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THE ENGLISH ANCESTRY OF WILLIAM<sup>1</sup> AND ANNE  
(BUSBY) NICKERSON OF CHATHAM,  
MASSACHUSETTS, AND OF NICHOLAS<sup>1</sup> AND BRIDGET  
(COCKE) BUSBY OF BOSTON

By Richard L. Bush

William<sup>1</sup> and Anne (Busby) Nickerson and their four children, her parents, and her siblings Nicholas, John, Abraham, and Sarah came to New England from Norwich, Norfolk, England, in 1637 on the *John and Dorothy* of Ipswich or its companion vessel, the *Rose* of Yarmouth.<sup>1</sup> The Busbys settled in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, residing briefly in Newbury before relocating to Watertown, and finally Boston. Where the Nickersons initially settled is not known, but they later resided in the Plymouth Colony, first in Yarmouth and then in Monomit (now Chatham).

BUSBY FAMILY

A relatively complete, correct, and well written account of the paternal ancestry of Anne (Busby) Nickerson has been provided by Kingsbury, based on research in England by J. Gardner Bartlett.<sup>2</sup> Wills were used to identify Anne's father, Nicholas Busby of Norwich; grandfather Nicholas of Claxton, Norfolk; and great-grandfather John of Great Oakley, Essex, and later of Acle, Norfolk. Her paternal grandmother and great-grandmother were not identified, but the Margaret Busby, buried on 7 June 1595 in Salhouse, Norfolk, about six miles from Claxton, appears to be the former.<sup>3</sup> No earlier Busbys were found in Norfolk. Based on the relative

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<sup>1</sup> John Camden Hotten, ed., *The Original Lists of Persons of Quality . . .* (London, 1874), 289–90: “April the 8th, 1637. The examination of Nicho. Busbie, of Norwich, in Norff., weaver, aged 50 years, and Bridgett, his wife, aged 53 years, with 4 children, Nicho., John, Abraham, and Sara. The ar[e] desirous to goe to Boston in New England, to inhabit. . . . The examination of Nicholas Nickerson, of Norwich, in Norfolk, weaver, aged 33 years, and Anne, his wife, aged 28 years, with 4 children, Nicho., Robartt, Elizabeth, and Anne, are desirous to go to Boston in New England, there to inhabit.”

<sup>2</sup> Anna C. Kingsbury, comp., *A Historical Sketch of Nicholas Busby, The Emigrant* (n.p., 1924), 1–5 (hereafter cited as Kingsbury, *Nicholas Busby*); see also Paul W. Prindle, FASG, *Ancestors and Descendants of Timothy Crosby Jr., 1957, With Supplement H: Ancestry of Mary Morey, Wife Timothy Crosby Sr., 1981*, 2 vols. (Orleans, Mass., [1982]), a duplicated work in 50 copies with additional penned changes by the compiler, 1:5–12, citing Bartlett's research published in Kingsbury, *Nicholas Busby* (hereafter cited as Prindle, *Crosby Ancestors*) [*the citations to Prindle's work have been added by the editors*].

<sup>3</sup> Salhouse, Norfolk, parish registers, 1561–1722 [Family History Library (FHL), Salt Lake City, film #1,911,691].

incidence of the surname in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century probate records, it is likely that they originally came from Oxfordshire.

Only one generation of Anne's maternal ancestors was provided: her mother, Bridget, was identified as the daughter of Christopher and Margaret (Allen) Cocke. Although there are few Cocke probate records to work with, Norwich city records provide insights into Anne's maternal ancestors.<sup>4</sup> They list Christopher Cocke, a carpenter, aged 34, with a wife Ellen, aged 26, and one child living in St. Mary Coslany parish in 1570. This first wife was Ellen Wigman, whom he married on 27 April 1567 in the Church of St. John Timberhill in Norwich.<sup>5</sup> She was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary Coslany on 28 September 1579, leaving Christopher as a single parent with four young children. Not surprisingly, he remarried only a few months later, to Margaret Allen, future mother of Bridget, at St. Mary Coslany on 25 January 1579/80.<sup>6</sup>

Margaret also had been married before. The same city records list a John Allen, russet weaver, aged 33, with a wife Margaret, aged 24, living in St. Mary Coslany in 1570. John was buried in that parish on 15 August 1579, leaving Margaret with five young children; two were buried there shortly after their father. Administration of John Allen's estate was granted to Margaret on 27 February 1579/80.<sup>7</sup> Christopher and Margaret had both lost their spouses during what the registers called "the year of a great plague."

The only baptism for a child of Christopher and Margaret Cocke listed in the St. Mary Coslany registers was an unnamed daughter in 1582. The complete date is not readable, but the entry falls between [—] May and 8 September of that year. The child might be Bridget, as it is not far off her age of 53 as given in the 1637 emigration record. Christopher and Margaret were buried in that parish's churchyard on 7 May 1610 and 2 March 1620/1, respectively. Although Christopher was made a freeman of Norwich on 21 September 1577,<sup>8</sup> he apparently acquired little property during his life as there was no will or administration mentioned in Norfolk records. In contrast, Margaret died with significant property and left a will dated 27 July 1616 and proved on 14 April 1621.<sup>9</sup> It named her son William Allen as principal heir and co-executor. Other legatees included daughter Bridget, son-in-law Nicholas Busby, and their children Thomas, Nicholas, Anne, and Katherine.

<sup>4</sup> John F. Pound, ed., *The Norwich Census of the Poor, 1570*, Norfolk Rec. Soc., 40(1971):70.

<sup>5</sup> St. John Timberhill, Norwich, parish register, 1559–1768 [FHL film #993,674].

<sup>6</sup> St. Mary Coslany, Norwich, parish register transcripts, 1557–1661 (Tillett MS) [FHL film #993,652].

<sup>7</sup> Consistory Court of Norwich, Probate Act Books, Vol. 7, f. 31 [FHL film #173,448].

<sup>8</sup> Percy Millican, ed., *The Register of the Freemen of Norwich, 1548–1713* (Norwich, 1934), 59.

<sup>9</sup> Archdeaconry Court of Norwich, Wills, Vol. 40, f. 360 [FHL film #2,262,750].

This will, the earlier administration, and the registers more precisely identify her as Margaret (—) (Allen) Cocke. Her maiden name has not been determined.

The same Norwich city records also list a John Cocke, worsted weaver, and his wife Margaret, both aged 60, and a William Cocke, worsted weaver, aged 36, and his wife Margaret, aged 37, all living in the same parish as Christopher in 1570. Additional city records identify William as the son and apprentice of John and, in turn, identify John as an earlier apprentice to a William Cocke, worsted weaver, perhaps an uncle.<sup>10</sup> They also show that John Cocke was the son of another John Cocke, and had come to Norwich from Suffolk about 1520. Christopher's father was not named in either set of records but they collectively suggest that his parents were this John and Margaret Cocke.

Kingsbury's information on Anne's siblings who remained in England, who went back, or who died early is not so complete or correct. Bartlett relegated the task of searching the church records of Norwich to an associate who had only limited access to the original parish registers. Moreover, some registers had significant water damage in addition to the usual age-related deterioration. As a result of these conditions, several relevant entries were missed or misread. For example, Richard Busby was baptized 19 November 1606, and Susan Busby's burial occurred on 24 September 1614.<sup>11</sup> The burial of Thomas's daughter Elizabeth took place on 10 August 1628; it was another Elizabeth, baptized 15 July 1634, who was buried on 16 October 1634.<sup>12</sup> There was also a daughter Ellen baptized on 31 May 1629. Catherine Busby's marriage to William Savory was on 2 December 1636.<sup>13</sup> Although the marriage record names her *Elizabeth*, a subsequent baptismal entry on 23 July 1639 correctly identifies her as *Catherine*. William Savory was buried there on 5 October 1674. Other changes are provided in the genealogical summaries that follow.

Kingsbury shows that Anne's brother John had returned to England by 1657, based on language in his father's will dated 25 July of that year. She also mentions a deed dated 23 September 1646 showing that John and Elizabeth Busby and a widow Elizabeth Hurton had jointly acquired property in the parish of All Saints in Norwich.<sup>14</sup> This suggests an earlier return and a maiden name of *Hurton* for John's wife. John actually went back to Norwich well before either date.

<sup>10</sup> Winifred M. Rising and Percy Millican, comps., *An Index of Indentures of Norwich Apprentices Enrolled with the Norwich Assembly: Henry VII–George III*, Norfolk Rec. Soc., 29 (1959):39–40.

<sup>11</sup> St. Mary Coslany, Norwich, parish registers, 1557–1942 [FHL film #1,526,325].

<sup>12</sup> All Saints, Norwich, parish registers, 1573–1739 [FHL film #993,667].

<sup>13</sup> St. George Colegate, Norwich, parish registers, 1538–1714 [FHL film #993,666].

<sup>14</sup> Kingsbury, *Nicholas Busby*, 18, citing Norwich Enrolled Deeds, roll 41.

John married Elizabeth in that parish on 7 October 1643.<sup>15</sup> The register gives her surname as *Rogers*. But the heirs named in the will of John Hurton, dated 6 April 1644 and proved on 9 August 1645, were his mother Elizabeth Hurton and his sister Elizabeth Busby.<sup>16</sup> So John Busby's bride had probably been a widow at the time of their marriage, but might have been John Hurton's single half-sister. There are also baptismal and/or burial entries in the All Saints registers for five of John and Elizabeth's children.

Kingsbury was not able to provide the date and location of the marriage of William and Anne (Busby) Nickerson. There is no entry for it in the surviving registers of the parishes where the Busbys and/or the Nickersons had lived in the early 1600s or any nearby. The appropriate Norwich registers may have been lost or the event was not recorded, in which case the information may never be known. One other possibility should be considered. The church registers of Norwich in 1627 list a very high number of burials, suggesting that there had been an outbreak of plague or yellow fever that summer, an all-too-common occurrence of the era. Many families with means fled the city and lived elsewhere until the arrival of winter greatly reduced the threat. Perhaps a record of the marriage may be found in some parish outside Norwich if one is willing to devote a large amount of time and effort to such a search.

#### NICKERSON FAMILY

A great deal of information exists about William<sup>1</sup> and Anne Nickerson and their descendants, in large part due to the efforts of The Nickerson Family Association [NFA].<sup>17</sup> The NFA account of this family is relatively complete and correct concerning the family after their arrival in New England, including William's leading role in establishing Chatham and his often contentious relationships with his neighbors, the church, and colony authorities.<sup>18</sup> Suspect information, however, is found in NFA's account of his English ancestry, which was also based on research in England by J. Gardner Bartlett. The ancestry NFA presents has Thomas<sup>C</sup> Nixson, Thomas<sup>B</sup> Nixson, William<sup>A</sup> Nickerson, and William<sup>1</sup> Nickerson the immigrant. Unfortunately, a more complete extraction and analysis of information from Norwich church registers, probate files, and city records suggests that the two earliest generations of this pedigree are incorrect.

<sup>15</sup> All Saints parish registers, 1573–1739 [FHL film #993,667].

<sup>16</sup> Archdeaconry Court of Norwich, Wills, 48: f. 214 [FHL #2,262,778].

<sup>17</sup> The Nickerson Family Association, Inc., PO Box 296, North Chatham MA 02650-0296.

<sup>18</sup> Burton N. Derick, *The Nickerson Family and the History of William Nickerson, the Immigrant, Founder of Chatham, Mass.* (Chatham, Mass., 1998) (hereafter cited as Derick, *Nickerson Family*); see also Prindle, *Crosby Ancestors*, 1:59–64.

Bartlett was unaware that there were two sets of brothers named Thomas and Richard Nixson living in or near the same parish in Norwich at the same time who might have been the sons of Thomas<sup>C</sup>, so pertinent information was sometimes associated with the wrong individual. In addition, relevant parish register entries were again missed or misread. These four men and all other Nixsons known to be in Norwich during this era were examined regarding their possible connection to William<sup>1</sup> Nickerson the immigrant. Finally, the research notes of Bartlett and his correspondence with William Emery Nickerson, sponsor of the research in question, were used to better support or modify, as required, those conclusions previously reached.<sup>19</sup>

Thomas<sup>C</sup> Nixson was said to have been buried in the parish of St. John Timberhill on 25 February 1584/5. However, the register entry is for a William Nixson. The wife of Thomas<sup>C</sup> was said to be Margaret Rudd, derived from the 1563 will of her brother Richard Rudd, which included as heirs “my brother Nixson and my sister his wife” and “any of their children now being alive.”<sup>20</sup> However, the will does not provide the given names of anyone in the family nor does it identify where they lived. It is only in a related Chancery Court case in 1568 that identifies them as Thomas<sup>C</sup> and Margaret (Rudd) Nixson of Norwich.<sup>21</sup> An extensive search of Norfolk records produced no additional genealogical information regarding this couple.

Two of Thomas<sup>C</sup> and Margaret (Rudd) Nixson’s children were named in the NFA account: Thomas<sup>B</sup>, born about 1543, and Richard, born about 1549. No baptism was found for either one, but men with those names and approximate dates of birth were subsequently mentioned in the registers of both St. John Timberhill and the adjacent St. Peter Parmentergate, although their relationship is not stated therein. A follow-up Chancery Court case initiated by the son Thomas<sup>B</sup> in 1585/6 indicates his connection to Thomas<sup>C</sup> and Margaret.<sup>22</sup> This Thomas subsequently mentions the death of his brother on Corpus Christi day in 1599 in a deposition made on 27 June 1599.<sup>23</sup> It is a date consistent with the burial of Richard Nixson in the St. Peter Parmentergate churchyard nine days earlier, thereby implying that connection as well. In the deposition, Thomas<sup>B</sup> was identified as a

<sup>19</sup> Nickerson Papers, R. Stanton Avery Special Collections, SG NIC 40, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, Mass. (hereafter cited as Nickerson Papers).

<sup>20</sup> Consistory Court of Norwich, Wills, 72 (Knights): f. 170 [FHL film #94,902].

<sup>21</sup> *Nyxson v. Skynmer*, The [British] National Archives [TNA] C 3/133/55: “On [—] November 1568, Thos. Nyxson and his wife Margaret sister and heir of Richard Rudde of Norwich, mercer, deceased, complained that. . .”

<sup>22</sup> *Nixon v. Pettus*, TNA C 21/N12/5: “On 31 January 1585/86, Thomas Nyxson, nephew and heir to Richard Rudd, deceased, that is to say, son and next heir to [—], wife of Thomas Nyxson, deceased, and sister to said Rudd. . .”

<sup>23</sup> Norwich Mayor’s Court Deposition dated 27 June 1599 (from Bartlett’s notes contained in the Nickerson Papers; the original record is no longer extant).

yeoman and his age was given as 56, which supports the approximate dates of his parents' marriage and his birth as given above.

No marriage record for Thomas<sup>B</sup> and wife Alice was found, but their names appear in the registers when their twin sons, William and John, were baptized in St. John Timberhill on 26 March 1567. The NFA account says both children were buried the same day, but the registers reflect only the burial of John. William appears to be the one buried there on 25 February 1584/5, as Norfolk records identify no other Nixson family as being in that parish at that time. If so, he cannot be William<sup>A</sup> Nickerson, who died about 1626. Their third son was identified as Richard, baptized in St. Peter Parmentergate on 6 March 1569/70. But the register entry gives the name as *Robert*. The fourth son was identified as the William baptized there on 15 December 1571. The date was actually the 19th. More importantly, the register does not identify his parents. They most likely are not Thomas<sup>B</sup> and Alice Nixson, as their son William was still alive on that date as shown above. Thomas<sup>B</sup> and Alice were buried in St. Peter Parmentergate on 23 September 1600 and 6 June 1596, respectively. Unfortunately, there is no will or administration for either.

Another possibility for the father of William<sup>A</sup> Nickerson is Richard, son of Thomas<sup>C</sup> and Margaret (Rudd) Nixson and brother of Thomas. He is not, however, the Richard Nixson who married Elizabeth Tesmond on 29 April 1571 in the church of St. John Timberhill, as stated in the NFA account. That Richard was a grocer who was made a freeman of Norwich in 1576.<sup>24</sup> The only other entry for this couple in the St. John Timberhill registers is the baptism of a daughter Marie on 3 February 1571/2, which makes it highly unlikely they were also the parents of the William baptized in the St. Peter Parmentergate church on 19 December 1571.

There was another Richard living in the same Conesford (King Street) section of Norwich, an individual not mentioned in the NFA account. This second Richard married Thomasine (—), widow of William Fidler,<sup>25</sup> in St. Peter Parmentergate on 26 June 1569. Their residency in that parish is supported by Norwich property tax records, which show that Richard and Thomasine were the new owners and residents of a tenement in St. Peter Parmentergate in 1569–70, previously held by a Thomas Nixson, probably his father.<sup>26</sup> They remained in the area, as this Richard was a constable in South Conesford in 1579, 1584–85, 1590–91, and 1595–96; a surveyor in 1591–96; and a member of the Common Council of Norwich representing Conesford in 1589–98.<sup>27</sup> So they were in place to be the parents of the

<sup>24</sup> John L'Estrange, *Calendar of the Freemen of Norwich from 1307 to 1603*, ed. Walter Rye (London, 1888), 102 (hereafter cited as L'Estrange, *Calendar of Norwich Freemen*).

<sup>25</sup> Consistory Court of Norwich Act Books, 40: f. 315 [FHL film #173,446].

<sup>26</sup> Mary Rodgers and May Wallace, *Norwich Landgable Assessments, 1568–70*, Norfolk Rec. Soc., 63(1999):101.

<sup>27</sup> M. A. Farrow, *Index to Norwich City Officers, 1453–1835*, Norfolk Rec. Soc., 52(1986):112.

William<sup>A</sup> Nixon baptized in that same church on 19 December 1571. The will of Richard Nixon, dated 11 April and proved on 23 June 1599, identifies him as a lime burner and resident of St. Julian's parish, with a wife Joan and children Richard and William.<sup>28</sup> St. Julian's parish is only a short distance down King Street from St. Peter Parmentergate, whose registers list his burial there on 18 June 1599. Finally, both the St. Julian's and St. Peter Parmentergate registers have an entry for the burial of Thomasine, wife of Richard Nixon, in the St. Peter Parmentergate churchyard on 3 January 1592/3. These confirm that they are the same couple who were long-term residents of the latter parish.

Richard married secondly by 1595 Joan —<sup>29</sup> and had a son William baptized in the St. Julian's Church on 10 July 1597.<sup>30</sup> He is far too young to be William<sup>A</sup> Nickerson and too old to be William<sup>1</sup> Nickerson. While reuse of a given name was common following the death of a child and occasionally for a child born to a second wife, only the younger William was mentioned in the will. So if the William baptized on 19 December 1571 in St. Peter Parmentergate was an older son of Richard, he apparently predeceased his father and therefore cannot be William<sup>A</sup> Nickerson who died around 1626.

The other Thomas Nixon was buried in the St. Peter Parmentergate churchyard on 29 May 1597—another man not named in the NFA account. This Thomas's will, dated 21 May and proved on 4 June 1597, identifies him as a haberdasher and resident of that parish.<sup>31</sup> His wife Grace and a son Robert were named as co-executrix/executor, suggesting that the latter was at least 21 years old as of 1597. He is probably the Robert baptized in St. Peter Parmentergate on 6 March 1569/70. Grace (Makens) Nixon was a second wife, and not Robert's mother; the registers show that she married the haberdasher there on 20 November 1596. What is most significant is there is no son William named in this Thomas's will. Another connection was confirmed as the will mentions a brother Richard, who by process of elimination, must be the grocer mentioned above.

In summary, there is no hard evidence that any of the above Nixsons is the father of William<sup>A</sup>, and based on the foregoing analysis, it is unlikely that any of them was. Clearly further research to find the correct pedigree is required. In the interim, the first two generations provided by the NFA should be discarded. Further research into families with the *Nixson* surname, however, would not appear to be useful.

The modern surnames *Nixon*, *Nicholson*, and *Nickerson* share a common etymology. However, Bartlett made two related assumptions regarding the equiva-

<sup>28</sup> Consistory Court of Norwich, Wills, 95 (Pecke): f. 95 [FHL film #94,922].

<sup>29</sup> Norwich Enrolled Deed, dated 3 April 1595 (taken from Bartlett's notes contained in the Nickerson Papers).

<sup>30</sup> St. Julian's, Norwich, parish register transcripts, 1589–1812 [FHL film #993,893].

<sup>31</sup> Consistory Court of Norwich, Wills, 93 (Eade): f. 52 [FHL film #94,920].



lence of these surnames and how they were written in that era, which directed his attention toward the wrong families.

First, in his research notes and correspondence he assumed the same individuals at different times are identified as *Nickson*, *Nixson*, *Nicson*, *Nixon*, *Nickason*, *Nickerson*, etc., but provides no examples of this. As would be expected in an era without well established rules of spelling, there are several variations in the spelling of *Nixon* and of *Nickerson* in Norwich records, but this author did not find any entries confirming the interchangeability of the two surnames. Second, he assumed that a wavy line that sometimes appeared above the letters *c* or *x* in these names signified an omitted *er*. That symbol, which he called a quirk, is perhaps better known today as a tilde. Standard references on English handwriting of that era state that the symbol usually stands for a missing letter or indicates the need to double the letter. It is an apostrophe or upwards continuation of a letter that indicates the omission of *er*, *re*, *ir*, *or*, or *ur*.<sup>32</sup>

The proposed alternative is a John Nickerson of St. Stephen's parish, a glover, admitted as a freeman of Norwich in 1564.<sup>33</sup> The administration of his estate was granted to his wife Elizabeth in 1568.<sup>34</sup> He has the right surname, resided in the same city in the right time frame, and there is consistency with English naming customs.<sup>35</sup> This John is far more likely to be the grandfather of William<sup>1</sup> Nickerson, the immigrant. Unfortunately, despite several points of agreement and the absence of any other alternative, this inference could not be proven. The noticeable lack of Nickerson wills in Norfolk and in adjacent Lincoln, Cambridge, and Suffolk counties suggests they originally came from some other part of England.

The death of William<sup>A</sup> Nickerson around 1626 was based on his son Richard's indenture agreement on 15 August of that year, covering the time remaining from the earlier apprenticeship with his father. The parish registers of St. Lawrence in Norwich contain what appears to be an entry for the burial of a William Nicerson on 23 October 1625 and a 29 May 1626 entry for the marriage of William Ward to a Margaret Nicerson, possibly the widow of William.<sup>36</sup> These entries and English-naming patterns of the era collectively suggest that this William and Margaret were the parents of William<sup>1</sup> Nickerson the immigrant. However, there is insufficient evidence to be certain of this.

<sup>32</sup> Jean F. Preston and Laetitia Yeandle, *English Handwriting, 1400–1650: An Introductory Manual* (Binghamton, N.Y., 1992), ix, xii.

<sup>33</sup> L'Estrange, *Calendar of Norwich Freeman*, 102.

<sup>34</sup> Consistory Court of Norwich, Act Book for 1563–70, f. 277 [FHL film #1,595,562].

<sup>35</sup> See Scott Smith-Bannister, *Names and Naming Patterns in England, 1538–1700* (Oxford, 1997), 37 [Table 2.2], 39 [Table 2.3], 183 regarding the customary naming of the oldest sons and daughters after the grandparents and parents in this era, particularly in Norfolk and other parts of East Anglia. However, having the same given names is not sufficient to confirm such a relationship.

<sup>36</sup> St. Lawrence, Norwich, parish registers, 1558–1902 (very poor condition) [FHL film #1,517,750].

In addition to a brother Richard for William<sup>1</sup>, the immigrant, the NFA account identified probable sisters Margaret (or Margery) and Mary, based on contemporary entries in the St. Peter Parmentergate registers. Using the same criterion, John, Edward, and Samuel should be added to the list of apparent siblings for William<sup>1</sup> Nickerson. No other Nickersons were found elsewhere in Norfolk during that time period.

#### GENEALOGICAL SUMMARIES:<sup>37</sup>

##### NICKERSON

WILLIAM<sup>A</sup> NICKERSON may have been the son of John<sup>B</sup> and Elizabeth (—) Nickerson of Norwich, Norfolk, England. He was likely born in the period 1560–70 and appears to have been buried on 23 October 1625 in St. Lawrence churchyard of Norwich. The MARGARET (—) NICKERSON who married William Ward in that church on 29 May 1626 appears to have been William<sup>A</sup> Nickerson's widow, but not necessarily mother of all of his children.

Known children of William<sup>A</sup> Nickerson, probably b. St. Ethelred parish, Norwich:

- i WILLIAM<sup>1</sup> NICKERSON, b. 1607–9 (based on apprenticeship records); m. say 1627, ANNE BUSBY, daughter of Nicholas<sup>1</sup> and Bridget (Cocke) Busby, location unknown. Their known children, all bp. in the parish of St. Peter Parmentergate, Norwich, were: 1. *Nicholas<sup>2</sup> Nickerson*, bp. 10 Aug. 1628. 2. *Elizabeth Nickerson*, bp. 1 Jan. 1629/30. 3. *Robert Nickerson*, bp. 27 Nov. 1631. 4. *Thomas Nickerson*, bp. 10 Jan. and bur. 21 Feb. 1633/4. 5. *Anne Nickerson*, bp. 7 May 1635.
- ii RICHARD NICKERSON, b. 1607–9 (based on apprenticeship records); m. St. Peter Parmentergate, Norwich, 11 March 1635/6, RACHEL FREEMAN. Their only known child is *Jane Nickerson*, bp. 2 July 1637 and bur. 14 July 1650 in that same parish.

Probable children of William Nickerson, all from St. Peter Parmentergate, Norwich, parish, register.<sup>38</sup>

- iii JOHN NICKERSON, m. MARY —, who was bur. 12 Jan. 1625/6. No known children.
- iv MARGARET/MARGERIE NICKERSON, m. 21 April 1623, WILLIAM WINTER as his 2nd wife. Known children were: 1. *Elizabeth Winter*, bp. 7 March 1623/4. 2. Unnamed son, bp. 15 Oct. 1627. 3. *Margaret Winter*, bp. 14 March 1629, bur. 11 Jan. 1636/7.
- v EDWARD NICKERSON, whose unnamed wife was bur. 8 Oct. 1643. Known children were: 1. *William Nickerson*, bp. 21 Oct. 1632. 2. *Ann Nickerson*, bp. 8 Nov. 1635. 3. *Thomas Nickerson*, bp. 4 March 1637/8. 4. *Ellen Nickerson*, [baptism not found], bur. 17 Oct. 1643.

<sup>37</sup> See Kingsbury, *Nicholas Busby*, and Derick, *Nickerson Family*, for the continuation of these lines in New England.

<sup>38</sup> Their identities are based on their having contemporary entries in St. Peter Parmentergate parish. The order in which the last five children are listed is based on the relative dates of their marriages. It is possible that they were born in St. Ethelred in Norwich, a nearby parish whose early church records have not survived.

- vi SAMUEL NICKERSON, m. 9 March 1633/4, LYDIA WALKER. Known children were: 1. *Thomas Nickerson*, bp. 26 Jan. 1634/5, bur. 2 April 1635. 2. *Sara Nickerson*, bp. 22 June 1636.
- vii MARY NICKERSON, m. 1 Dec. 1635, JOHN WRIGHT, probably as his 2nd wife. Known children were: 1. *Mary Wright*, bp. 14 Aug. 1636. 2. *Thomas Wright*, bp. 31 March 1639. 3. *Agnes Wright*, bp. 21 Aug. 1640. 4. *Samuel Wright*, bp. 26 Dec. 1643.

### BUSBY

NICHOLAS<sup>A</sup> BUSBY was born say 1546–48 and died in Claxton, co. Norfolk, between 17 June 1615 when his will was signed and March 1617/8, when it was proved. He may have been the “Nicholas Busby, now my eldest son” mentioned in the 1568 will of John<sup>B</sup> Busby of Acle, Norfolk, mercer.<sup>39</sup> Nicholas<sup>A</sup> Busby was probably married to MARGARET (—) BUSBY of Claxton, who was buried in nearby Salhouse, Norfolk, on 7 June 1595. If so, he had a later wife named SUSAN whom he mentioned in his will as “my late wife”; despite his use of the term *late*, Susan was made his residuary legatee and must have been alive when Nicholas executed his will.

Nicholas’s will was abstracted by J. Gardner Bartlett; in addition to “late wife,” Susan, he mentioned “Nycholas my youngest sonne” and “John my eldest sonne.”<sup>40</sup>

Children of Nicholas<sup>A</sup> Busby, perhaps with wife Margaret (—):<sup>41</sup>

- i JOHN BUSBY, b. say 1580, living in 1615 (father’s will).
- + ii NICHOLAS<sup>1</sup> BUSBY, b. say 1582; m. BRIDGET COCKE.

NICHOLAS<sup>1</sup> BUSBY (*Nicholas<sup>A</sup>*) was born probably in or near Claxton, Norfolk, England, say 1582, son of Nicholas<sup>A</sup> Busby; he died at Boston, Massachusetts, on 28 6th month [August] 1657.<sup>42</sup> Nicholas<sup>1</sup> married at St. Mary Coslany, Norwich, Norfolk, on 24 June 1605, BRIDGET COCKE. She was possibly the daughter of Christopher Cocke, name not given, baptized in that church between May and September 1582, daughter of Christopher<sup>A</sup> and Margaret (—) (Allen) Cocke. She died in Boston, Massachusetts, between 1 and 3 July 1660.<sup>43</sup>

Children of Nicholas<sup>1</sup> and Bridget (Cocke) Busby:

- i RICHARD<sup>2</sup> BUSBY, bp. St. Mary Coslany, Norwich, 19 Nov. 1606, bur. there, 25 June 1608.

<sup>39</sup> Prindle, *Crosby Ancestors*, 1:5.

<sup>40</sup> Prindle, *Crosby Ancestors*, 1:6.

<sup>41</sup> Years of birth are estimates from Prindle, *Crosby Ancestors*, 1:6.

<sup>42</sup> *Boston Births, Baptisms, Marriages, and Deaths, 1630–1699*, Boston Record Commissioners’ Report, 9(Boston, 1883):61.

<sup>43</sup> Prindle, *Crosby Ancestors*, 1:6. [Her son-in-law, William Nickerson, swore on 26 Feb. 1660/1 that she had died the previous July; the inventory of her estate was taken on 3 July.]

- ii THOMAS BUSBY, b. probably in St. Mary Coslany, say 1607, bur. St. Clements, Norwich, 28 Jan. 1635/6; m. All Saints, Norwich, 10 Sept. 1626, ANNE READE. Known children were (bp. All Saints): 1. *Elizabeth Busby*, bp. 20 May 1627, bur. 10 Aug. 1628. 2. *Ellen Busby*, bp. 31 May 1629. 3. *Elizabeth Busby (again)*, bp. 15 July 1634, bur. 16 Oct. 1634.
- iii ANNE BUSBY, bp. St. Mary Coslany, 2 Feb. 1607/8; m. WILLIAM<sup>1</sup> NICKERSON. They settled in Boston, Mass.
- iv NICHOLAS BUSBY, bp. St. Mary Coslany, 9 Sept. 1610; m. BRIDGET<sup>1</sup> COCKE (see below). They settled in Boston, Mass.
- v JOHN BUSBY, bp. St. Mary Coslany, 12 Jan. 1611/2, bur. there, 23 Sept. 1614.
- vi SUSANNA BUSBY, bp. St. Mary Coslany, 5 Dec. 1613, bur. there, 24 Sept. 1614.
- vii CATHERINE BUSBY, bp. St. Mary Coslany, 6 Aug. 1615, d. after 27 Nov. 1661, when she was mentioned in the administration of her mother's estate; m. St. George Colegate, Norwich, 20 Oct. 1636, WILLIAM SAVORY. The only known child was an unnamed son, bp. in that same church, 23 July 1639.
- viii JOHN BUSBY (again), bp. St. Mary Coslany, 9 Feb. 1616/7, bur. All Saints, Norwich, 10 April 1669; m. All Saints, 7 Oct. 1643, ELIZABETH RODGERS. John also went to New England but shortly returned to England. Known children were (all bp. All Saints): 1. *Elizabeth Busby*, bp. 2 June 1645, bur. [?] Sept. 1665. 2. *John Busby*, bp. 22 Nov. 1646. 3. *Mary Busby*, bp. 27 Feb. 1647/8, bur. [?] Aug. 1657. 4. *Sarah Busby*, bp. 11 May 1651, bur. [?] Sept. 1665. 5. *Nicholas Busby*, bp. 4 May 1654.
- ix ABRAHAM BUSBY, bp. St. Mary Coslany, 7 Sept. 1618; m. (2?) ABIGAIL<sup>2</sup> (COMPTON) BRISCOE, daughter of John<sup>1</sup> Compton of Roxbury and Boston and widow of Joseph Briscoe.<sup>44</sup> He settled in Boston.
- x SARAH BUSBY, bp. St. Peter Parmentergate, 9 Sept. 1618; m. as his 2nd wife, JOHN<sup>1</sup> GROUT of Watertown, Mass.<sup>45</sup>
- xi AMY BUSBY, bp. St. Peter Parmentergate, 22 April 1622, bur. there, 1 Sept. 1625.
- xii LIVEWELL BUSBY, bp. St. Peter Parmentergate, 31 Jan. 1627/8, bur. St. Clements, Norwich, 2 Aug. 1629.

#### COCKE

CHRISTOPHER<sup>A</sup> COCKE (?John<sup>B</sup>) was born say 1533–34 and buried at St. Mary Coslany, Norwich, on 7 May 1610. He is believed to be the son of John<sup>B</sup> and Margaret (—) Cocke (see discussion above). He married first at St. John Timberhill, Norwich, on 27 April 1567, ELLEN WIGMAN. She was born say 1543–44 and buried at St. Mary Coslany on 28 September 1579. He married secondly at St. Mary Coslany, Norwich, on 25 January 1579/80, MARGARET (—) ALLEN, widow of John Allen. She was born say 1546–47 and was buried in the St. Mary Coslany churchyard on 2 March 1620/1.

<sup>44</sup> See the sketch of John<sup>1</sup> Compton in Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1634–1635*, 2(Boston, 2001): C–F:170–71.

<sup>45</sup> See Mary Walton Ferris's discussion in *Dawes-Gates Ancestral Line*, 2 vols. (n.p., 1931–43), 1:663.

Known children of Christopher<sup>A</sup> and Ellen (Wigman) Cocke, all bp. at St. Mary Coslany, Norwich:<sup>46</sup>

- i Thomas Cocke, bp. 7 Sept. 1571,
- ii Elizabeth Cocke, bp. 7 July 1574.
- iii Anne Cocke, bp. 14 April 1577.
- iv (poss.) Ellen Cocke, d. after 1575.

Child of Christopher<sup>A</sup> and Margaret (—) (Allen) Cocke:

- v BRIDGET<sup>1</sup> COCKE, perhaps the daughter of Christopher Cocke, name not recorded in the parish register, bp. St. Mary Coslany, between May and 8 Sept. 1582; m. NICHOLAS<sup>1</sup> BUSBY, later of Boston, Mass.

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<sup>46</sup> St. Mary Coslany, Norwich, parish register transcripts, 1557–1661 (Tillett MS) [FHL film #993,652].

#### OMISSIONS, MILITANT SOCIALISTS, AND ROYAL MISTRESSES

*Contributed by David L. Greene, Editor*

Britain's famous *Complete Peerage* usually pulls no punches in expressing the prejudices of Vicary Gibbs, the first editor of the revised edition—and a staunch Tory. About Frances (Maynard), Lady Brooke, and later Countess of Warwick (1861–1938), he made a noteworthy omission and included a noteworthy syntactic *non sequitur*. The latter is:

She runs race-horses, and as far as can be gathered from her writing and talking is (1912) a militant socialist.<sup>1</sup>

Just what connection exists between race horses and militant socialism is a problem worth pondering!

The noteworthy omission is that Gibbs does not mention that Lady Brooke, who was one of the great beauties of the late Victorian age, was also one of the mistresses of the Prince of Wales before he became king as Edward VII. The reason that this association goes unmentioned is probably that this volume of the *Complete Peerage* appeared in 1912, and the king had died only two years earlier. Gibbs, who was nothing if not a monarchist, may have decided that it was too soon to publicize the king's peccadilloes.

<sup>1</sup> Vicary Gibbs et al., eds., *The Complete Peerage*, new ed., 14 vols. in 15 (London, 1910–59; Stroud, Gloucs., 1998), 2:316, note.