

JOSEPH BENHAM

He was born probably about 1630-33 and died probably in Wallingford or Cheshire, Connecticut, in 1703. He resided in that part of Wallingford which later was included in the Town of Cheshire. He and his son, Joseph, Jr., were original proprietors of Wallingford.

The last trial for witchcraft in the Colony of Connecticut took place in Wallingford and involved members of Joseph Benham's family. Captain Danial Clark, as attorney in behalf of our Sovereign Lord the King, arraigned Winnifrett Benham, Sr., and Winnifrett, Jr., both of Wallingford, for "having familiarity with Solthan, the enemy of God and mankind and by his aid doing preternatural arts by misteriously hurting the bodies and goods of sundry persons to the great damage and disturbance of the public pease." After trial in both New Haven and Hartford the grand jury returned upon the bill of charges "ignoramus" - or not found guilty.

Joseph Benham was married to Winifrett King in 1657 and they had fourteen children.

Children: Mary, b 1657, d young; Joseph, Jr., b 1659, d 1702, m Hannah Ives; Sarah, b 1661, d young; Joanna, b 1662, d young; Elizabeth, b 1664, d 1669; John, b 1666, d 1670; Sarah, b 1668, d that year; a daughter, b 1669; John b 1671; Mary, b 1673, d young; Samuel, b 1674, d young; Sarah, b 1676, d young; Jacob Johnson; James, b 1679, d 1745, m Ester Preston; Winifred, b 1684, m Everett Van Naman.

*No relations but of interest.*

*This incident a disgraceful period in his town by the New Haven.*

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