

CHAPTER X.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY.

THIS county is the most populous in the Commonwealth, and next to Suffolk the most wealthy. It has a grand historic renown: within its limits are "Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill." It is bounded north by New Hampshire, north-east by the county of Essex, south-east by Charles River, Boston Harbor, and Norfolk County, and west by the county of Worcester. Its rivers are the Merrimac, Charles, Mystic, Sudbury, Concord, and Nashua. Nearly every town is now intersected with a railroad. It contains fifty-four cities and towns. Since the war the town of Hudson, formed of parts of Marlborough and Stow, and the town of Everett, formed of a part of Malden, have been incorporated as separate and distinct towns; the former, March 19, 1866, and the latter, March 9, 1870. Their war records form a part of that of the towns from which they were set off, and therefore do not appear distinct and separate in this volume. In "old times" the county seat was Concord; at the present time the courts of the county are held in Cambridge and Lowell. Middlesex is not only celebrated for its Revolutionary renown, but for containing Cambridge University, and the Navy Yard at Charlestown. Lowell and Waltham are well known for their cotton manufactures, as are Marlborough, Woburn, Natick, and other towns for the manufacture of shoes. The aggregate value of the agricultural and manufacturing products of the county in 1870 was \$83,102,442. "The surface of the county is uneven, and the soil barren. It presents a great variety for the admiration of the patriot, scholar, farmer, mechanic, and painter."

The population of Middlesex County in 1860 was 216,352;

in 1865 it was 220,618, being an increase in five years of 4,266. The population in 1870 was 274,353, being an increase in five years of 53,735. The valuation of the county in 1860 was \$135,458,009; in 1865 it was \$155,324,723, being an increase in five years of \$19,866,714.

The number of men which Middlesex County furnished for the war, according to returns made by the selectmen of the towns and mayors of the cities in 1866—with the exception of Concord and West Cambridge, which do not appear to have made a return—was 28,646. West Cambridge and Concord furnished 524 men, which would make the aggregate, as reported, 29,170, which we believe to be at least three thousand more than was furnished; and therefore the returns were in many cases inaccurate. This fact, however, is certain: that every city and town in the county furnished its quota on every call made by the President, and at the end of the war each had a surplus, which in the aggregate amounted to one thousand six hundred and seven. The amount of money expended by the various municipalities on account of the war, exclusive of State aid, was \$2,400,860.40. The amount raised and expended during the war for State aid to soldiers' families, and repaid by the Commonwealth, was \$1,560,825.63, making a grand total of three million nine hundred and sixty-one thousand six hundred and eighty-six dollars and three cents (\$3,961,686.03).

The following are the war records of the cities and towns:—

ACTON.—Incorporated July 3, 1735. Population in 1860, 1,726; in 1865, 1,660. Valuation in 1860, \$821,401; in 1865, \$854,719.

The selectmen in 1861 and during the war were James E. Billings, James K. Putney, J. K. W. Wetherbee.

Town-clerk during the same years, William D. Tuttle. The town-treasurer in 1861 was Winthrop F. Conant; in 1862, 1863, 1864, and 1865, John E. Cutter.

1861. A legal town-meeting was held, April 27, "to see if the town would appropriate a sum of money for the assistance of the needy families of the Acton 'Davis Guards,'* now in the

* The Davis Guards was in the Sixth Regiment, which passed through Baltimore on the 19th of April, 1861.

service of the United States," at which it was resolved, first, "that the citizens of Acton, one and all, whatever may have been their former political opinions, will unite and rally around the Constitution and flag of our Union, and be ready to imitate the noble example of our fathers, who shed their blood in defence of our civil and religious liberties;" second, "that it is the duty of every citizen to come forward, and do all in his power, to assist in maintaining the rightful authority of the national government;" third, "that the soldiers of the Acton Davis Guards, starting, like their namesakes in 1775, at a minute's warning, with the Sixth Regiment—being the first to respond to the President's call, armed and equipped for the defence of the national capital—have honored themselves and the town, and shown by their gallant conduct that they are true lineal descendants of Davis, Hosmer, and Heyward,—men who were 'not afraid to go,' and who fought and fell in defence of our liberties;" fourth, that the town appropriate five thousand dollars "for the benefit of the families of soldiers in the town of Acton, who are, or may hereafter be, engaged in the service of the United States." A committee was appointed to superintend the expenditure of the money; "also, to purchase pistols for the use of the Davis Guards." July 16th, A meeting was held to make preparations to receive the Davis Guards on their return from their three months' service. It was voted to give a dinner to the soldiers, their wives, and families. "A band of music, and powder and cannon, were furnished." The reception was a very pleasant occasion for the soldiers and the citizens.

1862. July 16th, The town voted to pay a bounty of one hundred dollars to each volunteer enlisting to the credit of the town, and the selectmen and treasurer were authorized to recruit the men, and borrow the money to pay the bounties. August 20th, Voted, to pay a bounty of one hundred dollars "to each resident of the town who volunteers in the Davis Guards for nine months," and the further sum of twenty-five dollars to each of the twenty-three recruits for three years' service. December 2d, Voted, that if any more men are required from Acton the same bounty shall be paid as before; and if any man is drafted and enters the service he shall receive the same bounty.

1863. At a town-meeting held November 3d the selectmen were authorized to keep on recruiting men, and to pay such bounties as they might think proper. This system was continued to the end of the war.

Acton furnished one hundred and ninety-five men for the military service, which was a surplus of thirty over and above all demands. Twenty were commissioned officers. The total amount of money raised and expended by the town for war purposes, exclusive of State aid, was thirteen thousand and seventy-two dollars (\$13,072.00).

The amount of money raised and expended by the town during the war for State aid to soldiers' families, and which was afterwards repaid by the Commonwealth, was as follows: In 1861, \$731.05; in 1862, \$2,416.01; in 1863, \$2,556.71; in 1864, \$1,883.26; in 1865, \$1,150.00. Total amount, \$8,737.03.

ASHBY.—Incorporated March 5, 1767. Population in 1860, 1,091; in 1865, 1,080. Valuation in 1860, \$555,386; in 1865, \$508,393.

The selectmen in 1861 were Silas Rice, Joseph Foster, Benjamin F. Wallis; in 1862, Joseph Foster, Benjamin F. Wallis, J. S. Jaquith; in 1863, 1864, and 1865, F. W. Wright, J. S. Jaquith, Liberty Wellington.

The town-clerk in 1861 and 1862 was Perez C. Burr; in 1863, James M. J. Jefts; in 1864 and 1865, E. Hobart Hayward. The town-treasurer in 1861 was Stephen Wyman; in 1862, 1863, 1864, and 1865, Francis W. Wright.

1861. The first legal town-meeting, to act upon matters connected with the war, was held on the 1st of May, at which the following resolutions, preceded by a patriotic preamble, were adopted:—

Resolved, That we, the men of Ashby, heartily approve of the most energetic and active measures to secure and hold the public property and to sustain the Government and laws.

Resolved, That we pledge ourselves and our property to sustain the Constitution, the freedom and rights bequeathed to us by our fathers, and we will defend them to the last.