

A. R. Horsley Family Bible Records

Notes by Joan Horsley

Based on research as of 22 May 2011

The authors of *Horsley Families of America* (1986) include copies of pages from the "A. R. Horsley Family Bible," located at the time at the Georgia Archives in Atlanta, GA. Amos R. Horsley was a son of John B. and Pamela/Permelia Huff Horsley, ancestors of the book's authors Brenda Horsley Scott and Roy D. Horsley. The entries were written first on scraps of paper (also reproduced), then entered on Bible pages labeled Births, Deaths, Marriages, Miscellaneous, etc.

These are the entries that mention John B. and Pamela ("Permelia") with page numbers from *Horsley Families*. Discussion of the handwriting and of her middle name "Macaw" follows.

p. 140 - On a partly torn piece of paper is written:

John B. and Permelia [or Pamela] Horsly[sic] was married 22 of September 1825
John B. Horsley was born July the 25 1806
Permelia Macaw[partly illegible] Horsley was born Marche 27 1804 Now thear [their] Children
 [lists first 4 children with birth dates, then page torn off, but entries in Bible list other children]

p. 136 - Under the Bible "Family Record" section labeled "Deaths" is written:

Miss Pamela Macaw Horsley Died Aprile the third 1888. She was the mother of A. R. Horsley

Note:

The "Miss" here is interesting. Could it have to do with Amos' father, John B. Horsley, leaving his wife and family for another woman between 1854 and 1858? Family stories described her as a red-headed widowed school teacher, and Amos reportedly told his son Gerome that he "had seen the devil (the woman) at church." [*Horsley Families*, p. 22] The family did not know John B.'s later whereabouts, but he appears to in the 1860 census in Greene County, Arkansas with a wife Elizabeth and her two daughters (all named there as Horsley), plus a two-year-old son John T. born in Arkansas. John B. and Pamela/Permelia had a son also named John T. who was age 13 this same census and still living in Carroll County, GA with his mother Permelia as head-of-house.

p. 137 - Under the Bible "Family Record" section "Miscellaneous" in a different handwriting and apparently at a later date is:

John B. Horsley was born July 25th. 1806—
Father of A. R. Horsley
Permelia Macaw Horsley
was born March 27th. 1804
Mother of A. R. Horsley
10 Children 5 Boys 5 Girls

[Source: Brenda Horsley Scott and Roy Deris Horsley Jr. *Horsley Families of America 1650 to 1986* Vol 1 (Cullman AL: Gregath Co, 1986) Photocopied by Brenda Scott from the originals at the Georgia Archives, Atlanta, GA Transcribed by Joan Horsley, comments in brackets added.]

Note on the Bible Records

The handwriting on the scraps of paper and on most of the Bible entries matches the signature for Amos R. Horsley on a 21 Feb 1908 Carroll Co, GA court affidavit [also copied in *Horsley Families*, p. 142]. It appears that "A. R. Horsley" signed his own name to the affidavit and also wrote the notation under his signature: "Age 68 years, Barge, Ga. #1." The 1880 and 1910 censuses for Carroll County, GA list Amos Horsley as able to read and write; however, "Amos R. Horsley" signed his Civil War veterans pension application of 24 Aug 1910 by mark, possibly due to infirmity or age. From these documents and the very shaky handwriting of the Bible entries, we might postulate that Amos wrote the Bible entries around 1908 and perhaps wrote the dates on the pieces of paper shortly before.

Identifying the writer and dates of entry for any "Bible record" is important, as not all are considered "primary records" for genealogical evidence purposes. In other words, unless Bible entries were written at the time of the event mentioned or by the people involved, they are considered secondary sources and as such are subject to possible errors due to faulty memory, incomplete information, misunderstandings, copy errors, etc. by the original writer and/or later copyists.

In this case, except for Pamela's death, the information about Amos' parents John B. and "Permelia" seems based upon what Amos was told and upon his memory and understanding of that information, but they do conform with less exact information from other sources (e.g., censuses, children's birth years, etc.). It is interesting that while he included a full middle name, "Macaw," for his mother (which I have not found in a public record, only the initial "M." in her father's probate), Amos did not call her by her original first name of Pamela, but as Permelia (or Pamelia), a spelling and pronunciation found in Georgia censuses beginning in 1850. Amos also did not record her maiden name of Huff/Hoff, which is proved by the estate probate of her father Jonathan Huff (Hoff, Hoof) that names her as Pamela M. Hoff, wife of John Horsley. Amos made no reference to his parents' parents.

The A. R. Horsley Family Bible is extremely valuable for family information as well as a treasure to see. We are most fortunate not only that the Bible has been preserved but that it was made publicly available by the *Horsley Families* authors.

Note on Pamela/Permilia's Middle Name

The only public record I have found that indicates a middle name for Pamela is one time in her father Jonathan Huff's York County, SC estate probate file where she is called "Pamela M. Horsley, formerly Pamela M. Hoff" (this in a statement signed by her husband "John Horsley" in 1826). Elsewhere in this same Probate Court file, in an earlier Equity Court statement by her mother, even when she signed her own name by signature to a release of dower in an 1837 York County deed, she is simply Pamela Huff (or Hoff), Pamela Horsley, or later Permelia Horsley.

Her son Amos' Bible gives her full middle name as "Macaw." Some people today have assumed this automatically means that Macaw or McCaw was her mother Agatha Huff's maiden name.

However, middle names at this time in the South were not common and most often did not come from the ancestral line. Instead, most middle names came from close friends or neighbors, non-lineal relatives (e.g., cousins), historical personages (e.g., Washington), people significant to the family or who held a position of status in the community, etc. The question becomes, is there any evidence that might provide clues for the origin or meaning of the middle name Amos gave us (keeping in mind

that names were then spelled phonetically, and if Amos only heard rather than saw the name Macaw, it might possibly be McCall instead).

There were two groups of early McCaw families in the York County, SC area where Pamela's parents were living when she was born. One was headed by John McCaw of York County, born 1753 in western Pennsylvania where his father had settled after arriving from Antrim, Ireland probably via the port of Philadelphia. John McCaw migrated from western Pennsylvania to York County by the time of the Revolutionary War. The other McCaw line, which also included a John, arrived in the York area directly from Ireland between 1762 and 1765 and settled primarily in adjacent Chester County, SC.

It is difficult to see how Agatha Huff could be part of either of those McCaw family groups. According to the 1800 census, Jonathan and Agatha Huff had four children under age 10, indicating they married around 1790, about five years prior to arriving in York County. In 1790, Jonathan Huff and his parents Powell and Prudence Sutton Huff resided in Prince William County, VA, where they had moved from Hunterdon County, New Jersey between 1773-1776. Thus, Jonathan probably married Agatha in or near Prince William County, VA, an area where neither McCaw group in the York County, SC area is known to have lived. (Unfortunately, early Prince William County marriage records have not survived.)

On the other hand, John McCaw of York County was a significant personage of wealth and status in York County. He was a veteran of the Revolutionary War with the local honor usually bestowed by such service. More importantly, "John McCaw, Esq." was the first Clerk of York County and accrued commensurate community status, land and assets from this and other positions of public responsibility and financial enterprise. Also, the records show associations between his family and that of Jonathan Huff. One of John McCaw's assistant county clerks was Jonathan Sutton, brother of Prudence Sutton Huff and uncle of Jonathan Huff, so presumably the families were personally acquainted. Several families into whom John McCaw's children married lived near Jonathan Huff, and two of John McCaw's sons, Robert and William, were paid debts owed by Jonathan Huff from his estate.

Thus, it seems possible that Jonathan Huff's daughter Pamela Macaw Huff was named in honor of John McCaw's daughter Pamela McCaw (b. 1797), particularly since "Pamela" was a rather unusual name for that time and place. This would fit with the common practice at the time for middle names to come from, and show respect to, locally significant families, neighbors, and friends rather than from the ancestral line.

In any case, given the evidence to date, the maiden name of Pamela Macaw Huff Horsley's mother cannot automatically be presumed to be McCaw. Hopefully further research into families associated with or living near Jonathan Huff's family in Prince William County, VA between about 1775-1792 might provide better clues to his wife Agatha's family. (For more details about Virginia records found for Jonathan's father Powell Huff prior to the mid-1790's, contact Larry Huff by e-mail at: Huffer64@hotmail.com)
