

R.139 A SERIOUS GENEALOGICAL ERROR RELATING TO REVEREND
WILLIAM HILL JR (BORN 1737) OF GUILFORD, ROCKINGHAM,
COUNTIES OF NORTH CAROLINA.

Researched by Robert Hill in August 1998, entered in October
9th, 1998.

Source of Information: DAR records, Voorhees Genealogy, book
East Goes West by Craft, Court papers, deeds of Guilford,
Rockingham and Stokes Countries of NC and the Minutes of the
Matrimony Primitive Baptist Church of Guilford Co., NC.

Mr. Charles Massey, of Chattanooga, Tennessee, descends from
Thomas Hill 3/ (3rd generation), born 1759 (3rd generation),
who is listed as the son of Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ (2nd
generation) & wife Hannah Elizabeth Halbert.

Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ (2nd generation) was the son of
William Hill Sr 1/ (1st known generation) & wife, Susannah
Smothers, originally of Caroline County, Virginia but later
of Surry County, North Carolina. Reverend Hill 2/ is said to
have been a Baptist Minister.

Charles has long claimed that he had doubts that Reverend
William Hill Jr 2/ & wife Hannah Elizabeth Halbert were the
parents of Thomas Hill 3/, b. 1759 & who married Catherine
Shropshire.

Every genealogical publication that I have come across
clearly list Thomas 3/ as the eldest son of Reverend William
Hill Jr 2/ & Hannah Elizabeth Halbert. Still, Charles
continued to dispute this, so I decided to research this Hill
family, ignoring all other publications. The results of this
research is staggering.

There is definite evidence found to show that Hannah
Elizabeth Halbert WAS NOT the mother of Thomas Hill 3/, even
though DAR and other genealogical publications for many years
say she was.

That proof comes in the following manner:
Caroline County, Virginia Court Records shows that in 1764,
some five years after the birth of Thomas Hill 3/ in 1759,
Joel Halbert Sr. was deceased. The daughter, Elizabeth
Halbert, along with her brothers and sisters, were made
by the court "wards of their mother, Frances Halbert."

This shows that Elizabeth Halbert was still a single
unmarried female, some five years after the birth of Thomas
Hill 3/ in 1759. Notice there is no mention of a Hannah in
this court record.

This prompted me to examine the biography of Abner Hill 4/, (4th generation), the grandson of Rev. Hill 2/ and son of Thomas Hill 3/ & Catherine Shropshire. I do not have a copy of this biography but I am told by Charles that Abner Hill 4/ mentions briefly, a "grand uncle, Thomas Bridges." I believe this to be referring to a brother of Abner's 4/ grandmother, who must have been a Bridges.

In that same biography, Abner Hill 4/ states his grandfather was "William T. Hill." While not necessarily important, Abner does not say anything about his grandfather being a baptist minister. Neither does he mention his grandmother.

Thomas Hill 3/ moved via way of Wilkes County, Georgia, to Tennessee. So did several of his listed brothers and sisters, all reputed to be the children of Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ & Hannah Elizabeth Halbert.

In a book entitled "East Goes West," by Alta Craft of Hawaii, she states that in the Tennessee State Archives, there is a folder containing information on this Hill family. In that folder was the following entry, QUOTE "William Hill Jr. married Hannah Bridges."

When comparing this entry to the statement in Abner Hill's biography, mentioning a grand uncle, Thomas Bridges, it would seem to suggest that Reverend William Hill Jr. 2/ had a previous unknown marriage to this Hannah Bridges. This prompted more research and the following error was found.

Many publications, as well as DAR files, list Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ as having died in 1792 in Rockingham County, North Carolina.

Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ was dead by the 1st of February 1785, because on that date, his widow, Elizabeth Halbert was already remarried to John Glenn Jr and they were filing a petition to the court regarding the estate of her late husband, Reverend William Hill 2/. This early 1785 date suggest that Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ died in 1784, NOT 1792. So, the question is.. was there two different William Hills?

In this document, as well as the Caroline County, Virginia court document, there is no mention of a HANNAH Elizabeth Halbert, only Elizabeth.

This brings up another question: Can anyone produce a document showing she was named Hannah? This would have to be in the form of an official document such as a will, court papers, deeds or letters involving her name. Since the genealogical publications are being questioned, they will not be sufficient evidence.

Back to the death of Reverend Hill 2/, the difference in these two death dates of 1784 and 1792, leads me to believe that another William Hill has been confused with Reverend William Hill Jr 2/. With this in mind, the following questions arise:

1. Was William T. Hill & Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ the same man, or was he a different William Hill? Both Charles & I think he was a different William Hill! The reason for this is explained later.
2. Was the William Hill Jr, listed in the folder of this family in the Tennessee Archives, referring to a first unknown marriage of Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ to Hannah Bridges?

Court records of Rockingham County, NC shows us he was marriage to (Hannah?) Elizabeth Halbert when he died, OR was he a different William Hill Jr 2/ that married Hannah Bridges?

If so, then Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ had a previous unknown marriage, which could imply they were the parents of Thomas Hill 3/, born 1759.

Remember that Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ is listed as a baptist minister. In Guilford County, North Carolina, between 1776 and 1786, there was a baptist church named Matrimony Primitive Baptist Church.

Some minutes of this church has survived the times and these minutes mentions the following names: John Bridges & wife Rachel, William Hill & wife Hannah, Gustavas Hill & Charity, Margaret Hill & Caty Hill and Catherine Shropshire (married Thomas Hill 3/). Margaret or Charity appear to be the wife of Gustavas Hill.

Because Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ was a baptist minister, and since this church was located in the neighborhood of Reverend Hill's 2/ home, it was first thought that he was the same man listed in these church minutes, along with his wife (Hannah?) Elizabeth Halbert but this proved wrong.

This William Hill & wife Hannah were involved in some kind of dispute with others and were dismissed from the membership, only to be returned a few months later. This does not appear to be conduct of a minister! Gustavas Hill & wife Charity were excommunicated more than once, only to be accepted again. What was their relationship?

THIS COULD NOT HAVE BEEN REVEREND WILLIAM HILL JR 2/ & HANNAH (if that was her name) Elizabeth Halbert, because Reverend William Hill Jr 2/ died in 1784, and by the 1st of February 1785, his widow had already remarried to John Glenn Jr., YET

this William Hill & wife Hannah are listed in the 1786 minutes of this church. This has to be a different William Hill from Reverend William Hill Jr 2/!

It is our belief that this was William T. Hill & wife Hannah Bridges, and they were the parents of Thomas Hill 3/, born 1759, married Catherine Shropshire. We are looking for some definite proof of this, despite strong circumstantial evidence supporting us. If this is true, then a long standing, but accepted genealogy is wrong.

I am of the opinion that Gustavas Hill and a William Hill were brothers, and not even related to the family of Reverend William Hill Jr 2/.

If anyone can offer any light on this matter, or proof or documentation regarding this matter, it will certainly be appreciated.

END R.139 DATA