

CUNDIFF

Ms. Ida Mae Cundiff, 107, of Rocky Mount, N.C., and a former resident of 418 Rockford Street, Mount Airy, died at guardian Care Nursing Center in Rocky Mount on Thursday evening, August 12, 1999. She was born in the Siloam Community of Surry County on May 14, 1892, to the late William (Bill) and Jane Sawyers Cundiff. She was an active and devoted member of St. Paul Ame church of Mount Airy for many years. Left to hold her memory dear is a devoted niece, Mrs. Tedia M. Grimes, with whom she spent her final years; great nieces, among them, Mrs. Janice Grimes-Lewis of Augusta, Ga.; great nephews, among them, William T. Grimes, M.D. and his wife, Anne Grimes of Bellevue, Wash.; a great great niece, Jeanine Lewis of Lawrenceville, Ga.; a great great nephew, Jay Lewis of Richmond, Va.; other relatives and a host of friends. Funeral services will be held Monday, August 16, 1999 at 3 p.m. at St. Paul Ame church, with Dr. William H. Morrison as the Eulogist. Burial will be in the family plot of the Stony Ridge Cemetery. The family will assemble and leave from the Hampton Inn at 2:30 p.m. on Monday.

Woman Dies At Age 107

From Staff Reports

A Surry County native, Ms. Ida Mae Cundiff, of 418 Rockford Street, Mount Airy, died Thursday, shortly after celebrating her 107th birthday in May.

Ms. Cundiff was born in Siloam on May 14, 1892, to the late William and Jane Sawyers Cundiff. She worked on her family farm each year in her youth until harvest time and then traveled to Mount Airy and Greensboro, where she did domestic work, according to reports.

"Often it's the little things in life that bring her much pleasure," said her niece, Tedia Galloway Grimes, shortly after Ms. Cundiff's 107th birthday.

Ms. Cundiff attributed her long life to trusting in and serving God.

"People, especially young people, need to dedicate their lives more to God," she said in May. "That's what is wrong with the average youngster today. People need to lean on God and He will direct your path."

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Ida Cundiff

Surry County Native Turns 107

By ELEANOR POWELL
Staff Writer

Ida Cundiff celebrated her 107th birthday Friday. A resident of Rockford Street for more than 60 years, the Surry County native moved to Rocky Mount some years back to be near a niece, Tedia Gal-loway Grimes.

At her birthday celebration last year, Miss Ida said, "I lived in Mount Airy for many, many years. I lived alone, never married and worked very hard."

She attributes her longevity to trusting in and serving God. "People, especially young people, need to dedicate their lives more to God," she said. "That's what is wrong with the average youngster today. People

need to lean on God and He will direct your path."

Grimes said she took her aunt to Rocky Mount from Mount Airy in 1993. "She lived alone and became disabled. She liked to work in her garden. You would see her in that garden in the spring and summer. She got up every leaf in the morning and did the same thing in the afternoon."

Ida Cundiff's family bought a farm near Pilot Mountain. Today, the farm has been developed into a living museum depicting early farm life.

The niece went on to say, "She is one of my favorite aunts. When I was a child, I thought what she did and said was the gospel. She was my role model and mentor. She was my mother. She was everything to me."

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Born in 1892 to William and Jane Sawyer Cundiff, Miss Ida was well respected by her friends and neighbors. Gail Spane recalls growing up near Miss Ida and said that her home was just immaculate. "The lawn was always clean in the spring and summer and her sidewalk was the first to be cleaned of snow in the winter," he added.

Friends and relatives of Miss Ida recall that the opportunity for an education was remote when Cundiff was a child, so she had the chance to attend school for only three or four months a year. However, over the years, she made good use of the little education that she did receive.

Cundiff's family bought a farm near Pilot Mountain, according to relatives. Today, the farm has been developed into a living museum depicting farm life as it was in the South at the beginning of the 20th century. While her family ran the farm, Cundiff worked there each year until harvest time. After the harvest, she traveled to Greensboro and Mount Airy, where she did do-

mestic work.

Her niece said last week, "Often it's the little things in life that bring her much pleasure. The things that money cannot buy bring joy beyond measure. For example, in years past, she liked to visit by telephone for hours at a time, all of which made her day brighter. She loved to watch the sun rise and set and the children laughing as they played. And most of all, they enjoyed visiting Miss Ida so they could get some goodies she had kept for them."

"She always looked forward to Sunday worship at St. Paul A.M.E. Church, where her former pastor, the Rev. W.H. Morrison, and his wife always expected to see her. Good friends came each Sunday to transport her there."

Grimes continued, "Aunt Ida once said she would never forget the kindnesses shown her by her many friends."

And according to friends in her former neighborhood, they never will forget "Miss Ida."



Miss Isabell Cundiff (left) and her sister Miss Ida in the doorway of the log cabin their daddy yearned to buy and finally did.