



IIN MEMORY

THE LIFE OF LOUIS JONAS AND FLORENCE BERRY

Louis J. Berry was born on October 1, 1890 to prents ,Louis and Suzanne Berry on the French island of St. Barthelemy, FWI

In 1914 at the age of 24 he joined the French military and was shipped to France to do battle in The First World War.

In 1918 he returned home to St. Barthelemy to assist his father in the business of farming and raising cattle.

After awhile he wandered away from home to do some exploring and traveled the West Indies in search for work and adventure.

He finally settled in St. Thomas which was purchased from Denmark in 1917, and started fishing and farming.

Florence was also born in St. Barthelemy to parents Leon and Susan LaPlace. She was the oldest of six children.

Her father died at a very young age leaving a wife and kids. Florence had to forfeit much of her young life to work to help support the family.

At the age of 19 she left her hometown to travel to St. thomas to seek work so she can send her earnings back home for the family.

Louis Jonas and Florence fell in love and was married on January 24, 1924 and together they had nine children.

They started their lives fishing and farming and in their spare time raised children. Lois Jonas started by leasing 5 acres of land from the owner of a sugar cane plantation. Eventually they saved enough money to purchase the five acres ,so now they had a homestead.

Having fought in a war ,Jonas had invisible scars from poison gases so there were medical problems to deal with too.

Florence being the pioneer with unbelievable strenght and endurance worked side by side with Jonas to provide for the family.

They wer both very crafty.

Jonas would would forage through the woods to find what he called"hope wist" then he would meticulously peel and strip them so he can make his fish traps, make his own roap and knit his fish nets too.

When the catch was more than the family could use ,he would string the fish up and sell them to other settlers for twentyfive cents. The "string contained about 20 fishes.

They planted friuttrees,and farmed the ground together. As the family grew the demands became greater so Florence started

a side job of plaiting braids and making hats and baskets.

She would take to the co-operative on her donkey to sell.

The fruit trees grew and started producing so she would go to the market to sell her goods too.

By then Jonas was getting to the point where he couldn,t do too much anymore but he did have three sons so they were able to help Florence with the marketing of the produce.

And there were six daughters that did the housework and the plaiting and learned at an early age to make hats and baskets too

Life was hard but rewarding. Jonas and Florence was able to purchase more property to farm and to leave a heratige for their children.

Jonas died at age 78 from infasima.

He smoked Camel cigarette without filter all his life. Florence went on to work and tend her family and died at a ripe age of 89.

Their nine children is all alive and have taken tips from their parents on the essance of life. They will always be greatfull and proud of their parents and acknowledge the start their parents gave them in life.