

**ANCIENT  
LANDMARKS  
OF PEMBROKE**

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Ancient landmarks of Pembroke by Henry Wheatland Litchfield

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**HENRY WHEATLAND LITCHFIELD**

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*The Sachems' Point at Furnace Pond*

7173  
Ancient Landmarks  
of Pembroke

By  
Henry Wheatland Litchfield

Youth with thee my heart is fledde  
Come back to the golden Hedde  
Wilt not? yet this token keepe  
Of hir who doeth thy going weepe  
Gyf the world prove harsh and cold  
Come back to the Hedde of Gold

PEMBROKE  
GEORGE EDWARD LEWIS  
1909

TO MY FATHER  
AND MOTHER  
HER LOVE FOR PEMBROKE  
PROMPTED THESE PAPERS  
HIS HELP MADE POSSIBLE  
THEIR EXECUTION

## Ancient Landmarks of Pembroke

Not many among the outlying towns of Massachusetts possess histories more interesting or significant than that of the Town of Pembroke in the Old Colony. It is a history which, promising little at the outset, rewards study by disclosing persons and events of a character to win lasting admiration from the student, and lead him on engrossed from point to point until, if there is to be any end at all of his research, he must despair of attaining to a convenient stoppingplace, and breaking short off in the midst, leave half told their story—I at least have found them such. The series of papers printed in this book, at first including but nine *Landmarks*, has grown to include fifteen; each of these is longer than its predecessor in order of writing; and the ancient houses and sites of Pembroke whose annals remain unread by me, but well worth reading, are yet legion. The Taverns in High Street; the dwellings of Deacon Isaac Hatch, Judge Turner, Dr. Jeremiah Hall, and Capt. Alexander Parris; Wallis Orchard and Peter's Spring; Sabbaday Orchard; the Mills on Herring Brook, and the Furnace at Furnace Pond; Hobomoc, or Devil, Pond with its strange legend, Oldham or Monument Pond, and Indian Bridge close by; Ward or Hart Hill; Ludden's Ford; Queen's Brook; and many others in Hanson, dating from the days when all that region was western Pembroke: have in these papers been briefly mentioned, or not at all. Chief among my sins of omission, I know well, are the famous Magoun houses in northern and eastern Pembroke, of which the oldest, now known as the homestead of Luther Magoun, is said to have been erected in Schoosett—then Scituate Two-mile—by his ancestor John Magoun during the year 1666.



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No further statement, of course, is needed to show that this book does not even pretend to be exhaustive. I wish I might hope that incompleteness were its greatest fault.

Visitors to the place have told me that in summer Pembroke is at her best. I should like to make an amendment to their saying, and read with them summer indeed, but Indian summer. Walking eastward from the Ponds toward Highgary in the late afternoon or early evening of an October day, past quiet farmhouses, through fields of yellow corn shot across by the level sunbeams, and dim woods rich with the perfume of wild grapes, you come suddenly out upon a hillcrest, marked by tufts of dry poverty grass and a score of rugged pinetrees, overlooking Namassakeesett, the Brook and the River, the meadows and forests and ancient clearings which line their courses, and shade off into a blue haze on the distant slopes. There is stillness unbroken—for the rustling grass and whispering pines do not break it; off at the left, a dash of gold and scarlet shows on the maples below Dancing Hill; presently, across the common, comes pealing down from the belfry the first stroke of six, calling the village to supper, and heralding approach of the evening. As you descend the hill, the dust of its ancient thoroughfare is sprinkled over with pale leaves from the balm-of-Gilead: the mellow air seems peopled by shades of Indian scout and runner, sachem and sagamore; rough English pioneers; clergymen and magistrates of the Puritans; colonial squire and Revolutionary captain; friends of later years, now missed these many Sunday mornings from the family pew in the Meeting House; and all the throng of those who in succession passed that way: and a twilight of the olden time steals upon you, in which centuries are blended together, and the yesterdays become todays. If any of that light shines through these pages; or if the record which they contain, enables any to make for himself an Indian summer of his own: my purpose in writing them will have been achieved.

Although it follows from my confession, that I have cared more for point of view than for objective facts, still a

## OF PEMBROKE

considerable number of these was essential, as a framework on which to base the whole. I have tried to be exact in presenting them, and to attain accuracy in details. All dates are inclusive. All previous to 14 September 1752, are Old Style, unless otherwise stated; but even before that time, I have reckoned the year as beginning on January 1, rather than on March 25; retaining however double dates, when those appeared in the original. All ambiguous cases I have decided according to probability, and if necessary, translated. In determining sites, my description even now gives little help, and will after a time become quite useless: the defect is supplied in a map of Mattakeesett; on which—so far as its scope allowed—have been represented roughly, with some slight deviations from his plan, the results of Mr. Tillson's surveys of Marshfield Upper Lands, the Thousand Acres, the Massachusetts Path, and Duxbury Commons.

Necessary for a good understanding of the map, and important in itself as matter of general interest, is a knowledge of the changes in jurisdiction through which has passed the territory included within the Town of Pembroke during the period of its widest extent, the years 1754-1820. This territory lay entirely within the jurisdiction of the Colony Court of Plymouth Colony, from the establishment of that Court by the royal charter of 1629, until its absorption in the General Court of the Province of Massachusetts Bay. Duxbury was incorporated in 1637: in 1641 its northerly bound was fixed at the North River; and its westerly bound, at the Massachusetts Path. In 1658, the Court ordered "that such persons as live at Namassakeesett, on the lands as were granted to the townsmen of Duxburrow, shall appertaine to the towne of Duxburrow." Namassakeesett—the country lying just west of the Path—was in 1661 made part of a grant to Duxbury and Marshfield in common. The Major's Purchase, comprising the central and southerly part of what is now Hanson, was negotiated in 1662 by Major Josiah Winslow. In his deed of this land, the chief Wampatuck expressly reserved for the Indians' use a tract of one thousand

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acres bordering on Herring Ponds. Duxbury and Marshfield divided their holding in 1698, thus giving rise to Namassakesett proper—thenceforth a part of Duxbury—and the Marshfield Upper Lands. These were united with northern Duxbury and the Purchase, in the new town of Pembroke, incorporated 1712. A precinct including parts of Pembroke, Halifax, Bridgewater, Abington, and Hanover, and styled the West Precinct of Pembroke, was erected in 1746; in 1754 the entire area of this precinct was made part of Pembroke; and remained such until its incorporation, as the Town of Hanson, in 1820. Since that year, township boundaries in this neighborhood have not been materially changed.

The appearance of these papers in permanent form is due to the suggestion and encouragement of several persons, chiefly of Nathaniel Morton, Esquire, whose contribution of historical matter should also be acknowledged, and to the enterprise of their publisher. I take this opportunity to thank him sincerely for undertaking what is at best a doubtful venture; for sparing no pains to make the book perfect in text and illustration; and for receiving with uniform patience the many additions, changes, and corrections which have disfigured its first draft from time to time. Nearly all the landscapes are from photographs of his own taking; and he has made no account of expense or labor in reproducing several fine old likenesses, which, by the courtesy of their possessors, we were permitted to use.

Between September of 1906 and September of 1908, many discoveries have widened our knowledge of Pembroke history. These have induced me to write for the book several new chapters, and have made necessary a thorough revision of all. I wish each succeeding year may expose as many of their shortcomings as the last has exposed.

Material for the articles has been taken, in most cases without express acknowledgement, from Dr. Francis Collamore's *History of Pembroke*; Dr. Barker Newhall's *Barker Family*; Miss Hannah Barker's manuscript; Rev. T. P. Doggett's *Allen Memorial*; Barry's *History of Hanover*; the