



City of Cambridge

O-20.

IN CITY COUNCIL

March 19, 2001

COUNCILLOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR BORN
COUNCILLOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DECKER
MAYOR GALLUCCIO
VICE MAYOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

WHEREAS: Eli George Biddle was a member of the Massachusetts 54th Regiment. For a significant portion of his life, Eli George Biddle lived at 12 Hubbard Avenue, Cambridge; and

WHEREAS: Eli George Biddle attended the Abiel Smith School on Beacon Hill and later attended Yale. He was an A.M.E. Zion minister who at one time led the historic Columbus Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church; and

WHEREAS: Eli George Biddle married Sarah E. Decker on September 1, 1873; their marriage was blessed with ten children, five of whom succumbed to infant illnesses, and over time, with ten grandchildren, seven of whom (all of the male children) saw wartime service in the United States armed forces; and

WHEREAS: The legacy of Reverend Eli George Biddle is that he helped to end the scourge of slavery in the United States of America. He served with a decorated regiment which was distinguished by its make up and its valor; and

WHEREAS: Eli had just turned seventeen at the time he enlisted in the 54th Regiment; the youngest soldier in the regiment, he was called "Youngblood"; and

WHEREAS: Upon the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, Eli Biddle was named by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to represent Massachusetts and the northern forces at the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. At his death on April 8, 1940, he was the last survivor of the Massachusetts 54th Regiment; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: Eli George Biddle was a husband, father, preacher and soldier. He excelled in each of these rolls. We name this square today at the corner of Hubbard Avenue and Walnut Avenue "**Eli George Biddle Square**" in his honor so that all can know that the roots of American history are with the contribution of Americans - Black Americans and White Americans. Americans All!!!

In City Council March 19, 2001.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of eight members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "D. Margaret Drury". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "D" and a long, sweeping tail.

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk



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WHEREAS: Eli George Biddle attended the Abiel Smith School on Beacon Hill and later attended Yale; He was an A.M.E. Zion minister who at one time led the historic Columbus Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church; and

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D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

①

W/A Eli George Biddle married Sarah C. Decker on September 1, 1873; their marriage was blessed with ten children, five of whom succumbed to infant illnesses, and over time, with ten grandchildren, seven of whom (all of the male children) saw wartime service in the United States armed forces; and

② W/A: Eliza had just turned 17 at the time he enlisted in the 54th Regiment;

~~W/A~~ As the youngest soldier in the regiment, he was called "youngblood;" and

W/A:

5/20/01

Dedication Information

1. Full Name

Eli George Biddle

2. Important Nickname

As the youngest "man" in the Regiment Eli was called "Youngblood". Eli had just turned 17 at the time of his enlistment. Thus it was only fitting that, among the thousands of men in the Regiment Eli was the last person to die.

3. Date and place of birth.

Eli was born in Black Rock Pa. on 8 January 1846.

4. Full name of spouse

Sarah E. Decker

5. Date and place of marriage

Eli + Sarah were married in Newburg New York 1 Sept. 1873

6. Date of Death.

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CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Eli died in Boston mass
8th April 1940. His wife Sarah died
in Boston 29 Sept 1939.

7. Full names of children.

Theresa
William Alphonse
Grace Jane.
Edith Theodora
Mabel Maggie
George H.
Charles H. Biddle
Bessie Constance
Edna Isabel
Benjamin Bickmore.

8. Waive Children Spouses.

Infant illness took 5 of the
Biddle children. at early age.

9. Grandchildren.

Harold Wyman. world war " Vet.
Marius Ralph " " "
George Henry WW II, Korea, Viet Nam
Anna Decker Vet.
Edna Naomi
Earl Westly WW II Vet.
Carl Milton WW II Korea Vet
Gordon Byron " "
Irving Wendal " " "
Janet Clair.

10 Great Grandchildren

Michael Edward
Prof Ph.D. University Mass.

George Henry
Pres. Coblyn Design
Bethesda Md.

11 Military Service

All grandchildren participate during WWII, Harold was severely wounded during combat in Italy, died years later due to wounds suffered.

Carl Milton served in The Air Force attained the rank of Sergeant Major.

Erving served during Korea and Viet Nam attained rank of Sergeant Major.

George Henry participated in 3 wars wounded twice. Was with the 82nd Air Borne Div. Attained the rank of major upon retirement of 20 years.

Eli, himself, as a young student attending the Smith School on Beacon Hill became quite disgusted over the daily ritual of singing "My Country 'Tis of Thee" Sweet Land of Liberty. He was warned "to sing" or go home and return with his mother. Eli refused and left school on his way home he met a Capt Bohman who was recruiting Negroes for a Regiment.

which was being formed.

Eli was among the first 18 men to volunteer for service with what was designated as the Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment.

After training at Reedville Mass the Regiment soon found themselves in an attack position against Fort Wagner. In that battle Eli was seriously wounded in his left shoulder and neck. A few months later Eli was transferred back to his regiment and finally home to Boston.

Upon his return home Eli became the superintendent of a Sunday school at North Russell Street. Upon joining the A. M. E. Zion Church Eli earned his license to preach and later joined a church in New Haven Conn. He entered Yale University and was an honor graduate, being awarded a set of books called the Treasury of David.

12 Employment.

Eli became a sign painter becoming very skilled in the application of gold leaf lettering.

13 Entering adulthood Eli became the pastor of the Columbus Avenue A. M. E. Zion Church.

On his 94th birthday and during the celebration of the war's worst battle "The Battle of Gettysburg" Eli was chosen by President Franklin Roosevelt to represent Massachusetts at that event.

from school. While walking the street in the vicinity he came upon a lieutenant Holmes who was urging African Americans to join an all Black Regiment. Later Eli was wounded in the right shoulder and neck during the famous charge of the 54th against Fort Wagner Charleston South Carolina.

Returning home from the war Eli soon became the superintendent of the Sunday school at North Russell Street A.M.E.

Zion Church. He was licensed to preach and was later ordained an elder at New Haven Conn.

After graduating from Yale University where he was awarded a set of the Treasury of David by his professor.

Late in life Eli was the pastor of the Columbus Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church.

Upon the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, Eli was chosen by President Roosevelt to represent the Northern Forces at a reunion. Eli recall that "this was one of the most happy days of my life."

On the his 94th birthday Eli was chosen as the chosen chaplain of the state department of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1939.

~~Eli~~ Eli died a year later and was declared the last surviving member of the 54th Mass. Volunteer Regiment.

Hobbies, Special Events and Memories.

Eli spent his most happy days of his life at 19 Hubbard Avenue Cambridge Mass. It was and still is a lovely Victorian house adored by large colored glass doors and 3 fireplaces. The house is encircled by private hedges, 3 large pear trees and 3 prolific cherry trees.

"Harvest Day" is both festive and busy and a very special day for both Church members and neighbors. It is eye catching to see the women walk around with 2 cherries draped over their ears.

Walking in the midst of all the activity one finds the Rev Eli, softly yet emphatically preaching God's word.

And no matter how engrossed we would become in our activities, the sight of Rev Eli George Biddle rounding the corners of Walden Street onto Hubbard Avenue. It was a special event. We loved Hubbard Avenue.

Eli would always engage us with joyful banter.

The Reverend Eli George Biddle was a very special kind of person. He always appeared robust and joyful. We hoped he would live for ever. Ninety four years always seemed like too short a time.

Late in the year 1939 the Boston Globe ran a photograph of Rev Biddle who had just been chosen as Chaplain of the state Department of the Grand Army of the Republic. Accompanying Eli in the photo was George W. Green 94 of Jamaica who had just been elected adjutant general.

A year later the same photo was again published with the caption Rev Eli Biddle the last survivor.

Left order - Revere →

Eli George Biddle Square

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was a member of the Massachusetts 54th Regiment. For
a significant portion of his
~~Eli George Biddle~~
life he lived at 12 Hubbard
Avenue Cambridge

Whereas: Eli George Biddle
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School on Beacon Hill and
later attended Yale. He was
an A.M.E. Zion minister
who at one time has led
the historic Columbus Avenue
A.M.E. Zion Church.

Whereas: The legacy of
Rev. Eli George Biddle
is that he helped to end
the scourge of slavery in
the United States of America.
He served with ~~a~~ a decorated
regiment which ^{was} distinguished
by its make up and its
valor. Upon the 75th Anniversary
of the Battle of Petersburg, Eli
Biddle was chosen named by
President Franklin D. Roosevelt
to ^{be} represent Massachusetts and the
northern forces at the 75th
Anniversary of the Battle of Petersburg.
At his death in 1940, he was
the last survivor of the
Massachusetts 54th Regiment

"Eli George Biddle Square"
~~Chapter 14~~

Resumed:

Eli George Biddle was
a husband, father, preacher
and soldier. He excelled
in each of these rolls -

The name this square today
at the corner of ~~Hubbard~~ A Hubbard Avenue and Walnut Avenue
is in his honor so that
all ~~of~~ can know that
the roots of American history
~~have~~ ^{are} deep with the
contribution of Americans
Black Americans and White Americans
- Americans All!!!



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VICE MAYOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

RESOLVED: That the City Council dedicate the corner of Hubbard Avenue and Walden Street be named in honor of Eli Biddle, Civil War veteran and member of the Massachusetts 34th Infantry; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Assistant to the City Council be directed to confer with the family regarding a suitable dedication ceremony and communicate with the Department of Public Works to arrange for the sign.

In City Council March 19, 2001.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of eight members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "D. Margaret Drury".

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

Reveres

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Request that the corner
of Hubbard and Walden be named
Biddle Sq, in honor of Eli Biddle,
Civil War Veteran and member
of the Massachusetts 34th Infantry



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35 H

Order #20

Dedicate the corner of Hubbard
Avenue and Walden Street in honor
of Eli Biddle, Civil War veteran.

Councillor Reeves

In City Council March 19, 2001

ORDER ADOPTED