

CHAPTER FIFTY

SAMPSON PEIRSOL of Beaver County, Pennsylvania

This chapter has been in part deleted. See Note, page 1041.

SECTION 1.

SAMPSON PEIRSOL, son of Benjamin Pierceall, Chapter 49, Section 1; born circa 1764; resided at Beaver County, Pennsylvania; married Susannah ——. Children:—

1. Jacob Peirsol. Chapter 50, Section 2.
2. Ruth Peirsol, married David Shanor.
3. Ann Peirsol, married Michael Nye. Child:—*1. Sampson S. Nye.
4. Elizabeth Peirsol, married Joshua Buris. Child:—*1. Sampson Peirsol Buris.
5. Susannah Peirsol, married William McGaw. Children:—*1. James McGaw.
*2. Sampson McGaw.
6. Tobias S. Peirsol, died unmarried.

The Pennsylvania Archives disclose:—The tax list of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, 1791, Sampson Peirsol, Washington County, Pennsylvania, Soldiers of the Revolution, Sampson Peirsol. List of Officers belonging to the Brigade of Militia of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, First Regiment, 4th Company, Tuesday, May 1, 1792, Lieutenant Sampson Peirsol, and in 1794 promoted to Captain. Sampson Peirsol in Captain Hood's Company, recruited in 1782 in the counties of Allegheny, Westmoreland and Washington. [Pennsylvania Archives in the expedition against Sandusky. See Chapter 49, Section 2.]

March 24, 1822, Andrew Pettit of the city of Philadelphia guardian and trustee of Theodore Pettit, Robert Pettit and Henry Pettit minors appointed Sampson Peirsol his attorney in fact to lease certain lands on Brush Creek in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, patented in the name of Thomas McKean.

Among the papers of Sampson Peirsol appears a yellow time-worn sheet of which the following is a copy:—We whose names are hereunto annexed do agree to be members of a Bible class to be entitled the Mount Pleasant Bible Class to be conducted by Jonathan Drews. We agree to study the portion of Scripture which he may assign to us from time to time and to attend these meetings as far as it may comport with our circumstances—March 20, 1830. Sampson P. Barris, Joshua Barris, Elizabeth Barris, Susan Peirsol, Ruth Peirsol, Sampson Peirsol, Tobias S. Peirsol, Eliza Alleman, Susan Barris, Eleanor Wilson, Catherine Delaney, Isaac B. Barris, Nancy Barris, Andrew A. Nye, Eli Micklem, James McGaw, Susannah Nye, Susannah McGaw, Michael M. Nye, Ann Nye, Charles Camerford, Jairden Nye, Sampson McGaw, William McGaw, Sampson Stilly Nye, Rachel Nye, Elizabeth Ann Thompson, Eliza Micklem.

In his will Sampson Peirsol directed that he was to be buried in the graveyard or burying ground of the Mount Pleasant church situated on his farm in the township of North Sewickley. James Kastor Peirsol writes concerning this that Sampson Peirsol donated several acres of land on a sightly knoll for a church and graveyard. I can remember the church building about 1850. It was a small frame structure and was then in a dilapidated condition not used as a meeting place and soon thereafter disappeared entirely. The portion of Sampson Peirsol's farm surrounding the church and graveyard passed into the hands of German emigrants soon after Sampson's death. One of the subsequent purchasers afterward laid claim to a portion of the graveyard which lay between the fenced portion and the public road, but some of the descendants got together and built a new fence enclosing the disputed ground with the other part of the graveyard.

Sampson Peirsol located in Allegheny County on the Connaughquenessing Creek. Here he was neighbor to quite a few of the grandchildren of the neighbors of his grandfather, Job Pearsall, in Virginia and Pennsylvania. To describe Sampson Peirsol as a leader among these people would not fairly represent their relationship to him and to each other. For Sampson Peirsol was as much a lord of the manor to them as Job Pearsall had been in the manor of South Branch, or his ancestors had been in Staffordshire and Shropshire, England. The land belonged to the Hon. Benjamin Chew and the Hon. William McKean, well known historical characters in Pennsylvania history. It is interesting to read their letters to Sampson Peirsol wherein they defer entirely to his judgment as to the disposition of their vast domain in Beaver County. At the death of William McKean he devised certain of these lands to Andrew Pettit of Philadelphia, who, and his children also, depended upon the advice and assistance of Sampson Peirsol. No doubt there were many men who under similar circumstances could have directed the settlement of a wilderness, but there are very few who could have retained the friendship and confidence of the settlers to the same extent as Sampson Peirsol. For as long as he lived he was father, counsellor and advisor to the whole community which radiated from his farm. In a well-worn book found among his papers he records the names of over fifty of his neighbors for whom he was practically transacting all their business. Sampson Peirsol performed this duty for very little remuneration, in fact it seems to have been thrust upon him by the insistence both of great landed proprietors and by those to whom they sold their lands. The relationship to the proprietors continued until 1834 when it was closed by the Pettit heirs.

The booming of land sales in Pennsylvania made one of the most interesting chapters in the history of the early settlement of our country following the Revolutionary War. All of the curious things done elsewhere in Pennsylvania, were repeated in Allegheny and Beaver Counties. To have patiently and persistently followed the changing plans of the great proprietors should have commanded the highest sort of pay for the service. It is doubtful however if Sampson Peirsol looked upon this duty in any other manner than as an opportunity to do good to his neighbors. For after all this branch of the family had not outgrown the thought that they were mesne lords of the manor, charged with the duty of promoting the happiness of their people. A few words as to the land promotion of

those days will prove interesting. The settler if he so pleased could buy a leasehold with a right in seven years, on paying a certain sum, to have a deeded title. Having obtained this lease he would go on the land and begin to make improvements in which effort he was helped by Sampson Peirsol. Even as late as the above letter of 1834 he records having had two houses built in this way upon the proprietor's land. The lessor having made his title good by reason of these improvements, then possessed what was called a settlement, which could be bought and sold. Some times a desirable property would pass through several hands before a deed would be asked for from the proprietor. As a result there would be difficulty between the then holder of the land and the proprietor to make it clear that the possessor of the land had the right to the deed. In such controversies Sampson Peirsol would be the referee, for which he would receive the magnificent sum of one dollar, simply to make it legal and binding as the folks thought.

These properties were sometimes leased to thriftless fellows or to those who were trouble makers. The peace and prosperity of the community demanded that such be moved along. It is interesting to read of Sampson Peirsol's methods of ridding the community of a generally objectionable fellow and yet send him away entirely satisfied. But the proprietors were also to be reckoned with at such times and it appears that they were sometimes fearful that perhaps after all Sampson Peirsol might be making a rakeoff. So they promised to pay him one dollar for each ten dollars that he might still further reduce the price to be paid to the person whom they were getting rid of. His books show that Sampson Peirsol always stood by the bargain he had made. And there does not appear a single instance when he played false to the confidence reposed in him even by the man who knew that he was gently and quietly, but firmly, being made to move on. It is not difficult to understand that Sampson Peirsol was a diplomat, but he depended upon kindness, truthfulness and the exercise of the utmost good faith.

One of the great difficulties these large land proprietors labored under was in paying taxes on their unoccupied lands. The correspondence among the papers of Sampson Peirsol constantly refers to this trouble.

In one of his letters Mr. Benjamin Chew speaks of the Beaver and Ohio portage canal as being of great advantage to Beaver County. In several letters he speaks of Swiss, Italian and other European emigrants coming to settle in Beaver County so that his agent must have been required to speak several languages.

Another letter Mr. Chew closes with a request that Sampson Peirsol will give the writer's best wishes and regards to the good people on his land if they should inquire about him. He also requests that Sampson Peirsol shall tell them that he and his son are frequently thinking of them and of the means of rendering them and the country every good that may be in their power, although he is getting to be almost too old to expect to see them but that he considers the promotion of their comfort and prosperity and that of the country as intimately connected with the writer's own interest.

The letters were written in the days before envelopes were used and addressed to Sampson Peirsol, Esq., at the Forks of the Beaver and Harmony and Stoneville roads, Beaver County, near Harmony, Pennsylvania.

It is a rather interesting coincidence that Benjamin Chew was descended from John Chew from Somersetshire, England, who came to Virginia in 1620 where he was not only counted among the ablest merchants but was closely associated with the Dutch-English traders. About 1644 he removed to Annapolis in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, and settled where he could have a share of the old Kent Island trade. His oldest son, Samuel Chew, married Ann Ayres, sole daughter and heir of William Ayres. There is quite weighty evidence that this William Ayres was son of Christopher Ayres, who was one of the executors of the last will, dated March 26, 1629, of Edmond Pearsall, citizen and grocer of London, along with our ancestor, Thomas Pearsall the youngest son of said Edmond. Samuel and Ann Chew were the parents of Benjamin Chew, who married Elizabeth Benson, daughter of Dr. Samuel Benson of Annapolis, Maryland. Their son Benjamin Chew was of Cliveden Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and is the person above referred to. There was also a John Chew of this family who was connected with the old Dutch-English traders who resided at Hempstead, Long Island, New York, before 1665. [Virginia Historical Magazine, vol. I, pages 87 and 197; Hempstead Town Records, vol. I, page 218].

SECTION 2.

JACOB PEIRSOL, son of Sampson Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 1, born October 16, 1785; died 1850; resided in Beaver County, Pennsylvania; married June 21, 1810, Rachel Stillie of Peters Creek; born November 14, 1785; daughter of Tobias Stillie. She is descended from Olaf Stillie, who was one of the original Swedish colonists of the Delaware Peninsula, as his passport or certificate of character bears date December 2, 1634. Children:—

1. Sampson Peirsol, born March 24, 1818; Chapter 50, Section 3.
2. Jeremiah S. Peirsol, born March 13, 1827; died August 6, 1883; unmarried.
3. Scudder Hart Peirsol, born January 1, 1828; Chapter 50, Section 7.
4. Samuel Peirsol, born February 18, 1832; died August 30, 1868.
5. Joseph Peirsol, born March 15, 1835; Chapter 50, Section 8.
6. Benjamin Peirsol, born October 29, 1836; Chapter 50, Section 9.
7. Susannah Peirsol, born March 26, 1815; died 1913; married December 23, 1830, George W. Alleman, born August 30, 1811.
8. Ruth Peirsol, born December 16, 1813; died August 8, 1814.
9. Ruth Peirsol, born December 4, 1816; married Sampson S. Nye.
10. Rachel Peirsol, born August 15, 1821; married Michael Nye.
11. Rebecca Peirsol, born May 2, 1824; died 1890; married — Walker.
12. Jacob Peirsol, born October 19, 1825; died August 31, 1865; Chapter 50, Section 10.
13. Elizabeth Peirsol, born March 17, 1823; died 1882; married E. Swesey.
14. Uriah Peirsol.
15. Tobias Stille Peirsol, born July 4, 1820; died August 9, 1847.
16. David Peirsol, born August 23, 1830; died December 7, 1836.
17. Anna Peirsol, born September 28, 1838; died August 2, 1847.

SECTION 3.

SAMPSON PEIRSOL, son of Jacob Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 2; born March 24, 1818; died 1891; resided in Wood County, West Virginia, and Beaver County, Penn.; married 1840, Harriet Newton, who was born February 22, 1824; died 1896. Children:—

1. Sampson H. Peirsol, born 1841; died 1904; Chapter 50, Section 4.
2. Jacob Peirsol, born 1845; Chapter 50, Section 5.
3. Harriet Peirsol, born 1848; died unmarried.
4. Jeremiah S. Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 6.
5. Lucinda Peirsol, born 1851; married W. D. Newbanks.
6. Rachel Peirsol, born 1851; married Burge.
7. Rebecca Peirsol, born 1854; married L. M. Boone.

SECTION 4.

SAMPSON H. PEIRSOL, son of Sampson Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 3; resided in Wood County, West Virginia; married Marie L. Shear. Children:—

1. Charles B. Peirsol.
2. Curtis Peirsol.
3. Marvin Thurman Peirsol.
4. Elizabeth Peirsol, married Hogsett.

SECTION 5.

JACOB PEIRSOL, son of Sampson Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 3; born May 23, 1845; resided in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, and Parkersburg, Wood County, West Virginia; married 1869, Alzanah Grant, born in Washington County, Pennsylvania, August 1, 1851. Children:—

1. Robert Stille Peirsol, born September 12, 1870; married Susan Nowrey. See Z, this Section.
2. Alice Peirsol, born April 12, 1873; married 1894, James H. Cain; born August 29, 1875.
3. Harriet Susannah Peirsol, born August 29, 1875; died February 22, 1891.
4. Rebecca Peirsol, born January 26, 1878; married 1897, F. Hunter Cain.
5. Sampson Peirsol, born June 26, 1880; married 1898, Lydia Shreve.
6. Adelia Peirsol, born Sept. 10, 1883; married March 24, 1905, F. B. Brown.
7. Nancy A. Peirsol, born June 29, 1885; married 1904, E. O. Wilson.
8. Lester J. Peirsol, born April 10, 1888; married 1906, Cora Dawkins. Children:—*1. Sampson Peirsol. *2. Dorothy Peirsol.
9. Lorraine Peirsol, born August 20, 1891; unmarried.
10. Loretta Peirsol, born May 29, 1894; married 1913, Harley Morris.

SECTION 6.

JEREMIAH S. PEIRSOL, son of Sampson Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 3; resided in Wood County, West Virginia; married Fanny Wells. Children:—

- *1. Abigail Peirsol. *2. Elizabeth Peirsol, married Fred Smith. *3. Balser Peirsol, married Margaret Nowery. *4. Karl Peirsol. *5. Clyde Peirsol. *6. Ethel Peirsol. *7. Earl Peirsol.

SECTION 7.

SCUDDER H. PEIRSOL, son of Jacob Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 2; born January 1, 1828; died December 29, 1903; resided in Beaver County, Pennsylvania; married first, Elizabeth Weaver, died 1870. Married second, 1876, Mary Maxwell Chambers, who died 1902. Children of the first marriage:—

1. Joseph Peirsol, born September 15, 1857; died January 1915; married December 10, 1884, Mary Victoria Roessler; born January 1, 1859. Children:—*1. Agnes Laura Peirsol, born February 8, 1886; married August 4, 1903, William Henry Bell; born June 24, 1883. *2. Alma Peirsol, born September 1, 1891. *3. Joseph Peirsol, born August 27, 1893. *4. Louis Peirsol, born July 23, 1896.
2. Sue Peirsol; married R. J. Marshall.
3. Fannie Peirsol, married Frank W. Neeley.
4. George W. Peirsol.
5. Kate Peirsol, born December 15, 1862; married August 16, 1897, Sampson Alleman; born October 14, 1844.
Child of the second marriage:—
6. Scudder Hart Peirsol, born July 2, 1880; married 1907, Fannie Edith May.

SECTION 8.

JOSEPH PEIRSOL, son of Jacob Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 2; died October 9, 1909; resided at North Sewickley, Beaver County, Pennsylvania; married Frances A. —, who died January 9, 1917. Children:—

1. Daisy N. Peirsol, resided at Ambridge, Pennsylvania; married David Angel. Children:—*1. Hazel Angel. *2. Mildred Angel. *3. Audrey Angel. *4. J. Derwood Angel.
2. Abbie Peirsol, married Hinkle. Children:—*1. William Hinkle. *2. Susan Hinkle. *3. Frances Hinkle, married Frank McCue.
3. Vera Peirsol, married Smith. Child:—*1. Frederick Smith.
4. Annie Peirsol.

SECTION 9.

BENJAMIN H. PEIRSOL, son of Jacob Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 2; resided Beaver County, Pennsylvania; married Emiline E. Shanor. Children:—

1. J. R. Peirsol, married Anne Thomas.
2. William C. Peirsol, married Anna Maria Doty.

SECTION 10.

JACOB PEIRSOL, son of Jacob Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 2; born October 19, 1825; died August 31, 1865; resided at Parkersburg, West Virginia; married first, Nancy McDaniel, daughter of Smith McDaniel and his wife Nancy Delaney of Beaver County, Penn.; married second, Mary Ann Crantz, born January 19, 1828; daughter of James Crantz. Children of the first marriage:—

1. Jacob G. Peirsol, born circa 1849; died January 13, 1902, Chapter 50, Section 11.
2. Smith Peirsol, died young.

3. Agnes Ann Peirsol, born December 28, 1851; married first, James Boyer; married second, Joseph Johnson, who died May 30, 1908.
4. Rachel Minerva Peirsol, born September 13, 1853; married first, Miner Sargeant; married second, Manor Hascall.
5. Tobias Peirsol, born December 11, 1855; died August, 1911; married July 23, 1883, Mary Grimm; died May 4, 1894. Children:—*1. Cyrus W. Peirsol, born May 1, 1884, unmarried. *2. Estella V. Peirsol, born October 29, 1885; married May 4, 1908, Richard Beggs. *3. Stilly T. Peirsol, born October 26, 1886; died February 8, 1890. *4. Charles F. Peirsol, born April 20, 1889. *5. Edith Peirsol, born September 24, 1890; married ——— Pride. *6. Joseph Peirsol, born July 20, 1892; died October 23, 1908.
6. Aurelia Peirsol, born August 16, 1860; married Charles V. Bartlett.
7. Charles Fremont Peirsol, born March 22, 1861; Chapter 50, Section 12.
8. Julius David Peirsol, born February 28, 1865; married Ella Wuest, born March 11, 1868; daughter of Bernhard Wuest of Germany. Children:—*1. Charles Peirsol, died in infancy. *2. Louise Peirsol, died in infancy. *3. An infant died unnamed. *4. Agnes Peirsol, married Robert Staples. *5. Ralph Peirsol. *6. Bernard Peirsol, born February 22, 1896.

SECTION 11.

JACOB G. PEIRSOL, son of Jacob Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 10; resided at Parkersburg, West Virginia; born circa 1849; died January 13, 1902; married November 29, 1873, Mary E. Wharton; born February 17, 1855; daughter of Daniel Wharton and his wife Nancy Hoy of Wood County, West Virginia. Children:—

1. Minor Theophilus Peirsol, born September 13, 1874; married Amanda Brown.
2. John Rowland Peirsol, born December 26, 1876; died September 17, 1912; married Etta May Deams. No children.
3. Edgar Leon Peirsol, born February 18, 1879; died March 1883.
4. Nancy Eldetta Peirsol, born May 27, 1878; married Joseph Clinton Carpenter.
5. Edna Virginia Peirsol, born December 19, 1884; married Clinton Garfield Park.

SECTION 12.

CHARLES FREMONT PEIRSOL, son of Jacob Peirsol, Chapter 50, Section 10; born March 22, 1861; resided at Parkersburg, West Virginia, and Columbus, Ohio; married November 2, 1881, Emma Elizabeth Renner, daughter of Edward Renner and his wife Deniza Guinn of Parkersburg, West Virginia; born May 14, 1859; died December 6, 1917. Children:—

1. Nettie Edith Peirsol, born October 24, 1883; married Frank Wardwell.
2. Jessie Anna Peirsol, born January 14, 1886.
3. Charles David Peirsol, married Neva Harrison. See Z, this Section.