

## **Lucy F. Simms**

**Lucy F. Simms was born a slave in 1855 on the Gray family estate "Hilltop" along Harrisonburg's eastern edge. Miss Simms began teaching when she was just 17 or 18 years old and was able to attend Hampton Institute from 1874 to 1877.**

**Upon graduation, "Miss Lucy" returned to the Valley and taught for a year at Zenda, a black community north of Harrisonburg. She then moved to Harrisonburg city schools, first teaching in the church room and then the new Effinger School. She taught there until the end of the 1933-34 school year and died on July 10, 1934.**

**Lucy Simms' career spanned 56 years, with only one half-day lost due to illness. According to one person, she is remembered as "a person of strong moral convictions. She could not abide dishonesty. Although loving and kind to her children, she also administered punishment when deemed it necessary."**

**In her obituary, the Daily News-Record stated, "The record of the faithful colored teacher has few if any parallels in Virginia. All the pupils who have entered the primary grade at the Effinger School since its establishment have passed under mother like care. She taught three generations in many of the Harrisonburg colored families and its estimated that 1800 boys and girls were instructed by her."**

**Harrisonburg named its new school, built in 1938-39, in her honor.**

**To this we, the Lucy F. Simms reunion committee would like to thank each and everyone for there participation, in helping to keep her memory alive.**