

IN MEMORIAM  
DOCTOR SILAS EMLYN STONE

B. AUGUST 10, 1838, D. JANUARY 29, 1887

Trustee, Walpole Public Library, Member, Walpole School Committee  
Country Doctor, Walpole, Massachusetts

Civil War Veteran: Asst. Surgeon, Massachusetts 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment

Served at Battles of Roanoke Island and Newberne, North Carolina, 1862



Obituary, Silas Emlyn Stone. (Boston Evening Transcript Feb. 15, 1887)

Silas Emlyn Stone, M.D., whose death at Walpole, Mass., on the 29th ult. Has been announced, was the third son of Dr. Eben Stone, who in early life settled in Walpole, was there married and had four sons and two daughters. Dr. Stone was born in 1838. His early education was in the public schools of his native town and later at boarding school at Taunton, Mass., and Lancaster, N.H. Deciding to adopt his father's profession he entered Harvard Medical School and after studying about two years, went to the South Boston Insane Asylum, then under the care of the late Dr. Clement A. Walker. A careful student, he here attained that special knowledge of insanity which in after years made his opinion sought all over the State. Returning to Cambridge he finished the medical course, taking his degree with honor in 1860.

At the breaking out of the war of the Rebellion, the commission of assistant surgeon in the Massachusetts Twenty-third was offered him (Sept. 11, 1861), which he accepted gladly, the late Dr. George Derby, afterwards secretary of the State Board of Health, being the surgeon. Before the regiment sailed for North Carolina he married Sarah Elizabeth, daughter of the late Hon. Joseph Hawes of Walpole. He was with his regiment at Roanoke Island and at the battle of Newberne, where he rendered efficient service in the care of the wounded. Afterwards, in the occupation of the city which gives its name to the battlefield, Dr. Derby being detached, Dr. Stone was in charge of the sick in camp, and with Dr. Derby of the regimental hospital in the city, in which he continued until one day he fainted at his post from fatigue. Attacked by typhoid fever, he was very ill, and in a few days (May, 1862,) he was sent North by transport to die, as was supposed by his confreres. Youth, a good constitution, fine medical skill and careful nursing pulled him through, though he never attained the vigor of body of his entrance into the service.

After getting about, not well enough to rejoin his regiment, he resigned his commission (Sept. 11, 1862) and was made port physician, with residence at Deer Island, where he remained two years. In 1864 he returned to Walpole to be near his father, whose health was beginning to fail. And here, again, his life was despaired of through an internal abscess, the result of exposure in the army. Again did medical skill and good nursing restore him to a semblance of health. Since then his life had been that of a first-class country physician (those who have tried it know how hard it is), with a reputation and practice which called him throughout the county. Indeed, to his devotion to his profession may be attributed his early death. With vitality impaired by exposure to the extremely changeable weather of the early winter, and wearied by incessant calls for his services day and night, a severe influenza, superadded to two or three obstinate cases in his practice, produced the attack which so quickly ended his life.

Dr. Stone was a public-spirited man. His purse was always open, and his time freely given to any plan for the advancement of the best interests of the town. The welfare of the public schools was very near his heart, and for many years before his death, he was a member of the school committee. He was a trustee of the Public Library, serving continuously from its foundation to the present time. He was surgeon of E.B. Piper Post No. 157, G.A.R., and about five years ago was elected president of the Norfolk District Medical Society, resigning at the end of a year. Naturally a religious man in his thoughts and feelings, he attached little value to creeds, form or ceremonies, but his whole life was a conspicuous example of the golden rule: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

He was constantly seeking opportunity to do some service for his fellow men, and hundreds have enjoyed his medical skill and other kind offices, who had little to give in return save thanks. Perhaps his most marked characteristics were modesty and fidelity to duty. A course once decided upon as right, nothing could induce him to desist from it. Said a brother physician, "He had the best balanced mind of any man I ever knew." He had also the ability to inspire, in marked degree, that great adjunct of medicine, confidence in the physician. A close observer and original thinker, he assimilated what he acquired and when occasion required drew upon his vast fund of information, to the delight of his patient or listener. Speaking one day of the lost companionship of his only son, who died in his arms last April, which he had anticipated from the hour of his birth, he said with inexpressible sadness, "I must learn to live without it." A few short months, and lo! he has rejoined his son, and again entered upon that companionship which he shall nevermore lose. His death is a serious loss, and no man in the county will be more missed or longer held in remembrance. Besides his own, many hearths are desolate. T.A.K.

Dr. Stone administered care to Walpole's first soldier to die during the Civil War, Pvt. Elbridge Brigham Piper, Co. K, Mass. 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, at New Berne, North Carolina, most likely at the hospital set up at the still existing New Berne Academy. He was a member of the Union Club of Walpole, which supported the 1864 election of President Abraham Lincoln. He also took active part in the process of building the Old Town Hall in 1881, and provided personal funds towards the purchase of the Howard Clock located in the clock tower of the Old Town Hall. His residence was located at 1101 Main Street, Walpole. He is buried at Rural Cemetery, Pemberton Street, Walpole, Massachusetts.

Sources: Obituary, Silas Emlyn Stone, February 15, 1887, Boston Evening Transcript. Author "T.A.K." Unknown, but most likely a contemporary Walpole resident. Image, from Silas Stone Memorial booklet, courtesy of the Walpole Historical Society. References to Elbridge B. Piper: Letters from Samuel Piper, and other items, from the Walpole Historical Society Collection, Reference to Walpole Union Club, Walpole Historical Society Broadside (copy from private collection). Also: Record of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, Mass. Vol. Inf. 1861-5

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