



**THE FAMILY** of Joe and Myrtle Carman (above) included sons, (back row, from left) Willis, 10, and Max 8. Dennis, 7, was seated between his parents. The four Bell sisters include (below, from left), Dorothy Bell, Lucile Reed, Lois Kerr and Myrtle Carman Waldo. Mrs. Waldo, the only sister still living, will be 100 on Monday.

# Woman recalls a full century of happiness

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When it comes to living life to the fullest, it would be hard to find someone who has enjoyed the past century more than Myrtle Carman Waldo, who will turn 100 on Jan. 23.

Her family plans an open house from 2 to 4 p.m. on Sunday at the Decatur County Good Samaritan Center, where she now makes her home.

Mrs. Waldo, the former Myrtle Bell, said that she has always lived in Sheridan or Decatur counties. She was born Jan. 23,

1912, in a sod house which belonged to her Grandmother Vaughn in Parnell Township, Sheridan County. Her parents were Jess and Chelsie (Vaughn) Bell. Growing up, she attended a rural school and Selden High School.

Her grandparents, John Vaughn Sr. and Samantha (Foley) Vaughn, left Barboursville, Ky., by wagon in 1885 for Mankato in Jewell County. They arrived in Sheridan County in 1886 at a site near where Selden later was founded. That winter, Mr. Vaughn had the distinction of teaching the first term of school in a small sod house on land owned by Henry Duesberg, northwest of Selden. The school served the children of five families.

In the spring, they homesteaded land five miles east and 2 1/2 miles north of Hoxie.

"I was the oldest of four girls and was the 'tomboy' in the family," Mrs. Waldo said. "I helped dad with chores, which included caring for the cattle, milking cows and feeding the pigs. My younger sisters were Lucille (Reed), Lois (Kerr) and Dorothy Bell, who are all deceased.

"During high school, I worked after school and on Saturdays for my uncle, Charles Vaughn, at his department store in Selden. One day when I was working at the store, Erle Ashley stopped by and told me that he had someone out in the car who would like to meet me.

"Well, that someone turned out to be Joe Carman. He asked me for a date, and that was the beginning of a year-long courtship.

"Entertainment for young people at that time was mostly attending

the picture show in Selden, which featured mostly cowboys.

"After I completed my junior year, Dad told me that if I would quit school and help him for a year, due to his health problems, then I could finish school.

However, plans to finish school changed, as she and Joe decided to get married on March 29, 1930. The wedding was at the Dresden Methodist Church with Erle and Nova Ashley as their attendants. A wedding supper followed at the home of his parents, Joseph and Abilene (Blythe) Carman.

They made their home on farms in Decatur and Sheridan counties. Since she had always helped her dad with the outside work, she said she really didn't know much about cooking when she got married.

"One Sunday, we invited my folks over for dinner and I made a raisin pie," she recalled. "I just put all the raisins in the bottom of the pie shell, and when my dad tasted it, he told my mother, 'I think you'd better teach your daughter how to cook.'"

In 1946, the Carmans and their sons, Willis, Max and Dennis, moved to a farm just south of Oberlin. They later sold it to Dwaine and Mirla Olson and bought an 18-acre tract on East Ash Street in Oberlin, where they operated a dairy. They furnished bottled milk and sweet cream daily to the Green Lantern Cafe and Don's Grocery. They also raised crops, which extended all the way north to U.S. 36.

Mrs. Waldo said she also raised capon chickens and Mary Woodward bought one each week (minus the head). She also dressed capons for Dr. Don McCoy's wife, Mary, and sold the other chickens "live" to customers.

They sold the property to Reserve Building and Loan Association in 1954 and it was platted as the Carman Addition. The area is now filled with homes and apartment complexes.

The couple returned to the farm in Sheridan County, and after her husband's death in 1970, Mrs. Carman said, she moved to Hoxie.

She said that she and her husband had been good friends of Ralph and Alice Waldo of Oberlin and they



enjoyed playing cards together. Mr. Waldo's sons, Duane and Don, and the Carman boys were also good friends in high school in Oberlin.

After Mrs. Carman and Mr. Waldo both lost their spouses, they started seeing each other and were married in 1974. They lived in Oberlin until he died in 1985.

Mrs. Waldo said that one of the highlights of her life was when she joined a new club which she read about in *Grit* Magazine. Three women in Wisconsin started the club just for women born in 1912. She and 200 other women nationwide and even one woman in England joined.

Members held a reunion in different states each year, and she attended several. The first year, when they met in Iowa, they toured a calendar factory, and another year they toured the International Peace Garden in North Dakota. In the 1980s, about 50 of the women met in Oberlin. She said they had a picnic at City Park the first evening to welcome the group.

"Ralph enjoyed taking me to the reunions," she recalled, "and one year Lillian Carmichael invited all of the members to her home in Iowa for dinner. When we got there, Ralph told her, 'I never went so far for Sunday dinner.'"

After Ralph died, she said, she and Audra Steinmetz, also a member of the club, took many trips together for the club get-togethers.

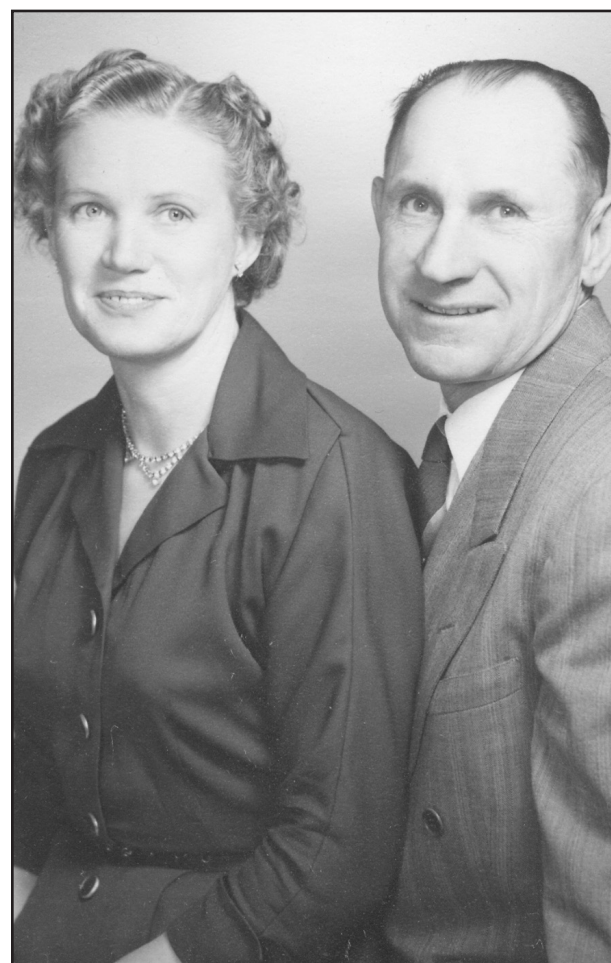
Some of the highlights mentioned in her 1912 book included the sinking of the Titanic, average income as \$1,209, a new car cost \$650, a loaf of bread, 4 cents, a gallon of gas, 11 cents and life expectancy was 50 years. Among popular songs were "Be My Little Baby Bumble Bee," "Moonlight Bay," "My Melancholy Baby" and "It's a Long, Long Way to Tipperary."

Mrs. Waldo said she always had a huge garden, and she helped organize the Oberlin Garden Club. She was active in the state Extension program and said she learned a lot from the lessons. She also served in various jobs with the Oberlin United Methodist Women. One of her favorite pastimes is playing cards and watching television game shows.

She said she enjoyed living at Wheat Ridge Terrace Apartments for 6 1/2 years before moving to the nursing home.

Max Carman, her only living son, and his wife Veanna live in Oberlin. She has a daughter-in-law, Peggy Carman of Hoxie, along with a step-son, Duane Waldo and his wife, Marilyn, of Tucson, Ariz.

"I have a lot to be thankful for," she concluded. "I have lived a happy life, mainly by not worrying about what my neighbors had or trying to 'Keep up with the 'Joneses.'"



**JOE AND MYRTLE CARMAN** on their 25th wedding anniversary in 1955. They were married Dec. 29, 1930, at the Dresden Methodist Church.