

The Use of Old Somerset County Judicial Records to Determine the Approximate Years of Birth of Hugh and Elizabeth Tingle of Maryland, and of Certain Relatives

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Hugh Tingle and his wife Elizabeth, née Powell, are the progenitors of an American Tingle family, which by the end of the 19th Century populated many areas of the South, the Midwest and the West. During the last several decades, researchers have variously estimated the years of birth of Hugh and Elizabeth Tingle. The Hall of Records of the Maryland State Archives contains documentation relating to the ages of Hugh and Elizabeth Tingle, and certain of their relatives. Old Somerset County Judicial Records indicate that Hugh Tingle was born in or about 1654, Elizabeth, his wife, was born in or about 1666, and their son, Hugh Tingle, Jr., was born in or about 1695.

The approximate years of birth of many Old Somerset County residents may be extrapolated from evidence obtained by commissioners appointed by the justices of Somerset County, Maryland to determine the boundaries of particular tracts of land.

The statement pertaining to Hugh Tingle's age is contained in an affidavit that records evidence provided by Hugh Tingle in 1730, relative to a request by William Holland. William Holland sought a determination of the boundaries of a 346-acre tract of land called "Powells Lott." The document is contained in Somerset County Court (Judicial Record) 1727/6 - 1730/6, p. 261B, 14 May 1730 [MdHR 9176 (accession), 1-48-3-3 (location)]. The document states in part:¹

Somerett Coty. Ss. In Obedience to a Commission Directed to Jno. Smith, Jno. Miller Wm. Smith & Jno. Tull or any three or two of them to Examine Evidences in relation to ye Bounds of Atract of Land Called Powells Lott we ye Subscribers Have Mett on ye said Land this fourteenth day of May Anno. Dom. 1730 first being Qualified or Sworne before one Justice of the Peace do Proceed to ye Examination of Evidences as followeth

Hugh Tingle Sen[“r” or “t” ?]. Aged 76 years or thereabouts being Sworne & Examined Saith he heard Walter Powill & Walter Evans Say that ye first Bounder of Powells Lott was the first Bounder of atract of Land Called Winter Quarter where they Begun to ye Best of his Knowledge he Shewed us awhite Oak Marked with ye Surveyers Marke

¹ Due to the modern font used in the preparation of this article, the transcriptions provided herein contain approximations or equivalents of certain symbols which are handwritten in the original documents. Illegible or otherwise unclear words or letters are represented within brackets.

Standing Near ye side of Herring Creek & by ye side of afield where
[“ffb.” ?] Co[“tt or “f” or “st” ?] in Now Lives where he Saith to ye Best
of his Knowledge he Marked ye sd. tree and further Saith Not —

This Evidence taken by us the Day & Date abovesaid as Wittness our
hands And Seals —

Jno. Miller (seal)

Jno. Tull (seal)

Thus, inasmuch as Hugh Tingle was 76 years of age “or thereabouts” in 1730, it
may be inferred that he was born in or about 1654.

The ages of Elizabeth Tingle and her son, Hugh Tingle, Jr. may be similarly
extrapolated from Somerset County Court (Judicial Record) 1738/8 - 1740/8, pp. 129B-
130B, June Court 1739 [MdHR 9181, 1-48-3-8]. This document was prepared in
connection with the request of John Eshen (or Eshan) for a determination of the
boundaries of a tract of land called “Winter Quarter Lying on Herring Creek in Baltemore
Hundred” in Old Somerset County. The document records evidence given by Elizabeth
Tingle (age 73), Hugh Tingle (age 44), John Evans² (age 32), Thomas Coffin (age 57),
John Tull, Sr. (age 57), Margaret Hodgson³ (age 47), Abell Boaden (age 24) and
Margrett Dazey⁴ (age 44). The document states in part:

And now to witt the third tuesday of June Anno. Dom. one thousand
seven hundred and thirty nine before his Lordships Justices at a Court then
held at deviding Creek Come William Fasit John Miller and Joseph Miller
three of the Gentlemen nominated in the above Commission and made
Return thereof with the following depositions thereunto annexed

In Obedience to the above Commission we the subscribers whose
names are under written have mett on the said Land this twenty fourth day
of Aprill Anno. Dom. 1739 being first sworn before one Justice do
proceed to the examination of evidences as followeth. —

- 1 Elizabeth Tingle aged 73 years being first sworn declareth that about
fifty years ago her father Walter Powell and her Husband Hugh Tingle
they wanted to know where the bounder of Winter Quarter was stood
in order to build a house on the Land and they Could not find it till
they went to Col. Francis Jenckins and he told them that it stood on
the south side of the Creek near anarrow passage of goingover and
Almost opposite to abounder of Ambrose white and she brought us to
amarked white Oake standing near the said place and said that her
husband Hugh Tingle told her that was the bounder of winter Quarter
and that she first saw the tree the [Chip?] was grown over with bark
and further saith not. —

² John Evans referred to Walter Evans as his father.

³ Margaret Hodgson referred to Walter Evans as her father.

⁴ Margrett Dazey referred to John Powell as her uncle, Walter Evans as her father, and Hugh
Tingle as her uncle.

- 2 Hugh Tingle aged 44 Years being sworn saith that a Considerable time Ago his mother Elizabeth Tingle told him that the said bounder stood a Little above afootway to go over the Creek and further saith not. —

Thus, inasmuch as Elizabeth Tingle was 73 in 1739, she was born in or about 1666. Inasmuch as Hugh Tingle, Jr. was 44 in 1739, he was born in or about 1695.

The documents discussed in this article provide insights into the family relationships, customs and laws of the colonial period in Old Somerset County, Maryland. They also provide reliable evidence concerning the chronology of the early Tingle family in Maryland.