

HARRY WHITLOCK, HAMBURG, MI 1894

The Democrat & Chronicle, Rochester, Monroe, New York Sunday August 19, 1894

A WHOLESAL POISONER

She is Supposed to Have Caused the Death of Four Persons

Detroit, Mich., Aug. 18 - The Journal prints a Hamburg, Mich., special to-day alleging that Mrs. Julian BUTLER, 45 years of age, who resided near that village, is supposed to have poisoned her father, mother, husband and herself, all of whom are dead. Harry WHITLOCK, the hired man, who is dying, and Dr. Elias SMITH, of Whitmore lake, the family physician. Dr. SMITH is broken in health and attributed his illness to partaking of food at the woman's home. Mrs. BUTLER's father was a steady farmer. Although he had heart trouble, he died from cramps, after several months' sickness, during which time his hands and feet became numb and useless. The mother's death was attributed to cramps and was unexpected. Two and a half years ago the woman's husband, Charles BUTLER, was taken ill and during the visits of the physician he was invited to dine. Dr. SMITH says he was invariably ill after the meals, but suspected nothing more than the effects of a congestion of food.

About July 1st Harry WHITLOCK, who had taken the farm on shares, boarding at Mrs. BUTLER's home, was taken ill. Dr. SMITH treated him, ascribing his illness to milk poison. The physician tasted the food prepared by Mrs. BUTLER and was taken violently ill, the symptoms being a burning at the stomach and vomiting. Dr. SMITH carried with him some of the food prepared, telling the woman she was suspected of having poisoned the man. The food was sent to Ann Arbor where a chemical analysis showed the presence of strychnine and arsenic.

Meantime Mrs. BUTLER attempted suicide by taking laudanum and failing in her purpose another poison was brought into play which concluded the job. Just before her demise the woman practically admitted her guilt to Dr. SMITH.

WHITLOCK is living but his hands and feet are useless and his health is broken. The woman was a neighbor of ex-Governor WINANS who died of heart failure some weeks ago. It was charged that Mrs. BUTLER had sent him food and that his death was directly attributed to her. Dr. SMITH denies this, however.

Our records show Harry Whitlock age 11 on the 1880 census living in Hamburg, Livingston Co., Michigan with his mother Carrie born in New Jersey about 1850. Also two siblings, Wirt age 10 and Cora age 8. All the children are born in Michigan and their father was also born in Michigan. In 1850 also living in Hamburg, Livingston Co., Michigan is Aramus Whitlock age 42 born in Vermont. He is married to Caroline age 39 also born in Vermont. There are four children shown in 1850, Frances 15 born Vermont and Jenett 13, Emery 11 and Franklin 8 all born in Michigan. I would therefore suspect that Harry's father was either Emery or Franklin.

Harry Whitlock appears to have survived as he shows on the 1900 US census still living in Hamburg. He was born August 1868 and is married to Mildred born September 1875. Living with them is Layfayett Thrasher born Dec. 1825 in New York shown as a "Bo" (Boarder?)

Our thanks to Chuck Rockett for this interesting article.

Sources: X143; X296/24; X573/3,4; X1035/1; X5321; R573/4