

Mary Isadore Williams

residing in Chesterfield, NH

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

Working as a domestic servant to a retired music teacher and his wife, 16-year old Mary I. Williams resided in the home of her employers George and Persus Fullam in Chesterfield, NH, in 1880. She had moved to New Hampshire sometime in the 1870s from Westminster, Vermont, just across the Connecticut River.

Mary was born in Westminster on December 8, 1864 to James H. Williams and Martha Brooks, the 4th of their five children. Both of her parents were Black residents of Vermont. Her father James had grown up in Rutland and became a farmer as an adult. Mary's maternal family resided in Cheshire County, NH, at one time, settling in Walpole in the 1840s-1850s before moving on to Westminster, Vermont.

Mary I. Williams entered the workforce in Cheshire County, NH, soon after the death of her mother and shortly before her father's remarriage to another Black Chesterfield resident, Mary Ann Dolby. Her father's second marriage was very short lived; he died from a tree felling accident in 1881. Mary's step-mother, Mary Ann Dolby Williams, relocated to Warner, NH, leaving the rest of the Williams children behind in Vermont.

By February 1884, Mary Williams married New Hampshire native Alva D. Wentworth and settled in Concord, NH. Mary was most likely 'with child' at the time; daughter Martha E. Wentworth was born soon afterwards. A second daughter, Florence Wentworth was born in Concord in June 1885. Unfortunately, both girls died of pneumonia a day apart in June of the following year.

The 1891 Concord City Directory indicates that Mary (Williams) Wentworth found work as a janitress at the Concord & Maine Railroad station in Concord, NH. She was most likely supporting herself at this time. She and her husband Alva divorced in May 1892, citing abandonment and refusal to support. Alva Wentworth, a railroad worker, moved to Berwick, Maine, and remarried a few years later.

Mary (Williams) Wentworth's life following her 1892 divorce is largely unknown.

Genealogy

Generation 1

James H. Williams of Rutland, VT, married Martha Brooks of Westminster, VT in _____. They had:

Mary Isadore (1864- ?)

Generation 2

Mary Isadore Williams (b.1864, VT) married Alva D. Wentworth in Concord, NH in 1884. They had: Martha E. (1884-1886) and Florence (1885-1886).

Family Timeline

1812: Cato Williams was born in 1812 in Lansborough, MA. (?)

1864: Mary Isadore Williams was born on Dec 8, 1864 in Westminster, VT, to JH Williams of Pittsford, a laborer. She is listed as colored. Her mother is listed as having been born in Westminster, VT.¹ NH recorded the birth of Baby Williams born 1 Dec 1864 in Westminster, VT, to James Williams of Rutland, VT, and Martha Brooks of Walpole, NH. This is their 4th child; they're all listed as Black.²

1867: Baby boy Williams was born March 11, 1867 in Westminster, VT to James H. Williams of Rutland, VT who was living in Westminster and working as a laborer. Mother is Martha Brooks of Walpole, NH, working as a housekeeper. This is the couple's 5th child; all are listed as Black.³

1870: Mary Williams was 6 years old residing in her family home in Westminster, Vermont, and attending school. Her father Jasper Williams was 29 years old, a farmer, born in VT, with \$300 personal estate. Her mother Marcia/Maira was 24 years old, born in VT, keeping house. Mary had siblings: Nancy E. (11, b.VT) in school, William H (10, b.VT) attending school, Charles F. (9, b.VT) attending school, George A. (4, b.VT), and Hattie (2, v.VT).⁴ The family is listed as Black.

1880: 16-year old Mary Williams, a Black teenager from Vermont, resided in the home of George L. Fullam of Chesterfield. George was 64 years old, a retired music teacher, and his wife Persus was 62 years old. Mary worked as a servant in their home.⁵

1884: On 16 Feb 1884, Mary I Williams married Alva A. Wentworth in Concord, NH. Alva was a 26 year old, white, cabinetmaker from Tilton, NH. They were married by Rev. WE Bates of Penacook, NH. Her father's name is not listed on the marriage record but his birthplace is listed as Rutland, VT. Her mother is documented as Mary E. Brooks. Alva's parents were Philip and Mary of Orford, NH.⁶

¹ [Birth records Westminster, VT.](#)

² [Birth records, Walpole, NH](#)

³ [Birth records, Walpole, NH](#)

⁴ [US Federal Census, 1870](#)

⁵ [1880 US Federal Census](#)

⁶ [Marriage records, NH, 1884](#)

1885: Ellen E. Wentworth was born to Mary and Alva Wentworth on July 25, 1885 in Boscawen, NH. Her race is listed as "D". This is their second child. Father is listed as 26 year old Alvah A. Wentworth, race "D", born in Tilton, NH. Mother Mary I. Williams was born in VT and was 20 years old.⁷

1886: Daughter Martha E. Wentworth died at the age of 2 in Concord, NH, on June 28, 1886. She was listed as Colored and born in Westminster, VT. She died of pneumonia.⁸

1886: Daughter Florence L. Wentworth died at age 11 months in Concord, NH, on June 29, 1886. She is listed as Colored and born in Boscawen, NH. She died of pneumonia.⁹

1891: "Isabel" Wentworth was working as an assistant janitress in Concord, NH at the Concord & Maine Railroad Station. She lived at 8 Warren.¹⁰

1892: "Isabel" Wentworth and Alva Wentworth divorced in Concord, NH on May 16, 1892. Cause of divorce: abandonment and refusal to support.¹¹

⁷ [Birth records, NH, 1885](#)

⁸ [NH death records, 1886](#)

⁹ [NH Death records, 1886](#)

¹⁰ [Concord, NH city directory 1891](#)

¹¹ [NH divorce records, 1892](#)