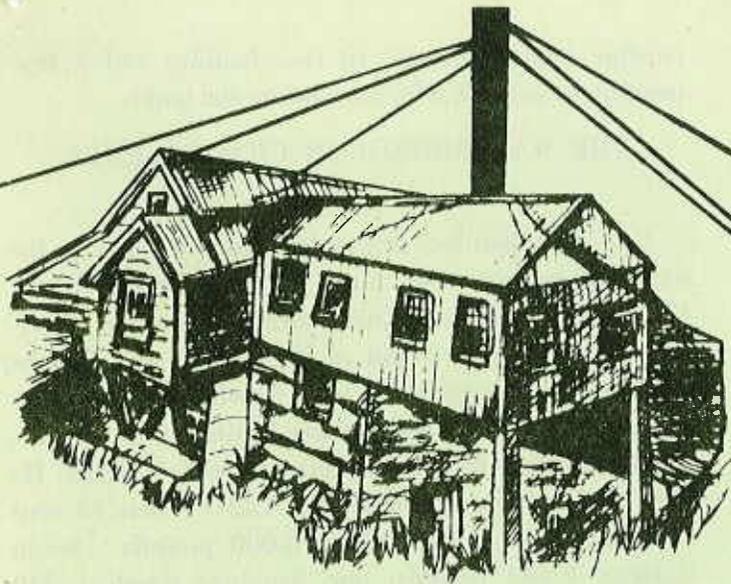


# THE WATERBOROUGH



\*\*\*\*\*

Published by the Waterborough Historical Society

January, 1982

\*\*\*\*\*

## Chadbourne Family Submitted by: Linda Hanscom

William Chadbourne was the ancestor of all who bear this surname in New England. He came from England, evidently from Devonshire, and arrived in Kittery July 8, 1634, on a vessel named the Pied Cow, and her landing place still bears the name of Cow Cove. He was a carpenter, and with several others came over under a contract with Capt. John Mason, proprietor of the Piscataqua Plantation, to build mills, the first in New England. They were to work for five years after which they were to have 50 acres of land on lease for the term of three lives (generations) by the payment of three bushels of corn annually. In a deposition by James Wall taken in 1652, they built for the use of Captain Mason and themselves a sawmill, and a stamping mill for corn, also that William Chadbourne built a house on his land which he gave to his son-in-law, Thomas Spencer. The date of William's death is not known. On November 16, 1652, he signed the act of submission to Massachusetts. By wife Mary he had three children, William Jr., Humphrey and Patience who was the wife of Thomas Spencer, a planter, lumberman, and ordinary-keeper in Berwick.

We now pass to notice one of the most prominent pioneers in what is now the State of Maine, Humphrey Chadbourne, eldest son of William, born in England about 1600, came over in the barque Warwick landing in Kittery September 9, 1631, three years prior to the arrival of his father, as chief carpenter for David Thompson and built the famous "Great House" at Strawberry Bank, now Portsmouth, where he lived many years. This stronghold was erected as a defense against the Indians, but was afterwards used as a

"truck house," or trading post. Hubbard, the historian, calls Humphrey Chadbourne "chief of the artificers," and Thomas Bailey Aldrich, in his *An Old Town by the Sea*, says: "It was not until 1631 that the Great House was erected by Humphrey Chadbourne on Strawberry Bank and consciously or unconsciously sowed a seed from which a city sprung."

He eventually made his abode at Newichawanuche where he attained remarkable prosperity. In 1643 he purchased a tract of land of Sagamore Rowles, as the following Indian deed, the first recorded in New England, shows:

"Know all whom these may concern that Humphrey Chadbourne bought of Mr. Rowles, the Sagamore of Newichawanuche, half a mile of which lyeth between the Little River and the Great River to begin at yet north of ye old ground, and for the conformity thereof the aforesaid Sagamore, Mr. Rowles, hath hereunto set his hand and seal, May the 10th, 1643. And the said Mr. Rowles doth except a parcel of ground called by the name of Comphegan, which he doth keep for himself.

In 1646, this same Sagamore sold Humphrey Chadbourne his right in the "ware at the Falls of the Great River, Newichawanuche," reserving for himself, "half of the great alewives taken there from time to time."

The Indian "totem," or signature, to these papers was the rude figure of a man with horns and may have been intended for a likeness of the Sagamore himself.

In the Indian deed by Captain Sunday to Francis

Small, conveying the "Ossipee Country" to him, "Chadbourne's logging Camp" was mentioned. This was the headquarters of the lumbermen who were cutting timber for the mills on Chadbourne's river, owned by Humphrey and his son of the same name.

In 1651-52 he received grants of 300 acres of land in Kittery and these extensive lands remained in the family of Chadbourne for more than 200 years.

Humphrey Chadbourne took an active part in town affairs and is mentioned by Sarah Orne Jewett as "the lawgiver" of Kittery. In 1651 he was chosen selectman, was ensign of the militia in 1653 and was probably engaged in the Indian wars. From 1654 to 1659 he was town clerk, was deputy to the General Court in 1657, 1659 and 1660 and in 1662 was appointed an Associate Judge for the County of York. He signed the submission to Massachusetts in 1652.

Humphrey Chadbourne married Lucy, daughter of James and Katherine (Shapleigh) Treworgy of Kittery, much younger than himself, and she was twice married after his death.

The will of Humphrey Chadbourne dated May 25, 1667 is a remarkable document and contains some quaint spelling and language. According to the custom in his native land, old England, he made his eldest son, Humphrey, his principal heir and after bequeathing real estate gave him his "saddle horse with all the furniture unto him belonging." Made provision for his other sons and gave each of his "little daughters" one hundred pounds. To his "uncle," Nicholas Shapleigh, he gave "one very good beaver hatt," and to his cousins, William Spencer and John Shapleigh, each "a good castor hatt, as good as can be gotten."

He died in the Summer of 1667 and was the owner of extensive farms, mills and timber lands. The inventory of his estate of date September 12, 1667 was 1,713 pounds 14 shillings, considered a large fortune at that time. The estate included "900 acres of land by estimation."

Numerous branches of the Chadbourne family, descended from William through his son Humphrey, have been planted in New England and in the western states, proving to be good citizens, but we must now omit the complicated genealogical ramifications and

confine this treatment to two families and a few prominent persons who have borne the name.

## THE WATERBOROUGH CHADBOURNES

Paul Chadbourne, descended from William in the sixth generation, was born in Berwick March 20, 1748, and settled on "Chadbourne's Ridge" in Waterborough. He was a son of Humphrey and Pheobe (Hobbs) Chadbourne. His wife, to whom he was married April 26, 1770, was Joanna Yeaton, born May 17, 1753 and died in Waterborough March 4, 1816. He died on his farm December 13, 1821. Their 13 sons and daughters weighed rising 3,000 pounds. Seven weighed 2,100 pounds; one daughter weighed 340 pounds; the whole family, parents and children, 3,400 pounds. In our introductory title we promised our readers "two tons of Chadbournes" and we shall make good before we close. Be patient.

The story was told concerning the Waterborough Chadbournes after this wise: "When the seven sons of Paul were at home, he used to send them down to Capt. Titcomb's store in Mousam with shiptimber; sometimes Paul Jr. and Elijah, sometimes Phillip and James, sometimes Humphrey and John, sometimes Jeremiah and Nathan; and everybody who saw them were astonished by their size--all of one stamp, typical Chadbournes. At length Capt. Titcomb asked Humphrey, the eldest, in a facetious spirit what he would bring down a ton of Chadbournes for and was quickly answered, "a barrel of rum." Very well, replied the old merchant, not to be outdone, "bring me down a ton and I will give them a barrel of rum." And Humphrey told his father, old Paul, and so, the following week the seven strapping fellows climbed upon the long woodsled, drawn by four noble oxen, and went to Kennebunk where they were weighed on the hayscales and tipped the beam at 2,100 pounds; a ton and a hundred better. The barrel of rum was loaded upon the sled and the "Chadbourne boys" started for home; and it was alleged that a large part of the liquid was transferred from the original receptacle to these big fellows' stomachs while on the road and that they made the hills quake with their hilarious songs and banter on the night of their return."

This was the ruse employed by which the weight of the big sister of the eight brothers was obtained: She had refused to be weighed, and so Paul arranged with the man who owned the hayscales to be ready when he drove on the following morning. Wishing to

visit her sister, the desired opportunity was afforded; and when the carriage was driven upon the scales where several men were standing, Paul drew rein, ostensibly to speak to them, and while the conversation was going on, the weigher, out of sight behind the scale stand, moved the "pea" and got the weight of the whole equipage, Chadbourne and all. And Paul drove on, but on his return had the "tare" deducted and found the exact weight of his "little sister." It is said that she was in "high dudgeon" when she had found out the imposition practiced by her brother and could never be induced to enter any vehicle afterwards.

"Uncle Jim" Chadbourne was a well known and much esteemed character, who made the most of his earthly stopping place while on his pilgrimage to the unexplored land of promise. He and his brother Daniel built a sawmill on the stream that issues from Chadbourne's pond and when the "fender-beam" was to be raised to its place across the frame, unassisted, the two brothers, one at each end, took it upon their enormous shoulders and carried it up and seated it on the tennons. This beam was 18 inches square and 30 feet long. It was a Herculean feat of strength and I doubt if there were two other men in the State who could have accomplished it.

Chadbourne's pond was a favorite place for fishermen, and many who were fond of the sport went there to try their skill; and, of course, put up their teams in Uncle Jim's stable and took dinner with him and his good wife if they wished to. At one time a party drove down to the door of the Chadbourne house and called for the proprietor, desiring to find accommodations and hire a boat. But when called from his work behind the barn, he appeared before the strangers in an old pair of trousers of heroic size and much soiled, and his wife, somewhat chagrined to see him looking so dilapidated, exclaimed: "Why, Mister Chadbourne, see how you have soiled your pantaloons. I am ashamed of you!" Looking at her with a serious expression, Uncle Jim said: "Missus Chadbourne, it is not often that I get down on my knees, but when I do it is to some purpose."

He was waiting in a blacksmith's shop to have his horse shod when a man entered whose face was elongated, cadaverous and exceedingly melancholy, and

when he had gone, the blacksmith remarked that such a sober man needed a change of heart. "Change of heart," shouted Uncle Jim; "he needs a change of liver."

He was a great favorite among the officers and privates during his service in the army and kept everybody about him good natured by his own jovial spirit. Being too heavy to enter the ranks he was appointed a commissary's sargeant, and it was his custom to go on a tour of inspection at midnight. He would give the password as he entered the commissary tent and when he came out he would say to the guard: "Say, comrade, don't steal your pockets full of molasses." It had been reported that some of the sugar had been missing.

At one time about Christmas, when doing duty on the picket line, Uncle Jim went to a plantation house and ordered a dinner for 12 men. The family had been one of wealth and aristocratic breeding, and the stately mansion with its Ionic columns, verandas and galleries was richly furnished with substantial plenishing of the old styles. If any white males were about home they did not appear. There were slaves without and female servants within.

The "dinner for 12" was elaborate in variety and abundant in quantity; indeed it was composed of the best cooked meats, pastry and dessert. The table was draped in snow white linen, deeply creased, and the nappery beautiful. The dishes were of an old brand and pictures; the cutlery and spoons exquisitely finished.

When the clanging dinner bell rang the 12 Union soldiers responded promptly and unanimously elected Uncle Jim master of ceremonies. Our hostess was seated at his side. He addressed her something as follows: "Madame, the dinner you have prepared for us seems to be very nice and sumptuous and we are very grateful for your pains, but we cannot partake of your food unless you eat with us. Some of the Union soldiers have been poisoned and we shall take no risks; so, madam, please go ahead." With flashing eyes in great excitement, she asked:

"Mister Chadbourne, do you think I am so wanting in honor and decency as to prepare this dinner for

which I am to be well paid, and attempt to poison you?"

"No," answered Uncle Jim, "I do not suppose you would, but others have poisoned the food sold to our men, and we shall not hazard our lives. If the food is good please eat and we will follow suit."

There was no other alternative and the mistress of the house began to eat; then the "boys in blue" followed through the courses till we were well supplied. When we had sufficed and moved from the table, the hostess asked some questions of the master of ceremonies and made some very bold statements.

"Have you a wife, Mr. Chadbourne?"

"Yes, marm, I have an excellent wife."

"Well, sir, when you go home you can tell her that you had the honor of dining with a secessionist, for I am one."

I believe she brought from the chamber a Confederate flag which she waved over our heads. She was paid 60 cents a head for her dinner and retaliated with insults for the affront given her by Uncle Jim in refusing to partake of her food till she had sampled it herself. And the old man talked back in language too rank for repetition on the printed page.

Uncle Jim was a man of kind and benevolent nature; a good townsman and citizen and usually on the right side of all important questions. He was widely known and had a host of warm friends who delighted to do him honor. Many saw a marked resemblance between him and "Uncle Josh Whitcomb," as represented in *The Old Homestead*. He died at a ripe old age in 1893.

Benjamin Chadbourne, cousin to the preceding, was afflicted with, as Aunt Keziah Hunchcum said, "an impediment in his speech;" otherwise, was a stuttering man. It was annoying to him and exceedingly distressing to others where he made an effort to talk with the "brakes on." He would twist his features into singularly repulsive contortions and chatter with his teeth until strangers thought his jaw was out of joint or he was having a convulsion. While standing in his doorway one morning, a traveler drew rein and asked how far it was to Limerick. Of course Ben could not "find his tongue," but began to chatter and roll up his eyes.

The stranger looked at him in amazement, and patiently waited for the "fit" to pass away. At last, after a desperate struggle to recover his speech, Ben blurted out: "Go 'long d-m ye, for you'll git to Lim'rick afore I can tell ye."

"Uncle Bill" Chadbourne, son of Jeremiah, who was one of the "ton," was a resident of "Shadagee" in Buxton, and as I rode by the small barn--the house removed--recently I recalled the old man who was something of a "character" in my boyhood days; a man who had the reputation of having a remarkable "gift of continuance"--when seated at any well-supplied table, where he was invited to tarry; an invitation he never failed to honor.

The story was current that "Uncle Bill" once drove down to Portland with a load of farm produce to sell, and having the appearance of an honest man the merchant wished to sell him several barrels of flour on credit; but the old man said he was not in funds to pay for so much of the "staff of life" and objected to getting in debt. However, the flour dealer urged him to buy and promised to wait for his pay; so the flour was loaded and carried home. Time wore on and the year passed without any remittance or word from Uncle Bill, and at last he was found and payment demanded; but he refused to honor the bill by saying to the merchant, "You promised to wait."

"Promised to wait! Have I not waited a whole year?"

"Very true," answered Uncle Bill, "but you haven't begun to wait yet."

And as the old man had no assets, the merchant could not collect.

*This was the first portion of an article published in the PORTLAND SUNDAY TELEGRAM January 15, 1911. Written by G. T. Ridlon, Sr.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## TWICE TOLD TALES REPRINTED

Ernest G. Knights' book, "Twice Told Tales" has been reprinted for the Historical Society with the permission and help of his daughter Helen K. Brock.

A newspaper release in 1955 had the following to report on the book: "From writing to printing and binding, it's a one-man job for the busy seer of Thyngs Mills, who once was described by New York Sun editor Robert H. Davis as "The Benjamin Franklin of Waterboro."

A dozen clocks tick off the seconds, reminding him time is fleeting as he thumpity-thumps away on his old foot-power, flatbed press.

Some of the type has been set from copy dashed off on a living room typewriter, but a lot of it has come direct from sentences composed in his head as he worked along with his printer's "stick."

He has found it takes too much time to commute between the living room and adjacent 10 by 15-foot print shop, although he literally leaps along toting his folding, brass cuspidor behind him.

Publication of Waterboro's history has been an 18-year project.

He has sandwiched it between countless things as clock repairing and gun collecting, job printing, a term in the State Senate, surveying and appraising land, managing a peach orchard and beating the drums for weather prognosticator One-Eyed Bill Smith, of nearby Thyngs Mills.

It's to be a limited Edition. Only 125 copies are being printed. "That's one way to assure a rare edition," chuckles Knight. Unlike most publishers, he's not worried about advance sales.

His book will be a rarity in itself for its wide variety of type. He has about 100 different faces of type. Some of it he has made himself.

He's going to distribute the book free among his friends. Some copies will go to public libraries. The library at the Portland Press Herald-Express is going to get a copy.

More than a record of bare facts, the 80 pages printed to date are enlivened with stories of Maine life, a bit of genealogy and other features in which Yankee wit predominates.

Some of the material was obtained from town records. Old letters and manuscripts produced more. Some of the yarns were passed along from generation to generation.

He tells, for instance, about the time the town was indicted in court in 1807 for failing to support a minister.

Twenty-five miles from the sea the younger generation today might be astounded to read that Waterboro once boasted a shipyard. True, it turned out only one craft, but it sailed the seven seas to bring the name of Waterboro to distant ports.

The 40-ton, two-masted schooner was built in the hills here, named after the town and pulled to Kennebunk landing on a monstrous scoot by 50 yoke of oxen in 1818.

Old-time barn raising and smelting are inter-mixed with records of Revolutionary and Civil War volunteers and family genealogies.

"Who am I? As if you didn't know," writes the tobacco-chewing, cigar-smoking, pipe-puffing Knights on a page devoted to himself.

Youngsters who check the time on the way to school by the two big, outdoor clocks on his front porch will find he was born here April 23, 1875.

They'll read that he was a trial justice 42 years, town treasurer and collector of taxes 27 years, superintendent of schools five years, selectman and assessor three years, a senator in Maine's 94th Legislature, a country newspaper correspondent and publisher, contractor and builder, weather prophet and what have you.

The book is described by Knights as "a labor of love."

It is dedicated to townfolk of the past, present and future.

On the title page, he writes:

"My many thanks; therefore, to you for your part in my happy life, and this little book goes to you with my best wishes for your future health and prosperity."

\*\*\*\*\*

The book may be purchased from either Arlene Jellerson or James Carll for \$4.00. If you wish to order by mail, you may order from James Carll, Box 326 North Waterboro, ME 04061, please add .65 for postage and handling.

\*\*\*\*\*

---

### WATERBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation: \$2.00 per year, Life Membership, \$15.00  
This will change on May 6, 1982 to \$5.00 per year  
and \$25.00.

Mail to:

EDITH PIERCE  
NORTH WATERBORO  
MAINE 04061

---