

# William<sup>1</sup> Hills of the Great Migration: Probable Origins in Upminster, Essex

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In 1995 and 2015, Robert Charles Anderson stated that the origins of Great Migration immigrant William<sup>1</sup> Hills of Roxbury, Massachusetts, and Hartford, Connecticut, are unknown.<sup>[1]</sup> However, Anderson also acknowledged the possibility that William<sup>1</sup> Hills was from Upminster, Essex:<sup>[2]</sup>

*BIRTH:* By about 1607 based on estimated date of marriage. (Jacobus suggested that he may be that William Hills baptized at Upminster, Essex, on 27 December 1598 . . .).

Anderson unintentionally introduced a discrepancy between his research and that of Donald Lines Jacobus (1887–1970), who stated in two works that William Hills was perhaps baptized in Upminster 27 December 1608.<sup>[3]</sup>

A baptismal date of 1608 — rather than 1598 — is far more compatible with Anderson’s own estimate of William’s birth by “about 1607.” The entry in the original parish register verifies that on 27 December 1608 “Willim Hilles ye sonne of Thomas Hilles & Jane his wife was baptized.”<sup>[4]</sup>

In estimating when William Hills was born, an error resulted in a nine-year discrepancy between the frequently cited publications of Anderson and Jacobus. Resolving that error and the associated *false* discrepancy increases the probability that William Hills of the Great Migration originated in Upminster.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620–1633*, 3 vols. (Boston: NEHGS, 1995), 2:941–946 (sketch of William Hills); Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration Directory: Immigrants to New England 1620–1640* (Boston: NEHGS, 2015), 162.

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, *Great Migration Begins, 1620–1633* [note 1], 2:943.

<sup>3</sup> Donald Lines Jacobus and Edgar Francis Waterman, *Hale, House and Related Families Mainly of the Connecticut River Valley* (Hartford, Conn.: Connecticut Historical Society, 1952), 579, and N. Grier Parke, II, comp., *The Ancestry of Lorenzo Ackley & His Wife Emma Arabella Bosworth*, Donald Lines Jacobus, ed. (Woodstock, Vt.: Elm Tree Press, 1960), 144. Prior to Jacobus, a transcription from the original parish register was published in William Sanford Hills, comp., and Thomas Hills, ed., *The Hills Family in America* (New York: Grafton Press, 1906), 659.

<sup>4</sup> Parish registers of Upminster, Essex, 1543–1931 [FHL 1,526,864 Item 1]. Nora D. Whisenant (ndwhisenant90@gmail.com) obtained a digital image of the original page from the Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, and attached it to the christening record for William<sup>1</sup> Hills in the Family Tree at FamilySearch.org (ID M7PJ-MNV as of 16 September 2020).