

Birth:

Nov. 11, 1814  
Pulaski County  
Kentucky, USA

Death:

Jan. 30, 1863

"Not long after losing his first wife Clinton Kelly married Miss Jane Burns, died three years later, leaving a daughter, Mary Jane. On the 11th of March, 1840, he wedded Moriah Maldon Crain, a daughter of John and Sarah (Rousseau) Crain, of Pulaski county, and a granddaughter of Samuel Crain, of Culpeper county, Virginia, who was a member of the United States navy during the Revolutionary war and in 1797 removed to Kentucky. In the maternal line Mrs. Kelly was descended from Hillaire Rousseau, a Huguenot who came from France in 1689 and settled in Virginia following the revocation of the edict of Nantes by Louis XIV, October 22, 1685. Her great-grandfather, David Rousseau, wedded Mary Harrison, a niece of Benjamin Harrison, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. It was she who made the trek across the plains."

Excerpt: Clackamas-Multnomah County OR Archives Biographies.....Kelly Rev.  
Clinton June 15 1808 -

Author: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Compan

"Souvenir of Western Women," edited by Mary Osborn Douthit, Portland, Oregon, 1905, pg. 34.

Moriah Maldon Crain

Down in the heart of Old Kentucky, the Dark and Bloody Ground of history, some of the exploits of the immortal Daniel Boone, was born, November 13, 1814, the brown-eyed, brown-haired maiden whose name heads this sketch, and who became the wife of Rev. Clinton Kelly. Her father, John Crain, came of an ancient English house that traces its lineage back through Charlemagne, some hundred of years prior to the Christian era; Sarah Rousseau, her mother, descended from Hilare Rousseau, a Huguenot, who, upon the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, sought refuge in America from the persecutions of a bigoted monarchy.

John Crain went from Virginia to the wilds of Kentucky in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and settled in Pulaski County, and there, with the help of his negro slaves, cleared a space in the forest and made for himself and family a comfortable home.

Moriah, the seventh child, dearly loved her native woods and streams;

and growing up in the pure, free air of the forest, drinking its balm and listening to its many voices, she rounded into a sturdy little woman, of fine, sensitive nature, timid almost to shyness. Being the youngest, she was shielded from much that we should call hardship, the negro women declaring that "Miss M'riah" must not "go for to spile her hands" with such work as they deemed drudgery, fit only for themselves. Simon Peter, an elfish little black boy, was Moriah's special property, and well might he look to his ways, for his young mistress would tolerate no habits of trifling.

But there were no drones in the Crain household. The young woman of that day must have a well-wrought sampler of her own handiwork, and know all the intermediate steps of needle work, to the cutting and making of coats and the queer, apron-front "pantaloon" worn by her father and brothers. Spinning, weaving and knitting were in the course of lessons to be mastered under the watchful eye of the frugal mother, who well knew the value of such a dowry to her daughters.

Up and down the spinning-room sped Moriah's light feet, her deft fingers drawing out the long threads from the spindle, the while a clear young voice sang snatches of "Corydon" "Come, My Beloved, Haste Away" or some other quaint melody of the time, fragments of which floated off to the kitchen where Aunt Nelly, busy with culinary affairs, would stop in her work, and, turning her homely face toward the "house" ejaculate: "Do Lawd bless dat chile!" Many a day saw a pair of warm socks knit by her busy fingers that in the morning had been crude wool; and once, on a wager, two pairs were the result of one day's work. Perhaps it was "weaving day," for the family as well as the slaves, must be clothed mainly from the flocks in father Crain's pasture; or garments were to be made when sewing machines were unknown, or housework to be done; but there were ever the willing hands and the clear singing.

So passed happy days, filled with useful activities, their healthful quiet varied by neighborhood husking-bees, spelling matches, etc., where the young folks had their share of fun and frolic.

But the womanly heart was untouched until there came a wooing to the home on Pitman Creek, a stalwart circuit-rider, Clinton Kelly, to whose manly advances there was speedy surrender, and Moriah Crain went out from a tenderly nurtured home life to mother six motherless children, to bear nine of her own, and to share in all the toil and privation of the life of a Methodist preacher.

It was a quiet wedding. The bride made a sweet, old-timey picture in her black satin gown, with "mutton-leg" sleeves and pointed bodice, trimmed with pipings of black silk; the waving chestnut hair in a simple coil at the back of her head; dainty morocco slippers peeping from the hem of her robe; the money that would have purchased a new trousseau could be used to advantage

in the home to which she was going.

The cloud of war appeared dimly on the horizon, and Clinton Kelly prepared to go to Oregon. From the day the little company of emigrants turned their faces toward the west, in 1848, Moriah Crain never beheld kith nor kin again on earth. John Crain sent word from his distant home, "Don't take Moriah west of the Rocky Mountains." But her husband's mind was her mind, and her spirit was like that of Ruth of old, "Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried."

The wearisome journey over the plains came to an end. It was as if the world she had known and loved had closed its doors forever upon her. Loved ones might be dead, weeks, even months, before the news could reach the log cabin in the wilderness on the banks of the Willamette. Wild animals roamed the woods, the Indians came with the freedom of the savage; she fed them, and breathed freer when they went away.

Immigrants came, too, and found the door always open, the table always spread, though simple, the fare, served in pioneer style. Many a family bereft of their all were taken in, sheltered and fed during the long rainy months of winter, and in the spring went on their way rejoicing.

In the trying days of '56, when the Indians terrorized the whole Northwest, Mrs. Kelly's house, from garret to cellar, was crowded with refugees. The little cabin had been superseded by an immense log structure in what is now one of the eastern suburbs of Portland. It stood on the spot where now stands the handsome residence of the late Captain J. W. Kern.

In memory's hall hangs a goodly picture. It is a wide room, its walls are of round logs, with the bark peeled off, the floor is of puncheons; a huge fireplace in the back of the room is filled with blazing logs that send columns of flame up the roaring chimney, while the storm howls without. The recess on each side of the fireplace is filled by a high bed; the high windows are hung with ruffled muslin curtains. In a niche between a bed and the chimney is a stack of Kentucky rifles. In one corner of the fireplace sits a mother, her fresh young face framed in a halo of silver. The heavy work of the day is over, her little children are about her, and the ver-present needle plies in and out. The father sits near, and looks musingly into the fire. The wide spaces about the fire are filled by the older boys, the hired men and several belated travelers. Some small boys, whose mother died on the dreary march over the plains, are playing about the room.

In all the vicissitudes of frontier life, Moriah Crain bore her part well; there was never a word of complaint, and the song-spirit never died. When she was glad she sang joyfully; if she was sad or lonely, it was not apparent; the song overflowed just the same. The late Rev. William Roberts came in through the wide-open doors once as she sang, and said, "Sister Kelly, you are always

singing." When a letter came over the wide reaches of plain bearing a black seal, telling of the death of her father, she brushed away the falling tears and tremulously sang of a meeting beyond.

One day - the thirty-first of January, eighteen hundred and sixty-three - as the sun sank to his rest behind the sea, she sang triumphantly,

"My soul's full of glory,  
Inspiring my tongue;  
Could I meet with angels,  
I'd sing them a song;  
I'd sing of my Jesus,  
And tell of His charms,  
And beg them to bear me  
To His loving arms."

and the music of earth melted into the music of the heavens.

"Mother" was a fitting title for her who entered with hearty co-operation into all the benevolent purposes of her life comrade, known to old and young alike by the endearing name of "Father Kelly."

She was one of many noble women who helped to build the Empire of the West, and of such Spartan matrons was born its broad civilization.

Her sons and daughters are: Mrs. Sarah M. Kern, Penumbra Kelly, Mrs. M. Emily Shaver, and Dr. Richmond Kelly, well-know residents of Portland; Mrs. Laura F. Turner and Mrs. Fredrika B. Judy, of California.

Family links:

Parents:

John Crain (1774 - 1858)

Sarah *Rousseau* Crain (1776 - 1869)

Spouse:

Clinton Kelly (1808 - 1875)

Children:

John Crain Kelly (1842 - \_\_\_\_\_)\*

Sarah Margaret *Kelly* Kern (1843 - 1904)\*

Penumbra Kelly (1845 - 1928)\*

Laura Frances *Kelly* Turner (1847 - 1918)\*

Victoria Ann Kelly (1849 - 1852)\*

Moriah Emily *Kelly* Shaver (1851 - 1940)\*

Frederica Bremer *Kelly* Judy (1854 - 1928)\*

Richmond Kelly (1855 - 1928)\*  
Raymond Kelly (1859 - 1859)\*

\*Calculated relationship

Burial:  
Lincoln Memorial Park  
Portland  
Multnomah County  
Oregon, USA  
Plot: Rosewood section

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