

## **SARAH REED BLANTON VAUGHAN**

portrayed by Beverly Bass Hines

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My name is Sarah Reed Blanton Vaughan. ...Friends and family call me "Sally" or "Ms Reed" ....

Whew....I have just come in from church down at Jamestown on the river and what a refreshing ride home...husband William had that horse at a clip all the way... the breeze felt good on this warm day...

It's a good day already ....

God's given me a good life here ...oh it is not always easy...I've known great loss and had my share of tears...but my God is my strength and He has always carried me through...seems like my life has always centered around my God...and my family... which he has shown great favor....

Even as a little girl I remember riding between mama and papa on that long dirt road down to church at Jamestown...I was raised at Millview across the Appomattox in Cumberland county...that road to church could get so muddy in the spring rains that the horse could barely pull papa's carriage up the hill from the river...and cold! Mama's quilts felt so good snuggled down...and mama always heated bricks and wrapped them in cloths to keep our feet from freezing....

We went to church 'most every Sunday! Mother would fix a meal to share with our neighbors...the Rev. Denny was such a man of God! Sermons that would make me think all week...and Sunday school was held in the afternoons and we always stayed...it was the most fun when I was younger.... We would sit outside under the trees in warm weather or gather inside by the woodstove in cold...

The colored folks were there too...they have their own church now but we were all together back then to read and study God's word together...and it seemed to be a closer community back then...

Why! I met my husband at church! He was so quick minded and I was having trouble with remembering my catechism ...he was helpful...he is still so helpful! When we married, I moved across the river into the Prince Edward side and we started our family

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here at dear Belvedere...our land is only a couple miles east of the river and Belvedere sits on a hill looking over our farm land...

God blessed us with 8 children...I lost my first child...a son...oh, that was a hard time....dear Charity, my colored house servant, who is still with me today...gave me comfort and with God's help, she saw me through...I couldn't have raised all our children and run the house without Charity! We are as close, or closer, than sisters...

Oh, but the good times! And the laughter! Belvedere would ring with laughter when the children were in their teens and courting...daughter Mildred married her husband, that young Walthall boy, there on the front lawn. What a flurry of activity to prepare for that! We even moved the piano out onto the front porch...and cooked for weeks it seems...

We raised tobacco here at Belvedere...some years over 10,000 hills! and sheep...lots of them...sell the tobacco and the wool for our cash money... and of course I knit and make blankets for the family...oh the softest blankets from that wool...so often we are blessed with fresh meat...I take the meat and carefully cut it into quarters...wrap it in ice from down at the pond...then the leaves to help keep in the cold.... It keeps longer that way....

Oh! Is that William I hear? No...Still un-harnessing that horse...

My husband keeps a keen interest in our church and our community...we need to be aware of our world that is changing so fast these days...readjusting, they call it...I was just 6 when all the fighting happened at Saylor's Creek...of course I was still living across the river...but my William was born at Pleasant Shade near here in Prince Edward and was in the thick of it ...he was in the Home Guard and helped defend High Bridge just down the river a bit...the fighting was fierce....he was just 17...but we don't dwell on that much now....

The loss of slave help was hard on our mama's and daddy's...but many of the coloreds hired themselves out to our families and stayed on ...we were family...we needed each other perhaps more then and we were friends. Why! My William was raised a brother to that Robert Moton at Pleasant Shade....they grew up together there....

Robert was by here just several weeks back when he was home from Hampton...came by for some of my sweet milk and rolls...had dinner with us...he and William sat and talked for hours after we ate. He has such a fine way with words...when he gave thanks to our Lord for our meal his words were rich and heartfelt...and he has met and actually sat down with so many important people at Hampton and in his travels up to the

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North...my husband likes to hear his thoughts on new farming ways and how people are thinking at the school...we still laugh about when he was younger and people wanted to send him off to school to be a preacher, how he would puff up and tell how he would rather grow up to be an ignorant Baptist than an educated Presbyterian!

I wonder if he will come back to see his mother this Christmas....

Christmas is such a special time when families gather back and when we all go down to the church for special services to rejoice in the birth of our Savior! Such a busy time...the children come home and we still go out on the land to gather decorations for the house...running cedar, holly and of course, someone has to shoot down the mistletoe! And the baking ...cakes and breads and my molasses cookies, hmmm! And the singing and music is so beautiful...right from the heart! here at home around that piano and at church too...

So many blessings God has given us! Now that it's just William and I at home... we have so many good times to remember...some nights when we are sitting and reading our Bible together with the glow of the kerosene lamp and I cannot help but feel the love of God...and remember when the children were younger and we would sit together each evening for vespers...reading the Bible and each having our prayers.... He has given us the hardships over the years to strengthen us as well as all the blessings he has bestowed.....

William? Is that you??

Oh my goodness...look who is here...dear Mother Moton! How good it is to see you again!