

Commentary: Mariah Elizabeth Upchurch was born in 1820 and died in 1900. She lived her entire life in Wake County, NC. She was blind from birth and never married. She lived her entire adult life with her half-brother Bartley Jefferson Upchurch, my grandfather. I grew up hearing my aunts and uncles talking about their Aunt Mariah. Through family lore I have more to relate about my great-Aunt Mariah.

There is a marriage record in Wake County, NC of one Gilbert Upchurch to an Elizabeth Upchurch. Circumstances essentially dictate that this couple were the parents of Mariah. Her mother disappeared from the record and Gilbert subsequently took on a new wife, Lucretia Mills and they produced nine children.

So how does the 1818 bride, Elizabeth fit into the family? Theoretically she could have been a member of the Moses Upchurch or the Nathan Upchurch I clan, being as both families having settle on the Wake/Chatham border about 1805. However our knowledge of these two clans suggests that the 1818 bride could not have come from these two clans. It is my strong conviction that Elizabeth Upchurch was of the John Upchurch III clan that had settled earlier on Shaddocks Creek in Chatham County just a few miles south of the spot where Moses and Nathan later settled. John Upchurch III had three sons whom we know very well. He also had five daughters, one of whom was most likely the Elizabeth who married Gilbert in 1818. This union thus linked the John Upchurch III and the Nathan Upchurch I clans. More research to support my claims would be most helpful.

- RPU 15 Jul 2017

Acknowledgements: This Biofile was transcribed by Marilyn Butler, a volunteer at our Cary Facility in NC.

- 1.) Tombstone in Inwood Baptist Church shows Mariah Upchurch born 19 Jul 1820, died 30 Dec 1900 (21)
- 2.) Plaque inside Inwood Baptist Church shows 25 Feb 1877 date of organization and three Upchurches among founders – Lamberth Lasiter Upchurch, Mariah Upchurch and Aurora Ray Upchurch (25)
- 3.) She was daughter of Gilbert and Lucretia Upchurch according to 1850 Census in hands of Ada Morgan (Inspected by RPU 10 Jul 1975). She was 27 years of age day census was taken (19 Aug 1850) hence born 1823 \pm 2 years. Was at home with mother – father deceased.
- 4.) See notes of RPU 25 Feb 1978 visit to Lena Perry home
A. thinks Grandpa did not join church right away but Uncle Lam and Aunt Mariah joined promptly.

- 5.) See 1860 Census Wake County NC
Elizabeth Upchurch age 38 appears in home headed by her mother Lucretia Upchurch age 59. Bartley Jefferson Upchurch was also in the home.
- 6.) See 1870 Census Wake County NC – Bartons Creek Township
Mariah Upchurch age 50, blind, was in home headed by her brother Jefferson Upchurch age 26.
- 7.) See 1880 Census Wake County NC – Swift Creek Township
Elizabeth Upchurch age 56 was in home headed by her brother Bartley Upchurch age 39.
- 8.) See 1850 Census Wake County NC – Western Division
Mariah Upchurch 29 Female Blind is in home headed by mother Creecy (Lucretia) Upchurch age 46 Female.
- 9.) See Letter 12 Jan 1981 – Frank Drew Upchurch Sr. to RPU
Frank Drew Upchurch Sr. said is grandfather Nathaniel Smith Upchurch told him that he had a blind sister **Mariah Elizabeth Upchurch** who was the oldest of the children. [Note: This fits –RPU]. Frank Drew Upchurch Sr. visited Bartley Jefferson Upchurch and said he was living with a blind sister whom he did not meet. [Note: does not fit —she died 1900. RPU]
- 10.) The Naaman Mills Family by W. A. Mills – Page 91, 92
- I. Abraham Mills
- A. Naaman Mills
1. Lucretia Mills married Gilbert Upchurch – see below. [grandparents of RPU]
Lucretia Mills, daughter of Naaman Mills and _____, was born 3 May 1802 in Edgecombe County, NC and died 26 Sep 1877. She married after May 1823 Gilbert Upchurch (born ca 1792, died ca 1845), son of Nathan Upchurch and Mackey Johnson. For more information see ch. COURT DATES ETCHED IN TIME (May 1823 – page 51).
- Lucretia is buried at Inwood Baptist Church Cemetery, Wake County, NC. Gravesite marked with tombstone. A memorial tombstone is also placed there for Gilbert – his *actual* burial site is not currently known.
- On Federal Census /1830, Lucretia and her children fit the description of Naaman Mills' household in Wake County NC. On Federal Census /1840, Gilbert is listed as head of a household in Wake County NC.
- After Gilbert's death, Lucretia and her family resided in Wake County, NC (White Oak Township) on Federal Census 1850-1860. In 1860, Lucretia owned real estate valued at \$72 and a personal estate valued at \$200. Lucretia

resided in Wake County, NC (Barton's Creek Township) with her son, Bartley and family on Federal Census 1870. Lucretia lived to age 75.

Allegedly, Naaman Mills' Bible was passed down to Gilbert and Lucretia's descendants. According to various writings: "Lucretia's family started to move to Tennessee in 1812, but they stopped in Green Level, NC and bought a farm and settled there. She had five brothers and was the only girl. Her brothers were all farmers – *very honorable people*, but never rich. Her father was Naaman Mills. We have his Bible, which was printed in 1769."

The balance of this chapter will list the children and descendants of Lucretia Mills and Gilbert Upchurch. *NOTE:* The first child, **Mariah** may not have been Lucretia's child. The ten children:

GILBERT AND _____'S CHILD:

1. **MARIAH ELIZABETH UPCHURCH** (born 19 Jul 1820, died 30 Dec. 1900).

Page 92 – 1. MARIAH ELIZABETH UPCHURCH, daughter of Gilbert Upchurch and _____, was born 19 Jul 1820 in NC, and died 30 Dec 1900. She is buried at Inwood Baptist Church Cemetery, Wake County NC. Mariah was *blind*, according to Federal Census 1850. She resided in Wake County NC (White Oak Township) with Lucretia Upchurch and family on Federal Census 1850-1860; (Barton's Creek Township) with Bartley Upchurch and family on Federal Census 1870 and (Swift Creek Township) on Federal Census 1880. Mariah was one of the founding members of Inwood Baptist Church, Wake County NC. She lived to age 80.

GILBERT AND LUCRETIA'S NINE CHILDREN:

1. NATHANIEL SMITH UPCHURCH (born Aug 1824, died 15 Jul 1913) married 1858 Sarah Ann Elizabeth Parker.
2. FEMALE UPCHURCH (born ca 1825, died after 1840).
3. FEMALE UPCHURCH (born ca 1825, died after 1840).
4. NATHAN UPCHURCH (born ca 1827, died ca 1855).
5. LAMBERTH LASSITER UPCHURCH (born 26 Jul 1830, died 31 Dec 1905).
6. FEMALE UPCHURCH (born ca 1830-1835, died after 1840).
7. WILLIAM GEORGE UPCHURCH (born 22 Dec 1837, died 13 Oct. 1895) married 24 Dec 1863 Eleanor Marks Upchurch.
8. HASELTINE UPCHURCH (born ca 1839, died 5 May 1862).
9. BARTLEY JEFFERSON UPCHURCH (born 11 May 1841, died 23 Jan 1929) married 30 Sep 1869 Aurora O. Ray.

- 11.) See Letter 17 Mar 2001 Margaret Louise Harris to RPU
I am also always looking out for further information about Gilbert's "Elizabeth".
Because of the July 1820 birth date of **Mariah Elizabeth**, I'm now guessing that

this first (?) child of Gilbert and Lucretia was actually born to Elizabeth. I'm also guessing that the mysterious child named "Marie" was the same as "Mariah Elizabeth."

RPU comments regarding above. All known information fits the above proposal that **Mariah Elizabeth Upchurch** was a child of Gilbert Upchurch and his first wife Elizabeth Upchurch whom he married in 1819. However, I know of no rationale for the proposal that **Mariah Elizabeth Upchurch** and Marie Upchurch were the same. Uncle Gettys told me Gilbert Upchurch had five daughters. Sister Perry (Lena Perry) told me one of the five was named Marie. Sister Perry knew enough not to confuse Marie and **Mariah**. – RPU - 11 Apr 2001

12.) INWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH CEMETERY, SWIFT CREEK TOWNSHIP,
WAKE COUNTY, NC MEMBERS OF THE UPCHURCH FAMILY:

Martin, Eleanor Upchurch, born 1875, died 1968
Perry, Bessie Upchurch, born 1872, died 1962
Upchurch, Allen Rex, born 25 Aug 1923, died 5 Aug 1996, mason
Upchurch, Bennie J., born 22 Aug 1932, died 10 Feb 1956, "Bitsy"
Upchurch, Bessie Elnora, born 25 Sep 1898, died 10 Mar 1984
Upchurch, Birdie, born 6 May 1897, died 16 May 1897
Upchurch, Edna W., born 2 Feb 1896, died 16 May 1988
Upchurch, Eldora Kendall Wright, born 1860, died 1943
Upchurch, Frank J., born 2 Oct 1888, died 31 Oct 1968
Upchurch, G. Malcolm, born 1874, died 1938
Upchurch, G. H., born 23 Feb 1882, died 8 Jul 1957
Upchurch, Gilbert, born 1792, died 1845
Upchurch, Jeff, born 1841, died 1929, 1st Reg., Co, G
Upchurch, John W., born 1855, died 1935
Upchurch, Laster, born 26 Jul 1830, died 31 Dec 1905
Upchurch, Lena, born 1870, died 1947
Upchurch, Lucretia, born 3 May 1802, died 26 ??? 1872
Upchurch, Lucretia, born Mar 1802, died Aug 1878 OR
Upchurch Marian, born 19 Jul 1820, died 30 Dec 1900
Upchurch, Maude Ray, born 21 Jul 1886, died 2 Dec 1975
Upchurch, Pattie A., born 1878, died 1935
Upchurch, Rex E., born 4 May 1894, died 31 Aug 1968
Upchurch, Robert Jefferson, born 28 Jan 1880, died 13 Apr 1948
Upchurch, Ruth S., born 4 Nov 1900, died 23 Jul 1959
Upchurch, Samuel H., born 10 Apr 1921, died 14 Apr 1921
Upchurch, William Clinton, born 7 Dec. 1888, died Apr 1963
Upchurch, Wis, born 1884, died 1959

13.) Inwood Baptist Church Cemetery, wake County NC Swift Creek Township – Rhamkatte – Inscriptions recorded by RPU 19 June 2006. RPU notes below meld details on stones and church list printed 16 Feb 2000, later inputs shown by [] family.

UPCHURCH

168	Rex E. Upchurch	4 May 1894 – 31 Aug 1968	
169	Ruth S. Upchurch	4 Nov 1900 – 23 Jun 1959	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
s/o 961 [1]	386 2 Gilbert Upchurch	1792 – 1845	
w/o 386	387 3 Lucretia Upchurch	3 May 1807 – 26 Sep 1877	
d/o 388	388 4 <u>Mariah Upchurch</u>	19 Jul 1820 – 20 Dec 1900	
s/o 386	389 5 Lasater Upchurch	26 Jul 1830 – 31 Dec 1905	
d/o 419	390 6 Lena Upchurch L.J.U.	1870 – 1947	
s/o 419	391 7 Wis Upchurch	1884 – 1959	
d/o 419	392 8 Maude Upchurch M Ray U.	21 Jul 1886 – 2 Dec 1975	
w/o 419	429 Bessie Upchurch, born Elnora U.	29 Sep 1898 – 10 Mar 1984	
s/o 419	430 Robert Upchurch, R.Jeffersen U.	28 Jan 1880 – 13 Apr 1940	
s/o 960	507 John W. Upchurch	1855 – 1935	
d/o 507	508 Eldora Upchurch E. Kendall Wright U.	1860 – 1948	
d/o 960	509 Birdie UPchurch	6 May 1897 – 16 May 1897	
h/o 510	510 Richard Weaver O.R.W., Jr	21 Sep 1918 – 12 Aug 1919	
s/o 386	419 Jeff Upchurch	1841 – 1929	
w/o 419	420 Aurora Upchurch A. Ray. U.	1849 – 1904	
d/o 421	421 Pattie Upchurch P.A.U.	1878 – 1935	
s/o 419	422 Malcolm Upchurch	1874 – 1938	
s/o 419	423 G. H. Upchurch	28 Feb 1882 – 8 Jul 1957	
s/o 425	424 Bennie Upchurch B.J.U.	22 Aug 1932 – 10 Feb 1956	
s/o 419	425 Frank Upchurch F.J.U.	2 Oct 1888 – 31 Oct 1968	
w/o 425	426 Edna W. Upchurch	2 Feb 1896 – 16 May 1988	

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

14) UPCHURCH INSANITY RECORDS – on 8 Sep 2011 Kay Lind Slappey sent RPU 6 emails regarding insanity of four members of the Nathan Upchurch I clan which I have coded to show pages = A10, B6, C15, D13, E55, F34. The pages are filed in the biofiles of the four as shown in the boxed names below. All four were declared legally insane an INDIGENT and committed to the Florida Asylum for the insane (Florida State Hospital) at Chattahoochee, Gadsden, Florida. The documents were shared with Margaret Louise Harris on 10 Sep 2011.
RPU – Extract 29 Nov 2013

More research would be required to conclude that an “insanity” genetic trait existed in the Nathan Upchurch I clan. In any family + and – traits are distributed unevenly. With today’s medicines some or all of the four might have led more or less normal lives outside of an institution. At this remove we cannot know what environmental conditions may have contributed to their ill health. It is a surprise that all four were declared indigent in view of the wealth of the family – but we judge from afar. The available records fail to show much family concern for those incarcerated (except for Rebecca) but more evidence is needed.

I. Nathan Upchurch, I – Head of Clan

A. Gilbert Upchurch

1. Nathaniel Smith Upchurch

a. Fred Bradford Upchurch 1882 – 1954

A 1-7 committed (Paranoia) at age 42 31 Dec 1924, died in the Asylum. His brother Dr. Noble A. Upchurch. = Guardian and on board to commit.

b. Nathaniel Swan Upchurch 1870 – 1931

B 1-6; C 1-15 committed at age 61 on 2 Mar 1931 – Loss of memory/time/place. Mrs. Frank Drew Upchurch, Sr., Guardian – N.A.U. on board to commit. Died in asylum. Body to Jacksonville.

c. John Jones Upchurch, Sr.

i. Susan Eleanor Upchurch 1898 – 1937

D –7-13; F 1-34 Committed 5 Oct 1927 at age 29 for chronic congenital imbecility. Had severe epilepsy bouts. Started as pay patient but judged indigent 4 Jun 1930 Brother J. J. Upchurch, Sr.=Guardian-upon death her mother Bell had her buried at asylum.

2. William George Upchurch

married 1902 () Rebecca Pearl Hankins 1882-1932 A 8-10; D 1-6; E 1-55. [Rebecca] committed 16 Apr 1915 at age 33. Died in asylum. Body to brother G. F. Hankins, Lexington, North Carolina. See her biofile for more comments.

3. Bartley Jefferson Upchurch

A. Bessie Estille Upchurch

i. Lena Upchurch Perry

I. Frances Holt Tilley – went blind as an adult. Was their blindness related to above insanity. See their biofiles.

4. Lamberth Lassiter Upchurch 1830 – 1905 Blind (from birth?)

5. Mariah Elizabeth Upchurch 1820 – 1900 Blind (from birth?)

(Was their blindness related to above insanity – see their biofiles)

15.) Was blindness among the descendants of Nathan Upchurch, I related to the cases to the cases of insanity in the family. (See RPU Extract 29 Nov 2011) – RPU 30 Nov 2011.

By reference to the 29 Nov 2011 Extract Sheet it will be seen that the insanity / blindness cases all involved descendants of Nathan's son Gilbert Upchurch. Gilbert's son Nathaniel Smith Upchurch had two sons and one granddaughter declared insane (Susie).

Susie was also a granddaughter of Gilbert's son William George Upchurch (due to intermarriages in the family.)

[In the Extract I explain how these cases of insanity could have been the "luck of the draw" and how modern medicine might have made unnecessary the pejorative term "insanity". However, in the case of Susie, one cannot overlook the two close marriages of four of her ancestors (two couples). Susie and her full siblings did not show robust health records.]

The blindness involved the other sons of Gilbert – Bartley, Lamberth, and Mariah. The latter two were blind (completely or partially?) (from birth?). My unsubstantiated guess has always been that the blindness of these two could have traced to venereal disease introduced by Gilbert as he had some known weakness of character. These two children had different mothers.

Bartley had a great-granddaughter, Frances Holt Tilly who developed complete blindness as an adult. Her years of explaining her condition led her to believe that her blindness was hereditary and thus connected to that of Lamberth and Mariah.

In conclusion, I have developed no connection that the insanity or blindness cases are genetic in nature or that they are related. Others with more expertise may show genetic causes.