

The Sanders Home on Highway 87 in La Vernia

Andrew Newell and Amelia SANDERS

By Elaine Mazurek Stephens and Susan Duelm Richter
for the La Vernia Historical Association
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Andrew Newell Sanders was born on June 22, 1862, in Seguin, Guadalupe County, Texas as the fourth child of Leander A. Sanders and Malvina D. Alexander Burnside. He had six siblings: W. L., James, Minnie K, Henry, Malvina, and Adam. In 1870, he was living in Precinct 1 of Guadalupe County.

In 1880, Andrew Newell Sanders lived with his mother, Malvina Sanders, and his brothers, James and Henry, in Guadalupe County, Texas, according to the U.S. Census.

By 1889, he owned businesses and land in La Vernia, according to a binder of letters written to his fiancé, Amelia. Several notes from those letters were graciously shared with the LVHA by his great-granddaughter, Melissa Doyle.



Amelia Trainer Sanders

In 1892, on June 22, at the age of 30, he married Amelia Trainer, daughter of Captain James Martin Trainer and Martha Alice McGee, in Bexar County, Texas. The witnesses listed on the marriage record were P. G. Scull and J. McGee. Martha Alice McGee was the daughter of Reverend John S. McGee, whose son, Jewett, (Martha's brother) died during an Indian raid near La Vernia on July 4, 1855.

Captain Trainer had arrived in Texas in 1840 and initially settled on the Cibolo, later moving to Mt. Olive in Bexar County. During the Civil War, he served as Captain of Company I, 3rd Texas Infantry and was

in the Cibolo Guards. He was an overseer for the opening of the road to St. Hedwig. He served as Justice of the Peace for Precinct 4 in Bexar County, which included Mt. Olive, Cottage Hill, St. Hedwig, and Adkins, from 1886 to 1908. He was a school trustee for St. Hedwig and Mt. Olive Schools and was later chosen by the Bexar County Democratic Party to be a delegate to the Democratic State Convention in Ft. Worth on May 23, 1888. He was a member of the Lavernia Chapter of the Masonic Lodge for 42 years. He enjoyed taking his granddaughter, Blanche, to St. Hedwig to buy her candy ginger snaps. Trainer spent much of his time in his daughter's La Vernia home helping to rear and train his grandsons and granddaughters. The Captain died on January 17, 1920, in San Antonio and is buried in the Mt. Olive Cemetery.



Capt. James Martin Trainer

Sanders was obviously quite in love with Amelia, as evidenced in a letter he wrote, "if 'twas

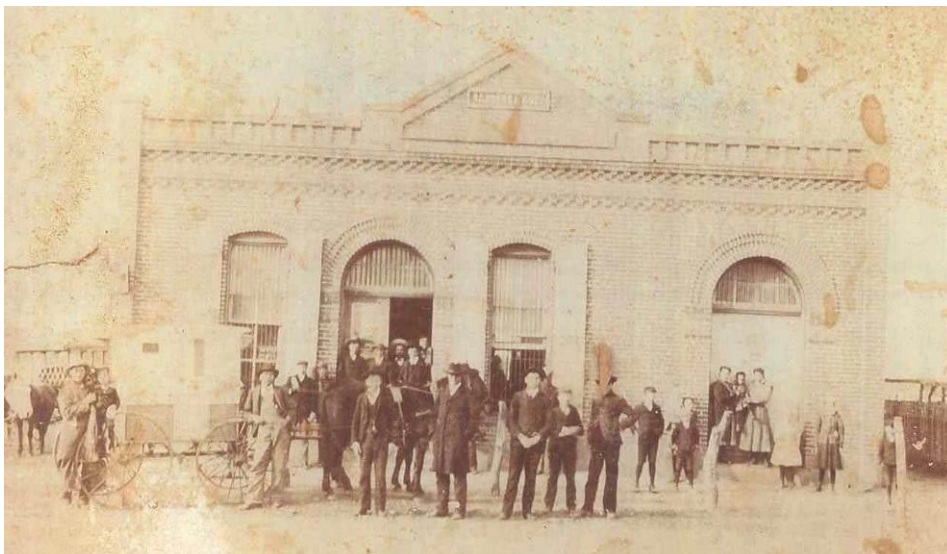
not for that 'Trainer Girl' seems to me life would not be worth the living, and for me to have to look into the future without you would simply be a blank." Another letter said, "I am so glad you were pleased with the birthday remembrance for I've reached the height of my ambition when I've pleased you..."

Andrew Newell Sanders and Amelia Trainer had the following children:

1. Alice Dunreath Sanders, was born on October 4, 1893, in La Vernia. She died on 04 August 4, 1958, in Austin, Texas¹.
2. James Leander Sanders was born on 07 March 7, 1895, in Wilson County, Texas. He died on 20 February 20, 1971, in San Antonio. He is buried in Concrete Cemetery in Guadalupe County.
3. Andrew Newell Sanders, Jr. was born on May 30, 1897, in Texas. He died on 12 July 12, 1953, in Los Angeles, California¹. He married Sadie Woodbury in 1929.
4. Blanche Irene Sanders was born on 03 February 3, 1899, in La Vernia. She died on January 6, 1986, in Baytown, Texas.
5. Horace Murdock Sanders was born on November 28, 1900, in La Vernia. He died on April 19, 1973, in Burnet, Llano County, Texas.
6. Alton Bailey Sanders was born on August 17, 1904, in Texas. He died on August 7, 1964, in Los Angeles County, California.
7. Russell Reuben Sanders was born on May 1, 1906, shortly after the death of his father. He died on November 18, 1940, in Baytown, Harris County, Texas.

In 1894, he is recorded as being the owner of property in Guadalupe County, Texas.

On May 14, 1898, Andrew Newell Sanders was appointed Postmaster at O'Daniel in Guadalupe County. He had other business endeavors indicated by a letter he wrote to his wife during that same time period, on the letterhead of Elm Creek Co-Operative Association, A. N. Sanders, Manager.



In 1898, Andrew Newell Sanders built a brick store on Chihuahua Street in La Vernia, Wilson County, Texas. In this photo from around 1900, the top of the building bears the name, "Sanders." The building still stands in the center of La Vernia.

In 1898, he paid occupation tax in La Vernia under the names Sanders & Canfield, Sanders McGee & Wiseman, and Sanders & Kott, indicating his associations with other businessmen in La Vernia.

In 1900, he was listed as a merchant in La Vernia, Texas, living in Precinct 6. He was also a member of the Brahan Masonic Lodge in La Vernia. His wife, Amelia, remained active in the Lavernia Chapter of the Eastern Star as late as 1939.

In the early 1900s, Andrew Newell Sanders built a home on Highway 87 in La Vernia.



The Sanders home on Highway 87 in La Vernia, c.1912. L-R: Andrew Newell Jr., Horace, Alton, Russell. In the back are Blanche and Amelia Sanders.



The Sanders home on Highway 87 in a photo taken around 2020. The year of the second floor addition is unknown.

In 1906, while serving his second term as a Guadalupe County Commissioner, Andrew Newell Sanders died on February 15 at age 43, in San Antonio, Texas. Shortly after his death, his son, Russell Reuben Sanders was born on May 1.

Andrew Newell Sanders was buried in Concrete Cemetery near La Vernia in Guadalupe County, Texas.

A. N. Saunders.

A. N. Saunders, aged 43 years, a prominent business man of Lavernia died yesterday afternoon at the Santa Rosa hospital after a lingering illness. Besides his widow and six children, deceased is survived by his mother, two sisters—Mrs. Herron of Lavernia and Mrs. Newton of Seguin—and two brothers, Lee and Henry, of Seguin.

Deceased had been for many years a merchant of Lavernia, but recently retired and invested largely in real estate. He was reared on a farm in Guadalupe county and is known to almost everyone in that section. He was elected county commissioner of that county and was serving his second term when death claimed him.

His wife, who was with him at the time of his death, accompanied the remains back to Lavernia this morning. Deceased was a member of Braham lodge, A. F. and A. M. at Lavernia, and the funeral services in that town were conducted, under the auspices of the order at 2 p. m. An escort from the local Masonic lodges

accompanied the body to the depot this morning.

*1906 February 16, A. N Sanders
(Saunders) death announcement in the
San Antonio Light, page 9.*

According to Blanche Irene Sanders' granddaughter, Melissa Doyle, Captain Trainer came to live with the family in La Vernia until he moved to San Antonio with two of his other daughters who were widowed and had no children.

Amelia Sanders lived in the home until her health deteriorated. She then moved away to live with her daughter, Blanche, in Baytown, Texas where she died in 1954.



*Blanche Irene Sanders
(1899-1986)*

James Leander Sanders, a graduate of Texas A&M University and a teacher in the La Vernia schools, lived in the home until his death in 1971. He is buried in Concrete Cemetery, along with his parents and brother, Russell.

Shortly after James' death, the siblings, Blanche and Jack, sold the home along with all its substantial land to Fred and Cherry Pierdolla of La Vernia.

In later years, the house was home to other residents and businesses.



James Leander Sanders

This narrative was written by the La Vernia Historical Association to record the history of the Sanders family and their significant role in La Vernia's history. As Andrew Newell Sander's great-granddaughter Melissa Doyle said, "the hearts left there can never be moved. It will always be the Sanders home place."

Special Sources

Alice Jean Hunter, daughter of Blanche Irene Sanders and Oscar H. Hunter.

Melissa Lestarjett Doyle, daughter of Alice Jean Hunter.

The website, www.LostTexasRoads.com

The book, A Century of Light, by D. L. Vest, pages 137, 149, 163, 170, 182, 183.

The transcribed letter written by Capt. James Martin Trainer (The original is with T. F. Hetherington, of Carefree Arizona, grandson of Capt. James Martin Trainer. Transcribed by Ed Trainer, 31 Dec 1998), It is a letter written by Capt. James Martin Trainer before his death in 1920.

The story, "On frontier's edge, La Vernia suffered deaths in Comanche attack on July 4, 1855," by William M. Wiseman in "Texas Through Time," *Wilson County News*, January 11, 1995, page 7.

The archives of the La Vernia Historical Association.

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1870 United States Federal Census; Census Place: Tucson, Pima, Arizona Territory; Roll: M593_46; Page: 75A.

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