

MARY FITCH BAKER



Born: 1836 in Salem, MA

Married: Apr. 8, 1875 to John Andrew Bostrom

Died: 1911 in Ormond, Volusia Co., FL

Appointment(s):

New England Freedmen's Aid Society
(NEFAS)
Lawton Plantation – Hilton Head, SC
Dec. 1864

Charleston, SC
Dec. 1865 – Jun. 1867

Mary, known as “Polly” was born about 1836 in Salem, Essex, Massachusetts, one of four children of Edward Dodge Baker (1808-1864) and Emily Stinson Fitch (1802-1888)¹. She is shown living with her parents in the 1850-1870 US Census in Hopkinton, Middlesex, Massachusetts. On April 8, 1875, Mary married John Andrew Bostrom (1836-1927) in Hopkinton.² They had two children, Helen Esther and Lars Edward; she and the family were living with her widowed mother in the 1880 Census in Hopkinton. In the 1880 and 1885 Florida state census, Mary and her husband were residing in Ormond, Volusia County, Florida and remained there in 1910 where Mary ran a boarding house and her husband was a fruit farmer. Mary died in 1911 in Ormond and is buried in the Hillside Cemetery in Ormond Beach with her husband³. Her sister Hannah Fitch Baker (1838-1910) is also buried with them.

Mary was appointed as a teacher by the New England Freedmen's Aid Society and sent in December 1864 to Lawton Plantation on Hilton Head Island where she taught for just less than one year⁴. She did not have a branch supporting her financially when she was appointed. She transferred to Mitchelville in November 1865⁵. She finally transferred to Charleston before she returned home in June 1867.

¹ Arnett, B.W., Rev, ed. “Proceedings of the Semi-Centenary Celebration of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Cincinnati, with an account of the rise and progress of the colored schools”. Allen Temple, Cincinnati, OH, Feb 8-10, 1874 Cincinnati, OH: H.Watkins, Printer, 1874.

² Findagrave. Mary Fitch Baker Bostrom Memorial # 61871290 create 19 Nov 2010 by Robert Stanley Orrell. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/61871290/mary-fitch-bostrom>.

³ Ibid. - US Gen Web. <https://usgwarchives.net/fl/volusia/cemeteries/hillside.txt>

⁴ New England Freedman's Association. “Teachers Sent to South Carolina in 1864-65”. <http://www.bronsonstours.com>

New England Freedman's Association. *The Freedmen's Record*, Vol I, No 1, Jan 1865; #5; May 1865; #7 July 1865, p 118; #8 Aug 1865

⁵ Spruill, Marjorie Julian; Valinda W Littlefield and Joan Marie Johnson. South Carolina Women: Their Lives and Times, Vol 2. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2010 p 88..
New England Freedman's Association. *The Freedman's Record*, Vol 1, # 11-12, Nov-Dec 1865 from Mitchelville, Hilton Head.