

## Aurora O Ray

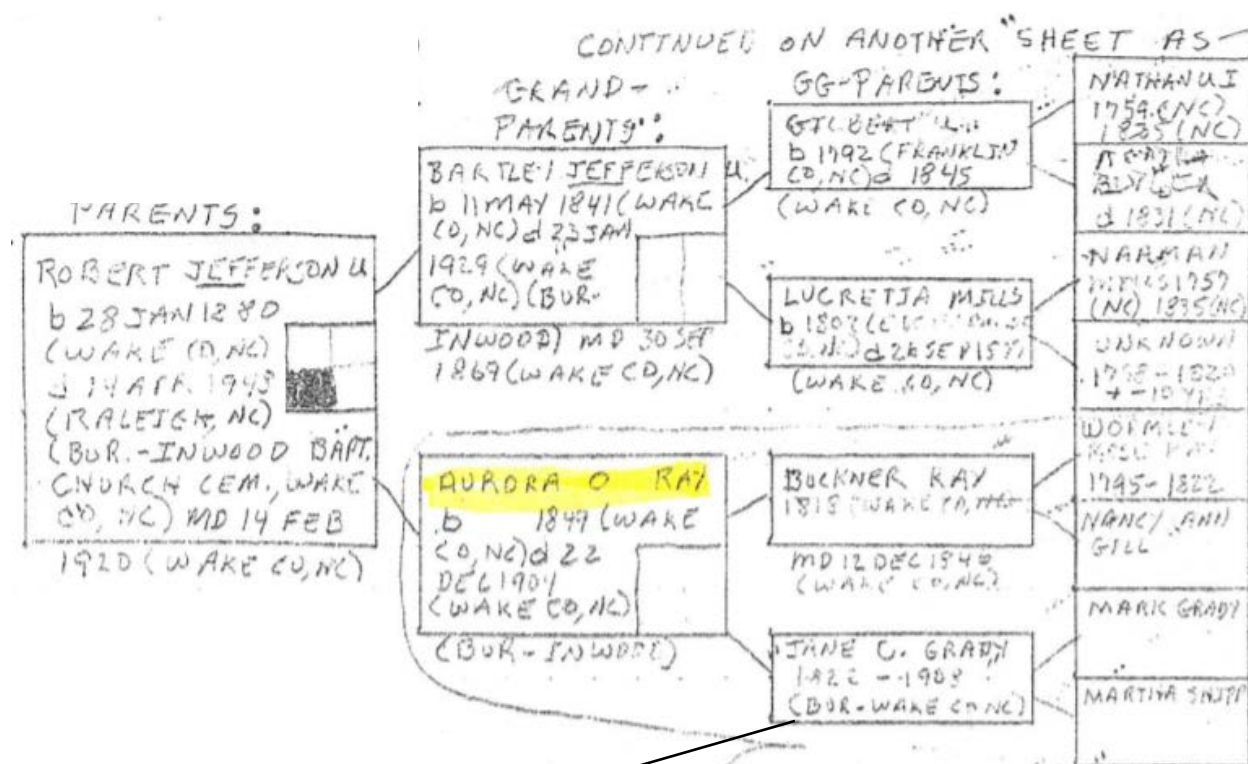
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**Commentary:** Aurora Ray, born 1849 in NC, married Bartley Jefferson Upchurch in 1869. Her husband was the son of Gilbert and the grandson of Nathan I, head of Upchurch Clan #3. This union proved to be very fruitful in that 11 and possibly 12 children were born in a 23 year period.

**Acknowledgements:** This Biofile was transcribed by Carla J. Michaels, UAFA Volunteer Coordinator in Cary, NC.

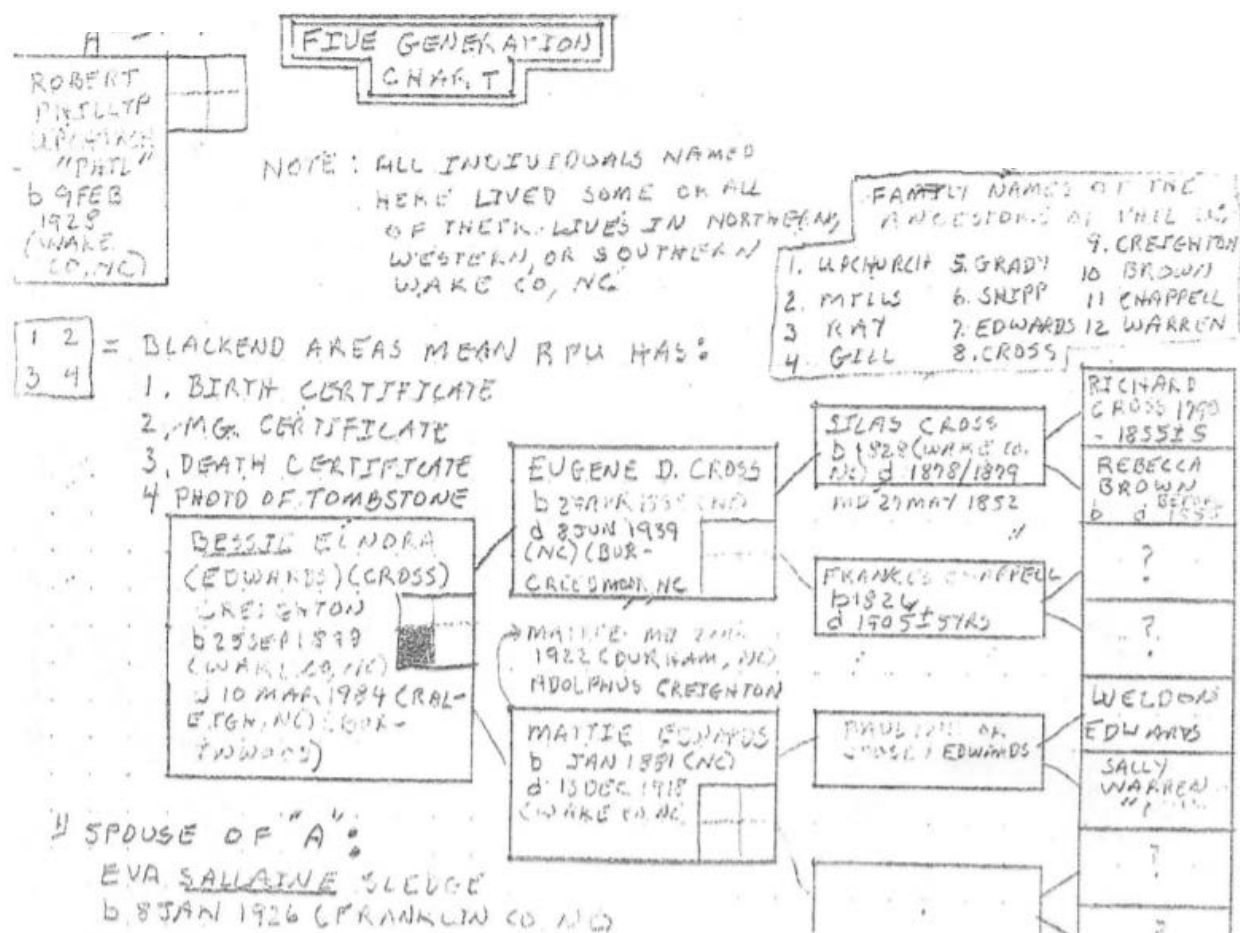
**(no number)** Date Chart constructed or updated: 1 Jun 2012

\* = Ancestors of RPU. Each biofile has an orange tag in the Biofile system – RPU 15 Jun 2018



lived in Northern  
Wake Co, NC – Barton's  
Creek Township – on the  
Neuse River.

Parents, grandparents, great grandparents, and great great grandparents of Robert Phillip Upchurch: Five Generation Chart.



Names included:

Robert Jefferson Upchurch	Bartley Jefferson Upchurch	Aurora O Ray
Gilbert Upchurch	Lucretia Mills	Buckner Ray
Jane C Grady	Nathan Upchurch, I	Mary ---
Naaman Mills	Wormly	Nancy Ann Gill
Mark Grady	Martha Shipp	Robert Phillip Upchurch
Bessie Elnora (Edwards) (Cross) Creighton		Eugene D Cross
Mattie Edwards	Silas Cross	Frank Chappell
Pauline Edward	Richard Cross	Rebecca Brown
Sally Warren	Eva Sallaine Sledge	

**(no number)** From biofile of Frances Holt Tilley – entry 5 May 2012

We talked about the “Rays” and I told her of our BJU Reunion with a focus on **Aurora O Ray**. FH says she was not talked about much and was referred to as “Ma”. FH does not know much about the Rays but as a child says Pat Ray, a relative, lived near them in Raleigh on Bloodworth at corner of East or Jones Street. Previously FH and I talked about Dottie Ray (had insane sister May in Dix Hill, who taught FH in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

From the BJU home, James Martin got a parlor chair for his office. Aunt Lena painted 4 pictures.

**(1)** Tombstone at Inwood Baptist Church shows Aurora Ray Upchurch born 1849 died 1904 (21).

**(2)** Plaque inside Inwood Baptist Church shows organization date 25 Feb 1877 and 3 Upchurches among founders – Lamberth Lassiter Upchurch, Mariah Upchurch, and Aurora Ray Upchurch.

**(3)** #34 West letter 18 May 1975 – Wake Co NC Marriage Records  
 “22 Sep 1869 – B Jefferson married A O Ray Rory)  
 Witness – W A Atkinson”

**(4)** Notes from Gettys Upchurch

Jeff went to Bill Upchurch farm at Storm Hill (Rogers Store – Barton’s Creek Township) in 1885 – stayed 4 years and Miss Ray and Lena was born. Then bought Woodland and build house in 1869. Rays were from Scotland.

**(5)** See Deed File – on 1 Oct 1881 BJU and wife and WGU and wife filed a Wake Co, NC deed giving 1 acre to Inwood Baptist Church. Aurora C Upchurch shows clearly “C” as middle initial. There is a special certificate that she signed of her own free will – per L D Stephenson, JP.

**(6)** See 1870 Wake Co, NC Census Barton’s Creek Township

Jefferson Upchurch age 26 male white Farmer \$0 RE, \$400 PP had married in the past year (Oct) Rose (Ro – Aurora) age 21. In the home was Lucretia Upchurch, age 70, Lassiter age 45 & Bartley Upchurch age 39.

**(7)** See 1880 Wake Co, NC Census – Swift Creek Township

Aurora Upchurch white female age 31 is wife keeping house for Bartley Upchurch age 39.

**(8)** See Census 1860 – Wake Co, NC – Rogers Store PO

Aura Ray age 11 Female is in home of Father Buckner Ray, whom see.

(9) From Wake Co, NC Heritage Book – 1983 (40, FH 682)

## THE RAY FAMILY

EMANCY - RFD

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Wormly R. Ray (1794-1822), wife Nancy Gill, is said to have been the son of Nathan and Elizabeth Kilgo (kilgor) Ray. Wormly and Nancy were married in 1813 and Nathan and Elizabeth in 1790. According to court records both men were reported to have drowned in the Neuse River on or about the first of January, 1822. Neither body was recovered and both men died intestate.

After Elizabeth Ray received her one third dower in Nathan's estate the balance of his property was divided between Wormly's two minor children, Buckner and Henry C. Ray. Jesse Gill, the father of Mancy Ray, was executor of both Wormly's and Nathan's estates and was appointed guardian to Buckner and Henry.

In 1837, Buckner Ray married Midda Lee Lowry and they had three children; Zadock, Aurora (Mrs. Jefferson Upchurch) and Lee Hawkins (Mrs. John D.R. Allen). After Midda Lee's death Buckner married Jane Caroline Grady in 1846. From that union eight children survived, including; William, George W., Jimmy R., Willis, Robert, Alfonza (Von), Mary (Mrs. Eugene Penny) and Charles Buckner. The family grew up on a farm in northern Wake County where the remains of an Indian civilization were found. According to an archaeologist, many of the artifacts uncovered date back over one thousand years.



The Charles B. Ray residence, later used by Raleigh City Schools as its business office.

Charles Buckner Ray (1865-1934), youngest child of Buckner and Jane Ray married Mattie Pugh the daughter of James L. Pugh, in 1889. After farming for several years, Charles moved to Raleigh, where, he became superintendent of the Wake County Home. Later on he founded the C.B. Ray Harness and Carriage Co, which he operated until forced into retirement by the "Horseless Carriage", which, he stated was "very impracticable and just a passing fad."

During the term of Gov. Kitchen, Charles Ray's daughter, Dorothy was invited to a birthday party honoring the governor's daughter. After the party Charles sent a liveried landau carriage to the mansion to await the pleasure of Dorothy Ray and friends.

The children of Chas. B. and Mattie Pugh Ray were; Hickman, May L., Dorothy C., Willa M., Catherine S., Charles B., Jr. and Martha Pugh (Mrs. J. Julian Carr).

Hickman Ray (1889-1925) was educated in the Wake County Schools, Bigham Military Academy in Asheville, The University of North Carolina, and the University of Maryland School of Medicine. In 1917 he entered the Army Medical Corps and in 1918, prior to leaving for duty in France, he married Ethel F. Thompson of Durham. Hickman and Ethel had first met several years before while guests in the home of Dr. Sanford W. Thompson at the Falls of The Neuse.

The children of Hickman and Ethel Thompson Ray are Hickman, Jr., of Raleigh and E. Frances (Mrs. Theodore B. Pollard) of Charlotte. Hickman Ray, Jr. Received his education

from the Durham Public Schools, Fork Union Military Academy and the University of North Carolina. In 1942 he entered the Army Air Force and served as a radio operator and technician in the South Pacific theatre.

After receiving his discharge in 1945 Hickman Ray, Jr. attended Kings Business College and soon thereafter, he entered the employ of R.L. Dresser, Inc. Among his many hobbies were astronomy, pipe organ building and collecting antiques.

Sources: Estate papers, court records, marriage bonds, Willa M. Ray and George W. Ray, II.

— Hickman Ray

PG 425

(10) See notes of biofile of Wilmer Conrad Betts, II. He reports that article 682 above is in error. **AOR** was the 2<sup>nd</sup> child of the 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage of Buckner Ray – not of his first marriage.

**(11)** See notes of RPU 8 Dec 1979 visit to Helen Palmer Bledsoe

I. Solomon Henry Bledsoe born 1820/ 1821 (NC) died 1873 (?) (Wake Co, NC)

married (1<sup>st</sup>) --- --- --- 2 children

\*married (2<sup>nd</sup>) Cornelia Moore died 1862/ 1870

A. Gonnavius Compton Bledsoe born 1852 (NC)

married ( ) Sarah Elizabeth Bailey

(Both buried at Soapstone Church, Wake Co, NC)

1. Helen Palmer Bledsoe born 21 Jun 1892 (Bayleaf, Wake Co, NC)

married ( ) Thad Ivey

2. Samuel Black Bledsoe born 13 Feb 1890 ( ) died 19 Feb 1961 (New Bern, NC)

\*\*married ( ) Ollie Claire Sorrell born 6 Jul 1891 ( ) died 21 Sep 1957 ( )

a. Catherine Bledsoe

Her address (1979) Mrs. H L Gaskins, PO Bx 536, New Bern, NC

married ( ) Henry Gaskins

b. James Odell Bledsoe, Sr

married ( ) Sarah Ellen Nelson

i. James Odell Bledsoe, Jr

married ( ) --- --- ---

[She prepared the Bledsoe Family History]

I. --- --- Moore

\*A. Cornelia Moore

B. --- --- More (F)

married ( ) --- --- Thompson

1. Nancy Thompson

married ( ) William Ray, a 1/2 brother of **Aurora O Ray**

I. --- --- Sorrell

A. Lewis Patrick Sorrell (M D) (lived at Leesville, Wake Co, NC)

married (1<sup>st</sup>) Virginia Victoria Hayes

married (2<sup>nd</sup>) 1902 ( ) Mary Elizabeth Ragsdale

\*\*1. Ollie Claire Sorrell

2. Eva Estille Sorrell (relative of Frances (Holloway) Wynne

B. --- --- Sorrell (M)

1. Victor Sorrell

**(12)** Extract of letters 10 & 23 Oct 1980 Frank Jefferson Upchurch, Sr to RPU

When Grandpa recovered enough from the Civil War he started getting around friends. He was invited to attend a school play an he saw a beautiful girl who had the leading part. He declared on the spot that he would marry that girl and he did marry her.

**[nee Aurora O Ray]**



**(13) Betts Family – Wake Co, NC Family Histories 94 → 99 NC Heritage Book B = Betts**

I. William Betts, Elder England → Northumberland Co, VA 1635 – His direct descendant was:

A. Thomas Betts, Sr – In Isle of Wight Co, VA in 1750 died 1773

\*1. Joseph Betts, Sr died 1806 (Wake Co, NC) married ( ) Mary --- --- moved from Hardy District NW Isle of Wight Co, VA to Buckhorn Township, Wake Co, NC – Spring or Summer of 1804 – Associated with Holly Springs Baptist Church

\* In 1804 when Joseph Betts, Sr moved VA to NC he was accompanied by his nephew Andrew Betts

A. Harty Betts; B. Susannah Betts; C. Dewey Betts; E. James Betts; F. Joseph Betts, Jr

married (1<sup>st</sup>) 1819 ( ) Nancy Clifton

married (2<sup>nd</sup>) 1828 ( ) Sarah Clifton

D. Barzilla Betts, Sr born Isle of Wight, VA died 1833 (Wake Co, NC) bought his father's farm near Holly Springs and sold 1832 to Stanford Wheeler \$120

married 1820 ( ) Jane Yates born 1892 (Wake Co, NC) died 1870 (Wake Co, NC) daughter of Jethro Yates

1. Lizzella Betts died 1870 ( )

married ( ) Harris Vaughn

2. Samuel Betts born about 1832

3. Calvin Betts died Oxford, NC

5. James Marshall Betts born about 1825

married 1845 ( ) Sarah Newland born about 1826

6. Joseph John Betts born 1828 (Wake Co, NC) died 1903 (Randolph Co, NC)

married 1848 ( ) Anne Gibson Hill born 1833 died 1912 (as husband)

7. Barzilla Betts, Jr – never married

8. Billy Betts

4. Anderson Betts born 1830 (Wake Co, NC), died 1912 (Raleigh, NC) – Master Carpenter for Raleigh-Gaston RR

married 1852 (Raleigh, NC) Elizabeth Jordan born 1833 ( ) died 1909 ( ). Lived many years across road from Inwood Baptist Church – Wake Co, NC – Later lived 117 West Street, Raleigh, NC - Elizabeth – daughter of Calvin Jordan

a. Lelie Ada Betts born 1855 died 1856

b. Calvin J Betts born 1853 ( ) died 1918 ( )

married ( ) Sallie McNeill Brookshire born 1856 died 1920

c. Charles Henry Betts born 1857 died 1926

married 1887 ( ) Roxanna Johnson born 1869 died 1949

e. Oscar Leon Betts born 1862

married ( ) Addie Barkley died 1962

f. Willie A Betts born 1866 died 1905  
 g. Algemin Betts born 1868 died 1871  
 h. Otis Allen Betts born 1872 died 195  
 married ( ) Sadie Faison died 1949  
 d. Wilmer Conrad Betts, the elder born 1859 died 1915 ( )  
 married 1894 ( ) Tessie Lee Ray born 1871 died 1940 of  
 Bartons Creek Township. They first lived in Hillsborough,  
 NC but returned to Edenton St, Raleigh, NC

I. Buckner Ray

A. **Aurora O Ray**

married Bertley Jefferson  
 Upchurch

B. Zaddock Ray, CSA  
 never fully recovered,  
 died soon after war – 4 orphans  
 married ( ) Artelia Nipper  
 ran a boarding house  
 Wilmington & Davie

1. Tessie Lee Ray
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

i. Brevard Betts

ii. Wilmer Zaddock Betts “W L”

BS NC State 1917 Bridge Engineer for NC,  
 purchasing agent NC, 1<sup>st</sup> manager Reynolds  
 Coliseum

married 1922 ( ) Moultrie Drake, a Meredith student  
 from Bennettsville, SC. Lived with Tessie 116  
 Hillcrest Rd, Cameron Park, Raleigh, NC  
 In the 1920s these two brothers (Brevard and  
 Zaddock) formed the Betts Coal & Oil Company of  
 Raleigh, NC

(I) Wilmer Conrad Betts, Duke grad.

Psychiatrist

married ( ) Georgie Ellen Forbus – Res:  
 3615 Alleghany Rd, Raleigh

(A) Ellen Betts – author of (94)

married ( ) Stephen M Rowe

(B) Wilmer Conrad Betts, III, “Bill”  
 M D; author of (95) & (97)

[Why is he III? – RPU]

(C) Wiley Forbus Betts

(d) Thomas Anderson Betts

(I) Elizabeth Betts – lives Louisville, KY

2. Thomas Betts, Jr died before 1790 – See separate extract for Descendants

A. Andrew Betts

On 1805 & 1810 Tax Rolls of Buckhorn Township, Wake Co, NC owned  
 150 acres astride Utley’s Creek – position unknown. Probably died  
 intestate married ( ) Sally White of Surry Co, VA

**(14)** See notes of RPU 24 Feb 179 visit to Edna Lois Upchurch

Page 8 – “**Aurora (Ray)** Upchurch” “Grandma” died a week before Christmas – December  
 1904.

**(15)** From: Wake Co, NC Heritage Book – 1983 (4o, FH 682)

I. Nathan Ray died 1 Jan 1822 (drowned in Neuse River, Wake Co, NC) [Head of Clan]

A. Wormly R Ray died as father

married Nancy Gill, daughter of Jesse Gill

1. Buckner Ray

married 1<sup>st</sup> Midda Lee Lowry

married 2<sup>nd</sup> Jane Caroline Grady, daughter of Buck Grady

a.<sup>1</sup> Zaddock Ray

b.<sup>1</sup> **Aurora O Ray**

married Bartley Jefferson Upchurch

[should be e2 – see (10) – RPU]

c.<sup>1</sup> Lee Hawkins Ray

married John D R Allen

d.<sup>2</sup> William Ray

married Nancy Thompson

e.<sup>2</sup> George W Ray

married Eudora Penny

f.<sup>2</sup> Jinny R Ray

g.<sup>2</sup> Willis S Ray

h.<sup>2</sup> Robert J Ray

married Eva Penny

i.<sup>2</sup> Alfonza C Ray “Von” born circa 1855

j.<sup>2</sup> Mary Ray

married Eugene Penny

k.<sup>2</sup> Charles Bodener Ray, Sr born 1865 died 1934

married 1889 Mattie Pugh, daughter of James L Pugh

**(16)** See letter 19 Oct 1980 to RPU from Mary Garnette Martin

“Grandma [**AOR**] died the day I was born – 22 Dec 1904”

**(17)** See biofile of Bartley Jefferson Upchurch – Entry 28 Apr 1986

Shows copy of marriage license and report of marriage of Bartley Jefferson Upchurch and **A O Ray**. License = 22 Sep 1869. Marriage took place on 30 Sep 1869 in the home of Buckner Ray, her father, and was performed by W A Atkinson.

**(18)** See biofile of George William Ray – entry 24 Jun 1978

On a visit to George near Rogers Store in Wake Co, NC George said he knew of my grandmother, **AOR** but did not know her and that he and she are of common descent. “She” said **AOR** was referred to as Aunt “Ro”. [“She” is Mary Ray, a niece of **AOR**.]



**(19) Living Stones: History of Inwood Baptist Church, Wake Co, NC 2000, pages 28, 29**

[Note: Names included below:

R M Andrews	H N Parker	B J Upchurch
David Smith	R E L Yates	Wilson
S H Averitt	Delia Goodwin	Aurora Upchurch
L L Upchurch	Betts	Rambout
Strain	Weddon	

R. M. Andrews and H. N. Parker were elected deacons in February, 1885. B. J. Upchurch was elected a trustee in October of the same year. In the late 1880's the names of David Smith and R. E. L. Yates began to appear in the records of church business. Soon both were representing the church at denominational meetings. And after the turn of the century, both would emerge as leaders of the congregation. Wilson's resignation as a deacon in December, 1896, had left the church with only two persons holding that office. Consequently, S. H. Averitt was elected deacon on January 23, 1897, and was ordained the next day. By 1901 the leadership of the church was clearly in new hands, both with representatives from the founding families and representatives from families that had moved into the community and into the church. Indeed, only three charter members were left: Delia Goodwin, Aurora Upchurch, and L. L. Upchurch. Entirely missing from the church roll are some charter family names: Betts, Rambout, Strain, and Weddon. But there are other new family names that will be prominent in the church minutes of the next era.

**(20) Excerpt from notes of RPU visit 3 Oct 2005 with Eleanor Upchurch Martin & daughter Becky**

Eleanor says Aurora O Ray had migraine headaches which Eleanor does also. Eleanor ways medicine for Aurora was ordered from Sears Roebuck and she became addicted to it. Eleanor and I agree this was probably laudanum. This accounts for the different version I heard which was that she was an alcoholic but only took it by the spoonful.

**(21) From: The Ray Family of Wake Co, NC by William Carroll Ray 1999**

I. Nathan Ray [Head of Clan]

A. Wormly Ray

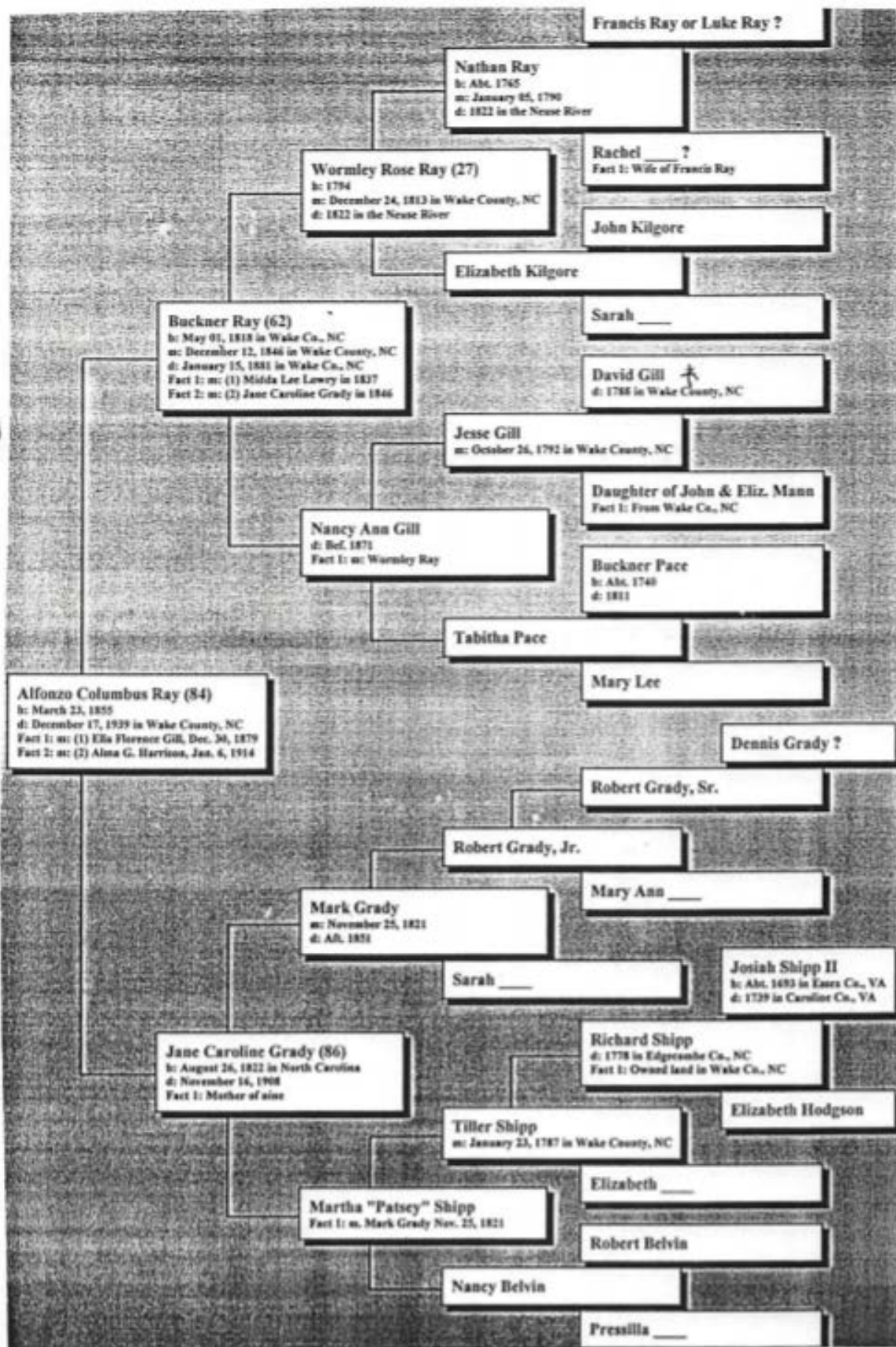
1. Buckner Ray.

a. Alfonzo Columbus Ray

b. Aurora O Ray

married Bartley Jefferson Upchurch

\* David Gill had a son Isaac Gill who had a son Ezra Gill who was grandfather of Ella Florence Gill. Jesse Gill and Isaac Gill were brothers.



(22) From: The Ray Family of Wake Co, NC by William Carroll Ray 1999

I. Wormly Rose Ray [son of Nathan Ray – Head of Clan]

A. Buckner Ray

married (1<sup>st</sup>) Midda Lee Lowery – 2 children – shown below

married (2<sup>nd</sup>) Jane Caroline Grady – 9 children (see elsewhere)

including Aurora O (Ray) Upchurch & Alfonzo Columbus Ray

Buckner Ray (father of Von Ray) was born on May 1, 1818 in Wake County, North Carolina. He was named after his great grandfather on his mother's side, Buckner Pace. Buckner's father, Wormley Rose Ray, drowned in the Neuse River on or about the first of January 1822 when Buckner was only three and a half years old. Buckner's grandfather, Jesse Gill, was appointed guardian of Buckner and his brother, Henry. At the age of 19, Buckner Ray married Midda Lee Lowry on October 14, 1837. A copy of their marriage bond is reproduced on the following page. The Lowry family was among the early settlers of the area that became Wake County. They arrived prior to 1760. Buckner and Midda Lee had three children:

1. Charles W. Ray was born in 1838. On May 1, 1861 at the age of 22, Charles enlisted as a private in the Confederate Army (Company E, 14<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Regiment). This was his father's 43<sup>rd</sup> birthday and less than three weeks after cannons fired on Fort Sumter in South Carolina signaling the beginning of the Civil War. When he enlisted, Charles was issued a blanket and a pair of shoes. Pay vouchers reveal Charles was paid thirty three cents per day for his service on behalf of southern causes. He was promoted to corporal on November 13, 1861 after six and one half months of service. Military records commend Charles for his conduct in battle. Charles was 25 when he was killed on November 27, 1863 in the Battle of Silver Run near Payne's Farm in the Mine Run Campaign near Culpeper, Virginia. Charles never married.

2. Zadoc Daniel Ray was born August 10, 1840 and died at age 37 on March 8, 1878. Zadoc volunteered on his twenty-first birthday and served as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Sergeant in Company D, 30<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Infantry Regiment, Confederate States of America. Zadoc was wounded at the Battle of Cold Harbor on May 1, 1862 east of Richmond, Virginia and was captured at Kelly's Ford on the Rappahannock River near Culpeper, VA on November 7, 1863. He was imprisoned at Point Lookout, Maryland until after the conclusion of the war (June 17, 1865). Zadoc married Artelia Frances Nipper in 1868 and they had four children:



Zadoc Daniel Ray (1840-1878)

- A. Tessie Lee Ray (1871-1939)  
Married Wilmer Conrad Betts.
- B. Charles Maude Ray (1877- )  
Named in honor of her uncle who was killed in the Civil War. Maude married Jesse Thomas Burke. She lived until after 1963.
- C. Patrick Ray ( - 1951). Married (first) Walena Atkinson and (second) Mina Williams.
- D. Hattie Ray (1875 - 1956).

3. Lee Hawkins Ray (1844 - 1878). Lee married John Allen and they had two sons, Charlie and George.

Buckner's first wife, Midda Lee Lowry Ray, and all three of their children, Charles, Zadoc, and Lee Hawkins, died prior to Buckner. Writing in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century B.C., the Greek historian Herodotus, "The Father of History" observed that "In peace sons bury their fathers and in war fathers bury their sons." This was certainly true of the impact of the Civil War on Buckner Ray's family.

[Names included in article – CJM 14 Sep 2020]

Buckner Ray	Von Ray	Buckner Pace	Wormley Rose Ray
Jesse Gill	Henry Ray	Midda Lee Lowry	Charles W Ray
Zadoc Daniel Ray	Tessie Lee Ray	Wilmer Conrad Betts	Charles Maude Ray
Jesse Thomas Burke	Patrick Ray	Walena Atkinson	Mina Williams
Hattie Ray	Lee Hawkins Ray	John Allen	Charles Allen
George Allen]			



**(23)** From: The Ray Family of Wake Co, NC by William Carroll Ray 1999

I. Wormley Rose Ray

A. Buckner Ray

1. Charles W Ray from 1<sup>st</sup> marriage
2. Zadock Daniel Ray from 1<sup>st</sup> marriage
3. **Aurora O Ray** from 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage  
married Bartley Jefferson Upchurch

The July 25, 1983 Raleigh News and Observer contained the following article on the military service of Charles and Zadoc Ray.

[Names included in article – CJM 14 Sep 2020]

Zadoc Ray	Buckner Ray	Charles Ray	Artelia Nipper
Tessie Ray	Charles Maude Ray	Patrick Ray	Hattie Ray
David Carter]			

[Names included in article – CJM 14 Sep 2020]

**(24)** From: The Ray Family of Wake Co, NC by William Carroll Ray 1999, page 18

Buckner Ray – List of 9 children by his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife

[Names included in article – CJM 14 Sep 2020]

Midda Lee Ray	Buckner Ray	Jane Caroline Grady	Alfonzo Columbus Ray
Charles Ray	Zadoc Ray	Lee Ray	William Henry Ray
Nancy Thompson	Otis L Ray	Joseph C Ray	Hubert R Ray
Arthur Ray	Jodie Ray	William Ray	Robert Ray
<b><u>Aurora Ray</u></b>	Jefferson Upchurch	George Washinton Ray	Eudora Penny
Flora Carolina Ray	Jesse Knox Ray	Samuel Buckner Ray	Minnie E Ray
Macie D Ray	Otho Clair Ray	Eloise E Ray	Eudora Penny Ray
Jessie Knox Ray	Lola Green	James R Ray	Ida Rogers
Walter G Ray	Floy Ray	Noye Ray	Lola Ray
Annie Ray	Florence Gill	Alma G Harrison	Robert Iverson Ray
Eva Penny	Vera Ray	Vallin C Ray	Iska C Ray
Artee H Ray	Beatrice Marie Ray	Ewart G Ray	William S Ray
Robert Latimer Ray	Willis S Ray	Ada Penny	Jessie Ray
Madge Ray	Ardelle Ray	Corrina Homes	W S Ray
Mary C Ray	Eugene Penny	Ola Penny	Carmel Penny
Sybil Penny	Charles Buckner Ray	Mattie Pugh	Hickman Ray
Mary Ray	Dottie Ray	Willa Ray	Catherine Ray
Charles Ray	Mattie Ray]		

After Midda Lee's death, Buckner married Jane Caroline Grady (Alfonzo Columbus Ray's mother) on December 12, 1846 in Wake County, N.C. Buckner was 28 and Caroline was 24. A copy of their marriage bond is attached on page 19. Caroline and Buckner raised Buckner's three children from his first marriage. When Buckner and Caroline married in 1846, Charles was 8, Zadock was 5 and Lee was 2 years old. Buckner and Caroline had nine additional children (seven sons and two daughters) as summarized below.

1. William Henry Ray \* was born on September 13, 1847 and died at age 69 on January 15, 1917. William married Nancy Thompson (1850-1932). William and Nancy had six children. Five have been identified: Otis L. Ray (born in 1878), Joseph C. Ray (born in 1883), Hubert R. Ray (born in 1889), Arthur and Jodie -- all sons. Otis was a physician and he was the attending doctor for his father, William, and uncle, Robert, on their death certificates. Otis was a true "family doctor."
  2. Aurora Ray was born in 1849, married Jefferson Upchurch
  3. George Washington Ray \* was born on August 30, 1850 and died at age 76 on June 7, 1927. George married Eudora Penny on September 3, 1874 in Wake County. In 1900, George was a census taker. George and Eudora had seven children: Flora Caroline (1876), Jesse Knox (1877), Samuel Buckner (1879), Minnie E. (1881), Macie D. (1884), Otho Clair (1886) and Eloise E. (1888). George and Eudora owned property next to George's younger brother, Alfonzo Columbus Ray. Their two story frame farmhouse still stands at the intersection of Creedmoor Road and Old Creedmoor Road. Eudora Penny Ray was born on October 2, 1852 and she died at age 87 on January 28, 1940. Jessie Knox Ray (son of George and Eudora) was born on August 25, 1877 and he died at age 75 on June 5, 1953. Jessie married Lola Green (1876-1942).
  4. James R. Ray born on July 1, 1852 and died at age 90 on September 29, 1942 following a heart attack. The 1880 Census shows Jimmy, his wife Ida Rogers Ray, and one year old son (Walter G. Ray) living next to his father, Buckner. Jimmy and Ida had five children (Walter and four daughters, Floy, Noye, Lola and Annie). For the last 33 years of his life, Jimmy lived in Gorman (Durham County) where he was engaged in the general merchandise business. Jimmy was a loyal member of the Gorman Baptist Church.
  5. Alfonzo Columbus Ray \* (known as Von) was born March 23, 1855 and at age 24 he married Florence Gill on December 30, 1879. Von and Florence had thirteen children. After the death of Florence, Von (age 58) married Alma G. Harrison on January 6, 1914 and they had seven children. Seventeen of Von's twenty children were sons. Von died at age 84 on December 17, 1939.
  6. Robert Iverson Ray \* was born on January 24, 1857 and he died at age 58 on March 19, 1915. Robert married Eva Penny (1867-1958) on August 15, 1883. The 1900 census lists Robert as a grocer. Robert and Eva had nine children. The names of eight of their children are: Vera E. (1886), Vallin C. (male/1887), Iska C. (female/1889), Artee H. (female/1892), Beatrice Marie (1892), Ewart G. (male/1898), William S. (1900), and Robert Latimer (1904). Artee and Beatrice were twin sisters. Robert and Eva's two story, white frame home still stands at the southwest corner of the intersection of Old Creedmoor Road and Norwood Road.
  7. Willis S. Ray born in 1859. Willis' first wife was Ada Penny and they had three children (Jessie, Madge and Ardelle). Willis and his second wife, Corrina Homes, had no children. A 1933 survey of the 231.5 acre farm owned by Alfonzo Columbus (Von) Ray shows W.S. Ray as an adjacent property owner. This may be Willis who lived until about 1940.
  8. Mary C. Ray was born in 1861, married Eugene Penny and they had three children: Ola, Carmel (a son) and Sybil. Mary was the last surviving child of Buckner Ray. When her brother, Jimmy, died in 1942, Mary was 81 years old residing in Cary, North Carolina.
  9. Charles Buckner Ray born in May 1865 and he married Mattie Pugh in 1889. Charles and Mattie had seven children (Dr. Hickman Ray, Mary, Dottie, Willa, Catherine, Charles, and Martha). Charles died in 1934 at age 69. After farming for several years, Charles Buckner Ray moved to Raleigh and founded the C.B. Ray Harness and Carriage Company. Details of this company are contained on page 25.
- \* William, George, Von, and Robert are buried with their wives and other family members in the cemetery of the New Bethel Baptist Church located near the intersection of Creedmoor Road and Old Creedmoor Road in Wake County approximately half way between Wake Forest and Durham. The white frame church is over 100 years old and ceased being used for worship around 1994. The parishioners relocated to a new church, Wakemister Baptist Church at the intersection of Routes 50 (Creedmoor Road) and 98 (Durham Road).

**(25)** From: The Ray Family of Wake Co, NC by William Carroll Ray 1999, page 27  
 Buckner Ray – List of 9 children by his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife

I. Nathan Ray

A. Wormley Rose Ray

married ( ) Nancy Ann Gill, she married (2<sup>nd</sup>) ( ) Edward A Parham

1. Buckner Ray

a. **Aurora O Ray**

married ( ) Bartley Jefferson Upchurch

[Names included in article – CJM 14 Sep 2020

Wormley Rose Ray	Buckner Ray	Nancy Ann Gill	John Ray
Nathan Ray	Jesse Gill	Obediah F Ellen	Lewis Jones
Henry C Ray	Edward A Parham	Edward Ray	Caroline Ray
Avery Ray	John Ray	Emeline Ray	William Ray
Obidience Ray	Bedy Ray]		



## ◆ WORMLEY ROSE RAY AND NANCY ANN GILL ◆

Wormley Rose Ray (father of Buckner Ray) was born in 1794 in the area of Wake Forest (northern Wake County), North Carolina. Wormley married Nancy Ann Gill in Wake County on December 24, 1813. Wormley was 19 years old when he married Nancy. A copy of their Marriage Bond is reproduced on page 28. Wormley and Nancy had two sons, Buckner and Henry, during their eight year marriage.

The 1815 Tax List for Wake County shows Wormley (age 21) as the owner of a 200 acre farm. On July 25, 1817, Wormley purchased 123  $\frac{2}{3}$  acres on the north side of the Neuse River for \$365 (\$2.95/acre) from John Ray. On August 1, 1821, Wormley Ray purchased a 196  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre parcel on the Neuse River at a sheriff's foreclosure sale for \$100 "cash in hand paid" (\$0.51/acre).

Court records reveal that Wormley and his father, Nathan Ray, both drowned in the Neuse River on or about the first of January 1822. The body of Wormley was not recovered and both men died without wills. Wormley was 27 when he drowned and his father, Nathan, was about 57 years old at the time of their accidental deaths. Wormley's son, Buckner, was only three and one half years old when Wormley and his father, Nathan, both drowned in the Neuse River. Buckner's grandfather, Jesse Gill, was appointed guardian of Buckner and his brother, Henry.

The Neuse River begins in Durham County, North Carolina at the confluence of the Eno and Flat Rivers. It flows southeast approximately 185 miles through Wake, Johnston, Wayne, Lenoir and Craven Counties before entering Pamlico Sound east of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore. The Neuse River was named in 1584 by Arthur Barlowe for the Neusiok Indians.

Nancy Ray filed the following petition at the May Term of the 1822 Wake County, North Carolina, Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions:

"...the petition of Nancy Ray humbly sheweth that her husband Wormley R. Ray departed this life on or about the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month of January last [1822] intestate [without a will] and without having made any adequate provisions for your Petitioner [Nancy Ray] & seized and possessed of a Tract of land lying in the said County on Neuse River adjoining the lands of Obediah F. Ellen, Lewis Jones & others containing 320 acres that the said dec'd [Wormley Ray] left two children to wit: Buckner Ray and Henry C. Ray both of whom are infants under the age of twenty one years..." This 320 acre tract was located on the north side of the Neuse River.

Nancy Ray's petition continues and requests that the Court divide the land into three parts separating her dower interest from the land to be inherited by her two sons. On July 19, 1822 at the direction of the court, the 320 acres were divided into three parts. Nancy Ray received 107  $\frac{1}{3}$  acres including the Mansion House, out buildings and orchards.

The guardian records for Buckner and Henry C. Ray extended for years with their guardian, Jesse Gill, annually recording precise accounts.

After Wormley's death, Nancy Ann Gill Ray married Edward A. Parham on October 26, 1822 and they had eight children (Edward, Caroline, Avery, John, Emeline, William, Buckner and Obidience (Bidy). Nancy died before 1871.

**(no number) Aurora (Ray) Upchurch** [Daughter of Buckner Ray]

Sent originals to Mrs Ace Robbins 17 Dec 2004

SSU promises to get me some more originals – RPU





(27) Worksheet to be places in various biofiles re:

Deed – Wake Co, NC – Book 24, Page 553, 12 Feb 1864

For \$1500 Willis Thompson & Buckner Ray sell 280 5/8 acres on the Neuse River to William Upchurch. Deed registered 7 Aug 1866.

William Upchurch per the deed is a resident of Raleigh, NC. RPU proposed that this is William George Upchurch and that this is the farm on which his brother Bartley Jefferson Upchurch lived and farmed from mid/ late 1860s to early 1870s during which period BJU met and married Aurora O Ray, daughter of Buckner Ray.

Adjoins:

W H Gatts [W H Gattis]

M B Allen  
 --- --- Heflin  
 --- --- Truman  
 on Longford Branch

Witnesses:

J W Rogers

G C Upchurch [George Clinton Upchurch]<sup>1</sup>

At this point:

<sup>1</sup> tentatively conclude that GCU is George Clinton Upchurch [son of William Clinton Upchurch, I] [Both of whom William George Upchurch had close relationship with] – in spite of the fact that as of 12 Feb 1864 George Clinton Upchurch was only age 16 years 3 months.

**(28)** Note: This hypothesis proposed by RPU 16 Mar 2007

It is clear that JDRA and Bartley Jefferson Upchurch served side-by-side in the Civil War being captured on the same day and enduring prison together at Elmira, NY. It seems reasonable to hypothesize that JDRA told Bartley about the lovely Ray girls he knew in Barton's Creek Township, Wake Co, NC as subsequently JDRA married Lee Hawkins Ray & Bartley married her sister **Aurora O Ray**. JDRA = John Derrell R Allen

**(29)** RPU 18 Oct 2005 observations about the sale of 382 acres of the late Buckner Ray land on 7 Dec 1896 in Northern Wake Co, NC to his son Willis S Ray for \$700 – Book 142, Page 420

When Buckner Ray died in 1881 he willed all his property to his wife for use at the discretion. She [Jane Caroline Grady] did not die until 1908. Even so, it must be that Buckner's land was allocated to his children prior to 7 Dec 1896 as it is some of his 12 children who are selling the 382 acre tract and the widow is not referenced in the deed. Presumably this 382 acres had passed to 7 of the 12 children of Buckner according to the 7 Dec 1896 deed. Each would have gotten \$100 [one of the 7 was **Aurora O (Ray)** Upchurch – which accounts for her inheritance from her father's estate]. The 7 owners are listed as follows: [# = child number].

#3 Lee Hawkins Ray [she must have died before the sale as her share is sold by sons Charles ☐ Allen & George ☐ Allen]

#4 William Henry Ray

#5 **Aurora O (Ray)** Upchurch [Her husband Bartley Jefferson Upchurch signed]

#7 James R Ray

#9 Robert Iverson Ray

#10 Alfonzo Columbus Ray

#12 Charles Buckner Ray

Note that the spouses of the 7 sellers are shown on the deed. new info gained shown by ☐

Wife of R I Ray = ☐ Clara Eva Penny

Wife of J R Ray = Ida ☐ Ray

☐



Wife of W H Ray = Nancy H Ray

Wife of George B Allen = Zelma A Allen

Note that 4 names on the deed are hard (impossible) to read.

Note that #8 in later years was known to live at the Buckner Ray Homeplace – presumably this 382 A.

Adjacent land owners: #6 & #10: John Adams, John D Owens; --- --- Parham, --- --- Hockaday; Patton M Davis

Comments re: other 5 children:

#1 Charles W Ray – not an heir – died 1862

#2 Zadock Daniel Ray – not involved

#6 George Washington Ray – no ownership in 382A but is shown as a justice of peace on the deed

#8 Willis S Ray – no ownership in 382A – he was the buyer

#11 Mary C (Ray) Penny – no ownership in the 382A

One presumes widow Jane may have transferred assets to #2, 6, 8, 11 before 7 Dec 1896.

**(30)** Ramcat – Swift Creek Township – Wake Co, NC

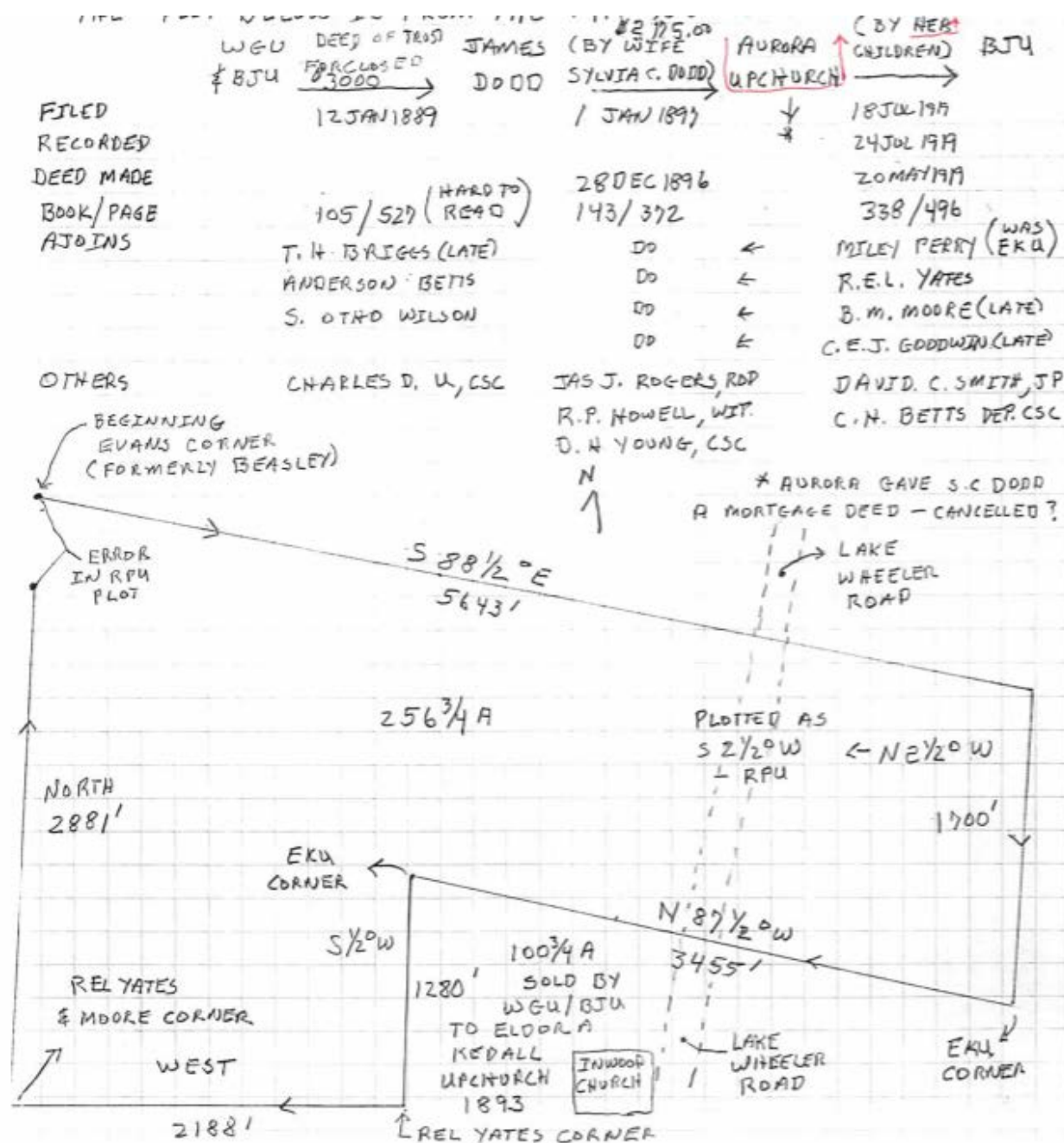
Foreclosure sale on 23 Dec 1896 due to failure of BJU & WGU to pay \$3000 loan incurred 11 Jan 1887

Re: BJU Homeplace – **Aurora O (Ray)** Upchurch (**wife** of BJU) bought the tract at public auction on 23 Dec 1896 for 2175 – incurred \$1200 in debt in the process. Thus two deeds were made on 28 Dec 1896 and simultaneously recorded (almost) on 1 Jan 1897. The DOT (143/370) was filed first at 10am and encumbered 181 3/4 A. The warranty deed (143/372) was filed second at 1pm and transferred 256 3/4A. RPU proposes that the 75 A difference in that part of the 256 3/4A which lies east of Lake Wheeler Road [Book/Page when found = ---/ ---].

The 256 3/4A and the 181 3/4A tracts involved 6 bearings and 6 distances as shown below.







(32) Inwood Baptist Church Cemetery, Wake Co, NC, Swift Creek Township – Rhamkatte – Inscriptions recorded by RPU 19 Jun 2006. RPU notes below details on stones 7 church list printed 16 Feb 2000. Later inputs shown by [ ].

Family: Upchurch

No.	Name	Dates	Relationship
168	Rex E Upchurch	4 May 1894 – 31 Aug 1968	
169	Ruth S Upchurch	4 Nov 1900	wife of 168

170A Allen Rex Upchurch 25 Aug 1923 – 5 Aug 1996  
 170B Samuel H Upchurch 10 Apr 1921 – 14 Apr 1921  
 170C Jaclyn Holk Neal 23 Mar 1948 – 24 Dec 2003  
 475 William Clinton Upchurch 7 Dec 1888 – 22 Apr 1963 son of 507

Relationship	No.	Name	Dates
[s/o = son of; w/o = wife of; d/o = daughter of]			
s/o 961	386 <sup>1</sup>	[2] Gilbert Upchurch	1792 - 1845
w/o 386	387	[3] Lucretia Upchurch	3 May 1807 – 26 Sep 1877
d/o 386	588	[4] Mariah Upchurch	19 Jul 1820 – 30 Dec 1900
s/o 386	389	[5] Laster Upchurch	26 Jul 1830 – 31 Dec 1905
d/o 419	390	[6] Lena Upchurch LJU	1870 – 1947
s/o 419	391	[7] Wis Upchurch	1884 – 1959
s/o 419	430	[8] Maude Upchurch	21 Jul 1886 – 2 Dec 1975
		M Ray Upchurch	
w/o 430	419	Bessie Upchurch	29 Sep 1898 – 18 Mar 1984
		B Elnora Upchurch	
s/o 419	430	Robert Upchurch	28 Jan 1880 – 13 Apr 1948
		R Jefferson Upchurch	
s/o 386	419	Jeff Upchurch	1841 – 1929
w/o 419	420	<b><u>Aurora Upchurch</u></b>	1849 – 1904
		<b><u>A Ray Upchurch</u></b>	
d/o 419	421	Pattie Upchurch	1878 – 1935
		P A Upchurch	
s/o 419	422	Malcom Upchurch	1874 – 1938
s/o 419	423	G H Upchurch	28 Feb 1822 – 8 Jul 1957
s/o 425	424	Bennie Upchurch	22 Aug 1932 – 10 Feb 1956
		B J Upchurch	
s/o 425	425	Frank Upchurch	2 Oct 1888 – 31 Oct 1968
		F J Upchurch	
w/o 425	425	Edna W Upchurch	2 Feb 1896 – 16 May 1988

<sup>1</sup>[Gilbert Upchurch is not buried here but a stone has been placed here in his honor – RPU]

**(33)** Excerpt of Marriage Record for Miley NMN Perry and Bessie Estille Upchurch – Item given to RPU by their Grandson Miley Albert Perry “Monk” on 20 May 2000 [full copy filed with Bessie Estelle Upchurch]

On 17 Dec 1900 J F Redford applied to the Register of Deeds in Wake co, NC for the authorization of marriage for:

Milley Perry age 24 of Raleigh, NC [Miley NMN Perry]

son of Redin Perry of Auburn, NC – living and M H Perry of Auburn, NC – living  
 [Mancy Helen Denton]

to B E Upchurch, age 28 of Raleigh, NC [Bessie Estille Upchurch]  
 daughter of B J Upchurch of Raleigh, NC – living [Bartley Jefferson Upchurch]  
 and A O Upchurch of Raleigh, NC – living [Aurora O Ray]

W H Hood, Register of Deeds signed the License with J F Redford swearing that there was no impediment to the marriage.

There was a return to the Register of Deeds as follows:

--- Martin [James Lee Martin, Sr], a Missionary Baptist Minister united in matrimony  
 Miley Perry and B E Upchurch on 19 Dec 1900 in Swift Creek Township, Wake county,  
 NC –

Witnesses:

R E L Yates [Robert E Lee Yates]  
 A F Taylor [Albert Ford Taylor]  
 D C Smith [David Columbus Smith]  
 all of Raleigh, NC  
 at the Residence of B J Upchurch

**(34)** Inwood Baptist Church Cemetery – Swift Creek Township – Wake Co, NC – Members of the Ray Family

**Ray, Aurora**, b. 1849, d. 1900, wife of Jefferson Upchurch

**(35)** From Article 600, Page 196 in book “Franklin Co Heritage, NC” 2011 Vol II – submitted by Miley Albert Perry

Recorded by Carla (Jones) Tate

They posit that the middle name of **AOR** is Aurora Olanda Ray.

**(no number)** Ancestry.com – 1850 United States Federal Census

Name: Buck Ray

Age: 37

Birth Year: about 1813

Birthplace: North Carolina

Home in 1850: Western Division, Wake Co, North Carolina

Gender: Male

Family Number: 1148

Household Members:

Name	born	age	
Buck Ray	1813	37	
Jane Ray	1824	26	
Charles Ray	1838	12	
Zadoc Ray	1840	10	
Lee Ray	1842	8	[Lee Hawkins Ray]
William Ray	1847	3	
Hawkins Ray	1848	1	[Hawking = Aurora O Ray]

**Source Citation:** Year: 1850; Census Place: Western Division, Wake, North Carolina; Roll: M432\_647; Page: 248A; Image: 499.

**Source Information:**



Ancestry.com. 1850 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009. Images reproduced by FamilySearch.

Original data: Seventh Census of the United States, 1850; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M432, 1009 rolls); Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives, Washington, D.C.

**Description:**

This database is an index to individuals enumerated in the 1850 United States Federal Census, the Seventh Census of the United States. Census takers recorded many details including each person's name, age as of the census day, sex, color; birthplace, occupation of males over age fifteen, and more. No relationships were shown between members of a household. Additionally, the names of those listed on the population schedule are linked to actual images of the 1850 Federal Census.

**(no number)**

B J Upchurch

North Carolina marriage: 30 Sep 1869 Wake, North Carolina spouse: A O Ray  
Marriages, 1759 – 1979

**(no number)** To RPU from Jay Buck 28 Sep 2016

newspapers.com/image/58170794

The Morning Post (Raleigh, North Carolina)

Tue, Dec 20, 1904

Page downloaded on Sep 28, 201\_

Note: This report would make her death Sun 18 Dec 1904.

### Death of Mrs. Upchurch

Mrs. Jefferson Upchurch died Sunday at her home in Swift Creek township after an illness of several weeks. The news of her death was received with the most profound sorrow by her numerous friends in the county. She was the wife of one of the best men in Wake county, the leading farmer in his section, and besides she had the love and esteem of all who knew her because of her lovely Christian character and sympathetic motherly disposition. She was an active, zealous member of the Inwood Baptist church and her loss will be irreparable in that community. Her kind and loving care of the sick and suffering has been a blessing to her neighbors.

Mrs. Upchurch leaves to mourn her loss a devoted husband, an aged mother, twelve children, and many near relatives throughout the county who have the deepest sympathy in their bereavement.

The funeral service was held from Inwood church yesterday and was largely attended. Many went from Raleigh.