

The 10 Children of Lucinda Jones Smith & William Yancy Smith, Sr.

Damon

Damon was the oldest child. He was born in 1881 and died shortly thereafter due to unknown causes.

Ida

The oldest girl, Ida lived all of her life in Mississippi. Since she was the oldest, Ida always had plenty of company in the form of one of her younger siblings. She was often looked upon as the second mother for her siblings, nieces and nephews. Ida was a kind and loving person, but she didn't let her charges get away with anything! Everyone knew that she meant business when she looked at you with her light brown beautiful eyes. Whatever you were doing stopped IMMEDIATELY!

Ida was married to Tom Miller. They had two daughters, Addie Mae and Viola. The family attended St. Paul AME Church and the children went to St. John School.

The Ida branch is the largest of the Smith Family Association. Ida's two daughters gave her 19 grandchildren.

Otha

Otha was the second oldest son. He worked on the Smith farm until he was old enough to be on his own. Otha attended school when there was no farm work to be done.

As a young man, Otha met and married Ada Watkins. They moved to Martinville, a small town north of Wesson. They had one son, William Yancy III, and five daughters: Lucille, Minnie Bell, Lucinda, James Mable and Frances. (Before Otha married Ada, he had a son named Howard.)

Otha obtained a job working as a laborer for the Illinois Central Railroad. This job allowed him to relocate his family to Gibson City (Ford County), Illinois.

Rose Ella

The second oldest girl, Rose Ella (known as Ella) grew up in Wesson. She married a fair complexioned man named Ben Thigpen and they had one son, L.C. (It is not known if his name was just "L.C." or if L.C. stood for something else.) They lived in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, where Ben worked as a railroad brakeman. He was later transferred to Memphis. At some point, both Ben and L.C. died. Ella, however, remained in Memphis.

Ella was not very education but she was very religious. She worked as a domestic - cleaning houses, doing laundry and taking in ironing. She was a spendthrift. As a widow with no living children, she often played favorites with her nieces and nephews. She was a "good aunt" who was fun to be around.

Later in life, Ella remarried. She and her husband, Richard Sims, were together until he passed away. When Ella became ill, she moved back to Wesson and live with her sisters Ollie and Ida until she died.

Ollie

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The third oldest daughter, Ollie grew up in Wesson with her siblings. She did not have the benefit of much formal education, but she learned how to cook as a young girl. This trade would be her main source of income in life.

Ollie married Robert Rayfield Gray and bore him two children" Robert Jr. and Janie Lou. Tragedy struck the young family when Robert Sr. became seriously ill and died, and Robert Jr. sustained a life-ending injury. Ollie's sister, Ella, encouraged the young widow to move to Memphis. Janie Lou stayed in Wesson with Grandma Lucinda.

In Memphis, Ollie met and married Al Fisher. They had three children: Ella Bernice, Wilfred Omar and James Kennedy. During her approximately 10 years in Memphis, Ollie and Al lived alone and with Ella. Eventually, the Fishers returned to Wesson and were reunited with Janie Lou who, by then, was a young married woman. Mother and daughter lived and raised their children together.

Ollie saw to it that her children went to school every day and attended Sunday School and church on Sundays.

Later in life, Ollie and Al separated and divorced. Ollie supported herself as a cook at White Junior College until she became ill. When she could no longer hold a paying job, Ollie helped raise her grandchildren.

William Yancy, Jr.

The third oldest son, William Yancy Jr. (known as Yancy), grew up in Wesson and worked the family farm. He was very popular among the young ladies and with his family and friends. He was known as a sharp dresser who demanded respect wherever he went.

Around 1915, Yancy moved to Gibson City, Illinois, to join his brother Otha. In 1917, Tishan Edwards joined him and they were married in Paxton (Ford County), Illinois. They later moved about 40 miles south to Champaign, Illinois. Yancy and Tishan had four children: Earl, Margaret, Imogene and Thelma. (Before marrying Tishan, Yancy had two daughters: Myrtha Lee and Clara.)

Yancy retired from the Illinois Central Railroad in 1961 after 45 years of service. Yancy was very active with the IBPOEW Elks (University Lodge #619) and the Lone Star Lodge #18 AF & AM. He died in Champaign on October 14, 1971.

Estella

Estella spent her childhood and early life in Wesson. She attended St. Paul AME Church and through her church activities she met Theodore Alexander Green, the pastor's son. They were married and had two children: William Henry and Rose Mary. William Henry died of unknown causes, which devastated the Green family. A few years later, Estella relocated to Memphis with Rose Mary.

In Memphis, Rose worked as a domestic. She joined Martin Temple AME Church where she sang in the choir and was a stewardess. She later met and married Charles Tarplett. After he passed away, Estella moved to Detroit.

While in Detroit, Estella met and married Tom Carpenter. They were together until he died in 1960. Estella then moved back to Memphis to take care of her sister Velma. Estella died in 1982.

Ardell

Ardell spent her early childhood in Wesson. She attended school in Mississippi and Iowa. It is not known how she came to live and go to school in Iowa. As a young student, Ardell played on the girls' basketball team.

At some point in time, Ardell moved to Memphis and lived with her sister Ella. Ardell was a production worker at the Wabash Company in Memphis. Later, she relocated to Detroit and lived with her sister Estella. There she met and married George Butcher. George made "good money" working for the Armour Meat Packing Company.

After her marriage, Ardell became a housewife. She and George had no children. In 1950, Ardell became seriously ill and was in and out of the hospital for several years. She and George both died in 1959.

Virgil

Virgil was born at the turn of the 20th century. He received his formal education at home and the community school. In those days, school was secondary to farm work. Virgil hated farming and would hide or stray to keep from doing his part. As the baby boy, he got away with almost anything. One of his jobs was to carry water from the spring to the farmworkers. However, Virgil would often stop along the way to play and not show up until it was time to eat. (He loved to heat and never missed a meal!)

As an adult, Virgil relocated to Bloomington, Indiana. He worked as a valet, porter and shoeshiner in area barbershops. He later moved to Jackson, Mississippi, where he worked odd jobs.

In Jackson, he met and married Inez, who had a daughter (name unknown). The daughter later had a boy everyone called Sonny. Sonny lived with Virgil and Inez and thought of them as his parents. Virgil and Inez had no children together. When Inez died, Virgil relocated to Memphis.

While there, Virgil met and married Mary Ruby Rivers. They first lived in Jackson, but later came back to Memphis. They, too, had no children together. However, Ruby had a son -- which made Virgil a stepfather once again.

In later years, Virgil became seriously ill and went blind. He died in 1997 in Memphis at the age of 96.

Velma

The baby of the family, Velma was born in the early 1900s in Wesson. She attended the community school and was a member of St. Paul AME Church. Velma left Wesson as a young adult for the bright lights of Memphis.

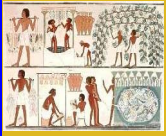
In Memphis, she married a mailman named LeRoy Ankton. While working as a "shampoo girl" at a beauty salon, Velma was encouraged to attend cosmetology school by the salon's owner. After completing beauty school, Velma became a licensed beautician and opened her own shop.

In Memphis, Velma went to St. Andrew's AME Church and she belonged to a young women's social club. At some point in time, her marriage to LeRoy was dissolved. They had no children.

At one of Velma's club events, she met Donald Gentry. He was a short-haul truck driver and worked for Liberty Cash Distributing Company. They were later

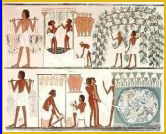
married, but had no children. As such, Velma was also a "good aunt." She was very generous with her nieces and nephews, and often helped provide for their needs.

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