

James Hyde (d. 1875) and Wife Mary Wright (d. 1865), of Long Island and New York City.

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In my “The Identity of Lucina, Wife of John A. Tarrant (d. 1864), of New York, New York” (published online in 2023), I offered several pieces of evidence that the last name of John Tarrant’s wife Lucina was Hyde. She seems not to have been the daughter of any of the Hydes who migrated into the New York City area from Connecticut in the early 1800s, but there is another, lesser known line of Hydes that settled there independently around 1732. James Hyde (d. 1875) was in the fourth generation of that family; his father John (1767-1834) was born in Marlborough, Ulster Co. NY and died in Glen Cove; his grandfather Henry (1741-1817) was born in Cold Spring, Oyster Bay and died in Pleasant Valley, Ulster Co.; his great grandfather John (abt. 1717 to after 1750) was born in England and appears to have died in the French and Indian War, perhaps while involved in road construction somewhere along the western frontier. This elder John, a clothdresser by occupation, was married to Johanna Bennet (1717-1750), the daughter of prominent shipwright Robert Bennet (1684-1743), at Trinity Church in New York City in 1738. John’s son Henry (d. 1817) was born on 5 November 1741, while John was living in Cold Spring. After John disappeared during the war the family moved; Henry married in Newburgh, Orange Co. in 1764 and was a resident of Ulster County thereafter. Henry’s wife was Annetje (Ann, Antje, etc.) Quick (1745 to after 1783), descendant of the Quick and Terwilliger lines that had been living in the southern New Holland region nearly from its inception. After marrying Phebe Travis (1761-1832) about 1788, Henry’s son John (d. 1834) probably lived most of the rest of his life in Oyster Bay. (Much of this information and some of what follows is taken from the older John Hyde’s bible, as described in the semi-publication “John Hyde of Long Island, New York, and His Descendants,” printed in 1995.)

This brings us to James Hyde, possibly the fourth child born to John and Phebe (Travis) Hyde. The details of his birth are a bit sketchy; an uncited date of 5 October 1794 is sometimes seen, and the place given variously as Queens, Glen Cove, and Long Island City. I think the 1794 date is probably actually his baptism date, as several later census records and an obituary suggest a date of birth more probably around late 1792. Similarly, little is known for sure about his early adulthood: for example, he may have served in the army in 1814 – there is a payroll slip for a “Private James Hyde” in that year and an obituary notice later placed him as a veteran of the War of 1812 – though the New York Census of 1865 records him as not formerly having been in the army or navy. Around 1815 he apparently was married somewhere in the New York City area (possibly Brooklyn) to one Mary Wright, of Oyster Bay.

Mary seems to have been a member of the celebrated Wright family of that town, as detailed in the major genealogical study *The Wright Family of Oysterbay, Long Island*. But

she is mentioned only twice in that work, as having been born “June 5, 1797” and married to one “James Hyde b. Oct. 5, 1794.” So is this really the right (or ‘Wright’...) person? Apparently so, as luckily she is mentioned in the print version of her father Daniel Ridge Wright’s (1766-1819) will as “Mary Hiae,” a mistranscription of her married name Mary Hyde (or actually the common alternate ‘Mary Hide’) from the original handwritten copy.

Despite these connections there are still some problems with the assumptions that the correct James Hyde has been identified, and that Charles S. Hyde and Lucina Hyde actually are the children of the James Hyde–Mary Wright union. To begin with, there were more than one James Hydes living in lower Manhattan during the time period in question. One was a James Hyde descended from the Connecticut Hydes (especially of the New London County part of the state). But he was James N(evin) Hyde, and though his wife was also named Mary and both he and ‘our’ James attended the Allen Street Church in New York City and had several of their children baptized there (and over the same period), the *United Methodist Church, Allen Street Records*, handwritten, always list “James N.” when he is the father, and sometimes give his wife as “Mary A.” or “Mary Ann.” Further, James (d. 1875) later lived with several of his children in their adult years, so they can be distinguished from the James N. family, who had moved to the New Orleans area. And, importantly, there are New York City directories for all the important years involved (roughly, 1810 through 1825), and these (especially the *Longworth’s* series) list only three James Hydes as present during this period: James N. (jeweler), James E. (mason/porterhouse), and James, consistently described from the 1817 edition on as a cartman (as he is in later U.S. and New York census records).

James and Mary are generally credited with having had eight to ten children, born over the years 1814 or 17 to 1846 (a large spread, but not impossible: if Mary was sixteen when she married, she would have been about forty-eight or -nine for her last). Their first baptized child may have been named James; the *UMC* baptism records are unclear as to whether this was a child born in 1814, or possibly James himself. The next two children were Phebe Ann, born 11/11/1817, and Mary Eliza, born 3/11/1819. But then there is a huge gap of almost ten years before the baptism of Aletta, born on 1/19/1829 (and followed by another Aletta – perhaps the first died as an infant), and Leonard Coit, born 8/22/1832. This ten-year gap in births as monitored by recorded baptisms, followed by the birth of at least six more children, is very odd – especially as the 1830 and 1840 U.S. Censuses itemize more children in the Hyde household than the *UMC* records account for.

I suspect that the Charles S. and Lucina Hyde described in my “The Identity of Lucina, Wife of John A. Tarrant (d. 1864), of New York, New York” were born to James and Mary during this gap period, but were not baptized at Allen Street, if at all. The city directories show that James moved around the southern end of Manhattan several times during these years, and perhaps this or some other reason accounts for the absence of these two birth records (and others?: see below). It is also not impossible that Charles and/or Lucina were born out of wedlock, or adopted by the Hydes. In the latter instance, perhaps one of James’s or Mary’s brothers or cousins was actually their father.

Further evidence of the significant role of 'Hyde' in my direct lineage is given by the full name of the slightly younger brother of my paternal grandfather Charles Hyde Munson (1878-1948): Clarence Hyde Munson (1882-1970). Possibly Charles S. Hyde died around 1880, and the brothers received their great uncle's/grandmother's last name in their memory. And, DNA tracings established through Ancestry.com reveal matches between myself and current-day descendants of two of Lucina Hyde's apparent siblings, Phebe Ann (b. 1817) and Daniel W. (b. 1834), and between myself and a current-day descendant of James Hyde's sister Phebe (b. 1807). This service has also found a DNA link between myself and one of Mary Wright's brothers, William (b. 1785), and a current-day descendant. These connections in turn provide links to Mary and James's parents and grandparents, including, for Mary: Daniel (Ridge) Wright (b. 1766) and Phebe Bennet (b. 1769), Daniel Wright (b. 1740), Sarah Walters (b. 1748), Willem Bennet (b. 1734) and Elizabeth Carpenter (b. 1738).

Additional insight as to the relations among these families can be gathered through where many of them were interred. In the tiny so-called 'Hyde Family Cemetery' in Glen Cove are buried only four persons: James (1875) and Mary (1865) Hyde, and Henry Bennet (1801) and Phebe Crooker (1861). Bennet is likely the brother of Phebe Bennet (b. 1869), wife of Daniel Ridge Wright (1766-1819), father of Mary Wright, James's wife; Crooker likely has ties to Abraham Crooker, a neighbor of the Hydys of Oyster Bay in 1800 (other neighbors, as suggested by the nearness of the hand-entered entries in that census, included the John and James Bennetts, Samuel Daniel and Joseph Wrights, and James Carpenters). In a separate plot in the Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, originally purchased by John A. Tarrant (d. 1864), lie the remains of John, his wife Lucina, John's older brother James (d. 1852) and sister Elizabeth (d. 1860), two Hydys (a 'Leonard Hyde' b. abt. 1823 and probably another relative of James Hyde, and Mary A. Hyde, 1788-1871, presumably a close relative (sister or cousin) of James, as she lived the final period of her life in my paternal great-grandfather Robert Story Munson's household, where the earlier-mentioned Charles H. Munson, my paternal grandfather, later grew up).

—Charles H. Smith, January 2024.