

The English Origin of Robert¹ Cutler of Charlestown, Massachusetts

Randy A. West

Robert¹ Cutler of Charlestown, Massachusetts, immigrated to New England in 1636; his English origin has remained unknown.^[1] His family consisted of a wife named Rebecca and four children: John, Rebecca, Hannah (married in 1654), and Nathaniel (baptized in Charlestown in 1640).^[2] Robert's son John was born about 1629 based on his gravestone,^[3] and his daughter Rebecca married in 1649 or 1650.^[4] Based on their dates of marriage, daughters Rebecca and Hannah were born say 1630 and 1634, respectively, assuming age 20 at marriage.

A search of English records has found the baptisms for Robert's three elder children in the parish of Wargrave, Berkshire, as well as for an earlier daughter named Rebecca who died young. A transcription of these records is as follows:

15 March 1628/9	Baptism	John Cutler sonne of Robert
10 October 1630	Baptism	Rebecca Cutler daughter of Robert
22 February 1631/2	Burial	Rebecca Cutler daughter of Robert
11 November 1632	Baptism	Rebecca Cutler daughter of Robert
15 February 1634/5	Baptism	Hannah Cutler daughter of Robert ^[5]

The above information is used in the following genealogical summary of the family of Robert¹ Cutler.

Genealogical Summary

ROBERT¹ CUTLER was born say 1603 (assuming age 25 at baptism of eldest known child). He was perhaps baptized in Wargrave, Berkshire, on 14 October 1604 as “Robert Cutler sonne of John Cutler.”^[6] He married by 1628, **REBECCA** _____. She was very likely the Rebecca Kirke who married in Henley on Thames, Oxfordshire, on 9 June 1628, “Robtus Cutler.”^[7] Robert immigrated

¹ Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration Directory: Immigrants to New England, 1620–1640, A Concise Compendium* (Boston: NEHGS, 2015), 85.

² Thomas Bellows Wyman, *The Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown, in the County of Middlesex and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1629–1818*, 2 vols. (Boston: David Clapp and Son, 1879) [hereafter Wyman, *Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown*], 1:254.

³ Wyman, *Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown*, 1:255: “d. Sept. 12, 1694, in 66th y[ea]r. g[rave]. s[tone].”

⁴ Thomas W. Baldwin, comp., *Vital Records of Cambridge, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850*, 2 vols. (Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., 1914–1915), 2:100.

⁵ Wargrave, Berkshire, parish register, 1538–1710, Berkshire Record Office, D/P145/1/1 [FSL DGS 7907903] [hereafter *Wargrave Register*], images 466 (John's baptism), 467 (baptisms of the first and second Rebecca and burial of the first Rebecca), and 468 (Hannah's baptism).

⁶ *Wargrave Register*, image 455.

⁷ St. Mary, Henley on Thames, Oxfordshire, parish register, 1558–1734 [*Oxfordshire, England, Church of England Baptism, Marriages, and Burials, 1538–1812*, database at Ancestry.com, image 86 of 171]. This marriage is nine months before the baptism of the immigrant's eldest known

to New England by 1636 and was admitted a member of the Charlestown, Massachusetts, church on 6 November 1637.^[8] He was made a freeman of the Massachusetts Bay Colony on 2 May 1638.^[9] Robert died in Charlestown on 7 March 1664/5 as “Deacon Robert Cutler,”^[10] and his widow died there on 18 March 167[7]/8 as “Rebecca Cutler, widow of Robert Cutler.”^[11] The will of “Robert Cutler of Charlstowne,” dated 1 May 1664 and proved 20 June 1665, gave bequests to “my now beloved Wife Rebecca Cutler . . . my sonn Nathaniel Cuttler . . . my Eldest sonn John Cutler . . . my daughter Rebecca Arington now wife of Abraham Arington . . . my daughter Hannah Griffin now wife unto Mathew Griffin.” His will mentioned “my Cousin Rockwell,” named his “wife Rebecca Cutler and my youngest son Nathaniell Cutler” executors, and desired “my loveing brethren Thomas Lynde and William Stitson” to be overseers.^[12] The will of “Rebecka Cutler of Charlstown widow,” dated 25 July 1676 and proved 3 April 1678, gave bequests to “my son John Cutler . . . my daughter Rebeca the wife of Abraham Errington . . . my son Nathaniell Cutler . . . his wife Elizabeth . . . my GrandChildren that is to say the children of John Cutler and the Children of Rebecca Errington and Hannah Griffins Children.” She named her son Nathaniel the executor of her will.^[13]

Children of Robert¹ and Rebecca (probably Kirke) Cutler (i-iv baptized in Wargrave):

- i. JOHN² CUTLER, bp. 15 March 1628/9,^[14] d. Charlestown, 12 Sept. 1694;^[15] m. (1) by about 1651, ANNA WOODMANSEY,^[16] bp. Loughborough, Leicestershire, 25 March 1627,^[17] d. Charlestown, 31 Aug. 1683,^[18] daughter of

child, and Henley on Thames is about four miles northwest of Wargrave. Thanks to Robert Battle, FASG, for bringing this marriage to my attention.

⁸ James Frothingham Hunnewell, *Records of the First Church in Charlestown, Massachusetts, 1632–1789* (Boston: D. Clapp and Son, 1880), 9.

⁹ *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, 1628–1686*, ed. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, 5 vols. in 6 (Boston: William White, 1853–1854), 1:374.

¹⁰ Roger D. Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown, Massachusetts to the Year 1850, Volume I* (Boston: NEHGS, 1984) [hereafter Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*], 48–49.

¹¹ Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*, 103.

¹² Robert H. Rodgers, *Middlesex County in the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay in New England: Records of Probate and Administration, March 1660/1–December 1670* (Boston: NEHGS, 2001), 263–265.

¹³ Middlesex County, Massachusetts, probate papers, case #5555 [FSL DGS 7553419], images 1003–1004.

¹⁴ The are three records that state John’s age: (1) deposition dated 15 June 1675 of “John Cutler aged about forty six years” (Middlesex County, Mass., court papers, folio 69 [FSL DGS 8131116], image 378); (2) deposition dated 15 April 1690 of “John Cutler Seneor Aged Sixty Years or there about” (Middlesex County, Mass., court papers, folio 138 [FSL DGS 8131118], image 691); and (3) his gravestone in Phipps Street Burial Ground, Charlestown, which reads “Here Lyes Y^e Body Of Deacon John Cutler Who Died The 12 Of September 1694 An In The 66 Year Of His Age” (FindaGrave.com, memorial no. 3629002). All three of these records correspond very closely with his date of baptism.

¹⁵ Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*, 162: “Jno. Cuttler, deacon of the Church in Charlstown, son of a deacon.”

¹⁶ Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration: Immigrants to New England, 1634–1635, Volume VII, T–Y* (Boston: NEHGS, 2011), 523–526 (sketch of Robert Woodmansey), at 525.

¹⁷ Robert Battle, “Some English Records of Robert¹ Woodmansey, Schoolmaster of Boston, Massachusetts,” *Register* 175 (2021): 345–347, at 346.

¹⁸ Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*, 120: “Anna, wife of Leiut. Jno. Cuttler.”

- Robert¹ and Anne (Clarke) Woodmansey.^[19] He m. (2) Charlestown, 29 Oct. 1684, MEHITABLE (NOWELL) HILTON,^[20] daughter of Increase¹ and Parnell (Gray) (Parker) Nowell and widow of William (*William*¹) Hilton.^[21]
- ii. REBECCA CUTLER, bp. 10 Oct. 1630, bur. Wargrave, 22 Feb. 1631/2.
- iii. REBECCA CUTLER (again), bp. 11 Nov. 1632, living 29 Nov. 1689 (granted land in Cambridge, Mass.);^[22] m. Cambridge, 1649 or 1650, ABRAHAM¹ ERRINGTON,^[23] bp. All Saints, Newcastle, Northumberland, 19 June 1622,^[24] d. 9 May 1677,^[25] son of William^A and Anne¹ (Liddell) Errington.^[26]
- iv. HANNAH CUTLER, bp. 15 Feb. 1634/5, d. Charlestown, 2 Dec. 1674;^[27] m. there 29 Aug. 1654, as his second wife, MATTHEW¹ GRIFFIN,^[28] d. there 29 Dec. 1691.^[29] Matthew m. (3) by 1678, Deborah (Norton) Hill, daughter of Francis¹ and Mary (Houghton) Norton and widow of Zachariah (*Abraham*¹) Hill.^[30]
- v. NATHANIEL CUTLER, bp. Charlestown, 8 Nov. 1640, d. there, 13 Aug. 1678;^[31] m. there 2 Sept. 1668 ELIZABETH CARTER,^[32] d. there, 3 Nov. 1694,^[33] daughter of Thomas (*Thomas*¹) and Anna (_____) Carter.^[34]

Randy A. West, FASG (746west@comcast.net) has an interest in discovering the English origins of seventeenth-century immigrants to New England.

¹⁹ Robert Battle and John C. Brandon, "Identity of Anne, First Wife of Robert¹ Woodmansey, Schoolmaster of Boston, Massachusetts, and of Her Niece, Anne¹ (Not Storer), Wife of James Truman and Robert Skinner of Maryland," *Register* 177 (2023):67–84, at 75.

²⁰ Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*, 123: "Deacon Jno. Cutler & Mehetabel Hilton, widow."

²¹ Robert Charles Anderson, *The Winthrop Fleet: Massachusetts Bay Company, Immigrants to New England, 1629–1630* (Boston: NEHGS, 2012), 499–504 (sketch of Increase Nowell), at 503.

²² *The Register Book of the Lands and Houses in the "New Towne" and the Town of Cambridge* (Cambridge: John Wilson & Son, 1896), 168, 176, "A Record of the lotts Granted to the Propriet[ors] of the Com[m]ons in the towne of Cambridge" included in the first division, "The forty eighth Lott was laid out to Widow Errington."

²³ Middlesex County, Massachusetts, deeds, vol. 1 (transcript), p. 248 [FSL DGS 7448437], image 198. The date of the marriage is blank, but it is between marriages in 1649 and 1650.

²⁴ Kerry William Bate, "The English Origins of the Cambridge, Massachusetts, Errington Family," *Register* 132 (1978):44–50, at 50.

²⁵ William Thaddeus Harris, *Epitaphs From the Old Burying-Ground in Cambridge* (Cambridge: John Owen, 1845), 6: "Here lies y^e body of Abraham Erinton [sic] aged 55 y[ea]rs dec[ease]d May y^e 9 1677."

²⁶ Bate, "The English Origins of the Cambridge, Massachusetts, Errington Family," 49.

²⁷ Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*, 91: "Hannah, wife of Mathew Griffin."

²⁸ Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*, 14: "Matthew Griffin & Hannah Cutler, both of Charlestowne." Wyman stated that Matthew married an earlier wife named Joan before he married Hannah Cutler (Wyman, *Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown*, 1:445, citing "returns in Reg[istry] of Deeds," but the source has not been found).

²⁹ Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*, 30, "Mathew Griffin Senr."

³⁰ Roger Thompson, "The English Origins of Captain Francis Norton of Charlestown, Massachusetts," *Register* 165 (2011): 273–279, at 278 [NB: the citation on that page (in note 35) should be to page 445 of Wyman's *Charlestown* rather than 455]

³¹ Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*, 104: "Nathaniell Cutler of Charlstowne, d. of smallpox."

³² Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*, 70: "Nathaniell Cutler & Elizabeth Carter."

³³ Joslyn, *Vital Records of Charlestown*, 163: "Elizabeth Cutler, widow."

³⁴ Wyman, *Genealogies and Estates of Charlestown*, 1:187.