

## Bio

Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois, edited by Newton Bateman and D. Paul Selby, vol. 2, Chicago: Munsell Publishing Co., 1903, pg. 672-74

MRS. MARGARET BAGLEY.

This interesting and highly intelligent pioneer lady was born at Pultney, N.Y., daughter of Samuel and Mary (McNally) Waddell. Her father, Samuel Waddell, was born in Pennsylvania, on the banks of the Susquehanna River, either in Northumberland or in Cumberland County. He was of thrifty -Scotch-Irish descent and the son of William and Margaret (McAfee) Waddell.

James McAfee was born in County Antrim, Ireland, came to America when young and married and settled in Pennsylvania, near Milton, Cumberland County, where he was one of the early Sheriffs, and, in colonial times, made his official trips throughout that region on horseback. He served in a conflict against the Indians, and his daughter Margaret, the grandmother of Mrs. Bagley, remembered escaping from the Indians on several occasions.

William Waddell was born in the North of Ireland and came to America with his brother Samuel. Samuel settled in the South, probably in North Carolina, and was never afterward heard from directly, but a family residing in North Carolina claimed their descent from him. Mr. Waddell settled on the Susquehanna and, after the birth of his first three children, moved to Seneca County, N.Y., where he bought a farm partly cleared of the timber, and, at that time, known as surveyor's land. Here he passed his remaining days and died about 1812, being then in middle life. His children were: Jane, Samuel, James, William, Martha, Mary, Fannie, Nancy, Isaac and Margaret. William Waddell was a Scotch Presbyterian in religious belief and a man of excellent character.

Samuel Waddell received a common-school education, read extensively of general literature and possessed an active mind well stored with general information. He took a deep interest in natural history, and, as a student of nature, became a naturalist of no small ability and imparted to his children valuable instruction in this particular branch of science. Mr. Waddell was a soldier in the War of 1812, and when eighteen years old served eighteen months with Col. Swick's riflemen. He was stationed at Fort Erie and Detroit, and was one of a party of volunteers in the attack on Fort Walden, Canada, where the Canadians were defeated and driven from the fort. Mr. Waddell was sick at Fort Erie for three months and his mother received no other news from him, except that he was sick. She was then a widow lady about forty years of age, with nine children, some of whom were very small. She determined to visit her son, but the journey would seem impossible when we consider that it was through a wilderness without roads or bridges with only narrow Indian trails, and tracks made by wild animals, as a guide. The only means of conveyance was on horseback, and the long journey of several hundred miles would take her through a country then infested with bands of hostile Indians and marauders. While most of the hostile Indians had been driven back, there were yet a great many small straggling bands, and besides these, many desperadoes scattered throughout the country. Nothing daunted, this brave woman mounted her horse with the determination of seeing her sick son. Having but passed through one of her own fields, at the very beginning of her journey, she heard someone call, and her son, who had partially recovered from his recent illness, had returned home on foot just in time to relieve his loving and heroic mother of the hardships and dangers of her perilous journey and fill her heart with gladness. Samuel Waddell, when twenty-five years of age, married at Ovid, N.Y., Mary McNally, who was born in Philadelphia, daughter of John and Isabel (Duncan) McNally.

Isabel Duncan was born in Scotland, the daughter of William and Mary (Wilson) Duncan, a sister of the eminent Ornithologist, Alexander Wilson, and owing to objections made by her father to her intended marriage, she came to America in charge of Dr. Gallagher, who became an eminent Philadelphia physician. John McNally was born in the North of Ireland, served as a soldier in the War of 1812, and died of sickness at Fort Erie. His children were Mary, William, James, Catherine and Isabel.

After marriage, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Waddell settled on a farm at Crooked Lake, Steuben County, N.Y., and after a residence there of ten years, moved to Michigan and settled on an eighty-acre farm in Livingston County. Mr. Waddell made excellent progress toward improving his farm, but sixteen months later he died of malarial fever, at forty years of age. He was a member of the Presbyterian church, and in politics a member of the Whig party. He was a man of excellent moral character, very careful and clear in speech. His children were Matilda, Anna, Margaret, Mary, Andrew, William and Isabella. Mrs. Waddell lived to be nearly ninety-four years of age and died in Steuben County, N.Y.

Mrs. Margaret (Waddell) Bagley, was about ten years old when she came with her mother and family to Michigan. The journey was made by canal and lake to Detroit, and thence by wagons to Livingston County. Mr. Waddell had removed to Michigan a few weeks in advance of his family and had built a log house for them to occupy when they arrived. The following year, after Mr. Waddell's death, the family returned to New York State, and Margaret lived with her grandmother Waddell until she married Mr. Bagley. She had received a good common-school education and inherited a love of literature, having been from youth accustomed to good books, and her father's instruction in zoology, ornithology and botany proved of great value to her. She well remembers the friendly Pottawatomie Indians who often visited her father's house, when the family first moved to Michigan, for the purpose of trading their trinkets for food. Mr. Bagley's farm was on the Indian trail to Detroit, where the Indians went for ammunition and supplies, and to receive their annuities from the Government. The Indians who visited their house were very courteous, the excellent conduct and good manners of the Indian children being especially noticeable and worthy of mention.

After marriage Mr. and Mrs. Bagley settled on a farm in Chemung County, N.Y., remaining one year and then (1851) came to Illinois and settled at Marengo, where he engaged in business, buying grain and produce. The family lived at Marengo fourteen years and then removed to Walworth County, Wis., where Mr. Bagley purchased a farm, but one year later they returned to Marengo and shortly afterwards removed to Rockford, where Mr. Bagley engaged in the nursery business. Eighteen months later (1874) Mr. Bagley and his family moved to Harvard, where he engaged in the lumber business, afterwards transferring his business to Woodstock. Mr. Bagley was a highly respected citizen and a very successful man in business transactions. Politically he was a Republican and held the office of Town Clerk in Marengo, and was also President of the Town Board. He was a member of the Baptist church and was a deacon in the church at Marengo. Mrs. Bagley is a member of the Presbyterian church. Their children in order of birth were as follows: Lue, Anna, John Winslow, Elmer E., Mary and Ethel. Those still living are Anna (Mrs. Robert Hall), Elmer E., Mary (Mrs. C. W. Nims), and Ethel (Mrs. Stuart Saunders).

Mrs. Bagley is a lady of wonderful memory and has a rich store of knowledge and reminiscence from which to draw upon. The history of her life is a history of thousands of others of those remarkable pioneer women, who have had and still have such an influence over the affairs of the great Middle West.

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1794 - 1836



**Margaret Waddell**

1826 - 1903

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