

THE ANCESTORS  
OF  
SILAS TINKER  
IN AMERICA.

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FROM 1637.

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A PARTIAL RECORD,

PREPARED BY A. B. TINKER, OF AKRON, AND READ AT THE  
ANNUAL REUNION OF THE DESCENDANTS OF  
SILAS TINKER, AT ASHTABULA, O.,  
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## INTRODUCTION.

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About the ancestors of SILAS TINKER<sup>5</sup> comparatively nothing was known by his descendants one year ago. This was not due to obscurity of facts, for within a small territory of New England four generations lived and died between 1662 and 1802. It is a little remarkable that the grandchildren of Silas Tinker,<sup>5</sup> many of whom are now living, did not know their great grandfather's name, nor any of the facts of his life. The causes for this ignorance of ancestry are mainly found, no doubt, in the want of wealth among our ancestors, in the wilderness which separated them from their Buckeye children, and in that independence which is born of hardship. It is possible, also, that we are lacking in that family pride and love of ancestral tradition which bind some families together through good and evil alike. Whatever the causes may have been, it is time that we awake to something like chivalry of race. No one is great who easily forgets the virtues of his father. Our grand republic owes half its strength to the veneration in which it holds the revolutionary and constitutional fathers by whom its foundations were laid. Let us hope that *our* great-grandchildren will not forget us so easily as those of Amos Tinker<sup>4</sup> (the father of Silas<sup>5</sup>) forgot him.

## THE NAME.

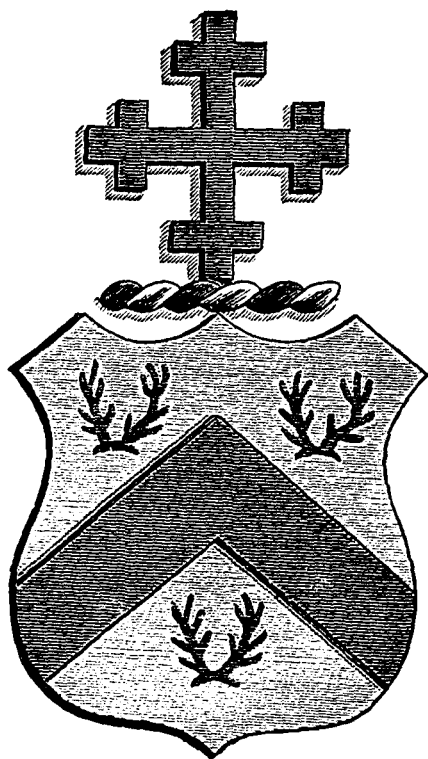
The name "Tinker" undoubtedly comes from the old English craftsman who mended kettles, pans and other ware, now-a-days more commonly called "tinner." Probably the name in its origin was "Tinkler," so called from the fact that this mender of kettles traveled from one neighborhood to another searching employment, and he heralded his coming by drumming or *tinkling* on a kettle. History furnishes us with the name of "Alice Tynkler" as far back as the 14th century. This occupation of our long-ago ancestors was indeed a humble one, and had the disadvantage of being rambling. Everyone knows that worldly respect is not for the rambler, else might the gypsies fare better.

In truth, the books tell us that the Tinkers were not far removed in degree from the strolling gypsies themselves; and, to make it still worse, the gypsies perhaps were the first "Tynklers." In the reign of Edward VI. a law was passed which declared that the Tinkers did more hurt than good in the world. Since it is to be hoped that this is the lowest point the Tinker family will ever reach in the estimation of mankind, I will here take the pains to quote the law. It ran as follows :

"Forasmuch as it is evident that *Tynkers*, Peddlers, and such like vagrant persons, are more hurtful than necessary to the commonwealth of this realme, be it therefore ordeyned \* \* \* that \* \* \* no person or persons called *Tynker*, Peddler, or Petty Chapman, shall wander or go from one towne to another, or from place to place out of the towne, parishe or village, where such person shall dwell, and sell pynns, poyntes laces, gloves, knyves, glasses, tapes, or any such kind of wares whatsoever, or gather connye skynnes," etc., etc.—5 and 6 Ed. VI. c. 21.

To which one of these pin-sellers and rabbit-skin buyers our family owes its beginning, we may never find out, but it is reasonable to believe that our early English ancestor was one of these merchants-and-mechanics-combined.

It is probable that our ancestors, or at least some of them, became land owners at length, and very likely some of them made their way into the nobility ; for it is well known that they had a coat of arms, of which the following is a correct representation.



The cross and the center-bar were blue, the shield was silver, and the antlers were black.

## HISTORY.

The first Tinker who came to America, so far as I have learned, was Thomas Tinker, one of the passengers of the historical Mayflower. He came with his wife and infant son on that famous voyage in search of religious liberty. We find his name signed, with forty-two others, to that covenant which is said to have been the first written constitution in the world, whereby the Pilgrims organized themselves into a state, in the words following :

“IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN. We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc. Having undertaken for the Glory of God, and advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first Colony in the northern parts of Virginia ; Do by these Presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politick, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid : And by virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal laws, ordinances, Acts, Constitutions and Officers, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general Good of the Colony : unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In Witness Whereof we have here unto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the eleventh day of November, in the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the twenty-fourth, Anno Domini, 1620.”

I have given the whole of this constitution (except the signatures) for the reason that time only serves to magnify it in the eyes of the world and succeeding generations, while civilization lasts, will turn their eyes back to it as one of the initial points of Democracy in America ; and no family, whose name is found in this document, can afford to omit it from its history.

On Plymouth rock, among the names inscribed is that of Thomas Tinker. De Toqueville says : “This rock is become an object of veneration in the United States. I have seen bits of it carefully preserved in several towns of the Union. Does not this sufficiently show that all human power and greatness is in the

soul of man? Here is a stone which the feet of a few outcasts pressed for an instant, and this stone becomes famous ; it is treasured by a great nation, its very dust is shared as a relic ; and what is become of the gateways of a thousand palaces? ”

The first Tinker, therefore, who came to America, a fugitive from persecution, is not wanting in monumental glory. We may forget Amos, but we shall never forget Thomas.

Whether this pilgrim was related to you and me, I have no means to assure you ; but the fact that only seventeen years afterward he was followed from England by those who were our common ancestors, inclines us to claim relationship to him.

About 1637 there came to New England a man by the name of JOHN TINKER, from whom we are undoubtedly descended ; and at this point I must recognize, as the source of nearly all my ancestral records down to Silas Tinker, the Rev. William Durant, of Baltimore, Md., who with great patience and considerable expense had traced our ancestry from this English immigrant down to our common ancestor Silas Tinker.

## THE RECORD.

### FIRST GENERATION.

John Tinker's first wife was a Mrs. Sarah Barnes, a widow with two daughters. When they were married is not known, but in 1648 she died, leaving the elder of her daughters to be brought up by Richard Cooke, and the younger by her husband John Tinker. In the year 1651 he married his second wife, whose first name was Alice and whose last name is not known. This is unfortunate, for she was our first maternal ancestor in America. According to the notes of the Rev. William Durant, John Tinker, of Boston, between 1638 and 1641, "Leased land in 'Woekingham, County Berks,' from Augustin Clement, or Dorchester N. E. In 1643 he was a partner of men in Windsor, Conn., manufacturing tar. 26 Sept., 1651, he occupied a hired house in Boston. In 1652, as an attorney-at-law, he won a suit in the Middlesex Court. A letter 1 April, 1653, from Robert Hathorne, of Bray, to his brother Wm. Hathorne in N. E., was addressed to the care of 'Mr. Tinker, at Wm. Willsheers

house, Ironmonger \* \* \* in Bredstreet, London.' John Tinker was made a freeman at Boston, 3 May, 1654. The next year he joined the petitioners for the founding of Groton, Mass., and in the grant he was appointed one of the selectmen. At this time, and later, he was a trader with the Indians, buying beaver and other skins. Original notes of hand are preserved," says Mr. Durant, "with the peculiar Indian marks, showing how some of them mortgaged to him all their prospective gains of two hunting seasons.

"He finally decided to join the first settlers of Lancaster, Mass., having received a grant of twenty acres on Gibson Hill, in the most desirable part of that town. His name is the first of the five selectmen originally appointed in September 1657, and he was clerk of the town as long as he remained there; his minutes still exist.

"In the latter part of 1658 he removed to New London, Conn., and the next year was a deputy to the General Court of the Colony. 'Being on the road to wealth and fame, he died in Oct. 1662.'

"The public esteem for him is shown by the fact that the expenses of his illness and funeral were paid by the General Court.

"His title of Mr., or Master, very rare in those days," says Wm. Durant, "is evidence that he was either a graduate of a university or had high social rank in England. His eldest son died apparently in early manhood, leaving no children, for his brothers were his heirs. These sons of John Tinker were AMOS and SAMUEL; they married the sisters, Sarah and Abigail, daughters of George Durant.

"His widow, Alice Tinker, married in 1664 Wm. Measure, an attorney of Boston, who died in 1688. She died at Lyme, Conn., 20 Nov., 1714, aged 85 years."

We have thus a fragmentary history of our first American ancestor. We find him to have been an active man, somewhat of a leader among men, probably well educated and pursuing a variety of occupations from that of a tar-maker to that of a legislator. It is probable that time may tell us more of this early ancestor, for he evidently left many tracks plainly behind him.

## SECOND GENERATION.

John Tinker had, by his wife Alice, six children, as follows :

I. SARAH,<sup>2</sup> who was born at Boston, January 2, 1651-2, and died in her infancy on the 28th day of August, 1652.

II. MARY,<sup>2</sup> who was born at Boston on the second day of July, 1653, and was married to one William Waller, who died before 1682.

III. JOHN,<sup>2</sup> who was born at Lancaster, Mass., August 4, 1655. He probably died unmarried at Lyme before the 18th of June, 1688-9, for on that day a petition was filed by his brothers, Amos and Samuel, for the land originally set off to him. This petition would indicate that his brothers were his heirs, and hence it is probable that he died childless.

IV. AMOS,<sup>2</sup> who was born at Lancaster, Mass., on the 28th day of October, 1657. This Amos was the next in the direct line of our ancestry from John<sup>1</sup> to Silas. He married Sarah Durant, daughter of George Durant, on the first day of June, 1682. He probably died at Lyme, Conn., in 1730, at the age of 73, for his will was proved on the 22d of June of that year.

V. SAMUEL,<sup>2</sup> who was born at New London, Conn., on the first day of April, 1659. He married Abigail Durant, daughter of George Durant, and sister of Sarah, wife of Amos.<sup>2</sup> He died at Lyme, Conn., April 28, 1733, in the 75th year of his age.

VI. RHODA,<sup>2</sup> who was born at New London, February 23, 1661-2. Nothing more is known of Rhoda.<sup>2</sup>

## THIRD GENERATION.

The children of our *second* ancestor AMOS<sup>2</sup> and his wife Sarah (Durant) Tinker were as follows :

I. JOHN,<sup>3</sup> who was born at Lyme, Conn., February 12, 1686. He married and left children, but who his wife was has not been ascertained. Rev. William Durant says he has records of a number of John's<sup>3</sup> descendants.

II. SARAH,<sup>3</sup> who was born at Lyme, Conn., July 19, 1689. She married Ephraim Jones of New London.

III. MARY,<sup>3</sup> who was born at Lyme, Conn., June 2, 1692. She married a man by the name of Smith.



IV. AMOS,<sup>3</sup> who was the *third* in the direct line of our American ancestors. He was born at Lyme, Conn., on the 17th day of January, 1716-17. He married LUCY LEE, who was born at Lyme, June 20, 1699, the daughter of John and Elizabeth (Smith) Lee.

V. SAMUEL,<sup>3</sup> who was probably born at New London, where he was married on the 30th of November, 1720, to Elizabeth Harris. It is at this point that the Tinkers of New Lyme, Ashtabula County, Ohio, trace their ancestry into line with ours. Samuel,<sup>3</sup> their ancestor, was a brother of Amos,<sup>3</sup> our ancestor. Therefore AMOS<sup>2</sup> is the common ancestor not only of us, but of the New Lyme Tinkers also.

VI. JONATHAN,<sup>3</sup> who was born at New London, Conn., January 27, 1722-3. He married Elizabeth Manwaring. He probably went to Middleport, Conn.

#### FOURTH GENERATION.

The children of our *third* American ancestor, AMOS, and Lucy (Lee) Tinker, were as follows:

I. JOSEPH,<sup>4</sup> who was born at Lyme, November 5, 1717. Nothing more is known of him, and he probably died young.

II. AMOS,<sup>4</sup> who was our *fourth* American ancestor in the direct line. He was born at Lyme, Conn., February 17, 1719-20, and died at the same place, November 9, 1802, in the 83d year of his age. He was married at Lyme on the 7th of January, 1741-2, to HANNAH MINOR, who died at Lyme on the 11th of April, 1790, in her 69th year.

III. LYDIA,<sup>4</sup> who was born at Lyme, November 5, 1723, and was married in the same place to Robert Lay, on the 1st of February, 1738-9.

IV. LUCY,<sup>4</sup> who was born at Lyme, February 9, 1725. Little is known of her except that she joined the church in 1741, at which time she was unmarried.

V. BENJAMIN,<sup>4</sup> who was born at Lyme, May 6, 1728. He was living at Waterbury, Conn., in 1771.

VI. SYLVANUS,<sup>4</sup> who was born at Lyme, December 9, 1730, and died at East Haddam, Conn., October 13, 1815, in his 85th year. His first wife was Abigail Olmstead, whom he

married in 1755. His second wife was Mrs. Wealthy Gilbert, whom he married in 1781. The wife of President Day, of Yale College, was a descendant of Sylvanus.<sup>4</sup>

VII. PARTHENIA,<sup>4</sup> who was born November 25, 1732, and was married April 13, 1758, to Joseph Chadwick.

VIII. PHINEHAS,<sup>4</sup> who was born February 6, 1734-5; and was married to Charity Marshall, at East Haddam, Conn., November 24, 1761.

IX. EUNICE,<sup>4</sup> who was born at Lyme, March 31, 1737, and was married in the same place, to William Rowland, August 1, 1764.

X. MARTIN,<sup>4</sup> who was born June 28, 1739, and died at Westfield, Mass., December 20, 1811, in his 73d year. He was married at Lyme, November 2, 1769, to Mary Peck, daughter of John and Catherine (Lay) Peck. The Rev. Wm. H. Slocum, President of Colorado College, Colorado Springs, is a descendant of Martin.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Slocum's mother's name was Margaret Tinker.

XI. JEHIEL, who was born at Lyme, November 11, 1741, and died before 1799. He married Temperance ———.

XII. BETTY, who was born at Lyme, February 4, 1744-5. Nothing further is known of her.

#### FIFTH GENERATION.

The children of our *fourth* American ancestor, AMOS,<sup>4</sup> by his wife HANNAH (Minor) Tinker, are as follows:

I. JOSEPH,<sup>5</sup> who was born at Lyme, Conn., on the 21st of January, 1742-3, and died at the same place on the 28th of November, 1836, in his 95th year. His first wife was Patience Watrous, a descendant of Samuel<sup>2</sup> and Abigail (Durant) Tinker; his second wife was a Mrs. Polly (Greenfield) Beckwith.

II. JANE,<sup>5</sup> who was born at Lyme, on the 18th day of January, 1744-5. Nothing more is known of her.

III. AZUBAH,<sup>5</sup> who was born at Lyme on the 6th of September, 1746. She married Elisha Smith, on the 15th day of October, 1767.

IV. SILAS,<sup>5</sup> who was our *fifth* American ancestor, and the man who came to Ohio in 1806, and settled soon afterwards in Kingsville, where many of his descendants now live. He was

born at Lyme, Conn., on the 25th day of November, 1748, and died at Kingsville, Ohio, in the year 1840, in his 92d year. On the 14th day of December, 1773, he married LOIS WADE, the daughter of Joseph and Esther (Chadwick) Wade, who was born at Lyme on the 24th day of May, 1749.

We have now reached that point in the history of our line of ancestry where the great break occurred which obliterated our forefathers from our memory. Up to the time when Silas Tinker<sup>5</sup> came to Ohio, our forefathers had lived continuously for more than a hundred years at the little town of Lyme, Conn., on Long Island Sound; and within a small territory, with a radius of only ten miles, the first generation died and the fifth generation was born. At this place they had raised large families. At this place they had gone through the wars of the revolution. At this place they had heard the bells announce the Declaration of Independence. They had seen the United States born, and had undoubtedly taken part in all these great national events. It is indeed strange that the story of their deeds, both good and evil, has been unheard among their descendants in Ohio, so long that the recollections of the oldest are unable to call forth a single chapter.

It would be interesting to continue this historical sketch through the life of our common ancestor Silas, whose latter days are within the memory of men now living. Much can be said of interest in his life. But this seems to be a convenient place to close the sketch. At some later time it may be brought down complete, even to the children here present.

