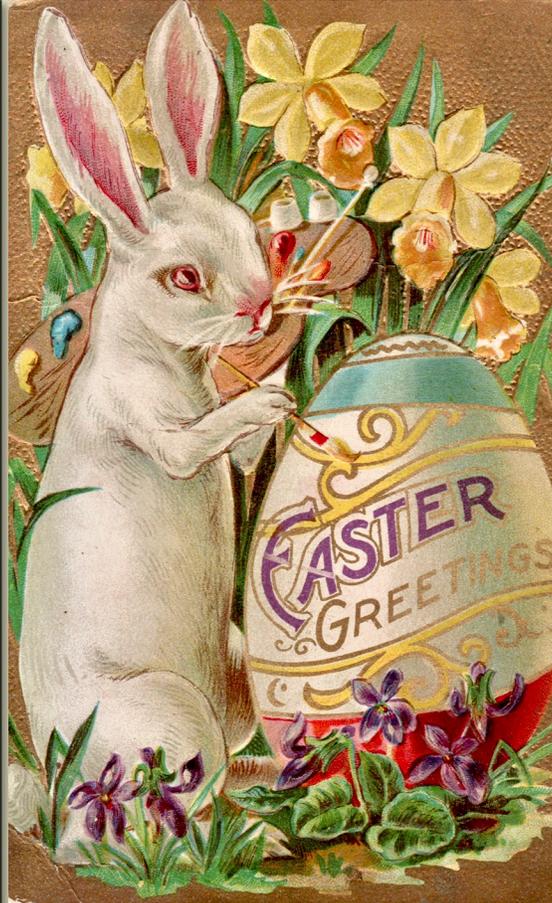
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"She walked among the daffodils,  
Eyes piercing.  
Somewhere there was a treasure  
Hidden within the yellow sea;  
And there it was,  
A silvery slip of oval goodness  
Encasing a sweet wonder  
Her fingertips could barely free  
From its grasp.  
Treasure found, she added it to  
The basket filled with other such  
wonders,  
A secret smile spreading across  
her face."

— Julie Craig



A Reminder to the  
guy's from Brenda Car-  
bon, [Italia19@aol.com](mailto:Italia19@aol.com),  
UAFA's DNA Project  
Coordinator:

Have you taken the Y  
DNA test? We are in  
need of additional  
Upchurch male testers.  
Thank you for  
considering  
this request.



**BACKGROUND ON UPCHURCH CLANS IN AMERICA** *Continued from Page 1*

bringing these obscure clans to light. With diligent research we are almost certain to uncover more members of the fifth generation and thus increase the number of clans beyond twenty-two. We already have several candidates. One of these is Joseph U., b. 1775 (NC) for whom thousands of descendants have been documented and organized into a family outline.

The heads of Upchurch Clans were born around the time of the Revolutionary period which was from 1775 to 1881. Most of them were actually born before this period. In general they had one foot in the Colonial Period 1607-1881 and one foot in what became the United States of America. Clearly their ancestors lives were played out in the Colonial Period. To give some perspective, perhaps it will be well to review some aspects of our Colonial Ancestors.

After arrival in America about 1638, Michael U. I was first found in Surry Co., VA where he completed his seven-year period of indentured service to pay for his transportation from England. He married and lived out his life in Surry Co., VA, dying there in 1681. He had four children, only one of whom, Richard U. I (1658-1700), is known to have had descendants. The family unfolded in the Colonial Period as seen in the picture here.

A few more things need to be said about our Colonial Upchurch ancestors. First, we must caution that the birth and death dates given above are approximate and based on the best information available at this time. More research may reveal the need for some slight adjustments. From a more substantive standpoint let us reflect on the movements of our Colonials.

The period of 1650-1750 in Virginia was one in which each generation looked over the horizon for a better life. Taken from the vantage point of Surry County on the James River this largely meant looking south-west. There lay Sussex County and beyond Brunswick County. There good land could be had cheaply, and it was relatively flat, well drained, and easily cleared for cultivation. These facts along with the always specialized circumstances in any given family led to what would be three centuries of ever southward and westward movement in America. It continues today, albeit for some of the same and for some different reasons.

In any case, the early generations of the Upchurch family in America followed this Surry-Sussex-Brunswick route. This chapter in our family history deserves much more attention. For example, where did each family live, what land did they own, what services

did they provide for the common good, and who were their neighbors? It would have been these neighbors with whom they intermarried and with whom they moved, intermarried or not, in a stream ever onward.

The existence of Brunswick County, VA on the North Carolina border adjoining the, at that time, large Granville County, NC set the stage for the family to make the easy leap from VA to NC. Some of the 4th generation made the leap but some of this generation did not. It is our belief that all members of the 5th generation of the Upchurch family in America actually lived in NC at some point in their life. The actual examples reveal several circumstances. Some 5th generation members were born in VA but moved at an early age to NC where they either lived out their lives or moved on to other states - south or west. Some were born in NC and lived out their lives there or moved on to other states - south or west.

**Colonial Ancestors.**

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1<sup>st</sup> generation - Michael U. I

2<sup>nd</sup> generation - Richard U. I (son of Michael U. I)

3<sup>rd</sup> generation - Three children of Richard U. I of whom two had children.

They were:

John U. I (1698-1758) and James U. I (1685-1765) both being grandchildren of Michael U. I.

4<sup>th</sup> generation - There are four of these Great-grandchildren of Michael U. I who were known to have had descendants. They were:

- James U. III (1724-1784) - son of John U. I - James U. III produced 5 members of the 5<sup>th</sup> generation who became Heads of Clans 14, 15, 16, 18, 19.
- William U. II (1735- ?) - son of James U. I - William U. II produced 2 members of the 5<sup>th</sup> generation who became Heads of Clans 11 and 12.
- Richard U. II (1725-1798) - son of James U. I - Richard U. II produced 11 members of the 5<sup>th</sup> generation who became Heads of Clans 1, 2, 3,4, 6, 7, 8, 13, 20, 21, 22.
- Michael U III (1728-1795) - son of James U. I - Michael U. III produced 4 members of the 5<sup>th</sup> generation who became Heads of Clans 5, 9, 10, 17.



**BACKGROUND ON UPCHURCH CLANS IN AMERICA** *Continued from Page 3*

Although the papers grow yellow with age and the tombstones grow ever harder to read, there is an Upchurch treasure-trove waiting for us in Virginia starting with Brunswick County and proceeding to earlier sites of Upchurch domiciles. It is not that these sites have been ignored but research has been inadequate. We hope for reinforcement documentation but also stand ready for new information that will be a surprise and allow us to render the story told here more accurately and more fully.

The use of the concept of Upchurch Clans has allowed us to establish more rapid and reasoned interaction with new found collaborators. Once we can establish that the new initiate is from a certain Clan the information flows rapidly as the exchanges focus on particular Upchurch ancestors, particular locations and particular

circumstances. In fact, it is common now to focus on a subclan within a clan. The children of Clan Heads are declared to be Heads of Subclans. Thus, one could belong to the George U./Shadrack U. Subclan, Shadrack being a son of George. Given that the Subclan Heads, such as Shadrack, belong to the 6th generation of the family we are brought that much further along in time. This makes it easier for a new convert to the study of Upchurch heritage to find themselves "in the know". Perhaps, it will not boggle the minds of the reader too much if we admit that we are now often making reference to Upchurch Lines, the children of Subclan Heads being the Heads of Lines. To use a personal reference, I belong to the Nathan U. I Clan and to the Nathan U. I/Gilbert U. Subclan and to the Bartley Jefferson U. Line in this Subclan - Bartley being the son of Gilbert and Gilbert being the son

of Nathan U. I. Bartley was my grandfather who died when I was about a year old. Most of us can reach back to our grandfather and even our Great-grandfather through personal knowledge or information handed down or acquired through research. If not, you should.

*Phil Upchurch, PhD, is the founder of UAFA which was formally organized in 2013— although Phil was editor of the Upchurch Bulletin from 1980-2016*



**Linda Upchurch Sparks 1st Quarter 2022 Upchurch Family Trees Report**



I am happy to be sharing another good report for the first quarter of this year. In addition to our regular standouts, Anna Sheets and Teresa

Churchill, I want to call attention to the work that Carla Michaels is doing with the Joseph tree. When Carla completed her biofile project, she asked for a tree to work on. I gave her Joseph in the hope that, with her genealogy skills and Brenda Carbon's expertise with DNA, they would be able to figure out who Joseph's parents were. Many experienced genealogists have tried to answer this question over the years without success, but they didn't have everything available to them that Carla and Brenda have—namely the internet and DNA. So, we'll have to keep our fingers crossed on that one.

On another subject, I have enjoyed scrolling through my old neighborhoods in the 1950 census. I haven't had much luck with what is posted to Ancestry.com, but the link to the national archives works well. If you haven't seen it yet, you might want to check it out.

<https://1950census.archives.gov>. The search feature by name is only moderately successful, but if you can figure out what enumeration district you want to see, you can search by ED and scroll through the entire neighborhood. It was like a walk down Memory Lane! Can't wait till Ancestry has it all indexed and 1950 census hints start showing up.



Image courtesy of Missouri State Archives

**Thanks to all the volunteer associate tree masters for the work you do on the Upchurch trees! —Linda**

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