

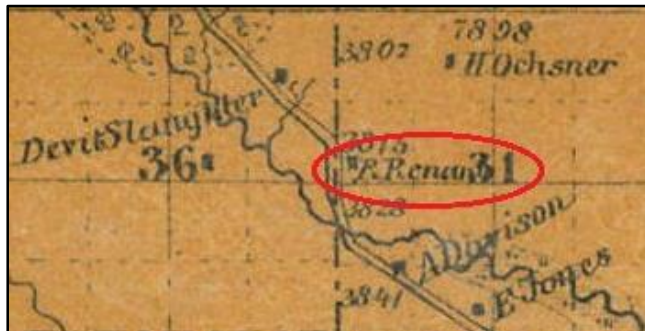
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Never Heard of Reason Renard?

by Marian Burmester

Most people that have connections to the Plain and Franklin Township area may have never heard of Reason Renard. Neither had I. Well, he is a Civil War veteran from Franklin Township. He was born in Jackson, Ohio, on January 9, 1829, to Isaac H. and Rachel (Parrill) Renard. Reason married Louisa Francis on June 6, 1850, at Vermillion Co., Illinois. Eli Helmick was the Methodist minister.¹

According to the 1850 US Census² for Vermilion Co., Illinois, Reason Renard is a farmer with real estate valued at \$550. Living in the same household are: Manirva, age 42; Rozin (Reason) Renard, age 22; and Louisea (Louisa), age 17. "Minerva" is listed in the 1860 census.³ Looking at Ancestry.com, Renard's mother Rachael died and his father Isaac married Minerva McCoy.⁴ According to the cemetery stone found on Findagrave,⁵ Reason's birth year is 1829, so his actual age would have been 31 at the time of the 1860 census.



At left the 1859 Franklin Township map with the red circle indicates the location of the land patent (WI Vol. 215, page 181) that Reason Renard purchased from the State of Wisconsin on October 2, 1854. The description is as follows: "the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter of section 31 in township 10 north of range 4 east í 38.15 acres."

Reason was one of the twenty-one men present at a meeting in April 1858 to organize a cemetery for the protestants in the community around Plain. At this meeting, the name Pleasant Hill Cemetery was chosen.⁶ The location of the cemetery is west of Plain on County Highway B. Reason also served as Constable for the Town of Franklin in 1855, 1857, and 1858.⁷

In the 1860 US Census, Reason Renard is a farmer in Franklin Township, Sauk Co., Wisconsin, with a real estate value of \$500. Reason and Louisa have three children: William age 8; Charles age 6; Henry age 2.⁸

¹ Digital Pension File 70150014

² <https://tinyurl.com/yfhewwem> 1850 US Census

³ <https://tinyurl.com/cxf33w6y> 1860 US Census

⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/yc36964x> Robert Renard tree at Ancestry.com

⁵ <https://tinyurl.com/yv5h3ee7> Reason Renard memorial

⁶ Cemetery Inscriptions book, Volume 6, page 35

⁷ *History of Sauk County, Wisconsin*, Butterfield, 1880

⁸ <https://tinyurl.com/6k3uh7e9> 1860 US Census

On February 24, 1864, 35-year-old Reason enlisted as a private in Company A, 36th Infantry Wisconsin Volunteer Regiment at Madison, Wisconsin. His residence was Franklin, and his personal description was as follows: height 5 feet 10 inches; complexion, fair; eyes, blue; hair, dark grey; occupation, farmer.⁹

The 36th Infantry was organized at Camp Randall in Madison, Wisconsin, and mustered into service on March 23, 1864. They were ordered to Washington D.C. on May 10, then marched to the Spotsylvania Court House and attached to the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 2nd Army Corps, Army of the Potomac. They ended their service at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, with the surrender of Lee and his army. They then moved to Washington D.C. from May 2-12 and participated in the Grand Review on May 23. On June 17, they went to Louisville, Kentucky, and mustered out on July 12, 1865, at Jeffersonville, Indiana.

Reason received a pension, but there are very few papers in the file from the National Archives. Compared to other pension files, this one is very small. It almost appears as though some of the papers were lost. Normally there are surgeon or doctor reports with a summary of disability and witness reports of the soldier's health before and after the war. I found just one document - a *Declaration for Invalid Pension* dated Sept. 5, 1890¹⁰ signed by Reason Renard with this statement "old age and general disability."

There are a number of land transfers for Reason and Louisa for section 31 and 36 in the Grantor/Grantee Index website for the Sauk County Register of Deeds.

<https://www.co.sauk.wi.us/registerofdeeds/grantorgrantee-index-mid-1800s-late-1986>.

Without viewing the actual documents, it is difficult to understand the land transactions.



Looking at the 1877 Franklin Township Map at left, we now find R. Renard in section 36, and no Renard in section 31.

The 1870 US Census¹¹ for Franklin Township, Sauk Co., Wisconsin lists a real estate value of \$1500 and a personal estate value of \$730, an increase from the 1860 census. Reason and Louisa now have four children: William age 17; Charles age 16;

Henry age 12; Ruth age 8. In the 1880 US Census, Reason and Louisa are living by themselves in Franklin Township, Sauk Co., Wisconsin.¹² The 1890 Veterans Schedules¹³ of the US Census lists the residence of Reason Renard as East Jordon, South Arm Twp., Charlevoix, Michigan. At this time Reason would have been 61 years old. In the 1900 US Census¹⁴ for South Arm, Charlevoix, Michigan, Reason and Louisa own a home in the Village of East Jordon, Michigan.

⁹ Digital Pension Files 70150010 & 70150018

¹⁰ Digital Pension File 70150011

¹¹ <https://tinyurl.com/ydtkb6sk> 1870 US Census

¹² <https://tinyurl.com/4mjfd46e> 1880 US Census

¹³ <https://tinyurl.com/2p8k82jk> 1890 Veterans Schedules

¹⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/4hpwnpc7> 1900 US Census

Reason Rennard is 71 years old and working as a grocer. It also states that he can read and write English.

The Pension file¹⁵ dated May 5, 1907, states: "That his several places of residence since leaving the service has been as follows: 'I left Wisconsin May 12, 1883. I moved to the State of Michigan. The 29 of August 1906, left Michigan and moved to Oklahoma.'" An interesting note is when looking at the Grantor Index for April 2, 1883, Reason Renard is selling a parcel of land to Henry Mitchell in the subdivision E½ NE, section 36 in town 10, range 3 which places the parcel of land located as highlighted in red on the 1877 map. This would have been when he left Franklin Township and moved to Michigan. In the 1910 US Census¹⁶ Reason (81 years old) and Louisa (76 years old) are living in a house on N. Pennsylvania Ave in Mangum, Oklahoma. The pension file¹⁷ lists the birth dates of Reason and Louisa's four children as follows: William born November 2, 1852, Charles born January 26, 1854, Henry born October 7, 1857, and Ruth born March 2, 1862. Per Findagrave and Ancestry.com there were two other children: Mary M. (1856-1857)¹⁸ and Budd (1857-1874)¹⁹ buried in Pleasant Hill Cemetery in Plain, Wisconsin.



Reason's wife, Louisa died²⁰ at her home on Pennsylvania Ave in Mangum, Oklahoma, on February 20, 1911, leaving behind a husband and two children, Mr. H. Renard and Mrs. McHale. Reason Renard²¹ passed away on February 27, 1917, and is buried in the Riverside Cemetery, Mangum, Greer County, Oklahoma.²² Like many of the early settlers in Franklin Township, Reason and Louisa were born in Ohio.

An interesting story about Reason Renard

Following is from "Story about Reason from Military History Online" 1865-1911, Oklahoma, posted 16 Mar 2011 by Robert Renard at Ancestry.com:²³ "Reason served as an ambulance driver during the Civil War. After the war became a muleskinner and made a living selling mules to the Army at Ft. Supply. Died in 1911 in Mangum OK and is buried with his wife and son in Riverside Cemetery. Family reportedly has a photo of Reason and his son 'Henry' in front of their dugout 'Sod' home just after the Oklahoma Land Rush."

I haven't been able to find evidence to support this story. Note the wrong death year for Reason. The Oklahoma Land Rush took place in 1889. It could be possible that his son Henry took part in the land rush. That might be why Reason, at the age of 77 years, and his wife decided to move out to Oklahoma.

The Renard family goes back to the 1700s in Virginia. The oldest ancestor, George Renner, was born in 1737 at Mutterstadt, Ludwigshafen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany, according to an Ancestry.com family tree.

¹⁵ Digital Pension File 70150010

¹⁶ <https://tinyurl.com/e7ppxd7n> 1910 US Census

¹⁷ Digital Pension File 70150014

¹⁸ <https://tinyurl.com/2p8kmv4d> Mary Renard memorial

¹⁹ <https://tinyurl.com/2p92872u> Budd Renard memorial

²⁰ <https://tinyurl.com/38v5c73p> Louisa Renard obit, Feb. 23, 1911, *Mangum Weekly Star* (Mangum, Okla.)

²¹ <https://tinyurl.com/5n8eymz3> Reason Renard memorial

²² Digital Pension files 70150015

²³ <https://tinyurl.com/4u9mh9wn> Military History 1865-1911