

***First
Genealogical
Research
Center***

Cook Family Research Report

Re: Amasa Chapman

29 March 2008

The purpose of this research session was threefold. First, before proceeding with further research, the connection needed to be confirmed between Lucy Chapman (wife of Willam Cook) and the man listed as her father, Amasa Chapman of Hancock, Berkshire, Massachusetts. Next, it was necessary to determine whether the ancestral Amasa Chapman, born about 1760-1765, might have a connection to Amaziah Chapman, born in 13 September 1734, as suggested by at least one on-line database. After these were accomplished, the focus could then shift toward extending the Chapman lineage.

For the first goal, it was determined that *onomastics* or naming conventions strongly support the conclusion that the ancestral Lucy Chapman was indeed the daughter of Amasa Chapman. Evidence for this was found in a brief survey of lineage-linked databases on www.rootsweb.com. These databases indicate that Amasa Chapman married Ann Darby or Darbee, a daughter of Eleazer Darby and Ann Doubledee (or Doubleday). Amasa and Ann seem to have been the parents of three children: Lucy, born 5 May 1787, who married William Cook; Lois, born 1789 married Abiel Cook, and Amasa, born 1793, married, and died 1836. Lucy (Chapman) Cook later had a son born about 1807 who she named Amasa. This fact is convincing evidence.

Focus then turned toward determining whether or not any relationship existed between Amasa and Amaziah Chapman. Initially, such a connection appeared weak, but the possibility needed to be either proved as correct or disproved. For this process, a survey was conducted, principally in census records, to confirm the localities of residence of men named Amasa and Amaziah Chapman in various census years. This survey was necessary before more in-depth searches could be conducted in other records.

Map 2 shows a map of Connecticut towns where Amaziah Chapman lived. He lived in the area of Windham County, particularly in the towns of Pomfret, Hampton, Brooklyn. The Darby or Darbee family lived in this area as well in Coventry. Examination of the family of Amaziah Chapman began in original records. As indicated in the database, evidence was found that Amaziah indeed married Esther Williams 26 Oct 1757 in Pomfret, Connecticut. It seems highly probable Amaziah was a son of Joseph Chapman and Elizabeth Ormsby, as indicated.

Examination of the Barbour Index, a nearly complete index to the civil birth, marriage and death records of most of the towns of Connecticut, allowed a compilation of the children of Amaziah and Esther. The civilly registered children in the Pomfret town records were: Elizabeth, born 5 Aug 1758; Esther, born 12 Jan 1761; Samuel, born 29 Apr 1763; Eunice, born 4 Sep 1766; Elisha, born 30 Apr 1769; and Molly, born 22 Aug 1773. Note that there was no child by the name of Amasa listed. Still, it was possible that the civil birth records were incomplete for the family.

Since many births were not civilly registered in Connecticut during this time period, church records of the First Trinitarian Church in Brooklyn, Connecticut, were examined. This church has baptisms available from 1735. These records reside in the Connecticut State Library in Hartford, Connecticut and are available on microfilm at the Family History Library. The title page of the records states "The Church Register in the Society taken out of Pomfret, Canterbury and Mortlake

A.D. 1736 or the Church in Brooklyn A.D. 1752 And which was made a town by the General Assembly at their Sessions in Hartford on ye 2d Thursday of May 1786 by the name of Brooklyn.”

This book (volume 1) contains the baptism entries for Amaziah’s children, in each case being listed as a “baptized child of Amaziah Chapman:” Elizabeth, 11 March 1759; Esther, 1 Feb 1761; Samuel, 19 Jun 1763; Eunice, 7 Sep 1766; Elisha, 7 May 1769; and Molly, 29 Aug 1773 (see Documents 42 and 44). Again, there was no mention of a child by the name of Amasa.

The records of the 1st Trinitarian Church provided additional information for the Amaziah Chapman family and well as for other Chapmans. The Church records show that the following Chapmans were received to full communion(see Document 46):

- 18 Feb 1759 – Esther, wife of Amaziah Chapman
- 24 Apr 1763 – Amaziah Chapman
- 28 Mar 1779 – Caleb Adams and Elizabeth his wife
- 12 Oct 1788 – Eunice Chapman
- 2 Nov 1788 – Samuel Chapman
- 3 Jul 1791 – Jonathan Copeland and Ester his wife recommended from the Chh [church] in Thomson
- 15 Apr 1792 – Molly Chapman
- 23 Feb 1794 – Mary, wife of Amaziah Chapman
- 14 Jun 1800 – Elisha Chapman, being sick was admitted a member of the Church of Christ after having owned the covenant in presence of a considerable number who were present.
- 3 Aug 1800 – the church voted to receive Elisha Chapman to their communion as a member of the Church.
- 24 Aug 1800 – Tirzah, wife of Elisha Chapman
- 14 Apr 1811 – Polly, wife of Capt. Samuel Chapman

Again, no mention was made in these church records of an Amasa Chapman.

At this point, probate records were considered the next best source of information. The state of Connecticut has exceptionally well organized probate record case files, all of which are on microfilm at the Family History Library from the early 1600s through 1915. The estate file for Amaziah Chapman of Norwich, Connecticut, was found. It was filed under the Windham Probate District. Note that Norwich is just a few miles south of Coventry. This file, number 753, was very

informative. It contained a total of eight documents that included a will, a bond, an inventory, a distribution, and four accounts of administration.

From this file, the following abstract was taken from the will of Amaziah Chapman, of Hampton, Windham, Connecticut, dated 9 April 1824:

Amaziah left his wife \$300, "a good cow, my one horse wagon and harness, my woman's saddle, and my clock." Other heirs included grandson, Smith Adams; grandson Jonathan Copeland, "my man's saddle"; grandson Royal Copeland, "my great Bible"; grandson, Joseph Chapman, "my best hat"; grandchildren Esther Corbin, David Copeland, Eunice Adams and Royal Copeland, "all my farming and joiners tools and the rest of my apparel"; granddaughter Tirzah Dabrey, ten dollars.

The remainder of the estate to be divided into 5 equal shares. The heirs were: "heirs of my deceased daughter Elizabeth Adams, one share; heirs of my deceased daughter Esther Copeland, one share; heirs of my deceased son, Samuel Chapman, one share; daughter Eunice Parsons, one share; daughter Molly Brown, one share."

Wife Mary Chapman and grandson Royal Copeland both of Hampton, executors. The will was signed Amaziah Chapman. Witnesses to the will were Rufus Lummis, Harvey Lummis and Rhoda Lummis. The will was proved on 29 April 1825. (See Documents 39-A through 39-O)

Amaziah's widow Mary Chapman also left a will. An abstract of her will follows (see Document 41-A through 41-E):

Will of Mary Chapman of Hampton, Windham County, Connecticut mentions: niece, Elizabeth Martin; nieces, Ruth and Rhoda Lummis; niece Eunice Lummis. "To the heirs of my Brother John Lummis, one share; to the heirs of my sister Sarah Durkee, one share; to my sister Margaret Durkee, one share; to my brother Jonathan Lummis, one share; to my sister Ruth Hebbard, one share; to my sister Elizabeth Martin, one share."

"All the remainder of my estate both real and personal I give to be divided into shares in the following manner viz.: to my brother John Lumis' heirs, one share; to the heirs of my sister Sarah Durkee, one share; to my sister Margaret Durkee, one share; to my Brother Jonathan Lummis, one share; to my sister Ruth Hebbard, one share, to my sister Elizabeth Martin, one share; to my nephew Daniel Lummis, half of a share."

"I constitute and appoint my nephew Abiel Durkee executor." The will was dated 15 Apr 1828 and signed by Mary Chapman. Witnesses to the will were: Josiah C. Jackson, Esther L. Jackson, and Sophia D. Jackson.

Neither of these wills, for Amaziah Chapman or for his wife Mary Chapman, mentioned anyone named Amasa Chapman.

It was thus concluded with confidence that the ancestral Amasa Chapman was not a son of Amaziah Chapman with either his first wife, Esther Williams, or his second wife, Mary Lummis. This conclusion was based upon the combined evidence searched, which included the civil vital records of Pomfret, the records of the First Trinitarian Church of Brooklyn, and the estate files of Amaziah and Mary Chapman, none of which identified anyone named Amasa Chapman

After determining that Amasa was not Amaziah Chapman's son, research was initiated to discover the identity of Amasa's parentage. First, a study was conducted of men named Amasa Chapman living in Connecticut or Massachusetts in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The early United States Federal Censuses were examined from 1790-1840. The resulting findings were compiled into a chart (see Document 36).

The Barbour Collection, mentioned before contains the following Amasa Chapman births:

Amasa Chapman	son of Thomas and Lydia	b. 9 Aug 1767	d. 13 Apr 1771	Colchester Vital Records	v. 1 p. 79.
Amasa Chapman	son of Jacob and Ellinah	b. 29 Jun 1771		Ashford Vital Records	v. 3 p. 121
Amasa Chapman	son of Benjamin and Lois	b. 4 Feb 1774		Ashford Vital Records	V. 4 p. 64
Amasa Chapman	son of Shubael and Phebe	b. 18 Jun 1807		Ashford Vital Records	v. 4 p. 113 (See 5-A through 5-G)

The above same four males named Amasa Chapman plus one or two others were also found in a general Ancestry.com search (see Documents 1-A and 1-B). None of these men appear to have been of the appropriate age and locality to have been having children in the late 1780s and early 1790s.

Even though towns in New England kept records of births, marriages, and deaths, some from an early date, the records were not always complete. Often, Church and other records must be consulted in order to obtain more complete records. Even with these, however, there may not be sufficient primary source evidence to conclusively prove generational connections. In such cases, another important research strategy must be employed. This is done by compiling evidence from indirect or secondary sources. This requires detailed searches of probate, land, and other records which identify close associates, relatives, extended family members, neighbors, and friends. Collectively, these sources can often successfully determine genealogical connections of a generational and nuclear family nature. In such instances, proof may not be accomplished until all pertinent sources have been exhausted. During the course of this session, it became apparent this methodology would be necessary in order to identify Amasa Chapman's parentage.

Research was therefore started among the records of Hancock, Massachusetts, where it was known that the ancestral Amasa Chapman lived. Amasa was listed as a head of household in the 1790 census of Hancock. A man named Ebenezer Chapman was his close neighbor. According to this census, Amasa was over sixteen years of age. In reality, he was probably estimated to have been born between 1760 and 1765. Since Ebenezer and his wife appear to be the only ones in their household in 1790, they were likely quite young (newly married) or they were elderly (with no children left at home) (see Documents 6-A through 6-C). It is significant that the earliest piece of land Amasa obtained in Hancock was sold to him by Ebenezer Chapman on 10 Mar 1784 (See Document 55).

Amasa Chapman was still living in Hancock at the time of the 1800 census. This census suggests he may have been born in 1755 or earlier. Strangely, there were nineteen persons listed in his household. Without more information, it is impossible to understand at this time why so many

people were in his household. Perhaps he had an in-home business of some sort or there were two families living together (see Documents 8-A through 8-C).

In the 1810 census, Amasa appears to have been over 45 years of age, thus born before 1765. (see Documents 14-A through 14-C).

In the 1820 census, there were two Amasa Chapman households listed in Hancock. There was an elder Amasa, born 1775 or earlier, and a younger Amasa, born between 1776 and 1794 (see Documents 17-A through 17-C). It is probable that the two men were father and son, as indicated by in the www.rootsweb.com database that lists a son Amasa born in 1793 to Amasa Chapman and Ann Darby.

A book, *Chapman Lineages*, found in the Family History Library, identified several generations of descent of Amasa Chapman, born 1793, in Hancock, Berkshire, Massachusetts (see Documents 4-D and 4-E). Five family group sheets were constructed from this source, including one for Amasa Chapman, born 1793, plus four additional generations of his descendants on one line. This book, however, contained no additional clues for any earlier ancestry.

Another book, *The Chapman Family or the Descendants of Robert Chapman, one of the First Settlers of Say-Brook, Conn.*, published in 1854, was found online that may potentially help in further research. Although this book contains an extensive index of Chapmans, it does not include any records for anyone named Amasa Chapman. However, it does identify an Ebenezer Chapman who was born 10 July 1764 with this his wife and children and whose lineage can be traced back five generations to the Robert Chapman for whom the book was named. Unfortunately, the book does not list places of birth, marriage, death, or residence, so it cannot be ascertained at this time whether or not this Ebenezer was the same man who was Amasa's neighbor in 1790. (The book also identifies the parents and siblings of Amaziah Chapman born 18 September 1734, the man discussed

in this report, but did not list his marriage or children.) The book is useful, however, for the history it contains of the Chapman family in England and in early America, and it is anticipated that a connection will likely be made in the future connecting Amasa Chapman to this ancestry (see Document 60).

Map 3 shows the location of Hancock, Berkshire County, on the west boundary of the state of Massachusetts. Deed indexes for this county were first checked (see Documents 51-53, and 57). The land records are indexed in three separate indexes: the Northern District, the Middle District and the Southern District. Based on the location of Hancock, it was felt the Northern and Middle Districts were the most likely to contain Hancock records. This proved to be correct as the surname Hancock was found in several records of the Northern District.

The name Amasa Chapman appeared in a number of Northern District entries, some of which have been extracted. In a deed dated 15 Jun 1812, Amasa Chapman, of the town of Hancock, and his wife Anna sold their farm in Hancock, containing 50 acres to William Ensign. In the same deed, Amasa sold an additional lot of land containing 70 acres (see Documents 58-A and 58-B). Witnesses to the deed were Lyman Chapman and Betsy Broad. It is plausible that this might be a record of the ancestral Amasa Chapman and that (Mrs.) Anna Chapman who signed the document by making her mark could be the same person as the ancestral Ann (Darby or Darbee) Chapman. Additional research needs to be done in these deeds in order to see if there are other records that can help to determine if this is the case, especially since the deed indexes contain numerous connections between Amasa Chapman and others of the Chapman surname. Further research of the land records of Berkshire County, Massachusetts, holds hope of extending the line of the ancestral Amasa Chapman. Also probates of that county should be examined. Of particular interest would be any probate records for Ebenezer Chapman, Amasa's 1790 neighbor, who may

have died there. Such records might help determine whether he is the same man who was a descendant of Robert Chapman of Say-Brook, Connecticut, and what his familial relationship to the ancestral Amasa Chapman might have been.

The findings of this session have been excellent and have achieved the three goals set at the beginning. First, it was concluded that Lucy Chapman was the daughter of Amasa Chapman. Second, it was determined there was no connection between Amasa and Amaziah Chapman, laying that issue to rest. Last, a solid foundation for extending the Chapman lineage has been established, and many other records have been identified for continued research.