

THE ADAMS FAMILY OF CARLTON

When I started my family tree research, I discovered that my maternal grandmother, Harriet Annie Adams, was born in the village of Carlton in 1869, the sixth of nine siblings. The village in those days was populated by farmers, farm workers, coal miners and, as my great grandfather became, “waggoners” or carriers. The 1841 census shows a total population for the village as 282 people living in 62 dwellings.

Harriet Annie’s grandfather, John Adams Sr. (my great,great grandfather) had arrived in the neighbourhood around 1830, having moved here from Whilton, Northamptonshire, most probably in an effort to secure work. Here he met Sarah Phipps from Kirby Muxloe and they were married on 20th November 1833.

They spent the next 18 years moving between Enderby and Thurlaston as he worked as a farm labourer to support his family. Among their offspring was John Adams Jr., Harriet Annie’s father, who was christened at Enderby Parish Church on 22nd February 1837. John’s older sister, Mary Ann, worked as a house servant in 1851 to James Oldacres of Market Bosworth, who had previously farmed 89 acres in Carlton.

John Adams Jr.,who worked as a farm boy from the age of 14, moved to Carlton when he was 19 and married Harriet Goddard, a local girl, on 14th July 1856. All of their nine children were born in Carlton over the course of the next 23 years. They lived and worked in Carlton for the rest of their lives, the last record of them being in the 1891 census.

My grandmother appears in the 1881 census, aged 11, described as a scholar, and the family were living at 56 Main Street, two doors away from the grocer’s shop. She would have attended the village school before being employed as a house servant at the age of 13 as were her older sisters.

Harriet Annie next appears in print at her wedding to my grandfather in Cape Town, South Africa in 1902. I have no idea how or why she went to South Africa, quite an adventure at the turn of the 20th century! I assume she met my grandfather there, as he originated from Lancashire and there doesn't appear to be any previous connection between the families.

Their son, Joseph, was born in Cape Town, but my mother was born in 1908 in Leigh, Lancashire, after their return to England. My grandmother died of a stroke in 1917. My mother, 8 years old at the time, was raised by "Aunty Alice", Harriet's elder sister, also born in Carlton.

Thank you for letting me share my grandmother's story with you. If anyone has any information to share on descendants of the Adams family, please contact me via the Editor. I also have more information on the Goddard family who date back even farther in Carlton. If anyone has any links to them I would be glad to correspond.

Roger B Male

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