

Abel Wheeler House

1786

The Abel Wheeler House just north of the Congregational Church was the home of Samuel Pierpont Sanford, who owned the main store in Oxford Center during the late 1800's. Later, his daughter, Ruth, operated the house as a restaurant and tea room. Along with the house, visitors may view the barn and the old three-seater outhouse on the grounds. The house is now owned by Terry and James Tottenham.



They called the Abel Wheeler House their home.

Overlooking the Congregational Church, this house has been the home of an early Oxford Selectman, the home of one of Oxford's largest land-holders and operator of Oxford's general store, as well as serving as an elegant tea and luncheon business of an Oxford spinster.

Abel Wheeler Was Early Oxford Leader

Abel Wheeler, Esquire, first owner of this house, served on the Oxford Board of Selectmen in 1802, and from 1811 through 1813.

He was born Dec. 18, 1765 in Oxford and died here Oct. 27, 1830. He was buried in the Congregational Cemetery.

Ruth Sanford operates "The Spinning Wheel"

Miss Ruth Sanford was the daughter of Samuel Pierpont Sanford (read his biography at right), who never married. She operated an elegant tea-room and luncheon, known as "The Spinning Wheel" from her home. She featured spinning wheels as decor throughout the house and would stand spinning wheels at the entrance of the long driveway to the house as an easily recognizable trademark. Her home became the social center of Oxford hosting many gatherings as well as luncheons.

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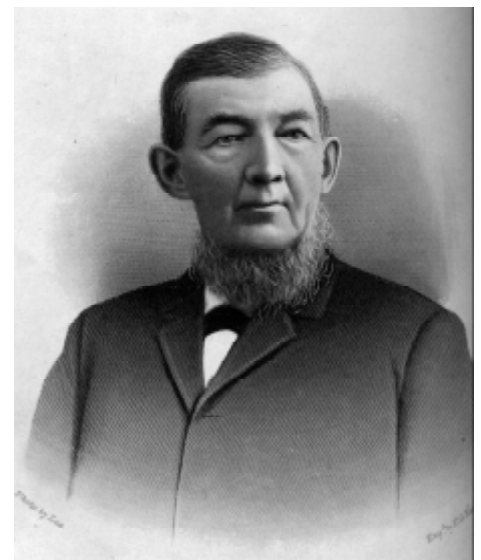
(Abridgement by Dorothy A. DeBisschop, Oxford Municipal Historian)

Samuel Pierpont Sanford

SAMUEL PIERPONT SANFORD, one of Oxford's most active and successful business men, was born in that town July 1st, 1827. He was a son of Marcus and Harriet (Perry) Sanford, and grandson of Doctor Samuel Sanford, a native of Bethany, who was the first physician at Humphreysville, where in December, 1797, he was given permission to build a smallpox hospital north of Castle Rock for the purpose of inoculating residents.

Samuel Pierpont Sanford was now apprenticed to learn the carpenter and joiners' trade, which he followed five years. He later became a clerk in the store of Frederick A. Candee, of Oxford Center. After five years of diligent application and faithful service, assumed ownership of the store. During the rebellion the post office was kept at his store, which was burned down in 1870. The store building now occupied was erected in 1875. Here he has been engaged not only as a general merchant, but his transactions have extended to many other operations, including large contracts in railway lumber.

Mr. Sanford was married April 10th, 1863 to Julia A., daughter of Beecher and August (Sherman) Fairchild, of Oxford. The Sanfords had five children: Lewis, Robert, Sherman, Ruth, and Edward.



Samuel P. Sanford

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This "house biography" sheet prepared by Oxford Municipal Historian.

Dorothy A. DeBisschop, © 2004