

Hobart Spencer Jr. Was Most Likely the Husband of Betsey Hazen

By Deborah A. Carl

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Introduction

Flora S. Clark's *Descendants of John Spencer, Samuel Spencer & Timothy Spencer, Sons of Gerard Spencer of Haddam, Ct.* which she compiled in 1963, stated that Hobart Spencer, born 1742 and died 1806 in Canaan, Essex, Vermont, married first Eunice Barnes, married second Martha Farmer, and married third Betsey Hazen.¹ Clark listed the children of Hobart and Eunice as Anne, Israel Brainard, Eunice, Esther, Nehemiah, and Virtue.² Clark left Hobart and Huldah off the list of Hobart and Eunice Barnes's children.

An examination of other published genealogies, both in book form and online, tend to repeat Clark's findings. One of them points back to Clark's research, while others repeat it without reference to where the information came from.³ Even *The Campton, Grafton, New Hampshire Centennial Celebration* reported Hobart Spencer and Eunice Barnes only had six children while the Town Records list eight.⁴ Twins often died in infancy, which may be why Hobart Jr. and Huldah were missing. (See Illustration 1)

But it is more likely that Hobart Jr. lived to adulthood and married Betsey Hazen when he was about 22 years old, rather than his father who would have been about 36 years older than Betsey. Also, one published genealogy was found that reported Hobart Spencer, the son of Hobart Spencer and Eunice Barnes, was the husband of Betsey Hazen.⁵

¹ Flora S. Clark, *Descendants of John Spencer, Samuel Spencer & Timothy Spencer, Sons of Gerard Spencer of Haddam, Ct.* (Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, 1963), imaged at FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/viewer/770278/#page=148> : accessed 27 July 2023), image 148 of 221, handwritten p. 65, Hobart Spencer, born ca. 1742, died Canaan, Vt., in 1806, married first Eunice Barnes, married second Martha Farmer, married third Betsey Hazen.

² Ibid.

³ Karen Spencer, *The Forgotten Spencers* (29 July 1979), imaged at FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/viewer/508580/#page=104> : accessed 27 July 2023), image 104 of 185, p. 103, entry GS281 iii. Hobart Spencer, born 1742, died at Canaan, Vermont, 1806, married first Eunice Barnes, married second Martha Farmer, married third Betsey Hazen, no children listed, acknowledged in the forward that she used Flora Clark's work as a reference.

⁴ *The Centennial Celebration of the Town of Campton, N.H., 12 September 1867* (Concord, New Hampshire: A.G. Jones, 1868), imaged at GoogleBooks (https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Centennial_Celebration_of_the_Town_o/O3AUAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1 : accessed 27 July 2023), p. 16, the authors state Hobart Spencer arrived in Campton, Grafton, New Hampshire in 1769 and had six children.

⁵ Alden S. Foss, *About the Simonds, Spencer and Foss Families: Particularly the Latter*, imaged at FamilySearch (<https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/viewer/603165/?offset=0#page=24&viewer=picture&o=&n=0&q=> : accessed 28 July 2023), p. 14, Foss claims Hobart Sr. was married to Eunice Barnes, and Hobart Jr. was married to Betsey Hazen Dearborn.

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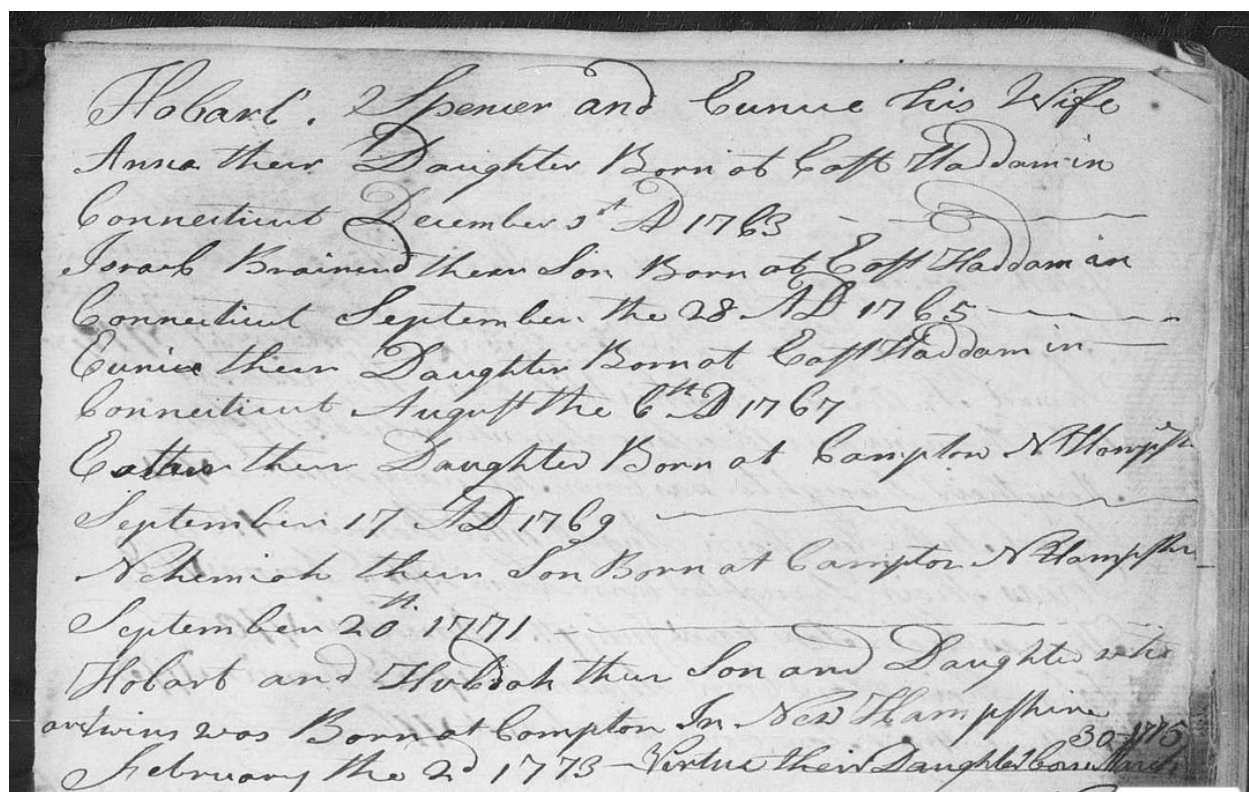
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Background

The children of Hobart Spencer and Eunice, his first wife, were recorded in the Town Records of Campton, Grafton, New Hampshire.⁶ It was probably written in 1836 as that is the date of the entry on the previous page. Eunice gave birth in East Haddam, Connecticut to Anna on 3 December 1763, Israel Brainard on 28 September 1765, and Eunice on 6 August 1767. Then around 1769, the family moved to Campton where Esther was born on 17 September 1769, Nehemiah was born on 20 September 1771, the twins Hobart and Huldah were born on 2 February 1773, and Virtue was born on 30 March 1775.⁷

Illustration 1



Campton, Grafton, New Hampshire Town Records 1777-1825

While Clark did not write citations, in places she described her sources, one of which was a court order dated 3 April 1780 appointing Joseph Spencer of Lebanon as guardian to Israel

⁶ "New Hampshire, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1636-1947," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QSO-G99K-8TVL> : accessed 27 July 2023), Grafton > Campton > Town records 1777-1825, image 183 of 217, unpaginated, first entry, Hobart Spencer and Eunice his wife with entries for eight children listed after - Anna, Israel, Eunice, Esther, Nehemiah, Hobart, Huldah, and Virtue; New Hampshire Bureau of Vital Records and Statistics, Concord.

⁷ *Ibid.*

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Brainard Spencer, Eunice Spencer, Esther Spencer, and Nehemiah Spencer, "all minors of the town of Campton, N.H., heirs to the estate of said Samuel Barnes, late of East Haddam."⁸ The fact that Hobart Spencer Jr. was left out of the list of heirs has also contributed to the confusion about which Hobart Spencer married Betsey Hazen.

The marriage record for Betsey Hazen and Hobart Spencer only names the bride and groom and the fact they were married on 8 May 1795 in Plymouth, Grafton, New Hampshire by Rev. Nathan Ward.⁹ Six months later, Betsey and Hobart had a child in Rumney, Grafton, New Hampshire.¹⁰ Did Hobart Sr. cheat on his wife and she divorced him, freeing him to marry Betsey, or was the groom Hobart Jr.?

Hobart Spencer Jr. was born in 1773 and died in 1811.¹¹ Hobart Spencer Sr. was born between 1740 (his parents were married in 1738 and his sister was born in 1739) and 1744 (which would have made him about eighteen years old when he married in 1762), and he died in between November 1804 and January 1808.¹² Sadly, no one who knew these men is alive today and can

⁸ Flora S. Clark, *Descendants of John Spencer, Samuel Spencer & Timothy Spencer, Sons of Gerard Spencer of Haddam, Ct.*, handwritten p. 65, on 3 April 1780, Joseph Spencer of Lebanon was appointed guardian to Israel Brainard Spencer, Eunice Spencer, Esther Spencer and Nehemiah Spencer, all minor of the town of Campton, New Hampshire and heirs of Samuel Barnes, late of East Haddam.

⁹ "New Hampshire Marriage Records, 1637-1947," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-DYW7-91L> : accessed 22 December 2023), film 004243228, image 392 of 4772, marriage record for Hobart Spencer and Betsey Hazen dated 8 May 1795; New Hampshire Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics, Concord.

¹⁰ "New Hampshire Birth Records, Early to 1900," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-68D3-QP6> : accessed 12 September 203), film 004244304, image 3919 of 4952, birth record for Clairisy Spencer born 17 November 1795 the daughter of Hobart Spencer and Betsey; New Hampshire Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics, Concord.

¹¹ "New Hampshire, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1636-1947," Grafton > Campton > Town records 1777-1825, image 183 of 217, unpaginated, first entry, Hobart Spencer and Eunice his wife with entries for eight children listed after - Anna, Israel, Eunice, Esther, Nehemiah, Hobart, Huldah, and Virtue. Also, Find A Grave, database with images (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/133406243/hobart-spencer> : accessed 22 December 2023), memorial 133406243, Hobart Spencer (unknown - 11 Apr 1811), Glenwood Cemetery, Ashby, Middlesex, Massachusetts, stone states he died in Constable, Franklin, New York and he shares a stone with his wife Betsey H.; gravestone photo by DASG.

¹² East Haddam, Middlesex, Connecticut Vital Statistics Vol. 1 Late 1600 to 1890, imaged at *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C91S-2D83> : accessed 22 December 2023), image 81 of 96, p.385, bottom, entry for Jospheh Spencer Jr. and Martha Brainerd who married 2 August 1738; East Haddam Town Hall, Connecticut. Also, *ibid.*, Martha daughter of Joseph and Martha born on 8 May 1739. Also, Grafton County New Hampshire Records of Deeds vol. 39, 1804 to 1805, imaged at *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSVT-7SS3-M> : accessed 10 November 2023), film 008128827, image 407 of 634, p. 110, deed from Hobart Spencer of Orange Gore, Orange, Vermont dated 2 November 1804 to his son Hobart Spencer of Topsham, Orange, Vermont; Grafton County Register of Deeds, North Haverhill, New Hampshire. Also, State of Vermont, Town of Topsham, Land Records Vol. 4, 1805-1811, imaged at *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3QG-W9G8-Y> : accessed 22 December 2023), image 269 of 921, p. 3-4, Hobart and Ben Spencer of Newbury and Hobart Spencer Jur of Topsham sell land in Corinth to David Barnett granting him a mortgage to be paid in four years or the sale to be null and void, dated 5 April 1804; Topsham Clerk's Office, Waits River, Vermont. Also, State of Vermont, Town of Corinth, Town Records, Deeds Vol. 4, 1803-1812, imaged at *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSLR-P726-K> : accessed 8 January 2024), mape 138

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answer the question so the documents and archival records needed to be consulted to either confirm or refute the idea that Hobart Spencer Jr. was the most likely husband of Betsey Hazen Dearborn.

Findings

The first step was to prove Hobart Jr. lived to attain the age of marriage.

In 1804, Hobart Spencer of Orange Gore, Orange, Vermont, sold land to “my son Hobart Spencer of Topsham in the County of Orange...”¹³ Hobart Spencer was not a common name. It was most likely Hobart Sr. or Hobart Jr. the many times the name appears in the deed records in the communities in northern New Hampshire and Vermont.

The second step was to prove Hobart Jr. was living near the Rumney, Grafton, New Hampshire area to be physically able to marry Betsey Hazen in 1795. This proved to be unnecessary.

On 5 April 1804, “Hobart and Benjamin Spencer of Newbury and Hobart Spencer Jr of Topsham...” sold and granted a mortgage on a grist mill and sawmill on land “lying and being in Corinth in the County of Orange and State of Vermont...” to David Barnett of Topsham.¹⁴ In 1808, the Widow Martha Spencer and Benjamin Spencer of Waterford, Caledonia, Vermont executed a Quit Claim on a “tract or parcel of land lying and being in Topsham, Orange [County] and Corinth which land the said David Barnett deeded to Hobart Spencer, Hobart Spencer Jr, and Benjamin Spencer with the mills thereon...”

Hobart Sr. had married Martha Farmer on 14 December 1778 in Litchfield, Hillsborough, New Hampshire.¹⁵ Since Hobart was alive in November 1804 when he sold land to his son, Hobart

of 544, p. 246, Widow Martha Spencer and Benjamin Spencer both of Waterford, Caledonia, Vermont executed a Quit Claim on the mortgage given to David Barnett of Topsham, Orange, Vermont on the land in Topsham and Corinth, Orange, Vermont, “deeded to Hobart Spencer, Hobart Spencer Jr, and Benjamin Spencer with the mills thereon...” dated 28 January 1808; Clerk's Office, Corinth, Vermont. Since Hobart was alive in 1804 and had a widow named Martha in January 1808, living with Benjamin Spencer the son of Hobart Spencer Sr. and Martha Farmer, it makes sense that the Widow Martha is most likely Hobart Sr.'s wife, Martha Farmer.

¹³ Grafton County New Hampshire Records of Deeds vol. 39, 1804 to 1805, p. 110, deed from Hobart Spencer of Orange Gore, Orange, Vermont dated 2 November 1804 to his son Hobart Spencer of Topsham, Orange, Vermont.

¹⁴ State of Vermont, Town of Topsham, Land Records Vol. 4, 1805-1811,, p. 3–4, Hobart and Ben Spencer of Newbury and Hobart Spencer Jr of Topsham sell land in Corinth to David Barnett granting him a mortgage to be paid in four years or the sale to be null and void, dated 5 April 1804. Also, State of Vermont, Town of Corinth, Town Records, Deeds Vol. 4, 1803-1812, p. 246, Widow Martha Spencer and Benjamin Spencer both of Waterford, Caledonia, Vermont executed a Quit Claim on the mortgage given to David Barnett of Topsham, Orange, Vermont on the land in Topsham and Corinth, Orange, Vermont, “deeded to Hobart Spencer, Hobart Spencer Jr, and Benjamin Spencer with the mills thereon...” dated 28 January 1808.

¹⁵ “New Hampshire Marriage Records, 1637-1947,” database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HY-DY49-P94> : accessed 22 December 2023), image 390 of 4772, marriage record for Hobart Spencer and Martha Farmer labeled “not recorded,” married 14 December 1778 by Rev. Samuel Cotton in Litchfield, Hillsborough, New Hampshire; New Hampshire Bureau of Vital Records and Health Statistics, Concord.

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Jr., and had a widow named Martha in January 1808, who was living with Benjamin Spencer, the son of Hobart Spencer Sr. and Martha Farmer, it makes sense that the Widow Martha is most likely Hobart Sr.'s wife, Martha Farmer. Since Hobart Sr. was still married in 1808, he could not have married Eunice Barnes in 1795.

The only other Hobart Spencer in the area was Hobart Jr. making him the most likely man who married Betsey Hazen.

Conclusion:

At this time, no record has been found that definitively states Hobart Jr. was the husband of Betsey Hazen. However, the age difference between Hobart Sr. and Betsey Hazen, the fact that Hobart Sr. had a son Hobart Jr. who lived to adulthood, and the fact the Widow Martha Spencer appears on a land deal originally executed by Hobart Sr. instead of Hobart Sr., indicate that Betsey Hazen was most likely married to Hobart Jr.

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