



James Fountain Cooper and family, Harold, Florida 1904

JAMES FOUNTAIN COOPER

Apr. 17, 1861 – Nov. 11, 1932

James Fountain Cooper was the fourth child, fourth son of ten children born of John Jordan Cooper and Louisa Slay Cooper. James was born early one spring morning, April 17, 1861 at the old Cooper homestead near what is now called Cooper Basin, east of Milton, Florida. A month before Jim was born Abraham Lincoln took the oath of office and became the 16th President of the United States. Just five days before his birth, April 12, 1861, the Civil War had begun when South Carolina troops fired on Fort Sumter. It wasn't until James was seven years old that Florida was readmitted to the Union. Jim like his older brothers helped farm the homestead with their father during his early years and was also involved in the timber industry.

Jim's siblings were: Henry Moses Cooper born in 1852, William Erasmus Cooper born in 1855, John Robinson Cooper born in 1858, Michael Raleigh Cooper born in 1864, Daniel Jordan Cooper born in 1867, Selimea Cooper born in 1869, Thomas W. S. Cooper born in 1872, Susannah Demerah Cooper born in 1875 and Joseph Franklin Cooper born in 1879.

James was a devoted member of the Mt. Olivet RLDS Church where he was baptized at the age of 11 in 1872 and later in life, at the age of 36, was ordained a priest.

In the fall of 1879, when Jim was 18, one month after his youngest brother, Joseph Franklin Cooper, was born, he decide to marry a very pretty young woman with blue eyes and fair hair by the name of Lucyann Missouri Levins. Lucyann was born in Coffee County, Alabama on August 20, 1861 to James Levins and Indianna (Anna) Turner. Jim and Lucyann were married on October 5, 1879 in Santa Rosa county, Florida.

During their 53 years of marriage Jim and Lucyann had 11 children and 52 grandchildren. Their children were born on the 160-acre homestead in Harold, Santa Rosa County, Florida. His children: Charles Robinson born 1880, George Washington born 1882, James Urwin born 1884, Lorina born 1886, John Jordan

born 1889, Bessie Elizabeth born 1891, Thomas David born 1893, Arlie Olevia born 1896, Susie Idell born 1899, Andrew Jackson born 1901 and Leila Agnes born 1904.

Like his father, Jim started his life as a farmer then developed other skills, which led him to become an entrepreneur. Jim also maintained a small herd of steer for which he created and registered his own brand, the circle "C". He built and owned several buildings and stores and jointly ran a couple of businesses with his second son George Washington Cooper in Holt, Florida. Around 1906 Jim built a General Store in Harold, Florida for his nephew, Floyd M. Cooper, who had married his oldest daughter Lorina Cooper in February of that year. In 1913 he built a brick building with large glass windows near the Train Station in Holt where he and his son George operated a Dry Goods Store. He and his son also built a Boarding house not far from the store.

In 1919 Jim built a large concrete block building next to the old post office in Holt. In 1922 the post office moved into that building. At one time James Fountain Cooper was the postmaster at Holt, Florida. He and his wife lived in the back of the old Post Office. The safe that was used by the Post Office had come from the J. Cooper & Son store. On the safe door were written Cooper & Son.

In 1920 two of Jim's grandson moved in with them, Marshall Fisher Cooper and Milledge Lushington (Bill) Cooper. Marshall lived with his grandparents until 1928 when he turned 16 and with permission from his father, enlisted in the Navy to see the world. Milledge lived with his grandparents until he was old enough to join the U.S. Cavalry.

Because he smoked a pipe most of his life and was almost always seen with that old corn-cob pipe sticking out of the corner of his mouth he developed what they called in the old days, Pipe Cancer which required that part of his lip and cheek be removed. Jim was diagnosed to have pipe cancer in 1928. Based on oral history he traveled by train to a cancer specialist in St. Louis, Missouri for treatment and also to have a prosthetic mask made to cover up the portion of his face that was removed from the cancer surgery.

Early in 1932, when James' Pipe Cancer became worse, one of James' son-in-laws, William Jackson (Bud) Carr (husband to Susie Idell Cooper), rode with him, by train, to a Cancer specialist in St. Louis, MO. On April 14, 1932, on their way back to home, James was on heavy medication and while Bud didn't have his eye on him, James removed one of his shoes and proceeded to beat out one of the train's windows and jumped from the train while it was still moving. Fortunately in his drugged state, he only broke a leg, which completely healed before his death. Afterwards Jim was furious with his son-in-law for allowing him to do such a foolish thing. On November 11, 1932 James Fountain Cooper died of cancer. Jim's final resting-place is in the Holt Cemetery between his wife, Lucyann, and his first son, Charlie Robinson Cooper.

James Clarence Cooper, one of James' grandsons, remembered when he was a boy and living with his grandparents, that there was a keg of Gold Coins that sat in the corner of the Dinning Room and that he used to play in it.

Jim's oldest daughters, Lorina, told an anecdote about her father: He was outraged when bacon went from \$.02 to \$.04 per pound and said that if people would quit eating it, it would come back down. They didn't quit eating it, and it didn't come down!