

THE FICTIONAL HATTIE (NICKERSON) LORD

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The *Boston Evening Transcript* of 5 Nov 1823 has an article which discusses the Lord family, early settlers of Connecticut. That article states that William² Lord, of Saybrook, CT, had two wives, the first of which was one Hattie Nickerson. This name, Hattie Nickerson, appears to be pure fiction, unsupported by any data which has come to light in years subsequent to the appearance of the article. Unfortunately this fiction has been repeated and maintained, growing to the point where Hattie has been claimed to be a daughter of William¹ Nickerson (1604 – 1686), the immigrant from Norwich, England, and founder of Chatham, MA. In this brief article, we will explore the facts, and attempt to refute this claim of kinship.

The history of the Lord family may be traced. Thomas Lord, the immigrant, was of Towcester, Northamptonshire, England, born there about 1585. He was licensed to marry, 10 Feb 1610/11¹, Dorothy Bird (b. Little Ilford, England, 1588)². On 29 Apr 1635, he was approved to emigrate to New England on the *Elizabeth and Ann*, when he is age 50, a smith, together with wife Dorothy (46y), and children Thomas (16y), Ann (14y), William (12y), John (10y), Robert (9y), Aymie (6y), and Dorothy (4y).³ An elder son, Richard (b. 1611), had emigrated separately about three years earlier and was resident at Cambridge, MA,⁴ at which place the father and family arrived. They did not long remain there, and Thomas and family removed to Hartford, CT, by 1636, where he was one of the first settlers. In Hartford, Thomas¹ is named in the division of lands in 1639, and died between 1639 and 1667⁵. His widow, Dorothy, made her will 8 Feb 1670, in which she names children of her deceased son Thomas; daughter Ann, wife of Thomas Stanton; sons William, John and Robert; daughter Amie, wife of John Gilbert; grandchildren Richard, Hannah and Dorothy; granddaughter Margaret Ingersoll, daughter of Dorothy, wife of John Ingersoll⁴.

Children of Thomas and Dorothy (Bird) Lord, all born in England:^{1,4,5,6}

Richard² – b. 1611; of Cambridge, MA, by 4 Mar 1635 when he was made freeman; removed to Hartford 1636; constable 1642; a trader with the Indians at Long Island in 1642 with his brother-in-law Thomas Stanton; selectman 1644; captain of the first troop of horse in New England 1657; removed to New London where he died 17 May 1662; m. before 1636, Sarah --- (d. 1676), who m(2) Joseph Haynes; 3 children.

Thomas² – b. 1616; was licensed by the General Court as a physician and surgeon on 30 Jun 1652 at a salary of £15 paid by the county; a schoolmaster in Wethersfield, CT; d. 1661; m. Hartford, 23 Sep 1652, Hannah Thurston, who m(2) Gregory Wolleston; 4 children.

Ann² – b. 1614; d. at home of her daughter in Stonington, 1688; m. c1637, Thomas¹ Stanton (d. Stonington, 2 Dec 1677), noted Indian interpreter and trader, commissioner of courts, magistrate and member of the general assembly; 10 children.

William² – b. c1623; see below.

John² – b. c1625; of Hartford; d. aft. 1677; m(1) c1645, Rebecca Bushness (b. 1621; d/o Francis Bushnell of Guilford, CT; d. bef. 1647); m(2) Hartford, 15 May 1648, Adrian Baysey, whom he had abandoned by Sep 1651 and for whom he was ordered to provide shelter and clothing.

Robert² – b. c1626; living in 1670; n.f.r.

Amy² – b. c1629; d. 1691/2; m. Hartford, 6 May 1647, John² Gilbert (b. c1626; s/o Thomas¹ Gilbert; d. 1690), who settled in Windsor, CT; 8 children.

Dorothy² – b. c1631; d. Northampton, MA, Jan 1657; m. c1651, John¹ Ingersoll (b. c1615; d. Westfield, MA, 3 Sep 1684) & had 3 children; he m(2) Northampton, 12 Dec 1657, Abigail Bascom & had 4 children; he m(3) 1667, Mary Hunt, & had 8 children.

William² Lord, born in England c1623, came to America with his parents at age 12 in 1635. He was one of the first settlers of Saybrook, CT, at which place he died 17 May 1678.^{2,6} The name of his first wife is not found in the record, but he was married by 1643 when his first child was born. It is this wife which is named "Hattie Nickerson" in the *Boston Evening Transcript* article of 1823. Children by this unknown wife, born in Saybrook, CT, were:^{2,4,6}

William³ – b. Oct 1643; d. 4 Dec 1696; m. c1676/80, Sarah Brooks (b. 1662), m(2) 1703 Samuel Ingham; 8 children.

Thomas³ – b. Dec 1645; d. 1730; m. Lyme, CT, 22 Dec 1693, Mary ---.

Richard³ – b. May 1647; d. 1727; m. c1682, Elizabeth Hyde.

Mary³ – b. May 1649.

Robert³ – b. Aug 1651.

John³ – b. Sep 1653.

Joseph³ – b. Sep 1656.

William² married cApr 1664, as second wife, Lydia (Buckland) Brown¹, widow of John² Brown Jr. of Rehoboth, MA⁴, daughter of William¹ Buckland of Rehoboth. Children by this marriage, born in Saybrook:^{1,4}

Benjamin³ – b. 1666; d. Nov 1712; m. Saybrook, 13 Apr 1693, Elizabeth Pratt (b. 1673), d/o John Pratt of Saybrook.

Daniel³ –

James³ – b. 1668; d. 1731; m. Saybrook, 13 Dec 1693, Elizabeth Hill (1674 – 1742).

Samuel³ – b. c1670; d. c1701; m. Susanna ?Collins (b. 1674), m(2) 1707 Daniel Bartlett.

There were three more daughters of William² Lord, but it is uncertain by which wife.

As far as can be determined, William¹ Nickerson, the immigrant, from Norwich, England, and founder of the surname in America, did not have a daughter Hattie. William Nickerson was born about 1604, based upon his stated age of 33y in Apr 1637⁷. His wife was Anne Busby (bapt. Norwich, England, 2 Feb 1607/8), to whom he was married about 1627⁸. In April 1637, he applied to emigrate, the record showing he brought his wife and four children: Nicholas (bapt. 10 Aug 1628), Elizabeth (bapt. 1 Jan 1629/30), Robert (bapt. 27 Nov 1631), and Anne (bapt. 7 May 1635). [A fourth child, Thomas, had been bapt. 10 Jan 1633/4, and had died 6 weeks later.] No Hattie Nickerson is mentioned. This Nickerson family arrived at Salem, MA, in June 1637, two years after the Lord family had removed to Connecticut. In 1638, the Nickerson family was in Boston, but by Dec 1640 they had removed to Plymouth Colony, where they were soon residing in Yarmouth (now the Town of Dennis), on Cape Cod. There is no evidence that William Nickerson was ever in Connecticut, or that William² Lord of Connecticut was ever in Plymouth Colony.

William² Lord was born about 1623, and was married by 1643. His first wife would likely have been similar in age, possibly as much as five years younger, but unlikely to have been significantly older, placing her birth probably in the range 1620 – 1628. While it is possible this maid was named Hattie Nickerson, if such she must have emigrated as a single woman, with no known relatives of that surname anywhere else in the colonies. The name is not found on any surviving passenger lists. (We may concede that servants frequently were not cited in passenger lists.) The fact remains that recent researchers have found no evidence of this name, and no evidence of the name of the first wife of William² Lord of Saybrook.

In conclusion, the name of Hattie Nickerson as the first wife of William² Lord of Saybrook, CT, appears to be pure fiction. If this is the name of this unknown wife, she certainly was not the daughter of William¹ Nickerson, the immigrant founder of Chatham, MA.

REFERENCES: 1. Torrey's, *New England Marriages*, p473. 2. NEHGR 113, p223. 3. Hotten's *List of Emigrants*, p72. 4. Savage's *Genealogical Dictionary*, Vol. 3, p116. 5. Paige's *History of Cambridge*, Vol. 2, p600. 6. Cutter's *New England Families*, 2nd Series; FTM CD #159. 7. Hotten, p289-93. 8. Derick, *William Nickerson, the Immigrant*, 1998; p11.