

Cicero Goddard PECK, of Hinesburgh [Vermont], was born 17 February 1828 in the village of Hinesburgh [Chittenden County, Vermont], son of Nahum and Lucinda (WHEELER) PECK. His father, Nahum PECK, was a distinguished lawyer, and at the time of his death was the oldest practitioner in Chittenden County. Cicero G. PECK is a descendant in the eighth generation from Joseph PECK, who in 1638, with other Puritans of Belton, Yorkshire, England, fled from the persecution of the Established church to this country to secure for themselves freedom of thought, speech and action. Cicero G. PECK was educated in the common schools and at the old Hinesburgh Academy, in which institution he prepared, at the age of twenty, for a regular collegiate course, but his health failed and he was forced, though reluctantly, to abandon his cherished hope of a liberal education, and to seek outdoor employment. He therefore engaged in agricultural occupations, in which he has been quite successful, and has, therefore, remained on a farm all his life, though he has devoted a good deal of time to other affairs.

Mr. PECK has been called on frequently to act as executor or administrator in the settlement of important estates in the vicinity. He has been selectman seven consecutive years. In 1864 he took a leading part in organizing the Valley Factory Cheese Company, which has been in successful operation under his supervision, and has been a great financial benefit to the farmers of the town. In early life he identified himself with the Free Soil party, and was always a strong opponent of the aggressions of the slave power, and since the organization of the Republican Party has been a firm adherent to its principles. In 1878 represented his town in the Legislature, and at the extra session of 1891. As a member of the House he served on the committee on joint rules, as chairman of the joint special committee on industrial matters, and again on the committee on education, taking an active part in urging the adoption of the town system of schools.

He has always taken a lively and active part in all educational matters; has been a member of the school board for fifteen years; town superintendent from 1877 to 1884 inclusive, and again from 1891 to 1894. Under the school law of 1888 was chosen a member of the board of education, which office he filled while this law remained in force. By this board was chosen for the committee for the selection of textbooks for the county, having twice before served on a like committee. At the session of 1892 he was nominated by Governor FULLER and confirmed by the Senate as trustee of the state reform school for six years, from 01 December 1892. In June 1893 was honored by Gov. FULLER as one of the appointees to the international congress of charities, correction and philanthropy, held at Chicago 12-18 June 1893. Mr. PECK has been an outspoken advocate of temperance; for several years when the order of Good Templars was active, he was worthy chief of the lodge in his town; and in early life he identified himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and has always been an active and liberal supporter. On 29 March 1854 at Hinesburgh [Chittenden County, Vermont] he [Cicero Goddard PECK] married Maria P., daughter of Selah and Phoebe (RUSSELL) COLEMAN, of Hinesburgh. He has no children of his own, but has an adopted daughter, Lucy, now married to Rev. M. R. FRANCE, of Cobleskill [Schoharie County], New York.

Men of Vermont: Illustrated Biographical History of Vermonters & Sons of Vermont. Ullery. Brattleboro: Transcript Publishing Company, 1894, pp 303-304 (portrait p 303)