

Commentary: Mary Sims married Moses Upchurch around the year 1780. Belatedly, we add to her Biofile, what Belle West has previously published in her book, Upchurch Family. From this we can offer speculation and perhaps begin to weave a story of importance to all members of the Moses clan.

It is of interest that Mary's father Isham Sims, in the 1780s, lived with his relatives in Brunswick County, VA as did Moses Upchurch and his family. Perhaps more can be learned from this setting. We are left to speculate how in the late 1790s, Moses, now living in Franklin County, NC, came to know and wed Mary Sims. At present we are not aware of any Sims family presence in that area. It is not too much to presume that Moses somehow found Mary in Wake County, where her father obtained land in the late 1700s. It is quite possible that the presence of Isham Sims on upper Crabtree Creek in western Wake County provided the opportunity for Moses to move in 1803 from Franklin to just 2 -3 miles west of the headwaters of Crabtree Creek.

What is clear is that among the descendants of Moses and Mary one finds many given names that originated from Mary's family.

This Biofile is a gem and a stimulus for more work.

RPU 22 May 2018

Acknowledgements: This Biofile was transcribed by Carla Michaels, also a gem for her work in preserving the history of Wake and Franklin counties.

(1) See notes of RPU visit 5 Sep 1977 to Adelia Jane Upchurch

We rode south on Hwy 751 from the H. O. Kelly Place (Adelia's residence) and just south of the nursery on the west side of the road Adelia pointed out the Mulholland Place which Adelia says was the place where Moses Upchurch and his son Sims Upchurch were buried in now unmarked graves. Adelia calls this the Sims Upchurch place – but at another place in the notes she indicates that Murray Upchurch, another son of Moses Upchurch were buried with Moses and Sims and as a conflict she refers to this as the Murray Upchurch Place. Adelia says a distant relative of Moses Upchurch authorized the plowing over of the graves. The Mulholland's are apparently sensitive to many visits.

(2) See Upchurch Family by Belle Lewter West – Pg. 33

“Moses Upchurch and his wife nee Mary Sims are buried on what is called the “Sims Upchurch” place in Chatham Co, NC on land originally purchased by Moses Upchurch when he left Franklin Co, NC.” According to tradition Moses Upchurch died at 102 or 103 from a fall from a horse while crossing a small stream in which he died. Neither Moses Upchurch nor his wife nee Mary Sims left a will.

(3) RPU comment 22 May 2018

Since Belle Lewter West completed her research in the 1970s, our follow-up work on the Upchurch family has given little attention to the heritage of Mary Sims, wife of Moses Upchurch, head of Upchurch clan #1. Belle, in her book Upchurch Family, devoted two pages to Mary. They are reproduced on the following page.

SYMES-SIMS

We, of the Moses Upchurch family of North Carolina, should feel much indebted to the late Jane Morris (Jennie Sims (Davison) Morris) for acquainting us with the English background of the SYMES family. In 1938 she published ADAM SYMES AND HIS DESCENDANTS, in which is proven several generations of ADAM SYMES' ancestors in England, one generation in Antigua and one in Surry Co., Va. Then she shows by the will of ADAM SYMES that he had a son ISHAM SIMS, of whom later. I shall show that MARY SIMS who married MOSES UPCHURCH was none other than the daughter of ISHAM and Mary (Murray) SIMS.

The pedigree of this SYMES family of Charde, Somerset County, England can be found in Vol. 11/110, published by the Harleian Society of England in 1623. Arms were granted to WILLIAM SYMES of Poundford, Somerset in 1591: "Azure, three scallops, or: crest, a demihind, rampant, and erased or." He married Elizabeth, dau. of Robert Hill of Yarde, Somerset (arms in the same volume 11) and his wife, Alice Clark. The will of WILLIAM SYMES of Charde, dated 4 June, 1597, proved 27 July, 1597, by Elizabeth SYMES, the relict, 66 Cobham) names several sons and daughters among whom was JOHN SYMES, eldest son and heir. He received £2000 sterling. JOHN was born in 1581 and died 21 October 1661, age 80. He married Amy, dau. of Thomas Horner, Esq., of Mill, Somerset County.

THOMAS SYMES, son of JOHN married Amy, dau. of Edward Bridges in 1640. Their son GEORGE SYMES, not being of the inheriting branch of the family, emigrated to Antigua in the West Indies. There he met and married Dorothy, only child of Thomas Everard, Gentleman, and his wife, Elizabeth. GEORGE died in 1687 and was survived by his wife and five children. Elizabeth soon married. Her son, GEORGE SYMES emigrated to Virginia in 1687 the year of his father's death. He married and had issue, GEORGE and ADAM SYMES. The name of his wife is unknown.

From Surry Co., Va., records we know that, in 1698, GEORGE placed his affairs in the hands of John Skelton, with power of attorney, and left for Antigua to look after the inheritance of 50,000 pounds of sugar left to himself and the same amount to his brothers and sisters, by his stepfather. He had to sue and the suit was settled in his favor (Proven by papers in Record Office in London) GEORGE SYMES died in 1718-23.

ADAM SYMES, son of GEORGE was born about 1689. He was living and trading in Prince George County, Va., and there met and married MARY ISHAM about 1708. A number of land transactions are on record to and from ADAM SYMES in that county. After 1720 ADAM and his brother were granted land in Brunswick Co.

Va., which county was formed from Prince George, Isle of Wight and Surry Counties.

A certified photostat volume in the Virginia State Library, entitled BRUNSWICK CO., DEEDS, WILLS, etc. 1732-1740, has a much-fragmented will of ADAM SYMES. From this and various other sources the children of ADAM and MARY (ISHAM) SYMES have been proved. They were GEORGE, JOHN, WILLIAM, JAMES, DAVID, CHARLES, ISHAM and MARY SYMES. His son ISHAM attracts our attention.

About this time the spelling of the surname SYMES was changed to SYMS, SIMMS and SIMS. ISHAM SIMS, son of ADAM SYMES, was born in Brunswick Co., Va., in 1723. He was granted 200 acres of land in Bladen Co., N.C., in 1745. (SAUNDERS COLONIAL RECORDS of NORTH CAROLINA. Vol. 4/764). He was in Granville Co., N. C. in 1748. In 1761 ISHAM SIMS was granted land in Wake Co., N. C., and was buying and selling land in that county around Crabtree and Walnut Creeks. The census of 1790 listed ISHAM SIMS, Sr., with four in his family and two slaves. He evidently died soon thereafter as his will was proved at December Court in 1791. His executors were his sons, ADAM and ISIM and his wife, Mary. (WAKE CO., N. C. WILL BK. C/185). His will was recorded 15 Nov. 1792.

No record of the marriage of ISHAM SIMS has been found. In his will he named his wife, Mary, along with his sons, ADAM and ISHAM, as his executors. No proof has been found that the surname of Mary was Murry. However, GEORGE SIMS, a brother of ISHAM, married Esther Murry, daughter of Thomas Murry of Isle of Wight Co., and it is presumed that Mary, wife of ISHAM SIMS was also a Murry, probably a sister of Esther. The prevalence of the given name Murry in the UPCHURCH family from that time until today bears out this theory.

Among other bequests in his will, ISHAM SIMS willed: "Item: I give and bequeath to my grand daughter, LEATHY UPCHURCH. 1 cow and calf and 1 featherbed which she is in the making of." The late Jane Morris was in agreement with this writer that the mentioned grand daughter, LEATHY UPCHURCH, could have been none other than the daughter of MOSES and MARY (SIMS) UPCHURCH.

UPSHUR FAMILY IN VIRGINIA

UPSHUR FAMILY IN VIRGINIA is a genealogy of this family, beginning with the immigrant, ARTHUR UPSHUR, who came from Essex County, England, to the Eastern Shore of Virginia (Accomack and Northampton Counties) about 1637 at the age of twelve. The author of this is JOHN ANDREWS UPSHUR who received