

The Identity of Lucina, Wife of John A. Tarrant (d. 1864), of New York, New York.

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In compiling my “Charles H. Smith: A Direct-Line Ancestry, Since Colonial Times” (published online in 2020), I was initially foiled in my attempts to identify the parents of my great-great-grandfather John A. Tarrant (d. 1864), onetime owner of a highly successful wholesale drugs firm in New York City, or those of his wife Lucina (d. 1857). Some basic detective work I’ve carried out since that time has produced progress on the matter, as I now report.

Tarrant & Co. is now most remembered for a terrible fire and series of explosions its headquarters in New York City suffered in 1900, killing or injuring more than two hundred people. By that time John Tarrant was long dead; his older brother James had founded the firm in 1834, and on his death in 1852 John took over. He died a fairly wealthy man only twelve years later, on 7 September 1864, in Flushing, Queens, New York (one of his two residences at that point).

Various public records identify his wife by the name Lucina (with a number of variants, including Lucinda, Lucine, Lucinne, Lucy, etc.), but none of these reveal her parents’ name, or her exact date or place of birth. The same is true of her husband. An obituary at the time of Lucina’s death on 1 January 1857 describes her as being 34 years and seven months of age, placing the date of her birth as about June 1822, but in the U. S. Census of 1850 her age is given as thirty, suggesting she was born in the year preceding June 1820. Meanwhile, various sources estimate John’s date of birth as being between 1819 and 1822, with multiple census and other records contributing to the confusion. Originally, my own appraisal of the disparate facts involved suggested he was most likely born between 7 September 1819 and 7 September 1820, but this was still a guess. Further, several census and other records were in disagreement as to whether John was born in England, or in New York.

The first new piece of significant information I came across was a statement made by a witness as part of the court record of litigation filed after John’s death regarding the disposition of his will (a woman purporting to be a second wife of John’s came forward to lay claim to some of his fortune). On 27 January 1865 a man named Charles S. Hyde testified that he was “a fireman on board the United States steam sloop of war Brooklyn. ... I am his [Tarrant’s] brother in law. I have known him about thirty-eight years, ever since I was five or six years of age. ...we were both brought up together and went to school together.” I have not been able to find much more about this individual, save (1) that he enlisted in the Navy on 16 January 1864 at the age of 42, and (2) was probably married to a woman named Joanna Feenan of Brooklyn on

21 March 1853 (but who died only six weeks later, on 30 April 1853). The sum of information I have on him suggests he was possibly born between 16 January 1821 and 16 January 1822, and knew John Tarrant as far back as about 1826. A researcher in New York was unable to locate his name on a list of those still serving in the Navy as of December 1864, but this was already several months after the Battle of Mobile Bay (in which he apparently took part) in early August, and he may well have mustered out by then (and again, note his appearance during the Tarrant will disposition just a month later, in January).

These connections were especially interesting to me, for personal reasons. My full name is Charles Hyde Smith, and it had never been made entirely clear to me where my middle name came from. I knew that I was directly named after my maternal grandfather, Charles Hyde Munson (1878-1948), but was uncertain as to where the 'Hyde' part came from originally. Meanwhile, it was family lore that 'the original' Charles Hyde had fought in the Battle of Mobile Bay on the *Brooklyn*, and I know that my just-mentioned grandfather was the son of Robert Randall Story Munson (1841-1917) and Lucina Tarrant (1845-1923), the latter being the younger daughter of John Tarrant. So, and considering the "brother-in-law" statement, it appeared likely that John Tarrant's wife's full maiden name was Lucina Hyde.

More recently I came across three additional bits of information that confirm this. First, I discovered an old request for genealogical information on the Tarrants my parents sent to the magazine *Yankee* in 1979 (now that I think of it, I can even recall them doing this); in it they refer to John Tarrant's wife as 'Lucy Hyde.' (It should be noted that my mother's original middle name was also Lucina; further, there are some other Lucinas in closely related wings of the extended Munson family of the late 1800s, and 1900s.) And, just a short while ago, I found an obscure Oregon death certificate for one Eliza Quimby (1838-1924) which, it turns out, was the married name of the oldest daughter of John and Lucina Tarrant. As Eliza Quimby she also appears in the 1865 litigation record regarding her father; importantly, the Oregon death certificate form required the deceased's mother's name, and this is given on it as 'Lucinda Hyde.' Further, the Green-Wood Cemetery records of her interment there give Lucina's age at death (1 Jan 1857) as "37 years, 7 months" instead of 34 years; thus the newspaper record alluded to above probably contains a transcription error (especially as the 1850 U.S. Census lists her as "30," which within a month jibes with a June 1819 birth date), as handwritten 4s and 7s from the nineteenth century often look much alike.

It has also proved possible to make a good stab at the likely names of Lucina Hyde's parents. None of the Hydies living in the Brooklyn-Queens area in the early 1800s seem to have left census or other records of families giving direct evidence of having children named Charles and Lucina, or even of any male or female children born around 1820. But there is one Hyde family from the area that appears promising in this respect: that of James Hyde (d. 1875, Fordham NY). James's ancestor John Hyde arrived in the New World in 1732, apparently separately from the main line of

American Hydes. About 1815 James married Mary Wright (1797-1865) of the Oyster Bay Wrights; together they had children over a rather long period, with some unusually substantial gaps in the record (I will discuss this further, along with James's lineage, in a future writing).

Further evidence of the important place of 'Hyde' in my direct lineage is given by the full name of the slightly younger brother of my paternal grandfather Charles Hyde Munson: Clarence Hyde Munson (1882-1970). Possibly Charles S. Hyde died around 1880, and the brothers received their great uncle's/grandmother's name in memory of them. Further, DNA tracings reveal matches, although not very strong ones, between myself and current-day descendants of two of Lucina Hyde's apparent siblings, Phoebe Ann (b. 1818) and Daniel W. (b. 1834) and between myself and a current-day descendant of James Hyde's sister Phebe (b. 1807), and numerous strong DNA matches between myself and descendants from my main maternal line proceeding through Lucina and John Tarrant, and the Munsons.

No such progress has been made on John Tarrant's parentage; one problem is that there were apparently few records-leaving Tarrants in the New York City area at that time (though there were many in England, and some elsewhere in the U. S.). Only two possibly useful leads suggest themselves. First, he is frequently listed as 'John A.', with no indication of what the 'A' stands for. It is almost certainly 'Alexander,' however, as son-in-law Robert Randall Story Munson's first son was named John Alexander Tarrant Munson, and this exact name was extended through two further generations ('II' and 'III') in the same line. Second, John's only two known siblings, James (abt. 1805-1852) and Eliza (abt. 1814-1859) were considerably older than he, and one or the other may have been half-siblings. Census records list both of them as having been born in New York, though as mentioned above several records give England as the place of John's birth. This does not add up; in 1850 James and Eliza were living in the same house, but I have no evidence that John ever lived with either of them. This suggests some possible unusual moves; for example that an older Mr. Tarrant, after fathering James and Eliza in New York, moved back to England to re-marry (or for other reasons), where John was born – and who then, for unknown reasons, was sent back to the U. S. around 1825 to live with Charles Hyde's family, per the "both brought up together and went to school together" statement alluded to earlier. This would of course explain how John Tarrant came to know Lucina Hyde, later to become his wife. It would also suggest that the elder Tarrants and Hydes were friends even before the births of John A. and Charles S.

The Green-Wood Cemetery records do at least provide Tarrant's exact age at death: "45 years, 10 mos., 13 days," meaning he was born on 25 October 1818. The same source records his place of birth as being England. The date fairly well accords with his alleged second wife's (Eleanor) statement in the will litigation record that he was 39 years old (in his 39th year?) when they supposedly married on 29 September 1857.

The details reported here affect a considerable number of family lines within the Munson clan William, both backward and forward. Robert Randall Story Munson (my paternal great-grandfather) had fifteen children, most of whom reached adulthood, and had sizable families of their own.

Appendix: Some other people connected to the John Tarrant/Lucina Hyde/James Hyde identity question:

Barrett, Catherine, d. April 1862: Probable second wife of Charles S. Hyde.; Mary Ann's sister.

Barrett, Mary Ann: Per testimony on 10/20/1864 concerning litigation on John Tarrant's will: she stated she was the sister-in-law of Charles S. Hyde. [Note the death record of Lucy Rooney, age 77, abt. 1859-1936, daughter of "Charles Hide & Catherine Barrett" (i.e., Lucy Hyde Rooney, widow of Joseph Rooney): <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:2WPX-PDK>]; re the 10/20/1864 deposition, concerning Charles S. Hyde: "I knew Charles S. Hyde the subscribing witness..." Q: How long has his residence been out of the state of New York? "about five months." Q: Where does he reside? "In the state of Virginia." Q: Where did he reside in December 1862? "I think at Flushing, Queens County."... Q: Is he a married man? "Yes." Q: What was his business in 1862? "He was there with Mr. Tarrant on the farm at Flushing, and resided up there on the farm." Q: With his family? "No." Q: When did he leave New York? "About five months ago." Q: For the seat of the war? "I suppose so."... Q: When did his wife die? "Three years the 25th of next April [i.e., she died 25 Apr 1862]: he has not kept house since then; have not heard of his being in the state of New York during the last five months: his small children are boarding with my mother and me" [ostensibly because Mary Ann was Catherine's sister]. Q: Have you corresponded with your brother in law Charles S. Hyde? "Yes. I never saw him write that I know of."

Bennet, Henry, d. 1801: One of only four persons buried in the Hyde Family Cemetery, Glen Cove (with James & Mary Hyde, and Phebe Crooker d. 1861). Quite possibly the son of Willem Bennet d. 1785: Willem married Elizabeth Carpenter (1738-1794), then their daughter Phebe (1769-1819) married Daniel Wright (1766-1819), who was the father of Mary (again, the wife of James Hyde). Records exist of a son or two of Willem and Elizabeth named 'Henry,' born in 1768, 1774, or 'before 1784'. Henry Bennet would therefore have been Phebe Bennet (Wright)'s brother, and Mary Wright (Hyde)'s uncle.

Crooker, Phebe, d. 1861: Buried in the Hyde Family Cemetery, Glen Cove (with James & Mary Hyde, and Henry Bennet d. 1801). Relations unknown, but an 'Abraham Crooker' and family are listed on the same two pages of the hand-recorded 1800 U.S. Census records for Oyster Bay as the John & William Hydes, John & James Bennetts, Samuel, Daniel & Joseph Wrights, and James Carpenters – surely not a coincidence. Perhaps the last name Crooker was actually Phebe's married name.

Duncan, William, d. 11/9/1858 (11/6/1858?): Buried in JA Tarrant's plot 6136-77 in Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn; per 1855 NY Census 50 years old & living with Eliza Tarrant, John's sister, in NYC (listed as her 's-brother'); was residing in Rockland Co. NY with Eliza T. when he died a widower at age 54; in 1855 NY Census listed as born in NY (state); born about 1804. So perhaps the mother of John A. Tarrant was remarried to a man named Duncan after JA was born?

Feenan, Joanna, of Brooklyn: Married Charles A. [sic] Hyde of New York on 3/21/1853 in Brooklyn (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle* of 3/26/1853), but died 4/30/1853 ("wife of Charles S. Hyde") aged 18 yrs 2 mos, 24 days, according to the *Brooklyn Evening Star* of 5/2/1853. Charles and Joanna were married by Rev. E. E. [sic] V. [actually, 'E. E. L.'] Taylor.

Feenan, Thomas: Hearnese's Brooklyn City Directory for 1850-51, p. 133 ('Hicks Street near Hamilton Avenue'). Very likely the father of Joanna: Hicks/Hamilton is less than ten blocks away from Rev. E. E. L. Taylor's Strong Place Baptist Church at 275 Court Street, where Charles and Joanna probably were married, and Feenan was a rare name in the U. S. at that time.

Gildersleeve, (Mary) Cornelia: 'Cousin' to Eliza Tarrant, John's sister, and living with her in 1855 at age 21 per NY Census; born in New York (state) per 1855 NY Census; born 15 July 1836 in Northport L.I. and died April 4 1910 in Brooklyn; married Thomas B. Young (1830-1907) in 1857 and made her home in Brooklyn; obit in *The Long-Islander* 4/8/1910; daughter of Thomas Whitehead Gildersleeve (1812-1887) & Frances B. Griffith (1808-1893).

Hyde, Charles S.: Per testimony on 10/20/1864 concerning litigation of John Tarrant's will: brother-in-law of Mary Ann Barrett; according to Barrett, C.S. Hyde was married as of 1862, and was working "with Mr. Tarrant on the farm at Flushing, and resided up there on the farm"...his wife had died "three years the 25th of next April"...his small children are boarding with my mother and me"; William Steel had known Charles S. Hyde for twenty-odd years. Likely is the Charles "A." Hyde "of New York" who married Joanna Feenan "of Brooklyn" in Brooklyn on 3/21/1853 (*NY Herald* 3/26/1853). Per 'U.S. Naval Enlistments 1855-1891': "Hyde Charles S. enl. 1/14/1864 1 term no previous naval service, born Brooklyn NY, age 42, carpenter, sandy hair, 5 ft. 7 in." Gave testimony in the JT Will litigation on 27 Jan. 1865. Pp. 216-219 of in New York, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1659-1999: Queens > *Wills of Real Estate, Vol 0012-0014, 1864-1867*: testimony given 1/27/1865 by Charles S. Hyde: "I am in the naval service of the United States and am a fireman on board the United States steam sloop of war *Brooklyn*. I knew John A. Tarrant deceased in his life time. I am his brother in law; I have known him about thirty eight years ever since I was five or six years of age."... "we were both brought up together, and went to school together"... "He [JT] did not know any other [language] than the English and I do not either." There is a record in the 1860 U.S. Census for Charles (30; druggist), Catherine (23), Lucina (5; see *Bennett, Mary Ann*, above) & William (3) Hyde, of New York NY NY Ward 16 District 4 (the ages don't quite match up, but otherwise the record seems relevant, especially if Charles was working for John Tarrant's business at that point). New York city and partnership directories circa 1842-44 give 'Charles & James Tarrant' as co-partners of the Tarrant pharmacy at 266 Greenwich Street NY NY and having the same home address at 292 Washington Street; perhaps this is a last name error for Charles Hyde, who may have been James Tarrant's co-worker at that point (despite being some fifteen years younger).

Hyde, Leonard [first name mis-transcribed as 'Seaman']: died 2/12/1854 age 34, born on Long Island ~1820; possible brother of Charles S. Hyde? ; buried in JA Tarrant's plot 6136-77 in Green-Wood Cemetery.

Hyde, Lucina, 1866-1936, daughter of Wm. C. Hyde (NYC 1835-?) & Letitia (NYC 1841-?). Any connection?

Hyde, Mary A.: Born Long Island approx. May 1786; died a widow 4 Feb 1871 (*New York Herald* 2/6/1871) age 84 years 9 months late residence Whitestone L.I. (funeral at home of Robert Story Munson); possibly married to a man named Charles Hyde with whom she had a child named Elle who died 4/3/1879; 1870 U.S. Census gives Mary at age 82 living with Robert Munson (age 29 b. 1841) & wife Lucina (age 28 b. 1845, daughter of JA Tarrant) in Flushing, Queens; Mary buried in JA Tarrant's plot 6136-77 in Green-Wood Cemetery.

Munson, Anne Hyde: Born 1778 in Lyme CT died 10/16/1862 in NY(C?) and buried in Sec K Lot 12858 Green-Wood Cemetery; father Benjamin Hyde 1717-1781 died in Norwich CT; wife of John Munson 1772-1818 died in New York. Possibly an aunt or cousin of James Hyde??

Munson, John Alexander Tarrant I, 1863-1940, first child of Robert Story Munson b. 1841 & Lucina Tarrant b. 1845 (and born one year before John A. Tarrant died); brother of Charles Hyde Munson (b.1878 in Whitestone NY); also, JATM II (Jr.): 1895-1985 & JATM III: 1924-1987.

Quimby, Eliza Tarrant, 1838-1924, first daughter of John A. Tarrant & Lucina Hyde; testified in the 'Tarrant v. Ware' contested probate of the will of Mrs. Eliza (Tarrant) Ware 25 N.Y. 422d, June 1862; Eliza Tarrant (Ware), older sister of JA Tarrant, was ETQ's aunt. ETQ married Josiah F. Quimby b. abt. 1837 in 1863; her father-in-law was Walter N. Quimby b. abt. 1797.

Tarrant, Eliza: Only sister of John A. Tarrant; age 46 at time of death 12/2/1859; age given as 51 (??) in 1855 NY Census 6/22/1855; age 36 in U.S. Census 6/1850; so possibly born between 12/3/1812 & 5/31/1814; at time of death the wife of Cyrus L. Ware; in 1855 NY Census living in Ward 8 NYC with s-brother William Duncan (age 50) and cousin Cornelia Gildersleeve (21), all born in New York (state); buried as Elizabeth Ware 6/12/1860 in JA Tarrant's plot 6136-77 in Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn; died in Clarksville, Rockland Co. NY per obit in newspaper (mentions funeral held at JA Tarrant's second home in NYC at No. 4 Renwick St.; gives her age as 46); per *Trow's Directory* 1855 living at 162 Wooster; had been married to Cyrus L. Ware for nearly four years when she died 12/2/1859 (they had no children). 'Tarrant v. Ware' 1 Jan 1862: 1862 WL 4772.

Tarrant, James: Only brother of John A. Tarrant; died 1852, buried in JA Tarrant's plot 6136-77 in Greenwood Cemetery. Did not marry. Founder of the Tarrants' pharmaceuticals business.

Tarrant, John: Made First Lieutenant in the First Infantry (*Evening Post* NYC 5/25/1815), 15 April 1815. Relevance unknown (possibly the father of John A. Tarrant?).

Ware, Cyrus L.: Had been married to Eliza Tarrant for nearly four years when she died 12/2/1859 (they had no children together).

Wright, Alonzo B.: Per testimony on 10/20/1864 concerning litigation on John Tarrant's will: Alonzo Bailey Wright, Whitestone resident, carriage maker and United States assessor, had known John Tarrant for about 4 years around 1860-64. Nominated for County Treasurer 10/11/1884 at meeting in Town Hall of Jamaica (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle* 10/12/1884); Sheriff of Queens Co. as of 12/17/1882 per story in the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*. Possible relationship to Mary Wright, James Hyde's wife?

—Charles H. Smith, September 2023.