

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS
A HISTORY
1636-1925

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WALTER WHITNEY SANDERSON—The Sanderson family is of ancient English origin, the greater number of those in America who bear this name tracing their descent from two brothers, Robert and Edward. The derivation of this surname is interesting, coming from the nickname Sander, and developing into Sanders and Sanderson, meaning in all cases "the son of Alexander." As in the old days the sons were designated by their father's given name, the name so applied gradually became their surname, and Robert Sanderson meant practically, Robert, the son of Sander, or as above stated in its original form of which this latter was but the "nickname" the son of Alexander. This name, however, had already developed into a surname at the time of the above named progenitor of this family, and so this line goes back even further than it can be traced.

(I) The first American forebear of this family was Robert Sanderson, who with his first wife Lydia, were among the first settlers of Hampton, New Hampshire, in 1638, and there their first child was born. Soon afterwards they moved to Watertown, of which he was a proprietor in 1642, and he remained there until about 1653, removing then to Boston, where he held office as deacon. He sold his house and ten acres of land in Hampton, July 20, 1650, to Richard Swain, after he had been residing in Watertown, and on October 17, 1653, he bought land of William Godfrey. He was a goldsmith and silversmith by trade, and in his diary under date of 1652-53, John Hull, a selectman, and for many years town treasurer of Boston, and the first mint master of New England, who was also the coiner of the pine-tree shillings, related how he was chosen to make coins and adds: "I chose my friend Robert Sanderson to be my partner, to which the court consented." In this same interesting document, under date of September 1, 1658, he wrote: "My boy, John Sanderson . . . departed this life." Under date of November 8, 1658, he says: "The Lord exercised with sickness my partner, Robert Sanderson, and his son, Joseph, but yet was pleased to recover them both. . . ." Robert Sanderson died October 7, 1693, and his will was proved October 20, of the same year. He bequeathed to his wife and children and grandchildren, mentions kinsmen and so forth; refers to house and land at Watertown, had by former wife. He married (second) in Watertown about 1642, Mary, widow of John Cross, and she died June 21, 1691. He married (third) Elizabeth —, who was born in 1617, died October 15, 1695, leaving a will. Among the children of Robert Sanderson was William, the second child, of whom further.

(II) William Sanderson, son of Robert and Lydia Sanderson, was born at Hampton, New Hampshire, in about 1641. He is on record as taking the oath of fidelity. All his children except Hannah, were born in Watertown, he then removed to Groton, but on account of trouble with the Indians returned to Watertown. He married in Watertown, December 18, 1666, Sarah, surname unknown, and among their seven children was Joseph, the last born, of whom further.

(III) Joseph Sanderson, son of William and Sarah Sanderson, was born in Watertown, August 28, 1680, and settled at Groton. He married there, Sarah Page, daughter of Samuel and Hannah Page. His estate was

administered in 1736 by his widow, Sarah. Among their eleven children was Joseph, the first born, of whom further.

(IV) Joseph Sanderson, son of Joseph and Sarah (Page) Sanderson, was born August 30, 1714, and died at Whately, March 20, 1772. He settled at Whately in 1753, with his wife and eight children. He built a log house near Abraham Parker's, perhaps on land belonging to him. Later he built a house on his own land, where the old Sanderson house was burned about 1880. He married, in 1737, Ruth Parker, who died December 8, 1780, aged sixty-four years. She was a daughter of Isaac and Ruth Parker. In his will he mentions ten of his twelve children who were married and had families. From him have descended between twelve and fifteen hundred children, grand-children, great-grand-children, and great-great-grand-children. Among his children the sixth was Thomas, of whom further.

(V) Deacon Thomas Sanderson, son of Joseph and Ruth (Parker) Sanderson, was born at Groton, March 16, 1746. He became one of the most active and prominent men in the town of Whately. He was an officer in the Revolutionary War; was selectman for twenty-nine years; assessor for twenty-six years; Representative to the General Court in 1784, 1812 and 1813. He lived on the homestead until 1803, when he removed to Indian Hill. He married (first) Miriam Wait, who died in 1772; (second) Lucy Wright. Among his children was Elijah, of whom further.

(VI) Elijah Sanderson, son of Deacon Thomas and Lucy (Wright) Sanderson, was born in October, 1782, and died August 28, 1823. He was a pioneer farmer of the town of Whately, cleared a great portion of the present Sanderson farm, and built the house which has been occupied by each successive generation, and a portion of which is still in existence. He was one of the two Sandersons who owned a large tract of land extending from the Connecticut River to the Conway line, a distance of four and a half miles. He served as ensign in the militia during the War of 1812, and he was an earnest supporter of the Congregational Church, being extremely religious. He married, January 16, 1806, Abigail Arms, who died January 12, 1864, aged eighty-four years. Among their children was Elijah Dwight, of whom further.

(VII) Elijah Dwight Sanderson, son of Elijah and Abigail (Arms) Sanderson, was born February 10, 1807, and died September 15, 1886, at the old homestead. He learned the cloth dresser's trade, which he followed until hand work was superceded by machinery. After that he followed farming, his father having died when he was but sixteen years of age, and the farm requiring his care and attention. He was well known in the community as a man of strict integrity and of sound judgment, and was a member of the Congregational Church which he served for many years as parish clerk. He married, September 4, 1837, Zelinda Wing, daughter of Dr. Walter Wing, of Morris, Otsego County, New York. She died in 1878, at the age of sixty-three years. Their children were Silas Austin, Walter Wing, of whom further, and Jane Elizabeth, who married Otis Hagar.

(VIII) Walter Wing Sanderson, son of Elijah

Dwight and Zelinda (Wing) Sanderson, was born in Whately, July 25, 1843. He enjoyed good educational advantages, attending first the district schools of his native town, and later the Deerfield Academy and Powers Institute at Bernardston. He worked for his father on the home farm, and later traveled on the road for a period of five years or more, covering Pennsylvania and the West. He then returned to the farm, his father being in poor health, and after the death of his father, he purchased from the heirs, their interests in the old homestead, and carried on the farm successfully thereafter until his death in 1913, specializing in tobacco growing. Mr. Sanderson was a Republican in his politics, and was a member of the Republican Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons of Greenfield, in which order he had been a member since 1875. He was first made a mason in Walpole, New Hampshire, in 1873. He was an attendant of the Congregational Church of Deerfield.

Walter Wing Sanderson married, in 1880, Mary Imogen Whitney, of Gardner, daughter of Joshua Avery and Mehitable Coleman (Gibbs) Whitney, the latter named a daughter of Paul Gibbs, of Whately. They were the parents of one son, Walter W., of whom further. The Whitney ancestry, the maternal line of Walter Whitney Sanderson, traces back to John Whitney, who settled in Watertown, in 1632, through Richard, the second generation, Richard, Jonathan, Caleb, Joshua, Joseph to Joshua Avery Whitney, who married Mehitable Coleman Gibbs, the parents of Mary Imogen (Whitney) Sanderson.

(IX) Walter Whitney Sanderson, son of Walter Wing and Mary Imogen (Whitney) Sanderson, was born at Whately, February 6, 1891. He received his education in the schools of Whately, and South Deerfield, and in Greenfield High School. He then spent two years in the Colorado College where he studied forestry, until 1912. Owing to the ill health of his father, he returned to the farm, and since the death of the latter has carried it on himself. He has an eighty acre farm that has been in the family for five generations, and which is perhaps one of the best cared for farms in New England, as well as being one of the most ideal in point of its formation, lying as it does on the Connecticut River, and being perfectly level and smooth. Mr. Sanderson specializes in tobacco raising, and in onions, with some corn and potatoes, and he has a sorting shop, where in the winter time he employs people in the sorting and packing of tobacco. Mr. Sanderson is a member of the Masonic Order, being a member and past master of Mt. Sugar Loaf Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons; Royal Arch Masons; Connecticut Valley Commandery, Knights Templar; Titus Strong Council, Royal and Select Masters; and he is also a member of Greenfield Lodge of Perfection; and Princes of Jerusalem; and of Mecca Temple, Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, of Springfield. He is a member of Greenfield Lodge, No. 1296, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks; the Deerfield Men's Club; Greenfield Country Club, and he is an attendant of the Congregational Church.

Walter Whitney Sanderson married, September 22, 1913, Florence Stearns, of Greenfield, born July 20, 1892, daughter of John Grimes and Carrie Belle (Cham-

berlain) Stearns. Mr. and Mrs. Sanderson are the parents of two children: Winthrop Whitney, born April 11, 1915; and Virginia Chamberlain, born May 6, 1916.

EDWIN KEYTE McPECK—Legal affairs and various responsibilities of grave import to the people have engaged the attention and constructive effort of Edwin Keyte McPeck, of Adams, throughout the period of his career. His faithful discharge of the duties entrusted to him forms a record equally worthy as compared with his individual attainments in his chosen field of professional endeavor. In his steady advance from the early years of his activity he has revealed to the world a spirit of lofty idealism which is eminently commendable and which places him among the most noteworthy citizens of this region. His success is the more remarkable in that he is the first of his family to branch from industrial activities and enter the professional field.

Mr. Peck is a son of William C. and Jennie B. (Galloway) McPeck. His father was a cabinet maker, highly skilled in his field and long active.

Edwin Keyte McPeck was born in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, April 20, 1874. The family thereafter becoming residents of Newark, New Jersey, Mr. McPeck's education was begun in the public schools of that city and largely through his own industry and initiative he gained the necessary advantages leading toward his preparations for his profession. Reading law under competent preceptorship, he was admitted to the bar of the State of Massachusetts in 1897, and in April, 1898, opened his offices in Adams. From the first the people expressed their confidence in him by bringing to him affairs of importance and his judicious and successful handling of the interests of his early clients led to ever increasing usefulness. On January 7, 1908, Mr. McPeck was appointed referee in bankruptcy for Berkshire County and served in that capacity until 1920, when he resigned to accept the appointment from Governor Cox of clerk for the Fourth District Court of Berkshire County. Mr. McPeck's public service has thus been largely parallel with his professional work but he is a well known worker in the Republican Party and was at one time chairman of the Republican County Committee and Town Committee. For nine years he served on the local board of health; and for twelve years on the school committee. He has also for some years been a trustee of the Plunkett Memorial Hospital, and evidences the deepest interest in every phase of community well-being and progress. He is vice-president and a director of the First National Bank of Adams, and his influence in local financial affairs is at all times salutary.

The war with Spain found Mr. McPeck a young man of high patriotism, and he was one of the early volunteers for service at that time. He enlisted in Company K, First Regiment, Vermont Volunteer Infantry, and saw active service during the short period of that war, rising to the rank of lieutenant with which he received his honorable discharge. Mr. McPeck's affiliations include membership in the Massachusetts and Berkshire Bar associations; Berkshire Lodge, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, of which he is Past Master; Corinthian Chapter, Royal Arch Masons; also the Royal and