

A Biographic Sketch  
OF  
William Chesebrough  
THE  
FIRST WHITE SETTLER  
OF  
STONINGTON, CONN.

BY  
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SAYBROOK, CONN.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE. — The materials which compose this sketch have been gleaned by a slow process extending over many years from church, town, and colony records, and other sources of information within the reach of the writer. The English records from which extracts are made were, under his instructions, examined and copied by Mr. H. G. Somerby, an expert residing in London, some forty years ago. Many thanks are due for suggestions and for valuable facts herein embodied to Hon. Richard A. Wheeler of Stonington, who is a leading authority in respect to the early history of Southeastern Connecticut.



# WILLIAM CHESEBROUGH

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## A Biographic Sketch

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WILLIAM CHESEBROUGH, the first settler of English lineage in the town of Stonington, Connecticut, was born in England in the year of our Lord, 1594. The place of his nativity and the names of his parents cannot with certainty be determined. The probabilities are, that he was born in or near the city of Boston, Lincolnshire, where he is known to have had his residence for at least ten or eleven years prior to his emigration to America in 1630 in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. His mother is supposed to have been Sarah Chesebrough, whose name stands No. 78 on the roll of the members of the First Church of Boston, Mass. Against her name upon this ancient record is written the word "dead," in a chirography different from that which appears in the name itself. From this indication it is inferred that she was removed by death before the arrival of her old pastor in St. Botolph's Church, Boston, England, "the blessed John Cotton." There is no reason to doubt that she came to America with William in Gov. John Winthrop's company, which sailed from Cowes,

March 29, 1630, and made its settlement in Boston, Mass.

In the old parish register of St. Botolph's Church, the following records are found :

Date, 1620, December 15. Married, WILLIAM CHESEBROUGH and ANN STEVENSON, by license.

1622, May 2. Baptized, MARIE, daughter of William Chesebrough.

1623, September 18. Baptized, MARTHA, dau. of William Chesebrough.

1624, Sept. 9. Baptized, DAVID and JONATHAN, sons of Wm. Chesebrough.

1627, April 1. Baptized, SAMUELL, the sonne of William Chesebrough.

1629, February 6. Baptized, ANDRONICUS, sonne of Will'm Chesebrough.

1630, January 25. Baptized, NATHANIELL, the sonne of Will'm Chesebrough.

1622, June 9. Buried, MARIE, daughter of William Chesebrough.

1623, Sept. 26. Buried, MARTHA, dau. of William Chesebrough.

1624, Oct. 23. Buried, DAVID, the sonne of William Chesebrough.

1629, Feb. 6. Born and buried, JUNIA, sonne of Will'm Chesebrough.

1629, Feb. 8. Buried, ANDRONICUS, the child of W'm Chesebrough.

It appears from these records, that when the family embarked for America in March, 1630, there were only three of the eight children which had

been born to Mr. Chesebrough still surviving, viz.: Samuel, Jonathan, and Nathaniel; the latter an infant of only two months. It is supposed that Jonathan died either upon the ocean passage, or soon after the landing in America.

For convenience of reference, the names of the children who were born in this country are here inserted:

Date, 1632, Sept. 2. JOHN, baptized, Boston, Mass.  
Died, Stonington, Conn., 1650; the  
first white person buried in Ston-  
ington.

1635, May 3. JABEZ, baptized, Boston, Mass.  
Died young.

1637, June 4. ELISHA, baptized, Boston,  
Mass. Died in Stonington, Sept. 1,  
1670.

1640, July 18. JOSEPH, born, Braintree (now  
Quincy), Mass. Died young.

The first thirty-six years of William Chesebrough's life were closing when he set foot upon American soil, and they were among the most eventful years in the history of England. Mind was waking up from the sleep of centuries, and the whole social and political fabric was electric with excitement. They covered the last nine years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, the entire reign of James I, and the first five years of the reign of the ill-fated Charles I. They included the period of several of the great naval expeditions and discoveries of Hawkins, Drake, and Raleigh. Mary, Queen of Scots, was beheaded only seven years before Chese-

brough's birth ; and only six years before, occurred the issue of the first English newspapers, and also the destruction of the Spanish Armada. It was the period in which Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, and Lord Bacon won their undying fame, in which the first telescopes were invented, and in which likewise the authorized version of the Bible was prepared by order of King James. The cruel "Act of Conformity" to the Church of England was in full operation, and the Courts of High Commission and of the Star Chamber were condemning the Puritans to prison and to death. When Chesebrough was two years old, John Greenwood and Henry Barrowe, Puritan ministers, suffered martyrdom at Tyburn by hanging, for their nonconformity, a fate to which not a few of their dissenting brethren were in like manner condemned. He was eleven years old at the time of the Gunpowder Plot ; thirteen years old when Jamestown, Virginia was founded ; twenty at the time of the settlement by the Dutch of New Amsterdam, now New York ; twenty-six when the Pilgrim Fathers landed on Plymouth Rock, and also when the curse of slavery found its first home in the United States by being introduced into Virginia.

The increasing corruptions in both Church and State in England, the high-handed measures of the government in its purpose to punish and crush out all freedom of thought and speech, the insecurity of life and property, and the civil and religious disintegration which threatened ruin to the nation, prompted many of the better class of the ministers and of the people to sacrifice their homes, and to



seek an asylum where they could enjoy the blessings of a rational liberty. The immigrants who came to New England with the illustrious Winthrop, and settled Boston, had grown up from childhood in the established church. But so disgusted were they with its corruptions and its persecuting spirit, that on establishing themselves in their new home, they organized their churches on the simple polity of the New Testament. Such an organization was effected in Charlestown on the 30th of July, 1630, with Rev. John Wilson as teacher; but in the course of about three months, it was transferred across the Charles river to Boston, which the majority preferred on the score of healthiness, as the place of permanent settlement. The names of William and Anna Chesebrough appear on the roll of the original members of this, the First Church of Boston. When Rev. John Cotton, their former minister in England, came over, some three years later, he took the place of Mr. Wilson as teacher of the church, and Mr. Wilson became the pastor.

The government of the new colony was administered under a charter granted by Charles I to "The Governor and company of Massachusetts Bay in New England," bearing date March 4, 1629. By the terms of this instrument, the administration was intrusted to a governor, a deputy governor, and eighteen assistants, who were to be annually chosen by the members of the company or stockholders. On the emigration to America of the leading members of this corporation, the corporation itself with all its powers and privileges was transferred to

them and the other freemen of the company who should inhabit the new plantation, and John Winthrop was chosen governor. Thus the administrative officers of the company became "The General Court of Massachusetts," which took the charge of the civil government of the province. Those of the colonists who were made freemen, of whom William Chesebrough was one of the earliest in May, 1631, enjoyed only the privilege of voting for the members of the General Court. But as this body was intrusted with no authority to impose a tax levy on the towns for public purposes, it was found necessary to order the several towns to choose each two deputies to appear at the Court and concert a plan for a public treasury, or, as the measure was phrased, "to advise the governor and council about raising a public stock." William Colburn, who was a deacon of the church, and William Chesebrough were appointed upon this service as the first deputies for Boston. This was the entering wedge to the yearly representation of the towns in the legislative body; and the result was, after several years of contention, that the Court was divided into two branches, the second of which was composed of the deputies of the towns.

Under date of the 17th of April following the settlement in Boston, it being General Court day, Winthrop makes this record in his journal: "At noon Chesebrough's house was burnt down, all the people being present." A similar calamity befell several others of the new comers. For want of better material, and in the haste of providing shelter, the upper portions of the chimneys of the

dwellings were constructed of billets of wood laid in mud or clay; and the roofs being thatched, there was a constant exposure to conflagration.

During his residence in Boston, Mr. Chesebrough filled various responsible positions in the young municipality. In 1634, he was chosen constable, an office equivalent to what would now be called "high sheriff," and subsequently, an assessor of rates, and again, one of a committee to allot to "the able-bodied men and youth," grounds for planting.

Many of the settlers of Boston, not finding within their own limits all the pasture or arable land needed, had lots assigned to them at or near Mount Wollaston on the south, a few miles away. This was the northeastern promontory of the section which was soon after set off as the town of Braintree. On the subsequent division of this town, Mount Wollaston fell within the boundaries of the present city of Quincy. Among those who received lands in this locality was Mr. Chesebrough, and he with many others in 1637 or 1638 removed thither. A church was organized for the accommodation of the growing community, Sept. 17, 1639, with Rev. William Tomson as pastor, and Rev. Henry Flint as teacher. Of this church Mr. and Mrs. Chesebrough became members by letters of dismission and recommendation from the Boston church. On the 16th of January following, we find him, among others, negotiating with the freemen of Boston in behalf of the residents of Mount Wollaston, to have it set off as a distinct town, which was done under a certain contract with regard to taxes. The General Court passed the en-

abling act May 23, 1640, and Braintree came into existence as a distinct political community. The same year, Mr. Chesebrough and Stephen Kinsley were chosen as the first deputies from the new town to the General Court, which convened Oct. 7, 1640. From the records it appears that Mr. Chesebrough was, during his residence in Braintree, a man of much prominence in public affairs. He was appointed by the General Court as a commissioner or local judge to try certain classes of cases which came up for adjudication. He was the first clerk of the train-band, an organization of indispensable importance in those early days; and on other occasions, he was appointed upon some committee to perform public service. The grounds he occupied were those which have constituted for two and a half centuries the old homestead of the Adams family in Quincy. The venerable John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States, informed the writer that the deed of transfer given by William Chesebrough to his ancestor, was still in his possession.

In the course of two or three years, the subject of this sketch removed to "Seekonk," in the vicinity of the old Plymouth colony, where, in 1643, according to the returns, his list amounted to £450. The year following, the woodlands bordering on the settlement having been divided by lot, he received lot No. 4. Early in July, 1644, he, with twenty-nine other of the resident planters, entered into a covenant and signed a civil compact, agreeing to be governed by nine persons, "according to law and equity, until we shall subject ourselves jointly

to some other government." On the 12th of the same month, at a public meeting, his efficient services in setting up the new government were gracefully acknowledged by the enactment of the provision, that "he should have division in all lands of Seekonk, for one hundred and fifty-three pounds, besides what he is to have for his own proportion, and that in way of consideration for the pains and charges he hath been at in setting off this plantation."

During the following year, the question of jurisdiction was settled by the plantation submitting itself to the government of the Plymouth Colony, and it was incorporated by the Scripture name of Rehoboth. Notwithstanding the high consideration in which he was held by the inhabitants of the plantation, his relations to the colonial authorities at Plymouth were not cordial. They seemed to have entertained a prejudice against him and to have been jealous of his influence, and they delayed his admission to the privileges of a freeman for some three years. Probably he did not favor the annexation to Plymouth. He was charged, too, with misconduct in an affair with an Indian by the name of Vesamequine,\* and dealt with somewhat harshly. For these reasons he could not be satisfied to make Rehoboth his permanent home.

As early as the year 1645 he took a tour of inspection westward, visiting Nameaug, subsequently known as Pequot, and now as New London. John Winthrop, Jr., under commission from the General Court of Massachusetts, had already laid the foundations of a settlement there, and Mr. Chesebrough,

who was well known to him, was strongly urged to join the newly arrived company. But the location was not such a one as Mr. Chesebrough was looking for. After successive explorations in that neighborhood, he finally selected the head of Wequetequock Cove, in what was called Pawcatuck, on the bordering lands of which he found arable sections sufficient for planting, with an abundance of pasture ground for stock-raising, to which he had largely turned his attention. From his independent and pioneering character, we are not surprised to learn that he was on terms of special friendship with Roger Williams, who resided in the vicinity of Rehoboth, whom he frequently consulted, and by whom he was assisted in his ultimate removal to his new home. This removal took place in June, 1649, after he had built for his occupancy a comfortable dwelling-house. At this time he was fifty-five years old, and his family consisted of his wife, now fifty-three years old, and four sons, — Samuel of the age of twenty-two, Nathaniel, nineteen, John, seventeen, and Elisha, twelve. John died from a wound by a scythe in 1650, at the age of eighteen.

Much trouble had been experienced by the New England colonists with the native Indian tribes, and the frequent disturbance of friendly relations with them called for the watchful attention of the colonial governments. Warned by the terrible Pequot War of 1636 and 1637, the General Court of Connecticut passed an ordinance forbidding all persons from selling firearms and ammunition to the Indians, and afterwards from selling them any

instrument of iron or steel, or doing any smith-work for them except by license from two magistrates. Still later, all kinds of trade with them were very much restricted. Mr. Chesebrough, by the necessities of his situation, having been led to practice the work of a smith, some unfriendly persons belonging to the Plymouth Colony easily awakened the suspicions of the Connecticut authorities by trumping up the charge that he had taken up his present residence for the purpose of carrying on an illicit business with the Indians in furnishing them with deadly weapons. The Court, therefore, within five months after his removal to his new home, issued a warrant to the constable of Pequot, "to repair forthwith to Chesebrough of Long Island," (where he was at the time on a business tour,) "and to let him understand that the Government of Connecticut doth dislike and distaste the way he is in, and the trade he doth drive among the Indians, and that they do require him to desist therefrom immediately; and that he should repair to Captain Mason at Seabrook, or some of the Magistrates upon the river (Connecticut), to give an account to him or them of what he hath done hitherto."

Judging that he was located within the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, he refused for more than a year to recognize the authority of Connecticut. Subsequently, however, in deference to the counsels of friends at Pequot, and especially of Mr. Winthrop, who now acknowledged the jurisdiction of Connecticut, he voluntarily presented himself before the General Court at Hartford in

March, 1651. Then and there he gave an account of his removal from Rehoboth to his present home, with the reasons therefor. He affirmed that he was carrying on no unlawful trade with the Indians, that he aimed simply to live at peace with them, that he was orthodox in the Christian faith, and that it was his purpose and hope to induce some of his old friends from the eastern colonies to unite with him in planting a town and establishing Christian worship.

This frank statement put a new face upon the matter, but as a measure of precaution, he was required to give a bond of £100 not to engage in any trade with the Indians forbidden by the laws of the colony, and before the succeeding winter to furnish the Court with the names of such persons as he could persuade to settle in his neighborhood. On these conditions permission was given him to remain unmolested where he was. The inhabitants of Pequot were friendly to him, and had he accepted their repeated and generous invitations to settle among them all this trouble with the government would have been avoided, as its severe action was largely prompted by a jealousy of all settlers in that section who were favorable to the Massachusetts claims, lest that colony should get the control. But he preferred, on the whole, the locality which he had selected for his settlement, and the only anxiety which disturbed him grew out of the fact that he had as yet no legal title to his lands. For the purpose of securing such a title he visited Hartford again in September of the same year. Through the influence of Mr. Winthrop and the



deputies to the General Court from Pequot, notwithstanding the claims of Massachusetts, the Pawcatuck River was made by a public act the eastern boundary of Pequot, so that his lands now came within the limits of that town. In the course of a few months the town not only voted him a house lot within the settlement itself, but also confirmed his title to three hundred acres at Wequetequock, which was subsequently increased to twenty-three hundred and sixty-two acres. This tract includes what is now Stonington borough, and is bounded as follows: Beginning on the south at Stonington harbor, the west line ran northerly through Lambert's Cove and Stony Brook and onward till it reaches the old Post road; thence easterly along said road to Anguilla Brook; thence southerly down said brook and Wequetequock Cove and the East Bay to Long Island Sound, which forms the southern boundary.

The first man who joined Mr. Chesebrough in the new plantation was Thomas Stanton from Hartford, the famous Indian interpreter, who in 1650 built a trading house some three miles eastwardly on the west side of Pawcatuck river, though he did not remove his family thither till 1656. In the year 1653, Walter Palmer located himself near to Chesebrough, erecting his dwelling-house in the east side of Wequetequock Cove. Thomas Miner and Capt. George Denison and Capt. John Gallup moved into the neighborhood in 1654; and during the next two years quite a number of other settlers joined them.

The great inconvenience of attending religious

worship at Pequot on account of the distance and the necessity of crossing two rivers, prompted the planters to seek to have Christian ordinances established among themselves. But the measure was opposed by the inhabitants of Pequot, and received no encouragement from the General Court, doubtless for the reason that it would be likely to lead to a separate town organization, and might result in bringing the plantation under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts. It was a well-known fact that the planters were much dissatisfied with what they regarded as the oppressive acts of the Connecticut government in denying their right to settle here without its permission; and in their behalf William Chesebrough, Walter Palmer, and Thomas Stanton actually made proposals in 1657 and again in 1658 to the General Court of Massachusetts for a transfer of allegiance. These proposals were not conclusively accepted, but a reference of the question of jurisdiction to the commissioners of the united colonies was suggested. In the meantime, or until the matter of jurisdiction could be amicably decided, the planters were advised "to carry themselves & order their affaires peaceably, and by comon agreement." Acting on this advice, they met together on the 30th of June, 1658, and organized a local municipal government with what may be termed a constitution, entitled: "The Asotiation of Poquatuck peple," to which William Chesebrough and his three sons, Samuel, Nathaniel, and Elisha, with seven others, affixed their names. This remarkable document, which is evidently in the handwriting of William Chesebrough, is exceedingly comprehen-

sive, and strikingly illustrates the training through which the early settlers were passing which was to qualify them to become the founders of a republic resting on the principles of equity and freedom. After setting forth the circumstances under which they were placed, they say: "We hose names are hearunto subscribed do hearby prommis, testify & declare, to maintain and deffend with our persons and estait the peac of the plac, & to aid and asist one another acoording to law and rules of righteousness, acoording to the true intent and meaning of our asociation, till such other provition be made ffor us as may atain our end above written; whereunto we willingly give our asent, & neither ffor ffear, hoape or other respects, shall ever relinquish this promis till other provition be made ffor us." After establishing their new commonwealth, the signers elected "Captain George Dennyson and Will'm Chesebrough to be comytioners," that is magistrates, or executive and judicial officers, to whom all questions of law and equity should be referred for decision and action.

The controversy between the two colonial governments in respect to jurisdiction over the territory lying between the Mystic and Pawcatuck rivers continued in a more or less unsettled state, the advantage being on the side of Massachusetts by the decision of the commissioners of the united colonies,—until the issue of the charter of Connecticut by Charles II, dated April 25, 1662. This fixed the eastern boundary of Connecticut at Pawcatuck river. Thereupon this territory which had been for three and a half years nominally subject

to the control of Massachusetts with township privileges under the name of Southertown, reverted permanently to the sister colony. In these years of trial and uncertainty, Mr. Chesebrough took a prominent part in all local affairs and all negotiations abroad. He held the office of townsman (selectman) until the town passed under the jurisdiction of Connecticut.

During the period in which the plantation was included in the township of Pequot, he had been elected its deputy to the General Court at Hartford in the years 1653, 1654, 1655, and 1656; he held also the offices of rate-maker, or assessor, and of commissioner. On its reversion to Connecticut under the charter, some of the planters manifested an almost defiant unwillingness to acknowledge the jurisdiction of this colony, at which the colonial government at Hartford took offense. In 1664, however, they united in choosing William Chesebrough as their first representative to the General Court. With much effort and considerable delay, he was successful in amicably adjusting the disturbed relations between them and the court, and securing the passage of acts of pardon and indemnity for past offenses. In 1665, the name of Southertown was changed to that of Mystic, and in the year following to Stonington. During the last three years of his life, which closed on Sunday, the 9th day of June, 1667, he being seventy-three years old, Mr. Chesebrough, as selectman, managed the affairs of the town. His wife, Mrs. Anna Chesebrough, died on the 24th day of August, 1673, aged seventy-five. Their remains were buried side by

side in the old cemetery at the head of Wequetequock Cove, a short distance from their dwelling-house.

The brief sketch of the life of William Chesebrough here given makes it clearly evident that he was a strong character, a man well fitted in capacity and high purpose to be a pioneer in laying the foundations of a well-ordered, civil, and religious community. Though not privileged in having received a university education, nor yet honored with one of the higher positions in the colonial governments, he was a prominent man among the freemen in the several localities in which he had his residence. Mature in years, of a well-balanced mind, wise in counsel, a man of positive convictions, and, withal, of uncompromising uprightness, he naturally drew to himself the confidence of his associates, as to one whose lead it would be safe to follow. He was a man of deeds rather than of words; and yet, when the occasion called for it, he could give utterance to his views in language that needed no interpreter, or he could put them into written form.

His organizing capacity was very marked. The scattered and diverse populations of Braintree, of Rehoboth, and of Stonington, which at first had no common bond of union, were brought into associated and orderly form largely under his leadership, and his versatility was wonderful. Though having passed his youth under the reign of the Stuarts, when religious and political freedom was scarcely more than a name in England, and where children among the common people usually followed the occupation of the parents, and education was limited,

we find him possessed of large resources, and capable of turning his hand without difficulty to almost any business or any branch of employment that offered itself. He could frame a building, or he could sit as a judge in a case at law. He could forge a chain, or draw up a plan for the organization of a municipal government. He could survey a tract of land, or he could represent a town in the General Court and adjust its disturbed relations to the constituted authorities. There is no evidence that he entered with any zeal into the controversies which arose in Massachusetts, in respect to the vagaries of Mrs. Ann Hutchinson or the extravagances of Roger Williams, nor that he endorsed the views of either of them. But there is reason to believe that he sympathized with them to this extent, that he regarded the action of the authorities at Boston as being unreasonably severe in the penalties inflicted upon them for their religious tenets. Certain it is, that while Rev. John Wheelright, Mrs. Hutchinson's brother-in-law and most ardent supporter, was under censure, he was invited to conduct religious services, by the planters at Braintree, among whom Mr. Chesebrough was prominent ; and also, that after the latter's removal to Rehoboth, he was known to be a warm friend of Roger Williams.

One fact which marks Mr. Chesebrough as a man who commanded great respect, is, that he was able to gather around him, after he had made his settlement at Stonington, such men of superior ability as Thomas Stanton, Capt. George Denison, and Walter Palmer, and that they worked so harmoni-

ously with him in the organization and ordering of the new community.

And further, it needs only to be added that he was a man of Christian principle, and that wherever he planted himself, he was an earnest supporter of religious worship. In the roll of the First Church of Boston, his name and that of his wife stand as Nos. 44 and 45 respectively; and on his removals, he took his church relations with him; and although he died prior to the organization of the First Church in Stonington, the tradition is, that, prior to 1656 or 1657, in all suitable weather, he was accustomed to attend Sunday services at Pequot, starting a little after midnight, in order to accomplish in good time the fifteen miles of necessary travel over rough roads and the crossing of the rivers. There can be no doubt that he took an active part in the measures which were initiated in 1657, for establishing regular religious worship within the limits of the plantation, and which issued, after the employment of several preachers for short seasons, in an invitation to Rev. James Noyes to serve the people permanently in the Gospel ministry. Mr. Noyes entered upon his labors here in 1664, about three years before Mr. Chesebrough's death; but he was not ordained until the church was organized, ten years later, in 1674.

To this Biographic Sketch of William Chesebrough is herewith subjoined A GENEALOGICAL REGISTER of the first two generations of his descendants, including the names and dates so far as they are known.

*fifth*<sup>22</sup>

I. SAMUEL, the ~~seventh~~ child of William and Anna Chesebrough, baptized, Boston, Eng., April 1, 1627; buried, Stonington, Conn., July 31, 1673. He was made a freeman of Connecticut in 1657; signed the Pawcatuck Articles of Association in 1658, and was elected constable; selectman in 1660, and deputy to the General Court in 1665, 1666, 1670, 1671, 1672, and 1673. His wife's name was Abigail, to whom he was married in 1655. His children were:

1. Abigail, b. Sept. 30, 1656; m. John, son of James Avery, Nov. 29, 1675.

2. Marie, b. Feb. 28, 1658; d. Sept. 25, 1669.

3. Samuel, b. Nov. 20, 1660; d. Oct. 27, 1735. His wife's name was Mary, by whom he had eight children; she died Jan. 8, 1742.

4. William, b. April 8, 1662; d. Jan. 2, 1740; m. Mary, daughter of Fergus McDowell, Dec. 13, 1698; she died March 23, 1745, aged 66. His children were six in number.

5. Sarah, b. Dec. 24, 1663; d. Sept. 9, 1729; m. William Gallup, Jan. 4, 1688, who died May 15, 1731.

6. Elisha, b. Aug. 4, 1667; d. Sept. 1, 1727; m. Mary, daughter of Joseph Miner, Jan. 27, 1692, by whom he had seven children. After her death (March 29, 1704), he m. Rebecca, daughter of Daniel Mason, Feb. 6, 1707, by whom he had seven children more. She died Jan. 15, 1742.

7. Elizabeth, b. Jan. 6, 1669; d. ———

After Samuel Chesebrough's death, his widow, Abigail, m. Joshua Holmes, and had two children.



*eight*

II. NATHANIEL, the ~~fourth~~ child of William and Anna Chesebrough, baptized, Boston, Eng., Jan. 25, 1630; d., Stonington, Conn., Nov. 22, 1678. He was made freeman of Connecticut in 1666; signed the Pawcatuck Articles, 1658; selectman, 1675; was one of the original members of the First Church in Stonington, organized June 3, 1674. He married in 1659, Hannah (b. May 20, 1643), the second daughter of Capt. George and Bridget (Thompson) Denison. His children were:

1. Anna, b. Oct. 12, 1660; m. Samuel Richardson, 1685.

2. Sarah, b. Jan. 30, 1662. Probably died young.

3. Nathaniel, b. April 14, 1666; d. Aug. 23, 1732. He was regarded as the legal oracle of the town; m. Sarah (b. 1673), daughter of Thomas Stanton, Jr., and granddaughter of Thomas Stanton, the Indian Interpreter-general of the colonies, Jan. 13, 1692. He had six children, the youngest of whom, Nathan, was deacon of the church, and married, Nov. 23, 1727, Bridget, daughter of Dr. James and Ann (Sanford) Noyes, and granddaughter of Rev. James Noyes and also of Gov. Peleg Sanford of Rhode Island, and great granddaughter of Gov. William Coddington, the "Father of Rhode Island." Deacon Nathan's children were: (1) Nathan, m. Anna Stanton; (2) Sarah, m. Thomas Stanton; (3) Nathaniel, m. Hannah Wheeler, and then Mary Hallam; (4) Peleg, m. Rebecca Barber; (5) Robert, m. Hannah Chesebrough, and then Content Rathbone; (6) Coddington, died young; (7) Bridget, m. Charles Chesebrough; (8) James, died young; (9) Anna, m. Elijah Palmer; (10) William, m. Mercy Goddard; (11) Keturah, m. Prosper Wetmore.

4. Bridget, b. March 25, 1669; m. William Thompson, Dec. 7, 1692, and after his death (June 1, 1705), m. Joseph Miner, Dec. 7, 1709.

5. Hannah, b. 1671; m. Joseph Prentice, Nov. 25, 1700.

6. Samuel, b. Feb. 14, 1674; m. Priscilla, daughter of David and Mary (Southworth) Alden of Duxbury, Mass., and granddaughter of John and Priscilla (Molines) Alden of the Mayflower, Jan. 4, 1699. They had seven children.

7. Margaret, b. 1676; m. Joseph, son of John Stanton, Jan. 18, 1696. He was born Jan. 22, 1668.

8. Mary, bapt. June 30, 1678; m. Benj. Miner, Nov. 15, 1699, and after his death m. Joseph Page, March 15, 1713.

Mrs. Hannah (Denison) Chesebrough, after her husband's death, married Joseph Saxton, by whom she had three daughters.

III. ELISHA, the ~~thirteenth~~ <sup>eleventh</sup> child of William and Anna Chesebrough, bapt., Boston, Mass., June 4, 1637; d., Stonington, Conn., April 1, 1670. He signed the Pawcatuck Articles in 1658; a freeman of Connecticut in 1666; a deputy to the General Court in 1669. He married Rebecca, daughter of Walter and Rebecca (Short) Palmer, April 20, 1665, by whom he had one child, Elihu, b. Dec. 3, 1668; d. June 28, 1750. Elihu married Hannah, daughter of Manasseh Miner, who bore him six children.

After the death of Elisha Chesebrough, his widow, Rebecca, married John Baldwin of New London, who by her had six children.

NOTE.—The orthography of the name *Chesebrough* retains the form given to it prior to or during what is known as the "Middle-English" period of our etymology, the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The variations in the spelling of the name found in Church, Town, and State Records, in historical notices and in the newspaper press, are both amazing and amusing. I have lying before me a package of the envelopes of letters and other mail matter, some of them from old acquaintances and intimate friends, which show a most inarvelous fertility of invention. The following are specimens: Chesbrough, Chesboro, Chesborough, Chesebrooke, Chesebro, Cheseborough, Cheseboro', Chesebrugh, Cheesbrough, Cheesbro', Cheesboro', Chees Bro, Cheesbrook, Cheesbroggh, Cheesebro', Cheeseborough, Cheesebrow, and Cheasbrough.

