

Sir William Rowan Hamilton's descent

A discussion of the claims made in 1866 by Peter Guthrie Tait

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From in any case September 1866, when the Scottish physicist Peter Guthrie Tait (1831-1901) published his obituary about Sir William Rowan Hamilton (1805-1865),¹ there have been discussions about whether Hamilton was of Scottish or Irish descent, and whether or not his mother, Sarah Hutton (1780-1814), had been related to the "celebrated Dr. Hutton." Tait claimed Hamilton to have been Scottish, while Robert Perceval Graves (1810-1893) went to great lengths to show that he was Irish. Although Graves was right about the Irish descent, that Hamilton's mother may have been related to 'Dr. Hutton' as Tait claimed may have been right, yet not in the sense Graves suggested.

On pp. 20-21 of his obituary Tait writes,

Genius is something of a loftier order than the lucid, logical, and quick-witted intelligence of the barrister or the mathematician; it involves essentially an unusual amount of the creative or originative power, and it was in this sense that the ancients regarded the higher flights of the imagination; as the term "poet" remains to testify in most civilized languages.

But if to genius be added enormous erudition and untiring energy, we can hardly set limits to our expectations of what its possessor may achieve, if but life and health be granted to him. When such a phenomenon (as [a man of genius] may well be called) occurs, it behooves us common mortals to study and examine him. Everything about him, even, or perhaps especially, his peculiarities, is deserving of the most careful attention.

Scotland has had such men. In the words of one of the most remarkable of them -

*"Yet Caledonia claims some native worth,
As dull Boeotia gave a Pindar birth;"*

¹ Tait, P.G. (1866), [Sir William Rowan Hamilton](#). *The North British Review*, 45 (Sept): 37-74. Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas. For readability see the [transcription](#) by David Wilkins.

few, of course, in actual number, because they are everywhere rare; but many, when her small population is considered. Such a list as Napier, Watt, Scott, Hunter, Black, Maclaurin, and Cochrane, though perhaps not including even all of the very first rank, forms a galaxy nowhere to be surpassed. But, besides these undoubted Scotsmen, there are others, such as Byron for instance, who are only not Scottish by a sort of legal fiction. This was the case with Hamilton, whose name will not only rank with any in the foregoing list, but will undoubtedly be classed with those of the grandest of all ages and countries, such as Lagrange and Newton.

His grandfather came over from Scotland to Dublin with two young sons, of whom Archibald became a solicitor in Dublin, James the curate of Trim, county Meath. A branch of the Scottish family to which they belonged had settled in the north of Ireland in the time of James I., and this seems to have given rise to the common impression that Hamilton was an Irishman. Archibald married a relative of the celebrated Dr. Hutton, and their son, William Rowan Hamilton, was born in Dublin on the 4th of August 1805."

In the first volume of his 1880s biography² Graves comments on Tait's claim about Hamilton's grandfather. Stating the question in the Table of Contents, Chapter 1, "- Descent, Scotch or Irish?" (I, xi), he discusses Hamilton's descent. Graves gives a family tree (I, xix) up to Hamilton's great-grandparents, and in a later *Addendum* that his great-grandparents were Francis Hamilton and Margaret(?) Blood (.. -1811).³ He gives an account (I, 2-3) of how Hamilton's Scottish grandmother Grace McFerrand met his grandfather, the Dublin apothecary William Hamilton (.. - 1783)⁴ and discusses the Blood family. Then he gives a part of a "narrative from the pen of Archibald Hamilton, " Hamilton's father,⁵ in which "he records some facts connected with his own and his father's history" (I, 4-5).

Speaking of his father, [Archibald] says: 'he was descended from a very respectable stock of ancestors both on the male and female side.' Recording the marriage of his mother (Grace M'Ferrand) he says: 'as fate would have it, her husband bore the same surname as Mr. Gawen

² Robert Perceval Graves (1882), *Life of Sir William Rowan Hamilton*. Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, & Co. Hereafter referred to as I. Likewise for volume II (1885), and volume III (1889).

³ In 1891 Graves wrote an *Addendum* to his biography, which was printed as a [15 page pamphlet, transcribed](#) and given open access by David R. Wilkins. In this *Addendum* Graves mentions that Hamilton's sister Sydney told him, apparently after the publication of the first volume of the biography in 1882 which contains the Hamilton family tree, that the Christian name of their great-grandfather was Francis. (Graves erroneously writes "the father of William Rowan Hamilton", which of course should have been "the father of William Hamilton," the apothecary.) This Francis Hamilton [married](#) Margaret(?) Blood who was, most likely, [buried](#) 29 May 1811, aged above [one hundred](#) years. They had in any case four children, William, Francis, Roger, and Margaret. The eldest son William, Hamilton's grandfather, married most likely in [1774](#) the Scottish Grace McFerrand; for that story see Robert Graves, Anne van Weerden (1882, 2020), *Grace McFerrand*, unpublished. Francis was a [saddler](#) at Castle Street. From the [Alumni Dublinenses](#) (p. 360, image 383) it is known that Hamilton's '[Cousin Arthur](#)' (1776-1840), actually a cousin of his father, was indeed the son of Francis, Generosus (of [gentle birth](#)). Arthur was born in 1776 as his [eldest son](#); Francis will therefore have been the Francis Hamilton who in 1775 [married](#) Mary Butler in Dublin. Graves wrote that Francis was an [alderman](#) but that was not found, yet he was in any case in [1800](#) and [1804](#) a member of the Dublin Common Council. Next to William and Francis there was a brother Roger, who was [alive in 1785 and 1786](#) (p 3, fn 11). Their sister Margaret Hamilton [married](#) a J. Collins; she was [alive in 1821](#). A strange feature of the *Addendum* is that Graves calls Hamillton 'Rowan Hamilton', something he did not do in his biography. Rowan was Hamilton's second given name, not his surname, and he called himself '[Hamilton](#)'.

⁴ Grace McFerrand was from Kirkmaiden, Scotland. In 1763 Mrs. Hamilton of Killyleagh Castle had 'adopted' Grace, who then was twenty years old. Mrs. Hamilton introduced her to William Hamilton, her later husband.

⁵ Archibald Hamilton was the fourth son of William and Grace, two of the elder brothers died early. See Anne van Weerden, [The Hamiltons of Jervis Street and the name Rowan](#), unpublished.

Hamilton,⁶ though in no way whatever related to him.' And again, speaking of himself, he says, that 'he was called by his Christian-name after the son of Mr. Gawen Hamilton (namely, Archibald Hamilton Rowan), from which trifling circumstance, added to his personal attachment to the latter, many supposed an affinity existed where no intermixture of blood ever circulated.' This passage, while disclaiming all retension to relationship with the Hamiltons of Killileagh Castle, throws no light upon the question of William Hamilton's origin. It contains, however, a statement that his father was of gentle birth on the paternal as well as on that maternal side which connected him with the Blood family. [...]

It has been necessary to insist with some detail upon these facts, because Professor Tait of Edinburgh, in his Article upon 'HAMILTON' published in the North British Review for September, 1866, lays claim to his mathematical chief and friend as virtually a countryman of his own, asserting that 'his grandfather came over from Scotland to Dublin with two young sons of whom Archibald became a solicitor in Dublin, James the Curate of Trim, county Meath.' This assertion my investigations have disproved. The father of these sons is first met with as a very eminent apothecary in Dublin, introduced there by an Irish lady to her protegee whom he marries in Dublin,⁷ where his sons are born;* his brother Francis, who was younger than himself, became an alderman of the Corporation of Dublin, and in the record of his son's matriculation in the Entrance-book of Trinity College, Dublin, is styled 'generosus,' i.e. 'of gentle birth.'⁸ Of his father, as I have said, no particulars, save the one that he was also of gentle birth, have been handed down, but his mother was a daughter of a well-known Irish family. The mistake, wherever it originated, arose, doubtless, from the fact that the [p]aternal grandmother⁹ of Sir W. R. Hamilton was of Scottish birth. To this extent Scottish blood was in his veins; and there may probably be truth in the family tradition that the branch of the extensive Hamilton clan to which he belonged came over to Ireland in the reign of James I., as well as that more distinguished branch represented by the successive owners of Killileagh Castle. But impossible as it has been found by me to trace his lineage upwards beyond what has been given, enough has been ascertained to warrant Irishmen in claiming Hamilton as fully an Irishman; and I may add that however he might have felt gratified by the counter-claim I have cited, he would not himself have willingly resigned that identification with Ireland as his country, which he was always ready to assert, which excited in him a warm patriotic affection, to which he more than once gave poetical expression, and which prompted the habitual feeling of ambition that his works might add to her renown.

* The memorandum of admission of Archibald Hamilton as freeman of the city of Dublin in the year 1802 adds the words 'by birth.'

The first conclusion which can be drawn is that Tait's claim, that Hamilton's father had been born in Scotland, is erroneous, and that the claim he suggested to have given rise to the erroneous suggestion that Hamilton was Irish is probably right. The family did not doubt that; on 14 July 1852 Hamilton's friend Augustus De Morgan asked, "Are you of Scotch origin? - by name and arms you seem to be so," and on 26 July Hamilton answered, "We do claim to be Scotch, of the time of James I." (III, 385, 393).

⁶ The Hamiltons of Killyleagh Castle, County Down, Northern Ireland.

⁷ Mrs. Hamilton and Grace MacFerrand.

⁸ This son was Hamilton's "Cousin Arthur," who after the death of his parents became a father figure. For the record see p. 383 of the [Alumni Dublinenses](#).

⁹ In his [Addendum](#), see footnote 3, Graves corrected this mistake, having written maternal instead of paternal.

Yet Tait's mistake may have had a very simple origin. Late in 1858 Hamilton and Tait started a correspondence, and in December 1858 Hamilton wrote to Tait, "I am partly Scotch by my father's side" (III, 104-105, 108), where he will have alluded to his grandmother Grace McFerrand, yet without saying so. In 1859 Hamilton and Tait met at the meeting of the British Association in Aberdeen, and in 1861 Tait visited Hamilton at the Observatory for two days (III, 118, 132-133). Because Tait then was professor of natural philosophy at the University of Edinburgh, Hamilton may have told him about his Scottish grandmother. If Hamilton did not write about this but only mentioned it either during the very busy meeting in Aberdeen, or during the two for Tait doubtlessly impressive days of conversation at the Observatory, five or more years later a mix-up is easily made, perhaps explaining Tait's mistake.

Eight months earlier, in January 1866, Augustus De Morgan had also published an obituary about Hamilton.¹⁰ About Hamilton's descent and 'Dr. Hutton' he writes,

William Rowan Hamilton belonged to a branch of the Scotch family, which settled in the North of Ireland in the time of James I. He was born August 4, 1805. His father was Archibald Hamilton, a solicitor at Dublin, a man of character and ability. His mother was Miss Sarah Hutton, of a well-known Dublin family, related to the late Dr. Hutton.

Augustus De Morgan was right about Hamilton's descent because Hamilton had written that to him, and different from Tait who wrote "the celebrated Dr. Hutton," he wrote "the late Dr. Hutton."

In 1869 Clement Ingleby, since 1861 a friend of Hamilton, wrote an obituary.¹¹ He obviously had read Tait's 1866 article because he quotes Tait. In his article Ingleby claims that Hamilton's paternal grandparents were born in Scotland, but not that his father was born there. Ingleby also does not mention 'Dr. Hutton'.

By his father's side, Hamilton was Scotch. Scotland was the native country of his grandparents, but Ireland was the country of their adoption. In Dublin were born to them two sons, one of whom, Archibald, became a solicitor, and married Miss Sarah Hutton.

In 1890 R.E. Anderson published a biographical sketch of Hamilton in the *Dictionary of National Biography*,¹² in which he openly took the side of Tait and Ingleby.

Hamilton, Sir William Rowan (1805–1865), mathematician, born in Dublin at midnight, between 3 and 4 Aug. 1805, was the fourth child of Archibald Hamilton, a solicitor there, and his wife Sarah Hutton, a relative of Dr. Hutton the mathematician. Archibald Hamilton was Scottish by birth, and went to Dublin when a boy with his father, William Hamilton, who settled as an apothecary there, and his mother, who was the daughter of the Rev. James McFerrand, parish minister of Kirkmichael, Galloway. The Rev. R. P. Graves maintains that William Rowan Hamilton was Irish by descent, while admitting that both the paternal and maternal grandmothers are Scottish; but the express statements of Professor Tait and Dr. Ingleby that the paternal grandfather went to Dublin from

¹⁰ Augustus De Morgan (1866), [Sir W. R. Hamilton](#), *The Gentleman's Magazine*, New series, 1 (Jan): 128-134. For readability see the [transcription](#) by David Wilkins.

¹¹ Clement Mansfield Ingleby (1869), [The Late Sir William Rowan Hamilton](#), *The British Controversialist* 22: 161-176. For readability see the [transcription](#) by David Wilkins.

¹² R. E. Anderson, [Hamilton, Sir William Rowan](#), printed 1890. Unfortunately not open access.

*Scotland seem conclusive. The apothecary had also brought a second son, James, from Scotland, who studied for the church, became curate of Trim, co. Meath, and earned some reputation as a linguist.*¹³

Graves reacted, to which Mr. Anderson replied, followed again by a letter by Graves. This discussion gave rise to the *Addendum* to his biography,¹⁴ in which he gave a complete account of his discussion with Mr. Anderson.

Showing again that also Hamilton's grandfather William Hamilton was of Irish parents,¹⁵ and repeating Hamilton's claim that "his particular branch of the Hamilton family came from Scotland to Ireland in the reign of James I.", Graves then contemplates how Tait and Ingleby had come to their knowledge, because, as he asserts,

Let it be remembered, in the first place, that it was impossible for either of them to possess personal knowledge of the facts.

This assertion is totally unfounded. During Hamilton's last years both Tait and Ingleby had frequent contact with him, and like Tait also Ingleby visited Hamilton at the observatory; there is not any reason to assume that Hamilton, who was a family man, could not have told them about his descent. Yet not believing they could have possessed personal knowledge, Graves suggests that their information came from Hamilton's eldest son William Edwin, who indeed provided them and several others with information. Yet that was mainly about his father's ways of working.¹⁶

But Graves's suggestion contains the idea that William Edwin and his cousin James Alexander, son of James Hamilton, would have believed themselves that their grandfather was born in Scotland. That is completely unimaginable. From the letters in Graves' biography it is very clear that the Hamiltons were close, having much contact with each other and with their extended family, and that they generally were intelligent people. It is in fact quite puzzling why Graves made such complicated suggestions. Realising that Tait wrote his obituary from a scientific point of view, and Ingleby from a philosophical one, it would make more sense to assume that, as is so often the case, they just mixed-up some details. For Ingleby these details may simply have been unimportant, but for Tait a, perhaps unconscious, motivation could have been that he was happily claiming Hamilton for Scotland.

Following Hamilton and Graves, and having found birth records of most of the children of Hamilton's grandparents William and Grace of Jervis-street,¹⁷ the first claim can be concluded now; his paternal grandmother Grace was Scottish, and his branch of the Hamilton family was Irish from the early 1600s.

That leaves Tait's second claim, the relation between the Hutton family and 'Dr. Hutton', and connected with it a Scottish ancestry for Hamilton's mother Sarah Hutton.

¹³ This part is also repeated in Graves' *Addendum*.

¹⁴ See footnote 3, 9 and 13.

¹⁵ In the second letter in the *Addendum* Graves reacts to his mistake about the paternal or maternal grandparent, see footnote 9.

¹⁶ Anne van Weerden and Steven Wepster (2018), [A most gossiped about genius](#): Sir William Rowan Hamilton. *BSHM Bulletin: Journal of the British Society for the History of Mathematics*, 33 (1): 2-20.

¹⁷ See footnote 5.

On the first page of his 1895 autobiographical pamphlet *Peeps*¹⁸ William Edwin mentions his descent. As regards the Hamilton family he only makes a remark about Archibald Hamilton,¹⁹ his grandfather, but about the Huttons he writes,

My father's mother's family, the Huttons, were from Yorkshire.

Why William Edwin explicitly suggests Yorkshire is not known, but where the England part of that notion came from seems to be easy to explain. In the preface to the *Descendants of Robert Hutton*²⁰ it is stated that "Mary Hutton of "Fairfield" used to say that her father claimed descent from an officer in Cromwell's army who was granted lands in Ireland." This Mary Hutton (ca 1792-1887) was a cousin of Hamilton's mother Sarah; both were granddaughters of Robert Hutton, a Dublin tannery owner.²¹ William Edwin was born in 1834 at Dunsink Observatory and Mary lived in nearby Glasnevin. Her house having been a "family centre,"²² he may have known her very well. About 'Dr. Hutton' he makes no claim, and as, supposedly, some errors in Tait's and Ingleby's obituaries, also for William Edwin mentioning Yorkshire may have been a minor detail.

About 'Dr. Hutton', something remarkable happened. Neither Ingleby nor William Edwin mentioned 'Dr. Hutton'; De Morgan wrote, in 1866, "the late Dr. Hutton;" Tait mentioned, also in 1866, the "celebrated Dr. Hutton;" Anderson wrote in 1899 "Dr. Hutton the mathematician." But in the *Addendum* Graves takes it a step further.

I learn from members now living, no connexion whatever of relationship subsisted with Charles Hutton, the eminent mathematician, presumably referred to in the text of the 'Dictionary.'

This seems to be the first time that Dr. Hutton's first name is mentioned, Charles, yet Graves also writes "presumably."

It can indeed be wondered whether 'Dr. Hutton' as referred to by Tait was Charles Hutton (1737-1823), the mathematician from Newcastle. Tait, who was from Midlothian, from Dalkeith which is south-east of Edinburgh, mentioned 'Dr. Hutton' while claiming Hamilton for Scotland, to which a relationship with the English Charles Hutton would not contribute.

Yet there is another and much more obvious candidate, namely the geologist James Hutton (1726-1797). Whom De Morgan was thinking of when he wrote "the late Dr. Hutton" is not known. His expression seems to suggest it was someone who in 1866 had died 'recently', but both 1823, when Charles died, and 1797, when James died, were quite some time ago. But assuming that Tait was thinking of James Hutton seems logical. Which Dr. Hutton was more famous is of no importance; Tait's mentioning Dr. Hutton had nothing to do with claiming fame for Hamilton. He was arguing that Hamilton was Scottish, and James Hutton was from Edinburgh. This assumption entails a surprise.

¹⁸ Hamilton, W.E. (1895), [*Peeps at my life*](#). Chatham: Banner Printing Company.

¹⁹ Underpinning the suggestion that he knew the Hamilton's were from Dublin.

²⁰ Sarah Lupton Swanwick, James Edmund Jones, Sarah Lawrence (1899), [*Descendants of Rev. Philip Henry. descendants of Robert Hutton*](#). Toronto: The Browne-Searle Printing Co.

²¹ Jim Cooke (2009), [*Hutton, John*](#), *Dictionary of Irish Biography*.

²² See the preface of *The Descendants*.

In 1899 *The Descendants* was published, giving an overview of the family of Robert Hutton (1710-1779), the tannery owner. He was the father of for instance Robert Hutton, Sarah Hutton's father and Hamilton's grandfather, Henry Hutton who was Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1803, and John Hutton the famous coach-builder.²³ Combining the preface of *The Descendants* and the Geni website,²⁴ it appears that Robert was a son of George Hutton (1675-1742), son of Thomas Hutton (.. -1690) (son of Laurence and Jane, no further data). Hereafter, in the Appendix, it is shown that this Thomas, if he was an officer in Cromwell's army as Mary Hutton claimed, cannot have been born in 1635, as given in the Geni record; he must have been somewhat older.

Yet it is also shown in the Appendix that the Geni data are generally in very good agreement with both *The Descendants*, and with the Dublin church records. Suppose then that Thomas Hutton was indeed born in Berwickshire as the Geni website claims, which is not at all far-fetched because the parish of Hutton was in Berwickshire,²⁵ but about ten years earlier as discussed in the Appendix, then that may have been the connection Tait was thinking of or perhaps even had knowledge of; Midlothian, where Tait came from, and Berwickshire border on each other.

The Hutton connection could then be found in proximities. James Hutton, the geologist, was a son of William Hutton, a merchant who was Edinburgh City treasurer, and Sarah Balfour.²⁶ Sarah and William owned the Slighhouses farm in Berwickshire, only some ten kilometres from Hutton, and in the early 1750s James moved to Slighhouses. Thomas Hutton had left for Ireland about a hundred years earlier, but it is easy to imagine that many family members still lived in the neighbourhood. It would therefore be very interesting to search the records for a connection between the Cromwellian officer Thomas Hutton and the Edinburgh geologist James Hutton. Or even Tait's papers; he does after all sound as if he felt certain.

Concluding, next to his paternal grandmother having been Scottish, Hamilton did have Scottish ancestry, but both the Huttons and the Hamiltons had already settled in Ireland in the seventeenth century.

And of course, this whole discourse has nothing to do with inherited intellect as has been claimed or denied, both families had their very intelligent members. Even today it is not known where extraordinary genius, as Hamilton had or was, so suddenly comes from.

²³ See footnote 21.

²⁴ [Thomas Hutton \(1635-1690\)](#). For reliability see the Appendix.

²⁵ [Hutton](#) is now a small village in the Scottish Borders region.

²⁶ Remarkably, just as in the Dublin church records, see the Appendix, in James Hutton's baptism record William Hutton's name was written as [Hutten](#).

Appendix

Thomas Hutton (1625(?) -1690)

In the preface of *The Descendants of Robert Hutton*²⁷ it is suggested that the father of Robert Hutton (1710-1779), the Dublin tannery owner and great-grandfather of Sir William Rowan Hamilton (1805-1865), was George, and that his father was Thomas, who married in 1662. These suggestions are in complete agreement with the family tree on the Geni website,²⁸ which gives the branch starting with Thomas Hutton who died in 1690.

The following list is a combination of family tree on the Geni website and the tree as given in *The Descendants*, here given backwards in time, starting with Mary Hutton of Fairfield, who "used to say that her father claimed descent from an officer in Cromwell's army who was granted lands in Ireland."

Mary Hutton of "Fairfield" (1792-1887, shown on Geni as 'Private'), was a daughter of Rev. Joseph Hutton (1765-1856). He was a son of Hamilton's grandfather Robert Hutton (ca.1710-ca.1779, tannery owner, the subject of *The Descendants of Robert Hutton*).²⁹ He was a son of George Hutton (1675-1742), who was a son of Thomas Hutton (.. -1690), the "officer in Cromwell's army" who married Ann Frizell in 1662.³⁰

That an ancestor called Thomas Hutton was in Cromwell's army is corroborated in an article in the Dublin Historical record,³¹

"The Hutton's of Summerhill trace their Irish ancestry to Thomas Hutton, an officer in Cromwell's army, who was given a grant of confiscated land in Ulster in the 17th century.

Not in perfect but in good accord with the data on the Geni website are the Dublin [baptism and burial records](#) of the children of Thomas Hutton and Ann Frizell, and the burial record of Thomas, as given below. All baptisms and burials were in the parish of St. Peter. Unfortunately, none of these records have been scanned yet, making linking directly impossible.

²⁷ Sarah Lupton Swanwick, James Edmund Jones, Sarah Lawrence (1899), [Descendants of Rev. Philip Henry, descendants of Robert Hutton](#). Toronto: The Browne-Searle Printing Co. For the suggestions, see the preface on p 57.

²⁸ [Thomas Hutton \(1635-1690\)](#).

²⁹ This Robert Hutton was the father of for instance John the coach builder, Henry who was Lord Mayor in 1803, and Hamilton's grandfather Robert, whose profession was not found.

³⁰ As mentioned in the Preface of *The Descendants*, p 57.

³¹ Jim Cooke (1992), '[John Hutton and Sons, Summerhill, Dublin](#), Coachbuilders 1779-1925', *Dublin Historical Record*, 45 (1): 11-27.

Abigail Hutton of St Kevins was buried in 1673,
George Hutton, child of Thomas and Anne of St Kev, was baptised on 14 May 1676,
Batholl (which will be a misread for Rachel) Hutton, child of Thomas and Ann, was baptised 3
May 1680,
Isaac Hutton, child of Thomas and Ann, was baptised on 22 June 1681,
Thomas Hutten of Kavin street was buried on 23 August 1690.

Apparently, the family lived at Kevin Street, Dublin. If Thomas Hutton and Ann Frizell married in 1662, but the first Dublin record of the family is the 1673 burial record of their child Abigail, a scenario might be that Thomas and Ann came to Dublin around 1670, and that they already had a number of children before they settled in Dublin.

Having shown that much of the information on the Geni site about this family branch is more or less correct, also the suggestion that Thomas Hutton was born in Berwickshire may be correct. Yet there is a real problem with his year of birth.

In the list of officers in Cromwell's army³² there are four Huttons: two George Huttons, a Robert and a Thomas Hutton. The latter was in Captain in George Dodding's Lancaster regiment of foot, which was active in 1648.³³ According to the record, Thomas Hutton owed arrears of £788 7s 2d in Sept. 1650. If he was born in 1635 this would make him thirteen when he would have been an officer, and fifteen when he owed the arrears. Having been born in 1635 is therefore virtually impossible.

Searching for the smallest mistake, suppose that 1635, given as Thomas' birth year on Geni, was just a misread for 1625.³⁴ Boys entered the army very early; in any case around 1800 they regularly entered with twelve. If he was born in 1625, Thomas thus could have entered the army around 1640, when he was fifteen, become an officer in 1648 with twenty-three, move to Ireland in 1655 with thirty,³⁵ marry in 1662 with thirty-seven, and die in 1690 with sixty-five, still not very old. He thus easily may have been even a few years older.

³² The Cromwell Association Online Directory of Parliamentarian Army Officers, [surnames H](#). Originally published by British History Online, 2017.

³³ Idem, [surnames D](#).

³⁴ The Geni record of [Thomas Hutton](#) does contain some errors or misreads; for instance one of his children would have been born five months after a sibling.

³⁵ The lands were confiscated from 1652, this [map](#) reads 1654.