

Rev. Pulaski Woodman Fuller – Historical Profile



Rev. Pulaski Woodman FULLER was born on 10 Mar 1823 in Boston, Massachusetts, USA¹ and was baptized on 25 May 1823 in the Old South Church, Boston, Massachusetts. This church is now a museum in the centre of Boston and is known as the Old South Meeting House as this was the meeting place of the rebels and the starting point of the famous Boston Tea Party of 1773.²

We assume that PW traveled to Charleston SC about 1838, where his father, Sumner, was sent for health reasons, however died prior to 1840. We next find PW in the 1840 census in Andover, MA at the age of 17, where his mother, Mary H. (Greenleaf) is listed as the head of the household. We have not been able to account for his movements for the next two years after the census on 1 Jun 1840 in Andover, Massachusetts. He married Zilpha Perkins "Polly"

BUCKMAN, daughter of Abner BUCKMAN and Polly PERKINS, on 8 Dec 1842 in Barnard, Vermont.³

We are able to follow the family movements and his occupation through their earlier years by way of published City Directories, birth records of their children and USA Census data. We know that in 1847, Lowell MA, he was a Spinner working for Hamilton Print (fabric Works; 1848-9, Lowell MA a colporteur (seller of religious material); 1850, Leominster, MA a bookseller (he is also listed as a labourer on the 1850 census; 1853, Lowell, MA a hostler (stableman-horses); 1855-7, Fall River, MA a labourer and an auctioneer.^{4,5,6}

Pulaski enlisted and was mustered in on 18 Jun 1861 at Camp Dennison, Cincinnati, Ohio; Company "E", 6 Ohio Infantry.⁷ He mustered out and ended his service on 23 Jun 1864 at Camp Dennison, Cincinnati, Ohio.⁸ During PW's pension application and fact finding process he stated in an affidavit that he was recovering from injuries at a hospital in Kentucky when a doctor told him that he would never be able to go on long marches again. Therefore he applied for a discharge and instead received a leave of absence and ordered to home, he apparently just left. Buried in his large army pension file were two pages with PW's pension ID at the top and the following account: "All charges of desertion prior to March 21, 1864 against this man are removed. He was treated in Regimental Hospital Oct 10, 1861 for a boil; Feb 1, 1862 for rheumatism and March 31, 1862 for constipation and entered No. 8 General Hospital, Bowling Green, KY., November 7, 1862 with acute rheumatism, disposition not stated. He was arrested March 3, 1864 by Provost marshal 2nd Dist. VT and delivered March 4, 1864 at Military Post Brattleboro, VT. He was tried before a general court martial for desertion, specification in this that he did desert from the hospital in Bowling Green, KY. He remained absent until apprehended at Vershire, Orange Co. in the state of Vermont, and returned to the Regiment April 18, 1864. He was found not guilty and thereupon acquitted. The proceedings, findings and acquittal were approved and promulgated in G.O. No.29 Hd Ins 3rd Div 4 A.C. dated April 30, 1864. The date when this man absented himself from the hospital and his whereabouts from that date to date of his arrest, cannot be ascertained from records." The document is signed by R.C. Drum 'Adjutant General' but not dated.⁹

The career as a Baptist Minister consumes his life through the 1860s, 70s, 80s and into the 1890s. He and his family appeared on the 1860 Federal Census for Hamilton County, Columbia TWP, PO Montauk, Ohio. His occupation is shown as a Baptist Minister. In the Ohio State [Baptist] Annual, 1860-61, he appeared as an ordained minister in Milford, Hamilton Township. He is first listed as a pastor of Vershire Baptist Church in Barre Association, Vermont, in 1863 following the death of Rev. C.J. Rugg. He resigned in 1865 and became pastor of Groton Church with a salary of \$400/yr with 48 church members. By 1867 the congregation had grown to 100 and his salary was \$500. He left this situation 1 March 1868 - "all members do not support the minister". In 1870 he was listed as pastor of North Troy Church in the Danville Association minutes. He had been assigned to write the 'circular letter (annual report) for the association to the state annual meeting. In 1871 this church was unlisted, but during this time he was pastor at Braintree, VT, which was also unlisted in 1872.^{10,11}

In an affidavit in connection with his army pension application dated 5 May 1890, he states "As a regular ordained minister of the Gospel, I have served in the following churches [he then lists the ones above and others]. In October 1872 I was appointed by the "Baptist Home Mission Society of New York - A Missionary and stationed at Long Prairie, Todd Co., MN." The Baptist Historical Society states that in 1872 PW was initially sent to Long Prairie and paid \$100 for 26 weeks work as a missionary pastor. He was instrumental in establishing the first Baptist church in Long Prairie MN, which he did and he served as its first pastor from 1872 as well as many other churches in the area, including Sauk Centre, Kandiyohi, Maple Hill, Otto, and Lake Amelia, where he preached the opening sermon at the annual association meeting on the text Romans 8:16.^{12,13,14}

In the spring of 1884, Rev. P.W. Fuller was installed as pastor in Kasson, Dodge Co., MN and the church gave evidence of life and vigor. A Sunday school had been maintained, and serves as an active factor in the up building and maintenance of church interests. In 1886 he was at Money Creek Church - "a difficult field; distances between stations are long and roads rough - progress is slow. A new Sunday School and preaching station have been established in a needy neighbourhood." This church had four outstations and a membership of 56 when he arrived and an average attendance of 119 when he left (this is a missionary field). PW, in 52 weeks preached 110 sermons, conducted 87 prayer meetings and made 538 visits. In Oct 1886 he resigned and moved to St. Paul.^{15,16,17,18}

PW made application at the St. Cloud, MN Land Office for a homestead (NE32, Twp130, R34, W5) on 10 April 1882 and made the final payment of the homestead fee of \$4 on 21 Nov 1882. He received his Homestead Patent 24 Nov 1883 and sold this quarter section 26 Oct 1886 for \$800 (subject to two mortgages). A local historian, O.B. De Laurier wrote an article in the Long Prairie Leader,

October 17, 1935, entitled "Township History - Iona". He describes the history of the area and that homesteaders came into the area and that the Township Board established the town of Odessa on 6 Jan 1881. The writer goes on to say that a meeting was held at the house of Pulaski W. Fuller in Section 32, which formed part of the town. "Mr. Fuller served as the clerk of the meeting and was elected the first town clerk." Apparently the community settled on the name Odessa as many of them were Germans from Russia and the lengthy article goes on to say that the community had been advised that the name 'Odessa' had already been used for another community and they would have to change that name. He states that P.W. Fuller, the first town clerk had been active in the organization of the town, was the Baptist minister. "He was a scholarly man, and well versed in classical learning and familiar with the current affairs of the day." "On March 8, 1881, at the first annual meeting, it was voted to change the name to 'Iona' and it seems probable that the Rev. Pulaski W. Fuller had something to do with the selection of that name also. The original of the name is a small island of the Hebrides group [he then gives the history of that group] and it seems to the writer that Mr. Fuller was the one more likely to see the significance attached to the name than any of the others."¹⁹

PW received an invalid pension from the army for \$6/mo effective on 8 Jan 1889, after sending the pension board many affidavits including ones from doctors who had treated him.²⁰ He applied for an increase to his pension on 15 Feb 1895 and this was rejected on 5 May 1896. One gets the feeling that they had very little money near the end of his life. As a final note on the pension file, it contained a great number of affidavits and testimonials to support a widow's pension from the army. It is recorded that Zilpha received her last \$8 for the month of April 1901 as she died 1 June, 1901^{21,22} in St Paul where she is buried. He died on 24 Jan 1897 in Long Prairie, Minnesota, at age 73²³ and was buried there on 26 Jan 1897.²⁴

Endnotes

¹Death: At the home of his daughter, Mrs. D.A. Tufts, *Todd County Argus*, Long Prairie, MN, 28 Jan 1897, We also have a copy of an Obituary that appeared in the "Long Prairie Leader" which has expanded wording, but the date is unknown. Excerpts from the two documents:

Argus:

The funeral was held from the Baptist church, Tuesday afternoon, Rev. Chas. Poole, pastor of the Baptist church at Little Falls officiated and the remains were buried here.

Deceased was born at Boston, Mass., March 10th, 1823 and in 1842 was married to Miss Zilpha P. Buckman, who survives him. Before the age of 21 he began studying for the ministry and graduated from the Andover theological school and was a good Hebrew and Greek scholar. [we have not proven this to date]. He came to Todd county in 1870 and was the founder of and first pastor of the Baptist church here; which was built in 1873. He was also the founder of the Baptist church of Sauk Centre. His aged companion 72 years old and two sons and two daughters survive him.

Leader:

He was only sick a few days, and many did not even know he was ill until a day or so before he died. He had been ailing for a long time past, but he did not give up his church work till he was taken to his bed on Wednesday of last week. Week before last he was holding special cottage meetings about town and the following Sunday, just one week before he died, regardless of the storm, he was in his pulpit at the Baptist church and held services both morning and evening.

Rev. Fuller was a native of Massachusetts, born as he was in the city of Boston. At an early age he studied for the ministry and after graduating at Andover college took up the ministry as his life's work, and was actively engaged in this work all his life with the exception of three years during the war. At the breaking out of the rebellion he was pastor of one of the Baptist churches in the city of Cleveland, Ohio. During the year '61 he enlisted as a private in the 6th Ohio Vol. Inf. and was made chaplain of his company. He was mustered out in '64. In 1870 Mr. Fuller came to Long Prairie and shortly after organized the Baptist church at this place and was its first pastor. He also organized the Baptist church in Sauk Centre. Early in the '80's he removed to St. Paul and for about 12 years was assistant pastor of the First Baptist church in that city. During his residence in St. Paul he was a member of Acker post G. A. R., the first post of the city, and for a long time was its chaplain. At the time of his death he was an honored member and chaplain of E. T. Wood post, of this place. He was an active member of the G. A. R. ever since it was organized. Besides his aged wife he left two sons and two daughters to mourn. Hereinafter cited as Todd County Argus.

²Pulaski Woodman Fuller, Birth Registration, "Boston Church Records" The Records of the Churches of Boston. CD_ROM. Boston, Mass.: (Online database. NewEnglandAncestors.org.)

Copy in W.L. Fuller Books

Record reads "Pulaski Woodman, son of Sumner & [blank] FULLER" (Transcribed Record), New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

³Pulaski Woodman & Zilpha Perkins Buckman marriage, Recorded 14 Dec. 1842, in State of Vermont, Bernard Records 1774-1828, page 167: Attested: Hagel R. Davis, Town Clerk, Vital Records, Vermont, USA, Burlington, VT 05402, Vermont, Witnesses: Jerome Perkins & Lucia Perkins.

Copy in Book: Ful-PW1, p3. Hereinafter cited as Marriage Record PW & Zilpha.

⁴State of Massachusetts, *Vital Records, Massachusetts* (99-101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA: NEHGS), Massachusetts Vital Records to 1850 (Online Database: NewEnglandAncestors.org, New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2001-2008)., 1847 -Birth Birth Record for Amos(1) Woodman - PW is listed as a Spinner;

1848 -Birth Record of Laurilla - PW is listed as a Colporteur (seller of religious material);

1848 -Birth Record of Charles E.-PW is listed as a Colporteur;

1850 -Birth Record of George L. -PW is listed as a Bookseller;

1852 -Birth Record of Amos(2) -PW was listed as a Labourer;

1855 -Birth Record for Myron -PW is listed as an Auctioneer;

1856 -Birth Record of Jacob Henry -PW is listed as a Labourer. Hereinafter cited as *Vital Records, Massachusetts*.

⁵City Directories, Massachusetts: 1847, Lowell, MA -PW working for Hamilton Print (fabric) works, house, Lawrence St.;

1849, Lowell, MA -PW Colporteur (seller of religious material), house, Fayette St.;

1853, Lowell, MA -PW Hostler (stableman-horses), house #8 Middlesex St.;

1855, Lowell, MA -PW;

1857, Fall River, MA -Zilpha

, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Massachusetts. Hereinafter cited as City Directories, Massachusetts.

⁶US Federal & State Census, *USA Federal & State Census for the Fuller Family* (Obtained from Ancestry or NEHGS: USA Federal & State), 1850, Sept 13, Fed. Census -PW listed as a labourer. Hereinafter cited as *Census for Fuller*.

⁷Pulaski Woodman Fuller army pension file; Certificate No. 501.549; *Application No. 684.426* (700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, 20408-0001: National Archives and Records Administration).

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰"Baptist Church Records Research - PW Fuller", March, 2003, Baptist Historical Society (Pennsylvania, USA), to Wayne Fuller (Calgary, Canada), We can follow the ministerial activities of PW through publications of the "Vermont Chronicle" published in Bellows Falls, VT. He:

16 July 1865, Groton - performed a marriage

15 Nov 1865, Groton - ditto

25 Jan 1866, in Topsham, PW of Groton - performed a marriage

27 Jan 1866, Groton - ditto

06 Feb 1866, Groton - ditto

27 Aug 1866, Groton - ditto

25 Dec 1867, Groton - "On the afternoon and evening of Dec 25, the members of the Baptist Church and society in Groton made their annual donation visit to their pastor P.W. Fuller. They left with him and his family, cash and necessary articles to the amount of one hundred and en dollars, for which they have the thanks of the minister and his family."

22 Dec 1868, Groton - performed a marriage

12 May 1869, North Troy - "The labors of Rev. P.W. Fuller of North Troy, have been blessed the past winter and 12 converts were baptized into the fellowship of the Baptist Church."

02 Sept 1869, North Troy - performed a marriage

14 Jun 1871, Braintree - delivered a sermon during the annual Baptist Barre association meeting at Montpelier.

21 Jun 1871, Braintree - delivered a sermon during the annual Central Baptist Association meeting.

26 Aug 1871, Braintree - "Eight persons have recently been baptized at the Braintree Baptist church by the pastor, Rev. P.W. Fuller"; American Baptist Historical Society, Atlanta, Georgia. Hereinafter cited as "Baptist Church Research - PW Fuller."

¹¹*Census for Fuller*, 1860, July 9, Fed. Census shows PW (37) as a Baptist Minister. Also Zilpha (36), George L. (9), Myron (4), Mary Ann (1), Nackey E. (5/12).

¹²Baptist Historical Society, "Baptist Church Research - PW Fuller", He is listed as missionary pastor stationed in Long Prairie, MN. at the MN Baptist Convention on Sept 21, 1872, Rev. P.W. Fuller was welcomed as a new minister to the state. He had preached at the service the evening before.

¹³Pulaski Woodman Fuller army pension, Pension File, Certificate No. 501.549.

¹⁴*Census for Fuller*, The 1875, State census shows PW (52) in Reynolds Co., MN born MA. Also shown are wife (50), Myron (18), Mary A. (15), Charles W. (13), Nacky (6), George S. (21) b. MI - [son of PW's Brother George S.] & Dana Tufts (18).

The June 1, 1880 Federal census shows PW (57) in Reynolds, Todd Co., MN as a preacher. Also listed is his wife 'Polly' (56), Charles (18) and Nackey (11).

¹⁵Pulaski Woodman Fuller army pension, Pension File, Certificate No. 501.549.

¹⁶Baptist Historical Society, "Baptist Church Research - PW Fuller", According to the Minnesota Historical Society, The Baptist yearly minutes show PW as a minister:
1872-77, Long Prairie, Todd Co.
1878, Otto, Pope Co.; Pastor Lake Amelia; Clerk for the N. Baptist Ass.
1879-80, Long Prairie
1881, Glenwood, Polk Co.
1882, Clotho, Todd Co.
1884, Kasson, Dodge Co.
1885, Rushford, Fillmore Co.
1886-94, St. Paul, Ramsy Co.
1895, Sauk Center, Stearns Co.
1896-97, Long Prairie, Todd Co.

The minutes for the 38th Baptist State Convention for Central MN, (Oct 11-15, 1897) on p41 reveals the following, "Rev. P.W. Fuller, of Long Prairie, wile active in pastoral work at past three score and ten years, was taken suddenly into the presence of the Lord, whom he had faithfully served in pastores East and West, and as an army chaplin during the war of 1861. He was filling the place of chaplin of his Grand Army Post at the time of his death." On page 67 under 'Ministers Deceased' it lists "P.W. Fuller, Long Prarie, Jan, 1897."

¹⁷Author - unknown, *History of Olmsted, Winona & Dodge Counties, MN 1884* (Publication Information: Unknown, Published 1884), Page 889; Kasson history. Hereinafter cited as *History of Olmsted, Winona, Dodge Co. 1884*.

¹⁸*Census for Fuller*, The 1885, State census shows PW (62) in Kasson. Dodge Co., MN born MA. Also shown are wife Z. (61), Myron (29), Nacky (16), George (6) b. MN - [son of Myron].

The 1890 Federal census of Surviving Soldier, etc shows PW Rank, Corporal, E Co., 6 Ohio Inf., Date enlisted: 18 June 1861. Date discharged: 1864, Service, 3 Years, 3 Mo. Current Postal: 1090 Rice Street, St Paul, MN. Disability: Shot in left leg - Rheumatism, Remarks: discharged on surgeon certificate.

¹⁹PW Fuller -1882, Homestead #4722, Application #8115, NE32, Twp130, R34, W5: We have a copy of: the original application dated 10 April 1882; final fee payment dated 21 Nov 1882; Homestead Patent of 24 Nov 1883; Sale Deed dated 26 Oct 1886, Minnesota Historical Society and State Archives, St Paul - 55102-1906, Minnesota. Hereinafter cited as PW Fuller 1882 Homestead.

²⁰Pulaski Woodman Fuller army pension, Pension File, Certificate No. 501.549, The 'invalid' pension file we received on PW's application including all the affidavits is some 61 pages most in his hand writing. It appears that he started the process 28 Dec. 1888 and signed the claimants affidavit before a clerk on 8 Jan 1889. At various times in the application process, he was asked for additional detail and there are at times interesting accounts. Also it looks like in his retirement, he made it his life's work to try to get the pension and then an increase and as time went along there were more stories.

One account dated 5 May 1890 reads, "While on a march through Kentucky in Oct. 1862, I was attacked by what seemed to be traumatic erysipelas brought on by heat, dust and exposure. This disease developed into inflammatory rheumatism. On about the 27th day of Oct. 1862 I was sent from a camp near Somerset to a hospital in Bowling Green, KY. The disease stubbornly resisting hospital treatment, the surgeon (I do not remember his name) informed me that I never would be able to stand any more hard marches. I applied for my discharge but instead received a leave of absence and ordered home, with transportation to Cincinnati. My wife with our family gone to her Father's home in Barnard, Windsor Co. VT, I was assisted by friends to proceed thither. When so far relieved as to warrant a return to my regiment on the 23rd day of Jan. 1864 at camp Dennison, OH by reason of expiration of term of Service."

He goes on to say "I have not been permanently relieved and never able to perform manual labor, and for the last three years not been able to support myself and family. A total loss of property by fire, a daughter now 21 yrs of age (an invalid from birth) and a son dependent upon me for support, I have now at this late day applied for invalid pension. He goes on for another page explaining that he has no faith in the medical profession to treat rheumatism and that his wife does a better job and also the fire that destroyed his possessions also destroyed any prescriptions so gives the names of doctors at every place he was a minister. He ends "The above so far as I am able to give them, are the facts." [p2-3a-c]

His initial application was rejected and then on 24 March 1892 he wrote another affidavit to the pension review board and stated: "While on duty guarding a wagon train between McMinnville and Woodbury TN, about the middle of Aug. 1862, I received a gun shot wound in my left knee. The bullet was for spent and no bones were broken at the time, I regarded the wound as trifling and requested that no record be made of it, out of regard to my family.

With my limb bound up, I continued on duty. Shortly afterwards I took a severe cold that settled in my left knee resulting in traumatic erysipelas, with the limb swollen to twice the normal size. I was consigned to the hospital at Bowling Green, KY. And this I regard as the primary cause of the acute and chronic rheumatism from which I have suffered from that day to this and that such disabilities are not due to vicious habits and are to the best of my belief of a permanent character."

[p2-4]

Shortly after this submission the Pension Board legal review signed off on Sept 13, 1892 and medical review signed off on Oct 4, 1892, stating that the his rheumatism and resulting heart condition and wound to his left thigh would be worth \$8. The best part of this approval is that it was retroactive to 8 Jan 1898, but only for \$6[/mo]. [p2-5].

²¹Ibid.

²²*Census for Fuller*, The 1895, State census shows PW (72) in St. Paul, Ramsey Co., a minister. Also shown are wife Zilpha (71), Charles W. (33), Grace (24), Jessie (12), Annie (10) and Harry (1).

²³*Todd County Argus*, 28 Jan 1897.

²⁴*Ibid.*