

Bacheller, John Warren, Jr. (1839–1917) and Arvilla Marilda (Lane) (1837–1911)

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John W. Bacheller

From Ellen G. White Estate photo database.

John Warren Bacheller, Jr. and his wife, Arvilla Marilda (born Lane), were early Sabbatarian Adventists and active in the formation of the denomination. Warren worked as a printer for James White in Rochester and later became a lifelong employee of the Review and Herald Publishing House.

John Warren Bacheller, Jr., was born February 22, 1839, at Vergennes, Vermont, to John Warren (1812-1839) and Cynthia (1814-1883) Bacheller. He typically went by his middle name, Warren. His father died in 1839, and his mother accepted the Millerite message of Christ's soon return. She was among those disappointed in 1844 but was also among the very first to accept "the present light on the Sabbath question."¹ John first met James (1821-1881) and Ellen White (1827-1915) during the fall of 1852 while they were traveling. James White "spoke to me about coming to Rochester to live with him, and to work in the Office."² With encouragement from his mother, who had urged him to find better social influences, at age 13 he went with his mother and sister, Roxanna (1837-1895) to live with the White family. According to Bacheller's account, "they all treated me kindly," and while

there, he accepted Jesus as his Savior.³ John was tasked as the “roller boy” to spread ink across the type sitting on the bed of the Washington Hand Press.⁴

Arvilla was born at Genoa, New York, on December 17, 1837. When she was two months old, her parents moved to Michigan. In 1848 she along with her parents, Harvey Lane (1813-1848) and Huldah Jane née Young (1817-1899), accepted the Sabbatarian Adventist message from Joseph Bates (1792-1872). After Arvilla’s father died, her mother married Richard Godsmark (1822-1905) in 1852. The following year they accepted the Sabbatarian Adventist message and were instrumental in assisting the Whites when they moved from Rochester, New York, to Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1855. Their home was a frequent place for the Whites and other early workers to visit, including Warren. Presumably this is where John and Arvilla met. For the first two years Adventists in Battle Creek worshipped in their home (1854-1856). The trees on their property were used to build the original Review Office.⁵ More timbers from these trees were donated from their property to build “a small chapel” which was 18 by 24 feet and erected during the fall of 1855 through the winter of 1856. The Bachellers were charter members when the congregation of 38 members in late 1855 covenanted together “the present truth.”⁶

John and Arvilla were stalwart supporters of the fledgling denomination often giving sacrificially for church projects. In 1860, when a “Battle Creek Conference” was held to organize the church, John was part of what was called a “committee of arrangements” tasked with providing accommodations for those coming from out of town.⁷ Later that year John and Arvilla were married. In 1861 John invested \$10 in shares in the newly established Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association.⁸ In 1863 John and Arvilla had their first child, Elbert, followed five years later by a daughter, Teresa. In 1868 when there was an earnest appeal for the literature work, John contributed another \$10.⁹ The next year he donated another \$5 each to the “Foreign Missionary Fund” and the “Book and Tract Fund.”¹⁰ John gave sacrificially from his limited resources to assist with the expansion of the denomination. While there are not a lot of details about their lives, the Bachellers were active in the children’s Sabbath School at church headquarters. They helped to organize a special Sabbath School picnic on August 23, 1871. Each of the children’s classes had special mottoes printed, nature walks, “a most bountiful hygienic dinner,” conversation, boat trips on the lake, singing, and a talk by George Amadon.¹¹ John was also active in the Review and Herald Literary Society, which promoted Adventist literature.¹² In 1874 John was elected secretary of the Michigan Conference.¹³ In 1879 John gave \$25 and Arvilla contributed an additional \$8 to assist with the building of the Dime Tabernacle.¹⁴

Warren died September 1, 1917; Arvilla died May 17, 1911.¹⁵ The two are buried together in Oak Hill Cemetery in Battle Creek, Michigan.¹⁶ The Bachellers were stalwart early “pioneers” who through their consistent, diligent work contributed to the building up of the early Seventh-day Adventist Church.¹⁷

SOURCES

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"Another Sad Reminder." *ARH*, March 28, 1899.

Bacheller, J[ohn] W. Letter dated August 15, 1853. *Youth Instructor*, August 1853.

Bacheller, J[ohn]. W. "Our Sabbath-School Picnic." *Youth Instructor*, September 1, 1871.

Bacheller, John W. "Special Meeting." *ARH*, April 4, 1871.

Loughborough, J. N. "Experiences in the Publishing Work—No. 14." *ARH*, December 31, 1908.

Obituary. *ARH*, June 22, 1911.

NOTES

1. See obituary written by Uriah Smith: Obituary, *ARH*, January 15, 1884, 47.
2. See letter dated August 15, 1853, in *Youth Instructor*, August 1853, 95.
3. Ibid.
4. J. N. Loughborough, "Experiences in the Publishing Work—No. 14," *ARH*, December 31, 1908, 19-20.
5. "Another Sad Reminder," *ARH*, March 28, 1899, 208.
6. Geo[rge] W. Amadon, "A Sketch of the Battle Creek Sabbath-School from its Commencement to the Present Time," *ARH*, November 26, 1901, 765.
7. "Battle Creek Conference," *ARH*, September 25, 1860, 152.
8. "For Shares in Publishing Association," *ARH*, July 2, 1861, 48.
9. James White and Ellen White, "An Appeal to the Friends of Truth," *ARH*, January 14, 1868, 72.
10. See lists of donations in *ARH*, December 28, 1869, 8.
11. J[ohn] W. Bacheller, "Our Sabbath-School Picnic," *Youth Instructor*, September 1, 1871, 66.
12. John W. Bacheller, "Special Meeting," *ARH*, April 4, 1871, 128.
13. "Michigan Conference of S. D. Adventists," *ARH*, August 25, 1874, 78-79.

14. "The Dime Tabernacle," *ARH Supplement*, November 28, 1878, 3.

15. See announcement under "News Notes," *Lake Union Herald*, May 24, 1911, 6.

16. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15637426/john-warren-bacheller> [9/22/23]

17. See reference to John W. Bacheller as a "pioneer" who gave a talk at Emmanuel Missionary College. "Emmanuel Missionary College," *Lake Union Herald*, July 24, 1912, 15.

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