

James & Mary Jane (Harris) Francis
1857 – 1956

James Francis: James Francis was listed in the 12th census taken June 1900 and again in the 13th census taken June 1910. During his lifetime his occupations were farmer, miner, government worker, land and homeowner. Also indicated, all of James Francis's children could read and write. James Francis died September 21, 1941. He is buried at Dickerson Church Cemetery.

Mary Jane (Harris) Francis: Nancy Wilkerson, a slave, bore a daughter Hannah. After Hannah became a young woman, she worked for her master in the Big House. Hannah bore a child, Mary Jane. The father was Hannah's owner.

Because Mary Jane was the daughter of a slave owner she was allowed to attend school. When she was 4-5 she and her mother were sold. Mary Jane's white half sister cried and became so upset that her father bought Hannah and Mary Jane back for twice the original selling price.

Mary Jane remembered the day freedom came. She often spoke of it. She spoke of Blacks in the fields learning of freedom and passing out from fear and excitement.

After being freed, Hannah married a Harris. Two children that we know of were born Serilda and Columbus.

Mary Jane at the age of 17 married James Francis on December 25th, 1879. From this union came 10 children. **Emma (November 14, 1880); Austin (December 25, 1882); Logan (October 28, 1884); Allie (January 11, 1887); Ben (April 16, 1889) Joseph Pink (January 5, 1892) Hannie (November 28, 1894) Jesse Young (February 7, 1896); John Edgar (March 3, 1898); Adolphus (February 10, 1900) Clarence (December 25, 1903).** Mary Jane was a very Christian woman. She maintained many *truths-respect* for herself and family, honor for her fellowman, and a firm belief in God.

During her lifetime she experienced many things, slavery, freedom, the chance for an education when many others were denied, land ownership, when most were Sharecroppers, last but not least the opportunity to vote.

Mary Jane Harris died, May 6, 1956. She is buried at Dickerson Church Cemetery.