

The Marr Bible Record

What we know about the Marr Bible Record itself (see image of the publication page below):

The Bible record was published by Mrs. William Breckenridge Ardery in *Kentucky Court and Other Records*, 1932, Vol. II, p. 204. It purportedly shows the Bible entries for the family of Lawrence Marr [Sr]. The additional record for David and Sarah Marr is not discussed here. The entries are noted to have been made in a Bible purchased in 1755, and are of “His children, born unto him and his equal half at Ester, Northumberland County, Pennsylvania.”

Enos Marr, the transcriber/contributor of the Bible record notes his birth date in his transcription as 24 Oct 1850, so we know who he is. His connection to Lawrence, Sr is – John⁴, Joseph³, William², Lawrence Sr¹. Enos was born in Wainfleet Twp., Welland, Ontario, Canada.

Enos tells us the Bible record was “in the family of my uncle Joseph Marr.”

This author attempted through several local Kentucky genealogy and historical organizations, and the publisher, to obtain at least a copy of the original Bible record without success. Its location is unknown as was its location at the time Mrs. Ardery included it in her publication. Mrs. Ardery does not identify the source of the record, although she does so for other records in her book.

Harriett Marr Wheeler, in her book, *William Marr of Upper Mt. Bethel Township*, addresses the Bible record, which she calls a “red herring”. She states the copying [by Enos] was probably done circa February 1875 at which time the Bible itself was in the possession of Enos’ uncle, Joseph. Joseph died the next year, on 9 Mar 1876, in Ontario, Canada.

We know, from numerous records, that Enos Marr lived his entire life in Ontario, Canada. Presumably, copies of the Bible record transcription were distributed to others. Among those appears to have been Elizabeth [Marr] Dills (David², Lawrence, Sr.¹) whose family moved from Pennsylvania to Kentucky in the early 1800s. Mrs. Ardery was in Kentucky so may have obtained the Bible record from that family.

Wheeler tells us the original Bible has “disappeared”.

Observations about the Bible record:

There are many questions raised by this Bible record. Among them are the following:

- 1) There was no such town as “Ester” in Pennsylvania, in any county.
- 2) Northumberland County didn’t exist in 1755 as it was formed in 1772. In addition, Lawrence Sr. and his sons lived in Northampton County until at least the early 1780s. It’s not possible for Lawrence, Sr. to have had children in Northumberland County since all his children were born before Northumberland County existed. Additionally, his children were certainly born in New Jersey where Lawrence lived during those years. The only possible exception is Alem Marr who was born about 1760, a during a short time period where Lawrence Sr’s location is uncertain.
- 3) The following, almost certain, children of Lawrence Marr Sr. are not in the Bible record: sons Lawrence, Jr., John, and Alem, and daughters Mary and Elizabeth. All of those children are included in the records of Anna Eliza (Marr) Grier and William Price Marr (who, in 1920, produced a chart of the family; probably including information obtained from Anna). There is also sound evidence of these family members from other sources.

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- a. Enos states the Bible was purchased in 1755. At that date, all of Lawrence, Sr.'s children had been born (using reliable dates, not the Bible dates) except for Lawrence, Jr. and Alem. So, even if the record was made in 1755 and no further entries were made, Lawrence Sr.'s son John is missing as are his two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth. Daniel is discussed below.
- 4) The use of the 3rd person pronoun "his" in several caption sentences leads us to believe the Bible entries were not written by Lawrence, Sr.
- 5) Enos doesn't use Lawrence Marr "Sr" in the unquoted caption to the Bible record, even though that was common in the records of the day. This might be somewhat explained by the omission of Lawrence, Jr. in the record (an issue itself).
- 6) Thorough examination of Northampton County, PA, tax records have provided reliable birth years for Lawrence, Sr.'s male children¹. None agree with the Bible record.
 - a. See a compilation of the relevant tax records at: [Marr - tax records in Northampton and Northumberland Counties PA](#)
- 7) Birthdates for Joseph (15 June 1750)² and David (8 August 1743) were published in genealogical records of their descendants. Neither agrees with the Bible record.
- 8) In 1920, William Price Marr produced his chart of the family. The Chart contains all of Lawrence Sr.'s known children, including those missing from the Bible record. The Chart does not include a Daniel Marr.
- 9) Harriette Marr Wheeler tells us Anna Eliza [Marr] Grier gave information to an unnamed person which was incorporated in a two-page typescript, located at the New York Public Library, titled *Marr Family Data*³. The names and birth dates of Lawrence, Sr.'s children are identical to those of William Price Marr, but neither cites sources. Anna was a generation earlier than William and probably supplied him with her data.
 - a. The Bible record had been in the family for generations before Anna Grier produced her typescript and before William produced his chart, yet they used none of its information.

Marr Claims to a Vast Inheritance

There are numerous records related to efforts by persons surnamed Mar, Marr, Mars, and Marrs to press unfounded claims to a 'vast inheritance' left in Scotland by the Earl of Mar⁴. In particular, a Marr Claim Association of Michigan (President, D. B. Marr) was formed at one point and contributions solicited to fund such an effort.

What we highlight here is that there was also an effort to organize a Western Association of the Marr family. This Association was to 'lay the foundation for a reliable genealogy of the family'. At a meeting in

¹ Thomas-Abt. 1739, William-1740, David-1743, Joseph-1752, John-Abt. 1754, Lawrence Jr.-1756 (from gravestone), Alem-Abt. 1760. Daniel and Elmer Marr from the Bible record don't appear in PA records.

² Joseph Marr: *Genealogical and Biographical Annals of Northumberland County, Pennsylvania*. J.L Floyd & Co. Chicago. 1911. p246. David Marr: *Pioneer Sketches of Long Point Settlement*. E. A. Owen. William Briggs. Toronto. 1898. P146.

³ In 2024, the author communicated with New York Public Library in an attempt to get a copy of Anna's typescript. The Library was unable to locate the document.

⁴ See [The Marr Claim Associations](#)

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Lansing, Michigan, on 1 Sep 1874, Daniel R. Marr of Dowagiac, Michigan, was elected as temporary chairman. Enos Marr's uncle Joseph, the reported holder of the Bible record, attended this convention. A copy of a newspaper article about the meeting, which provides a list of attendees, is included below.

We believe it is very significant that the September 1874 meeting, which Joseph Marr attended, places Enos' Feb 1875 creation of the Bible record shortly thereafter. It is also significant that a purpose of the Association was to produce a foundation for a family genealogy [relevant to a claim on the estate of the Earl of Mar]. We have here the impetus to create a family record and a family Bible was a common source of such information in early America.

[The Marr Claim Associations are discussed further here.](#)

Who is Daniel Marr?

At least hundreds of online family trees at Ancestry.com and elsewhere attach Daniel Marr to Lawrence Sr. based solely on the Bible record. There is no other known source to do so.

A biographical sketch of Daniel's grandson, Jesse Marr⁵, states that Daniel was born in Virginia. From Virginia he went to Tennessee and from there to Missouri where he died in 1827. Of the five children named in Daniel's will, the oldest, Rebeckah, was probably born about 1792 in Tennessee. It is highly unlikely for a man in that time period who, per the Bible record, was born in 1742, to have married and started having children in his 50s. The Bible transcription is the only known source for Daniel's birth date.

There is no known connection between Daniel Marr and the areas where Lawrence Marr, Sr is known to have lived. And, given the continuity of records for Lawrence, Sr., it's safe to say he was never in Virginia. [See Lawrence Marr's known locations.](#)

The author has about 50 known autosomal DNA matches to descendants of Lawrence Marr, Sr, through all of his children except for John, whose descendants are unknown. The author has no DNA matches to descendants of Daniel Marr nor does another known direct descendant of Lawrence, Sr. Given the numbers of Daniel's descendants, some of whom have done DNA testing, this is unlikely if Daniel was indeed a son of Lawrence, Sr.

Conclusions

Reliable, secondary source records have refuted all of the birth dates in the Bible record. Reliable records also convincingly tell us the Bible record's list of children is incomplete. And records tell us Daniel Marr was not a son of Lawrence Marr, Sr. DNA evidence supports all of this as well.

Enos Marr was clearly descended from Lawrence Marr, Sr. of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Therefore, it is certain that the Bible record was an attempt to document the family of that Lawrence Marr. There are not two different Lawrence Marrs of the same period and locations. While there are known and documented differences between the family of Lawrence Marr, Sr. and the information in the Bible record, it is the Bible record that is in error.

⁵ *Past and Present of Saline County, Missouri.* William Barclay Napton. 1910. B.F. Bowen & Company. P869. <https://archive.org/details/pastpresentofsal00napt/page/n7/mode/2up>

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The authors conclude that the Marr Bible record is, as Wheeler described it, a red herring. The authors believe it was produced in early 1875, shortly after a demand for family records was created at the Marr Association meeting in September 1874. That timing connection is glaring. The impetus was to connect those Marrs in the Association to an inheritance believed to be had in Scotland (i.e., the Earl of Mar). Whether Enos Marr's transcription was of an actual Bible record is unknown as the Bible itself has conveniently disappeared. It is believed Enos transcribed a Bible record created by his uncle Joseph Marr, or someone else in the family, to satisfy the need for documentation related to the claim.

To be clear, we do not suggest there was any deception intended. Rather, the Bible record was an attempt to create documentation showing the family of Lawrence Marr, Sr using whatever was believed to be true, or at least a best guess, at the time. Joseph and Enos Marr were certainly descendants of Lawrence Marr, Sr. These probable creators of the Bible record were descendants who had lived in Canada for several generations and likely had no direct knowledge or primary source for the information that was placed in the Bible record.

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MARR BIBLE

Lawrence Marr—His Bible, bought in 1755.
"His children, born unto him and his equal half at Ester, North-
umberland County, Pennsylvania":
William Marr, born March 13, 1732.
Thomas Marr, born Aug. 6, 1734.
Joseph Marr, born Oct. 30, 1736.
Elmer Marr, born Dec. 3, 1738.
*David Marr, born Dec. 20, 1740.
Daniel Marr, born Aug. 8, 1742.
"The above copied by Enos Marr out of Lawrence Marr's Bible
in the family of my uncle, Joseph Marr.
Signed: "ENOS MARR, Oct. 24, 1850."
Children of David Marr and wife, Sarah:
Mary Marr, born Dec. 5, 1764.
Ann Marr, born Feb. 28, 1767.
Elizabeth Marr, born July 4, 1769.
Sarah Marr, born May 25, 1771.
Lawrence Marr, born July 18, 1773.
Eleanor Marr, born April 20, 1775.
Susannah Marr, born June 20, 1777.
Rachel Marr, born May 14, 1780.
Martha Marr, born Sept. 30, 1782.
David Marr, born Aug. 20, 1784.
Margt. Marr, born Aug. 1, 1786.
Judith Marr, born Oct. 7, 1788.
David Marr, born Sept. 10, 1790.
Abraham Dills and wife, Elizabeth (Marr) Dills were married in
Pennsylvania and immigrated to Harrison County, Kentucky, at
an early date—see Perrin's History of Bourbon, Scott, Har-
rison and Nicholas Counties, pg 652.
The foregoing records were taken from the Bibles of Lawrence
Marr and his son, David Marr.

McBRIDE-ARNOLD-JOHNSON BIBLE AND NOTES

(In the possession of Mrs. E. B. Weitzel, Frankfort, Ky.).

William McBride and Martha Lapsley, his wife, were both born in Virginia.

William McBride's daughter, Martha McBride, married Stephen Arnold. The following is from the family Bible but parts are not legible:

"Died at her residence on Cedar Run, Franklin County, on ---- day, the 10th ult, at ½ before 12 o'clock, Mrs. Martha Arnold, aged 75 yrs., 9 mo., 4 days.

"Few such old ladies have lived in this country, few such young ladies ever have lived. When young her industry, energy, and neatness found no superior, while her kindness of temper and charitable heart endeared her with many true friends. She was bereaved of her husband in 1814, who, tho' one of the pioneers of Kentucky, participated largely in the Indian wars from '85 up to the date of his death, left her with a large family of helpless children, with but a scant means for their support. She, though, with the untiring perserverance and good management, succeeded in raising her family, in a good circle in society, edu-

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JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

*OF THE MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF MARR'S, HELD
IN THE PARLORS OF THE CHAPMAN HOUSE, LAN-
SING, MICH., SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1874.*

The Convention was called to order at two P. M. by Charles S. Marr, of Battle Creek, Michigan, who stated the object of the meeting to be for the purpose of organizing a Western Association of the family and laying the foundation for a reliable genealogy of the family, and nominated Daniel R. Marr, of Dowagiac, Michigan, as temporary chairman. On motion Daniel R. Marr was elected. On motion, Charles S. Marr, of Battle Creek, was chosen temporary secretary of the Convention. A canvas was then taken of the persons present, with the following result:

Cornelius M. Carmon, son of Elizabeth Marrs, residence Flint, Mich.; J. M. B. Tucker, husband of Caledonia Marrs, Natchitoches, La.; R. P. Marr, Kenosha, Wis.; Dennis Marr, Waukegan, Ill.; Joseph Marr, Woodhouse, Canada; Erastus R. Marr, Caro, Osceola Co., Mich.; Jessie Marr, Howell, Livingston Co., do.; Enos Marr, do; Harlan Marr, do; Cyrus Marr, do; Mrs. Eunice Marr Butler, Waterloo, Jackson Co., do; Parker Marrs, P. O. Niles, Berrien Co., do; A. N. Rundio and wife, daughter of Mollie, daughter of James Marr and wife, Sumner, Gratiot Co., do; Daniel R. Marr, Dowagiac, do; Albean Butler, son of Eunice Marr Butler, Adrian, do; David Marr, P. O. Angola, Steuben Co., Ind.; James C. Marr, Burch Run, Saginaw Co., Mich.; J. W. Marr, Edwardsburg, Cass Co., do; James F. Marr, Fort Madison, Iowa; George Marr, Hickory Corners, Barry Co., do; J. W. Cushman, Sheridan, Lucas Co., Iowa; David Campbell and wife, Durand, Ill; Harriet Ketchum, Rockford, Ill; Charles S. Marr, Battle Creek, Mich. Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. Ketchum are sisters, and daughters of Mollie, daughter of James Marr.

Remarks were then made by E. R. Marr, Charles Marr, Daniel R. Marr and J. M. B. Tucker, who exhibited letter, certified copies of record, etc. William Newton, attorney of Cornelius Carmon, produced and read some interesting deeds, wills, and other papers. On motion a permanent organization was made, by the Convention choosing Daniel R. Marr, of Dowagiac, President, and Charles S. Marr, of Battle Creek, Corresponding Secretary. A congratulatory telegram from R. H. Marr, of New Orleans, La., was received and read. The Convention tendered a vote of thanks to the proprietor of the Chapman House, for the many courtesies shown the members of the Convention, and then adjourned subject to the call of the President.

CHARLES S. MARR, SECRETARY,
Box 1402, Battle Creek, Mich.

DANIEL R. MARR, PRESIDENT,
Dowagiac, Michigan.