

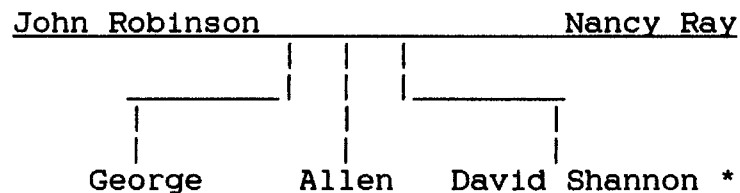
## CHAPTER II

### JOHN AND NANCY ROBINSON

#### OLDEST KNOWN ANCESTORS

John and Nancy (Ray) Robinson are the oldest known ancestors of our Scotch-Irish clan. They were both born in South Carolina, but the exact locations are unknown. Their son provided this information when he was interviewed for the 1880 Census Records. The author estimates that John was born between 1790 and 1800, based on known dates pertaining to his family and information in the 1840 Census Records of Barnwell County, South Carolina. His wife, Nancy, was born in 1805 as per the 1850 Census Records of Barnwell County, South Carolina. They were married sometime before 1831 and they had at least three children, sons George, Allen, and David Shannon. George and Allen were both born in South Carolina, but the exact location is unknown. David Shannon was born near Ellenton in Barnwell County, South Carolina (this location, which is 23 miles northeast of Augusta, Georgia, is now known as Old Ellenton because the town was moved by the U.S. government for the Savannah River Project in the early 1950's).

Barnwell County is located in the former Orangeburgh District established by the military when South Carolina was being settled (See map in Exhibit 2-1). David's middle name, "Shannon," was given after the Shannon River in Ireland, which is the area where our ancestors lived before immigrating to America. The following is a chart of John and Nancy's family:



\* The information in the rest of this book (Chapter III and on) pertains to David Shannon and his descendants.

John was a farmer in Barnwell County in 1840. His closest neighbor was Hiram Ray who was Nancy's younger brother, as recalled by William Penn Robinson of Lenox, Georgia. Hiram was born in 1814 in the Barnwell District of South Carolina (Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia, Folks Huxford, V. 3, p. 266).

David Shannon told his children the story of how his father, John, and John's brother-in-law, Hiram, were involved in a fist fight at Old Ellenton. The conflict started when a bully spit on a young boy, possibly David Shannon. Hiram told the bully to apologize to the boy, but he refused. The bully went into the street and drew a circle, daring Hiram to enter. Hiram accepted and asked a bystander to hold his watch and call the rounds. Hiram entered the ring and while fighting, hit the bully's neck and broke it, causing him to die. Because of this death, Hiram Ray left South Carolina with his family in 1850. He resettled in Ray City, Georgia on lot #311, 10th. District of Berrien County [in 1850 this was Lowndes County] (Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia, Folks Huxford, V. 3, p. 266). It is believed that John and his oldest son, George, also left the area at the same time with Hiram Ray.

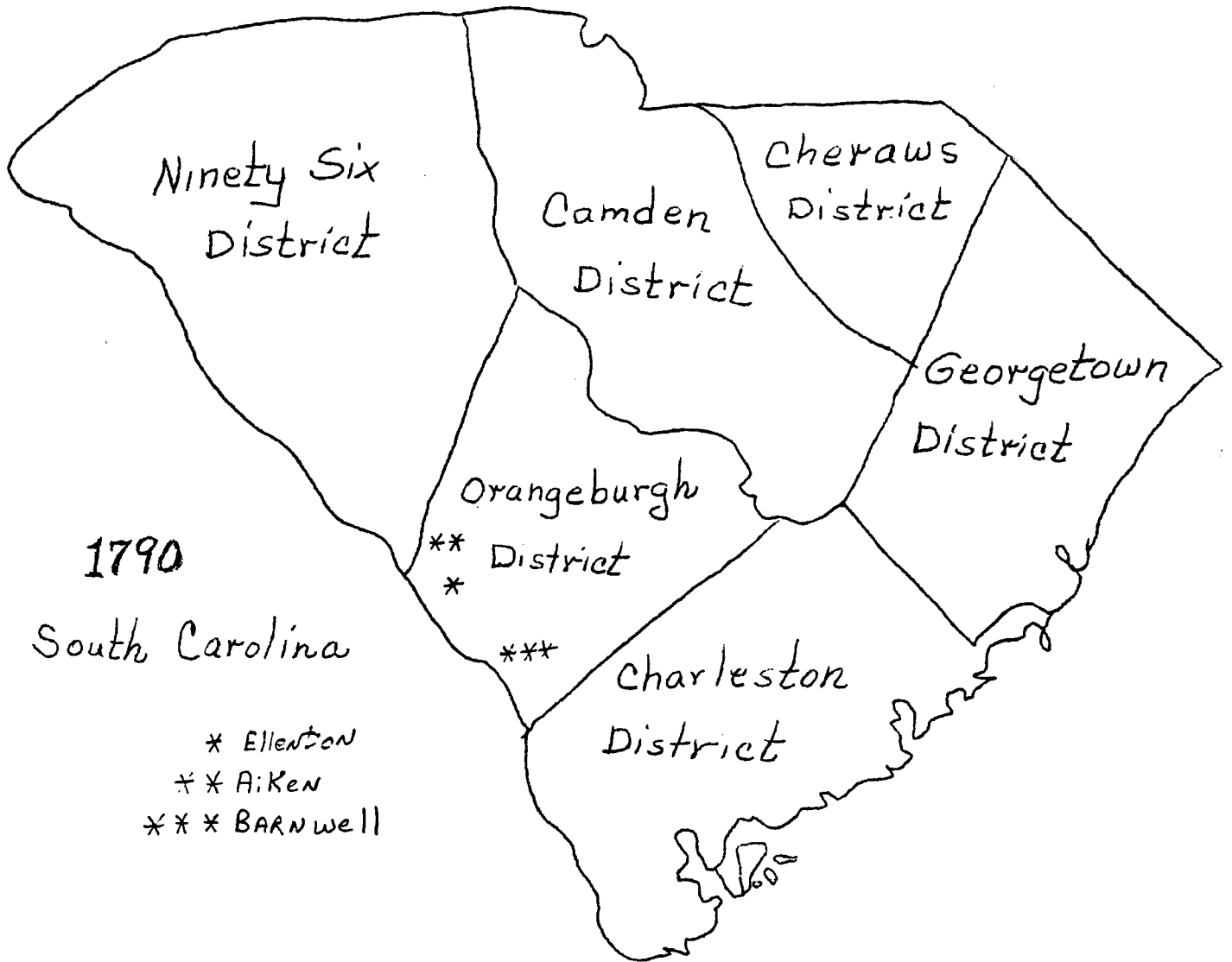


Exhibit 2-1

The following story, told to David Ralph Robinson, Jr. of Lenox, seems fitting of Hiram's character. After settling in Lowndes County in 1850 (this section of land was later used to create Berrien County), Hiram became known as the "bull of the woods" in the area now known as Ray City, Georgia. This title was always given to the toughest man in the area. One day Hiram received word of a challenge from Bonus McClelland who was "bull of the woods" in Omega, Georgia. Hiram decided to accept the challenge; he left his home before daylight and walked to Omega. Upon arrival, he accepted Bonus's challenge to a fist fight and won. Hiram still had enough energy to celebrate and walk home that night. The story was told that this all happened in a period of one day, but it must have been a really long day, considering the distance between his home near Ray City and Omega is approximately 22 miles.

The 1850 South Carolina Barnwell County Census Report shows Nancy as head of the household with her youngest sons Allen, age seventeen, and David Shannon, age fifteen. Nancy and Allen listed their occupations as planters, with no occupation listed for David. Nancy's nearest neighbor was Bey Ray, possibly another brother to Nancy and Hiram (1850 Census Records, Barnwell County, S.C., p. 431, Entry #1713, Oct. 7, 1850).

It is believed that in 1850, Nancy and her children, Allen and David Shannon, joined her husband and son in the Cat Creek area in Lowndes County, Georgia (this section of land was later used to create Berrien County). In 1982, Arlie Snyder Robinson recalled his father, William David Robinson, telling the story about David Shannon Robinson (Arlie Snyder's grandfather), coming to Georgia with his brother and mother.

Some additional information conflicts with the story of John moving from South Carolina to Georgia. Virginia Ann (Henderson) Robinson, the wife of Joseph Daniel Robinson, told the following story to Julia Robinson when they were cleaning the cemetery at Oakey Grove in Berrien County. Virginia said that a cemetery in South Carolina, containing John Robinson's grave, had to be

relocated due to the United States Government Savannah River Project. The United States government had contacted Joseph Daniel Robinson to determine if he had a preference on where the grave should be relocated. The decision of moving John's remains from South Carolina down to Oakey Grove was discussed and it was agreed to let the government move the grave to a new cemetery, along with all the other graves from the original cemetery. Virginia told Julia that she and her husband regretted their decision of not having John's grave moved to Georgia.

This story means that John Robinson probably died and was buried in South Carolina. If he had died in Georgia, it was highly unlikely (in that era of time) that he would have been transported back to South Carolina for burial. The location of John's grave or his exact date of death have not been determined. The author has done research on the relocation of cemeteries affected by the Savannah River Project, but has not found information pertaining to John or Nancy. This remains an item for additional research.

The questions are: Did John Robinson even come down to Georgia with Hiram Ray?, Did he travel to Georgia, but then return to South Carolina and die there? The author has never been able to confirm any of these stories, but there are two predominant stories: 1) the first fight which led to John and his son, George, leaving South Carolina and relocating to Georgia with Hiram Ray and 2) Nancy leaving South Carolina with her two sons, Allen and David Shannon to join John and George at Cat Creek, Lowndes County, Georgia. The author believes these two events occurred, with the exception of John leaving South Carolina. It may be that when George left South Carolina, he was accompanied by only Hiram Ray and not his father, John. It is believed that John died and was buried in Ellenton, Barnwell County, South Carolina.

John and Nancy's place and time of death is not known. At this writing, it appears both had died by 1860. There was never any talk about Nancy, other than her moving to Georgia. It is

believed that after moving there, she left with either George or Allen, who both continued their journey to other states.

## FIRST GENERATION

### George Robinson

George, the oldest son, left South Carolina in 1850. It is believed he left with his father, John, in 1850. Later, they were joined by his mother and two brothers. Then George migrated to Orlando, Florida, possibly accompanied by his mother and father. George made a return visit to see his brother, David Shannon, at Oakey Grove, Berrien County, Georgia sometime after 1877; a son or grandson named Duncan accompanied George on the trip. Arlie Snyder Robinson recalls the story told by his ancestors of how Duncan was impressed with the nice round holes (usually about 3 to 4 inches in diameter and depth) dug in the red Georgia clay for a game of roly holey marbles. This was not possible in the sandy Florida soil Duncan was accustomed to. In 1974, Raymond Baker (at 83 years old), a grandson of David Shannon, told his first cousin, Ralph Robinson, that he had visited George (his great uncle) in Orlando, many years ago when he took a load of produce to Florida. He said he lived and had a store on Robinson Street. Research shows no connection between the naming of the street and the George Robinson of our clan.

### Allen Robinson

Allen, the next to oldest son, came to the Cat Creek area in Lowndes County, Georgia in the 1850's with his brother, David Shannon and his mother. The only information which revealed a clue about Allen is the issuance of a marriage license on July 23, 1857 in Nashville, Berrien County, Georgia. It shows that on July 24, 1857, Allen Robinson married Rebecca Jenkins. By 1860, this couple had left the area, as indicated by the census. They may have been accompanied by his mother, Nancy, and maybe even

his father, John. It has always been a story repeated often times that Allen went west. It is believed they moved to Arkansas, based on stories passed down by the elders. Also, Allen's brother, David Shannon, had a relative from his wife's side of the family (William (Billie) Waters) who moved to Arkansas in 1877. The author thinks that Billie may have moved to Arkansas because of Allen (For additional information, see the section on Nancy Carolina Fountain's Family in Chapter III).

Allen's whereabouts are unknown, but some of the elders recall that one brother went west, and the story goes that Senator Joseph Taylor Robinson of Arkansas was Allen's descendant. Joseph Daniel Robinson corresponded in the 1920's or 1930's with Joseph Taylor Robinson, attempting to establish kinship. The results of this is unknown.

Joseph was born on August 26, 1872 in Lonoke County, Arkansas to James and Matilda Swaim Robinson. He attended the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and then went on to study law at the University of Virginia. In 1895, he was admitted to the bar and practiced law as a civil and criminal lawyer in Lonoke, Arkansas. In 1896, he married Ewilda Gertrude Miller. He was first elected governor of Arkansas in 1912. Shortly after he took office, he was elected by the state legislature to fill a vacancy in the U.S. Senate. In 1928 he was the Democratic candidate for Vice-President of the United States. He and presidential candidate Alfred E. Smith lost to Republicans Herbert C. Hoover and Charles Curtis. He served as Senate majority leader from 1933 until 1937. He died on July 14, 1937 in Washington, D.C. (The World Book Encyclopedia, Volume 16, p. 347) (The Robinson Family, 1975, p. 121-2).

(Note: This information is being furnished as a basis for further research as desired by the author or any other reader).

#### David Shannon Robinson

David Shannon settled at Cat Creek in Lowndes County, near Valdosta, Georgia, sometime between 1850 and 1854. The only

other Robinson living in this area, besides David Shannon, was William Robinson in the Naylor District of Lowndes County, near Valdosta, between 1835 and 1838 (Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia, Folks Huxford, V. 2, p. 248).

In reviewing Judge Huxford's information, William Robinson descended from Pitt County, North Carolina, which is near Greenville. The oldest known Robinson there was the widowed Sabra Robeson. She had at least two sons, James Robinson and Frederick Robeson. Frederick's last name was spelled differently than his brother's name. As was mentioned earlier, the spelling of the Robinson name did vary. James was born in 1752 and his migration pattern went from Pitt Co., North Carolina to Wayne Co., Georgia in approximately 1810, to Appling Co. (now Ware Co.) in approximately the 1820's. He died in Wayne County in 1832. His brother, Frederick Robeson was born in 1765. He went from Pitt Co., North Carolina to Robeson Co. (near the city of Lumberton), North Carolina, to Lancaster Co., South Carolina in 1790, to Wayne Co., Georgia in approximately the 1810's. Frederick died in 1828. The son of Frederick, William Robinson, and his descendants, lived in the Naylor District of Lowndes County (Pioneers of Wiregrass Georgia, Folks Huxford, V. 2, p. 248).

The William Robinson family could be relatives of John Robinson, David Shannon's father. More research needs to be done to see if this family is part of the missing link. A connection was never made between these families, however David Shannon settled at Cat Creek, which was only a very short distance north of William Robinson's homestead. William Robinson, son of Frederick Robeson, was already living in the area and this could be the cause for David Shannon settling there.

Additional tracing of our ancestors before 1790 is difficult because this South Carolina area was a frontier for new settlers. The Barnwell area was sparsely settled in the 1776 revolution. The pioneer traders cut notches on the trees to mark their paths of travel through the dense forests. Today, "Two Notch Road"



still exists between Augusta, Georgia and Columbia, South Carolina, which passed near this area. The only government was the military, which attempted to control the hostile Indians upset by the settlers pushing farther into their lands. Permanent records were few, since little of the population could read or write. Life was very difficult, people were poor, and survival was of the utmost importance, rather than the recording and retention of records.

The author has never found any descendants of either George Robinson or his brother, Allen Robinson. This is the reason the book focuses on their brother, David Shannon Robinson, his wife, Nancy Carolina Fountain, and their descendants (See photographs in Exhibit 2-2 & 2-3).

David Shannon is the patriarch of our clan. The next chapter pertains to the major events that occurred in his life. Chapter V then discusses each of his eight children. The eight children are as follows:

- 1- James Hiram Robinson
- 2- Infant Robinson
- 3- David Melton Robinson
- 4- Sarah Ann Robinson
- 5- Nancy Martha Ann Savannah Robinson
- 6- George Melton Americus Robinson
- 7- John Richard Robinson
- 8- Joseph Daniel Robinson

(Note: If you don't recognize one of the above names as your grandparent, then you need to find out which one you descend from. The Robinsons from Oakey Grove all descend from these eight children. If you need any help, please call me.)

DAVID SHANNON AND NANCY CAROLINA (FOUNTAIN) ROBINSON

This is the original tin type picture made about 1885 when David Shannon was 50 years old. An enhanced drawing of this tin type photograph appears on the next page. It was drawn by an artist in Tifton, Georgia.



Exhibit 2-2



DAVID SHANNON & NANCY CAROLINA (FOUNTAIN) ROBINSON

**Exhibit 2-3**