

Sumner Fuller – Historical Profile

Lieutenant Sumner Fuller.¹ Sumner Fuller was born on 3 Jun 1799 at Newton, Middlesex, Massachusetts, USA, and was the ninth child of Deacon Joseph and Elizabeth Bacon who had 13 children of which five lived to have children of their own. Sumner is a fifth generation descendant of John Fuller (1611-1698) who is listed as one of the first settlers of Newton Massachusetts.^{2,3,4,5} On 7 Jun 1813, Sumner, sister Mindda and brother Jeremiah were named in a document filed at the Probate Court after their father's death for the purpose of naming Henry Craft as guardian of these three children who were not considered to be an 'adult' but were over the age of fourteen and were due consideration even though their father did not leave a Will. A similar document was filed for the three children under the age of fourteen.⁶ He was confirmed on 31 Aug 1817 in the Second Church of Newton.⁷ His school record at the Phillips Academy in Andover indicates that he was admitted on 9 Dec 1817 and left in August 1818. His subjects would have been Latin, Bible or Religion, Philosophy, possibly German or French, English and one or more of the classics. Boys on scholarship might have had the opportunity to learn candle making, carpentry, housekeeping or farming.^{8,9} The 1820 census shows the Josiah Greenleaf family in South Parish, Andover as well as Mrs. Phebe Abbot, where Sumner Fuller boarded in 1817-18, so we assume this is the time and place that Sumner met his future wife, Mary H. Greenleaf.¹⁰

In the spring of 1819 Sumner Fuller along with his brother Joel and four other young people taught Sunday school to thirty children in the first Sabbath School at the Second Church of Newton.¹¹ On 18 Nov 1821 he was discharged from that Second Church in Newton^{12,13} and 21 Jan 1822 was admitted to the Old South Church in Boston (where his son Pulaski was baptized in 1823).¹⁴ He married Mary H. Greenleaf, daughter of Josiah Greenleaf and Mary Harvey, on 30 Apr 1822 at Andover, Essex, Massachusetts.¹⁵ On 16 Nov 1823 Sumner was dismissed from the Old South Church in Boston to the Phillips Street Church in South Boston.¹⁶ About July 1822, Sumner was recruited to the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, also known as the Military Company of the Massachusetts. His rank was ensign in the Third Regiment, Third Brigade, First Division, M.V.M., 1822-3, and Lieutenant from 1824 to 1827 inclusive. He was honorably discharged from the Artillery Company on Sept. 4 1826.¹⁷ On 10 Dec 1823 the 'Evangelical Congregational Church of South Boston' (also known as the Phillips St. Church) was formed and Sumner Fuller is listed as one of the 13 founding Members. A publication dated 1832, indicates that Mary H. Fuller became a member on 8 Feb. 1824 and that both she and Sumner had been dismissed to another church, likely Andover where they later moved.^{18,19}

We know they lived in Boston between 1821 and 1830. The 1821 Boston Tax List shows him residing in Ward 12, on Washington St. and the city directories show that after they were married he was listed as: 1822 - a tallow chandler; 1823/25/26 - as truckman in rear 740 Washington street. The 1828/29/30 city directories show him as a laborer and soap boiler living at the rear of 4th street, South Boston where his soap works was located. These entries show us that he was a Chandler or candle and soap maker, which was fairly new profession at this time.^{20,21} Sumner Fuller is listed as member (volunteer) of the 1827 Engine Company No. 12, of the Boston Fire Department which was located at the Franklin School House, Washington Street.²² He is also listed as being the treasurer of the South Boston branch of the American Tract Society in their 27 May 1929 publication. This organization was founded in New York in 1825 for the publication of religious material, and still exists today.²³ Sumner and his family appeared on the census of 1830, ward 12, at Boston.²⁴ Sumner's name appeared as a contact in a newspaper ad in the Boston Courier, when his father-in-law, Josiah Greenleaf, sold his house in Andover. Shortly after this time Sumner moved his business to Andover as we know that his son Edwin was born in Andover, Sept 1830.²⁵

A biography of Sumner's son, William Greenleaf Fuller, who was a famous American in his own right, in the 1882 'History of Gallia County' by James Averill, made the following statement, "His father Sumner Fuller was a prominent man, a graduate of Yale college, a soap and tallow chandler in Boston and Andover Massachusetts. In 1834 he met with an almost fatal accident; removed to Charleston, South Carolina, for his health, but died there in 1838. His death left his Widow with the care of seven children and a small patrimony. These children are all alive, as a monument to their mother's faithfulness. She too is still living."²⁶

The following was extracted from an Andover church history book: "Sumner Fuller: Feb 28, 1834 Received at the South Church of Andover from the West Church of Andover. Sept 11, and in 1836 Removed from the South Church in Andover to the 3rd Presbyterian Church of Charleston SC. Mary H (Greenleaf) Fuller: Feb 28, 1834 Received at the South Church of Andover from the West Church of Andover. July 30, 1837 Removed from the South Church in Andover to the 3rd Presbyterian Church of Charleston SC."²⁷

We assume that Sumner moved to Charleston shortly after 11 September, 1836.²⁸ He is listed in a Charleston City Directory as living in North St Phillips Street showing the profession of Chandler. There is also a Benjamin Fuller listed at the same address; perhaps a relative. A search of the archives in Charleston did not find his death record. A note from the city archives indicated that North Phillips Street was not included in the Charleston County in 1839 and therefore not included in the Historical Records of that county.^{29,30} Sumner's daughter who married Simeon Richardson included an entry in the Richardson family bible, which shows that her father, Sumner Fuller, died 3 June 1839 in Charleston at the age of 40. A search through the Charleston, South Carolina archives did not produce a death certificate, Will, or burial place.^{31,32,33}

Our search for a burial record, date or place ended in failure.

1. We have the Andover church record showing that Sumner and wife Mary H. were discharged from the Andover church to the 3rd Presbyterian Church in Charleston SC in 1836 and 1837 respectively.

2. Our research discovered that the 3rd Presbyterian Church was renamed the Central Presbyterian Church shortly before the Civil War. In 1882 it was renamed Westminster Presbyterian Church and that church still existed as of our research in 2015.

3. We discovered through the National Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia PA, that the records for the third Presbyterian Church of Charleston were now archived at the Columbia Seminary in Decatur, Georgia.

4. We then reviewed the archive record index and found that one box contained all the birth, marriage, death and burial records for the 3rd Presb. Church of Charleston 1822-1881, so we were hopeful. These archives were open to the public so we searched the records for Sumner Fuller with no success.

5. During this research we discovered that the cemetery for the 3rd Presb. Church in Charleston had been abandoned and sold. However prior to it being abandoned, all known interments along with any grave stones or grave markers were moved to Riverview Memorial Park Cemetery in Charleston and reinterred there. We found a book of gravestone inscriptions for the 3rd Presb. Church Cemetery and a list of the persons moved and Sumner Fuller was not on that list. The researcher from Charleston said that if our Sumner was interred without a marker he likely would not have been moved and as it turned out the land where that cemetery was located (2015) is a paved over parking lot.³⁴

Endnotes

¹Records of the Old South Church of Boston, MA, Record of Baptism - PW Fuller: Our family researchers first found Sumner's name on a Baptism Record for PW Fuller in Jan 2009, after 20 years of searching for PW's father. DNA confirmed our connection to an existing Fuller line, (Date: May 25, 1823), New England Historic Genealogical Society, 99-101 Newbury Street, Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts, USA. Hereinafter cited as Baptism Record, PW Fuller.

²USA State of Massachusetts, *Vital Records, Massachusetts* (99-101 Newbury Street, Boston, MA: Publisher: NEHGS - Online), Massachusetts Vital Records to 1850 (Online Database: NewEnglandAncestors.org, New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2001-2010), Newton Births, Volume I, page 75. Also a hand written document from Newton town published Jan 1, 1854 - Vital Statistics to 1850. Hereinafter cited as *Vital Records, Massachusetts*.

³Richards Family Bible (5 hand written pages have survived), *Mr and Mrs. Simeon E. Richards Family Bible (hand written pages)* (Publisher information not available: These are the hand written pages from the Family Bible, Copy Received in 2010); Owner: Randall Berry, Maine, USA. Hereinafter cited as Bible, Simeon E. Richards Family.

⁴Education for Sumner Fuller, School file containing basic information and a letter from the 2nd Church of Newton, 1817, File #1817, Phillips Academy, Andover MA, Andover, Essex, Massachusetts, USA.

⁵Lineage application of membership in the Ohio Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, National File No. 72716; State File No. 4026, Applied to the National Society Sons of the American Revolution through the Ohio State branch, Douglas Kerr Fuller made this application on May 17, 1950 and received a certified membership on June 21, 1950. This application was based on an attached lineage of his ancestor, Joseph Fuller b. July 29, 1751 and d. Feb 23, 1813, who had been reported to be in the Revolutionary War in two history books, which Douglas Fuller quoted in his application., even though his ancestor, Joseph Fuller b. 1751 is the father of our Sumner Fuller, Douglas K. Fuller has a b. date of June 3, 1797 which is not the correct Sumner Fuller and he also has a d. date of Jan 3, 1839, which is not correct for our Sumner Fuller - he has referenced the wrong Sumner Fuller.

⁶Minda and Jeremiah and Sumner Fuller, Probate upon the death of Deacon Joseph Fuller, to name Henry Craft as guardian Probate #8764, New England Historic Genealogical Society, 99-101 Newbury Street, Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts, USA, The probate application was for the children over the age of 14 and was signed by Josiah Fuller, Justice of the Peace on 7 June 1813 and was granted by James Prescott, Prob. Judge on 15 June 1813. Hereinafter cited as Probate Record - Henry Craft, Guardian.

⁷Education for Sumner Fuller, School file containing basic information and a letter from the 2nd Church of Newton, 1817 Phillips Academy, Andover MA.

⁸Library, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA T W Sprattler-Interim Archivist, "Attendance of Sumner Fuller at the Phillips Academy, Andover, MA," e-mail message from T W Sprattler (Andover, Massachusetts) to W Fuller, received 6 April 2010, Sumner is listed in the 1903 publication of students 1778 to 1830 and says: "Sumner Fuller, 18, Newton, son of Dea. Joseph Fuller and Elizabeth Bacon. At Mrs. Phebe Abbot's. Left 1818. In business in Boston for a few years". Hereinafter cited as "Email, Phillips Academy, Sumner."

⁹Education for Sumner Fuller, School file containing basic information and a letter from the 2nd Church of Newton, 1817 Phillips Academy, Andover MA, Shows that the parents were Dea. Joseph and Elizabeth Bacon and that he was in S. Boston until 1830. There is a note at the bottom that says: "# Ch. Record at W.N., put as his baptism was in '99, the birth in '97 may have been another child of same name. Confirm? age above."

The letter from the 2nd Church of Newton:

West Newton, June 9, [18]86

[To] Rev. CC Carpenter [at Phillips Academy]

Dear Sirs:

Mr. Ferber sent me some days ago your letter of inquiry related to Sumner Fuller, he finding no mention of him (Sumner) on the 1st Ch. Records. As clerk of the 2nd Cong. Ch. of Newton (Rev. Mr. Patrick's), I am able to give you some of the desired information, but have had no time to look it up till today. Joseph Fuller (one of my earliest predecessors in the office of Deacon of this church) united with the church together with his wife Joanna, on profession of faith, March 10, 1782. A child of them (Betsey) was baptized in July of that year. This wife (Joanna) died two years later, in 1784. This Joseph Fuller, who subsequently became Deacon, married again, his second wife was Elizabeth also meeting with this church on profession. From this 2nd marriage the first child born was baptized in 1786 (Joel), and he also become Deacon in later years. Then follow the baptism of 12 more children, of Joseph & Elizabeth Fuller, the last in 1807. The 9th child from this 2nd marriage, was Sumner and he was born in 1797, and was baptized July 1799, uniting with the church on profession Aug 31 1817, and removed his relation from this to the Old South Church in Boston Nov 18, 1821. Since this last date (1821) I find no further mention of Sumner. His father Dea. Joseph Fuller died in 1813 and his mother Elizabeth in 1819.

If I can aid you further, I will do so with pleasure.

Respectfully yours,

Julius L. Clark [he appears in the Church History as being a Clerk 1863 - 1899]

Excuse my hastily written letter. [I] should like to know if it reaches you safely.

¹⁰US Federal & State Census Data, *USA Federal & State Census which shows our Greenleaf Family* (Obtained from Ancestry or NEHGS: USA Federal & State), The Josiah Greenleaf family is listed as having: Males; 1 - 10-16; 1 - under 26; 1 over 45. Females; 14 - under 10; 1 under 26; 1 over 45, for a total of 6 people. The 1820 census was taken on the first Monday in August. Hereinafter cited as *Census data for the Greenleaf Family*.

¹¹West Newton Church Committee dated Nov. 8 1881, *Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Organization of the Second Church of Newton* (No 1 Somerset Street, Boston, MA: Beacon Press: Thomas Todd, Printer, Published 1882), There is a chapter on the "Sabbath School History" and on page 121 they state: The first Sabbath school in New England was formed in Beverly, MA in 1810..... "We are celebrating the 100th birthday of this church and the Sabbath school is a child of the church The life and work of the Sabbath school has therefore an appropriate place in the history...."

On page 122: " At nine o'clock on a Sabbath morning in the spring of 1819, there gathered in that plain school-room Joseph Jackson, Joel Fuller, Sumner Fuller, Adolphus Smith, Elisabeth Smith and Mary Stearns. With these assembled about 30 boys and girls, and then and there was held the first session of what we now call 'our Sabbath school'. Hereinafter cited as *Book, Second Church of Newton, 1882 - One Hundredth Anniversary*.

¹²Church Record: Admitted to the Old South Church, Sumner Fuller was admitted 21 Jan 1822 and discharged to Church in South Boston 16 Nov 1823, Old South Church of Boston, Church Record showing that Sumner Fuller was admitted 21 Jan 1822 and discharged to Church in South Boston 16 Nov

1823, NEHGS: 99-101 Newbury Street, Boston; Ful-Sum, page 13, New England Historic Genealogical Society, 99-101 Newbury Street, Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts, USA. Hereinafter cited as Church Record, Old South Church Boston.

¹³Education for Sumner Fuller, School file containing basic information and a letter from the 2nd Church of Newton, 1817 Phillips Academy, Andover MA.

¹⁴Church Record: Admitted to the Old South Church, Sumner Fuller was admitted 21 Jan 1822 and discharged to Church in South Boston 16 Nov 1823, Church Record, Old South Church Boston.

¹⁵Town Records compiled from Church Records, *Vital Records of Andover Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1849* (Topsfield, MA: Published by the Topsfield Historical Society, 1912), Andover Marriages, Volume III, page 145+159. Sumner of Boston; South Parish Congregational Church. Also hand written document from the Andover town clerk which shows they were married by Rev. Justin Edwards. Hereinafter cited as *Vital Records, Andover, MA*.

¹⁶Church Record: Admitted to the Old South Church, Sumner Fuller was admitted 21 Jan 1822 and discharged to Church in South Boston 16 Nov 1823, Church Record, Old South Church Boston.

¹⁷Oliver Ayer Roberts, *History of the Military Company of Massachusetts, Now Called the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts: 1637-1888* (Harvard University, Boston, MA: A. Mudge & Sons, Published 1898), A quote on page 1, from the "History of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Co." by Zachariah G. Whitman, published Boston, 1842 says: "This Company was the first regular organized Company in America. It may be considered the gem from which all our military character in New England, if not in all the United States has sprung; and to the formation of this company may, therefore, be justly attributed the decided superiority of the New England Militia". Hereinafter cited as *Book, History of the Military Co. of MA, 1898*.

¹⁸Joy H. Fairchild, *Articles of Faith and Form of Covenant Adopted by the Evangelical Congregational Church in South Boston, Together with a list of Members* (Boston, MA: Press of Putnam and Damrell, Published 1832), 1832; Deacons: Jeremy Drake & Marcus Whiting; Clerk: Alvin Simons; Treasurer: Samuel Gale. Hereinafter cited as *Book, Evang. Congr. Church of South Boston*.

¹⁹Thomas C. Simons, *History of South Boston Formerly 'Dorchester Neck' now Ward XII of the City of Boston* (84 Washington St. Boston, MA: Press David Clapp, Published 1857), Pages 163-167. Hereinafter cited as *Book, History of South Boston*.

²⁰City Directories for various Cities in USA: Boston City Directories. He did not appear on the city directories for 1831/32/33 nor in 1820/21 but did appear in the 'Tax List' for Boston in 1821 (also from NEHGS), New England Historic Genealogical Society, 99-101 Newbury Street, Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts, USA. Hereinafter cited as City Directories, USA.

²¹Oliver Ayer Roberts, *Book, History of the Military Co. of MA, 1898*.

²²Published by Order of the Central Department of the City of Boston, compiler, *Book, Documents of the City of Boston* (City Printers: City of Boston, MA), Documents of the City of Boston for the Year 1868, Vol. I, (Contains documents from No. 1 to No. 40 inclusive); Published by Order of the Central Department of the City of Boston; Alfred Mudge & Son, City Printers, 34 School Street, Boston, MA, Published 1869. pp 218 & 225 list the people at each Depot and details the Dire Department organization for 1827. Hereinafter cited as *Docs of the City of Boston*.

²³Read, *Annual Report of the American Tract Society Boston with Lists of Auxiliaries, Benefactors, Depositories, Etc.* (32, Congress St., Boston, MA: Press T.R. Marvin, Published 27 May 1829), Page 29 shows the contribution of the S. Boston society as 1828-\$7.52; 1829-\$7.75 with a total from when they were organized in 1827 of \$23.35 (1827=\$8.08). Hereinafter cited as *Book, American Tract Society, Boston*.

²⁴US Federal & State Census Data, *USA Federal & State Census data showing our Fuller Family* (Obtained from Ancestry or NEHGS: USA Federal & State), 1830 Census, Boston, Ward 12, Page 457, Sumner Fuller; Males: 1 under 5 yrs [William - 3]; 2 under 10 yrs [PW-7, George-5]; 1 30-40 yrs [Sumner-31]; Females, 1 under 5 yrs [Mary E.-1]; 1 of 15-20 yrs[?]; 1 30-40 yrs[Mary H.-31]. (No names on the census). Hereinafter cited as *Census data for the Fuller Family*.

²⁵"Research Notes and Data re: the Fuller Family," Author: J Ward (Canada), to W Fuller (Canada), Copy of the Boston Courier for May 20, 1830, issue #459, classified ads, Col 'A'. Heading 'Real Estate for sale in Andover'. A two story wooden dwelling house convenient for one family or two, together with a half acre of land under and adjoining the same, well stocked with fruit trees." It goes on to say "For particulars apply to Josiah Greenleaf, on the premises, to Merrill Pettengill of Andover or Sumner Fuller of South Boston"; Research Material, W. Fuller, Canada. Hereinafter cited as "Research Notes, Fuller Family."

²⁶James Averill, *History of Gallia County - A Condensed History of the County [OH]; Biographical Sketches; General Statistics; Miscellaneous Matters, etc.; Map of the County* (Chicago and Toledo: H.H. Hardesty & Co., Publishers, Published 1882). Hereinafter cited as *Book, History of Gallia County Ohio*.

²⁷George Moorar, *Historical Manual of the South Church of Andover Mass.* (Boston, Mass.: Warren Draper, Published Aug. 1859), Mary H is shown as a widow in the 'Covenant of the South Church of Andover with a Catalogue of Surviving Members' dated Jan 3, 1848; Printed by William H. Wardwell, 1848, Andover. Page 27 shows:

"Mary H. Fuller, w. admitted Feb. 28, 1834". [ful-sum,p24b]. Hereinafter cited as *Historical Manual of the South Church of Andover Mass.*

²⁸Ibid., Sumner: Sept 11, 1836 Removed from the South Church in Andover to the 3rd Presbyterian Church of Charleston SC.

Mary H: July 30, 1837 Removed from the South Church in Andover to the 3rd Presbyterian Church of Charleston SC.

²⁹City Directories, USA: Page 106, Charleston, South Carolina, 1840/41, says Fuller, S., Chandler, n. St. Phillips Street. [Note: info for the prior year].

³⁰Interview with Archivist Molly French (Charleston, South Carolina), by W Fuller, April 2010. Charleston County Archives (South Carolina History Room, Charleston County Public Library, 68 Calhoun Street, Charleston, Charleston, South Carolina, USA 29401, 843-805-6956), In a telephone interview, I was told: "I have checked every possible record we have here and have not found Sumner Fuller.

The only conclusion I can come to is that he perhaps died outside the city of Charleston limits (at that time the City of Charleston was considered from the tip of the peninsula north to Calhoun/Boundary Street).

In that case, it is unlikely that you will find a death record.

Good luck with your genealogy."

She also says: "N. St. Phillips Street would have been Charleston District (later Charleston County).

The county office is not a historical repository, we (Charleston County Public Library) are the repository for historical county records. We do not have any other records to check for his death.

Many historical documents no longer exist."

³¹Bible, Simeon E. Richards Family, Family and published information say that he died in Charleston, SC.

³²James Averill, *Book, History of Gallia County Ohio*, Page 43 - sited that Sumner died in Charleston.

³³Interview, Molly French, April 2010.

³⁴Research Notes Fuller Family