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NICHOLAS POTTER

Tavernkeeper, Lynn, Massachusetts, 1646

(from a work in progress entitled *Gardner's Door*, by Alexander Bannerman)

NICHOLAS POTTER was baptized the son of Robert Potter and Elizabeth Marshall at Newport-Pagnell, Buckinghamshire, England on April 1, 1604.* On April 22, 1628, at Newport-Pagnell, he was married to Eme Carter.[†] To their union were born three children:

Robert bapt. 9 Feb 1629/30 at Newport-Pagnell, Bucks., Eng.; m. (1st) ____; m. (2nd) 25 Jan 1659/60 at Lynn, MA to Ruth Driver; 10 ch.
Samuel bapt. 26 Dec 1632 at Newport-Pagnell, Bucks., Eng.; bur. 4 Feb 1632/3 at Newport-Pagnell.
Elizabeth bapt. 8 Apr 1634 at Newport-Pagnell, Bucks., Eng.; bur. 22 Feb 1686/7 at Lynn, MA; m. 29 Dec 1652 at Lynn, MA to Thomas Newhall, Jr.[‡] (d. 1 Apr 1687 at Lynn, MA); 10 ch.

The precise time of their arrival on American shores is not immediately evident, but it appears Nicholas brought his young family sometime near 1636. His wife appears to have died soon after their arrival. He married secondly to Alice (____), widow of Thomas Weeks, and she died January 26, 1658/9 at Salem,[§] evidently providing Nicholas with no children who survived.

While in Lynn, Nicholas owned 60 acres, where he was a mason and was engaged in the business of the ironworks.** On October 7, 1646, he was licensed to draw wine in accordance with the desire of the townspeople.^{††} By about 1656,

* Frank Elwood Potter, *Descendants of Nicholas Potter of Lynn, Massachusetts* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1991), pp. 1-10, from which much of this biographical sketch is culled. Among the notable descendants of Robert and Elizabeth (Marshall) Potter (parents of the Tavernkeeper) is American suffragist Susan B. Anthony.

[†] *Id.* at 3.

[‡] *Vital Records of Lynn, Massachusetts*, vol. 2 (Salem: The Essex Institute, 1906), p. 307, which, citing probate records, erroneously calls her the daughter of Robert.

[§] Ezra R. Stearns, *Genealogical and Family History of the State of New Hampshire* (New York: Lewis Publishing Co., 1908), vol. 3, p. 1173; *Vital Records of Salem, Massachusetts to the End of the Year 1849* (6 vols., Salem, MA: The Essex Institute, 1925), vol. 6, p. 155.

** Charles L. Newhall, *The Record of My Ancestry* (Southbridge, MA: Herald Power Print, 1899), p. 51.

^{††} Alonzo Lewis and James R. Newhall, *History of Lynn ... 1629-1864* (Lynn, MA: Bookstore of George C. Herbert, undated), pp. 157, 221; Louis E. DeForest, *Our Colonial and Continental Ancestors...* (New York: DeForest Publishing Co., 1930), p. 162.

Nicholas had removed his family to Salem, where he occupied himself as a bricklayer.* bricklayer.* His property in Lynn was eventually left to his son Robert.

Nicholas chose for his third wife Mary, daughter of John Gedney of Salem. Although their date of marriage has not been discovered in the records, it probably occurred in 1659, very soon after the death of his second wife, based on the birth of their first child. Nicholas and Mary parented twelve children, many of whom died in infancy:†

Mary b. 4 Jan 1659/60 at Salem, MA; d. 29 Aug 1662 at Salem, MA.

Hannah bapt. 25 Mar 1661 at Salem, MA; d. 28 Aug 1662 at Salem, MA.

Sarah b. 4 Oct 1662 at Salem, MA; d. 29 Sep 1688; never marr.

Mary (again) b. 10 Nov 1663 at Salem, MA; m. Samuel Elson; 4 ch. (at least).

Samuel (again) b. 9 Jan 1664/5 at Salem, MA; d. 10 Jan 1665/6 at Salem, MA.

Hannah (again) b. 27 Mar 1666 at Salem, MA; m. (1st) at Salem, MA, to William Roache (d. 1705 at Salem, MA); 5 ch.; m. (2nd) 15 Apr 1717 at Salem, MA to Daniel Darling.

Lydia b. 6 Feb 1666/7 at Salem, MA; d. 17 Sep 1668 at Salem, MA.

Bethiah b. 23 May 1668 at Salem, MA; m. (1st) 26 Feb 1683/6 at Lynn, MA to Thomas Witt (d. 28 Jan 1690/1 at Salem, MA); m. (2nd) 7 Oct 1699 at Salem, MA to Joseph Holloway; 2 ch.

Samuel (again) b. 22 Apr 1669 at Salem, MA; d. 1692 at Salem, MA; m. Rebecca Trask; no ch.

Lydia (again) b. 16 Jul 1670 at Salem, MA; d. Apr 1671 at Salem, MA.

Benjamin b. 6 Nov 1671 at Salem, MA; d. 14 Aug 1697 at Salem, MA; never marr.

Joseph b. 9 Jun 1673 at Salem, MA; prob. d. young.

Nicholas survived his third wife and died at Salem on October 18, 1677.‡ The inventory of his estate, taken October 25, 1677, and allowed at Salem Court on November 29 following, valued his holdings at £206.11. His will, dated October 10, 1677, was proved November 29 following at Salem.§ He mentioned a previous will in which he had bequeathed his land to his daughter Elizabeth Newhall, now revoking that bequest in favor of the sons of his “last wife.” He made no new provision for Elizabeth, but provided for all of the children of his last wife.

Alexander Bannerman, #97-23

* Lewis and Newhall, *supra*, p. 482.

† The family is constructed primarily from Salem Vital Records, *supra*.

‡ Salem Vital Records, *supra*, vol. 6, p. 156.

§ *Historical Collections of the Essex Institute* (Salem, MA: Henry Whipple & Son, 1860), vol. 2, p. 275.