

EOHP

Warren Chase Report

By Claudia Tracy

Great Granddaughter

When we think about the history of East Orford, we often think about the buildings, farms, and landmarks that have stood here for generations. But behind those places were skilled men and women whose hard work helped shape our community. My great-grandfather, Warren Simeon Chase, was one of those people.

Warren Simeon Chase was born on September 21, 1878, in East Orford, New Hampshire. He spent his entire life in the village where he was born and passed away there on November 17, 1949, at the age of 79. He learned the trades of carpentry and blacksmithing from his father, continuing a tradition of craftsmanship that was passed from one generation to the next. In an era before power tools and modern equipment, his work required patience, precision, and skill.

Warren was known as a hardworking and talented craftsman, but those who knew him also remembered his wonderful sense of humor and his love of children. He and his wife raised five children, and one of their sons—my grandfather—followed in his father's footsteps and became a carpenter as well.

One of Warren's homes that still stands today is known locally as the "Dollhouse," now the home of Christy Manning. More than a century after it was built, it remains a lasting example of the quality of his craftsmanship.

One of Warren's most important contributions to East Orford began in 1904 when Camp Moosilauke opened. Camp records show that he was already working there as a carpenter in June of that year, making him one of the craftsmen who helped establish the camp from its very beginning. Warren built the original cabins and the mess hall, creating buildings that would serve generations of campers. Although many of those campers never knew his name, they enjoyed the results of his work every summer.

But Warren wasn't remembered only for the buildings he constructed. He was also remembered for the joy he brought to the children at camp. He delighted in sending them on impossible errands, asking them to find things like 100 feet of shoreline, a bucket of striped paint, or a left-handed wrench. He even convinced some that there was going to be a big dance on top of Mount Cube and that they should wear their best clothes. The campers never seemed to mind being the target of his good-natured jokes because they knew he enjoyed making them laugh.

As a blacksmith, Warren also made small rings from horseshoe nails, giving them to children as keepsakes. I have one of those rings with me today, along with one of his hand-forged

doorknockers. These simple objects remind us that his work was not only practical but personal. They represent the skill of his hands and the kindness of his heart.

After Warren's passing, his legacy continued. His son, my grandfather, carried on the family tradition of carpentry and also worked at Camp Moosilauke, continuing the work that his father had begun decades earlier.

History is not only about famous people or major events. It is also about ordinary people whose work quietly shaped the communities where they lived. Warren Simeon Chase was one of those people. Whether building homes in East Orford, forging useful items in his blacksmith shop, or helping build Camp Moosilauke from the very beginning, he left behind more than buildings. He left behind a legacy of craftsmanship, humor, generosity, and family. More than seventy-five years after his passing, his work still stands, his stories are still being told, and his contributions remain an important part of East Orford's history. I am proud to be his great-granddaughter and honored to share a small part of his story with you today.