

**A History of
MARVIN R. FINLINSON
1908-1977**



Marvin R. Finlinson was born 29 August 1908 in Oak City, Millard County, Utah. He is the third boy and the sixth child born to George Edward and Mary Caroline Roper Finlinson. His brothers and sisters are Amy Faust, Esdras, Angie Lyman, Martha Dutson, Edward, Lucy Christensen Day, Lenox, and Melva Day. He was born in the second house in the first block on the left side of the street entering the town from the south. (This house burned to the ground on 5 July 1979).

Martha and I (Angie) were out to "The Flat" helping (or hindering) Aunt Frank cook for the hay men. I would have been seven years old and Martha would have been four and a half. When we arrived home I remember Grandmother Roper demonstrating the size of the new baby by putting him in a quart cup and just his head was above the top. He was two months premature and didn't thrive very well. Very little, if anything was known about supplementary feeding at that time and if mother's breast milk didn't agree with the baby or the amount was not enough, it was just too bad.

Marvin was blessed and given a name by his uncle, Joseph Trimble Finlinson, on 6 December 1908.

When he was about a year old, he became very sick and went into convulsions. Amy was tending him by wheeling him back and forth in the baby buggy, she ran to the kitchen to get mother who then sent her to get father. (He was at the church house). Esdras suggested that Marvin be administered to. Amy ran the full two blocks to the meeting house and father got on his horse that was tied up outside and came home immediately. Father administered to Marvin and it was effective immediately, which added much to the faith of his young brothers and sisters who witnessed the healing.

An epidemic of whooping cough hit the town the summer that Marvin was a year old. A remark was made in town that "It would be too bad if that little Marvin Finlinson should get whooping cough." Well he did, but it was hardly noticeable that he even had it, while two, robust babies, (the same age as Marvin) died of the disease. Ann, the daughter of Aunt Edith and Uncle Joe Finlinson was one and Mertin, son of Aunt Libbie and Uncle Lem Roper was the other.

While Marvin was the youngest child, the family moved to a new home a half block north and nearly a block east. It was decided that the old house was too small for the growing family, which now numbered six children, but would accommodate Uncle Josh and Aunt Ida Finlinson's family needs, as Dwain was their only child. Father made the adobes in the street in front of the new home and Uncle Charl (Charlie) Roper did the carpentry work for the new home. When it was time to go to bed the first night that the family spent in the new home, Edward cried and cried to go home. There was an old house on the lot, which provided an interesting place for exploration. It seemed that we were miles away from our friends. It was quite a thing for mother to leave all the nice trees and shrubs that she had growing so well at the old home.

As soon as he was big enough to straddle a stick he began to ride stick horses. This was a favorite pastime until he was big enough to ride a real horse. He would ride many times (when he was older) to Delta and back in a day. He always rode bareback and many times the horse's backbones were very sharp. He began to milk cows when he was five years old and help about the farm. He tromped hay in his bare feet and his feet were so callused and tough. He could run across the Lucerne stubble without shoes. In fact, I (Angie) think he never wore shoes except on Sunday during the summertime.

Marvin started school at the age of six years. Being very small, he crawled in the desk where the books were kept and the teacher couldn't find him. One day, Marvin did something that he wasn't supposed to do, (he couldn't remember just what). The teacher, Mattie Parks, attempted to take him to Mr. Booth, the principal, but Marvin held back with all his might and she, being a small person couldn't budge him. Miss Heckerthorn was his next teacher. The thing that he remembers about her was her green satin petticoat. About the first day of school the petticoat came down below her dress. It got lower and lower until it was nearly a foot below her

dress. The teacher had no place to go to fix it as there were no indoor restrooms in those days, so she had the children lay their heads on the desks. Of course Marvin couldn't resist doing a little peeking. The rest of the children probably did the same. Other teachers that he had while in grade school were, Leda Finlinson, Eva Lovell, D. O. Harris and Elroy Jones. He attended the High School at Delta, Utah from 1925 to 1928. While a freshman he had to wear green on Freshman Day. He had on a green tie. A big bully, Macel Brasher, who was twice as big as Marvin, proceeded to take the tie off of Marvin. Marvin got him down and sat on him and he couldn't do a thing. Marvin had made quite a growth at this time and was the same height as Edward and Lucy. Mother called them her triplets. Marvin's buddy-buddy friends at this time were Burton Lovell, Ivan Nielson, and Robert Shipley.

Marvin and his brother, Edward, raised a lot of rabbits. Soon after Aunt Frank and Uncle Ray were married, Marvin and Edward took two rabbits to sell to them. The boys wanted more money for the one rabbit than the other because they said that it was "going to have 'em".

Some of his fond memories are going to Leamington for a Finlinson family dinner at Thanksgiving time. He and Burton would hang on the back of the white-topped buggy and or run along behind. The next day their legs would be so stiff they could hardly move.

He also remembered being so frightened of some Indians that camped down by Shipley's. They would take his hat and throw it up in the trees and he couldn't get it down. (Everyone wore a hat in those days, winter and summer). When he was a few years older, father had some Indians work on the farm for him. Marvin, at fruit harvest time, would be picking the fruit high in the tree. The squaws would be bent over picking the fruit off the ground. As they were in just the right position, Marvin couldn't resist sending a piece of fruit flying down, cracking them on the backside. They would shake their fists at him and cuss in their native tongue.

There were some Gypsies that would camp near our home. One of the old women would sing filthy songs and smoke a pipe. That was quite an attraction for the town children.

At the age of eight years, Marvin was baptized by Uncle Leo Finlinson, 3 September 1916, and was confirmed the same day by Uncle Joshua Finlinson. On the 30th of January 1921 he was ordained a deacon by Uncle Joshua Finlinson and was also ordained a teacher by him on 6 January 1924. Uncle Lorenzo T. Lovell ordained him a priest on 2 January 1929. He was ordained an Elder by Edward Leo Lyman on 31 August 1930 and served later as secretary of his elder's quorum. Bishop Dean E. Anderson ordained Marvin a High Priest on 5 January 1969.

As Marvin grew to manhood he had many narrow escapes where he could have been seriously hurt or even lost his life. But as it seems, like President Wilford Woodruff, his life was spared for other things the Lord wanted him to accomplish. When he was quite young, he was hanging on the side of a manure spreader with his foot on the step. They were on the way to Uncle Ren Lovell's. Burton pulled him off and some way the manure spreader ran over his legs close to his body. He was badly bruised by the heavy iron wheels, and mother hauled him around in a little wagon for some time afterward.

Another time he and Burton were shoeing a horse. They had the animal tied down, but all at once it stretched, breaking the rope and a hoof came up hitting Marvin in the nose. It didn't break his nose or knock him out, but he says his nose "bled like a stuck pig".

On 20 April 1920 a cyclone hit Oak City. It came up through the middle of town from the west, uprooting trees, falling telephone poles and lifting roofs off barns and Charlie Rawlinson's house. Marvin, Melva, Lucy, mother and Aunt Ida, (mother's sister) were in the kitchen preparing the evening meal. They looked out the window and saw the terrible dust and twister coming toward them. It lifted the roof off the barn and part of it was coming toward the house, heading right for the kitchen window. Aunt Ida and mother held the breadboard against the window in case it hit. It came within five feet of the house then swerved and went the other way. Part of the roof was carried two blocks away. The window was blown out and the plates on the table were covered with dirt. Three chickens were taken up above the poplar trees about a block away.

After things had calmed down, Marvin went Burton's where the two of them got on Burton's broken winded mare, Marvin riding behind Burton. They came on a gallop from Burton's to Marvin's home and on through the big gate, which was open. The telephone wire was just low enough to catch Burton in the mouth. Burton's head was pushed back hitting Marvin in the head and they both rolled off the horse. When Marvin came to, Burton was hanging from the telephone wire by his top jaw. Marvin tried to lift him up to unhook

him, but as he lifted the wire would go up too. After some struggle Marvin was able to get him loose. Burton's jaw was broken and several teeth loose.

One summer while Marvin was still in High School, he worked for Uncle Joe at Leamington, Utah, putting up hay. He was on a load of hay forking it off onto the stack. He had just put the fork into the hay and something prompted him to move. The arm of the stacker pole broke and hit him on the shoulder. Had he not moved it would have hit him across the neck.

Because money had never been very plentiful or places to buy parts to replace old ones were not plentiful, Marvin learned to fix up things that needed it around the house and farm. He was able to get things going again that had not run for some time. One day when he was approximately fifty-eight years old, he was repairing a piece of farm machinery at the flat and the part he was working on suddenly snapped back, giving his right arm a hard jerk. Marvin said that, "It felt like my arm had been pulled right out of the socket". As it turned out, several ligaments in his shoulder had been torn badly. From that time on he couldn't raise his arm from his side or in front of his body very far.

Marvin had some sick spells in his adult life. The fall after Lois (his second child and first daughter) was born, 31 July 1941, he was working at Albert Christensen's helping fill the silo. When the workers lay down to rest they noticed a lot of Black Widow spiders. He must have been bitten by one as in due time he was stricken with Tularemia. He was sick for over a month. He couldn't go to church to have Lois blessed so she was blessed at home by Esdras on 5 October 1941. On 29 December 1953, he was stricken with an Embolism and was laid up from then until April with a blood clot in his leg. Because he had been in the sun for long periods of time, either from farm work or fun during his lifetime, he had skin cancer develop on the back side of his hands. He had it surgically removed twice.



He married Elva Anderson in the Salt Lake Temple on 1 September 1937, the ceremony being performed by Nicholas G. Smith. Afterwards, they were permitted to climb the spiral staircase of the temple. They were told by the workers that their marriage was one step toward exaltation and that exaltation is gained one step at a time just as they had climbed the staircase one step at a time.

In November, Marvin and Elva took their "honeymoon trip" to Rexburg, Idaho. That is the year that Angie and Willis Lyman moved there and Lucy and Evan were living there at the time.

They set up housekeeping after their marriage in the two east rooms of mother and father's home. As the family grew, they took over the two bedrooms upstairs, directly above the rooms they were occupying. When mother and father passed away they inherited the home. They have always made the rest of the family welcome to come and stay and we have enjoyed family get-togethers and many of Elva's good meals there.

To Marvin and Elva came seven lovely children and they have many grandchildren and many great grandchildren. Although Marvin rarely expressed his pride in his children and grandchildren to them verbally, he was very proud of them. Perhaps his good posterity is reason for his life being spared in the numerous accidents and sicknesses that he experienced. When Marvin would recount the many calamities that he had lived through he would always end with, "I'm just like a cat, I've got nine lives."

Marvin's working skills were many and varied. At one time he worked for Willis (Lyman) at South Tract, Delta, Utah, when Willis was managing Richard R. Lyman's farm and needed some extra help.

In 1930 Marvin signed to go in the C.C.C. camp which was a camp sponsored by the Government as a work project for young men. He was paid \$1.00 a day with board and clothes. The camp was stationed at Kanosh, Utah. They were there a month cutting posts and peeling the bark off them. The camp then moved to Escalante, Utah. He worked in the kitchen, waited on tables, and washed about 200 pots and pans after every meal. Fortunately, each person had to wash his own knives, forks, and spoons. It was during this time that he grew to detest rice. He said that the cooks used it in everything in every meal. He also helped to build a road into Boulder Dam. He was with the C.C.C. about three months. They worked two days one week and three the next. The rest of the time they could do as they pleased.

He worked for John Robbins in Salt Lake City one winter. Here he served as chore boy, house boy, and

chauffeur to their young son, and ate his meals with the maid.

He had some farming acreage at "The Flat" ten miles north of Oak City, which he farmed until his health would not permit. Then for a few years he leased it out, and after his death, his son Jack has taken over the greater part of the laborious task.

Marvin had always had a few cows to milk, sheep and beef to raise and eat, an occasional pig to raise to eat, and turkeys, ducks, and various other farm type animals. Before there were tractors to help ease the work of a farm, Marvin had a set of work horses that he was proud of. Later he bought a Shetland pony for Preston and Arvin to ride when they were little, and also used it for pulling a little one-seat cart or snow scraper to clear the snow from areas around the house and yard. For a few years he even had some peacocks to dress up the barnyard.

He worked for the Millard County School District for sixteen years, repairing seats in the school buses. Here he learned the upholstering business and later bought a machine and he and Elva went into business for themselves. They never advertised officially, but their expert work and by word of mouth brought them all they could do--from re-upholstering fine couches and chairs to constructing bailing aprons and tractor seat covers.

When Marvin went to Salt Lake City to establish his credit with Silver State Suppliers so he could begin receiving the supplies needed for the upholstery business, he was told he would need to give them two references. He told them he could get two attorneys, Jim Faust, and Fred Finlinson. After looking around the establishment the fellows shook hands in goodbye, and Lenox (who was with Marvin), asked about the references, and they replied that they weren't necessary now. Marvin was told later by the management that they wished everyone was as good to pay their bills, as were Marvin and Elva.

Marvin acted as Justice of the Peace for a number of years. He fined Bruce Lovell for speeding, and George Anderson for going through a stop sign. He caught some boys in his own melon patch.

He and Elva had the "Central" switchboard in Oak City for the telephone company from 1960 until the dial telephones were installed in 1966. They raised the number of out-of-town calls to 400 a month and there were ten new telephones installed. There were 48 phones on one line with each having its own set of rings to distinguish it from others. To reach "Central" one would ring one long ring. To reach mother's, one would ring two long rings and one short. It was quite convenient when you were at your neighbor's or visiting across town and heard your specific set of rings. Not many missed phone calls that way. (And with everyone on one line the busybody never missed anyone's calls.)

As time went on the school board hired Marvin full time the year round. Sometimes he went to the schools in the county to take hot lunch supplies, (the lunch-ladies would make such a fuss over him, and would treat him and whomever was with him just like royalty), and sometimes he drove the school buses. His favorite task was taking the "head start" children to and from school. He had many interesting experiences with the little children who confided in him. Because this job took him from one end of the county and across quite frequently, he met and made many friends.

He liked to be out of doors and enjoyed rides in Oak City Canyon. He especially liked the tall Ponderosa pine that grew in abundance. Wilford Sheriff and others would take him occasionally for rides around town and the canyon.

After his retirement, Dr. Rymol Williams, (his physician in Cedar City), told him that he would have to lose some weight because his heart was enlarged from being overworked from the extra weight, and that his blood pressure was too high. He went to work dieting and the pounds did come off, his heart shrank to normal size, and his blood pressure came down. He didn't like having to give up the sweet, fattening, good stuff, but always had a thrill when the nurse would tell him he had the healthiest blood pressure reading.

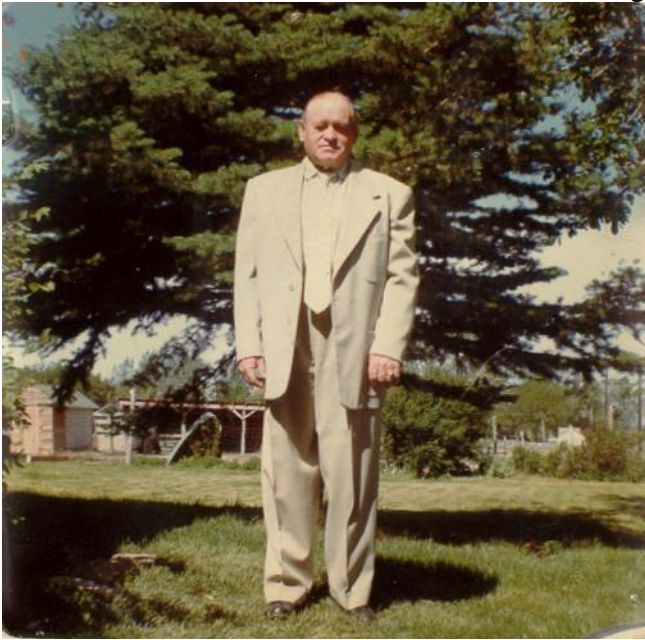
Elva and Marvin were very considerate of mother and father in their declining years and when the time came that mother had to have shots in her last illness, it was up to Marvin to give them to her. I (Angie) was there when he gave her the first one. Mother cried, I cried, but I don't think Marvin did (outwardly anyway). He got to be really expert at the job and from then until her death, he gave her over five hundred shots. He was willing both day and night to help his five sisters who took turns caring for their parents in their last sicknesses, which with each lasted three years.

Marvin had always been a "homebody". He probably inherited this trait from his Grandfather Roper. He was quiet and unassuming. He enjoyed very much when friends and or relatives would drop in. In his

retirement years he would spend many hours sitting on an old couch outside the front of the house. He appreciated the visitors that would stop in to chat or would wave or yell a hello as they passed. The summer before his death, he was having an increasingly hard time breathing and sitting outside in the fresh air helped him breathe slightly better. He also had orders from Dr. Williams not to do any work at all, but he would get bored and try to do a little here and there until his legs couldn't get him as far as he wanted to go or as safely as he wanted to get there. Because of his accident with the manure spreader, his legs bothered him quite a bit in later life. He often would wish he "could send to Sears for a new pair of legs".

Marvin was very generous with his time and means and would give you the shirt off his back if you needed it. His personal philosophy of life was, "If you can't find work that pays a dollar then work for fifty cents." His philosophy of life in general, "It's better to give all you have than to have bad feelings over it."

He didn't have a desire for material things, but he had a few things that he found joy in. One was his horses he had when younger, a birthstone ring, and two model wagons each being pulled by a set of work horses. Wilford Sheriff had crafted the miniature models himself, and it would amaze Marvin how every little detail on the harnesses were exact as the real thing.



The first, and probably the only time in his life, he ever wore a tuxedo was at Trudy and Garth's wedding reception in 1972. His five foot two inch frame looked so stately and dignified. He would look at the wedding pictures over and over again.

His favorite foods were green onions, sorghum (Molasses), bread and milk, bread and honey, and eggs, any way you wanted to fix them. He would eat eggs three meals every day. One day when Ralph (Lenox's son) was in his teens he was visiting Marvin and Elva. Marvin challenged him to eat some raw eggs. He told him he would give him a dollar for each one he could get down. Hard as he tried, Ralph did not get one single dollar.

Marvin kept up the whiskering tradition of the family. He would whisker his kids, nieces and nephews, and when he got grandkids, they got it too.

His favorite speaker in church was Apostle LeGrande Richards. Jerald and family gave him two of

Elder Richards' books and he couldn't leave them alone until he had read them both.

His favorite television programs for many, many, many years were (1) Lawrence Welk's Orchestra, (Lois took he and Elva to one of his shows in California in 1960 while they were there visiting her before she was married. Marvin wanted to dance with the group dancing, but neither Lois nor Elva shared his fondness for dancing), and (2) Gunsmoke. His favorite character was Festus, an unshaven, unbathed, sidekick deputy and friend of Marshal Mat Dillon of Dodge City, Kansas during the 1800's.

His nicknames as a boy were Galiby, Galeb, Galabit, Mavin, Miskus and probably many more. (When Arvin was a young boy he looked allot like Marvin, so Marvin passed his nickname of Galeb onto him.) Arvin doesn't remember the nickname "Galeb" but does remember being called "Yabin", "Yabe", and "Abe" by his father.

Years ago at the south end of the cemetery in Oak City was an old "wash". Marvin and his friends would joke that when they died, they wanted to just be "tossed over there in that old wash". At the time of his death, the "wash" had been filled in and that land made into an addition to the existing cemetery.

Marvin in death was true to his nature. He quietly and unexpectedly (to others) died in his sleep on Tuesday, 6 September 1977 in the home he had lived in all of his 69 years of his life. He was buried at the far south end of the addition, by a pine tree, just south of where the old "wash" had been.

The history of Marvin R. Finlinson was written by his sister Angie Finlinson Lyman, on April 12, 1972, and edited by his daughter Ella Trudy Finlinson Tesch, June 1980. Pictures added 2017.