



Joseph Franklin Cooper, tenth child of John Jordan Cooper

JOSEPH FRANKLIN COOPER

Sep 5, 1879 – Aug 9, 1918

Frank was the tenth and last child born of John Jordan Cooper and Louisa Slay Cooper. He was born September 5, 1879 at the Cooper Basin homestead in Santa Rosa County, Florida.

Frank's siblings were Henry Moses, William Erasmus, John Robinson, James Fountain, Michael Raleigh, Daniel Jordan, Selimea, Thomas W. S. and Susannah Demerah Cooper.

Frank worked on the farm helping to raise the livestock and tend the large garden that was required to feed his family. While growing up, one of Frank's closest friends and kin was his nephew Charles Robinson Cooper one of his older brother's sons; James Fountain Cooper's first son. Frank was only a year older than Charlie was so they became fast buddies and got into plenty of mischief together, as boys will do. When Frank was 13, in 1892, the Grippe swept over the panhandle of Florida and killed many of his family members: his father, two sisters-in-law, one brother and two nephews. His grandmother, Selimea Thompson Slay also died of the Grippe that year in Washington County, Florida. After Frank's father died in 1892 and his sister Susannah married in 1893, Frank spent more and more time traveling between DeFuniak Springs and his home at Cooper Basin. He stayed with his Uncle Robert Slay in Defuniak Springs but his main reason for wanting to spend so much time in Defuniak Springs was his Uncle Robert's granddaughter Ada Brannon. Ada was the daughter of Frank's first cousin, Annie Elizabeth Slay Brannon. Ada's grandfather, Robert Slay, was Frank's Mother's oldest brother.

Frank and Ada were married on April 7, 1906 in DeFuniak Springs, Florida. Six months after Frank and Ada were married Frank's mother died at the Cooper Basin homestead. Frank's first train ride was to return home to Santa Rosa County to grieve with his brothers and sister and for the burial of his mother in the old Cooper Cemetery. It would have taken days by horseback to get home

if he hadn't taken the train. Frank worked his farm in DeFuniak Springs and was also employed at one of the local sawmills. Both he and Ada were devote members of the RLDS church in DeFuniak Springs and were happily married for twelve years.

In 1918 a very virulent strain of the Spanish influenza swept around the globe in nine months and killed over 30 million people. On August 9, 1918 Frank succumbed to the Spanish Flu and died. His final resting-place is in the Pleasant Ridge Cemetery, five miles south of DeFuniak Springs, Florida. Ada lived another 26 years and died in 1944. Her final resting-place is next to Frank in the Pleasant Ridge Cemetery. Frank and Ada never had children because of an accident that Ada had as a teenager that required her to have an operation which left her incapable of having children.

The following was from a DeFuniak Springs, FL newspaper clipping in August of 1918:

"Frank Cooper was born at Milton, Florida, September 5, 1879; son of John and Eliza (Louisa) Cooper; accepted the restored gospel at an early age, and was a faithful member for twenty or more years. In and through his influence many souls were won to Christ. Brother Cooper departed this life August 9, 1918. A few minutes before the Spirit took it's flight to the great beyond he said, "Doctor, I wish I was able to explain difference between the Utah and Reorganized Churches," he knowing that many of our people here in DeFuniak Springs, Florida, did not know the difference. He leaves a wife, three brothers and a sister to mourn."

The three brothers and sister were Henry Moses Cooper, James Fountain Cooper, Michael Raleigh Cooper and Susannah Demerah Cooper Adams. His wife's name was Ada Brannon.

*Compiled by: Miles Davis Cooper, great grandnephew of Joseph Franklin Cooper.
Updated November 2002*