

SARAH ANN ROBINSON

Sarah Ann Robinson was the fourth child and the oldest daughter of David Shannon and Nancy Carolina (Fountain) Robinson. She was born on March 6, 1860 at Cat Creek, near Valdosta, Berrien County, Georgia.

In 1865, Sarah's father, David Shannon, returned home from the Civil War. This was a very vivid memory for Sarah, who was 5 years old at the time. Sarah remembers playing outside with her older brothers, James Hiram and David Melton, and her younger sister, Nancy Martha, when they saw an old, skinny man in the distance walking towards their house. They were frightened by the sight of his appearance, because his clothes were all tethered and torn. None of the children recognized this man as their father, so they ran inside and excitedly told their mother that an old man was coming up the road. Nancy went to investigate and she saw her husband, David Shannon, being greeted by their dog, "Old Yellow," who recognized his voice.

In 1877, Sarah moved with her mother and father to their new farm and homestead at the crossroads of Oakey Grove in Berrien County, Georgia.

In 19____ (approximately 1879), Sarah married John Wesley Baker (known to some as "James") and they had 14 children (See Exhibit 5-26 for photograph and Exhibit 5-27A and 5-27B for Family Group Record #5).

John's parents are unknown by this author, but his father is supposed to be buried just outside of Tifton. The elders recall that John was first cousins to Harmon Baker, whose homestead was just east of Oakey Grove. John's great niece, Julia (Fender) (Collier) Robinson, recalls that two of his brothers (Nathan and Albert) were killed in the Civil War. He had at least three

Sarah Ann, daughter of David Shannon,
and her husband, John Wesley Baker



Husband: JOHN WESLEY BAKER 4*-32

Born: 23 MAR 1851 Place:
 Chr.: Place:
 Marr: Place:
 Died: 29 APR 1928 Place: OLD IVEY HOME, THREE MILES FROM, OAKY GROVE, GEORGIA
 Bur.: Place: OAKY GROVE, TIFT-NASH HWY, BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 Father: Mother:
 Other wives:

Wife: SARAH ANN ROBINSON 4*-6

Born: 6 MAR 1860 Place: CAT CREEK, NEAR VALDOSTA, BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 Chr.: Place:
 Died: 28 NOV 1941 Place: HER HOME, LENOX, COOK CO, GEORGIA
 Bur.: Place: OAKY GROVE, TIFT-NASH HWY, BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 Father: DAVID SHANNON ROBINSON 0*-1 Mother: NANCY CAROLINA FOUNTAIN 0*-2 Parents' MRIN: 1
 Other husbands:

Sex Children

- | | | | |
|-------|---|---|-----------|
| 1. | Name: JAMES NATHAN BAKER 4-1*-33 | Spouse: MATILDA CRUMPTON 4-1*-914 | MRIN: 290 |
| ---- | Born: OCT 1880 Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA | | |
| M | Chr.: Place: | | |
| | Marr: Place: | | |
| | Died: 12 MAY 1934 Place: | | |
| ----- | | | |
| 2. | Name: EDWIN JACKSON BAKER 4-2*-34 | Spouse: OCCIE LUCY VIRGINIA LOTT 4-2*-931 | MRIN: 296 |
| ---- | Born: 17 JUL 1883 Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA | | |
| M | Chr.: Place: | | |
| | Marr: 6 JUN 1907 Place: LOTT HOME, LENOX, BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA | | |
| | Died: Place: | | |
| ----- | | | |
| 3. | Name: SALLY BAKER 4-3*-35 | Spouse: J.D. LUKE 4-3*-951 | MRIN: 302 |
| ---- | Born: Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA | | |
| F | Chr.: Place: | | |
| | Marr: Place: | | |
| | Died: 1925 Place: MIAMI, DADE CO, FLORIDA | | |
| ----- | | | |
| 4. | Name: DAVID NICHOLAS (NICK) BAKER 4-4*-36 | Spouse: KELLY 4-4*-952 | MRIN: 303 |
| ---- | Born: Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA | | |
| M | Chr.: Place: | | |
| | Marr: Place: | | |
| | Died: Place: | | |
| ----- | | | |
| 5. | Name: JAMES HIRAM BAKER, SR. 4-5*-37 | Spouse: NELL WELDON 4-5*-956 | MRIN: 305 |
| ---- | Born: Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA | | |
| M | Chr.: Place: | | |
| | Marr: Place: | | |
| | Died: 1935 Place: | | |

Name and address of submitter:
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FAMILY GROUP RECORD-5

12 MAR 1994

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Husband: JOHN WESLEY BAKER 4*-32
 Wife: SARAH ANN ROBINSON 4*-6

Yr of Birth 1851
 Yr of Birth 1860

Sex Children (continued)

6.	Name: NANCY JANE BAKER 4-6*-38	Spouse: JOE BACON 4-6*-961	MRIN: 307
----	Born: 16 FEB 1888	Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA	
F	Chr.:	Place:	
	Marr:	Place:	
	Died: 23 NOV 1923	Place:	
7.	Name: DANIEL W. BAKER 4-7*-39	Spouse:	
----	Born: 29 MAR 1899	Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA	
M	Chr.:	Place:	
	Marr:	Place:	
	Died: 9 MAY 1899	Place:	
8.	Name: INFANT DAUGHTER BAKER 4-8*-40	Spouse:	
----	Born: 7 AUG 1900	Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA	
F	Chr.:	Place:	
	Marr:	Place:	
	Died: 7 AUG 1900	Place:	
9.	Name: INFANT SON BAKER 4-9*-41	Spouse:	
----	Born: 7 JAN 1902	Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA	
M	Chr.:	Place:	
	Marr:	Place:	
	Died: 7 JAN 1902	Place:	
10.	Name: BERRY BRYAN BAKER 4-10*-42	Spouse: BERTA JOHNSON 4-10*-968	MRIN: 308
----	Born:	Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA	
M	Chr.:	Place:	
	Marr:	Place:	
	Died:	Place:	
11.	Name: BRASKEY BAKER 4-11*-43	Spouse: WALT SIMMONS 4-11*-974	MRIN: 310
----	Born:	Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA	
F	Chr.:	Place:	
	Marr:	Place:	
	Died:	Place:	
12.	Name: JOSEPH JERRIAME FRANKLIN BAKER 4-12*-44	Spouse: MARY JANE GRIFFIN 4-12*-976	MRIN: 311
----	Born:	Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA	
M	Chr.:	Place:	
	Marr:	Place:	
	Died:	Place: BRUSHY CREEK CEM, GEORGIA	
13.	Name: MINERVIA BAKER 4-13*-45	Spouse: JEFF HOLLAND 4-13*-989	MRIN: 313
----	Born:	Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA	
F	Chr.:	Place:	
	Marr:	Place:	
	Died:	Place:	
14.	Name: TISSUE BAKER 4-14*-46	Spouse: CHARLIE RUTLAND 4-14*-997	MRIN: 314
----	Born:	Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA	
F	Chr.:	Place:	
	Marr:	Place:	
	Died:	Place:	

sisters, Polly, Sally, and Mary Jane. Polly married Ben Pearson and she died in 1915. Sally was born in 1827 and died in 1922.

Mary Jane Baker married George Nelson Blount and their daughter Polly Ann Blount married James Collier, the parents of Julia (Fender) (Collier) Robinson (the author's mother), who was mentioned above. Julia recalls that John's family came from central or north Georgia.

John and Sarah first lived about two miles south of her father, David Shannon Robinson, at Oakey Grove, and just north of the old Lee Ivey place on the Brookfield-Lenox Road. To find their homestead, in reference to Oakey Grove, head south on the Brookfield-Lenox Road. After passing the road that leads to the Rutland Bridge, go one mile, and their home stood on the left (east) side of the road. The homestead stood north of the late Ed Baker's home (on the east side of the road) and south of his brother's, Amos Baker, home (on the west side of the road).

John also had a second family with Sally Watson (sister to Rick Watson), who was the mother of four of his children: Braskey, Joseph, Minervia, and Tissue. They lived in the area, however it was still quite a distance away from John and Sarah's house. When the mother of the children died, John told Sarah about Sally and their children. He also expressed the desire to move his children close by so he could take care of them. Sarah said she didn't want them living someplace else; she wanted John to bring them to their house, where they could raise them as their own. Eddie Bennett and Julia Robinson recall that Sarah never showed partiality or distinguished in any way a difference between any of the 14 children, 10 of which were John and Sarah's and 4 of which were John and Sally's.

John was a smart man and was well liked in the community. He was appointed as a Justice of the Peace for the New River District and held court in the school house. He ran a strict court, but he was well respected as a law official.

In 1900, John and Sarah decided to move to a new farm. John purchased a 100-acre farm for \$50 from Eliza Robinson on May 1,

1900. The land was in the southwest corner of lot #520, 6th. District of Berrien County. (Reference Tift County Deed Book p. 171) (This land is located just north of the Tift County and Cook County line, 2.5 miles west of Interstate 75, and on the west side of Little River). Some remember this as the farm that was located "on the way to the Ty-Ty District."

On August 17, 1905, Tift County was created from three counties, one of which was Berrien County. The brand new county created the need for a sheriff. On October 5, 1905, John was elected the first sheriff of Tift County. John had a name for being brave and the people felt he would be a good sheriff. The story was told that one day a person wanted to look at John's gun and asked him to take it out for them to look at. John advised him that if he ever pulled his gun, he always used it. John's picture, as sheriff, still hangs on the wall in the sheriff's office in the Tift County Courthouse. He served as sheriff until December 31, 1908.

In 1910, Sarah and John accepted the responsibility of helping their son, Nathan, raise his two sons, Emmett Preston Baker (age 4) and Willie Hendrix (Bill) Baker (age _____). Nathan needed help because his wife, Matilda, had died during childbirth.

Emmett remembers working in the fields with his brother and grandmother. He has a vivid memory of his grandmother picking velvet beans in the field. He can still remember the itching created by the velvet beans. As Emmett said, "They would eat you up!"

Emmett remembers his grandfather, John, not being as ambitious as his grandmother. He says that Sarah was the leader of the family and a very hard worker, doing both chores in the house all day long and working in the fields. In later years, she was the breadwinner of the family. Sarah was a very pleasant woman and had very long hair and wore it in a style referred to as "a rat." This involved taking her long hair and putting it up

in a style similar to a large bun, except that it covered up her whole head.

Emmett recalled a typical day at his grandparent's house which began early each morning at 4 A.M. His grandfather, John, would call him from his bed to get up and start his daily chores. His first chore was to build a fire in the kitchen stove and the fireplace, if needed. Once the fire was going, Sarah would get out of bed and come sit by the fire with him. His grandfather would remain in bed and smoke his pipe. Sarah, who was an excellent cook, would make biscuits and cook them on the wood stove. This was always accompanied by fresh eggs removed from the chicken nest the day before.

Another of Emmett's morning chores was to take care of the livestock. He would let the chickens, hogs, and cows out of their pens so they could forage in the woods and fields for their food. They always had about 15 to 20 chickens to feed and about the same number of cows to tend.

The cows were allowed to roam freely because of the open range law. To entice them to return home each night, it was necessary to give the cows a little feed, such as velvet beans. This helped establish where home was located and helped keep them tame. Also it was necessary to pen them up at night for protection from wild animals, such as panthers. Before releasing the cows, it was Sarah's early morning chore to milk at least three of the cows in order to get a gallon of milk for her family's daily use.

Breakfast, dinner (lunch), and supper were always special because Sarah was an excellent cook and she always cooked a lot of vegetables. She served three square meals a day. Each meal was always accompanied by her biscuits and fresh butter that she had churned from the cream separated from the milk. Each meal was served with meat from the smokehouse. The meat was cured with smoke from a small oak wood fire and the meat was covered with borax and red peppers for seasoning and preservation. The sausage came from a crock with a wooden lid stored in the

smokehouse. Inside the crock, cured sausage had been placed layer by layer, with each single layer being covered as it was stacked, and sealed with hot lard for preserving it until ready for use. Meat was always plentiful for meals because the smokehouse stayed full of meat.

Sarah always kept a clean house and her wooden floors were spotless and scrubbed white. To accomplish this, she would use a homemade scrub brush made from a board about 2 inches by 8 inches in size, with several holes bored through it for holding corn shucks in a locked position, when they were pulled through the board.

First she would scrub the floors using the corn shuck scrub brush. This was followed with a rinse of clean water that was drawn from the well. The rinsing process always started on the highest part of the floor since the water needed to run down towards the lowest corner. In this corner was a hole bored through the floor for the water to drain out. While the floor was drying, Sarah and the boys would go down to Little River and get about 100 pounds of white river sand and bring it to the house. The sand was spread over the floor and foot traffic would help whiten the floors by the grinding action as they walked.

Sarah also had the chore of washing clothes. First she had to draw water by hand from the well for filling the wash pot. Then she would start a fire for heating the water. Next it was time for wetting the clothes and scrubbing them, before putting them into the wash pot of boiling water. After the clothes had boiled for a period of time, they were removed and placed on a battening block for beating with a batten stick (this created a continuous problem of broken and crushed buttons). Again, the clothes were placed in the wash pot of boiling water. Finally she would rinse them two or three times and then hang them over the fence to dry.

In 191____, John and Sarah moved to a new farm about three miles north of Lenox on U.S. Highway 41. It was referred to as the "Old Belflower Place."

In 1913 or 1914, when Emmett Baker was 7 or 8 years old, he remembers seeing his first electric light bulb. He was taking a trip with his Uncle Hiram Baker to Tifton, hauling a bale of cotton. They arose that morning at about 3 A.M. for an early start to Tifton. When they arrived at the cotton gin, Emmett saw something that he "had never seen before and knew nothing about." It was his first look at an electric light bulb glowing and he "did a lot of looking at it."

John and Sarah had been very successful on this farm but in about 19____ they decided to divide their farm between their sons, Joe, Nick, and Edwin.

In 19____, John and Sarah moved back to their old homestead farm near the old Lee Ivey homestead, which is across the branch from Joe Baker, in Berrien County. Julia (Fender) (Collier) Robinson remembers going to their house when she was 10 years old (1921) with her parents. They visited and spent the night. She recalls the fun times she had playing at their house. She has fond memories of her Aunt Sarah and says "she was a very fine woman."

John and Sarah were members at Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church (2 miles north of Lenox). The preacher that preached at Bethlehem and who was in good standing with the church, owned land which was 7 miles from Bronson and 14 miles from Gainseville, Florida. John and the preacher became acquainted at the church and this led to a land deal being made to exchange their farms. The deal required the preacher to pay off the debt owed on John's farm. John favored this deal to get him out of debt, because he had recently experienced financial trouble due to bad crops.

In the fall of 1922, John and Sarah moved to their new farm in Bronson, Florida, along with grandsons, Emmett and Willie. The farm was 100 plus acres and it was low, wet, and had very sandy soil. In 1923, Emmett and Willie tended the farm for their grandparents. Their crop consisted of cotton (three acres), peanuts, cucumbers, and corn. Most of the land proved to be

unsuitable for growing crops because of the sandy soil conditions. The corn was a failure, producing only nubs of corn. After this misfortune, they planted peas, which are easy to grow on almost any type of soil. This also produced very poor results. Of the 100 plus acres, it appeared that only about three acres of the farmland proved to be even marginally suitable for growing crops. Emmett and Willie decided that it was impossible to make the land productive, so they gave up and moved to Oneco, Florida (on U.S. Highway 41, south of Bradenton and north of Sarasota).

In 1924, John and Sarah's son-in-law, Joe Bacon (husband of their daughter, Nancy Jane), and Alvin L. Bacon (Joe and Nancy's son) decided to farm the land. They planted a crop of watermelon and found the results to be no better than the disastrous results of the year before.

In 1925, John and Sarah had sustained enough losses, so they sold their farm for a very small amount of money and moved to Miami. The new owner, Mr. Ponds, turned the farm into a big cow pasture and it is still used for this purpose today.

In Miami one of John and Sarah's children owned a boarding house, which Sarah helped run for about a year. She tired very quickly of the task and they decided to move from Miami to Bradenton, Florida where Emmett was living. There they bought a restaurant, which they operated for the next two years.

In 1927 they moved back to Georgia, approximately half a mile from their original homestead, near David Shannon Robinson, on the old Lee Ivey homestead.

Shortly after returning to Georgia, John Wesley died on April 29, 1928. He is buried at Oakey Grove Cemetery.

After John's death, Sarah spent the remainder of her life staying at different places for a few weeks at a time, with her children and her brothers and sisters. When Sarah took trips to Lenox, she either stayed with her brother, Joseph Daniel, or her sister, Martha. Joseph Daniel and Martha's homes were in a very short walking distance of each other. Often times the three of

them would be seen sitting on either Joseph Daniel's or Martha's front porch rocking, reminiscing, and enjoying each others company.

In early 1941, Sarah went to visit her sister, Martha, and stay for awhile in Lenox, Georgia. Martha's house was located on the block west of Joseph Daniel Robinson's house. Both Sarah and Martha became gravely sick during this time. Martha and Sarah were being cared for in bedrooms that were located next to each other. Sarah's death occurred on November 28, 1941. Her sister, Martha, died on December 11, 1941, without ever knowing of her sister's death because of her grave illness. Both sisters were buried at Oakey Grove Cemetery beside their husbands.