



*General Henry S. Sanford*

## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES**

- 1823, June 15      Henry Shelton Sanford born in Woodbury, Connecticut; son of Nehemiah Curtis and Nancy Bateman Shelton Sanford, both of whom were descended from "a long line of Yankee stock". Nehemiah Curtis Sanford was a direct descendant through his mother of Thomas Welles, the first colonial governor of Connecticut. He was also an influential citizen, having served in the Connecticut State Senate.
- 1829 - 1836      Henry's early education was by private tutors.
- 1836                Sanford family moved to Derby, Connecticut. Here the elder Sanford organized, in partnership with his brother-in-law, Edward N. Shelton, the Shelton Tack Company.
- 1837, May-July    Henry made a trip west to Michigan, primarily to look over his father's land holdings.

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| 1837, September | Entered the Episcopal Academy at Cheshire, Connecticut.   |
| 1839            | Graduated from Episcopal Academy. Entered Washington College (now Trinity College) in Hartford, Connecticut. Here "he distinguished himself by his scholastic attainments."   |
| 1840, December  | While a member of the Sophomore Class in good standing, an asthmatic condition caused his eyes to deteriorate to the point that he was forced to give up his studies and take a recommended sea voyage.   |
| 1841, August    | Sailed for Europe.  |
| 1842, August    | Made trip from Boston to Smyrna. Visited Constantinople, Malta, the Alps, and other places of interest.   |
| 1843, April     | Returned to the United States.  |
| 1844, July-Sept | Made trip to Michigan.  |
| 1845, March-May | Toured England.   |
| 1846, June-July | Made western trip.  |
| 1847            | Made Secretary of the American Legation at St. Petersburg.  |
| 1848            | Made Acting Secretary of the American Legation at Frankfort, Germany, under the direction of Andrew Jackson Donelson, Minister.   |
| 1848, October   | Attended Heidelberg and was tutored by Dr. Levita.  |
| 1849, April     | Took examination and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Laws cum laude from the University of Heidelberg.  |
| 1849, June      | Returned to the United States and made a three-week trip to Michigan.   |
| 1849, October   | Appointed Secretary of the American Legation at Paris, France, by President Zachary Taylor.   |
| 1850-1853       | Arranged the first postal convention between France and the United States and was influential in forming the international postal agreement between the two countries. Also made a voluminous report on the French internal administration which was published by Congress as an authoritative report on the French |

- government. In addition produced a scholarly document, "The Penal Codes of Europe" which was included in President Pierce's 1853 Report to Congress, and was later used by law schools in the United States in their work on criminal codes.
- 1853 Made Charge d'affaires at Paris.
- 1854 Resigned his diplomatic post in Paris and returned to the United States.
- 1855, January Took charge of the "Aves Island Case" for his uncle, Philo S. Shelton of Boston.
- 1857-1860 Made trips to Central and South America on behalf of United States business interests in the Latin American countries of Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, and Honduras.
- 1859 Conducted the negotiations for the Venezuelan Convention which decided the "Aves Island Case" but the settlement did not take place for many years.
- 1860 Efforts made to save the Union. Made a trip to Springfield to see Lincoln.
- 1861, March Appointed by President Lincoln as United States Minister to Belgium. This was Lincoln's first diplomatic appointment.
- 1861-1869 Maintained the post of Minister to Belgium and formed warm personal friendships with Leopold I and II. Served as fiscal agent for the United States and supervised its secret service during the war. He negotiated and signed the treaties of the Scheldt, a convention summoned to deal with commerce, navigation, naturalization, and trademarks. He made numerous reports to the United States government on such subjects as "The Revenue System of Belgium," "The Belgium Excise Laws," "The Courts of Audit and Accounts, the Bankruptcy Laws," and others. He devoted much time and money to the promotion of the cause of the Union.
- 1864, September Married Gertrude Ellen DuPuy, descendant of a prominent French family who had settled in Pennsylvania. Her mother died when she was quite young and Gertrude had spent most of her life in Europe with relatives. There were seven children — two sons and five daughters.
- 1869 Purchased Oakley sugar-plantation in Louisiana.

- 1870 Purchased "Sanford Grant" containing twenty—three square miles, in South Central Florida.
- 1872 Started the town of Sanford, "the Gate City to South Florida" and planted an orange grove of one hundred acres at St. Gertrude, west of the village which bore his name.
- 1873 Moved his orange grove to "Belair" nearer Sanford.
- 1875 Built two large hotels—the Sanford House and the Monroe House—and the Moyle Store. Sanford was founded as the first "dry" town in Florida.
- 1876 Wrote a highly publicized letter to Thurlow Weed of New York in which he put forth a Southern viewpoint of the political implications of the coming elections. Tried to establish the Republican Party in Florida on white rather than Negro representation.
- 1876 Delegate of the American Geographical Society to a conference called by King Leopold II of Belgium to organize the African International Association with the purpose of opening up equatorial Africa to civilizing influences. Made a member of the Executive Committee.
- 1877 Created a Grand Officer of the Order of Leopold.
- 1878-1880 Beset with labor difficulties on his large tract of land he brought one hundred adult immigrants from Sweden to Florida where they worked for him a year for their passage. The Swedes founded the town of New Upsala.
- 1878-1882 Worked for the establishment of stations along the Congo for civilizing purposes.
- 1880 Organized the Florida Land and Colonization Society of which he became the president and the largest stockholder.
- 1880 General and Mrs. Ulysses S. Grant visited Sanford to turn the first sod for the new South Florida railroad.
- 1881 Florida Land and Colonization Society brought seventy-five more Swedish immigrants to Sanford.
- 1884 President Chester Arthur visited Sanford at his Florida home for three days.

- 1884 Tried unsuccessfully to get Congressional Agricultural Committee to establish an experiment station in Florida. Started his “Tropical Garden” near Sanford and supervised remarkable experiments in plant and fruit growth.
- 1884, November Stanley and Sanford spent the winter in Berlin working with United States Minister, John A. Kasson to make secure with European powers certain concessions. The Independent State of the Congo was a result of their efforts.
- 1886, January A great freeze destroyed much of the “Tropical Garden” in Florida and Sanford lost interest in it.
- 1886 Organized at Brussels and dispatched to the Congo and its tributaries the Sanford Exploring Expedition for the purpose of scientific and commercial discovery and for the purpose of opening up of an interior trade. His steamboats – “Florida” and “New York” – were the first commercial steamers to penetrate the waters of the upper Congo.
- 1888 Failure to enlist American capital in the Congo enterprise caused the liquidation of the Sanford Exploring Expedition and the establishment of the Belgian Anonymous Society which was the first commercial company to enter into regular operation on the Upper Congo.
- 1890 Attended the Anti-Slavery Conference at Brussels as Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary for the United States. He worked for the abolition of the liquor traffic and the slave trade in the Congo.
- 1891, May 21 Henry S. Sanford died.
- 1901, June 1 Mrs. H. S. Sanford died.