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# History of the town of Middleboro, Massachusetts

*Thomas Weston*

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PREFACE

This volume should have been written fifty years ago, during the lifetime of many men who were familiar with the early history and traditions of the town, which they had learned from older men with whom they had conversed in their younger days, who, in turn, had learned these stories from the early settlers. These men were Wilkes Wood, Zachariah Eddy, his son Samuel Eddy, Colonel Thomas Weston, Alfred Wood, and others. Wilkes Wood delivered an historic address in 1815 ; Zachariah Eddy wrote the history of the First Church ; Samuel Eddy gathered many important facts not before recorded ; Colonel Weston was especially familiar with the genealogy and traditions of the settlers, and John Bennett left a number of valuable papers relating to their conveyances of land ; but when these men passed away, much of the early history which might have been preserved was lost forever. General Ebenezer W. Peirce, who was interested in the military affairs of the town and the early history of Lakeville, wrote an account of Middle-boro and Lakeville for the " History of Plymouth County," a genealogy of the Peirce family, and many articles which were published in the Middleboro "Gazette."

We have transcribed what could be obtained relating to the early history from the records of Plymouth Colony and the Massachusetts Archives ; but it is unfortunate that in King Philip's War the records of the town and many ancient documents were burned. There have been kept, however, many of the records of different purchases from the Indians, the original or early copies now being in the possession of the town clerk.

The traditions here given have come down uniformly from father to son through generations, so that they may be regarded as trustworthy and correct statements of facts. Many of the incidents were told to the author in his boyhood by those men

before mentioned. For the account of Judge Oliver and the various stories connected with his life, the author is largely indebted to his father, who learned them from Mrs. Mary Nor-cutt, Judge Oliver's housekeeper. Many years ago, Granville T. Sproat published the same in the Middleboro " Gazette." Family genealogies have given more or less information concerning some of the individuals whose lives are recorded in the following pages.

We desire to make special acknowledgment of the assistance rendered by Joseph E. Beals, chairman of the publication committee, for many valuable suggestions and facts. The author also acknowledges the aid he has received from other members of the committee, from many interested in the preparation of this work, and from his daughter Grace, who examined and transcribed many historical documents, and from her researches added many facts not heretofore published. Most of the illustrations are from photographs taken by Walter L. Beals, and the plates and designs have been made by or under the supervision of Herbert S. Sylvester.

In this volume we have adopted the shorter spelling of Middleboro instead of Middleborough.

This book is submitted with the many imperfections and mistakes which, with the utmost care, a work of this

kind must necessarily contain, but the author has endeavored to set forth the story of this ancient town, and something of the lives and character of the men, that they may not be forgotten amid the stirring scenes of the present age and generation.

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**Helen Leduc:**

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**Adeline Bonds:**

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