

Nancy Avner Petry

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Nancy Avner Petry was one of 21 children of James (1) and Mary Sarah (Lacy) Petry. Born 13 March 1823 on Indian Ridge at Pipestem, in now Summers County, Nancy died 8 March 1905 at Dry Creek on the Marsh Fork of Coal River. Nancy is buried on a bluff across from the Dry Creek Post Office, on land now owned by Stanley and Mary Virginia (Jarrell) Kalinoski (1986).

Nancy's grave was originally marked with a fieldstone but replaced in 1950 with a concrete head marker by her great-grandson, Golden Petry. Weather has worn away most of the inscriptions. Buried beside her is James Cruisenberry "Berry" Anderson, whom she married late in life (both were 45), with a similar concrete head marker. Mercer County recorded Nancy's marriage to James, the son of James and Elizabeth A. Anderson, on 21 July 1866 by Rev. Leroy Keaton. If this date is true, she was married before she came to Coal River. An old family story has it that she returned to Pipestem and married Berry, surprising everyone on her return to Coal River. Also in the burial plot is Sylvester H. Petry, a grandson, and another grave marked with a field stone of, I believe is Webster Lang Alberty, the son of Hazel (Alberty) Petry, the wife of Sylvester H. Petry.

James Cruisenberry "Berry" Anderson (1819 Bedford, Va.-9 July 1899 Dry Creek, W.Va.) was the son of James and Elizabeth A. Anderson. He married (9 December 1845) #1 Sarah Elizabeth Carner (1829-14 August 1859 of typhoid), the daughter of David and Sarah Anderson Carner. Berry and Sarah had 7 children of which two were born dead. Their children were:

|                |                               |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Minerva A.     | marriedGeorge Davidson        |
| James B.       | marriedSarah Elizabeth Butler |
| Thomas Chapman | marriedNancy J. Kinser        |
| William H.     | marriedMary Ella Thomas       |
| Mary M.        | marriedEdward E. Shrewsbury   |

After marrying, Nancy and Berry came to Dry Creek and lived until they died. Nancy's children, all born at now Petry, in Mercer County, are:

|                    |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Ardilia            | marriedBallard Preston Petry |
| Sarah Ann          | never married                |
| Sylvester Plunkett | marriedMary E. Williams      |
| Ellen Mae          | never married                |
| Benjamin F.        | marriedMary Ellen Burnside   |

Nancy's father, James, sold his farm on Indian Ridge to William Wiley in 1831. The farm was located between Tom's Run and Lick Creek in now Summers County. James moved to the area now known as Petry, near Concord College at Athens W.Va. Athens, at that time was known as Concord Church.

The 1850 census list Nancy living with her father. Residing at James's residence when the 1850 enumerator visited were:

|            |         |                   |
|------------|---------|-------------------|
| James      | 72      | Farmer 300 acres. |
| Mary       | 65 est. |                   |
| * Nancy    | 26      | daughter          |
| Albertena  | 20      | daughter          |
| Ardelia    | 6       | G-daughter        |
| Sarah A.   | 4       | G-daughter        |
| Sylvester  | 1       | G-son             |
| John Petry | 17      | G-son             |

The Mercer County 1860 census list Nancy in her own home as:

|               |    |  |
|---------------|----|--|
| * Nancy Petry | 36 |  |
| Ardelia       | 16 |  |
| Sarah A.      | 14 |  |
| Sylvester     | 11 |  |
| Ellen         | 4  |  |
| Benjamin      | 2  |  |

The Raleigh County 1870 census list Nancy with James Crusenberry Anderson who she had just married. They are listed as:

|                   |           |  |
|-------------------|-----------|--|
| James C. Anderson | 54        |  |
| * Nancy           | 49        |  |
| Sarah A.          | 24        |  |
| Ellen             | 17        |  |
| Benjamin          | 13        |  |
| William A.        | 5 gr. son |  |

The Raleigh County 1880 census list James C. and Nancy Anderson as:

|                   |            |  |
|-------------------|------------|--|
| James C. Anderson | 66         |  |
| * Nancy           | 54         |  |
| Benjamin Pettry   | 22         |  |
| Ellen Pettry      | 21         |  |
| Cebe              | 6 gr. dau. |  |
| Leota             | 4 gr. dau. |  |

Nancy said she always remembered that spring began when the slaves came home. She described it as:

In the area of Concord Church, now Athens, the slave owners would pool their slaves together that were not needed on the farms during the winter months. An overseer would take the slaves to Cabin Creek to work in the coalmines until they were needed in the spring. In the spring the slaves were brought back to the farms via Paint Creek, Beckley, down Jumping Branch to where it enters into Bluestone River. The slaves being happy to leave the coalmines and returning to the

farms and to their friends and families, would divide, break and run up Bluestone River, Pipestem Creek and New River. They made a game out of who could get to their homes first. As they raced home they would begin hollering. The owners and friends would stop everything and begin cooking food for a large welcome home dinner when they heard the hollering of slaves coming home.

Of the Civil War, Nancy often told of Confederate soldiers coming by their farm and taking livestock. At first they paid for it with confederate money but later not paying at all. The soldier's money was printed on large perforated paper sheets that they kept rolled up in their blankets. In this way they could tear off whatever money they needed like postage stamps. A chicken would sell for \$100.00, confederate money. This money was usually "old money", money that was useless because of money change that had taken place earlier, rendering it useless.

Nancy moved from the area now known as Pettry, Mercer County, to Edwight, Raleigh County, in April 1867. She left in the morning with her children, Sarah, Sylvester P., Ellen, and Ben, in a wagon with all her belongings. Also with them was Sarah's son, William, who was 2 years old. Ardilia had married her cousin, Ballard Preston Petry, and they were living near Concord Church. At the end of the first day, she had traveled to about the now entrance of Pipestem State Park on State Route 20. Here she camped for the night on property owned by Mr. John L. Williams, whom she knew. That evening Mr. Williams gave 17 year old Sylvester a job working on his sawmill. The next day Nancy continued on, leaving Sylvester behind. About 5 days later, Nancy arrived at the mouth of Horse Creek on 30 April 1867 and camped under a cliff. This cliff can be seen on the left side of the road as you enter the road up Horse Creek Hollow. This was the night that William E. "Billy" Pettry, son of William T. and Reany (Pettry) Pettry, was born. Billy later married Naoma A. Dickens on 24 October 1887. The town, Naoma, is named after Naoma (Dickens) Pettry. Nancy arrived at her designation, her uncle Jacob Pettry's house at Edwight, the next day.

Nancy lived on Jacob's land at Edwight a few years and then homesteaded and lived at the head of Sturgeon Fork of Dry Creek a few years. As part of a traded, the Sturgeon Fork property was used to obtain land on the hillside across the creek from the present day Dry Creek Post Office. Here she lived until her death. Nancy and James C. Anderson are buried on a knoll on the property. This property went to her son, Ben. Stanley and Mary Virginia (Jarrell) Kalinoski (1986) now own this property.

Nancy's son, Sylvester, later married Mary Emmaline Williams, the daughter of John L. and Anna (Dickens) Williams, and made his home on Indian Ridge in the Pipestem District of Summers County. His log cabin still stands (1986) and he is buried near by. Sylvester's descendants celebrate their family reunion near the site of the log cabin on the second Saturday of July.