

## **BIOGRAPHY OF ASAHEL WARD, United Empire Loyalist**

The two petitions for land in Ontario that were submitted to the Land Board by Asahel Ward, provide key information about him but a limited amount about his immediate family. He was born about 1758 or 59 in, probably, Dover, Dutchess County, New York and stated in his first petition from Markham in 1811 that he was a native of New York and had joined the British Standard at New York in 1778. He mentioned a brother, Major Thomas Ward, who had commanded a blockhouse which had been attacked by General "Mad" Anthony Wayne on July 21, 1781 at a place called Stony Point on the New Jersey shore of the Hudson River. Further, that he, Asahel, had been in the blockhouse at the time in service with the Engineer Department. At the time of his first petition in 1811 he had lived in the Province for about 25 years and had not received any lands with the exception of a Land Board Certificate, of an early period, which was burned to ashes when his house burned down. Asahel asked for lands but also wanted to be inserted on the UE list. Several people who knew him well vouched for him at his Land Board hearing. *Ref: 526/W10, Pet. No. 69, RGIL3, C-2953.*

One of the affidavits in his support was from Peter Howard who recalled that Asahel had come into the province with his family in 1785. For whatever reason, Asahel never drew the land for which he was entitled and so he petitioned a second time from Saltfleet in 1823 and mentioned that he had served under Captain Elias Smith as an artificer and had been a resident of the province for upwards of 36 years. *Ref: 529A/W13, Pet. 84, RGIL3, C-2955.* Captain Elias Smith had provided an affidavit for Asahel's first petition in 1811, so it is obvious that the same Asahel Ward had petitioned a second time. By occupation, Asahel was a carpenter but had also provided services for others, such as a trip to Montreal for provisions as presented by an affidavit by Basil Rorison.

Biographers of this family have bypassed the fact that Asahel was married twice and by his first marriage, had three little girls. His first wife was Jemimah Comstock; she was the stepdaughter of Ephraim Eyers. Ephraim had settled in the province by 1785 and in Doctor Jones account book for Ephraim is an entry in 1786/87 for a medical purpose, which was paid for by "Ward". It would seem that upon the arrival of Asahel into the province they were living temporarily with Ephraim Eyers. Based on birthdates of Jemima's siblings, and if she had reached age 21 in 1785, her birthdate would be about 1764. The date coincides with the birth of Asahel and Jemimah's daughter, Sarah. It is not until 1842, and in the petition of their daughter, Sarah, that we learn more about this family.

Their daughter, Sarah, petitioned from Marmora on 1 December 1842, as the wife of George Cain, and stated she had never received any lands as the daughter of Asahel Ward of Twelve Mile Creek in the Gore, yeoman and UEL. Sarah was examined by the Board and she revealed that she was 55 years of age and if her father, Asahel, was alive he would be upwards of 80 years. *Ref: V 134, C3, Pet. 139, RGIL3, C-1734.* The Board asked Sarah for more information and she wrote them a letter which became part of her petition packet, letter dated 1 March 1845. She stated that she could not determine where her Father lived in 1812. She, personally, was living in Fredericksburgh and he was living above Toronto somewhere in a township she could not recall. Apparently, the Board asked about her siblings and her response was that her father had two wives and that she was the daughter of the first wife as were her two sisters who were Clarissa, wife of John Lawrence, and Mary, wife of David Edmunds but late wife of Joseph Johnson, her last husband. Sarah stated she had no brothers from her father's first marriage. And further, that she could not describe anything about her Father's second marriage. Sarah recalled that after her mother's death, (Jemima) she resided with an aunt in Merrickville on the Rideau and never saw any of the second family nor did she know their names. The aunt she referred to in Merrickville was Sylvia Comstock Merrick, wife of William Merrick. Sarah did not think she could provide more information without writing to her sisters at Penetangushine.

The Board awarded Sarah scrip in the equivalent amount of 200 acres of land on 25 May 1846. A reference to Sarah, who died at Marmora in 1848, was "Mrs. George Cain, nee Ward", an obituary post.

From the Records of the Blue church, and baptisms performed by Rev. John Bethune, it is recorded that on 26 May 1793, record No. 356, Sarah Ward, daughter of "Essel" Ward of Elizabethtown, and Jemima Comstock, his wife, was baptized. Sarah was baptized on the same day that William Merrick, son of William Merrick and Sylvia Comstock, was baptized at the Blue Church. Based on Sarah's age from her petition and the baptismal dates, she was born about 1786-7 which coincides with the medical ledger for Eyers and arrival dates into the province by her parents. It also suggests that Asahel and Jemima were married before their arrival into the Eyers household in 1785. In Ephraim Eyers' original petition, he sought land for himself, a wife and four children—those children being Levi, Aaron, Sylvia and Levinia Comstock but did not include Jemima, who was undoubtedly already married.

The second marriage for Asahel Ward was to Abigail Adair who petitioned from Grimsby, as Abigail Adair Ward. *Ref: 525/W8, 10, RG1L3, C-2952.* Abigail stated she was the daughter of John Adair of Clinton, U.E., and that she was married to Asahel Ward. She had not received any lands and asked for 200 acres of wasteland and permitted Robert Nelles of Grimsby, Esq., to be her agent and locate the same and take out a deed when complete. The date of her petition as Abigail Adair Ward was 1 May 1806, which establishes the death of Jemima Comstock Ward as occurring prior to that date and after the birth of her, Jemima's, third daughter, Mary, born 18 February 1797 at Gananoque, Ontario. No burial information has been found for Jemima.

Included below are the abstracts of petitions related to the above information:

ASHAEL WARD of Markham 1811, 526/W10, 69, RG1L3, C-2953—of Markham, a native of the late province of New York—joined the British Standard at NY in the year of 1778 and is brother to Major Thomas (torn), who commanded the blockhouse when attacked by General Wayne and that he himself was in the blockhouse during the attack and served in the Engineer Department, that he has been in the Province for about 25 years and never received any lands...except a Land Board Certificate at an early period, which got burnt when his house and \_\_\_property was reduced to ashes by fire. Wants to be inserted on UE list and grant him lands.../s/ Asahel Ward. On 15 Feb. 1811, Captain Pickel vouched for him as having lived within his acquaintance upwards of 30 years and knew him to be an honest industrious subject and it was verified that he had taken the oath on 14 March 1811 by W. Allen. On 13 March 1811, Benajah Mallory vouched that he had known Ward for 12-14 years. And, this is to certify that the bearer Asahel Ward came to the province with his family in 1785 in an affidavit of 13 March 1811 /s/ Peter Howard. And, Asahel Ward came into the province of lower Canada about 26 years past and resided in said province some time after that he moved into this province and has resided in the same for about 25 years, an honest man. at York 24 Feb. 1812 /s/ Stephen Burritt. On 30 March 1812, Elias Smith certified that Asahel Warded had served under him in the Engineer Dept. of his Majesty's Service in the year 1777 and continued in his service during the War. He is a worthy soldier..and further certify he is American born, /s/ Elias Smith On 12 March 1811 at York, Basil Rorison certified that he was acquainted with Ashel Ward in the Oswegatchi settlement for about 22 years..Asahel delivered a boatload of provisions from Montreal to Elizabethtown for Rorison. William Allen certified that Rorison was a resident of Dover in Dutchess Co., NY. Referred to Council which was read on 7 April 1812, with the recommendation that Asahel's name be inserted on the UE list.

ASAHIEL WARD of Saltfleet 1823, 529A/W13, 84, RG1L3, C-2955—of the township of Saltfleet in Wentworth Co., Dist. Of Gore, carpenter—has been a resident upwards of 36 years and served his Majesty in the Rev. War under Capt. Elias Smith as an artificer and petitioner's name was entered as a UEL in 1812 and has done his duty during the late war and taken the oath of allegiance..has a numerous family and never received any land.../s/ Asahel Ward at Saltfleet 9 Jan. 1823..John Willson Esq., as agent for petitioner. Entered Land Book I, p. 373

SARAH CAIN/WARD of Marmora, 1842, V 134, Bun. C3 PET 139, RG1L3, C-1734 –Sarah Cain, wife of George Cain in the Township of Marmora in the District of Victoria, Canada—she is the daughter of Asahel Ward of Twelve Mile Creek in the Gore of Dist. And Prov. Aforesaid, yeoman, UEL..never received lands../s/ Sarah Cain..1 December 1842. On examination she has an age of 55 years and the age of her father, Asahel Ward, if alive, to be upwards of 80 years. Board awards scrip in the amount for 200 acres. 25 May 1846. In a letter written by Sarah dated 1 March 1845, (to the Land Board) she states: I received your letter of 31 May in which you state that I shall require further affidavits; I cannot ascertain where my Father lived in 1812. I was living in Fredericksburgh and he was living above Toronto somewhere but the township I cannot positively state. You wish me to give the names of my brothers and sisters, my Father had two wives. I am by the first wife and Clarissa, wife of John Lawrence and Mary, wife of David Edmunds also wife of Joseph Johnson, her last husband. Brothers I had none. His family by his last wife I cannot describe after my mother's death I resided with my aunt in Merriksville on the Riddeau and I never see none of his second Family or knew their names. I have been able to get the affidavit of one person and cannot get any more without writing to my sisters at Penetangushine. Yours truly, Sarah Cain  
NOTE: Sarah died at Marmora in 1848 as Mrs. George Cain, nee Ward – obituary post

#### FROM THE RECORDS OF THE BLUE CHURCH: Baptisms

26 May 1793: No. 356-SARAH WARD, daughter of Essel Ward of Elizabethtown and of JEMIMA COMSTOCK, his wife, was baptized on the 26<sup>th</sup> May, by Rev. John Bethune

Children of George Cain and Sarah Ward: Sarah born 1786-7; marriage to Cain at about 16 years of age.

George Cain, 52, widower, farmer, Prince Edward Co., Marmora, s/o George and Sarah Cain, married Margaret Loucks, 45, widow, Sidney, Marmora, d/o John & Elizabeth Ackers. Wits: George E. & Mrs. McMillan of Marmora, 22 December 1881 at Marmora. Margaret died 24 August 1880 at 56 years. She was born in Ireland—cause of death was lake fever. George Cain, farmer, Marmora Twp. (Hastings Co.) reported her death.

*From the register of Rev. John Langhorn:*

Baptism: 20 June 1802, Barnabas, son of George and Sarah Cain of Fredericksburg.

Baptism: 6 May 1804, Katy, daughter of George and Sarah Cain of Fredericksburg

Clarissa Ward and John Lawrence: Clarissa Ward born about 1791.

Land Petition request of Clarissa—she is wife of John Lawrence, of York Twp., yeoman. Daughter of Asahel Ward of York Twp, late of Markham, carpenter, UEL. Asking for 200 acres and requests that Ashel Ward of York Twp. To be her agent and take out the deed. At York 25 April 1812. Clarissa Lawrence. Clarissa swore the above information was correct on 29 June 1812 at York. She was recommended for 200 acres and it was referred to the Executive Council by order of the President. Entered p. 205 of Land Book F. Ref: Petition: V286, L10, 24, C-2126

Mary Ward and David Edmunds: Mary born 18 Feb. 1797 at Gananoque, Ontario; d. 9 March 1868 at Rawdon Twp., Hastings Co., Ontario

Her second husband Joseph L. Johnson

Petition from York in 1812 Bundle E10/25 C-1888:

“The petition of MARY EDMUNDS, wife of DAVID EDMUNDS of the Township of York, yeoman: That she is a daughter of Asahel Ward of the Township of York, late of Markham, carpenter, a UE Loyalist. That your petitioner has never received any land nor order for land from the Crown..asks for 200 acres of waste lands ...and permits Asahel Ward of York Township to be her agent to locate same and take out the deed when completed. Dated at York 25 April 1812. /s/ Mary X Edmunds” She swore that the facts presented in her petition were true and dated 29 June 1812 at York. Recommended for 200 acres and referred to Executive Council by order of the President.

Children of David Edmunds & Mary Ward:

Asheal Edmunds, 70, widower, farmer, Ontario, Maryborough, s/o David Edmunds & Mary Ward, married Hannah Vardun, 62, widow, New Brunswick, Pickering Twp., d/o William Hawkins & Sarah Paul. Witnesses: Elisha & Margaret Turner of Maryborough, 31 Oct. 1872 at res., of E. Turner, Maryborough Twp.

The children of Asahel Ward and his second wife are given by descendants as follows:

Lydia Ward born 1807 in Saltfleet Township, Wentworth Co., Ontario

Rhoda Ward bc 1810 in Trafalgar Township, Halton Co., Ontario

Phoebe Ward bc 1811 in Trafalgar

Cordelia Ward born 7 June 1813 in Tapleypoint, Wentworth Co., Ontario

Kezia Ward--

KEZIA WARD of Saltfleet, 1833, 533/W18, 12, RG1L3, C-2957—of Saltfleet in the Gore District, spinster..daughter of Ashael Ward late of township of Trafalgar in said district, an enrolled UE Loyalist, is of the full age of 21, unmarried....8 January 1833 Kezia X Ward referred to Council  
*She is of the second marriage by Asahel to Abigail Adair.*

Researched by M. Sapienza

March, 2017