SARAH E. FRIERSON:
A BIOGRAPHY

Prepared for:
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History 300

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Abstract of Sarah E. Frierson

Sarah E. Haupt was born in Savannah, Georgia around the early 1820's. She married George Frierson, a merchant from Macon, Georgia. They had five children, Florida, Norton, Louisa, Henry and George. Sarah spent most of her life devoting her time as a housewife and mother. She became a widow early, and remained so the rest of her life. Sarah raised all of her children to maturity. She died in her home at the age of sixty-six.
Sarah Elizabeth Haupt was born in Savannah, Georgia around the early 1820's. She was the oldest child of Henry Haupt, a wheelwright in Savannah. Sarah attended Chatham Academy where she received high marks in spelling, writing, history, and behavior. When Sarah was in her early twenties, she was baptized into the First Baptist Church of Savannah, where she remained an active member. Sarah married George S. Frierson on February 3, 1842. They were married in the Baptist Church by the Reverend J. G. Binney.

Very little information could be found about the first eight years of George and Sarah's marriage. Apparently, they did not buy property until much later. In 1850, George is known as a commission merchant. His residence is listed as 1 Elbert Square. There are no deeds that specify him as the owner of any land in Elbert Ward. However, Sarah's father, Henry Haupt, owned Lot Number 18, in Elbert Ward. Lot Number 18 was situated in front of Elbert Square. Perhaps Sarah and George lived on her father's land. However, there is no proof to support this speculation.

By 1850, George and Sarah had three children. The oldest was Florida B., who was born sometime during the year 1843. Norton was born on December 12, 1845. The youngest was Louisa A., who was born sometime during the year 1847.

George kept himself busy during the 1850's. He often bought large quantities of cotton. This probably had something
to do with his occupation as a commission merchant.

George was also active in civic affairs. He was appointed to the Board of Health in 1852 and 1855, representing Crawford Ward in 1855.\textsuperscript{12} He bought and sold slaves, which was legal at that time.\textsuperscript{13} During the 1856 elections, George was appointed to assist in keeping order at the polls on behalf of the Democratic party.\textsuperscript{14} George also served as a Grand Juror in 1858.\textsuperscript{15}

In 1852, Sarah's father, Henry Haupt, gave the Friersons a piece of property known as the eastern 1/2 of Lot Number 72, Crawford Ward.\textsuperscript{16} As stated in the deed, Mr. Haupt wished to make provisions for his daughter against further contingencies. All the proceeds from any sale or rent were to go to Sarah and her children. George was not to mortgage the property without the written consent of Sarah.

Sometime during the 1850's, George formed a partnership with W. C. Butler, formerly of Verstille, Lufburrow, and Butler.\textsuperscript{17} Butler and Frierson was a boot and shoe dealership in Savannah.\textsuperscript{18}

By 1855, George and Sarah added two more children to their family. Henry Haupt, named for his maternal grandfather, was born during the year 1851. George S., named for his father, was born during the year 1855.\textsuperscript{19}

During the year 1855, George and Sarah took out several mortgages on their property in Crawford Ward.\textsuperscript{20} Their loan was financed by the Chatham County Mutual Loan Association.

During the next few years, George and Sarah bought several pieces of property. The first was Lot Number 34, Franklin Ward.\textsuperscript{21} George bought this land from William Waters.

The next year George made an agreement with Mr. Waters
in order that he might pay for the property by a series of installments over a period of three years.  

On September 27, 1857, fire destroyed the Frierson's house on Liberty Street (eastern 1/2 of Lot Number 73, Crawford Ward). Here is the account of the tragedy that appeared in the newspaper the next day:

"The Conflagration Yesterday Morning

"A long time has elapsed in this city since we have had to chronicle a fire in Savannah, therefore break of day yesterday, when the rousing cry of "Fire" with the alarm of bells and watchmen's rattles rang through the city, no small degree of consternation was the consequence. The flames spread so rapidly that no furniture could be saved, and even some of the inmates were in utmost personal peril.

We are indebted to Mr. G. S. Frierson, one of the principal sufferers by the fire of yesterday, for the following particulars.

The fire broke out about 5 a.m. in the building adjoining him on Liberty Street owned by A. A. Smets, which was rented by Mr. T. D. Pond. Mr. Pond has been absent from the city for several weeks and the premises had been left in a very insecure state, with doors, gates, and etc. open. The flames quickly reached Mr. F.'s residence which was rapidly consumed, his family barely escaping to safety . . . There was a strong wind blowing from the West at the time, and as the fire originated in the basement of the building, which was of wood, it had made rapid progress before it was discovered. We learn that Mr. Frierson had an insurance of $2,000 on his house and furniture in the Charter.
Oak and Marine Insurance Company, a Wilbur agent, but which will not cover his loss by $1,500 or $2,000 . . . There is no doubt the fire was placed there by an incindiar."23

The day after the tragic fire, Sarah's mother died.24 These events seem to be the beginning of a series of tragedies for the Frierson family.

Four months after her mother's death, Sarah's father died of pneumonia at the age of seventy.25 Henry Haupt's will was controversial and resulted in a bitter contest.26 According to the will that was presented by George Frierson as Executor, Henry left $2,500 to various organizations, $10.00 to his son, Cope, three slaves to his son, William L., one piece of property in Effingham County to his daughter, Frances Brunner, and five pieces of property in Savannah to his daughter, Sarah Frierson. Cope Haupt, William L. Haupt, and Charles A. Brunner, Trustee of Frances Brunner, contested that the will was false. They brought forth another will, and presented it as the true document. George claimed that his version of the will was authentic. The Plaintiffs argued that Henry Haupt was not of sound mind and body. There was a discrepancy among the witnesses as to which one signed which document. The judge finally made the decision that all the various organizations would receive their share of the estate. Cope Haupt would receive the $10.00. William L. Haupt would receive the three slaves. Frances Brunner retained her land in Effingham County. The rest of the estate that was originally left to Sarah was to be sold at public outcry, and the proceeds were to be divided evenly between the four children. There is an interesting fact to point out. When Henry Haupt's property
was sold at public outcry, Charles A. Brunner, Trustee of Frances Brunner, bought four of the five pieces of property. He bought Lot Number 4, Heathcote Ward, Lot Number 33, Columbia Ward, Lot Number 18, Elbert Ward, and Lot Number 16, S. Oglethorpe Ward.  

Crime was even a problem in 19th century Savannah. Butler and Frierson's shoe store was robbed, and about $50.00 worth of goods were stolen.

Sarah and George were active in many church activities during the late 1850's and early 1860's. In February of 1859, George and Sarah were received back into the First Baptist Church of Savannah. According to the Minutes of the First Baptist Church, George and Sarah had left the congregation in 1847 in order to join the Second Baptist Church. After he rejoined the First Baptist Church, George was vigorously active in church activities. He was a candidate for the position of Deacon. He was unanimously elected leader of the choir. He donated money for the construction of a church lecture room. He was appointed to various social committees.

George and Sarah's daughter, Florida, was received into the congregation by baptism in late 1859. The rest of the children were not baptized until after George's death.

Sarah's life was very sketchy during the Civil War years. The war probably affected Sarah emotionally and financially, but no one knows to what extent. Her son, Norton, was a Confederate soldier. He would have been in his teens when he fought for the South.

The shoe dealership of Butler and Frierson was dissolved by mutual consent in the early part of 1862. The termination
of the business might have been war related, but there is no evidence so far that would indicate that theory. However, six months later, George Frierson died in Macon, Georgia at the age of forty of bronchitis.\(^3\)\(^8\) He was brought back to Savannah, and buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery.\(^3\)\(^9\) George was supposed to have been buried in Lot 166.\(^4\)\(^0\) There is not a tombstone for George on Lot 166. However, on Lot 1485, there is a vault with his name on it. Perhaps someone who cared a great deal built the vault for George and his family. There are not any records to show who built the vault or when it was built.

George Frierson died intestate. His estate was not administered until thirty years after his death.\(^4\)\(^1\) Therefore, no one knows what was left to Sarah. There is not a list of property or an estimation of the value of his estate. Sarah's future business transactions show that she might have been struggling to stay afloat. She was a widow with five children to support. The Civil War had weakened the country, and the people. Sarah continued on alone. In every document beforehand, Sarah had been thrust behind her husband, George. Now she was a businesswoman as well as a mother.

After the Civil War ended, Sarah began a series of real estate transactions. In June of 1866, she took out another mortgage on her lot in Crawford Ward with the Savannah Mutual Loan Association.\(^4\)\(^2\) Later that year, Sarah sold some property on Isle of Hope, on petition of her daughter, Florida B. Frierson, to George W. Wyly, Trustee for Corinthia A. Goodwin.\(^4\)\(^3\) George had bought the land known as the Eastern portion of the Southern 1/2 of Dr.
William Parker's Plantation in 1859 from Rebecca Moorehouse. Florida 2, Prierson also petitioned that her mother sell Lot Number 33, Columbia Ward, which had previously been owned by Sarah's sister, Frances Brunner. The proceeds of the sale were to be reinvested for the benefit of the children of Sarah Prierson.

In 1866, Sarah was living on Jones Street. Her deed does not show her buying the property until 1867. Sarah bought property known as Lot Number 9, Monterey Ward, from William Stark. The house was one of five row houses, each built on 2/3 of a lot, and known a Lunceford's Lane.

The years 1867 and 1868 brought festive occasions for the Prierson family. Sarah's oldest son, Morton, married Annie E. Haupt on December 12, 1867. They were married by the Reverend Sylvanus Landrum, a prominent Baptist Pastor.

Sarah's second son, Henry Haupt, was baptized into the congregation of the First Baptist Church.

In September of 1868, Sarah's youngest daughter, Louise A., married Thomas S. Sanford, of Forsythia, Georgia. The Reverend Sylvanus Landrum officiated.

The years 1868-1869 must not have been too prosperous for the Priersons. Once again, Sarah's daughter, Florida, petitioned to the Superior Court in order to make Sarah sell more property. This time Sarah sold Lot Number 34, Franklin Ward to John Houston. George had bought the land in 1858, so apparently he left it to her when he died. Once again the proceeds were to be for the benefit of the children.

Sarah also sold her house on Jones Street. Marcus Seelig bought Lot Number 9, Monterey Ward for his wife, Barbara.
Tragedy struck the Frierson household again in 1869. Sarah's oldest daughter, Florida R., died at the age of Twenty-six of phthisis pulmonalis, or tuberculosis. The rest of Sarah's children outlived her, which must have been a relief for a mother, especially in that time frame.

Sarah was not only selling property, she was improving her property. In 1857, George and Sarah's house burned down. It is not known so far when they began to rebuild it, but in 1869 a building was completed for Sarah Frierson on the East 1/2 of Lot 72, Crawford Ward. Grimball and Chaplin, prominent builders in Savannah, claimed a mechanics lien on the Eastern 1/2 of Lot 72, Crawford Ward. Apparently, the lien was settled, because Sarah's son, Norton, is listed as a resident in early 1870.

Sarah's daughter, Louisa, and son, George, were baptized into the congregation of the First Baptist Church on the seventh of May, 1870. Sarah stayed active in the church as the years went by. She was probably the influence that encouraged her children to become active in the church.

In 1871, Sarah bought two pieces of property. She bought Lot Number 70, Choctaw Ward from Barbara Ann Vaugen in February of that year. In December she bought Lot Number 17, Derby Ward. It appears that Sarah rented out these two pieces of property for income. At the time of her death, she was receiving payment for these lots.

For Sarah, the 1870's were a time of religious participation mingled with personal sorrow. Sarah had been fortunate to raise all her children to maturity. Her children were not
so fortunate with their children. Sarah's second grandson, Thomas Shelton Sanford died before his first birthday in 1871. In 1872 Morton's youngest daughter, Elizabeth Williams Frierson, died.

Two years later, Louise A. Sanford, died of congenital hydrocephalus. Louise Sanford lost another daughter, Addie, in late 1877.

Sarah's devotion to the Baptist Church is represented by the small duties she performed. She was an assistant to the deacons, she made cloaks for baptism, and she donated money to the church's poor fund.

Not much could be found about the last six years of Sarah's life. There are no significant real estate dealings, although there is a question of how she came to possess the lot in White Ward. As early as 1879, Sarah is listed as a resident of 314 Waldburg Street. In 1880, Sarah, Morton and his family, Louise and her family, Henry, and George are all listed as residents of 314 Waldburg Street. There is no deed that lists Sarah as a grantee for any property in White Ward. However, Morton Frierson's employer, R. B. Reppard, built a house on Lot 23, (Western 1/2, North side), White Ward in 1875. That same year, R. B. Reppard sold Lot 23 to Thomas Sanford (Sarah's son-in-law).

The lot was designated as 312-314 Waldburg Street. Apparently, the whole Frierson family lived together in two houses very close together. Furthermore, the house on Crawford Ward (Liberty Street) was listed as Henry Frierson's residence in 1886. Sarah probably gave Henry the property in Crawford Ward, but a deed could not be found to prove the transaction.

On September 24, 1886 Sarah died of paralysis at the age of sixty-six. She died in her home on Waldburg Street. Her funeral
was held two days later at the First Baptist Church.

Sarah died intestate, so her son George served as administrator of her estate. Sarah left two pieces of property, Lot Number 17, Derby Ward and Lot Number 70, Choctaw Ward. The total worth of her estate was $1,925. Sarah left many debts. Her property was sold at public auction to pay them. What was left over was divided by her children. Norton Frierson bought Lot Number 70, Choctaw Ward, and sold a one-fourth lot to each of his siblings.

Sarah supposedly was buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery in Lot 1065, however there is not a tombstone for her in that lot. Maybe she had a tombstone to begin with, but somehow it was destroyed.

Sarah was survived by her four children, and seven grandchildren. Norton became a successful businessman. Louise moved to Macon, Georgia and died four years later. Henry became untraceable after his marriage to Sarah Elizabeth Powell in 1888. George married Fannie G. Gentry in 1888 and died alone at the age of seventy-four.
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