

**HISTORICAL ADDRESS  
DELIVERED BEFORE  
THE CITIZENS OF  
WALTHAM, JULY 4, 1876**

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Historical address delivered before the citizens of Waltham, July 4, 1876 by Josiah Rutter

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**JOSIAH RUTTER**

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# HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

CITIZENS OF WALTHAM,

JULY 4, 1876,

BY

JOSIAH RTUTTER.

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WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE DAY.

1877.

~~325, 69~~

312470.4.5

1877, Sept. 12.

Gift of  
Jan<sup>s</sup> A. Green, M. D.  
of Boston.  
(H. U. 1851)



WALTHAM:  
WALTHAM FREE PRESS OFFICE.  
1877.

## PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATION.

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On the 25th of May, 1876, the President of the United States issued the following Proclamation:—

**WHEREAS**, a joint resolution of the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States was duly approved on the 13th day of March last, which resolution is as follows:

*“Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled:*

*“That it be and is hereby recommended by the Senate and House of Representatives to the people of the several States, that they assemble in their several counties or towns, on the approaching centennial anniversary of our national independence; and that they cause to have delivered on such day an historical sketch of said county or town from its formation; and that a copy of said sketch may be filed, in print or manuscript, in the clerk's office of said county, and an additional copy in print or manuscript, be filed in the office of the librarian of Congress, to the intent that a complete record may thus be obtained of the progress of our institutions during the first centennial of their existence.”*

*Whereas*, It is deemed proper that such recommendation be brought to the notice and knowledge of the people of the United States.

*Now, therefore*, I, Ulysses S. Grant, President of the United States, do hereby declare and make known the same, in the hope that the object of such resolution may meet the approval of the people of the United States, and that proper steps may be taken to carry the same into effect.

Given under my hand at the city of Washington, the 25th of May, in the year of our Lord 1876, and of the independence of the United States the one hundredth.

U. S. GRANT

By the President.

HAMILTON FISH, *Secretary of State.*



At a town meeting held March 19, 1877, it was—

*Voted*, That the Selectmen be directed to cause to be published in proper form and in numbers according to their judgment a sketch of the Centennial exercises of July 4th, 1876, including the Historical Address of Josiah Rutter, Esq.

E. B. ARMSTRONG,  
TIMOTHY LEARY,  
CHAS. H. BILL,  
B. C. BATCHELDER,  
L. S. FOSTER. } *Selectmen.*



## ORATION.

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In the Spring of 1630 there would seem to have been quite a fever in the mother country for emigration to America. In the course of a few weeks seventeen vessels sailed from different ports on the English coast, bringing over some prominent men, such as Gov. Winthrop, Sir Richard Saltonstall, Henry Bright and others. A number of these had made Salem their destination and there they landed. Not, however, feeling satisfied with the place, they in the course of a few days removed to Charlestown. Here again they were disappointed, and going up Charles River about four miles they finally selected as a permanent location, a spot to which with other territory was afterwards given the name of Watertown. Here with Sir Richard Saltonstall as their leader, and the Rev. George Phillips as their

Pastor, they established a home and formed a church, the covenant of membership having been signed by forty men, most of them heads of families.

As originally established and chartered Watertown included what is now embraced in the towns of Weston, Waltham, Watertown and part of Lincoln. And so it remained for nearly a hundred years. In 1713, Weston became a separate town. From this time what was afterward set off as Waltham, was known as the West Precinct of Watertown, an ecclesiastical rather than a municipal designation. In 1720 a church was formed, and soon after a meeting-house was erected on the spot near the Lyman mansion, where afterwards a more commodious house was built which remained until 1840. During the one hundred and twenty years, from 1720 to 1840, there were but three Pastors of this society, the Rev. Warham Williams officiating from 1720 to 1752; the Rev. Jacob Cushing from 1752 to 1809; and the Rev. Samuel Ripley from 1809 to 1840.

In 1738, Waltham was incorporated as a town. It is remarkable that we do not find on some of the records some intimation of the origin of the name given to our town. We know that various meetings were held in the West Precinct in reference to the change, that formal notice of the intended application was served upon the town of Watertown, and that a petition was present-

ed to the General Court asking for its incorporation. But in none of these is found any suggestion of the name intended to be given to the new town. The probability is that it was proposed by some one of the inhabitants who came from the vicinity of Waltham Abbey, in Essex County, England. Waltham gained about six hundred acres of territory by annexation from Newton in 1849, and lost on its northeast corner by the incorporation of Belmont in 1859.

It may seem strange that from the time of the incorporation of the new town, for a good number of years so little should have occurred within its borders to become matter of history. And yet it is not wanting a satisfactory explanation. The territory of Waltham had always been a sort of middle or border land between two well known and thrifty towns. And this continued to be its character long after the establishment of the new town. The inhabitants were a farming community, occupying the rich and productive lands in the northerly section of the town, in preference to those nearer the river which were of an inferior quality. It was a town that had no centrality. The Post-Office, after one was established, was in the vicinity of Beaver Brook where there was a public house and a store; and there was also a public house and store at the extreme west end of the town. And thus it continued until the Boston