

Amanda Wood Reed



Amanda Wood, considered a “belle of Quincy,” married 20-year-old Simeon Gannett Reed at the age of 18 in Quincy, Massachusetts. Born August 26th, 1832, the youngest of nine children in a wealthy, prominent Quincy family, Amanda was related through her mother, Sarah Adams, to Henry Adams and the presidential Adams’ and was the fifth great-granddaughter of Pilgrims John Alden and Priscilla Mullens. Amanda’s father owned the local quarry, while Simeon, who grew up in nearby Abington, learned the Dry Goods business in Boston at 15 and worked as a shoe cutter for several years back in Abington, had entered the grain and flour business in Quincy when 18.

Soon after their marriage in 1850, Simeon traveled west to California and then Oregon to buy and sell dry goods, while Amanda remained in Quincy with her parents. Joining Simeon in 1854, Amanda set up house with Simeon in Portland. Both participated in the social and cultural activities of the time while Simeon pursued his entrepreneurial business ventures in commission selling, dealerships, and then river transportation, railroads, real estate, and mining.



The Reeds joined the Unitarian church in Portland based on Amanda’s religious preferences, and Amanda and Simeon naturally became close friends with Thomas Lamb Eliot and his family, the Unitarian minister and founder of many local humanitarian efforts. Eliot became their trusted advisor in many ways; he introduced the idea of founding an institute of learning in a note before Simeon’s death, then continued as Amanda’s counselor until her death in 1904. At that time, her will named him one of five trustees to establish such an institute.

Amanda ran the domestic affairs of their household and counseled Simeon widely on both social and business questions. When business ventures provided increasing profits, the Reed's accordingly ascended into high society, keeping a huge



well-appointed house with servants and a coach. Though they never had children, they invited Martin Winch, Amanda's nephew, to live with them at the age of 13; he later became their business manager. Both the Reed's were involved in philanthropy for children, sometimes through Reverend Eliot and at others with outright gifts. They traveled to Europe and spent time in Massachusetts with family and New York City for business interests.



From the daguerreotypes, photographs, and Cartes de Visites present in the Reed family papers, it is apparent that Simeon and Amanda entertained and enjoyed socializing. Several images show them in fancy dress costumes for parties, and one striking photo shows Amanda in full formal attire. In step with the times, one portrait photo of Amanda has the addition of an actual piece of fuzzy white wool on her bonnet.



In running a large household, Amanda would naturally maintain records and books. A cookbook and one hand-written recipe book open a window on their culinary habits. The cookbook is *Mrs. Putnam's Receipt Book; and Young Housekeeper's Assistant*, new and enlarged edition (Boston: Ticknor, Reed, and Fields, 1850; Reed the publisher was a relation of Simeon's). The small notebook appears to have been used as a food diary with recipes written in as they were found or taken down from friends. Many entries are accessory foods and not main dishes, though they do include stewed oysters and how to cook a turkey. There are many somewhat abbreviated recipes for desserts, and several are given here along with a caveat to test before eating.

Molasses Gingerbread

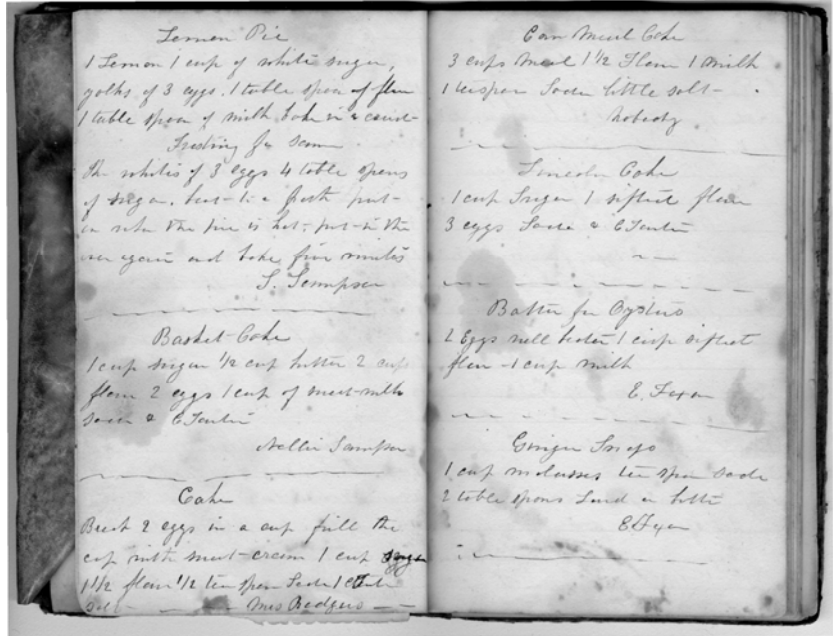
6 cups flour
2 ½ [cups] molasses
1 [cup] butter
1 teaspoon soda
ginger
1 cup milk
Marian Wood

Poor Man's Cake

1 cup butter
1 cup sugar
1 cup raisins
½ cup molasses
½ cup sour milk
1 egg
3 cups flour
Spice to taste
Cream of tartar
Soda
Annie Wood

Lemon Pie

1 lemon
Yolks of two eggs
1 cup milk
Tablespoon flour
2/3 cup sugar
Whites for frosting
Aunt Margaret



Cracker Pudding

9 crackers rolled fine
4 eggs
1 qt. milk
1 cup raisins
1 tablespoon butter
Bake 1 hour
Ann Drumphy

Lemon Water Ice

6 lemons to 2 qts. of water
1 grated [lemon rind]
When partly frozen, add the white of
a well-beaten egg and 1 cup sugar
Annie Wood

