



Louisa Slay Cooper, circa 1860

LOUISA SLAY COOPER

Feb 12, 1835 - Oct. 17, 1906

Louisa Slay Cooper was the wife of John Jordan Cooper. Louisa was born February 12, 1835 in Henry County, Alabama. She was the sixth of ten children born of William Slay born circa 1790 in North Carolina, and Selimea Thompson Slay born in South Carolina on February 2, 1802.

Her siblings names were Robert Slay born 1822, William Slay, Jr. born circa 1825, Erasmus Slay born 1827, Stephen Slay born circa 1830, Bedy Slay born 1832, Caroline Slay born 1837, Harriett Slay born 1837, Nancy Slay born 1841, and Julian Slay born 1844.

Louisa's physical appearance is that of a full blood Cherokee Indian but it was from her mother, Selimea Thompson Slay, that she derived her looks. Louisa's dark complexion, high cheekbones, thin lips and slightly down turned eyes gives her a very strong Indian appearance. In one of the photographs of Louisa seated, her hairstyle is short in the front with the hair possibly pulled back into a ponytail which gives her the appearance of an Indian but It is believed that Selimea was actually the full blood Indian. There are many Cherokee Indians with the Thompson name in North and South Carolina. Louisa's father's eyes were supposed to have been blue. This explains how Louisa's son, Michael Raleigh had blue eyes

It is not known when or where Louisa and John met but both of their families lived in close proximity to each other. John Jordan Cooper, his father Washington Arnold Cooper and mother Nancy lived in Holmes County, Florida during the 1850 census and Louisa Slay and her family lived in Washington County, Florida during the 1850 Federal Census. Holmes County and Washington County share a common border. They could have met at a Church meeting or some other social event. We do know that Louisa married John sometime in 1851 when Louisa was sixteen years old and John was thirty-one. Their first child, Henry Moses Cooper, was born February 14, 1852 in Holmes County, Florida. It

is assumed that John and Louisa moved to Washington County, Florida to be closer to Louisa's parents, William and Selimea Slay, because their second child, William Erasmus Cooper was born in Washington County, Florida on December 21, 1855. During the spring of 1856 Louisa, John, their two sons and John's father, Washington Arnold Cooper, moved to Santa Rosa County, Florida where they staked claim to land next to a basin off of the Blackwater River east of Milton, Florida which is now called "Cooper Basin". During their forty-one years together Louisa and John had ten children, eight of which were born at their Cooper Basin homestead. On September 5, 1879 Louisa's tenth and last child, Joseph Franklin Cooper, was born. Louisa was forty-four years old and John was fifty-nine years old. Their children's names were: Henry Moses Cooper, William Erasmus Cooper, John Robinson Cooper, James Fountain Cooper, Michael Raleigh Cooper, Daniel Jordan Cooper, Selimea Cooper, Thomas W. S. Cooper, Susannah Demerah Cooper, and Joseph Franklin Cooper. Louisa and her family were devout members of the Mt. Olivet Branch of the Reformed Latter Day Saints Church in Santa Rosa County, Florida

Louisa survived the Flu epidemic of 1892, that took her husband John Jordan Cooper, one son William Erasmus Cooper, two grandsons, Henry and Johny Cooper, and two daughters-in-law, Dorah Bloodworth Cooper and Elisabeth Reed Cooper.

In 1893 her son, John Robinson Cooper died of the flu. He had not fully recovered from the previous year's flu that had killed many in his family. John's death left his three surviving children, Samuel Jackson Cooper age fourteen, Floyd M. Cooper age eight and Annie Mae Cooper age four without either parent. Louisa being their grandmother took them into her home and cared for them the best that she could but it was difficult so she had the children's Aunt Mary Lou Bloodworth Dean and Uncle Charlie Dean take the children into their home in Pace, Florida to live.

Louisa out-lived John by seventeen years and died on October 17, 1906. Louisa's final resting-place is in the old Cooper Cemetery near the east edge of the old Cooper homestead at Cooper Basin.

*Compiled by: Miles Davis Cooper; GG grandson of Louisa Slay Cooper.
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