James Frank McKay (McKoy) of Roanoke, Virginia

By Allen McClain

Believed to have been the second of twelve children of Henry McKay Jr (b.1854) and Jennie (b.1856), James Frank McKay (McKoy) was born March 18, 1874 in Harnett County, North Carolina possibly in the Stewarts Creek area. In 1880, James lived with his parents and three of his siblings [Lewis W. (b.1873), Flora A. (b.1876) and Thomas (b.1879)] next to the McLean family.

Alexander McLean (b.1846) was a farmer and head of the McLean household. Around the year 1865, Alexander McLean married Isabella McDougal (b.1846) and had seven children: Daniel McDougal (b.1865), Bulia Mary (b.1870), Julia A. (b.1870), Alexander (b.1872), Lewis (b.1877), Sarah Catherine (b.1878) and Isabella (b.1880). Though never married, it is said from interviews with the descendants of the McKay family that James and Sarah Catherine McLean had a child, George McClain (b.1900).

It has been reported that James Frank McKay was graduated in the academic and agriculture department of Hampton Institute. At present, the first known document of James Frank McKay outside of his father's household is the “Annual Report of the Christiansburg Industrial Institute” in Cambria, Virginia dated 1908. In this annual report he was listed as an Ass't Farm Manager. On September 20, 1911, James Frank McKay married Loretta M. Long (b. 1886) in Montgomery County, Virginia. The ceremony was performed by Loretta's brother, Edgar A. Long. Edgar A. Long worked at the Christiansburg Industrial Institute from 1897 til 1906 as treasurer, agriculture and printing instructor, then principal from 1906 until his death in 1924. In 1896, Booker T. Washington accepted the Friends' Freeman's Association's invitation to serve as supervisor of Christiansburg Industrial Institute until his death on November 14, 1915. James Frank McKay taught at the Institute from 1908 until 1913.

In 1914 James Frank and Loretta McKay moved to 342 Harrison Avenue NW, Roanoke City, Virginia. James worked initially as the assistant Principal of the Gainsborough School and later the Principal of Gregory School until his death at home in August 11, 1924. He is believed to have been buried in the C. C. Williams Memorial Park (also once known as the Lincoln Burial Park).
Sources cited:

1880 US Federal Census, Stewarts Creek, Harnett County, North Carolina: Roll: T9-967 Family History Film:12549, Pg. 87, Enumeration District: 97, family 25, dwelling 25, lines 28-41


World War 1 Draft Registration Card, Roanoke (Independent City), Virginia: Roll: 1985175; Draft Board: 2, Serial Number 2860, Order Number 1160

Annual Report of the Christiansburg Industrial Institute, Cambria, Virginia; Managed by the Friends' Freedmen's Association of Philadelphia, Forth-Fifth Year Ending 9th Month 20th 1908 pg.2


Marriage certificate for Jas. F. McCoy and Loretta M. Long, 20 September 1911, File No. 3137931, Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Health-Division of Vital Records, PO Box 1000, Richmond, VA 23218-1000

Death certificate for James Frank McKay, 11 August 1924, File No. 19522, Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Health-Division of Vital Records, PO Box 1000, Richmond, VA 23218-1000

Roanoke City, Virginia, Directory, 1915, pg. 362
Roanoke City, Virginia, Directory, 1916, pg. 384
Roanoke City, Virginia, Directory, 1918, pg. 404
Roanoke City, Virginia, Directory, 1924, pg. 563

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