

Active Pall Bearers
Nephews

Honorary Pall Bearers
Deacons of James Chapel M. B. Church

Active Flower Bearers
Nieces

Honorary Flower Bearers
Athens Homemakers Club
The Naomi Chapter OES
Mothers of James Chapel M. B. Church



Interment
Zion No. 1 M. B. Church Cemetery,
Oates Annex, Barton, Alabama

Acknowledgments

The family of Bernice Brown wishes to express our sincere appreciation and heartfelt gratitude for the many acts of kindness, words of comfort, cards, flowers and visits shown during the illness and death of our beloved "Lady Brown".

People's Funeral Home, *directing*

Celebrating the Life
of

**Bernice Lorene Oates
Darby Brown**



Born into Earth April 28, 1926
Born into Eternity June 20, 2004



Thursday, June 24, 2004
Eleven O'clock AM

Round Island Creek M.B. Association Convention Center
Lucas Ferry Road
Athens, Alabama

Pastor Karlon Fletcher
James Chapel M. B. Church
Officiating

My "Other" Mother

*Already an adult when I was born,
You were starting a family all your own.
I came to our parents well into their middle age
Their level of enthusiasm was not hard to gage.*

*Your first-born fed from your breast, and I did too;
The chances of this happening were very few.
But here we were vying with each other;
It was then you became my "other" mother.*

*You were widowed when you were twenty-some;
As was the custom those days, you moved back home
With four little boys who I treated as brothers;
And you, my big sister, you were my "other" mother.*

*We grew up and I went off to college;
You were so proud of me; you thought I'd gain much
knowledge.
You helped send me off in the best way you could,
Buying me stuff and reminding me of the "shoulds".*

*Through my adult years you were always there;
With sage advice and fervent prayers
Which helped sustain me in all that I did;
For to you I was no longer just anyone's "kid".*

*We came full circle in the last few years,
Dealing with joys, sorrows, heartaches and tears.
The two of us can now go no farther,
But you will always be my "other" mother.*

*Josetta Faye Oates Walker
"Baby Jo"*



CRY FOR ME

Cry for me, but tears of joy for my eyes can weep no more.
Cry for me for I'm in Heaven sitting at Jesus' feet.
Aren't you happy and excited? I have no worries now.
I know all the answers to all the questions that we talked about.
I've met our ancestors and our descendants.
I've met those friends I'd missed.
I've met the people we read about in the bible.
I've seen the galaxies and all the waters.

Don't cry tears of sorrow for words you did not say.
Don't cry tears of sadness for deeds you did not do.
Don't cry tears of regret for times you did me wrong.
Don't cry tears of worry for those I've left behind.

Know that I'm still working to bring Glory to our God.
The work I did with you is paying off now.
The sacrifices we made are being rewarded now.
The prayers we prayed together, I can help answer now.
The visions we talked about, I can assist in making a reality.

Cry for me, but tears of joy. I'm in a better place.
And live your life so you can see the Master face to face.
Live your life so I can see you again. Live your life as you know
you should.
And don't be ashamed to cry for me, but please cry tears of joy!

Teblo
06-21-98



God's Special Angel

*God Called home an angel;
An angel named Bernice;
Your work is done on earth;
Come rest, you're now at peace.*

*There're angels all around us;
This angel's a special one;
She's always there to help you;
For her work is never done.*

*She doesn't make a difference;
Towards anyone you see;
An angel like none other;
That's how everyone should be.*

*Her love, time, and kindness;
Is always enough to share;
When you think that she's too busy;
Look around, she's always there.*

*She's God's precious angel;
God gave to you and me;
Thank God for our angel;
A Special Angel named Bernice.*

*We love and miss you,
Gwen*



Lovingly known as:

*Bernice, Bern, Mother, Mama, Ma, Muh, Lady
Brown, Big Sis, Twin, Bea, Grandma, Gran Gran,
Grandmother, Aunt Bernice, Mama Brown, Sister
Brown, Girl, Mrs. Brown*

I'll Be Your Mama

I've been in a daze since we got "the call".

The outpouring of love has been overwhelming.

I feel like I've crossed over into a secret society of motherless children that no one can join until it's their time.

Thinking of Mama now is peaceful and sad. I know where she is and I'm glad about that, nevertheless I'll miss her so much.

The one thing I remember is the many times I've heard her say "I'll Be Your Mama" when kids in the community lost theirs.

And even to the kids who still have their mothers, she was the "second mama" to so many.

So who will be our Mama now? That mother to the motherless we've heard so much about.

And I hear God saying like she did so often -
"I'll Be Your Mama Now."

Teblo
06-21-04



Obituary



Before she was born, her grandparents, Caleb and Julia Ann Turner Geise, were dead. She was born in the home of her paternal grandparents, Thomas Jefferson and Susan Olivia Webster Oates to her parents William McKinley and Lessie William Geise Oates on April 28, 1926. She was the first grandchild born in this very large loving and excited family. She was loved, spoiled, and had her way with her Daddy's siblings. Her parents soon moved into a home of their own and over a period of years she became big sister to four brothers and two sisters. They all attended and became members of Zion No. 1 M. B. Church in Barton, AL. She accepted Christ in August of 1939. She attended Barton Roosevelt Elementary School and graduated Co-Valedictorian from Cherokee High School in Cherokee, AL.

After graduation, she married Louis Herbert Darby and they became parents of four sons: William Louis (Della) of Athens, AL; Jefferson Spivak (Frances) of Rockford, IL; Galon Drake (Loretta) of Dixon, IL; and Oates Bernard of Athens, AL. After the unexpected death of her husband in 1952, she remained single for 7½ years. She then married Thomas Edward Brown in Nov 1959, moved to Athens, AL, and they all joined James Chapel M.B. Church. Through their union, they parented three daughters: Teblo Bizet Brown Garrison (Stephan) of Athens, AL; Kyra Deness Brown Pope (Darryl) of Huntsville, AL; and Melody LaDawn Brown of Athens, AL. From her seven loving children, she has 15 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

While a member of James Chapel, she served as Church Secretary, Choir Member, Missionary Society Secretary and President, and helped in any way she could. She served as President of the Athens Homemakers Club for many years and was a member of the Naomi Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star.

Her parents and three of her brothers preceded her in death: William McKinley Oates, Jr., John Henry Bolden Oates, and Caleb Webster Oates. She is survived by her husband, children, grandchildren & great-grandchildren, three siblings: Sallie Olivia Oates Pride of Iuka MS; Ellis James Oates (Mary) of Sumter, SC; and Josetta Faye Oates Walker (Louis) of Marietta, GA and a multitude of nieces, nephews, relatives, friends, and "adopted children".

Program



PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL

SELECTION

Sis. Sharon Travis

WORDS OF COMFORT TO THE YOUTH

Minister Dexter Jackson
James Chapel Church

SCRIPTURE

Psalms 24

PRAYER

WORDS OF COMFORT TO THE FAMILY

Pastor Galon Darby
Second Baptist Church, Dixon, IL

SELECTION

Brown Sisters (Pre-recorded)

EULOGY

Pastor Karlon Fletcher
James Chapel Church

SELECTION

CLOSING PRAYER

Pastor Karlon Fletcher

RECESSIONAL

