

Chapter 3

JAMES WELLS WARNER TO MORDECAI HARVEY WARNER



James Wells Warner

Among the happiest of men, James Wells Warner carried a gleam in his eye that would eventually be passed on to me and many in my generation. Chores finished, he sat on the porch he had helped attach to the house he had helped to build. He sat in a rocking chair he had made, watching the shadow of the hill to the west creep up across the pasture on the hill to the east. In his hand was a large gold pocket watch with the letter “M” beautifully engraved on the front cover. James had carried it since the funeral of the stranger who had become a real friend. He had come to help with the farm work and was invited to stay. The fancy letter on the watch also caused him to think of his grandfather. He was young when they made the trip to Maryland to visit him.

His grandfather Mordecai had built his own house. James had been amazed at all the farm tools and other utensils made from copper and silver his grandfather had made. It was the last time he had seen him. His grandfather Mordecai died from appendicitis shortly after their visit.

James had been only thirteen when his father, John Lewis Warner, had been enticed by both a teaching job and talk of good land in the new state to the west. It had been twelve years since President Jefferson had declared Ohio qualified to be a state. His father John had loaded their belongings into wagons, left Fayette County, Pa., about thirty-five miles east of the Ohio River and unloaded them near Batesville, Ohio, just twenty miles west of the Ohio River. Batesville was located near the eastern edge of the newly formed Noble County.

John Lewis Warner was a certified teacher and a millwright, having learned the building trade from his father, Mordecai Warner. James and his father had built several homes in this new area of Ohio that had become known as Glady Valley.

At nineteen James Wells married Mary Frances Carpenter, an attractive neighbor girl, whose box lunch he bought at the first annual May Day celebration held in Batesville. They were married on the day before Christmas, 1857. His father's house later became their home when his mother and father moved to Gorrel's Run, near Middlebourne, West Virginia, to help some other members of their family. It was in this house near Calais in Monroe County, nestled among the foothills of the Appalachian Plateau, that Mary Frances would bear five more Warner children. Each time James would go for the best known midwife in the area, Sina Carpenter. She would always smile when she found the brown freckle-like patch somewhere on the skin of the Warner babies.



Mary Frances Carpenter

Warner

James Wells Warner held the office of school director for Sub-District No. 3 for nine years. He was elected justice of the peace in 1874 and held the position for a number of years. He served as commissioner of Monroe County for one term. James was a member of the Beaver Baptist Church, but soon after his marriage transferred to the Palestine Christian Church. This may be the reason the following generation of Warners are not of the Quaker Faith. He was a faithful member for fifty years and served many years as an elder. His wife of forty years, Mary Frances died in 1897, and a year later James married her widowed sister, Sina Carpenter (Morris). He lived in the house near Calais for the rest of his life. He died of cancer in 1918, the year WWI ended.



James Wells Warner and Mary Frances (Carpenter) and Children 1892

Front row: Virginia 1867-1951; Sarah Roe 1869-1950; James Wells 1838-1918;

Mary Frances 1835-1897; Shirley Ellatherr Brownfield 1880-1964; Alva C.1876-1950;

Back row: John B. 1862-1918; James F.1874-1958; Bellazora A. Rockwell 1864-1939;

Letitia Jane Steven 1860-1943; Joanna Howiler 1859-1947; Alfred Sherman1865-1951;

and **Mordecai Harvey** 1871-1956. (An infant daughter was born and died 1882)
This generation had families of five to ten children for a total of sixty children.

There are many stories about the involvement of the eight boys, five girls and their sixty offspring in the development of our American culture. These are my great-aunts and uncles, some of whom I met on visits with my father. Up until the beginning of WWII there was an annual reunion of this part of the Warner clan. They met on the fairgrounds at Woodsfield, Ohio.

Of interest in developing our story is Mordecai Harvey (MH), who grew up in this pre-machine, agricultural, rural hill country. James and Mary Frances had named their eighth child with the Biblical name given to James' grandfather and added a middle name. Mordecai Harvey was born in 1871, just over two hundred years after Captain William Warner arrived from England and settled on the banks of the Delaware River. Mordecai Harvey Warner is of generation 15.