

DAVID ALLEN OF WESTON, STOCKBRIDGE, CLAVERACK AND NOBLETOWN

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Membership records of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints contain information about two brothers, Daniel and Joseph Stewart Allen, who became members in 1831 in Ohio and were in Nauvoo, Illinois, in 1840. The brothers stated that they were born in Whitestown, Oneida, New York, that their parents were Dr. Daniel Allen and Nancy Stewart.¹ Daniel gave his birth date as 9 December 1804 and Joseph Stewart gave his as 25 June 1806, 1808 or 1810. (Apparently he wasn't sure of his age.)

While he was in Nauvoo, Daniel Allen gave the names of his parents, grandparents and his Allen great-grandparents, as well as some aunts and uncles, but did not give any birthdates or birthplaces. He stated that his grandparents were Joseph and Rachel Allen and his great-grandparents David and Martha Allen.² In 1878 Daniel gave the birthplace of his father as Vermont and named David Allen as his grandfather born in America.³

A history of Erie County, New York, contains several references to Dr. Daniel Allen, who in 1817 was the first physician in Hamburg Village. He was a charter member of the Erie County Medical Society in 1821.⁴ In 1823 Daniel and his sons Daniel, John and Albert were named as residents of Montville Township, Geauga County, Ohio.⁵

Daniel Allen and Nancy Stewart were married in Colrain, Franklin County, Massachusetts, 12 September 1793. (A marginal note states that Daniel Allen went to the Western Reserve.)⁶

Daniel Allen was born in Lenox, Berkshire, Mass., 25 July 1770, to Joseph Allen and his wife Rachel, who died shortly after Daniel's birth on 20 August 1770. Daniel was her first child.⁷ This record, found by a relative a few years ago, confirms the statement by the grandson, Daniel, that his grandparents were Joseph and Rachel, although he was mistaken about his father's birth state. In the 1850

census of Geauga County, Ohio, Daniel Allen stated that he was born in Massachusetts and was aged 79 years.⁸

Joseph Allen married Anna as his second wife, but only two of their children are recorded in the vital records: Rachel, 7 March 1772; and Isaac, 12 February 1774.⁹ The identity of Joseph's first wife Rachel remains unsolved. She might have been a Loomis because her son Daniel named a son Albert Loomis Allen. There was a Samuel Loomis and his unnamed wife who were admitted to the Congregational Church in Great Barrington 23 February 1752. Samuel died 27 October 1758 and his wife died two days later. Their daughter Rachel was dismissed from the Great Barrington Church 29 July 1768, and her brother David was dismissed the same day. There are several children recorded for David: Maria b. 10 June 1753, Lydia b. 31 August 1755 and Eunice b. 12 June 1757. If David was about 26 when the first child was born his birth date was around 1726 and a sister born about that time would have been older than the probable wife of Joseph Allen.¹⁰ Another Rachel Loomis was born 5 August 1735 in Windsor, Connecticut, a daughter of Benjamin Loomis and Joanna Alvord. Benjamin Loomis never moved to Berkshire County, Massachusetts, but some of his relatives did. There was a Rachel Loomis born 16 May 1742 in Westfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts. It cannot be assumed, however, that the wife of Joseph Allen was a Loomis without stronger evidence than is now available.

Joseph Allen of Lenox was listed in the 1790 federal census with ten in the family: two males over 16, three males under 16, and five females.¹¹ The family was not in the 1800 census of Berkshire County. In his 1840 list of his uncles and aunts, Daniel Allen added to Rachel and Isaac: Stephen, Rebecca, Mary, Ruth, David, Timothy, Abijah, Mary, Polly, and Martha. Joseph Stewart Allen, in another LDS church record, added an uncle Jeremiah. In this record he named David Allen as his grandfather, born in New York.¹²

An early Berkshire County land record of Joseph Allen, the grandfather of Daniel and Joseph Stewart Allen, is a Berkshire County quitclaim deed dated 2 October 1772, in which Josiah Jones, gentleman, and Elijah Jones, both of Stockbridge stated: "Whereas Joseph Allen and David Allen both of Lenox paid to our honored father Josiah Jones . . . the sum of fifty pounds for a tract of land, 100

acres lot #19 in 1st division . . . lot is the same where Joseph and David now live . . . father in his lifetime made a deed of sale . . . the dwelling house being consumed by fire, deed consumed. . . give grant and quitclaim . . ."¹³

This deed suggests that Joseph Allen had a brother named David, pointing to the possibility that his father was also David, as first stated by Joseph's grandson Daniel. The brother David Allen sold his fifty acres to Noah Yale of Lenox for 110 pounds in a deed dated 27 September 1773 and Joseph Allen sold his fifty acres to Allen Metcalf of Sharon, Connecticut, in a deed dated 14 June 1793.¹⁴

Records of the Stockbridge Congregational Church list David Allen as having been admitted to the church 13 January 1765¹⁵ and David Allen with his wife Lucy had a son David born at Lenox 17 October 1772.¹⁶ A David Allen served in John Brown's Berkshire County Regiment in 1777. A Joseph Allen of Stockbridge also served fourteen days in 1777.¹⁷

Several contemporary Joseph Allens in western Massachusetts needed to be identified. One Joseph Allen was a chainman (surveyor of highways) in Lenox on 17 November 1769.¹⁸ Another Joseph Allen was listed among those submitting expense accounts for Stockbridge Indians, 15 December 1752.¹⁹ He received 50 acres in Stockbridge in a deed dated 1 November 1742.²⁰

Efforts have been made to place Joseph Allen, the father of Daniel, in Vermont, probably because of the statement by Daniel Allen that his father was born in Vermont, and possibly also because of a deed in which a Joseph Allen and others sold shares in a township in Castletown, New Hampshire, in the area that later became Rutland County, Vermont (land originally granted to Samuel Brown). This deed was dated 24 October 1765.²¹ The Joseph Allen named in this deed was probably the Joseph Allen in Stockbridge as early as 1742.

In regard to the land in what later became Vermont, a history of that state tells that beginning in 1761, following the surrender of the French in Canada in 1760, Governor Wentworth of New Hampshire made many land grants west of the Connecticut River; 63 new townships were formed. Every grantee was to plant and cultivate five acres within five years or forfeit his grant or share.²² A charter was granted to Samuel Brown of Stockbridge, 22 September 1761, but

there is no evidence that he (or other who bought shares in the land) ever acted with the proprietors of Rutland County, Vermont.²³

It is not feasible that Joseph Allen was "of Vermont" for several reasons: First, he was living in Massachusetts in 1770. Second, there were very few English settlers in Vermont before 1760. A third reason is that the settlers of Berkshire County, Massachusetts came mostly from Connecticut and from eastern Massachusetts.

The fact that both Daniel and Joseph S. Allen repeatedly named a grand or great-grandfather as David led to a continuing search for a David Allen who had sons named Joseph and David living in Lenox by 1770. A query in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* told of a David Allen who was a blacksmith in Claverack, New York, at the time of the final settling of his father's estate in 1753.²⁴ As Claverack is just a few miles over the state line from Lenox, this seemed to be a possible clue to the identity of the father of Joseph Allen.

David Allen of Claverack was evidently the son of (Ensign) Joseph Allen and his second wife Abigail of Weston, Middlesex County, Massachusetts, born in Weston 26 September 1714. The father Joseph Allen died 1 November 1729.²⁵ A study of the documents in the intestate estate revealed interesting clues about the family. One of the men who took inventory was Josiah Jones.²⁶ Another neighbor involved in the estate was Benjamin Brown. Following Benjamin Brown's death on 11 March 1752,²⁷ his estate made payment to the surviving heirs of Joseph Allen.²⁸ This was the final settlement of the estate in which David Allen was mentioned as being a blacksmith in Claverack. (David's mother Abigail who had married (2) George Robbins, died in Weston 20 March 1753.)²⁹

Josiah Jones married a daughter of Benjamin Brown,³⁰ and a history of Watertown (part of which became Weston) states that Josiah Jones was dismissed to Housatonic (Stockbridge) in 1739.³¹ He received lot #19 in the first division in Lenox, land he later sold to Joseph and David Allen.³²

Benjamin Brown (junior) was on a list of about 75 men to whom the Stockbridge Indians granted land for two new townships in Berkshire County, in a deed dated 27 September 1756, as also was David Allen. David was one of the smaller stockholders and probably would have received about 20 acres, although a recorded

deed for this land has not been found.³³

Stockbridge has an interesting history. John Sargeant of New Haven accepted a call to establish a mission to the Indians in Berkshire County, which because of the hilly terrain, boundary disputes with New York State and hostile Indians, was settled much later than the Connecticut Valley. A few "families of Piety" were selected to accompany the minister, and four families arrived in 1737-8. Among these settlers was Josiah Jones, and there were twelve unnamed families who had arrived by 1749. It is possible that David Allen, whose father was called "Ensign" in Weston, was among them. Unfortunately the earliest vital records of Stockbridge are missing.

Two deeds in Hampden County mention Mary Weldon, daughter of James Weldon and Mary Lamb. The first names her as a niece of Thomas Lamb of Springfield, the second names her as the wife of David Allen of Stockbridge, the first dated 1 October 1729 and the second 6 February 1744/5.³⁴ This second deed shows that David Allen was indeed among the early settlers of Stockbridge.

The great-grandson, Daniel Allen, stated that the wife of David Allen was named Martha, but he was obviously mistaken in the name as both he and his brother Joseph Stewart were mistaken about the birthplace of their father. Martha and Mary are very similar names, and both are among those listed by Daniel as his aunts.

David Allen had a brother, Daniel, who settled first in Sheffield and later in Great Barrington. Daniel, a housewright, represented David at the final settling of their father's estate 18 June 1753, and it was he who was appointed guardian of David's minor son, Elijah, following David's death about 26 August 1766, in Nobletown, now Hillsdale, New York.³⁵

David Allen died not long after his brother died. (He was ten years younger.) He made his will 24 January 1767. But the death of a son and the birth of a daughter made it necessary to add a codicil in April. One of the witnesses to this codicil was Joseph Allen.³⁶ The uncle Daniel died before 4 September 1767, the date of his probate in Great Barrington.

This brings us back to the question of the identity of the two Joseph Allens of Stockbridge and Lenox. Obviously a David Allen born in 1714 would not be the father of a grown son in 1742, (the

date Joseph Allen of Stockbridge received 50 acres in Stockbridge), but he could have been the father of a Joseph Allen born about 1742, probably in Stockbridge, later of Lenox, whose first child Daniel was born in 1770. Most probably the Joseph Allen who witnessed the codicil to the will of Daniel Allen was his nephew. The fact that Joseph named his first son Daniel indicates that he knew this uncle.

Another indication that Joseph was acquainted with Daniel Allen and his family is a court record in which John Allen of Plymouth, Litchfield County, Connecticut, was plaintiff against Joseph Allen and Thomas Yale of Lenox in a plea concerning a note dated 22 November 1783, in which the defendants had agreed to pay John the sum of three pounds and ten shillings in money or wheat.³⁷ This John Allen was the son of Daniel Allen, therefore the cousin of Joseph Allen of Lenox. (Following Daniel's death his widow Esther (Colton) moved to Litchfield County, Connecticut. His son John Allen later represented Connecticut in the U.S. Congress from 1797 to 1799.)³⁸

To summarize the evidence pointing to David Allen and Mary Weldon being the parents of Joseph Allen of Lenox:

1. No other David Allen was found, after much searching, who might logically be the father of Joseph. (Although several people have sent this author pedigrees showing a David Allen born 11 December 1715 in Kingswood, Wiltshire, England, married 13 September 1735 to Martha Bennett born 21 January 1710 in Charfield, Gloucester, England. This couple had twelve children born in Kingswood between 1736 and 1756, yet somehow were said to be parents of an unlisted Joseph Allen born in Vermont about 1744. Another undocumented pedigree has Joseph Allen born about 1740 in Vermont son of David Allen born about 1708 in Vermont married 13 September 1735 to a Martha Bennett.)
2. David Allen and his wife Mary Weldon were of Stockbridge in 1744/5, which is the closest town to Lenox, where Joseph Allen lived.
3. The family names fit: David named his first son for his father Joseph, his second son for himself, a family name. Joseph named his next son Isaac, the name of another of David Allen's brothers. (The Joseph Allen line showing the ancestry back to immigrant, a Walter Allen, is in print.)³⁹

4. At least two men known to be neighbors of David Allen in Weston were associated with him, and one of them with his sons in Berkshire County — Josiah Jones and Benjamin Brown.
5. Joseph Allen, father of Daniel born 1770, obviously was acquainted with his uncle Daniel Allen and with Daniel's son John.

SYNOPSIS

David Allen, son of Joseph and Abigail Allen, born in Weston, Middlesex, Mass., 26 September 1714, married about 1740, Mary Weldon, daughter of James and Mary (Lamb) Weldon, born in Glastonbury, Hartford, Conn., 18 September 1710,⁴⁰ had the following children:

- i. Joseph, born about 1742, probably in Stockbridge, married 1st about 1768 Rachel, and 2nd about 1771 Anna.
- ii. David, born about 1744, probably in Stockbridge, married Lucy.
- iii. Elizabeth, baptized 26 March 1750 in Claverack, Columbia, New York.⁴¹
- iv. Elijah, born 26 August 1752 in Kinderhook, Columbia, New York.⁴²
- v. Prudence, baptized 16 April 1755 in Claverack, Columbia, New York.⁴³
- vi. (Probably) Daniel, who was a cabinet maker in Hudson, Columbia, New York in 1786.⁴⁴