

GEORGE MELTON AMERICUS ROBINSON

George Melton Americus Robinson was the sixth child of David Shannon and Nancy Carolina (Fountain) Robinson. He was born on October 26, 1864 at Cat Creek, near Valdosta, Berrien County, Georgia (See Exhibit 5-35 for photograph).

George was born while his father, David Shannon, was serving his country as a Confederate soldier fighting in the Civil War. The war records show that David Shannon was home on furlough in January of 1864. This is when Nancy became pregnant with George.

When George was born into this world, it was a very difficult time for everyone in America, and especially in the interior rural areas of the South, which had been frontier land until just a few years earlier. His parent's, David Shannon and Nancy Carolina, homestead at Cat Creek was located in an area of Georgia that was still very primitive in the 1860's. The Civil War was continuing to rage, costing many lives and destroying the economy of the South. George's mother, Nancy Carolina, was like all the other women who had been left with the responsibility to take care of their families and tend the farm without their husbands.

Nancy Carolina named her son "George Melton." His first name, "George," was chosen in honor of his father's brother, George. After David Shannon returned from the civil war, he added the name "Americus," to his son's name. This was in honor of and in response to David Shannon's personal feelings about the Civil War.

When George was almost seven months old, David Shannon saw his new son for the first time. His father had been released as a prisoner of war from the Union prison in Thomasville, Georgia on May 17, 1865. After his release, David Shannon walked from the prison to his home, which was approximately 40 miles. His

SALLY & GEORGE AMERICUS ROBINSON



Exhibit 5-35

homecoming was a joyful event, celebrating his survival of the war, seeing his new son, George, for the first time, and being reunited with his family. Finally, Nancy had someone to share the burdens of everyday life, that had been created by the war.

In the fall of 1877, George, age 13, moved with his family from their homestead at Cat Creek to their new farm and homestead at the crossroads of Oakey Grove in Berrien County, Georgia. George learned the skills of farming from his experience at Cat Creek and at Oakey Grove. He also acquired business expertise from the exposure to all of the family run businesses that operated at the crossroads of Oakey Grove.

On December 3, 1882 George married Sarah (Sally) Alice Ivey at May Ivey's house in Berrien County. Their marriage was witnessed by George's brother, James Hiram Robinson, and Allen Hester. The ceremony was conducted by W.H. Snead. Sally's parents were both born in Georgia (1900 Berrien County Census). George and Sally had five children (See Exhibit 5-36 for Family Group Record #8).

George and Sally's first homestead was located next to David Shannon's house at Oakey Grove. Their second homestead was located in Berrien County (this area later became Tift County in 1908), between Oakey Grove and Eldorado. To find the area where their homestead was located, (in reference to Oakey Grove Church) go west on the Tifton-Nashville Road, cross New River, and then take the first dirt road south which goes to Eldorado. They lived somewhere along this dirt road. Their two oldest children, Martha and David, were born here. Martha died at the age of 3 years, 10 months on January 19, 1888. It is unknown whether she died in Berrien County or Irwin County.

It can be assumed that Martha died in Berrien County and that due to her death in 1888, George and Sally left the surroundings that reminded them of their grief. By the spring of 1888, they were living in Irwin County, where their third child, Mamie Lee, was born on July 28, 1888.

Husband: GEORGE AMERICUS ROBINSON 6*-8

Born: 26 OCT 1864 Place: CAT CREEK, NEAR VALDOSTA, BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 Chr.: Place:
 Marr: 3 DEC 1882 Place: MAY IVEY'S HOME, BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 Died: 13 JAN 1938 Place: OMEGA, TIFT CO, GEORGIA
 Bur.: Place: OAKKY GROVE, TIFT-NASH HWY, BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 Father: DAVID SHANNON ROBINSON 0*-1 Mother: NANCY CAROLINA FOUNTAIN 0*-2 Parents' MRIN: 1
 Other wives:

Wife: SARAH (SALLY) ALICE IVEY 6*-62

Born: 9 JAN 1864 Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 Chr.: Place:
 Died: 25 SEP 1949 Place: OMEGA, TIFT CO, GEORGIA
 Bur.: Place: OAKKY GROVE, TIFT-NASH HWY, BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 Father: WILLIAM COUNSEL IVEY 6*-3660 Mother: MARY ANN HESTER 6*-3661 Parents' MRIN: 1496
 Other husbands:

Sex Children

1. Name: MARTHA JAMIE ROBINSON 6-1*-63 Spouse:
 ---- Born: 5 MAR 1884 Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 F Chr.: Place:
 Marr: Place:
 Died: 19 JAN 1888 Place:

2. Name: DAVID G. ROBINSON 6-2*-64 Spouse:
 ---- Born: 23 NOV 1885 Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 M Chr.: Place:
 Marr: Place:
 Died: 18 AUG 1904 Place:

3. Name: MARY MAMIE LEE ROBINSON 6-3*-65 Spouse: THOMAS JEFFERSON YOUNG 6-3*-1247 MRIN: 403
 ---- Born: 28 JUL 1888 Place: IRWIN CO, GEORGIA
 F Chr.: Place:
 Marr: 25 NOV 1906 Place: COLQUITT CO, GEORGIA
 Died: 1 AUG 1963 Place: MOULTRIE, COLQUITT CO, GEORGIA

4. Name: JOSEPH ALLEN ROBINSON 6-4*-66 Spouse: OCIA BESSIE POWELL 6-4*-1297 MRIN: 422
 ---- Born: 14 FEB 1891 Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 M Chr.: Place:
 Marr: Place:
 Died: Place: LELIA CEMETERY, COLQUITT CO, GEORGIA

5. Name: JOHN CHESTER ROBINSON 6-5*-67 Spouse: MATTIE MAE SELPH 6-5*-1314 MRIN: 429
 ---- Born: 4 JAN 1893 Place: BERRIEN CO, GEORGIA
 M Chr.: Place:
 Marr: 1 FEB 1912 Place: COLQUITT CO, GEORGIA
 Died: 28 OCT 1969 Place: COLQUITT CO, GEORGIA

Name and address of submitter:
 JOHN SNYDER ROBINSON
 3531 KEYSTONE ROAD Phone: 813-937-2719
 TARPON SPRINGS, FL
 34689-9498

By February of 1891 they had returned to Berrien County. Their last two children, Joseph Allen and John Chester, were both born in Berrien County. It is assumed that they moved to the area where they had previously lived in Berrien County, which was south of Tifton and east of Eldorado. This area, at that time, was still Berrien County, until it was cut off to form part of Tift County.

The 1900 Census (dated June 13, Sheet #123A, Line #41, Berrien County 1314, GM District which included Tifton Town) showed their children as David G. age 14, Mary Mamie Lee age 11, Joseph Allen age 9, John Chester age 7. The oldest child, Martha Jamie Robinson, was not listed in the census records because she died January 19, 1888 at the age of 3 years, 10 months (See Exhibit 5-37A and 5-37B for photographs). The census listed George's trade as farmer. All of the family could read and write, except for Chester, who was only 7 years old. All of the children were in school except David. The census records did not mention Sally's inability to read or write.

In the spring of 1901, George and Sally moved to the Ty-Ty District in Colquitt County, Georgia and purchased a farm in 19____ (this time period was based on Ruby Young's recollection of her mother, Mamie, being twelve years old when they moved). It is unknown if George purchased this farm prior to selling his farm in Berrien County in 1902. Their farm was located at the intersection (northeast corner) of the Crosland-Lenox Road and the Ellenton-Omega Road. This is four miles south of Omega, Tift County. The farm had good, rich, farm land. This community is where George opened his first store.

On July 9, 1902, George sold 65 acres of land in District 6, Lot #449, near Reedy Branch in Berrien County (Tift County Deed Book). This was about six miles south of Tifton and east of U.S. Highway 41, near Eldorado.

In 19____, (after 1906 when his daughter, Mamie, was married and before 1920, when he purchased a home in Omega), George sold his farm in the Ty-Ty District and purchased the adjoining farm



George Americus and Sally's family

(left) Mamie, John Chester, Joseph Allen
George Americus, Sally 1905

(middle) Mamie, Sally, George Americus

(right) George Americus and Sally

Joseph Allen, Sally, and John Chester Robinson
Approximately 1910



Exhibit 5-37B

north of his original farm. This farm was owned by Henry Young, father of his son-in-law, Thomas Young. George purchased this farm after Henry Young died.

In the early 1910's, family trouble arose between George and his youngest brother, Joseph Daniel, and created hard feelings between them. This was concerning their brother Hiram's disappearance and money borrowed on a note by Hiram from Joseph Daniel's Bank of Lenox. George had co-signed with Hiram for collateral on the note. After Hiram's disappearance, the legal responsibility for payment of the note shifted to George.

George felt that Joseph Daniel knew the whereabouts of their brother, Hiram, and because of this, George felt that Joseph should not expect him to solely pay the debt. Joseph continued his steadfast denial of knowing anything about Hiram's whereabouts. In an effort to locate Hiram, George took a trip to White Springs, Florida, but he did not have any success. George had also heard that Hiram was working on a banana boat, but this information never led to finding him. Through information from his father, David Shannon, George knew that Hiram was alive and that Joseph continued to keep only to himself the secret of Hiram's whereabouts. George felt betrayed that his brother would not share this information with him, especially since Joseph had insisted that he pay off the note at the Lenox Bank.

Up until this time, George had been very close with his brother, Joseph, and their families had visited each other often. The visits were usually day long affairs, which included a big Sunday dinner. After their disagreement, George and Joseph were always friendly to each other, but the frequent family visits stopped.

When the new church at Oakey Grove was being constructed during 1916 and 1918, George took the responsibility of putting on the roof. The new roof was made from single type wooden shingles. The money to pay for the roof came from revenue generated from the turpentine that had been collected from the timber standing on the 25 acres of church property.

In approximately 1918, while living at his farm in Ty-Ty, George donated six acres of his farm land for the first consolidated school to the Ty-Ty District, in Colquitt County.

In 1920, George gave up the profession of farming and became a full-time businessman. In May 1920, he moved from the farm in Ty-Ty, Colquitt County, to Omega, Tift County, Georgia which was near the home of his sister, Martha, who had purchased property in October 1919.

On May 8, 1920, George purchased a home and land for \$1000.00 from J.E. Beverly. The legal description on the deed, in Ruby Young's possession, describes the property as one town lot, Block #6, District 6, and part of the original lot #526 in Omega. The land was 100 feet on A B & A Railroad, running north 150 feet, and was bound as follows: south A B & A Railroad, west Ridley Street (now Cedar Street), north J.W. Lang with an alley in between, and east land of J.E. Beverly. His home still exists today on the northeast corner of Cedar Street and Georgia Avenue (See Exhibit 5-38 for photograph).

In 1920, George also purchased property on Oak Street in Omega (it is assumed he purchased this property the same year he purchased his home). He opened a grocery store at this location (in the middle of the block on the west side of Oak Street) (See Exhibit 5-38 for photograph). The store was a good place for meeting and talking with friends to catch up on the news of the town. There was always time to do this, while waiting for staples to be weighed up and bagged. The staples included rice, sugar, coffee, beans, and black eyed peas, all of which were stored in big sacks. The store was conveniently located near George's house. He would leave from the rear of the store and walk a very short distance down an alley, which led to his house.

On April 1, 1921, George sold half interest in the south side exterior brick wall of his store, located on Oak Street in Omega. The brick wall was 3.5 feet wide and 50 feet deep, and was bound by land owned by George Robinson to the north, Cox and



George Americus Robinson's home in Omega (1993)

George Americus Robinson's store on Oak Street in Omega (1993)



Company to the east, and Mallory and Mitcham to the south, and Oak Street (Tift County Deed Book, p. 64).

On March 22, 1922, George purchased a second commercial town lot on Oak Street in Omega in Block 4 (25 feet by 50 feet) from G. P. Finaley for \$750.00 (Tift County Deed Book, p. 222).

On September 11, 1922, George sold land in District 6 of Tift County, Block 4, Omega on Oak Street for \$1000 to J.E. Beverly (Tift County Deed Book, p. 480). The property was 50 feet deep by 21.5 feet wide. The date that George originally purchased this land has not been researched.

In 1925, Ruby Young, at age 5, remembers the burnt out ruins of a store next to her grandfather's store. The burnt out store was between George's store (north) and the drugstore (south). She remembers the impact it made on her when walking through the building and seeing the burnt walls. She walked through it to get to the alley leading to her grandfather's house, which was a short distance away.

In 1927 or 1928, George's store burnt. It took him about a year to rebuild his store in the same location and he operated it until he closed it out in 1934.

In 1935, he opened another store on the east side of Oak Street and operated it until he closed it in 1937. Like his brother Joseph Daniel, George was also a shrewd businessman. On one occasion, there was a customer that had no money to pay for his groceries, however he said he really needed them. George knew this man had questionable credit. He felt that the man would probably not repay him if he let him take the groceries on credit. The man told George he had repaired a person's car and was awaiting their payment to him. George made a proposition to the man for him to bring the car to him for holding until the car's owner paid the car repair bill and the man paid for the groceries. The man brought the car to George and George put it in his car house (garage) and padlocked the door. Eventually, George received his money and the customer was given his car back.

George was active in the leadership of Omega, serving as mayor of the town for several years. He also held the office of Justice of the Peace and court was conducted in the back room of his store. He did this for several years, up until 1934.

George and Sally had acquired wealth from their successful farming and the general merchandising business. Land deed records in Tift County Courthouse show Sally purchasing 55 acres of lot #487 in the 6th. District for \$2350 on June 30, 1934. On July 30, 1934, the records show George purchasing a lot (60 feet by 100 feet) in Block #7 in the town of Omega for \$400. This deed referenced a previous land transaction where George purchased land adjacent to this property, by a deed dated November 10, 1933.

With George's death on January 13, 1938, the Robinson influence in the general merchandising business came to an end. However, it was resumed again in 1946 when George's nephew, Raymond Jackson Baker (son of Nancy Martha and Jack Baker), opened a store on the east side of Oak Street, near the last store his uncle operated. He operated this store until 1950.

Mildred Lee (Robinson) Hamilton recalls that her Uncle George and Aunt Sally always attended church at Oakey Grove. It was a tradition of theirs to go have Sunday dinner with George's brother, David Melton, Mildred's father. George always wore a dark suit, white shirt, and black bow tie. He was a very neat dresser, always wearing suspenders and always looking his best with his clothes starched and ironed.

George and Sally's granddaughter, Ruby Young, has many fond memories of her grandparents. On Saturday night, after George's store was closed, it was a ritual for Sally to groom her husband. There was no indoor bathroom, so Sally would heat water on the stove and pour it into a foot tub and wash George's feet. She would sharpen a straight razor with a razor strap and shave his face. Next, she trimmed his hair. Then she would shine his shoes and lay out his clothes for Sunday church services. Ruby recalls one Sunday morning when her grandmother, Sally, had

helped her grandfather, George, get dressed. He then departed from the house, got the car out of the car house, drove it around to the front of the house, blew the horn to let Sally know that he was anxious to go, and yelled, "Sally, why ain't you ready?!"

George Arthur Robinson, son of Joseph Allen, has memories of his grandfather, George. He often times drove his grandfather's car to take his grandfather to church at Oakey Grove.

George Arthur recalls memories of his grandfather wearing false teeth. In the morning he would always go to the well, pour water over the teeth, and place them in his mouth. He wore the teeth at all times, except for when he was eating because they bothered him. When he would be at the table to eat, his hands would sneak up to his mouth, slip out his teeth, and place them in the pocket of his blue suede coat. When he finished eating, he would always put his teeth back in.

George really enjoyed eating fish. He was very fond of the fish fries at his father's home. The fish fries were a tradition that took place when the fish pond was let off to drain.

Mildred remembers that George was about 5'8" and had white hair that was pretty and flowing. Sally was tall, slim, and always wore a wide brimmed hat to shade her face. Both George and Sally were very pleasant and had easy going personalities. Ruby Young remembers her grandfather, George, being a man of high integrity and his word being his bond. She recalls that if a person made a verbal promise to George to do a certain deed, and that promise was broken, George terminated the friendship and never trusted the individual ever again. Another trait of George was that he wanted only what was due to him and nothing else. Ruby recalls that her grandmother, Sally, was not capable of reading and writing, however, she compensated with her intelligence. She had an excellent memory and was able to figure mathematics.

Pauline Hardy, of Omega, whose father named the town, told of her recollection of Sally. She knew Sally personally and considered Sally a good friend of hers. Sally was very mild

mannered and was the "salt of the earth," never tending to anyone's business.

George and Sally's grandson, George Lester Young (brother to Ruby Young), achieved a championship title in professional bowling. In 1949, at the approximate age of 42, he gained the title of having the highest average in the United States for the American Bowling Congress and he held this title for ten years. During his bowling career, he bowled approximately 35 games with perfect scores (300). On April 1, 1959, a testimonial dinner was given in George Lester Young's honor, at the Pick-Fort Shelby Hotel in Detroit, Michigan. He also achieved famous status by being the second person voted into the Bowler's Hall of Fame. His bowling achievement is also honored in the Sports Hall of Fame in Michigan and the National Bowling Hall of Fame and Museum in St. Louis, Missouri. George Young resided in Detroit until his death on September 1, 1959. He is buried in Southfield, Michigan.