

ANNUAL MARVEL REUNION AT PEORIA

On Sunday, August 26, 1923, the Marvel family held their fourth reunion at the South Park, Peoria, Illinois. It was an ideal day and surely a fine place for the large, good-humored crowd to visit, and meet the relatives that meet each year to renew the family ties.

A fine large crowd from seven different states. Oregon was represented by Mr. and Mrs. George Marvel, Wisconsin by Mrs. Ewing, Missouri by George Loer, Texas by Thomas Loer, Nebraska by J. W. Marvel of Hastings, and Mr. and Mrs. Thompson Marvel of Giltner; Indiana by Raymond Marvel, and Illinois by relatives from Chicago, Carthage, Waynesville, Lanes, DeLand, Clinton, Washington, Bartonville, Bushnell, Good Hope, Galesburg, Kenney, Peoria and Normal.

Many new faces that had met with them for the first time and some that had been with them were absent. The big dinner was one of the big features. Mr. William Loer of Peoria, had everything arranged so fine; everything was spread on the long tables and all helped themselves cafeteria style. After the baskets were packed away, a fine large picture, 16x23 inches was taken of the jolly crowd.

Then, all went into the auditorium where the program and business meeting was held. The president and vice-president both being absent, George B. Marvel of Clinton, Illinois, acted as president. An address by Chas. O'Hern, welcoming the big crowd to the city of Peoria was first. Edna Lewis of Fairview, sang two solos, George W. Marvel of Oregon, next on the program, gave quite an interesting talk on family history. Betty Ann O'Hern gave a reading, and Ben Hunt of Kenney sang a fine solo, and Mrs. Hunt read a paper prepared by Mrs. Ella A. Yeakel, which gave the history from about 1100 on down, tracing her family line till the present time.

The business meeting followed: The reunion to be held the last Sunday in August 1924 at Peoria, Illinois, the site to be decided on by Dr. J. E. Marvel of Waynesville, George Marvel of Washington, and Mrs. Chas. O'Hern of Peoria, the same committee to arrange the program. A collection was taken to finance the association another year. Mrs. Markley of Bushnell to see about the printing of the family history for 1924. The secretary has a few of the booklets of the first history left, and anyone wanting one, can get it by writing her, and joining the association. The fee is one dollar. The old officers were re-elected: Walter C. Marvel of Kenney, Illinois, president, Harry Marvel of Fiatt, vice president, and Mrs. Hettie Marvel Markley, 234 East Hurst Street, Bushnell, Illinois, secretary-treasurer.

NEBRASKA AND OREGON MARVELS, AND NEBRASKA 1923

REUNION. WRITTEN BY JOHN W. MARVEL

OF HASTINGS, NEBRASKA, AUG. 25, 1924

James Marvel, son of Prettyman Marvel, Jr. and Rebecca Barr, was born near Springfield, Illinois, October 29, 1825. He was married to Maria Gambrel on July 15, 1847. Nine children were born to this union, as follows:

Thompson, Oct. 1, 1848; Nancy Jane, April 10, 1850; William P., November 25, 1851; Henry, Jan. 22, 1855, who died March 6, 1856; Rebecca Elizabeth, Jan. 14, 1857; James Wiley, Dec. 23, 1858; Mary Ann, Sept. 16, 1859, who died March 10, 1867; Stephen D., October 12, 1860; and John S. July 10, 1862.

Maria Gambrel, wife of James Marvel, born Sept. 27, 1829, was a daughter of Col. Thompson Gambrel and Elizabeth Roberts (a daughter of John Roberts, Sr., born in 1807). Thompson Gambrel was born Aug. 22, 1806 in Kentucky, died Aug. 30, 1877 in DeWitt Co., Ill. William Gambrel Sr., father of Thompson, came to Indiana from Kentucky in 1807, married Winifred Elkins from South Carolina.

The James Marvel homestead was the east 160 acres of the farm of his father, lying about one half mile south of Waynesville.

Shortly after the close of the Civil War, James Marvel went out into the new prairie country in Vermillion Co., Illinois, and purchased 240 acres of land, which he afterwards divided among Thompson, William P., James W. and Rebecca Elizabeth.

In 1861 when Thompson Marvel was 13, and William P. was 10, they took charge of the farm as their father had met with an accident in which he was struck with a buggy tongue in the back. From this a tumor developed which caused his death in 1876. After his death, the wife, who had a life estate in the home place, remained on the same, and Stephen D. and John S. were to take care of her.

There was a great interest taken in Nebraska by Illinois people in the year 1882, and many came from Illinois and bought farms here. Stephen D. Marvel came to Hamilton County, Nebraska, and bought some land in the early fall of 1882, and in October he was followed by his brother, John S. and Matthias Wagner and family (the wife being Rebecca Elizabeth Marvel, sister of the Marvel boys). They built a house in which they lived that winter. The boys and their mother sold the home place in the spring of 1883, and their mother, Maria Marvel, came out along with many Illinois families. Soon after she came they bought the Spanogle ranch which had become quite well known as the headquarters of large farming and ranch operations. This became the home of Maria Marvel and her two sons, S. D. and J. S. who were still single, and is still owned by J. S. Marvel. The mother died on this farm March 30, 1898.

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In 1868, before he was married, Thompson Marvel went up to Vermillion County, there to begin breaking out prairie and getting it ready for farming. While he was there he met Margaret Jane French, daughter of George and Irene French of Penfield, Ill., to whom he was married, March 15, 1871. They took up their residence in Vermillion County. Thompson Marvel and family left in 1882 and removed to Hamilton County, Iowa, where they lived for two years, and then removed to Hamilton county Nebraska, where they have resided ever since, and where their children all grew to their maturity.

William P. Marvel married Sarah C. Darnell of Maroa, Ill., November 6, 1873, and took up his home on the land received from his father. In 1878, W. P. Marvel left Penfield and went to Cowley County, Kansas, locating near where his wife's people had moved from Indiana some years before. The family then moved to Arkansas City about 1880 and ran a ferry across the Arkansas River. In 1884 they moved further west and located in Comanche County, Kansas. In 1890 they left there and removed to Hamilton County, Nebraska, where his brothers and one sister were living at the time. The writer is their eldest son.

Rebecca Elizabeth Marvel married Matthias Wagner, Jan. 23, 1877, and removed to Penfield. About 1875, the town of Penfield, Ill., was started and W. P. Marvel and Matthias Wagner started in business in this new town. Matthias Wagner sold out his interest in the business to W. P. Marvel and sometime afterwards Thompson Marvel became interested in the same. The family remained in Vermillion Co. until the spring of 1882, when they moved to Hamilton County, Nebraska. Rebecca Elizabeth was never very strong, and died April 15, 1893 in Hamilton County, Nebraska. Later Matthias Wagner married Sarah Sharp. Matthias Wagner died April, 29, 1913.

Soon after James W. became of age, he went to Vermillion Co., Ill., and farmed his land and made his home with his brother Thompson, with whom he moved to Hamilton County, Iowa, but came on to Hamilton Co., Nebraska in the spring of 1883, and on March 3, 1885 was married to Melissa French, a sister of Mrs. Thompson Marvel, in Council Bluffs, Iowa. They have lived in Hamilton County on the same farm ever since their marriage.

Stephen D. Marvel, married Elizabeth Kirkpatrick, July 22, 1880, for his first wife, and on October 26, 1919 he was married to his present wife, Sarah Sharp Wagner, who was the widow of Matthias Wagner heretofore mentioned. S. D. now lives near Loveland, Colo.

John S. Marvel was married on February 19, 1891 to Mary E. Bedell of Maxwell, Iowa, who had been teaching the home school of the Marvels here. The J. S. Marvel family live in Hastings, Nebraska; also the family of John W. Marvel, who attended the Peoria reunion in 1923.

Thus six of the seven children of James Marvel and Maria Marvel moved to Hamilton County, Nebraska, from 1882 to 1890 where they reared their families. Most of the grandchildren and great grandchildren live in Hamilton County and adjacent counties.

Nancy Jane Marvel married William Shipley at Waynesville, Ill., Jan. 18, 1874, where they lived and reared their family. The next year after the death of William Shipley, Nancy Jane Shipley moved to Sheridan, Oregon, where all of the children but one had gone before. On March 11, 1923, Mrs. Shipley was married to George W. Marvel, who had been living in Oregon for a number of years. This George W. Marvel was the son of "Old Uncle Wiley Marvel," and was a cousin of Mrs. Shipley's father. They now live at Boyd, Oregon.

George W. Marvel of Boyd, Oregon, who attended the Peoria reunion in 1923 was born Nov. 20, 1844, was married to Samantha Leevee, May 31, 1866, and moved from Illinois to Pottawatomie Co., Kansas in the spring of 1872. He had driven out the fall before to see his brother, Prettyman, who had moved his family to this county, the spring of 1871. He reached his brother's home Oct. 3, 1871, after traveling 16 days. He lived in Kansas fifteen years when he moved his family to Williams Co., Ore., in which state he has since resided.

Another Prettyman Marvel, brother of James Marvel, first mentioned and of George Marvel of Phillips, Nebraska., in whose honor the Phillips reunion was held, came to Nance Co., Nebr., about 1890. They were own cousins to the George W. and Prettyman who moved to Kansas in 1871.

The Marvels are a congenial folk and for the most part they have not scattered as some families do. They are not clannish, but they have that agreeable nature that enables them to get along well together and to enjoy that closer friendship that kindred should develop. While drawn together by ties of relationship they are nevertheless a neighborly people highly respected for their friendliness, their strict integrity and high sense of humor, their frugality and yet for their desire to do good to others. They always develop a Christian citizenship and become a positive force for good in their communities.

Renewed interest in the Marvel history having been aroused because of the annual reunions in Illinois, the Marvels in Nebraska decided to have one following the very successful one held at Peoria last year on Aug. 25, 1923 at which the writer was fortunate enough to be present.

Accordingly, soon after our return from Illinois, we began to lay plans for a reunion here in Nebraska. The relatives seemed to be unanimous in feeling that our reunion should be held in Phillips, Nebr., which is the home of the oldest of the Marvels here and in whose honor we felt it should be held. George Marvel and his wife Louvisa Houchins Marvel. These people celebrated their

sixtieth wedding anniversary April 19, 1924 having been married during the Civil War, while George Marvel was in the service as a Union soldier, their marriage being April 19, 1864. In 1880 they moved to Lexington, Nebr., and the next year went on further west into Colorado where they lived two years. Then they moved to Hamilton Co., Nebr., where they now reside.

The reunion was held on Sept. 30, 1923, just 30 years after the death of his remarkable mother, Rebecca Gambrel having passed from this life on September 30, 1893. Another remarkable thing about our reunion was that the parents of our guest of honor had married just one hundred years before, their marriage having been on May 15, 1823, and their son who was present, and their daughter, Mary Ann Gambrel of Tabor, Ill., had lived to chronicle the centennial of the marriage of this courageous pioneer couple.

The day was delightful and about eighty had gathered to enjoy the reunion from central Nebraska. In addition there were present from Waynesville, Ill.: Thomas Marvel, Dr. J. E. Marvel and Kirby Armstrong. Douglas and Kirby Yeakel were driving through but on account of rain did not reach here until the next day, and Johnson Starkley, all of Waynesville, also came a few days later and all enjoyed a pleasant visit with the Nebraska Marvels.

In keeping with the Illinois reunion at Peoria where the prominent and venerable attendant was George W. Marvel of Boyde, Ore., 79 years of age, and where the presiding officer was George B. Marvel, of Clinton, Ill., our reunion at Phillips had as honor guest, George Marvel of Phillips, 82 years of age and Dr. George Marvel of Aurora, Nebr., presided. The writer was called upon to give a report of the Peoria reunion and also to read the paper prepared by Ella Armstrong Yeakel and read at Peoria. Dr. J. E. Marvel was then called upon and gave some interesting information in regard to Marvel history, which was highly appreciated. Archie D. Marvel of Hastings, and Dr. P. O. Marvel of Giltner also gave talks along the line of the importance of compiling the Marvel history while the many important and interesting incidents are available. All were unanimous in voting it the sense of the meeting that steps be taken to cooperate with the Marvels in Illinois in getting this history in printed form at the earliest convenience and that this history should contain the portrait of Ella Armstrong Yeakel, she having contributed so much time and expense in getting and filing the data so necessary to make a history valuable. A vote of sincere thanks was voted her for her splendid paper and other contributions to our particular line of ancestral history; also Mrs. Marvel Markley, Sec'y. of the Illinois association for her untiring effort in making the reunions so successful. The reunion was closed with singing "God be with you till we meet again" and adjourned subject to call for a reunion next year somewhere in this vicinity.

Boyd, Oregon, July 14, 1924.

Mrs. Hettie M. Markley,
Sec. Marvel Association,
My Dear Friend and Relative:

Your very kind communication received and contents noted. You state you are on the look out for more "Marvel History" for our book.

Now as to the talk I gave at the reunion last August, I was called on so suddenly and being wholly unprepared and not being accustomed to extemporaneous speaking, I am very sure I could not write it verbatim, as spoken on that day. But I shall send you some facts and reminiscences connected with the pioneer days of our branch of the "Marvel family."

Commencing with Prettyman Marvel, Senior:

He was born in Kent Co., Delaware about 1763, was married to Lavina Rogers in 1788. They moved to Georgia, and in 1808 moved to Indiana.

There were born to Grandfather Marvel, nine children named as follows: John Patience, Comfort, Prettyman, James, Wiley, Nancy Elizabeth and George.

My father was Wiley, the sixth child of Prettyman Marvel. Born in Green County, Georgia, April 4, 1806, being two years old when his parents settled in Gibson Co., Indiana. He was married to Charity Clark, March 30, 1826.

The Clarks were of very early pioneer stock. They were French Huguenots.

Protestants driven from France by the Catholics about the year 1615. They came to America and settled in South Carolina. In 1808 they emigrated to Indiana and settled in Gibson County.

The country through which they traveled was a wilderness and they were beset with many dangers from Indians and wild beasts. The children were carried all the way between beds lashed on a pack horse, while the older ones walked and drove their cow. They had to live on such food as they could obtain from the forest.

Scarcely had they become settled, a small patch cleared and a cabin built, when Grandfather Clark took sick with a fever and died. The two older boys, one of whom took sick with a fever and was down a long time and the other one killed by a falling tree, left Grandmother Clark alone with the smaller children to fight the battle of life.

During one of the Indian Raids, just before the battle of Tippecanoe, while she was weaving a piece of cloth to make clothing for the children, a neighbor rushed in and said, "Indians are coming!"

Grandma said she did not want the red skins to get her cloth and to cut it would ruin it, so she declared she would stay and finish it. The neighbor said if she would stay, she was going to remain there also. So they took turns at the loom and watching for the Indians until the cloth was finished.

She however sent her children to the nearest stockade. One of those children was Charity (Clark) Marvel, born January 23, 1807.

After the marriage of Wiley Marvel and Charity Clark, they lived in Indiana where their children were all born. Three children in early childhood and seven attained to man and womanhood. These seven were:

James K.	born	March	29, 1827
Mary	"	February	9, 1828
Prettyman	"	December	27, 1835
Joseph W.	"	July	30, 1838
John Wesley	"	February	21, 1841
George W.	"	November	20, 1844
Braxton	"	October	1, 1847

In 1852 Wiley and Charity (Clark) Marvel moved to Dewitt Co., Ill., with their family accompanying them.

Living in Illinois at that time were John and Comfort (Marvel) Barr and Prettyman and Rebecca (Barr) Marvel with their families. They were among the very early pioneers of that country. Uncle Prettyman, son of Prettyman Marvel, Sr., having died several years before our arrival there.

My grandfather, Prettyman Marvel, now near ninety years of age, after the death of Grandmother, who was also near ninety, moved to Benton County, Illinois, to live with his youngest son, George Rogers Marvel. He was very desirous to see his children, Wiley and Comfort (Marvel) Barr, so they rigged up a large family carriage that Father had brought from Indiana the spring of 1852, and in the early fall of 1855 my Father and Uncle John Barr started on their journey toward the southern part of Illinois to bring "Grandpap" to our home.

You can hardly imagine the joyful and expectant feeling that we children had for three or four days. One of us would keep a constant lookout for miles and miles across the broad and level plain toward where the city of Lincoln now stands.

One day one of us shouted, "Oh, I see something coming this way!" And it wasn't long until we all began to clap our hands and shout, "Oh! It's them! It's them!" We could hardly wait until they got close enough so we could run and meet them. Our first question was, "Where is Grandpap?" "I want to see Grandpap." The team stopped and Grandpap raised up from his bed with joy and gladness beaming over his tired old face, realizing that the long journey was over.

After he had rested and supper was over, he had a great deal to talk about. Most of his talk was about southern Illinois, where he had been making his home for some time, and their trip on the road home.

At that time, like most every one else, we had but very little house room, and according to arrangements Grandpap was to stay with us over the winter. We had but two rooms; one big room, with a "lean-to" for a kitchen, having a bed in one end. We had two beds in the big room with trundle beds under each of them. Mother told some of the larger boys they would have to sleep in the bed in the kitchen because Grandpap would have to sleep in the bed where it could be kept warm. Mother arranged the bed for him and said, "You may go to bed anytime you wish." But he had seen the trundle beds underneath the other beds and said, "Charity, won't you let George sleep with me? He will keep me warm." So it was arranged that way.

Nothing would have pleased me better. From that time on he looked to me for every little favor, such as getting his clothes ready for him, his cap, "specks", walking stick, drink of water and so on.

Grandpap and I continued sleeping together in the trundle bed for about eight months, so you see I was with him most of the time. It seemed to be a great pleasure to him to talk of his "Early Boyhood days." Especially of the trials, incidents and hardships they had to endure during the long seven years of the Revolutionary War. He was hardly in his early "teens" and the only one the family could look to for protection and help against hungry Indian raids, Tories and many other dangers connected with pioneer and war times.

One thing he told me several different times was that during the long war, mad dogs became numerous. Wolves were also going mad. As every family had dogs, things became alarming. He said they had one very large family watch dog, that was always on the lookout for any approaching danger. They could tell by his manner and barking, when they saw him coming, the kind of danger approaching. He would stand guard against everything else but a mad dog. Grandpap said, it seemed that he could smell them, long before they came into sight, and the alarm he gave them was time enough for them to shut the stock up and get to safety.

He told of seeing Gen. Washington and his men marching past, and of the privations and suffering of the Continental Army. I think he talked mostly on subjects he thought would interest boys of my size.

He was a great lover of fish. He said he liked anything that had a fish taste or smell, such as turtles, eels or oysters.

I remember one evening we boys caught a very large snapping turtle. We brought it to the house. I ran in and said, "Oh, Grandpap,