

Bible Records from the family of Francis A Poythress (1836-1859; son of Joseph Poythress & Mary King), of LaGrange, Troup County, Georgia

Permission to post these photocopies on our Poythress genealogy research website was given to Barbara Poythress Neal, courtesy of Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries, Athens, Georgia, by Director Mary Ellen Brooks, on 5 Feb 1998

The below transcription, with additional clarifying notes, was prepared by Barbara Poythress Neal, from photocopies received from Accession No. 20, "the Nix Collection," which Accession is held in the Manuscript Collection at the Hargrett Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries. There, the four page "Records from Family Bible" photocopies are filed within Accession No. 20, Item 10. The copies do not include the Bible's publisher's name, location, or publication date.

The Library's Accession No. 20 includes a total of 226 items (not all of which were copied for me) with dates of the items ranging from 1807 (land grant) to 1911 (business papers), as well as this "undated" Record from Family Bible. A date of 1956 is handwritten on the top of the Accession overview sheet, likely indicating that this Nix Collection came to the University of Georgia in 1956.

This was apparently originally the Bible of Mr. and Mrs. Francis A. Poythress (also known as Frank, or F.A. Poythress). He lived from 4 April 1836 to 2 October 1859, in LaGrange, Troup County, Georgia; he was son of Joseph Poythress and his wife Mary King. When Frank/Francis A. Poythress died young, his widow Caroline E. (nee Ware), kept the Bible which descended through her and her daughter by Francis, Mary Lorena Poythress, who married John M. Barnard. As shown below in the Accession overview, Major John M. Barnard left the Bible pages to a niece, Miss Mary Barnard Nix. The photocopies clearly show foxing of the old pages, and show that the pages had been folded into fourths: folded both left to right, and top to bottom.

The University of Georgia Library's Accession overview indicates that the Nix Collection "belonged to Miss Mary Barnard Nix, a school teacher in LaGrange. She inherited the papers from her Uncle, Major John M. Barnard. Miss Nix had all these old papers and Mr. Price came into possession of them in acting as her executor."

The handwritings and pens and/or pencils of the Bible are varied. All the handwritings use quite old letter formation styles.

[top left entry is crossed out & re-written on top right]

F.A. Poythress Born
April 4th 1836

Francis A. Poythress
age 64 April 3rd 1836

[Bpn note: "age 64" is written across the column divider, in a handwriting different from the top left crossed-out entry, which handwriting appears to be that of the top right entry. This "age 64" portion here indicates one of the apparently non-contemporaneous discrepancies by the person who was making the entry on the right side, since Francis A. Poythress died far younger than age 64. His father, Joseph Poythress was the man who died at age 64, in 1853.]

[Lower on this page, in the column on the right, we find the two children born to Caroline E (nee Ware), one by each of her consecutive husbands, Frank/Francis A. Poythress, and John T. Gay; Gay's daughter was named for Caroline's brother, Eugene Ware, who was killed in the War in June 1862. The names of these two daughters are divided by a handwritten dotted line.]

Mary Lorana Poythress

Sept 3rd 1856 1856

Eugenia Ware Gay was born

Sept 25th 1863

[Meanwhile, on this same page, in the column on the left, we find the following entry beginning slightly higher on the page than Mary Lorana Poythress' birth. This below-transcribed entry on the left has a heading of "Mary's & Maria's children" shown with six births from 1856-1864, with none listing a surname. Since these births are much too late to refer to any child of Mary King who married Joseph Poythress, and since I see no indication in any source of any person in the family having married either a Mary or Maria, it seems logical that these may well be the recording of births of children of two valued household slaves named Mary and Maria. There is a handwritten dotted line after the first child (in the same fashion as the dotted line between Caroline's two daughters), perhaps indicating that the first-listed child was born to "Mary" and the other five children were born to "Maria." See additional Bpn notes below these 6 births, regarding possibilities explored for these children].

Mary's & Maria's children

Logan was born June 25, 1856

Nathaniel " " Oct 6, 1858

Waverly " " Oct 28, 1859

Madaline " " Feb 26, 1860

Loriann " " May 4(?), 1862

Alice " " April 27, 1864

[Additional Bpn notes re "Mary's and Maria's children" from page 1 -

- (1) Loriann's name was clarified by the Library Archivist in pencil below the photocopied Bible page. The Archivist also indicated "not sure" for the date. I note that the "4" of

Loriann's date is written the same way as the "4" in the year for Alice's birth, with a curl at the left top.

- (2) This listing of the six children of Mary and Maria in the family Bible (which descended through the family of the widow of Francis or Frank A. Poythress, Caroline nee Ware, then Poythress, later Gay) may have been merely a way of keeping track of the slaves' increase.
- (3) These children of Mary and Maria (all born after the deaths of Joseph & Mary Poythress in 1853 and 1854 respectively) could have been fathered by slaves owned by other residents of LaGrange in the 655th District of Georgia Military found in the 1850 Slave Schedule, or it is also possible the children may have been fathered by son(s) of Joseph and Mary Poythress.
- (4) Since their son John Hardaman Poythress died in 1842, at age 20, he was not a potential father. The sons of Joseph & Mary Poythress, who may or may not have fathered these children, include Francis or Frank A. Poythress, who died 2 Oct 1859 (after the first two births & just 26 days before the birth of the third child listed); Russell King Poythress (married and father of four children shown in the Censuses of 1860 and 1870); and William B Poythress, for whom no wife or children are in his Census households in 1860 or 1870 (though 49-year old William B's immediately adjacent 1870 household is one of the many Poythress households of Blacks found that year in the Troup County Census: this was the household of Dina Poythress, a 40-yr old Black female farm hand, with children Judy 20, Rena 18, Leanna 16, George 14, Rose 12, Solomon 10, Jack 8, and Samuel 6.
- (5) Searches on these childrens' first names and years of birth in the Troup County, Georgia Census of 1880 yield some potential identification of four of these children in two Mulatto households on consecutive pages of the Census: (1st) Logan Heard, single, 22-yr old carpenter; and (2nd) Nathaniel Harrison, single, 22-yr old brick mason, who also had in his household his 20-yr old brother Waverly Harrison (single; farm laborer) and his 16-yr old sister Alice Harrison (single; keeps house).
- (6) Later in the 1900 Troup County, GA Census, we find: Logan A. Heard was then listed as a Black male carpenter born in Georgia in June 1856, who owned his home on Depot Street in LaGrange free of mortgage, and who had been married 16 years to Hilda, a teacher; both could read and write; his father was born in Georgia and his mother in Virginia; their children were John (b. Dec 1884, a carpenter who had attended school 3 months in the last year); Edgar (b. Nov 1889, a school boy who attended school 9 months); James C. (b. Aug 1892, a school boy who attended school 9 months); and Mary H. (b. Mch 1897). It may or may not be coincidental that Logan (possibly the Logan listed in "Mary's & Maria's children") apparently named his first daughter "Mary."
- (7) In the 1900 Troup County, GA Census, we find: Nathaniel Harrison was then listed as a Black male stone mason born in Oct 1858 who owned his home in part of 655th District of Georgia Militia free of mortgage, and who had been married 16 years to Louiza; both could read and write; their eldest child was Frank (b. Nov 1884); Marie (b. Sep 1886); Mable (b. Sep 1888); Ethel (b. Jul 1891); Grace (b. Sep 1893); Pauline (b. Aug 1895); and Lillian (b. Sep 1897). The eldest three children had attended school 9 months during the year. It may or may not be coincidental that Nathaniel (possibly the Nathaniel listed in "Mary's & Maria's children") apparently named his first daughter "Marie."]

**Francis A. Poythress and
Caroline E. Ware were married
Febuary(sic) 22nd 1855**

**John T. Gay and Carrie
E. Poythress were married
Jan 6th 1863**

**John M. Barnard and
Mary L. Poythress were
married Nov 13th 1873**

[Bpn note: "Carrie" or Caroline as shown in the right column of this page was then widow of Francis A. Poythress. Her maiden name was Ware. This second marriage of hers is directly across from that first marriage. As seen in the deaths on page 3, both of her husbands died young, as did her brother, Lieut E.S. Ware]

[Page 3] **FAMILY RECORD
DEATHS** [left column]:

John H. Poythress Died

[Bpn note: no date; this entry and the next one are in the same older handwriting as the crossed-out entry on Page 1 that listed F.A. Poythress' birth as being April 4 1836. This John H Poythress would be John Hardaman Poythress, the son of Joseph Poythress and his wife Mary nee King, who she mentioned in her will, instructing: "...suitable Tomb Stone placed over my grave and that of my son John Hardaman."]

DEATHS [right column]

Joseph Poythress
Died April 14th 1853

Joseph Poythress died
April 14 1853

[Bpn notes that Joseph was the father of Francis A. Poythress. In the first of this page's two entries for Joseph, I cannot be certain whether the day of death was truly meant to be "14" or "24" due to that digit's formation. The first of these two entries seems to be in the same handwriting as the entry for John H. Poythress on this page, and the same as that of the crossed-out entry on Page 1 that listed F.A. Poythress' birth as being April 4 1836. The handwriting of the second entry is different and more clearly seems to have the day of death originally as "24" and perhaps changed to be "14." Joseph's death is recorded again on the next page.]

[Page 4] **FAMILY RECORD**

DEATHS [left column; long handwritten dashes are between these entries. Nothing appears in the right column.]

Joseph A. Poythress died April 14th

1853 aged 64

[Bpn note: This entry is the only one giving a middle initial for Joseph, father of Francis A. Poythress. The old handwriting of this entry is different from any other in this Bible.]

Mary Poythress died Sept 29

1854 aged 56

[Bpn note: wife of Joseph; maiden name King; mother of Francis A. Poythress]

Francis A. Poythress died

Oct 2nd 1859 age 23

[Bpn note: This death date fits correctly with his listing in the Mortality Schedule of the 1860 Census, which was taken as of June 1, 1860, recording all the deaths of the preceding 12 months.]

**Lieut E.S. Ware
was killed June 25th
1862, at the battle
near Richmond**

[Bpn note: this is Eugene Ware, brother of Caroline E. Ware, whose first husband was Francis A. Poythress]

**Lieut J.T. Gay died from
wounds received in the battle
around Petersburg. Was wound-
ed on the 25th of March
died on the 28th of April
1865**

[Bpn note: John T. Gay was the second husband of Caroline E. Ware, whose first husband was Francis A Poythress]