



*Eben F. Hagg*

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## PREFACE.

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In my youth I was accustomed to hear my father, and other aged people, relate the incidents of olden time, in which I was always interested, and therefore remembered. When Dr. Charles Bell's "Facts in Relation to the History of Chester" appeared in the seventh volume of the N. H. His. Soc. Coll., it was so small in compass, containing little or nothing respecting the Long Meadows, I thought of collecting and preserving the traditional history of that part of the town.

Upon mentioning the subject to the Hon. Samuel D. Bell, he insisted that we should have a history of the whole old town, and have it published, and wished me to undertake the work. I at first declined, but seeing that the alternative was presented of my doing it or having all the traditional part pass away and be lost, I at length consented, having the assurance of Judge Bell that he would aid me. He has done me the favor of perusing most of the work as it has been written, and has greatly aided by his advice and suggestions. Upon our comparing notes, our ideas have run nearly in the same channel. He furnished most of the materials for the notice of the grantees of Chester. I greatly regret that he did not live to see the work completed.

I have endeavored to ascertain and show who the early settlers were, who their ancestors were, where they came from, the identical spot where they settled, who their children were, and what became of them. To do this, it was necessary to examine thoroughly the records of deeds and probate, and also to have a map of the town as laid out into lots, which is an important part of the history of the town. These locations are thus fixed for all time.

I am aware that many will object to so much space being taken up with the genealogy. It was according to my own taste and that of Judge Bell, and may be an aid to descendants of Chester abroad, in tracing back their lineage. I have suppressed many dates, and much respecting the later generation which I had, or which was easily accessible, that many will yet wish had been printed. I have attempted to show how those pioneers lived, what they did, and the energy they exerted, &c., not in a poetical style, being sadly deficient in imagination, but by a plain statement of facts.

Where documents are copied, they are literal copies, capitals, orthography and abbreviations, and are indicated by quotation marks. I have used the orthography of names as found on the records from which I was copying. Judge Bell, when residing in Chester forty-five years ago, collected the tradition of some of the old families from Col. White and others, of which collection I have availed myself. Stephen Chase, Esq., kept a diary from 1784 to his death in 1819, from which I have derived a good deal of information. I would gratefully acknowledge the courtesies extended to me by those having charge of the various public offices I have had occasion to examine. I am greatly indebted to Capt. William F. Goodwin, late Librarian of N. H. His. Soc., for finding and copying documents in the Secretary's office. While all of whom I have made inquiries have treated me courteously, and cheerfully given such information as they possessed, I cannot refrain from acknowledging my great obligations to Miss Margaret Shirley for the information given respecting the ancient families; she and her sister having much more traditional knowledge than any other persons consulted. I am indebted to Henry M. Eaton, Esq., for aid in putting the names of the early settlers of Candia on the map, and also to John Brown, Esq., and the Rev. Joseph Fullonton for those of Raymond. Last, though not least, I would acknowledge my obligations to the compositors and proof-reader for their skill and patience in deciphering bad copy.

I lay no claim to literary merit for the work. There are, no doubt, many errors, some merely clerical or typographical; others, from uncertain and sometimes conflicting traditions; and probably I did not always understand the idea meant to be conveyed;

besides, when I have made statements from my own recollection I may have fallen into error.

The work has greatly exceeded my expectations when I commenced, and the labor of preparing it many times what I then anticipated; but I have never regretted the undertaking. Whatever may be its merits or demerits, or the labor bestowed upon it, I have derived a great amount of satisfaction in its compilation, and if the reader shall derive a quarter as much in reading it, he will be amply repaid for his money and time expended.

BENJAMIN CHASE.

AUBURN, N. H., May, 1869.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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I think that the earliest of anything which I have seen about Chester is Oct. 23, 1717. Samuel Smith of Haverhill deeded a right in Kingstown to Samuel Ingalls of Cheshire. Clement Hughes, the first clerk, spells it "Checher." The records commence with "A Society for Settling the Chestnut Country," and in the charter it is called "Chester." It is useless for me to speculate about the origin of the name, any further than to say that they are all nearly related in orthography and sound.

The surface of Chester is very uneven, and most of it stony, — much of it not susceptible of cultivation; but when it is cultivated, the soil is strong and produces such crops as are adapted to a New England climate. The forests, which were heavy, were, at the lower part where the settlement commenced, composed mostly of walnut and chestnut, intermixed with oak and pine and other woods. At the Long Meadows the same; with less walnut and more hemlock. Hooksett, or Chester Woods, abounded more in the yellow- or pitch-pine and oak, and when burnt over, as it frequently was, the oaks came up and grew rapidly, and produced an abundance of material for hoop-poles. Candia, and perhaps Raymond, had a greater predominance of maple, beech and hemlock. There is a great tendency when the growth is cut off for the hard woods to sprout from the stump, and the soft woods, especially white pine, to come up from the seeds, which makes even the roughest land valuable.

Although the land is uneven, there are no large hills, but simply swells which have names: Walnut Hill, near the lower

corner, so called from that timber; Ingalls Hill, because Capt. Ingalls settled there; Robie's Hill, because John Robie lived and had a tan-yard near its base; and Stockman's and Severance's Hill, from people of that name who lived on its side. The farms of Thomas Richardson and Thomas Craige went back on to Great Hill. At the Long Meadows is Mine Hill, in which the Devil's Den is situated. The Devil's Den is a cave on the southwesterly side of the hill, near its base, and some thirty rods from the road. Peter French of Sandown gave Dr. Belknap a description of it (which was published in his History in 1792, and copied into Morse's Geographies) in which he drew largely from his imagination, telling of a room fifteen or twenty feet square. I have never had the curiosity to explore it, but it is only a mere fissure in the rock, and so large that a man can with difficulty go in sixty feet. Rattlesnake Hill lies south of the pond and west of Londonderry turnpike. The swell between the two bays of the pond is called in the records Mount Misery. The hill lying north of the Oswego mill, mostly in Candia, is called in the records Tower Hill; but a small circumstance, which occurred a little more than fifty years ago, gave Hazen McDuffee, who lives there, the appellation of "the butcher," and the hill has since been called "Butcher Hill." A few years ago a liberty-pole was raised and a Fourth-of-July celebration held on the swell of land near school-house No. 5, in Auburn, when it was named Bunker Hill, which name it has since borne.

There are no *large streams*, but an abundance of small ones. A stream has its head in Beech Hill pond in Hooksett, and passing through Tower Hill pond, partly in Candia and partly in Auburn, taking the name of Oswego brook, empties into Massabesic pond. Another branch passes through Little Massabesic pond and unites with Oswego brook, near the old Calfe fulling-mill.

The pond is said to have derived its name from the circumstance that an Indian whose squaw's name was "Massa," being inquired of in regard to the health of his family, replied, "My massa be sick." It is a beautiful sheet of water with a hard shore and bottom, and some fine beaches of sand. The stream leading from the pond to Merrimack river is called the Cohas, and has a fall of



about one hundred and fifty feet. Alewives, and perhaps shad, formerly passed into the pond.

There are two of the sources of Exeter river which have their rise in Chester; one rising in Three Camp Meadows, passing by the old saw-mill into Sandown, and again into Chester, and another flowing from the North pond, uniting with it and passing through Raymond. Another branch rises in Candia, passing near the station and through Raymond, unites with the main river near the lines of the towns. This last is called the North Branch, and the locality near their junction, the Branch.

The stream rising near the Congregational church in Auburn, and passing through Auburn into Londonderry, and thence into Manchester, and emptying into the Cohas, has meadows most of its length, which were called the Long Meadows, and hence the west part of the town is called the Long Meadows. The stream in Manchester is called the Little Cohas.

There is a stream rising in Candia, passing the village and the island into Raymond, and through Jones pond; and another coming from Deerfield, uniting near Raymond Centre, forming Lamprey Eel river, which passes Freetown mill, and into Epping. Merrimack river passes a short distance into Old Chester, the line being some distance west of the river at Martin's Ferry. The Falls are called in the records "Ile Hoxey Falls," but were not in Chester, the line crossing below. The stream from Lakin's pond, passing Head's mill and entering the river above the falls, is called "Ile Hoxey brook" in the records.

A small stream entering the river near Martin's Ferry is called in the records "Lousy brook." The meadow on this brook, near the old Concord road, was called Bushnell's meadow, and the hills on the south and west were called Bushnell's hills, from the fact that a man by that name had a camp near the meadow, where Samuel Rowell formerly lived and Josiah Clark now lives, in Hooksett. It was a stopping place for travelers in early times, and was called Bushnell's Camp.

## MONEY.

There were different species of money used. Four shillings six pence sterling was equal to a Spanish milled dollar. Six shillings lawful was equal to a dollar. The principal part of the money in actual use was bills of credit issued by the Province, which depreciated, and its value was continually changing. The following values are extracted from Belknap's "New Hampshire," Vol. III., p. 125:

In 1720 an ounce of silver was worth 7s. 6d.; 1725, 16s.; 1730, 20s.; 1725, 27s. 6d.; 1740; 28s.; 1745, 36s.; 1750, 50s.; 1755, 70s.; 1760, 120s., or one pound was equal to one shilling lawful.

This was called "old tenor," and sometimes when there had been a *new* emission, was called "new tenor." I find by old accounts that from 1760 up to the issue of the Continental money by Congress, one pound "old tenor" was equal to one shilling lawful. Massachusetts also issued bills of credit, which did not depreciate so much as those of New Hampshire. One pound Massachusetts "old tenor" was equal to two shillings sixpence, lawful.

May 10, 1775, Congress issued two millions of dollars, and in July three millions more, and in December three millions more, which was called "Continental money," and promised to pay in Spanish milled dollars, or its equivalent in gold or silver. This was assigned to the several States, and they were to redeem it; but this State (New Hampshire) had more of its own paper than it could redeem, and it was counterfeited to a great extent, and therefore depreciated. One hundred dollars in silver was equivalent to the following sums:

January, 1777, it was at par; July, one dollar in silver was equal to \$1.04; January 1, 1778, to \$3.25; July, to \$4.25; January, 1779, to \$7.42; July, to \$14.77; January, 1780, to \$29.34; July, to \$60.00; January, 1781, to \$75.06; June, to \$120.00.

Paper money became entirely worthless, and the currency came to a specie basis. I give copies of the bills of some of the issues of paper money, and would give fac-similies, but the expense is too great for my work.

The following is a sample of the Province bills of credit:

“THIS INDENTED BILL of three Pounds & ten shillings Due from y<sup>e</sup> Province of New Hamp<sup>e</sup> in New England, to y<sup>e</sup> Possessor thereof shall be in Value equal to Money and shall be accordingly accepted by the Treasurer and Receivers subordinate to him in all Publick payments & for any Stock at any time in y<sup>e</sup> Treasury. Portsmouth the Twentyeth of May 1717. By Order of the General Assembly.”

The following is a copy of a nicely engraved bill. On the left of the signatures is a boat with men in it, nearing a wharf:

( N<sup>o</sup> )

( 4039 )

VII Shill<sup>s</sup> & 6 PenceVII Shill<sup>s</sup> & 6 Pence

WE JOINTLY AND SEVERALLY promise to pay  
ISAAC WINSLOW Merch<sup>t</sup> or order in BOSTON  
seven pennyw<sup>t</sup>; & half Coin'd Silver Ster<sup>s</sup>,  
Alloy, Troy-Weight or Gold pro Rata by the  
31<sup>t</sup> Decemb<sup>r</sup> 1755; Value Rec<sup>d</sup>; BOSTON.

7<sup>s</sup>—6<sup>d</sup>N.E. 1<sup>t</sup> Aug<sup>t</sup>; 1740. 7<sup>s</sup>—6<sup>d</sup>Edw<sup>d</sup> Hutchinson

Thomas Oxnard

Joshua Winslow

Sam<sup>l</sup> Sewall

[ENGRAVING.]

(No. 220)

6d

{ Colony of the *Massachusetts*  
  *Bay*, June 18<sup>th</sup> 1776.

*THIS* Bill entitles the Bearer to receive  
*SIX PENCE* L. M. out of the  
Treasury, by the 18<sup>th</sup> of June, 1778; and  
shall be received for that Sum in all Pay-  
ments agreeable to an Act of the Assembly  
of said Colony.

J. PARTRIDGE, Com.

The following is a copy of a Continental bill:—

\*\*\*

No. 476427 \*

HALF A DOLLAR.

ACCORDING  
to a Resolution  
of CONGRESS,  
passed at Phi-  
ladelphia, FE-  
BRUARY 17,  
1776.

{ In this space is a fig-  
ure of a sun-dial, with  
"Mind your Business"  
beneath it. }

W. COALE.

HALF A DOLLAR.

On the reverse side is a chain with thirteen links, to represent the thirteen United Colonies. "Printed by Hall & Sellers in Philadelphia, 1776."

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#### ABBREVIATIONS.

In ancient writings a great many abbreviations are used, such as  $y^e$  for the,  $y^t$  for that,  $y^m$  for them. For the lots I have used H. L. for Home Lot, O. H. for Old Hundreds, 2d P., 2d D., for Second Part of the Second Division, 3d D. for third Division, &c. In the Genealogy, b. is used for born, m. for married, unm. for unmarried, and d. for died. In one generation I have used Roman numerals, and in the next figures, to denote the number of the children; also the parent in one generation is printed in small capitals, the next in Italics, and the next in Roman.

# HISTORY OF OLD CHESTER, N.H.

FROM 1719 TO 1869.

BY

BENJAMIN CHASE.



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