The CHAUNCEY FAMILY

Nine Generations

1590 — 1934

By
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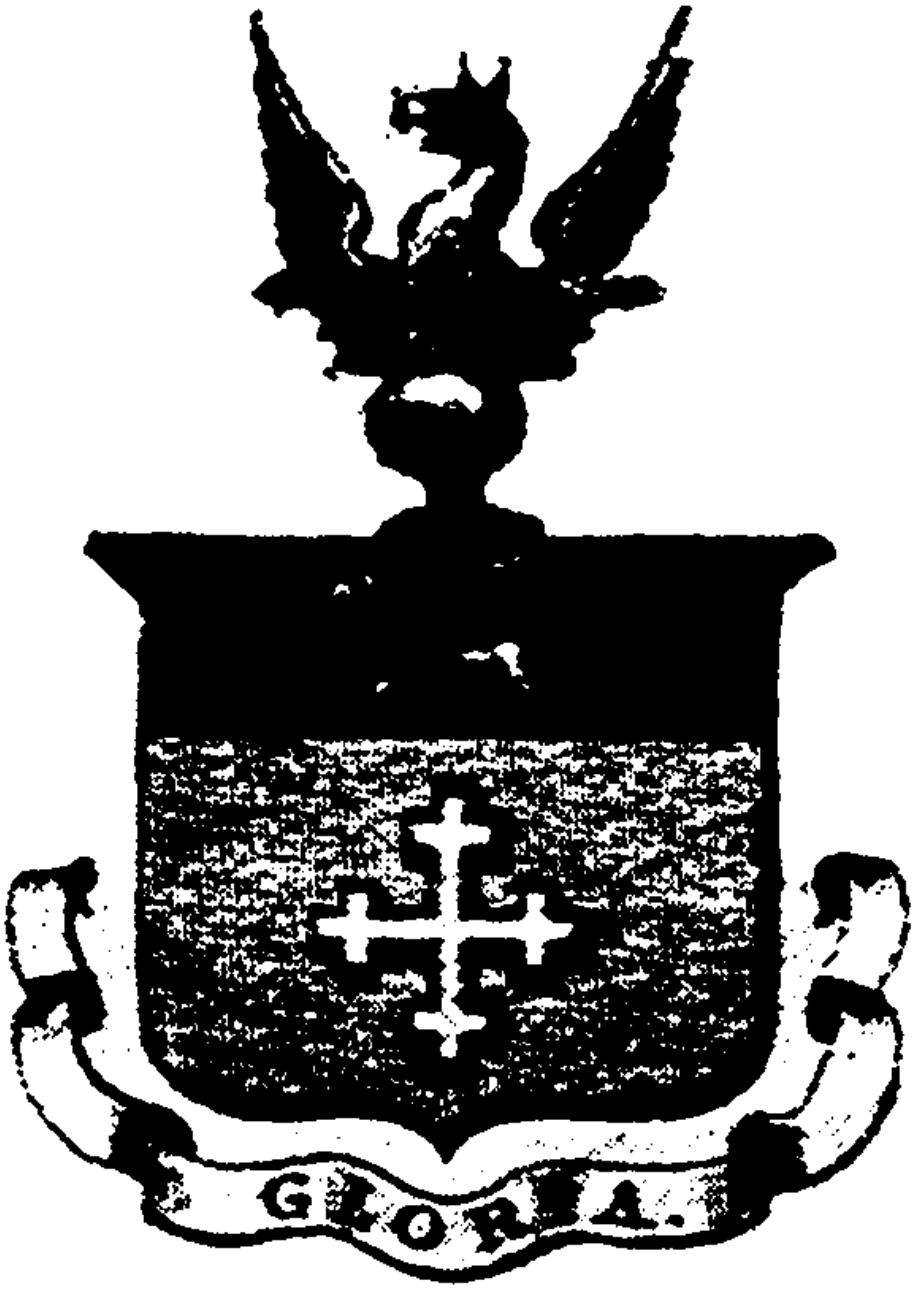
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN
1934



Chauncey

Early Family

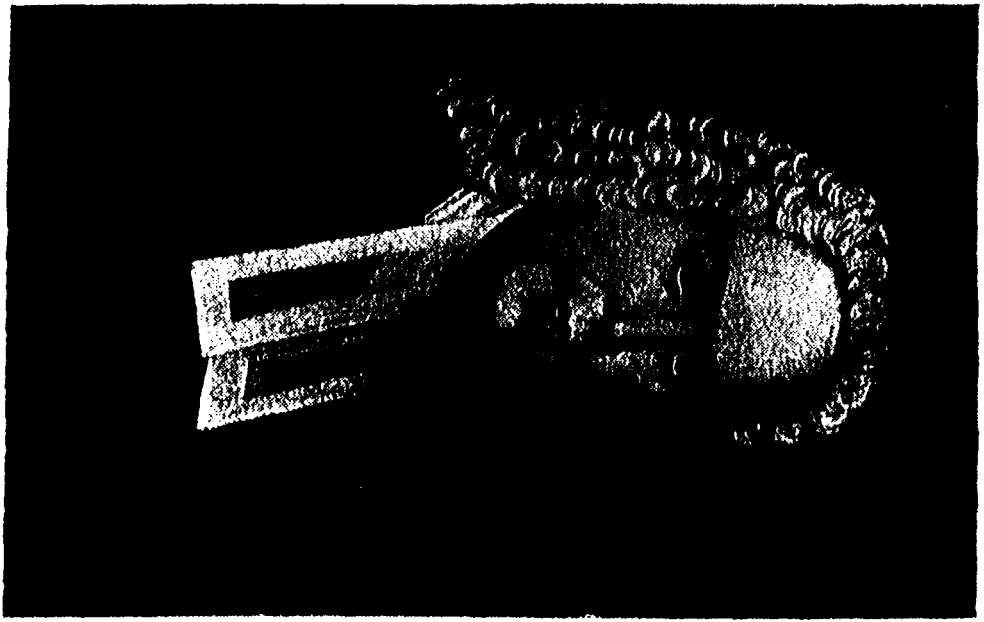
THE pedigree of the Chauncey family is quite accurately recorded in the work of the great English historian, Sir Henry Chauncey, nephew of Charles Chauncy, our first American ancestor, in his History of Hertfordshire.

The name of Chauncy is Norman. It was taken from the name of that place in Normandy called Canchy or Chaucy. Here Chauncy de Chauncy, Norman nobleman, lived before 1066, when he entered England with William the Conqueror. Exactly, Canchy is located about six miles north—northeast from Abbeville and less than thirty miles from Amiens in present-day France. Not far to the northeast is the river Canchy or Chaucy, running by Montreuil, two leagues from which it empties into the English Channel. At different times, the family name has been spelled Canci, Cauci, Caunci, Chauncie, Chancy, Chauncy, and finally, Chauncey.

It is interesting to note that those descendants of Israel Chauncy of Stratford, and Nathaniel of Durham, sons of Charles Chauncey, generally spell Chauncey with an "e". This spelling commenced with Israel and was accepted in England.

Through generations of family after Chauncy de Chauncy, the family was vested with a baronial estate, it would appear, the name being associated with the cultured and benevolent efforts of the times, rather more than with great achievement in arms or battle.

The maternal ancestry, or the families in the female line, include many of the highest nobility of Norman and Saxon chivalry.



Charles Chauncey

ANAGRAM

"His shadow is without deceit"

"ARISE and look into the book the learned author has written, the pains he has taken in it deserves a great reward; or the work therein is its own reward.

He is a powerful preacher; knowledge proceeds out of his mouth; he abounds in reproofs proper to bring all men to a sense of their sins. He delights in the fear of God, he excels in humility, it is his delight to speak the words of wisdom.

His name is famous and renowned among the wise and prudent, among the upright; and is great or illustrious among the Doctors or Divines. Blessed is the man who hearkens to the instructions of his speech; for he teacheth sound doctrine, and all this is the desire of his soul. He has planted his vine among the learned, good works are his secret, he is a man mighty in the knowledge of divine things, none is equal to him in scholastic disputations.

He is just and righteous in his actions, and speaks truth from his heart. She was happy who brought him forth, a person so good and wise as he is.

May his days be prolonged and those of his relations; may he live to raise the honor of his house; and may they or the world bless him in the name of the Lord."

In honor of Charles Chauncy; written in Hebrew, by Maria Antonio, Anno 1626. Translated by T. Russell, Anno 1712.

CHARLES Chauncy, dissenter, sought New England as a place of refuge in 1638, as a man of middle age. His religious career in England had been fraught with mental anguish, by his determination to hold rigidly to his principles. In a day of the uncompromising Laud, Chauncy was persecuted first in 1629 because of his opposition to the famous "Book of Sports," submitting finally to this charge, and later in 1635 because of his opposition to the railing in of the communion table. Both charges were made against him while vicar of Ware. On the last charge, he was suspended and imprisoned, until forced to recant, under Laud's extreme persecution. A man deeply conscientious, Chauncy regretted his recantation, and, driven to despair, he emigrated to New England in 1638.

Charles Chauncy was born in Yardley-Bury, county of Hertfordshire, England, in 1589 or 1592, the latter date being the date of his baptism and registration. The date of his birth is uncertain, records conflicting on this matter. He was the fifth son of his father, George Chauncy.

As a youth, he studied at Westminster School, located near the Parliament Buildings in London. It is quite probable that Chauncy was a student there at the time of the famous "Gunpowder Plot," devised by the infamous Guy Fawkes, which if it had succeeded would have involved both Parliament Buildings and Westminster School in one common fate. Dr. Charles Chauncy of the fifth American generation, and a popular Boston theologian of the Revolution, expressed himself feelingly on the grace of God in sparing

life to the first Chauncy and himself (as well as to you, dear reader) on several occasions of the annual commemoration of the "fifth of November" while Massachusetts was still a colony.

On completing his preparatory studies at Westminster, Chauncy enrolled as a student at Trinity College, Cambridge, receiving a Bachelor's degree in 1613 and Master of Arts degree in 1617. Here, he prosecuted his studies with such diligence that he became a Fellow of the College and was honored in 1624 with the degree of Bachelor of Divinity.

He distinguished himself in the study of Oriental literature, becoming Hebrew professor at Cambridge, retiring shortly to become professor of Greek. In 1623, he made an address in Latin before the ambassadors and emissaries of Spain and Austria, then the two greatest European powers, on occasion of their departure from England. Thus, at an early age, we find him recognized as an outstanding scholar in England. This oration may now be found in its original form at the Bodleian Library in Oxford, England. While residing in Cambridge, Chauncy also wrote numerous Latin and Greek poems, some of which are found in the collections at the British Museum in London. He was widely respected for his learning and eloquence, genius and piety.

In 1627, by reason of his attainments, he became Vicar of Ware, of which parish the Master and Fellows of Trinity College were patrons according to a grant of Henry VIII. We may realize with what regret his departure was looked upon by Cambridge intellectuals. The name af Chauncy stands high in the records of Cambridge and his

portrait hangs in an honorable position in the great dining hall at Trinity today.

Ware is in Chauncy's native county, Hertfordshire. He entered upon the duties of his calling with great energy and spirit. However, he soon became involved in difficulties with the government. The Book of Sports was the first subject of controversy. By this edict, King James meant to turn the English people from Papacy. It was less exacting on Sunday observance, making lawful certain forms of recreation after the "end of divine service." To this, Chauncy was strongly opposed. Others of the same mind were treated with extreme cruelty. Bishop Laud would stamp out the opposition; he was determined to bring non-conformists into "exact conformity, or stop their mouths, or cast them into prison, or drive them out of the land," and Chauncy did not escape the vengeance of the tyrannical prelate. In 1629 the charge was taken to Bishop Laud but was dropped on Chauncy's submission.

Later in 1635, he was prosecuted for his opposition to the railing in of the communion table and finally made a humiliating recantation, for which he never forgave himself. His Retractation in 1637 of his recantation is a published document, now found in the Bodleian Library.

Chauncy was a man of puritanical principles; was outspoken in his claims against ecclesiastical authority. Besides the Book of Sports and the Communion table, he denounced the practice of kneeling in sacrament, preached against the wearing of long hair as a heathen practice and a crying sin, and expressed himself frequently, especialy later when in America, as favoring the cele-

bration of the Lord's Supper in the evening and on every Lord's Day. Even as an old man, in 1662, he published the Antisynodalia Americana in this country in opposition to the synod, admitting to baptism children of non-communicants. Dr. Charles Chauncy, Boston cleric of the Revolution, earlier referred to, says of the wearing of long hair controversy:

> "It is strange that men of learning, rich good sense, and solid judgment, should be able to expend so much zeal against a trifle, not to say a thing absolutely indifferent to our nature. But the greatest as well as best men in this country, in that day magistrates as well as ministers, esteemed the wearing of long hair as an enormous vice and solemnly testified against it as such.
> "There are always those who are ready to wage war with externals that are of little more consequence in themselves than the cut of the hair. Men are governed more by associations than by reasons. The Cavaliers of the Church of England wore long hair, and, from the association, some of the Puritan round-heads considered it as sinful."

In late 1637, after his recantation, but before he departed for New England, he officated for a short time at Marston-Lawrence near Peterborough.

In America, until 1641, Chauncy was occupied at Plymouth, Massachusetts, with the Reverend Mr. Reyner, but remained outside the church because of his extreme opinions. Governor Winthrop of Plymouth colony refers to Chauncy in his journal as a "great scholar and godly man"; at the same time "an active man and very vehement in his opinions."

In 1641, he was reordained and became pastor at Scituate, Connecticut, remaining there some twelve years. It would seem that Chauncy was quite dissatisfied at Scituate.

> "The circumstances by which he was surrounded, together with his ardent temperament, make an apology, in part, for his uneasiness. He was a studious man. beyond what is often known and was subject to the nervous sensibility peculiar to hard students. He was consciously endowed with great talents and learning. He was devoted to his profession, and he was too apt to accept it as an indignity that his powers should not keep down all opposition, and his labors bring him at least the comforts of life in temporal things."

Especially disquieting to Chauncy was his controversy with some of his parish and others, on the mode of baptism, Chauncy maintaining the complete immersion of infants. Also, the poverty of his circumstances, in contrast to the abundance he once enjoyed, eventually determined him to resign his Scituate mission and return to England. Besides performing his ministerial labors, he practiced, to a considerable extent, as a physician for which he was eminently qualified, Cotton Mather, New England historian, informs us. Also, he was engaged in instructing his own six sons and preparing other young men for the ministry.

In 1654, he removed from Scituate to Boston to make arrangements to return with his family to England. Conditions were greatly changed in England; the dissenters, his party, were now in authority under Cromwell; Laud had been beheaded; and his old people in Ware especially urged his return among them. But on the verge of returning to England, he was offered the Presi-

dency of Harvard College, then a struggling institution, whose first President, Dunster, had recently resigned. Chauncy was selected by the board of overseers of the college on condition that he refrain from disseminating his opinions on controversial points. He was to get one hundred pounds, about five hundred dollars. Though his opinions had not undergone any change, his feelings, at least, were less acute and he readily accepted the position.

Let us turn again to Mather and to his description of the manner in which Chauncy performed his duties as President of Harvard.

> "How learnedly he now conveyed all the liberal arts unto those who sat at his feet; how wittily he moderated their disputations and other exercises; how constantly he expounded to them the scriptures in the college hall: how fluently he expressed himself unto them in Latin of Terentian phrase, in all his discourses; and how carefully he inspected their manner, and above all things was concerned for them—will never be forgotten by many of our most worthy men, who were such men, by their education under him.
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> "He was a most indefatigable student, which, with the blessing of God, made him a most incomparable scholar. He rose very early, about four o'clock both winter and summer; and he set the example of diligence hard to be followed.
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> "But, by interweaving of constant prayers into his holy studies, he made them indeed holy; and my reader shall count, if he pleases, how oft in a day, he addressed Heaven with solemn devotions, and judge whether it might not be said of our Charles, as it was of Charles the Great, Carolus plus cum deo, quam cum hominibus loquitur, when I have told, that at his first getting up in the morning,

he commonly spent near an hour in secret prayer, before minding any other matter; then visiting the college hall, he expounded a chapter of the Old Testament, with a short prayer before and after, in his family; about eleven in the forenoon, he retired again about three quarters of an hour for secret prayer. At four, in the afternoon he again did likewise . . . . Behold, how near this good man approached unto the strictest and highest sense of praying always!"

Also Mather continues:

"But if the whole country were sensible of the blessing which New England enjoyed in our Chauncy now at Cambridge, the church of Cambridge, to whom he now joined and preached had particular cause to be so. And so indeed they were; by the same token, that when he had been a year or two in the town, the church kept a whole day of Thanksgiving to God, for the mercy which they had enjoyed in his being there."

His Advice to a Clergyman, written in 1665, best describes the manner of Chauncy's spiritual approach to life:

"1. Be much in prayer to God. Thereby you will find more succor and success, in your ministry, than by all your study. 2. Preach much about the misery of a state of nature; the preparatives to conversion or effectual calling; the necessity of union and communion with Christ; the nature of saving or justifying faith; and the fruits thereof, love and good works and sanctification. 3. Explain the words of your text clearly; bring clear proof from the Scriptures; let your reasons be Scripture-reasons; but be most in application, which is spent in five uses, refutation of error, information of the truth, correction of manners; exhortation; instruction in righteousness. All of which we find in 2 Tim. III: 16, 17. And there is a sixth use, viz., of comfort. 1 Cor. XIV: 3.

"4. Preach not high notions. Read Ames's Medulla; and the explication of 1 Cor. II:1, 2. Neither use any dark Latin words or any derived thence which poor people can't understand, without explaining them, so that the poorest and simplest people may understand all. 5. I advise you, being in office, to catechise every Lord's Day in the afternoon, so as to go through the Catechism once in a year."

Quincy, a President of Harvard many years after Chauncy, wrote in respect to Dunster and Chauncy, Harvard's first Presidents:

"Both of them were able, faithful, and earnest. Both pious even to the standard of that quality which characterized the times. Both were learned beyond the measure of their contemporaries, and probably in this respect were surpassed by no one who has since succeeded to their chair. After years of duty unexceptionably fulfilled, both experienced the fate of literary men of the country in that day; thankless labor, unrequited service, arrearages u npaid, posthumous applause, a doggerel dirge, and a Latin epitaph."

Chauncy found his salary of 100 pounds quite inadequate. At that time, very little coin circulated as money, and payments were made in land and certain land products which served as money standards. The salary of 100 pounds was uncertain at best, and we find Chauncy many times petitioning the board of overseers on the matter.

Quincy, again referring to Harvard's first Presidents says:

" . . . . for learning, talent and fidelity, Dunster and Chauncy have been surpassed by no one of their successors, exceeded every one of them in sufferings, sacrifices and privations; their fates little known,

and consequences having little sympathy. And yet they were main supports of the Institution for thirty years, in times when its friends were the fewest, and its condition was the humblest; and were not inferior to any of its friends, patrons, or officers, in establishing its character, and perpetuating its usefulness."

Even on the verge of extreme old age, President Chauncy retained the same freshness of feeling and the same vigor of intellect which he had in his early prime.

"After age had enfeebled him, the fellows of the college once leading this venerable old man to preach a sermon on a winter day, out of affection unto him to discourage him from so difficult an undertaking, told him, 'Sir, you will certainly die in the pulpit.' But, he laying hold of what they said, as if they had offered him the greatest encouragement in the world, pressed the more vigorously through the snow drift, and said, 'How glad should I be, if what you say might prove true.'

"At length, on the commencement of the year 1671, he made a farewell oration, wherein he took a solemn farewell of his friends, and then sent for his children upon whom he bestowed his solemn blessing, with fervent prayer commending them to the prace of God. Accordingly the end of this year proved the end of his days. When illness was growing upon him, the Rev. Urian Oakes, after his requested supplication, asked him to give a sign of his hopeful and joyous assurances, if he yet had them, of his entering into eternal glory. Whereat the speechless old man lifted up his hands, as high towards heaven as he could lift them, and so his ripened soul flew thither, February 19, 1671, in the eightieth year of his age."

In reviewing Chauncy's eventful life, what strikes us forcibly is the rare combination of excellences which enter into his character. He was

as distinguished for untiring industry even to the close of life, as he was for the ardor of his feelings. He is appropriately styled by Mather as the "Cadmus" who brought letters to this country. It is remarkable that with all his love of knowledge he should take for his motto, inscribed in more than one of his books, with his name this, "He who increaseth knowedge also increaseth sorrow." He was eminently conscientious in what he did and in what he said. He never, by any pretence of benevolence, or by any splendid act of charity, endeavored to conceal his misdoing from the public. If, like Cranmer, he publicly yielded to temptation, like Cranmer he was willing to do public penance.

In his endeavors to instruct and enlighten others, and lead them in the way of their duty, he may sometimes have trusted too much to his own clear perceptions of truth and to his honesty in imparting it, as the means by which to win success, without taking sufficiently into view the dullness and prejudices of men. So diligent was he in business, so fervent was he in spirit, so ready was he to do with his might what his hands found to do, that his appeared like angelic earnestness, both in intensity and constancy. His worldly wisdom might sometimes be doubted; his honesty, never. In laying the foundations of the literary and religious institutions of New England he lived a life of labor and devotion; he died the death of the righteous; and his memory is blessed whether he is contemplated as a man of genius, or a scholar, or a confessor, or a Christian. (Paragraphs condensed from Fowler's Chauncey Memorials, published in 1858; Fowler a professor at Amherst).

Chauncy was a most exemplary man, and lived a most holy life, yet at the time of his death, he made the following humiliating declaration as his last will and testament:

> "I do acknowledge myself to be a child of wrath, and sold under sin, and one who hath been polluted with innumerable transgressions and mighty sins; which as far as I know and call to remembrance, I keep still fresh before me, and desire with mourning and self-abhorrence still to do, as long as life shall last; and especially my so many sinful compliances with and conformity unto vile human inventions, and will-worship and hell-bred superstitions, and other evil things attached to the service of God, with which the English mass-book, I mean the book of Common Prayer, is so fully fraught."

The wife of Charles Chauncy was Catherine, daughter of Robert Eyre of Sarum Wilts., and Agnes, his wife, daughter of John Still, bishop of Bath and Wells. They were married March 17, 1630. The six sons of their marriage were all ministers and graduates of Harvard.

President Chauncy is the ancestor of all in the United States bearing that name.

Reverend Israel Chauncey
of Stratford

CHARLES Chauncey had six sons and one daughter. His oldest son, Isaac, returned to England and became a minister and physician. One of Isaac's sons, Charles, returned to Boston and became a merchant, however. The distinguished Dr. Charles Chauncy of the First Church in Boston was the son of the returned Charles Chauncey. In his "History of the First Church in Boston," Emerson wrote frequently of Dr. Chauncy, with praise. From 1727 until 1787, crucial years in American history, Chauncy was a living oracle of the people of New England. He was an ardent advocate of American Independence. He died in 1787, aged 83, in Boston.

> "In that city, 'Chauncy Place,' 'Chauncy Street,' and 'Chauncy Hall,' so called in honor of the good, the learned, the patriotic, and the reverend Doctor Chauncy, have helped to keep his name fresh in remembrance."

The second son of President Charles Chauncy was Ichabod. Like Isaac and the remaining brothers, he was educated at Harvard, and like Isaac, he returned to England and became a physician of note.

Barnabas Chauncy, third son, died unmarried and little is recorded of him.

Nathaniel and Elnathan were twins, and were the first Harvard graduates in the history of Plymouth. They took their first degrees in 1661 with Israel, the youngest brother and our ancestral agent. Nathaniel settled at Hatfield, Massachusetts, as minister but died at an early age, about 46.

Meanwhile Israel had settled at Stratford, Connecticut, and, on his brother's death, he took one of Nathaniel's sons, his namesake, and agreed to educate him.

> "Nathaniel was taken to Stratford, Connecticut with his father's library, for the use of which his uncle Israel Chauncy agreed to educate him. Being thus placed under the best influences, his ancestral love of learning led him to prepare himself for college, under the training of his uncle. Yale College had just been founded. His uncle, who was one of the founders, placed him in that institution, and he was the first to receive a degree from that college.

Though not of direct lineage, this Nathaniel Chauncey was a member of the Stratford family of Israel Chauncey. He was greatly beloved and respected by the people of his parish in later years at Durham, Connecticut. On the occasion of his death in 1756 two sermons were preached, by one Reverend Jonathan Todd of East Guildford. (We might readily believe that this Todd was an ancestral agent in our Todd family, inasmuch as the original Todd family had long been settled in Connecticut by that time. ((This fact is verified in the history of the Todd family, although the man was not a direct lineal antecedent))).

Our family descends from Israel, the youngest son of President Chauncey. He was born at Scituate, Conn. in 1644. He probably studied medicine as well as theology after his graduation from Harvard in 1661.

> "He was ordained in the Independent mode in 1665. His ordination was, in the way of derision, called the 'Leather-Mitten Ordination.' One of the members of the church selected to lay on hands, happened to

have a leather-mitten on the hand which he employed in the rite. (See Allen's Dictionary). It is said that some of the clergy imposed hands at the same time."

In 1667 he married Mary Nichols, daughter of Mr. Isaac Nichols.

Like his father, Chauncey was a man of decided opinions, and, soon after his arrival in Stratford, there ensued a controversy among his parish which was not finally settled until 1678, when a majority of the dissenters removed to Woodbury, establishing themselves there under a Mr. Walker. After that, it is recorded in Cathren's History of Ancient Woodbury, the churches were on friendly terms, and, in 1712, Israel Chauncey assisted at the ordination of Walker's successor.

"Mr. Chauncey had the reputation of being a very learned, able, and devoted pastor. He was one of the founders of Yale College, being the second named; was probably the presiding officer at the first meeting of the college undertakers as he is the first on the list.

"At the meeting which took place November 11, 1701, he was chosen Rector, or President. Professor Kingsley, in his History of Yale College, remarks of him, that he had a high reputation for scholarship. However, Chauncey declined the appointment. Dr. Charles Chauncey of Boston says of him, 'He spent his days among the people of Stratford in great reputation as a physician, as well as a divine. Mrs. Whittlesey, who lived in his family when a young woman said that he was one of the most hospitable and benevolent old gentlemen she ever knew.' "

Reverend Israel Chauncey died in 1713, and was survived by three sons, Charles, 1668, Isaac, 1670, and Robert 1677. The first, Charles, is our

ancestral agent, and was left a double share of an estate of 743 pounds by his father.

With Sarah Chauncy, we have enumerated the seven children of the President. She married Reverend Gershom Bulkley, and bore him six children, all of whom settled in Connecticut.

Reverend Charles Chauncey
of Stratfield

WE ARE thus at the third generation of the Chauncey line in this country, Reverend Charles Chauncey of Stratfield being the progenitor. He was the eldest son of Reverend Israel Chauncey of Stratford. He took his degree at Harvard in 1686, was ordained at Stratfield (now Bridgeport) in 1695, and died in 1714. His second wife, Sarah Wolcott, sister of Roger Wolcott, Governor of Connecticut, is our ancestral agent on the maternal side.

Robert Chauncey

OF THE children of Reverend Charles Chauncey of Stratfield, Robert was the only progenitor and marks the fourth generation. Little is known of him except his birth in 1701, his marriage to Hannah Wheeler, his family of five daughters and his one son, Wolcott, born in 1732.

Wolcott Chauncey

WOLCOTT Chauncey, representing the fifth generation, married Ann Brown who was ten years his junior. Their family was a large one, nine children in all. Curiously enough, the records of those other than Commodore Isaac Chauncey, our illustrious ancestor, are lacking. Probably most of them died while young. However, one brother of Commodore Isaac Chauncey, Ichabod Wolcott, survived, and was a Captain in the first U. S. Navy.

Commodore Isaac Chauncey

COMMODORE Isaac Chauncey was born February 20, 1772, at Black Rock, Fairview County, Connecticut. Evidently he was imbued with a great love of the sea, prevailing upon his parents to allow him to leave home at the early age of 12. He was taken in hand by a friend of the family, Captain Brewster.

So suited was Chauncey to the sea that at the age of 19, he had won himself the command of a ship, the Jenny, owned by the great New York shipowners of that time, the Schermerhorns.

It has been narrated that young Chauncey demonstrated his resourcefulness on the Jenny to his everlasting credit during a voyage from New York to Charleston. The officers and crew had been stricken with yellow fever, every man but Chauncey, and, single handed, Chauncey brought the ship to port. It is written, that when the pilot boarded the ship, finding her under short sail, he asked Chauncey in a commanding tone "Why did you not make sail, or order all hands on deck?" to which Chauncey replied, "All hands are on deck—myself."

President Adams took the first steps toward assembling an American navy in 1797, and Chauncey, along with such others as Rodgers, Decatur, Porter, Stewart, and Hull, received his appointment. The first vessels of the fleet were the Constitution, the United States, and the Constellation. Chauncey was attached to the new frigate, President, built in New York, 1798.

The United State made its entry into the international circle during the Tripolitan war against the pirates, who had been preying on international commerce for some time. It was during this period, 1802 to 1805, that Chauncey made two voyages to the Mediterranean. For his services, he received only the highest approbation of his superiors. He served with Commodores Morris, Preble, Truxton, and Barron, commanding at different times the finest frigates of the American fleet, the Chesapeake, the New York, and the John Adams, all flagships of the Mediterranean fleet. He joined Preble on the Constitution as acting captain for the important engagement against the Pasha of Tripoli, August 28 and 29, 1804, and Preble said of him:

> "I cannot, in justice to Captain Chauncey, omit noticing the very able assistance I received from him on the Quarter-deck of the Constitution, during the whole of the action. . . .. I again acknowledge, with pleasure, the services of an able and active officer in Captain Chauncey, serving on the quarter-deck of the Constitution."

It was during the engagement mentioned above that Decatur, then a young lieutenant, accomplished his daring feat of firing the Philadelphia, American ship, which had been taken prize by the pirates, as it lay beneath the enemy guns—a superb act of gallantry.

As Captain of the New York, Chauncey was an exemplary leader during his Mediterranean services. One incident, when his presence of mind and his coolness and decision in the moment of danger, probably prevented the total destruction of the ship, is outstanding.

"On the passage between Gibraltar an explosion occurred, by which the lower part of the ship was filled with smoke. It was an appalling moment, for every man on board was aware that a quantity of powder not far from the magazine must have exploded.

"Captain Chauncey ordered the drummer to beat to quarters. The alarm had not been given a minute when the men were going steadily to their guns and other stations, under a standing regulation. The influence of discipline was well exhibited on this trying occasion, and, fearful as is the alarm of fire on shipboard, the crew went as regularly to their quarters as in the moments of confidence.

"An unfortunate order from the Commodore to hoist out the boats had increased the alarm, but Captain Chauncey rallied a few followers, and reminding them that they might as well be blown up through three decks as one, he led the way below into passages choked with smoke, where the danger was rapidly increasing. There be began to contend with the fire in a spot where a spark might have produced a result that would have left nothing of all on board but their names. Commodore Woolsey, who was a midshipman on board, always spoke in the highest terms of the coolness and decision of Chauncey, by which alone the vessel was saved."

The explosion killed fourteen and wounded five, but Chauncey's heroic action, assisted by that of Lieutenant David Porter, saved many lives, and, of course, the ship.

In 1802, during his service under Commodore Morris, Chauncey distinguished himself in a severe conflict with a flotilla of Tripolitan gunboats, defeating that as well as a troop of cavalry ashore.

For his acts of heroism and his demonstration of command, Chauncey was publicly thanked by Congress and voted a sword, which he never re-

ceived. Besides this, he was a Captain, the highest statutory rank in the navy.

The Mediterranean conflict terminated, and war politicaly disfavored, Chauncey left the navy in 1806 to join John Jacob Astor in his East India trade, and commanded on a voyage the finest East Indiaman out of New York, the Beaver. He left New York for Canton, China, July 10, 1806.

The entire voyage, New York to Canton to New York, took eleven months. The Beaver was a new craft, with two decks and three masts. Its length was 111 feet; breadth, 29 feet 6 inches; depth, 14 feet, 9 inches; and tonnage, 427 pounds. Its stern was square. The ship was registered in compliance with the federal law by Astor and Chauncey in June, 1807, the latter acting in lieu of Whetten joint owner with Astor.

At Canton, a British frigate under Captain Wood succeeded in impressing one of the crew of the Beaver. Indignant, Captain Chauncey negotiated to recover the sailor, considerable correspondence being found in the files of the Secretary of State on this incident. Captain Wood finally refused to deliver over the man on the ground that he was a British citizen. In late January, 1807, the Beaver sailed on its return voyage to New York. Its cargo consisted of teas and china mainly. The outgoing cargo had consisted of $95,000 specie, 3470 otter skins, 1794 fox skins, 555 beaver skins, and 529 piculs of blackwood, all insured for $30,000 at 8% per annum premium.

The Wood incident in Canton harbor has a different version in the Chauncey Memorials:

"On his arrival at Canton, he (Chauncey) found much excitement and feeling among the American merchantment, in consequence of the oppressive course of the British officers in boarding our unprotected ships, and impressing such seamen as they might please to call Englishmen, into their naval service. Chauncey, on hearing of these outrages, expressed his determination to resist any attempt to seduce or kidnap his crew from their allegiance, with all the force under his command. An occasion was soon presented of carrying his resolve into effect. His vessel was boarded by a lieutenant from an English frigate, who, without much ceremony, ordered Capt. Chauncey to muster his crew for the purpose of ascertaining if there were any British subjects on board. Capt. Chauncey refused to do it, stating that his crew should have the protection of the American flag flying over them,—that he held a commission in the American Navy, and would not disgrace it by submitting to such an indignity. The lieutenant grumbled and threatened to no purpose. He left with the threat of returning with an armed force to carry his threat into execution.

"In the meantime, Capt. Chauncey had prepared his crew for resistance, (though under the guns of an English frigate), who resolved to stand by him. On the return of the frigate's boat with an armed crew alongside, he allowed the lieutenant to come on board, but not one of the crew, saying to the officer that he was prepared to resist force by force;—that he would give him a certain number of minutes for reflection, and if he did not leave his ship peaceably, he would be ejected. The lieutenant stormed and ordered his men on board. This was resisted, and Capt. Chauncey, having warned him that his time had expired and finding him unwilling to leave, seized him in his arms and threw him into his boat, or more probably overboard. No further measures were afterwards taken by the British ships of war in that sea to impress our seamen."

On his return to the United States in 1807, Chauncey was commissioned by the government to organize the Navy Yard at Brooklyn, N. Y., to the command of which he was appointed. At that time, Commodore Rodgers was in charge of the flotilla stationed there. Because of the Chesapeake incident (the British impressment crucial point), the possibility of war was imminent. Because of the national disgrace, Commodore Barron of the Chesapeake was court martialed, and Commodore Rodgers was ordered to appear at that trial. During Commodore Rodgers' absence, Captain Chauncey was in charge of the fleet in New York harbor, besides performing his other duties at the Navy Yard. He was relieved in early 1808 on the return of Rodgers. It is probable that there was a fine feeling between Chauncey and Rodgers, as their careers were so closely related. Chauncey Street at the Navy Yard today commemorates Captain Chauncey, first commander.

At the outbreak of the War of 1812, having the confidence of President Madison and Secretary of the Navy Hamilton, and being one of the most efficient officers in the navy, Chauncey was appointed commander of the naval forces on Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, with full power to build, purchase, and hire vessels, to appoint officers, enlist seamen, buy naval stores, and establish a navy yard. This was the highest command in the navy at that time.

Chauncey was an excellent organizer. Beginning October, 1812, for three years his general headquarters were at Sackett's Harbor, N. Y.

He was fortunate in having at his command the eminent shipbuilder, Henry Eckford, who as-

sembled a fleet of twenty ships under the most adverse conditions. The "Mohawk," a forty-two gun frigate, was launched thirty-four days after its keel was laid; the corvette "Madison," nine weeks from the time the first tree was cut. The keel of the "Pike," first flagship, was laid April 9, and the ship floated June 12. Henry Eckford was undoubtedly a man of genius. In after years he built many fine ships at his yard in New York for South American states, as well as the "Ohio," eighty guns, the best three-decker in the American navy until the adoption of steam. In 1829, he died of fever while at Constantinople, where he was building ships for the Sultan.

Chauncey had as one of his objectives on the lakes, the destruction of enemy fortifications. At this, he was to be assisted by the land forces under General Pike. York (Toronto) and Fort George were reduced by their combined fighting, General Pike dying bravely at the York attack.

As commander of the British fleet, Sir James Yeo, outnumbering the forces under Commodore Chauncey two to one, was under general orders to avoid action unless the circumstances were decidedly favorable. This accounts to a considerable extent for the uninteresting naval history of the war of 1812 and the difficulty Commodore Chauncey had in bringing the enemy to action. At York, September 27, 1813, the British fleet was put to flight, and Commodore Chauncey's performance there has been the subject of unremitting praise. He maneuvered the Pike, his flagship, and fought in such a manner that it remains legend in the navy. A heavy gale interrupted the route, however.

At Kingston in the following year, it has been rcorded that the "hostile vessels were so near each other that by the aid of a glass an American prisoner then on board the Prince Regent distinctly recognized Commodore Chauncey standing in the gateway of the Superior, and pointed him out to the English officers." The English squadron remained in blockade for the rest of the war, except for a few minor skirmishes.

It is certain that the American navy on the lakes was mistress of the situation at all times during the War of 1812. James Fenimore Cooper writes:

> "The history of no marine probably furnishes an instance of a higher state of discipline than Commodore Chauncey had brought his squadron up to this summer. At exercising sails and at working ship, the method, accuracy and rapidity of the crews have been likened to the drill of favorite regiments of the guards in Europe. At the guns the men were kpt constantly in practice with targets, handling heavy long guns like muskets and pointing them like rifles. Discreet observers have even doubted whether the English could have got out had they attempted it, as they must have advanced, bows on, through a channel less than a mile wide, for it is believed every spar would have been taken out of them before they could close. . . . . "

Another eminent American associated with Commodore Chauncey at Sackett's Harbor, was Washington Irving, who consulted the commander about calling out the New York militia. Arriving at Sackett's Harbor "nothing could exceed the surprise of Chauncey on receiving Mr. Irving aboard his ship in these remote solitudes. 'You here!' he exclaimed; 'I should as soon have thought of seeing my wife.' "

Oliver Hazard Perry joined Chauncey as a young officer at Sackett's Harbor in 1813. It is evident that the details of organization and the difficulties of a campaign were uninteresting to the eager Perry, in his remark "About the only gunpowder I've smelt is what we've burned up saluting comanders." Recognizing courage and ability in the young man, Commodore Chauncey dispatched him to Lake Erie to assemble a fleet, Captain Barclay of the British navy having been a constant menace there. Finally Perry's fleet of nine ships was ready for battle. He was joined by Stephen Champlin, his friend, who had been sent with additional reinforcements by Chauncey from Sackett's Harbor. The famous battle of Put-In-Bay occurred and Perry's name echoes in the words, "We have met the enemy and they are ours." Perry's message to Commodore Chauncey can be seen in the reading room of the New York Historical Society, folded and sealed in the old fashioned way, and addressed in Perry's handwriting:

"Commodore Isaac Chauncey, Commanding U. S. Naval forces on the Lakes, Sackett's Harbour."

It reads as follows:

"U. S. Brig Niagara, off the
"Western Sister, Head of Lake Erie
"September 10, 1813, 4 P. M.

"Sir: It has pleased the Almight to give to the arms of the United States a signal victory over their enemies on this Lake.

"The British squadron, consisting of two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop, have this moment surrendered to the force under my command, after a sharp conflict.

"Very respectfully, I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant.

"O. H. Perry."

This rare letter was presented to the Historical Society on May 2, 1854 by the Rev. Peter S. Chauncey, a son of the Commodore, who was rector of St. James' Episcopal Church in New York city at that time.

It is interesting to note that in the spring of 1813, the activities of Chauncey affected John Jacob Astor, although adversely this time, when Astoria, lone American settlement on the Pacific coast, was left unprotected by reason of an order issued by Chauncey calling Captain Crane and his crew to the Lakes.

In 1816, Commodore Chauncey took command of the Mediterranean squadron. His flagship was the Washington, the second line of battleship ever commissioned under the American flag, seventy-four guns. Sailing from Annapolis, Maryland, Commodore Chauncey was accompanied by Mr. Pinckney, Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Russia, en route to St. Petersburg, by way of Naples where he was to conduct some important negotiations with the government of the two Sicilies.

In 1816, with William Shaler, Consul General of the U. S. at Algiers, Chauncey negotiated a treaty with the Dey of Algiers, checking the depredations on American commerce thereafter. This was a singular incident in the history of the United States; a naval commander acting with plenipotentiary powers.

The large squadron under Commodore Chauncey was distinguished for its activity in cruising, and for the exact and perfect discipline maintained. It visited all the ports of the Mediterranean, and while at Naples "the Washington was visited by large numbers of British naval officers, who then thronged the continent after the general peace, and who did not fail to express their surprise at our possession of ships of war of so formidable an armament, and their admiration of the ship in her model, her equipment, and her efficiency."

Commodore Chauncey cruised in the Mediterranean until the year 1818, when he was relieved in command by Commodore Stewart, in the Franklin, seventy-four, and returned to New York, July 4, 1818.

Commodore Chauncey, shortly after his return was appointed to the command of the Brooklyn station, and kept his flag flying on board the Washington. His duties not requiring his residence at the Navy Yard, he retired to his country seat, a beautiful spot on the East River, which he had purchased in his absence. But this pleasure he was not long permitted to enjoy. In 1821, he was ordered to Washington whither he proceeded with his family in December of that year, and entered upon the duties of his office as Navy Commissioner with his colleagues, Rodgers and Porter, administering the affairs of the Navy. He remained there until 1824, when he returned to New York to resume command of the Navy Yard, the command which he held until June, 1833. Again he was appointed Navy Commissioner, removing to Washington a second time.

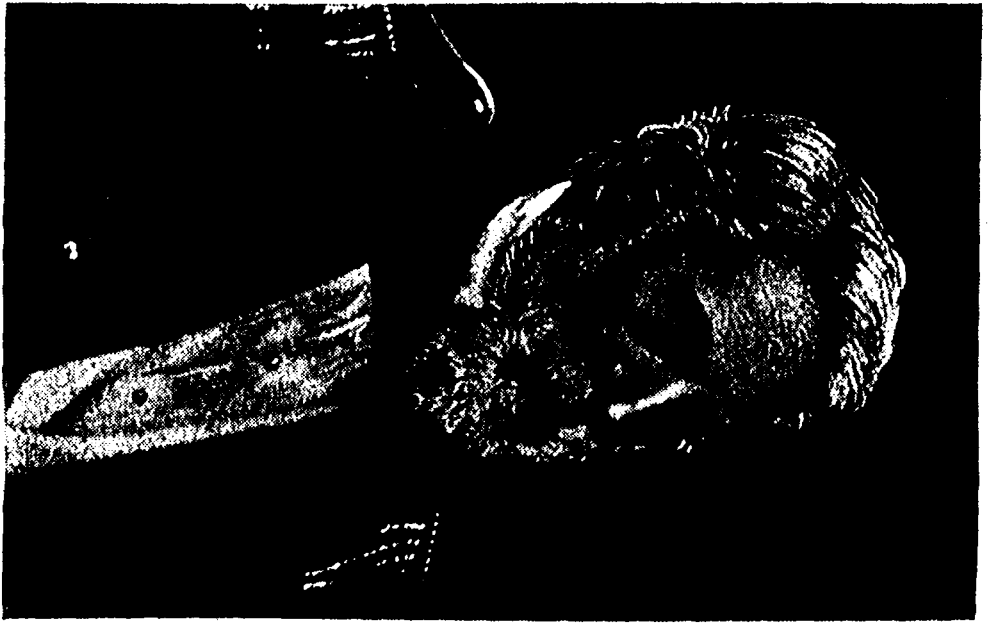
In 1837, in consequence of the failing health of Commodore Rodgers, Commodore Chauncey was appointed President of the Board of Navy Commissioners, and fulfilled the duties of that responsible post for the remaining years of his life. On January 27, 1840, he died at the age of 68, and was buried with naval honors in the Congressional Cemetery at Washington, where a marble monument has been erected to his memory.

In Cooper's History of the American Navy, there is the following account:

> "No officer of the American navy ever filled a station of the responsibility and importance of that which Commodore Chauncey occupied. And it may be justly questioned if any officer could have acquited himself better of the high trust reposed in him. He commanded the profound respect of a vigilant, bold and skilfull commander, to whom he was opposed, (Sir James Yeo), and to the last retained the confidence of his own government."

Commodore Chauncey was "a model of gallantry, energy and skill."

The wife of Commodore Chauncey was Catherine, the daughter of John and Catherine Sickles of New York. Their children were Charles W., a lieutenant in the Navy, who died in the Mexican war, John S., who spent his life in the naval service of his country, and Reverend Peter S., Rector of St. James' Church, New York for many years, who married Mary S., daughter of Commodore James Renshaw of the United States Navy.



Commodore John S. Chauncey

THE illustrious Commodore Isaac Chauncey was succeeded by his son, Commodore John St. Clair Chauncey. The fame of the great Commodore overshadows that of his son. None the less, the fact remains that John S. Chauncey was a Commodore in his own right; he was well qualified and deserving.

Commodore John S. Chauncey was born in 1805, and, at an early age, became a midshipman. On January 13, 1825, he received his commission and was assigned to the Mediterranean squadron, becoming its commander in 1841. During the years intervening, he was an active young officer in the navy, doubtlessly. In 1825, while on the Peacock, he participated in an engagement with eight pirate schooners off the coast of Cuba and commanded one of the captured prizes while it was maintained in the U. S. service. Probably this was his first command.

From 1847 until 1850, Chauncey served as Inspector of Ordnance at Washington. It was during this period that his brother, Charles W., died in the war with Mexico, while commanding the Spitfire, August, 1847.

In September 14, 1855, he was promoted to the rank of Captain. In 1861, he was assigned to the U. S. steamer, Susquehanna, and, in September of that year, commanded the blockade of the Virginia and North Carolina sounds, engaging with the confederates at Fort Hatteras and Fort Clark.

For six months, he was accompanied by his son, Charles W. Chauncey, who was listed as Captain's Clerk. During that time, there were five schooners, a brig, and a ship captured by the Susquehanna as prizes, Captain Chauncey's share as commanding officer ultimately amounting to $493.14.

On July 6, 1862, Captain Chauncey became Commodore Chauncey, and, for the rest of the war, he was assigned to special service. On April 4, 1869, he retired from active service and died at Brooklyn, April 10, 1871. In the notes of Charles W. Chauncey, the following records a last fact in the life of Commodore John S. Chauncey:

> "April 13. Kate and Fred arrived from St. Louis, and J. S. C's. funeral took place from Henry St. to St. Mark's Church, N. Y., accompanied by all the Marines from the Brooklyn Navy Yard, the Band, and all the officers of that Station.
>
> "There were eight officers as pall bearers in full uniform.
>
> "The remains were buried at St. Mark's Church Yard by Dr. Terry and Rylance, and a salute was fired by the Marines."

John S. Chauncey was married to Marie Jane Fitzgerald Graham, daughter of David and Mary Graham of New York, in December, 1838. Their children were Mary Stockton, September 13, 1839, Edward B., May 13, 1842, who died in infancy, Kate Augusta, Jan. 6, 1843, our grandmother, Charles Wolcott, January 8, 1846, our "Uncle Budd," and Fannie Lear, October 5, 1848. Of these, only two survived to old age; Kate Augusta and Charles Wolcott Chauncey. Mary

Stockton died in June, 1865, at Hartford, Connecticut, and was buried in the Chauncey vault at the 2nd Street Cemetery in New York. Fannie Lear Chauncey became the wife of Henry T. Hutchins at St. Louis, Mo., in 1874. Gertrude Helen Hutchins, our "Aunt Gertie," was born, March 16, 1875, and Charles Chauncey Hutchins, January 2, 1878. Edgar E. Stewart is a son of Gertrude Hutchin's first marriage, is married, and lives in Denver, Colo. Gertrude Hutchins is now Mrs. Robert K. Anderson and lives in Denver. Charles W. Chauncey, only surviving son of John S. and Maria G. Chauncey, never married and died in Grand Rapids, April 7, 1920.

In the notes of Charles W. Chauncey, there are several interesting family references beginning May 29, 1864:

> "J. S. C., Kate A. C., C. W. C., and F. L. C. were confirmed by Bishop Potter at church of Rev. P. S. Chauncey, New York City."

December 14, 1866:

> "Rev. P. S. Chauncey died, age 56; buried at Greenwood in Chauncey vault, Dec. 17th."

February 2, 1870:

> "Kate A. Chauncey was married to Fred'k A. Stevens."

April 10, 1871:

> "Commodore J. S. Chauncey, U. S. N., died at 350 Henry St., Brooklyn, after 12 hours illness; age 66 years."

November 1, 1871:

> "Kate and Fred went to housekeeping at 2633 Lafayette Ave., St. Louis."

October 24, 1874:

> "Saturday at 1:45 A. M. born at Louisville, Ky., May Chauncey Stevens, daughter of Fred A. and Kate A. Stevens."

June 11, 1882:

> "Left N. Y. to take position in U. S. Engineer's Office, Grand Rapids, Michigan, under Capt. D. P. Heap."

Maria Graham Chauncey died in New York City, April 13, 1851, aged 33. She was buried in the old 2nd Street Cemetery, but her remains were later removed to the Graham vault in Greenwood Cemetery, New York, beside her famous brothers, David and John Graham of New York, the most celebrated criminal lawyers of their time, and Major General Charles K. Graham of Civil War fame. A sister of Maria Graham Chauncey was the mother of Alvey A. Adee, second assistant Secretary of State under seven Presidents, beginning with Cleveland and concluding at the time of his death, aged 83, with Coolidge. At several different times during his career, he was acting Secretary of State, besides serving on many foreign missions. He was commonly referred to as the "remarkable Mr. Adee". Many of the diplomatic notes which established or readjusted our relations with other nations at critical times were written by Mr. Adee, then signed and dispatched without alteration by the Secretary of State or President. Secretary Hay once said of him:

> "Adee would make a good Bible. He begins at the creation and tells me how everything was done in the past and winds up by instructing me in my duties as head of this department. And the beauty of it is that I shan't go far astray if I follow him."

Maria Graham Chauncey was a charming member of Washington society during her married life, and it is probable that most of her children were born in Washington.

Commodore John S. Chauncey married a second time, but there were no children by that marriage.

Kate Augusta Chauncey

(Mrs. Fred'k A. Stevens)

KATE Augusta Chauncey represents the eighth generation of Chaunceys in America. She was our maternal grandmother. She was christened Catharine but chose Kate, it would seem.

On September 24, 1870, at Brooklyn, N. Y., she married Frederick Augustus Stevens, Captain in the U. S. Army and third of a family of five boys whose father was General Joseph Cushing Stevens of Bangor, Maine. They settled at St. Louis, Mo. After the death of Commodore Chauncey in 1871, they were joined by Fanny Lear Chauncey and Charles W. Chauncey, but the latter returned to his duties in New York, shortly thereafter. On October 24, 1874, their only child was born, Mae Chauncey Stevens, at Louisville, Ky.

In 1882, Charles W. Chauncey came to Grand Rapids. In 1890 or thereabouts, he was joined by his sister, Kate Augusta, and niece, Mae Chauncey Stevens. Father and family remained separated, and Frederick A. Stevens died in Brooklyn, February 12, 1899, age 60.

Kate Augusta Stevens died in Grand Rapids, 1912.

Mae Chauncey Stevens
(Mrs. Stanton W. Todd)

Mae Chauncey Stevens was a woman of charming manner and gracious disposition. She was a very beautiful young lady. While visiting at Fredonia, N. Y., in 1901, she met Stanton W. Todd, then graduating from the Fredonia Normal School. In the fall of that year, Sept. 18, they were married. Previous to this time she had been invited to christen a torpedo boat destroyer, then under construction at Philadelphia, named for her grandfather, Commodore Isaac Chauncey. By her marriage, it was commonly reported, she had broken the custom of the U. S. Navy, being the first married sponsor of a vessel.

There were two other vessels of the same type as the first Chauncey; the Bainbridge and the Barrow. They were 245 feet long from tip to beam, the beam was 23 feet in width, and, with four cylinder-triple-expansion engines, they were capable of a speed of 29 knots. At the time, the Chauncey was looked upon as one of the fastest vessels of her class in the navy.

There were six children by this marriage, two dying in infancy. Catharine Marguerite was born July 1, 1902 and died in her first year. Dorothy Mae was born October 22, 1903 and is now Mrs. Ranald Hoyt Fell of Galesburg, Illinois. She has two children, Barbara Ann Fell, December 13, 1930, and Robert Todd Fell, March 2, 1933. Chauncey Stevens Todd, born June 8, 1906, married Elizabeth Rachael Whittier and lives in Grand Rapids. Stanton Wesley Todd, Jr. was born September 20, 1908 and is unmarried. Jack Wolcott

Todd was born 1910 and died in his second year, 1911. Gretchen Wolcott Todd was born June 28, 1912 and is affianced to Dr. Newton Hesbacher of Des Moines, Iowa.

The first U. S. S. Chauncey was rammed and sunk by the steamship Rose, November 19, 1917, while proceeding from Gibraltar to meet and escort a convoy. Three officers and eighteen men were lost in a heavy sea. Six years later, in August, 1923, the Annapolis Regiment of Midshipmen of that year unveiled a tablet in Gibraltar to the memory of the heroes of the Chauncey—to the memory of their devotion in a grim tryst with Duty.

The honor of christening the second U. S. S. Chauncey at San Francisco, September 29, 1918, was extended to Mrs. Ranald Hoyt Fell, then Dorothy Mae Todd. The fate of that ship was much the same as that of the first, it going aground in a fog off the coast of southern California, 1923, with several other vessels of the Pacific fleet. Stripped of its machine, the battered skeleton of the last U. S. Chauncey may be seen on that bleak and desolate shore today.

Mrs. Mae Chauncey Todd died May 21, 1925, in Grand Rapids. She is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery, Grand Rapids, beside her mother and uncle, infant daughter and son.

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