



Sanborn Signatures

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JOHN EASTMAN SANBORN

Dorothy Barker

Editor's note: SFA member Dot Barker has kindly shared information she has collected about her husband, Gordon Wesley Barker's, Sanborn family. Gordon is the great grandson of Dr John Eastman Sanborn [V C Sanborn # 1511] & his wife, Rebecca M Tate. Dot has written up quite a lot of detail about the family and, given space constraints for Sanborn Signatures, I've had to choose what to include in this issue; more in the next issue. My choice has been to print first her precis of the Sanborn letters and then direct extracts from Dr Sanborn's diary of his trip to Europe in 1888. This should give you a sense of his personality.

In September of 1999 I received an e-mail from a gentleman stating he had some papers relating to my husband's ancestors. He had noticed my queries on Family Tree Maker about the Sanborns in Concord, NH, and Rockport, MA. He wrote that he had had these papers in his possession for twenty years. I purchased the papers from him and the following is a summary of the letters, etc, we have in our possession now, that were written by Dr John Eastman Sanborn.

1. A May 4, 1833, letter written by John Sanborn, age 9, to his brother George W Sanborn, in Gilmanton NH. John was then in Boston, where he was attending school (formerly at Mr Rice's, now at Mr Otheman's in Milk Street). His parents were also apparently in Boston. He says his mother and sister Harriet are well. He discusses the city and its commons, his father's cold, a huge bull he saw, and the many fires that had broken out recently.

2. A July 16, 1833, (completed on July 19) letter written by John Sanborn, age 9, to his brother, George W Sanborn, in Gilmanton NH (where he was staying at the home of his uncle, J Wilson, Esq). John is still in Boston at school and living with his family. He is studying geography, arithmetic and grammar, and his penmanship has improved greatly. He writes a lot about his school and about punishment there; he is clearly trying out some new, sophisticated words he has learned. He discusses the fruits and vegetables that are available in Boston. He sends his regards to his "Uncle and Aunt Wilson if they will allow a little boy to send them his love".

3. A February 13, 1834, letter written by John Sanborn, age 10, to his father, Rev Jacob Sanborn, at Broomfield Street, Ballard Place No. 7, Boston MA. John is now back at Mr Rice's school in Newton MA. Writes about an upcoming scholastic "Exhibition" to close the academic quarter and how

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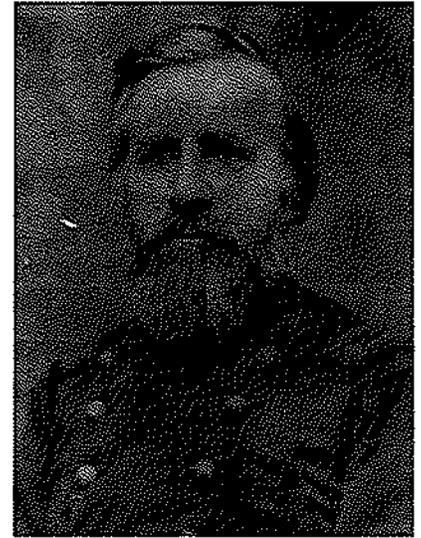
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Dr. John Eastman Sanborn



Rebecca M (Tate) Sanborn



Dr. John Eastman Sanborn in Civil War uniform

Mr Rice invites Rev and Mrs Sanborn to attend. Says there may be no sleigh riding for the rest of the winter because of lack of snow. Gives his regards to his sister Harriet. Asks for handkerchiefs. Writes about composition, drawing maps, and the subjects of recent classroom debates.

4. An April 17, 1834, letter written by John Sanborn, age 10, to his father, Rev Jacob Sanborn, at No. 7 Ballard Place, Boston MA. He describes recreation - fishing, going to the falls, playing ball - and his studies - astronomy, geography, grammar, arithmetic, reading, writing, spelling, drawing maps, and speaking.

5. An October 12, 1844, address, apparently written by J E Sanborn and delivered by him in the College Chapel, presumably at what is now Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT. The address was a eulogy of the American poet, painter and novelist, Washington Allston, who had died the year before. We have a small clipping, written about this address, that was found with his obituary.

6. A copy of the will of the Rev Jacob Sanborn of Concord, Merrimack County NH, executed October 15, 1862; he died March 16, 1867. He left most of his property to his wife Eliza. The rest he gave to his children George W, John E, Harriett E, Joseph H, and Jacob R. In a notation added January 21, 1863, Sanborn explains that he has dealt equally with his children and given each \$1000 since their respective 21st birthdays. He says that Jacob "has been unfortunate" so has received a little extra. More details. The will was witnessed by J A Harris, M B Critchett, and J Z Sleeper. The will is in an envelope from the law office of O S Knapp of Boston. On the envelope, John E. Sanborn has written "A copy of my Father's will" and "Rockport Mass. Dec. 1877". The will was apparently probated around then because a notation on the

inside of the envelope says "Dr. Sanborn wishes Mr. Knapp to examine papers — will etc. — between 2-3 o'clock Sat. Nov. 10 '77.

7. An 1874 daily diary book which was actually used by Dr Sanborn from June 11 through September 21, 1888, to record his trip to Europe. Extensive entries and memoranda about the ships traveled upon, the sites, the cost of living, the art — everything. He added some additional notes on the back of the cover of the 1888 "Annual Report of the School Committee of the City of Rockport" which is loose in the diary. The diary's binding has pretty much fallen apart.

The man who sold the Sanborn materials to me told me that he had begun to transcribe the diary, but hardly made a dent in it (I didn't even finish the third day, not to mention the various notes!).

I have read a big part of it but it is so fragile we wear gloves when we handle it. It is a very descriptive recording of his trip. I have used the abbreviations as he used them, for instance, t is for both 'the' and 'then'. The following is exactly what John E Sanborn wrote in his diary.

Monday, June 11, '88

At Rockport, home. Last day here. Up early, making [final] preparations for leaving. Just after our early dinner and about the time for starting to [catch the] train. A heavy shower came down pouring! Had to go and get [a] hack. Finally, all the little last things attended to, we got off at train time. Had visited Mrs. Norcross and left her very favorably hopeful.

At Boston, did some trading, bought wraps for steamer trip and went to Providence Station. Were met there by Miss Pearle Taylor. Train left at 6:30, to [the] wharf in Providence without a stop. [Had a] state room. Arrived at New York about 7:00.



Tuesday, June 12th

[here follows his description of the ship]

Steamer City of Rome

586 ft long - 52 wide 37 deep

300 tons coal a day

24 foot propeller stern

promenade deck 400 ft & 20 ft wide each side

Dining saloon 72 x 52 & seats 266 persons

Engines 12,000 horse pow.

Screw turns 60 rev min

are 63 furnaces

gross 800 tons net tonnage 3452

391 cabin passengers

270 intermediate

225 steerage

284 crew

1170 - total in all

120 men to feed fires

Mast 180 ft high

can take 520 saloon and 1137 other passengers

1657 in all

crew & all = 2000 persons

Went at once to Pier 43, the "City of Rome" steamship, to attend to our luggage and look at our state room, which is 2 B our 'ome for a week or more. Then went up to the Grand Central Hotel, Broadway. After dinner took a most delightful drive through Central Park and made a visit to the Zoo, thence to [the] Hotel where I met Dr. Tourjee and others. Bought \$200 worth of coupons for use in the different nations we R 2 pass thro'. Wrote letters to Mary, enclosing \$10, to M_____ with \$100 for investment, to W.J. and Chad together, and Truman Tass \$1.00 for petty local bills.

Up quite late writing letters and taking those coupons for the foreign traffic, but at last got to bed late with the serious feeling that it was the last night we are to sleep, just at present, in America. Somehow less from sentiment than from causes of local disquietude, I spent a miserable night.

Wednesday, June 13th

The important and long looked for day. Up early, breakfast early. Walked to 8th Street to take horse car across city and down West Street to the Pier. Had but just left Broadway when the horse balked and apparently wanted to get into the car, although already full. Finally, down he fell in the track. We were an uneasy trio [daughter Harriett was with them]; on the way to Europe and perhaps to be kept back by a baulky horse car. I began to query if I had not better hire a hack and hurry on when, after various persuasions, the

quadruped began to locomote, and with ominous pauses, finally brought us to the pier in time. But [what a] crowd at the pier—carriages hurrying up, pushins, crying, laughing, shoving, all styles of people and all in wild haste...

When the gang plank is drawn, two tugs slowly pulled out into the current. Slowly she swung about, the tugs left her & we were at last feeling the first thrill of the motion that was to end, we hope, far away on the other shore. Our huge vessel glided magnificently along, down by the island, past Brooklyn, past the Bartold's Liberty enlightening, down the now broadning harbor, at length by Sandy Hook & then swiftly out 2 open sea. Four large ocean steamers dropped down ahead of us, but we gradually passed them all. This is the first experience of this in my life, out to sea, in a magnificent steamer, on our way to Europe hoping 2 enjoy during the summer, some of the long wished for but hardly expected, pleasures of foreign travel. The labors, the economy of years, finding at last, some due fruition.

We have company enough to prevent all fear of solitude. An officer tells me there are 387 cabin passengers, 264 intermediate, about 200 steerage & 300 of crew officers for a total of about 1150.....with population enough to make a large village....but no daily papers, no post office to go to, no news boys. It is a superior vessel, the largest on the ocean, 600 ft. long, burns 300 tons of coal a day.

Thursday, June 14:

The day was pleasant, or is, & the sea calm as a pond. We move on swift and smoothly, making about 18 miles an hour, or 422 the first day out. No roll, no undue motion & so no seasickness....During the day we passed, or they passed us, two large steamers, for America.....about 15 miles north, one Cunard & one German. I am a little surprised that along this highway of sea, we meet no more ocean craft. Sea Gulls are now & then seen, sitting on the water.

Friday, June 15:

Another quiet day---strong wind SE, but not rough sea & very easy motion of the boat. No Stemos all day & only one or two sails---We are nearing Newfdland & towards evening it became foggy, dense chilly fog & whistle blew at short intervals for long time, occasionally bells---none of us R sea-sick, my three, & as we sleep famously, all goes well. I hv an increased respect for Chris Columbus---the great originator of the Excursion Business.

Saturday, June 16:

Much same---still remarkably quiet & still--foggy some today but we consumed our nautical rations & enjoy the trip--Four days of remarkably pleasant weather, no drawback to alter enjoyment of our trip. I feel an increasing respect for the memory of Chr. Columbus, Esqr.



Sunday, June 17:

Still wonderfully pleasant--the good ship speeds on, at about 17 and over miles per hour. The run today noon hd bn 416 miles. This morning, at 8 bells, when the usual Sunday morn fire alarm was given, followed by the regular life boat drill, some ladies became suddnly alarmed as they saw the long ranks of the crew hurrying to call, the hose got out & the stream of water flying, with sailors hwling down the life boats & really took fright at the terrifying display, but were calmed & soothed, just short of fainting or screaming point---At half past ten there was religious service in the saloon, organ finely played by Dr. Tourjes, Epis. service by a Bishop and preaching by Bishop Raddock of Wash. Territory--his sermon was short, and or a failure, was a brilliant success. I never attended church here before in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean & never shall again, on this spot. It was very impressing the singing by the large audience, 400 or 500--Nearer My God To Thee & Jesus Lover of My Soul. I shall never forget it.

Today is Bunker Hill Day--There are a good many English on board & Scotch---the ship is owned by Scotch, Henderson Bros., is manned & officered by Scotch & some English--Scotch mainly---very well managed---We are now rather more than half seas over--& with 5 pleasant days--We can apparently hardly have any very serious storms B4 we arrive in Liverpool.

Monday June 18:

Still charming but just a bit rough, from wind, ship rolls some & Mrs. & F failed to come 2 times at brkfst. & din, but gained grace by supper time.

Tuesday, June 19:

Still serene & more so; ocean quiet as a pond & the huge steamer runs as smoothly as if on the Hudson River. We R now on our 7th day out & are feeling just a bit surprised, not to say disappointed, that a passage across the Atlantic is so simple a matter — Tomorrow Queenstown — I hv bn writing four letters to America! W. J. & Clar - Mary & Hat - & the Rockport Review - I write a page or 2 in one then another & so likely get them mixed & confused - & either repeat or omit much that I intended to say - This Eve hd a concert in the Saloon — somewhat of interest.

Wednesday, June 20:

This forenoon at about 9 or X we first saw the coast of Ireland! Its high bluffs & long ranges of hills looked attractive to ones eyes accustomed for a week to only the monotony of the boundless blue. The hills are almost mountainous & very plainly volcanic--the strata of apparently mica sckist being thrown up vertically--so the crest are not rounded but broken & fragmentory. We ran along the coast all day charmed with

the varied scenery; here green & fertile hills slopes, divided by walls into square fields & shapely farms & green with every shade of diverse verdure; then a bold & volcanic headland, pushed far into the sea, its sides ragged with broken strata & its top surmounted with a light house--many fishing vessels are about our path, the hulls so different from ours & the sail cut very differently shade of a very dark brown color, almost black--The crews all cheered us heartily as we passed feeling that we are fresh arrived from the far off land of the free so dear to the Irish heart--The green slopes of Ireland never left our vision & throngs of passengers gaze with the deepest interest upon its novel and varied landscape — At not far from 5 o'clock we stopped off at Queenstown & a tug took off a crowd of passengers & a pile of mail — thence we steamed on all night & arr. at Liverpool morning of

Thursday, June 21: Liverpool & Glasgow

About 9 o'clock passing up thro miles of rows of magnif. docks we hv read of & they are wonderful so solid, so extensive, as it nears full tide, one great ship went up thru dock & we passengers were then taken by tug down, no up, some 2-3 miles past such spectacular docks - opening frm one to another, by locks & gates nto wonderful series of inner docks, like a house of many chambers — At last we go to t custom house & in time were put thro to custom house — very courteously & considerately — There to carriages & dinner — This was our 1st English dinner, tho courses served regularly, in unvarying series, like the order of the seasons & with little regard to the wishes of individuals — There 2 t Railway Station and off for Glasgow — and here after we get out of town, came our first view of lovely English scenery — beautiful rural England — We were all charmed by a lovely view — so neat, so very vividly green, such neatness of culture — fields level, charming hedges everywhere — never a fence, stone walls occas — & the most excellent roads. Never a wooden house — stone mostly, but many brick — Houses all of very similar pattern — We took car seated like an _____[?] on the side, very inconveniat to look out on the country--but t scenery was so delightful we were constantly interested in new objects of interest. We passed thro Carlisle t so on to Glasgow, arriving about 7 o'clock — Drove at once to hotel & took dinner — neat & acceptable. After din we walked about town, a very neat, tidy, thrifty city — well built & evincing[?] much wealth. As in Liverpool all t buildings r black or blackish brown from smoke.

We are learning to use English instead of American; lift, for elevator — tram for carriage — luggage for baggage.

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