

CLASS OF 1819

ANDREW WILLIAMS

Born June 27, 1797 in Lebanon, Conn.

Married March 19, 1826, for first wife, Martha Murdock, daughter of Seymour Austin of Warren, Ohio. She died April 19, 1860, aged 54. He married,-----,1861, for second wife, Ann, daughter of Edward Wood, of Steubenville, Ohio. She died November, 1863, aged 50. He married December, 1864, for third wife, Sarag, daughter of Edward Wood, of Steubenville, Ohio, widow of Dorsey Pentecost of New Lisbon, Ohio. She died February, 1866, aged 52.

He was graduated A. B. Union College 1819.

He was a lawyer. Was member of the House of Representatives in the Twenty-Fifth U. S. Congress, 1837-39. Settled in practice of his profession in New Lisbon, Ohio. Removed to Pittsburgh, Pa., about 1839, and afterwards to Cumberland, Md., where he died August 23, 1873, aged 76.

FROM Descendants of Veach Williams
of Lebanon, Conn.
Alexander Hamilton Wright
New Haven 1887.

p. 28

ANDREW WILLIAMS, A.M., 1819, of Cherry Valley, N.Y., was a member of the Adelpic Society.
Adelpic Catalogue 1830
(Died: 1876)

ANDREW J. WILLIAMS

Bret Harte and his sister arrived at San Francisco in March, 1854, stayed there one night, and went the next morning to Oakland, across the Bay, where their mother, and her second husband, Colonel Andrew Williams, were living. In this house the boy remained about a year, teaching for a while, and afterward serving as clerk in an apothecary's shop. During this year he began his career as a professional writer, contributing some stories and poems to Eastern magazines.

Bret Harte, like Thackeray, was fortunate in his stepfather, and if, according to the accepted story, Thackeray's stepfather was the prototype of Colonel Newcome, the two men must have had much in common. Colonel Williams was born at Cherry Valley in the State of New York, and was graduated at Union College with the Class of 1819. Henry Hart's class was that of 1820, but the two young men were friends in college. Colonel Williams had seen much of the world, having travelled extensively in Europe early in the century, and he was a cultivated, well-read man. But he was chiefly remarkable for his high standard of honor, and his amiable, chivalrous nature. He was a gentleman of the old school in the best sense, grave but sympathetic, courtly but kind. His generosity was unbounded. Such a man might appear to have been somewhat out of place in bustling California, but his qualities were appreciated there. He was the first Mayor of Oakland, in the year 1857, and was reelected the following year. Colonel Williams built a comfortable house in Oakland, one of the first, if not the very first in that city in which laths and plaster were used; but land titles in California were extremely uncertain, and after a long and stubborn contest in the courts, Colonel Williams was dispossessed, and lost the house upon which he had expended much time and money. He then took up his residence in San Francisco, where he lived until his return to the East in the year 1871. His wife, Bret Harte's mother, died at Morristown, New Jersey, April 4, 1875, and was buried in the family lot at Greenwood, New York. The following year he went back to California for a visit to Bret Harte's sister, Mrs. Wyman, but soon after his arrival died of pneumonia at the age of seventy-six.

The San Francisco and Oakland papers spoke very highly of Colonel Williams after his death, and one of them closed an account of his life with the following words: "Colonel Williams had that indefinable sweetness of manner which indicates innate refinement and nobility of soul. There was a touch of the antique about him. He seemed a little out of time and place in this hurried age of ours. He belonged to and typified the calmer temper of a former generation. A gentler spirit never walked the earth. He personified all the sweet charities of life. His heart was great, warm and tender, and he died leaving no man in the world his enemy. Colonel Williams was the stepfather of Bret Harte, between whom and himself there existed the most affectionate relations."

Andrew J. Williams 1819
A73

Andrew J. Williams 1819
A. B.