

**In Memoriam**

**Sam G. Anderson**

**July 7, 1875 – June 22, 1935**

## Samuel G. Anderson, Jr. (1875 - 1935)

On January 15, 1900, Samuel Gilmore Anderson, Jr., a graduate of the Law Department of the University of Minnesota and a veteran of the Spanish-American War, was admitted to the Minnesota bar.<sup>1</sup> He began practicing in his hometown, Hutchinson, in McLeod County. As expected he became involved in public affairs. He was elected county attorney and appointed postmaster of Hutchinson by President Wilson, a post he held from 1914 to 1923.<sup>2</sup> All the while he was pursuing what became the passion of his life: wild life conservation. Over time he earned a national reputation as a conservationist, and it was his contributions to this field that he was remembered on his death on June 22, 1935, at age fifty-nine.

From the front page of the weekly *Hutchinson Leader*, June 28, 1935, followed by an editorial in that newspaper:

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<sup>1</sup> Roll of Attorneys, Supreme Court, State of Minnesota, 1858-1970, at 51 (Minnesota Digital Library).

<sup>2</sup> In 1917, he subscribed to the publication of a county history. Curiously his biographical sketch in that book does not mention his work for game conservation:

Sam G. Anderson, Jr. was born in Hutchinson on the old Hutchinson homestead in Hassan Valley township July 7, 1875. He graduated from the Hutchinson high school in 1894 and from the law department of the University of Minnesota in 1899. On January 1, 1900, he engaged in the practice of law at Hutchinson. April, 1898, he enlisted in Company A, Thirteenth Minnesota Regiment, and served until February, 1899. He was in the Philippines from July to January and took part in the battle of Manila. He became sick with typhoid malaria and was invalided home. In 1908 he was elected county attorney and served two terms. February 1, 1914, he was appointed postmaster of Hutchinson which position he has filled with credit. He also continues his law practice. He is director of the Bank of Hutchinson, and secretary and treasurer of the Contact Copper Co., at Contact, Nevada. Fraternally he is a Thirty-second degree Mason and a Shriner.

Franklyn Curtiss-Wedge, ed., *History of McLeod County, Minnesota* 302 (1917)

## Military Rites Held For Sam G. Anderson Tuesday

Nationally-Known Conservationist, Jack Miner of Minnesota,  
Passed Away Early Last Saturday Morning After  
Long Illness at Age 59 Years

Simple but highly impressive military rites were held last Tuesday afternoon for Sam G. Anderson, Hutchinson's foremost citizen, nationally known conservationist, one of the founders of the Gopher Campfire club and the Minnesota Game Protective league, a member of the Federal Migratory Bird Advisory board for six years, postmaster of Hutchinson for nine years, county attorney of McLeod county for four years, who died last Saturday morning, June 22, at 12:45 after a lingering illness of nearly a year and a half.

More than 1500 people attended the funeral rites held at 2 o'clock Tuesday afternoon on the lawn at the Anderson Hill Farm, just across the driveway from his pond, the focal point of his wild life sanctuary which gained nation-wide reputation and rivalled the refuge maintained at Kingsville, Ontario, Canada, by Jack Miner, a close friend of Mr. Anderson.

Mayor Albert J Evans, chaplain of the Third Infantry at Fort Snelling, conducted the short but impressive services at the home. . . .

Burial was made in Oakland Cemetery, with full military rites. There was a firing squad of soldiers of the Third Infantry from Fort Snelling and a bugler who sounded taps. The flag draped coffin was carried to the cemetery on a caisson drawn by two black horses.

All business places of Hutchinson were closed from 2 until 3 o'clock during the services in honor of the departed. At the services were friends from all parts of the Northwest, many game

wardens, county and judicial officials, a representative Governor Olson, state officials, friends in law and conservation, and many comrades of the Spanish-American war.

Sam G. Anderson was ill since January 1934. In the spring of 1934 he went through the clinic at Rochester and last fall he spent some time in the veterans' hospital at Fort Snelling. Last January he was taken to St. Luke's Hospital in St. Paul where he was submitted to a sinus operation. Upon his return home he gradually failed, his chief ailment being heart trouble, until he passed away early last Saturday morning at 12:45. He never was able to visit his law office since last Christmas although he attended the term of court last November.

At the military rites at the grave were an impressive formation of flags, the American flag, and the colors of Charles McLaughlin Post No. 906 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, of Admiral Benson Post No. 2818 of the V.F.W. of Litchfield, of Hutchinson Post No. 96 of the American Legion and of McLeod County Voiture No. 414 of the Forty and Eight.

Sam G. Anderson was born on the old Hutchinson homestead on July 7, 1875, being 59 years, 11 months and 15 days of age at the time of his passing, the son of Samuel G. Anderson, Civil War veteran and early settler in this community, and Abby Hutchinson, only daughter of Asa B. Hutchinson, one of the founders of this city.

He was graduated from the Hutchinson high school with the class of 1894 and from the law department of the University of Minnesota in 1899 after being invalided home from the Spanish-American war. He enlisted in Company A, 13th Minnesota Volunteers in April 1898 and served until February 1899 when he was invalided home. He was in the Philippines from July 1898 to January 1899 when he was stricken with typhoid malaria.

On January 1, 1900, Mr. Anderson established his law office in Hutchinson which he conducted until his death, having Leonard C.

Klammer for his associate for the past year. He was especially learned in the law, enjoyed a large practice and was a most gifted public speaker.

In 1908 Mr. Anderson was elected county attorney of McLeod County and served four years, until 1912, when he was succeeded by W. O. McNally. February 1, 1914, he was appointed postmaster at Hutchinson by President Woodrow Wilson and served nine years, until 1923, when he was succeeded by W. S. Clay. Always a prominent democrat he was mentioned as that party's gubernatorial candidate in the 1934 campaign.

Mr. Anderson had long been an ardent conservationist and together with the late Carlos Avery founded the Gopher Campfire club, nationally recognized sportsman's organization, in 1910. About the same time he started a wild life haven which became a sanctuary for all species of ducks and wild geese.

Since as early as 1901 he began building up his sanctuary, importing decoys for the purpose. On the sanctuary can be found practically all species of ducks and geese, deer, pigeons, eagles pheasants and owls.

Mr. Anderson, besides his interests in the Gopher Campfire club, was active in the Minnesota Game Protective League, being present of that organization for nine years up to the time of his death.

His great knowledge of wild life resulted in his appointment in 1929 by President Herbert Hoover as a member of the Federal Migratory Bird Advisory Board, and he served on this board until his death. The appointment was the highest honor that can be bestowed in American conservation. With the exception of 1934 he attended every session of the American Game Conference in New York since 1925. He was noted for his innumerable sportsmen contacts throughout North America.

Mr. Anderson was a member of Temple Lodge No. 59, A. F. and A. M. of Hutchinson, Minnesota Consistory No. 2 of the Scottish Rite Masons, Zuhrah Temple, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of Minneapolis, a member of Charles McLaughlin Post No. 906 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the 13th Minnesota Regimental Association.

On June 7, 1913 Mr. Anderson was married to Margaret Ames, daughter of A. H. Ames, and to this union five children were born. Surviving are his wife and three children, Mary, Sam and Peggy. Two other children died, Jane in April 1925 at age of 11 years and Ames in February 1927 at age of 23 months.<sup>3</sup>

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Editorial in the *Leader*:

## CONSERVATION'S GREAT LOSS

Men are born, lived for naught or for much; die, leaving ugly scars or beautiful wounds, return to dust.

Often has it been said that when a man dies, no matter how important he was or how much he had accomplished, that his place can be filled, that the vacancy will be taken by another and the tasks carried on.

Sam G. Anderson has gone to his Maker, to meet the God that watches over the wild creatures that both loved, but his place can never be taken in the Hutchinson community.

In the preservation of wild life to which Sam Anderson dedicated his entire life, no one can be found who can do what he has done, can speak the same language as the creatures he sought to

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<sup>3</sup> *Hutchinson Leader* (Weekly), June 28, 1935, at 1 (photograph and funeral services omitted).

protect, can have the same idealistic conception of conservation, and actually put himself in the place of the dumb beings of land, air and water, appreciate their instincts and their wants, can be their spokesmen and foremost defender.

His wild life sanctuary at Anderson Hill Farm, which harbors practically every known variety of duck and goose on the North American continent, can never be the same, now that Sam is gone, but it can always remain as a memorial and a tribute to the work he accomplished, his ideals and his foremost thoughts.

His ideals of the true meaning of conservation are inoculated in the Articles of Faith of the Gopher Campfire club, which was organized more than 25 years ago by himself and the late Carlos Avery, another of America's most illustrious conservationists, the two collaborating and writing those Articles.

His ideals were unwavering as can be shown by an instance very close to home. He instigated, encouraged and brought to conclusion a fight to rid the Crow river below the dam of filth in spite of quite bitter criticism and opposition from many. He wished to preserve the pureness of Nature, the freshness of the out-of-doors; another can be cited is his saving to Hutchinson of the flowage rights at the Hutchinson mill dam, and preserving for future generations of the beautiful lake above the dam.

For years Sam Anderson was the Jack Miner of the Northwest and year by year more and more of his feathered friends sought the safety of his wild life sanctuary. His work was more than rewarded, as more and more wild creatures of the open spaces came to his doors, ducks of almost every known species, all known types of geese in America, deer, pheasants, badgers; some of the most precious moments were spent with his friends at the pond on his farm.

His wild life work did not go without national recognition. He was president of the Minnesota Game Protective association for a decade, and in 1929 he was appointed by President Hoover as a

member of the Federal Migratory Bird Advisory Board, on which he served until his death. In these capacities and through his years of work in the Gopher Campfire club, he exerted a tremendous aid to the wild life of our country, was always for the preservation of our game and fish, bitterly opposed to unsportsmanship in any form, always urged more than an even break for the defenseless wild fowl, and wild animals, always their best protector and friend. He enjoyed the outdoors and the communion with nature to the utmost and did not want to have succeeding generations miss his pleasures through the greed and thoughtlessness of others.

He was a true conservationist, his ideals were lofty and farseeing, he was a sportsman and all that word implies, and his initiative in conservation in this community can never be replaced. He was first in every step for the protection and preservation of wild life, first to advocate closed seasons and restricted kills, first to foster the establishment of game refuges around our city, first to offer a sanctuary for the creatures of the air and land, but now he is gone. May he secure the peace and protection he gave his dumb friends.

His place can not be filled.<sup>4</sup>

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From the *Minneapolis Journal*, Sunday, June 23, 1935, front page, followed by an editorial in that newspaper the next day:

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<sup>4</sup> Id, at 4

# Conservation Cause Loses In Sam Anderson's Death

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Hutchinson Attorney Was Pioneer in Wild Life  
Protection— Funeral Services Tuesday



Conservation activities in Minnesota and throughout the nation lost one of their most ardent workers in the death at Hutchinson, Minn., early yesterday of Sam G. Anderson, who was a pioneer in protection of wild life, forests and other things dear to those who love the great outdoors

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Mr. Anderson died after an illness of more than a year. He was 59 old was nationally known because of his conservation work, which was recognized in his appointment as a member of the federal migratory bird advisory board in 1929.

Although an ardent hunter and fisherman, it was his creed that wild life should have a chance. In order to give it that chance, he converted his farm on the outskirts of Hutchinson into a wild game preserve. In a pond in the barn yard all types of wild fowl stopped spring and fall to pay a visit and obtain a few square meals from Anderson granaries. Some of them never left.

It was a familiar sight to see Mr. Anderson walking through the barnyard but followed by two or more large Canadian wild geese, tame as dogs, which were special pets. If a visitor went to the farm and the wild ducks and geese were in the neighboring field feeding, Mr. Anderson and his farm employees would beat on pans or pails and from all directions the wildfowl would come in.

### All Types of Geese

On the farm were every type of geese on the North American continent, including emperor geese from Alaska. The favorite goose was called Jim, although it turned out not to be a gander.

Mr. Anderson often was called the "Jack Miner Minnesota" because of his work with wild life. He and Mr. Miner had corresponded for a number of years but never met. Finally when Mr. Minor with a group of Gopher Campfire members went to the Anderson farm, Mr. Anderson had been called away for a few

hours on business. The wild fowl set up a commotion usual[ly] when strangers were present. Finally Mr. Miner spoke up and said that Mr. Anderson had returned. He was asked how he knew, never having met him. He replied that the geese and ducks suddenly had quieted down. He was right. Mr. Anderson had come back and slipped in the crowd unnoticed by anyone except his feathered friends.

In recent years he had strung a series of electric lights a few inches above the water in the barnyard pond. Turned on at dusk the lights would attract insects of all kinds in the ducks and geese would feed on them as insects fluttered above the lights.

### Two Pet Owls

Two pet owls generally were perched near the backdoor of the farm home, blinking their eyes and hoo-hooing occasionally. They were called Tom and Jerry. Among the other pets were deer, badgers, a bear cub— all as tame as human kindness could make them.

Although Mr. Anderson was an attorney by profession, his farm was his home and his hobby, converted as it was into a wild life sanctuary. However, the regular activities of the farm were not entirely forgotten and Mr. Anderson had some small reputation as a breeder of blooded hogs, which he exhibited at state and county fairs.

Mr. Anderson was born in Hutchinson, the grandson of the city's founder, Asa B. Hutchinson. Following completion of his work in the public schools at his home, Mr. Anderson entered the University of Minnesota. His studies were interrupted by the Spanish-American war. He enlisted in the Thirteenth Minnesota Volunteer regiment and saw service in the Philippines. He was invalided home in 1899, reentered the university and was graduated from the law school in 1899.

He then returned to Hutchinson and started practice of law. In 1908 he was elected county attorney of McLeod County, which post he held until 1912, when he was appointed postmaster at Hutchinson by President Woodrow Wilson.

Mr. Anderson always was active in democratic politics and at one time was mentioned as a possible candidate of his party for the Minnesota governorship

In the World War he was active in patriotic work, particularly in halting seditious enterprises in the state. The story is told of him invading a crowd that was listening to a defamatory speech, calling the speaker to time and finally backing up his arguments with his fists.

#### Helped Organize Club

Early in his professional career Mr. Anderson became interested in conservation. With the late Carlos Avery he organized the Gopher Campfire club, which became nationally known as a sportsman's organization meeting twice each year to consider questions concerning wildlife in the state. He also was active in the Minnesota Game Protective League and was its president for many years. From 1925 until illness a year ago forced him to abandon it he did not miss a meeting of the American Game Conference in New York.

Mr. Anderson was a member of Temple Masonic Lodge at Hutchinson and of other Masonic bodies, including Zuhrah Temple of the Shrine in Minneapolis.

He is survived by his wife Margaret Ames Anderson; three children, Mary, Sam and Peggy, and a sister, Mrs. Lyman E. Wakefield of Minneapolis.

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The following editorial was published in the *Journal* on Monday evening, June 24, 1935:

## Friend of the Wild

The cause of game conservation in the Northwest has lost its best friend by the death of Sam G. Anderson of Hutchinson

For twenty-five years he had preached that "love thy neighbor" should include the birds, trees and flowers. And at his home, Anderson Hill Refuge, with its little pond and cover of trees and thickets, he has shown to a questioning world the inherent understanding of nature for one who approaches it with a kindly heart. Here wild geese and ducks, pheasant and quail, song birds of all sorts have been wont to gather, knowing full well there was peace and contentment were such a loving spirit was host.

Though many honors came to Mr. Anderson from his home city, county, state and even his appointment to the Federal Migratory Bird Advisory Board, none can match the moment he built himself in the wildlife sanctuary at his home.

And when geese each year come wedging out of the north on a fall wind and drop in on the little Hutchinson pond for rest and protection from gunners, it will be compliment to the attributes that conservationists everywhere credit him with today—his sincerity, truthfulness and kindly spirit.

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