

# Ardelia (Lamb) Watson’s Family of Origin

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This article about Ardelia (Lamb) Watson is connected to the family history of [Elhanan W. Watson Sr. \(1816-1903\)](#).

This article is *also* part of a larger family history, **The WATSON Family of West Greenwich, Rhode Island**: [Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), and [Part 3](#).

## Ardelia Lamb

Ardelia Lamb, first wife of Elhanan W. WATSON, Sr., was the daughter of William Lamb Jr. of Ledyard, Connecticut. Likely she was born in Ledyard, around 1820.

Ardelia (Lamb) Watson predeceased her father by about fourteen months. She died at age 25 on November 26, 1845; he died “in the 56th year of his age” on January 19, 1847. They are both buried in Lambtown Cemetery in Ledyard, CT.

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15531380/ardelia-watson>

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15531504/william-lamb>

When William Lamb Jr. died, the portion of his estate that Ardelia would have inherited went instead to her children, Nehemiah and Elhanan Watson Jr. William Jr.’s probate record refers to a loan made to Ardelia and her husband:

“One Note of Hand of 75 dollars Dated May 1st 1844 against Elhanan Watson and Ardelia Watson his Wife Said to be wrote and both names Signed by Said Wife”

One Yearling 4-00	One Lamb Springs calf 3-00	11	—
One Goat 3-50	Two sheep 3-25	6	75
Farm Estimated at 40 acres at 13.00 per acre		10	40
		\$ 12	65 45
<p>One Note of Bond of 75 dollars Dated May 1<sup>st</sup> 1844  against Elhanan Watson &amp; Nichole Watson  his Wife Said to be wrote and both names  Signed by said Wife</p>			
<p>Ledyard February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1847</p>			

Content Lamb's headstone in Lambtown Cemetery notes that she was William Lamb Jr.'s wife. She *may have been* Ardelia Lamb's mother.

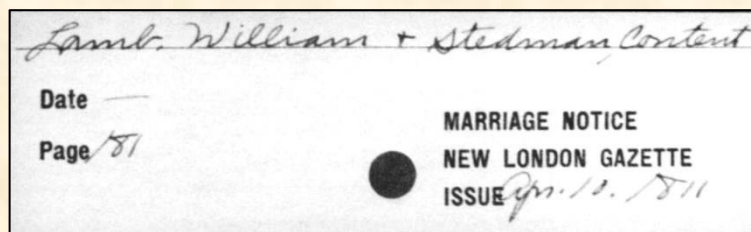
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/15531513/content-lamb>

Content's headstone also says that she was 92 years old when she died on August 11, 1872. If this is correct, she was born circa 1780, making her about twelve years older than her husband.



An obituary for Henry A. Lamb (1829-1911) of Mystic, CT, names his parents as *William and Content Holdredge Lamb*. While not a primary source, Henry's obit is likely to be accurate: Henry lived mostly in one place and had five surviving daughters who would know his personal history.

Some researchers think Content Lamb might have been the daughter of Samuel and Abigail (Perigo) Holdredge. If so, records for the town of Groton, New London county, CT (of which Ledyard was a part until 1836), give her date of birth as Sept. 20, 1783.



Content's last name at the time of her marriage to William Lamb Jr. *may have been* Stedman. The Hale Collection, Index to marriages, New London (CT)

Gazette G-Z has a record saying that, on April 10, 1811, William Lamb married Content Stedman. Perhaps Stedman was the surname of a deceased first husband.



## **“Lambtown” in Ledyard, Connecticut**

Per both *History of the Town of Ledyard 1650-1900* and *Genealogical Sketch of the Lamb Family*, this Lamb family arrived in Connecticut early on.

The first Lamb ancestor, whose name has been lost to time, came from England to the Massachusetts Bay colony, settling in what is now Haverhill, MA. His son Isaac may have come with his father from England; or he may have been born in Massachusetts. Fred W. Lamb, author of *Genealogical Sketch of the Lamb Family*, wrote that “Isaac Lamb [was] recorded as having been baptized and owned the covenant at Watertown, Mass., July 10, 1687.”

Apparently the family was “driven away by the Indians,” causing them to relocate from Massachusetts to Connecticut.

In 1695 or '96, Isaac Lamb bought land in southeastern Connecticut near the Mystic River. In 1704 that area became the town of Groton when it was set off from New London.

A description of the Lamb family’s homestead in Ledyard, CT, is provided through the *National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form*:

Family tradition maintains that the Lamb House was built about 1714, shortly after Isaac Lamb (?-1723) sold his property in Mystic, a nearby coastal town, although many of the finishes are more typical of the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Isaac Lamb had settled in Mystic in the late seventeenth century, and like many of the early settlers of coastal Connecticut, he later moved inland. Although the 1714 date is supported only by family and local oral tradition, it is clearly a strong indication that the property was occupied by the family early in the century. The house has been occupied by a lineal descendant of Isaac Lamb since its construction. This house, the first to be constructed in the area, became the core of the what was to become known as “Lambtown,” as other family members in later generations built their houses nearby.

Isaac Lamb was involved in organizing the very first Baptist church in Connecticut, established in Groton in 1705. And he served as one of its first deacons. Isaac’s descendants include a number of Baptist clergymen.

## Lamb Family Lineage

Isaac<sup>1</sup> Lamb and his wife Elizabeth (—) were Ardelia Lamb's great-great-great-grandparents. Their son Jacob<sup>2</sup> Lamb married Jerusha Williams. Jacob<sup>2</sup> "is said to have been the first to settle Lamb Town in Ledyard, Conn." (Fred W. Lamb, 1903)

Jacob<sup>2</sup> and Jerusha's son Timothy<sup>3</sup> married Mary Holdredge. Timothy<sup>3</sup> and Mary's son William<sup>4</sup> Lamb married Anna (whose maiden name *may have been* Woodward).

William<sup>4</sup> and Anna had ten children, including a son named William<sup>5</sup> Lamb Jr. *William<sup>5</sup> Lamb Jr. was father to both Ardelia Lamb and Henry Lamb.* (See Henry's obituary in [Resources](#).)

Right: Excerpt from page 5, *Genealogical Sketch of the Lamb Family*

Timothy Lamb, son of Jacob, was born in 1733, married Mary Holdredge April 20, 1766, and died in 1807. He was a soldier in the Old French and Indian War, serving in a company of militia under command of Capt. Joseph Morgan, which marched to the relief of Fort William Henry at the alarm of August, 1757. The company served fifteen days. His children were:

1. Timothy, Jr., born September 28, 1767.
2. William, born April 16, 1769. He married Anna —

and had the following children :

1. William, had children, Mary, William, Sanford, George, **Ardelia**, Francis and Henry.
  - II. Lydia, married Hallam Whiting and had seven children.
  - III. Washington, had child George.
  - IV. Russell, had children, Elizabeth, Patience, Anna, Levi, Dennison, Milton, Edmond, Robert, Nelson, Erastus, Cortland, Elizabeth, Emetsin, and Delia.
  - v. Nathan, had children Amasa, Frank, Emeline and Edwin.
  - VI. Nancy, married John Ayers and had ten children.
  - VII. Jefferson, had children, Mary, Henry, Emeline, Eliza, Noyes, and Ellen.
  - VIII. Polly, married Ichabod Chapman and had twelve children.
  - IX. Hannah, married "Subal" Maynard and had eight children.
  - x. Lavinia, married Levi Chapman and had twelve children.
3. Mary, born April 10, 1771.
  4. Prudence, born September 11, 1772.
  5. Aaron, born January 18, 1774.
  6. Isaac, born April 11, 1775.
  7. Deborah, born March 7, 1776.
  8. Rufus, born April 9, 1778.
  9. John, born March 6, 1780.
  10. Sabra, born March 7, 1783.

## Lamb Men in the California Gold Rush

Family lore for Ardelia's husband Elhanan W. Watson Sr. says he was a "Forty-Niner" – that he participated in the 1849 California Gold Rush. While we'd love



to take this as truth, we've found problems with this claim. Maybe he did; more likely he didn't. This lore likely arose with regard to several of Ardelia (Lamb) Watson's cousins.

In Lambtown Cemetery, there is a cenotaph memorializing three Lamb brothers who lost their lives while in pursuit of California gold. It reads:

Erected in Memory of  
DENISON LAMB

who died July 17, 1850

Aged 29 years 8 Mo. & 24 Ds.

He fell asleep in a far distant land / Dreamless and  
lone his lov'd form resteth there / Yet when our  
Father gives his loud command / His dust an angel's  
glorious form shall wear / The light of the great  
resurrection morn / Shall pierce the darkness of his  
lonely grave / And he shall rise in beauty to adorn /  
The crown of Him who died mankind to save.

Also in Memory of / RUSSEL E. LAMB

who died July 25, 1850 / Aged 22 years & 6 Ds.

They died at Deer Creek, California / of the typhus fever whilst there engaged in  
the mining business

And Also in Memory of / FRANKLIN M. LAMB / Who died on board the  
Schooner Montague/ of the cholera whilst on her / passage from Sacramento to /  
San Francisco Oct. 22nd 1850 / Aged 28 years 2 Mo. & 22 Ds

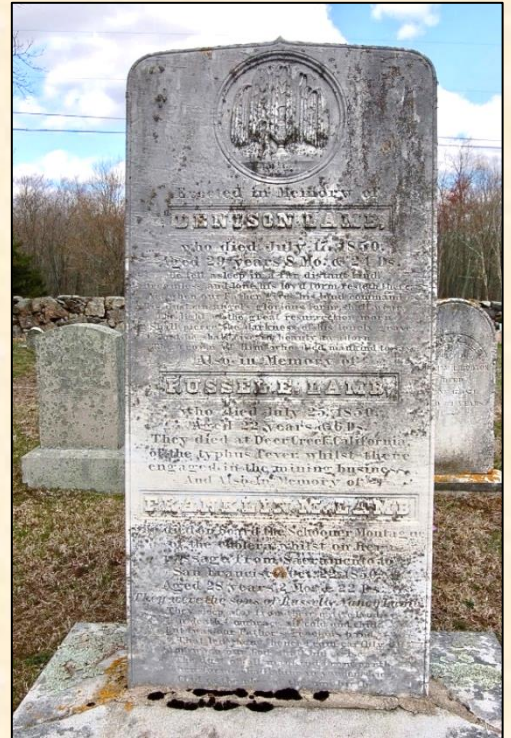
*They were the sons of Russel & Nancy Lamb*

They sleep afar from their native land / In death's embrace all cold and chill /  
But t'was our Father's gracious hand / That led them thence from earthly ill / And  
when our God shall bid arise / The dust from all mankind from earth / Their forms  
shall shine in yonder skies / Clad in the robes of the new birth

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/17695990/denison-lamb>

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/17696019/russell-e-lamb>

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/17696062/franklin-m-lamb>



Referring back to our excerpt from page 5, *Genealogical Sketch of the Lamb Family*, we have drawn a box around the names of five of Russel and Nancy (Chapman) Lamb's sons. These five brothers all went to California. It appears that only Levi and Robert made it back to Connecticut alive.


Denison Lamb was named first on the Lamb cenotaph. Next named was Russel E. Lamb, noted as "Edmond" in

*Genealogical Sketch of the Lamb Family*. It appears he went by his middle name – which we suspect was actually "Edwin," given that name's frequent use in these related Lamb families around and after that time. The final name on the cenotaph was Franklin M. Lamb – the brother named as "Milton" in *Genealogical Sketch of the Lamb Family*.

What makes this bit of family history particularly interesting is that both Levi and Denison Lamb were listed in the 1850 census with their wives and children in *Connecticut*. Why is that? Because ...

The law required "all the inhabitants" of each Federal judicial district or territory be enumerated. The Instructions to Marshals and Assistants explained that the term "usual place of abode" used in column 3 of Schedule 1, Free Inhabitants, meant the "the house or usual lodging place of a person" and that a person "**temporarily absent on a journey, or for other purposes, without taking up his place of residence elsewhere, and with the intention of returning again, is to be considered a member of the family....**" <https://www.archives.gov/research/census/1850>

In November 1850, Levi Lamb and his brother Robert were enumerated in the city of Sacramento, Sacramento co., CA. The other three brothers were deceased by that time. Poignantly, Denison Lamb was listed in Groton, CT, with his wife, their children, and his brother Nelson on Sept. 20, 1850, more than two months after his death. Denison's widow, Sally Ann (Ashbey) Lamb, apparently never remarried.

2. William, born April 16, 1769. He married Anna — and had the following children :
  - i. William, had children, Mary, William, Sanford, George, Ardelia, Francis and Henry.
  - ii. Lydia, married Hallam Whiting and had seven children.
  - iii. Washington, had child George.
  - iv. Russell, had children, Elizabeth, Patience, Anna, Levi, Dennison, Milton, Edmond, Robert, Nelson, Erastus, Cortland, Elizabeth, Emetsin, and Delia.
  - v. Nathan, had children Amasa, Frank, Emeline and Edwin.
  - vi. Nancy, married John Ayers and had ten children.
  - vii. Jefferson, had children, Mary, Henry, Emeline, Eliza, Noyes, and Ellen.
  - viii. Polly, married Ichabod Chapman and had twelve children.
  - ix. Hannah, married "Subal" Maynard and had eight children.
  - x. Lavinia, married Levi Chapman and had twelve children.



Robert Lamb made it back to Connecticut in time to marry Harriet Brewster in Ledyard on May 8, 1854. After his death in 1885, Robert was laid to rest in Lambtown Cemetery in Ledyard, CT. Harriet joined him there in 1923.

Levi Lamb may have journeyed back to Connecticut with his brother Robert, or at least soon after. His twin daughters Ellen and Mary were born in March 1856 in Noank, New London county, CT. He and his wife Mary Ellen (Ashbey) Lamb are buried in Noank Valley Cemetery, Noank, New London county, CT.

## OBITUARY.

### Levi Lamb.

The death of Levi Lamb occurred at the home of his granddaughter, Mrs. Charles Zaccardy, in Noank, Sunday morning. Up to within a few weeks Mr. Lamb had been enjoying his usual fine health, but he commenced to fail and during the past week he became worse and worse and the end was not unexpected.

Ninety-one years ago Mr. Lamb was born in Ledyard, being one of a family of fourteen children, of which only one brother, Courtland, now remains. During his whole life he has followed the vocation of a farmer until a year or two ago. He has since resided with his granddaughter, Mrs. Charles Zaccardy.

Besides his brother, Courtland, of Ledyard, he leaves to mourn his loss one daughter, Mrs. O. W. Beebe, of Noank, and seven sons, Charles of California, Walter of Pennsylvania, George of Brooklyn, Roswell, John, Ira and Benjamin of Noank.

## Resources

[Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) (subscription) and [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org) (free) are our favorite sources for census and vital records.

Lamb, Fred W. (1903). *Genealogical Sketch of the Lamb Family* (2nd ed. rev. and enl). Printed by J.B. Clarke, Manchester, NH. Available in digital format at the Library of Congress website: <https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/public/gdcmassbookdig/genealogicalsket001clamb/genealogicalsket001clamb.pdf>

Avery John and University of Connecticut. 19721901. *History of the Town of Ledyard 1650-1900*. Norwich Conn: Franklin Press. "The Lamb Family," page 139-140 at <https://archive.org/details/historyoftownofl00aver>; accessed on 21 January 2023.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lamb\\_Homestead](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lamb_Homestead). At the foot of this web page is a useful reference, a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nomination for the Lamb Homestead. The Lamb House listing in the NRHP dates to 1991. [https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/91001175\\_text](https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NRHP/91001175_text)

Ancestry.com. *Connecticut, U.S., Town Birth Records, pre-1870 (Barbour Collection)* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2006. Original data: White, Lorraine Cook, ed. The Barbour Collection of Connecticut Town Vital Records. Vol. 1-55. Baltimore, MD, USA: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1994-2002.

“Connecticut, Vital Records, Prior to 1850,” database, *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QP34-YSHG>: 15 April 2022), **Content Holdredge**; citing Birth, Groton, New London, Connecticut Colony, British Colonial America, Compiled by Lucius A. and Lucius B. Barbour, housed at State Library, Hartford, Connecticut; FHL microfilm 008272233.

“Connecticut Marriages, 1630-1997,” database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F7PW-S28>: 11 January 2020), **Content Stedman** in entry for **William Lamb**, 1811. An image of this record was accessed at <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9F1-T2S5> on 4 Feb 2023.

Regarding the probate record for William Lamb Jr. (ca 1792-1847): We obtained our copy so long ago, we can't remember where we found it. Our apologies!

Credit for the photo of the Lamb brothers' cenotaph belongs to “Kim H M,” (Find A Grave ID 49655815).

The obituary for Henry A. Lamb, found on page 6 of the *Norwich (CT) Bulletin* newspaper for Tuesday, 7 February 1911, was obtained at [Newspapers.com](http://Newspapers.com). Henry and his wife Margaret named one of their daughters Ardelia. We feel reasonably certain that Henry A. Lamb was Ardelia (Lamb) Watson's little brother.

The obituary for Levi Lamb, found on page 5 of the *Norwich (CT) Bulletin* newspaper for Tuesday, 20 April 1909, was obtained at [Newspapers.com](http://Newspapers.com).

**Death of Henry Lamb—Frank Hancock's Funeral—No Game With Groton as Planned.**

Henry Lamb died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. James Chapman, in Old Mystic, where he had gone to reside about one year ago. He was the son of William and Content Holdredge Lamb and was born in Ledyard 81 years ago, but has spent most of his life in Mystic. He is survived by five daughters, Mrs. Augusta Hilliard, Mrs. Evie Ryan and Miss Delia Lamb of Boston, Mrs. James Chapman of Old Mystic and Mrs. Everett Watson of Mystic.