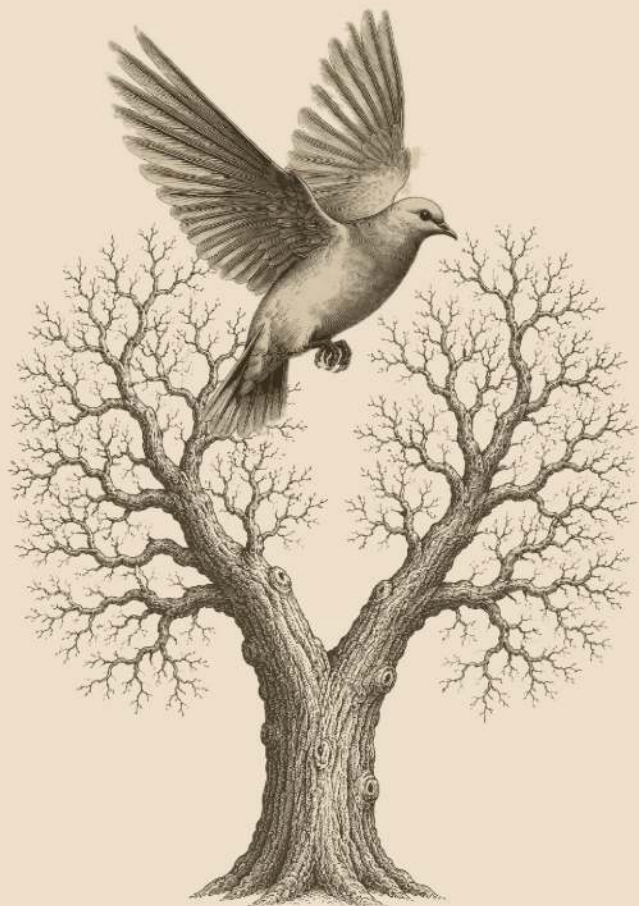

WE ARE DOVES

Four Centuries of the Collver–Culver Family



Jabez Collver, senr.
Jabez Collver, second.
Jonas Collver,
Timothy Collver,

THE LOYAL ADDRESS OF 1809 • NINE COLLVERS, ONE PAGE

ALBERT B. COLLVER III

REVIEWER'S SAMPLE

WE ARE DOVES

Four Centuries of the Collver–Culver Family

Albert B. Collver III

IN THIS SAMPLE

Title page and contents	i, v–vi
From the Prologue, The Pew at Troy	1–4
From chapter 7, A House Divided	173–176
“The People in This Chapter”	201
The 1777 indictment, in facsimile	204
From chapter 9, The Walk North	225–228
The petition of 11 June 1794, in facsimile	248
From Appendix A, The Corrected Register	403–405

Pages are reproduced from the print edition, with the book's own page numbers. The front and back covers are shown first and last.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA

Publisher: Three Doves Press, St. Louis · December 2026

Pages: xxvi + 620 · 68 illustrations, 10 appendices, bibliography, index · 6 × 9 in.

Hardback ISBN 979-8-9967563-7-7 · \$59.95

Paperback ISBN 979-8-9967563-8-4 · \$39.95

E-book ISBN 979-8-9967563-9-1 · \$9.99 · **LCCN** 2026927499

Review copies are available to the journals of historical and genealogical societies, to reviewers, and to libraries. Interview requests are welcome.

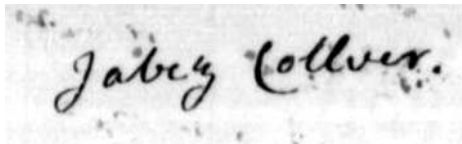
Albert B. Collver III · genealogy@collver.biz

The companion blog and the *A House Divided* podcast: **history.collver.biz**

THREE DOVES PRESS

WE ARE DOVES

Four Centuries of the Collver–Culver Family



from the hand of Rev. Jabez Collver, 1794

Albert B. Collver III

Contents

Prologue — The Pew at Troy	1
Chapter One · The Dove’s Name	7
The word in the chalk	7
The culver in the poem	9
An early bearer we can name	11
The bowman who missed Agincourt	14
The false cousin	16
The heartland	17
The honest wall	22
One name, many hands	28
The name in a novel	30
The People in This Chapter	31
Document reproduced with this chapter	33
Chapter Two · An Unknown Ship	37
The sixty-eighth name	37
The paper a ship leaves	39
Two Dedhams	44
“Our Sister Culver”	46
The wheelwright	48
Standing	51
The long goodbye	54
A tidy man’s last entry	56
The People in This Chapter	58
Document featured in this chapter	59

Chapter Three · The Wheelwright at War	61
Come up to Hartford forthwith	61
The receipts	64
Bread, beer, and lodging for man and horse	67
The first lost Collver	69
The scout	70
The Voluntown roll	73
1685, and the doors out	76
The house that is still lived in	78
The People in This Chapter	80
Document featured in this chapter	82
 Chapter Four · The Rogerene Heresy	 83
Five of them put into prison	83
What a Rogerene was	86
The far edge of the Reformation	90
The Culvers in the sect	96
Fifteen stripes on the naked body	100
Why the registers are silent	103
The going out, and the coming back	107
The People in This Chapter	110
 Chapter Five · The Colverites	 115
“Cordwinder, being sick”	115
The waves	118
Two colonies, not one	121
Eleven years by the sea	123
The temple of the grove	133
Twenty dollars for a text	135
The Germans next door	137
Still knitting in 1770	140
What the mountain kept	142
The People in This Chapter	144
Document reproduced with this chapter	147
 Chapter Six · The Orphan Patriarch	 151
“A minor, over 14”	151
The date with a hole in it	153
Crossing over	155

Prologue — The Pew at Troy

On the morning of the Fourth of July, 2026 — the two hundred fiftieth birthday of the United States — an email went out to ten people. It carried the story of how the American Revolution divided my family into two houses: one that fought for Congress, and one that stood for the King. A few hours later I was sitting in a pew in Troy, Illinois, singing the opening hymn and thinking about one of my members, a young father whose wife had just given him a son. The father is my ninth cousin once removed, by way of a German marriage made on a New Jersey mountainside in the 1750s; the boy in the bassinet is the newest man in that line.¹ That marriage did more than lengthen a pedigree. When Esther Collver wed her German neighbor, her children left the family's old dissenting stream — the oath-refusers of New London, the Presbyterian pulpit of her cousin Jabez — and became Lutherans, and Lutherans her line has remained for two and a half centuries. It has since given the church a deaconess, the general editor of *The Lutheran Study Bible*, and a seminary president's household in Fort Wayne.² My own father made the family's other German

¹The cousin connection runs through Esther Collver, first cousin of Rev. Jabez, who married Jacob Hann of Pleasant Grove, New Jersey, about the 1750s; see chapter 5, and the full chain in chapter 13. The degree was computed in 2026 from that chain — its upper links documented in the published record, its middle (Johnson) links presently on family-tree data awaiting record attachment — and is stated on that combined authority. A single small shared DNA segment is consistent with the kinship but, at this distance, proves nothing by itself.

²The Rast and Engelbrecht careers are matters of public record and are given here with the family's blessing: Deaconess Amy Rast served as Associate Direc-

marriage, two hundred years after hers; I stand in a Lutheran pulpit. The pew at Troy is where the family's two German experiments finally sat down together.

I am a descendant of the man who chose the King.

That sentence took me thirty years to be able to write plainly, and this book is, among other things, the story of why. Not because the fact was hidden — the record of it sat in courthouses and archives on two sides of one border the whole time — but because families do not remember the way archives do. Families remember the way rivers carry sediment: everything true is in there somewhere, ground fine and settled in layers, and it takes patience to sort what happened from what the current did to it on the way down.

Consider what my family carried. We remembered that our ancestor, the Reverend Jabez Collver, was a chaplain in the Revolution — some said in Washington's army.³ We remembered that he received three

tor of Deaconess Formation at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, completing that service in the spring of 2025; her husband, Rev. Dr. Lawrence R. Rast Jr., was the seminary's sixteenth president (2011–2024) and remains professor of American Christianity; her brother, Rev. Edward A. Engelbrecht — general editor of *The Lutheran Study Bible* during his years as senior editor at Concordia Publishing House — has served since December 2016 as pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio. For the pastorate: "Church Staff," Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio, accessed 16 July 2026, <https://www.elclife.org/church-staff/> ("Pastor Edward A. Engelbrecht . . . has served Emmanuel since December, 2016"). For the editorship: *The Lutheran Study Bible*, English Standard Version, Edward A. Engelbrecht, general editor (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009); "New Study Bible Arrives Early," *Reporter* (The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod), 23 September 2009, naming Engelbrecht "the Bible's general editor." His Concordia title — Senior Editor for Bible Resources — is given in the publisher's biographical notice to Edward A. Engelbrecht and Laura L. Lane, eds., *The Church from Age to Age: A History from Galilee to Global Christianity* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2011). For the Rasts: "Rast Jr., Dr. Lawrence R.," faculty directory, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, accessed 16 July 2026, <https://www.ctsfw.edu/about/directory/p/rast-lawrence/>; and "Knowles to Serve as Director of Deaconess Formation," Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, 30 May 2025, <https://www.ctsfw.edu/about/news/post/14095/> ("Another longtime leader of the program, Deaconess Amy Rast, completed her service as Associate Director of Deaconess Formation this spring").

³The chaplain tradition appears in the family compilation at collver.org and in several twentieth-century retellings; its origin and correction occupy chapter 7, its full examination chapter 14.

thousand acres from the Crown in Upper Canada. We remembered — my grandfather and grandmother told me this themselves, at their kitchen table in Munger, Michigan, when I was a boy, from stories they had carried down from Simcoe, Ontario — that there were old stories of the Collvers scalping people with the nickname of “Cut-throat Collvers.” We remembered a will, somewhere back in New Jersey, that left a son a hat and a belt.

Every one of those memories is wrong. And every one of them is pointing at something true.

Jabez was no chaplain of Washington’s; he was indicted for sedition by the State of New Jersey in 1777 for saying that “it is best to set up the King’s Standard” — but he *was* a minister through the whole of that war, marrying and burying and consoling, and the men he ministered to were the King’s men. The memory kept the ministry and lost the flag.⁴ The grant was one thousand acres, not three — the family’s own 1916 pamphlet had it right, and later tellings inflated it. The scalping stories turn out to be American war propaganda of 1794 — invented about Governor Simcoe, printed from Vermont to London — which time and a town named Simcoe folded back onto the loyal family that had just settled there: the enemy’s atrocity story, adopted as our own legend. And the will — dated the second of December, 1732, when Jabez was seventeen months old and his father was dying at Black River — inventories no hat and belt. It inventories “beaver hat, felt hat and Bible.”⁵ Wrong consonants. Right objects. My own memory, tested against the abstract, ran exactly as true and exactly as crooked as everyone else’s.

That experience — being corrected by a document and finding the correction *more* interesting than the legend — is the method of this book, and I want to state it at the door. Family tradition, in these pages, is treated neither as gospel nor as garbage. It is treated as testimony: directionally reliable, verbally unreliable, and always worth taking

⁴*The State of New Jersey v. Jabez Colver*, Indictment for Seditious Words, Sussex County Court of Oyer & Terminer, May–June 1777; New Jersey State Archives, Supreme Court Case Files, no. 34547. Transcribed in full in Appendix B.

⁵Abstract in *Calendar of New Jersey Wills*, vol. II (1730–1750), 105; the original is Liber 3, p. 368, New Jersey State Archives. The distribution of the hats — and the Bible — is taken up in chapter 5.

seriously enough to check. Where the archive confirms the story, I will say so. Where it corrects the story, I will show the correction and, where I can, how the legend formed — because how a family misremembers is itself a piece of family history, sometimes the most revealing piece it has.⁶ And where the record is silent, I will say that too, plainly, in the text and not in a buried footnote. So every claim in this book is graded. *Proven* means a primary record says so. *Probable* means the records lean hard one way without quite closing. *Possible* — a lead — means there is a real record and an unproven connection. *Tradition* means the family said so and the archive has not spoken. A fifth grade is not a degree of confidence at all but a kind of evidence: *name-history only*, for people who are real, correctly named, and tied to this family by nothing whatever but the name. Those two run on different axes, and one man can carry one of each — John Culverd of Oxford, in the next chapter, is proven as a burgess of Edward I's city and name-history only as a kinsman of mine. I have tried never to let one grade impersonate another.

The story those rules govern runs like this. A wheelwright named Edward Colver — his ship unknown, his parents unknown, his origin honestly unknowable — signs a covenant at Dedham in Massachusetts Bay, the sixty-eighth name on the roll. His son joins one of the most persistently persecuted religious sects in New England, and his grandson leads that sect's exodus to a New Jersey mountainside, where the neighbors simply call the whole company "Colverites." His great-great-grandson — orphaned at two, raised by guardians, converted out of the family religion into the pulpit his kinsmen heckled — prospers at the foot of the Kittatinny ridge until January of 1776, when he signs his name to the wrong piece of paper, and the family splits along the same seam as the continent. One house gives Congress a fourteen-year-old with a bayonet wound; the other gives the King a convicted minister. Both houses believed they were being loyal, because both houses were.

Then — and this is the part the record insists upon, against every convention of the divided-family story — they put it back together. Four sons of Jabez, the Loyalist minister, married four daughters of his

⁶Readers who want the method without the family may go straight to chapter 14, which audits every legend in this book, the author's own included.

Chapter Seven · A House Divided

“Infatuate monster! stay thy guilty hand, / Nor raise the
dagger ’gainst thy brother’s breast.” — Loyalist verse,
Pennsylvania Ledger, March 14, 1778¹

The paper in the winter

In January of 1776, in Sussex County, New Jersey, a forty-four-year-old Presbyterian minister took up a pen and subscribed his name to a paper. Six months before the Declaration of Independence, signing your name to a political paper was the most dangerous thing an ordinary man could do, and everyone knew it. The minister was Jabez Collver, pastor at Wantage, this author’s sixth great-grandfather — and the paper was not the one you are thinking of.

The Revolution divided the Culver family — by then a century and a half in America, Dedham to Mystic to Groton to Schooley’s Mountain — into two houses. One house fought for Congress. One house stood for the King. Both houses believed they were being loyal, because both houses were. This chapter is the story of that division: who signed what, who marched where, who bled, who fled, and how — remarkably — the Loyalist half of the family stitched itself into one densely intermarried house on the far side of the war, four weddings

¹*Pennsylvania Ledger*, 14 Mar. 1778 — Loyalist verse of the occupation press. The couplet stands at this chapter’s head as it stood at the July 4 post’s, because no historian has said it better in prose.

at a time. The last chapter left Jabez at the top of his world, with land, a pulpit, a houseful of children, and a choice coming. This is the choice.

The story we told

The family literature, told with complete sincerity by people who loved the subject, long remembered Rev. Jabez Collver as a chaplain in the Revolution — in some tellings, a chaplain in Washington's army.² It is a natural memory for a family to keep. He was a minister; there was a war; ministers in wars are chaplains; and by the time anyone wrote the stories down, his descendants had been loyal Canadians for a century and loyal Americans for another, and the word *Loyalist* had lost its sting on one side of the border and its shine on the other.

And here the reader should mark something that chapter fourteen will need: the family told this story because it was *almost true*. That is how the durable legends work — not invented from air, but assembled from real parts wrongly joined. There was a minister; there was a war; he ministered, through the whole of it, to a community at war. Every component of "chaplain in the Revolution" is genuine. Only the flag is missing, and a missing flag, in a family's memory, defaults quietly to the winner's. Hold that thought through this chapter, and watch the parts the legend was built from as they go by.

But Jabez left us his own account, in his own hand, and it says something more interesting.

²The chaplain tradition, in its several forms (including "chaplain in Washington's army"), descends through the family's compiled literature and the collectors' website; its workings — what it preserved and what it inverted — is ch. 14's business. Its documentary refutation is Jabez's own petition, cited above. Frances McIntosh, whose 1970 typescript otherwise repeats much of the compiled tradition, was already cautious here: "According to Owen's SKETCHES and our family records, Reverend Jabez Collver was a chaplain in the Revolutionary War but there is no military proof of this. He was at heart a Loyalist (to the British)," adding that "it is probable that Jabez Collver ministered to all soldiers needing his services" (McIntosh, "Collver Culver Genealogy," 1970, typescript p. 14).

The paper he actually signed

In June of 1798, petitioning the Executive Council of Upper Canada, Jabez set down what he had done in the first winter of the war:

...in order to favour an Idea or Intention entertained by the Loyalists of Sussex County in the Province of New Gersey in or about the month of January 1776 to Erect the Royal Standard in the said County of Sussex, [he] subscribed his name in writing to an Enrollment under John Pettit, who was Nominated as an Officer in a Battalion to be raised for that purpose...³

Note what this was and what it was not. No battalion ever mustered; no John Pettit appears anywhere in the rolls of the New Jersey Volunteers, the Loyalist corps raised later that year. The January 1776 enrollment was not an enlistment. It was a declaration — a signature, on paper, in a county already tipping toward revolution, stating before his neighbors that if a standard were raised he would stand under the King's. It was, in other words, precisely the same act his Patriot neighbors performed when they signed their county associations — the same pen, the same courage, the opposite flag.

The company he signed among is worth a paragraph now, because the same names will shadow the whole second half of this book. John Pettit, the nominated officer, was of the Sussex family whose head, Nathaniel Pettit — judge, assemblyman, one of the county's principal men — was apprehended by the local Committee of Safety in that same January of 1776, and would later lie imprisoned through the very seasons this chapter covers.⁴ And the judge himself, the

³Petition of Jabez Collver to the Executive Council of Upper Canada, received 25 June 1798 (Upper Canada Land Petitions, "C" Bundle 4, Pet. 60, Vol. 92, reel C-1648, images 870–71), read from the manuscript images for this book. "New Gersey" is the petition's own spelling. The 1794 petition (Bundle 1, Pet. 12, Vol. 89, reel C-1647) supplies "suffered imprisonment and loss of considerable property during the late rebellion on account of his loyalty."

⁴On the Pettits of Sussex — Judge Nathaniel Pettit (1724–1803), apprehended by the Committee of Safety in Jan. 1776, imprisoned 4 Apr. 1777 to 28 May 1778, later of Grimsby, Upper Canada; and his brother John (1726–1797), the identification for the enrollment's nominated officer (n. 5) — see also the research assembled for the blog's Log Gaol study, with the caveats there recorded. The Pettit thread reappears at the Grand River and in Norfolk (chs. 9–10): the family that took Jabez's enrollment in

fuller Pettit genealogy now records, was in that same winter helping to raise a battalion of five hundred men for the Loyalist cause — in all likelihood the very “Battalion to be raised for that purpose” that Jabez’s petition names, the unit whose nominated officer, the judge’s brother John, took the minister’s signature; the battalion that, as we have seen, never mustered.⁵ These were not marginal men plotting in a barn. The Loyalists of Sussex County in the winter of 1776 were a substantial faction of the county’s establishment — judges, assemblymen, large freeholders, and one settled minister — who believed, reasonably on the evidence then before them, that the King’s government would shortly be restored and that the prudent, loyal, and lawful course was to stand ready for it. They were wrong about the future. They were not wrong about what they were: the county’s respectable men, acting, as they saw it, respectably.

Mark, though, where the county’s disaffection actually lived, because it was not where the minister did. When the Council of Safety took in a return of Sussex’s “disaffected & dangerous” in July 1777, twenty-three of the twenty-eight men named lived in the frontier townships of Hardwick and Knowlton; Wantage supplied exactly one name, and it was not Jabez’s.⁶ His own township had gone almost to a man the

1776 sold his son land in 1807.

⁵The battalion and the brotherhood are documented in Rev. Frank C. Baldwin, “Nathaniel³ and Elizabeth (Heath) Pettit of Hunterdon County, New Jersey,” *The Genealogical Magazine of New Jersey* 88 (2013): 99 ff. and 89 (2014): 32–41. Judge Nathaniel Pettit (b. 12 June 1724, d. 9 March 1803) and John Pettit (b. 12 June 1726, d. 1797, of Newton — surveyor, county coroner, and warden of Christ Church) were sons of the same Nathaniel³ Pettit; Baldwin’s biography of the judge (89:32–34), quoting the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, records that after his January-1776 break with the revolutionary committee he “helped raise a battalion of 500 men for the Loyalist cause.” That the “Battalion to be raised” of Jabez’s enrollment was this battalion, and its nominated “John Pettit” the judge’s brother, is the reading offered here on two supports: the judge’s brother John was the only John Pettit in Sussex of an age to hold such a nomination in 1776 (Baldwin’s other men of the name — John b. 1761 and John Charles b. 1762 — were boys), and no other Loyalist battalion is attached to the family in that winter. Baldwin confirms the kinship and the battalion; the identification of that John as the enrollment’s officer rests, as always, on Jabez’s own 1798 petition (n. 3). The magazine is under copyright; quoted only in brief.

⁶*Minutes of the Council of Safety of the State of New Jersey* (Jersey City, 1872), 79–80: the return of 9 July 1777 — twenty-eight names in all, fifteen in Hardwick, eight in Knowlton, three in Newton, one in Oxford, and one in Wantage (Solomon

The People in This Chapter

*The grades are the Prologue's: **proven** (a primary record says so), **probable** (strong indirect evidence, stated as such), **possible** — a lead (a real record, an unproven connection; unplaced* where the person has no demonstrated place in the tree) — and **tradition**. **Name-history only** marks someone real and correctly named but tied to this family by nothing more than the name; an entry may carry a grade on each axis.**

- **Rev. Jabez Collver**⁵ — the Loyalist enrollment under John Pettit, Jan. 1776 (his own 1798 petition); seditious words to Benjamin Hull, early Apr. 1777; indicted 28 May 1777 (Oyer & Terminer, Newton); pleaded guilty 12 June 1777; fined £5, committed till paid; “suffered imprisonment and loss of considerable property”; ministered at Wantage throughout the war. *Proven*.
- **John Culver** (1762–1836) — b. Morris Co. 1762; enlisted at the Sussex court house Oct. 1776, aged about fourteen; White Plains bayonet wound; served to Cornwallis’s surrender; pensioned 1833 (Act of 1832) with James K. Polk’s endorsement; d. Bedford Co., Tenn., 23 Nov. 1836. **Rev. Jabez’s kinsman beyond reasonable doubt, and by strong tradition and every circumstance his nephew** — the pension file and DAR papers are silent on his parents. *Proven as to service; the nephew link probable, stated*.
- **Samuel Culver** (1758–1834) — b. Roxbury Twp., Morris Co., 22 May 1758 (his own oath); enlisted 15 Aug. 1776 from Hardwick, Sussex Co., Jersey line; wounded at Princeton; discharged at Morristown 1783; m. Phebe Pollard of Mendham 1783; of Elmira, N.Y., from c. 1821; d. 23 Mar. 1834 at Tyre, Seneca Co., visiting a child. Pension file R.1570. **Brother of Phineas (Phineas’s own affidavit, 1834); probable nephew of Rev. Jabez** — no file names the father. *Proven as to service and brotherhood; the nephew link probable, stated*.
- **Phineas (Phinehas) Culver** (1761–1848) — b. Roxbury, 17 Mar. 1761 (his own oath; family papers say 1764); enlisted 1779; sergeant, New York line; wounded at Mamakating Hollow, 1782; at Newtown (Elmira) c. 1791, married there (Phoebe Breese, by family record), then Bath (deputy sheriff)

The Jurors, on Behalf of the State of New Jersey, for the
 Body of the County of Sussex, upon their Oath present, That ~~Joseph~~^{Jabez}
 Colver, late of the Township of New Town — in the County of
 Sussex a.s., ~~Minister of the Gospel~~^{Minister of the Gospel}, being a pernicious and disaffected Man,
 and a Person of a turbulent Mind & seditious Disposition,
 and Conversation, and contriving, practising, & fully, malici-
 ously, advisedly, and seditiously intending to terrify, dismay,
 and discourage the good Subjects of this State, and to dispose
 them to favour the Pretensions of the Enemy, and to alienate

Figure 16: For words spoken to a neighbor: the charges against the minister of Wantage, in the indictment of 1777. He pleaded guilty. “The Jurors ... upon their Oath present, That Jabez Colver, late of the Township of New Town ... Minister of the Gospel, being a pernicious and disaffected Man, and a Person of a turbulent Mind & seditious Disposition ...” (N.J. State Archives, SSV00001 no. 34547; the clerk first wrote “Joseph,” struck it, and interlined “Jabez,” and added “Minister of the Gospel” above the line — both corrections in his own hand). (The full page, signed by Attorney General William Paterson, is reproduced with Appendix B.)

Chapter Nine · The Walk North

The bed of pine-boughs

On a night in February or March of 1794, on Lot 1 of the eleventh concession of Townsend Township — an unbroken forest in the Long Point country of Upper Canada, north of Lake Erie — a fire burned beside a fallen tree, and a man stood guard over it with the wolves in hearing. The old historian of the settlement, who married into this family and gathered its stories from the people who had lived them, set the scene down whole, and this book will not paraphrase what it cannot better:

On a bed of pine-boughs, by the side of a fallen tree, lies old Townsend's first pioneer mother. She has had a hard day's tramp through the forest, and has fallen into a deep sleep with her babies nestled snugly in her arms. She is oblivious to her surroundings, and hears not the discordant howls of the blood-thirsty wolves.¹

The sleeping woman is **Miriam**, born a Colver of Schooley's Mountain — a daughter of Timothy the Loyalist — and married to her cousin **John Collver**⁶, third son of Rev. Jabez; the babies in her arms

¹E. A. Owen, *Pioneer Sketches of Long Point Settlement* (Toronto, 1898), Sketch XII ("The Double Culver Quartette"), quoted from the full transcription published by this project (history.collver.biz, July 2026). The scene is Owen's reconstruction from the family's own telling, a hundred years after the night; it is presented here as the family literature's set piece, not as reportage — and it is the only account of the arrival that survives at all.

are the first of the next generation to lie on Canadian ground; and the man at the fire, “Old Townsend’s first permanent settler,” is John, twenty-five years old, a preacher’s son with a poet’s streak, who had led the whole family north the way his grandfather’s advance household had once led it into New Jersey.² They had left New Jersey early in 1793, spent the intervening season about the Grand River, and come into Norfolk before the winter broke — ahead of the patriarch, ahead of the brothers who would follow, ahead of everything but the wolves.³

The reader of chapter five will recognize the shape at once, because it is the same shape: the family moves in waves, a young household ahead, the church behind. And the reader of chapter eight knows what this family’s migrations look like on paper — deliberate, funded, state-receipted. But no paper prepares you for the pine boughs. Between the orderly liquidation of the Chemung acres and the orderly petitions about to fill this chapter stands one night that was neither orderly nor papered: a woman asleep on the ground with her children, in the dead of a Canadian winter, in a township with no other permanent inhabitant. The family’s epic begins, as the family’s epics usually do, not with the patriarch but with a household — and this one begins with a sleeping woman the record caught, for once, in time.⁴

²John Collver⁶: b. Wantage 5 Apr. 1768; m. Miriam/Marian, daughter of Timothy⁵ UE, c. 1789/90 (the third of the quartette marriages — “we hear John is married to another of Timothy Collvers daughters,” ch. 8). Owen: “Old Townsend’s first permanent settler.” His later turns — poet, Universalist, the *Upper Canada Hymn Book* — are ch. 11’s.

³Owen: “They left New Jersey early in 1793, but the season was spent somewhere about the Grand River, and they did not reach Norfolk before February or March, 1794.”

⁴The arrival dates, reconciled once for the whole chapter: Jabez’s reconnaissance visit is “two years ago” from June 1794 — i.e., c. 1792 — by his own petition (Mutrie’s “went to Niagara in 1793” may date a second staging trip or compress the same one); John’s household left New Jersey in 1793 and entered Norfolk Feb./Mar. 1794; Jabez “in the Year of Our Lord 1794 departed from his Native Country” (his 1798 petition) and petitioned at Newark that June; the 1912 gravestone’s “settled here in 1793” preserves the departure year as the settlement year — a one-year memory-slip of exactly the kind ch. 14 catalogs. Tasker’s settler roll dates Jabez at Townsend 1794 and Timothy 1795 (the walking visit; his removal was 1796).

The invitation

They did not wander north; they were asked. In the winter of 1792 the new lieutenant governor of the new province of Upper Canada issued the paper that set the whole Long Point settlement in motion, and by that summer it was running in newspapers on the far side of the Atlantic:

A PROCLAMATION, to such as are desirous to settle on the lands of the Crown in the Province of Upper Canada. By his Excellency John Graves Simcoe, Esq., Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief of the said Province... given authority and command to grant the lands of the crown in the same by patent under the great seal thereof.⁵

The text this book quotes is taken from the front page of *The Waterford Herald* — of Waterford, **Ireland** — for the twenty-eighth of July, 1792, where Simcoe's invitation ran beside the Continental war news. The detail is worth the footnote it carries: the governor of a forest province cast his net for settlers across the whole British world, and the net reached Irish breakfast tables and New Jersey parsonages in the same season. The terms were the standard grammar of Crown land — patents under the great seal, *free and common socage* (the plainest and freest tenure English law knew), the mines and naval timber reserved to the King, two-sevenths of every township set aside for the Crown and “the support of a Protestant Clergy” — and none of that grammar mattered a tenth as much as the plain fact underneath it: land, in quantity, lawfully, under the flag the Colvers had chosen in 1776 and been punished for choosing.

Jabez answered the invitation in person before he answered it on paper. By his own account he “two years ago came to this Province” — a reconnaissance, about 1792, made “encouraged by his Excellency's

⁵ *The Waterford Herald* (Waterford, Ireland), 28 July 1792, p. 1. The proclamation's appearance in an *Irish* newspaper by mid-1792 — beside the Continental war news — measures how far Simcoe cast the net for settlers. Primary image: Newspapers.com 59332889. The tenure and reserve clauses summarized in the text are the proclamation's own (patents under the great seal; free and common socage; mines and naval timber reserved; the two-sevenths Crown-and-Clergy reserves).

most gracious proclamation” — and while there received something better than a proclamation: “such private encouragement from his Excellency in person that he has ventured to remove with his family into the Province.”⁶ The sixty-year-old dissenting minister and the forty-year-old soldier-governor, face to face on the Niagara frontier — what was said, no record keeps; what it produced, every record of the rest of this chapter is. And the family had a forward base waiting: Ebenezer, the second son, had been at Niagara since about 1788, five years the family’s man on the British side of the river while his father built and liquidated the Chemung estate. The walk north, like everything else this family ever did, was scouted, staged, and executed by the whole web at once.

The petition of the eleventh of June

On the eleventh of June, 1794 — John and Miriam by then a season dug into Townsend, the rest of the family arriving — Jabez Collver sat down at Newark, the little capital, and addressed the government of Upper Canada. The petition survives in his own hand, and the reader who has followed him from the orphan’s guardianship to the sedition plea to Proctor’s fireside has earned the whole of it:

That Your Petitioner suffered imprison[ment] and loss of considerable property during the late rebellion on account of his loyalty. From a sincere and unaltera[bly] attachment to the british Government he has ever been desirous since the late peace of removing with his family to this or some other of his Majesty’s Colonies in America. encouraged by his Excellency[’s] most gracious proclamation he two years ago came to this Province and further received such private encouragement from his Excellency in person that he has ventured to remove with his family into the Province.

He begs leave to inform Your Excellency that he has six sons three at present are with him and the other[s] he expects soon. Your Petitioner therefore most humbly re-

⁶Petition of 11 June 1794 (cited below). On Ebenezer at Niagara from c. 1788: ch. 8’s note on Jabez’s letters to Ebenezer, and Mutrie §5.

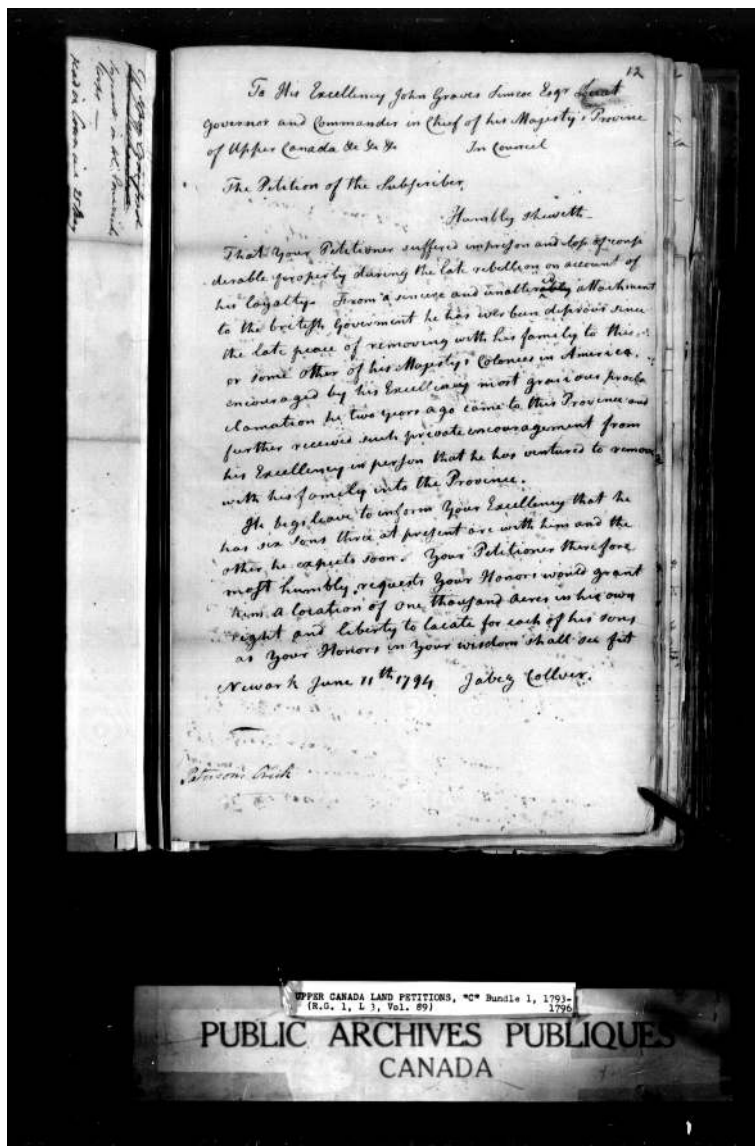


Figure 23: Three days to yes: the petition of Jabez Collver, Newark, 11 June 1794 — “suffered imprisonment and loss of considerable property during the late rebellion on account of his loyalty” — ordered 1,000 acres, 14 June 1794.

Appendix A · The Corrected Register

Generations 1–6 from Edward Colver¹, with the four “quartette” lines carried two further generations (to generation 8), and the author’s own line carried in full to the thirteenth generation — Albert B. Collver III¹³, the author. The three living generations at the foot are named with relationships only and no dates, exactly the roster Albert cleared for the frontispiece chart (11 July 2026); a $\triangle$ note marks them, and no other living person appears anywhere in this register. Every registered person is tagged for the index; every vital date is drawn from a primary record or from the chapter that documents it, never estimated. Where a record and a compilation disagree, the record governs and the variant is footnoted. This is the payload for libraries: a numbered descent built to be cited, and — as much as anything — a place to kill in print the errors that a century of well-meaning compilation has kept alive.

What this register is, and is not

This is a **descending register in the New England style**: each person through whom the line continues carries an Arabic number; children are listed beneath their parents, and a plus sign (+) marks a child taken up under his own number in the following generation. Generation is shown by a superscript on the given name (Edward¹, John², John³, and so on), counting from the immigrant.

It is not a complete descendant register of Edward Colver. That

larger work was attempted by Frederic Lathrop Colver in the *Colver-Culver Genealogy* (1910) — a monument of industry that also carried forward, in good faith, the very errors this appendix exists to correct (a Winthrop marriage in three forms, a phantom generation, two Timothys merged into one). Readers wanting the collateral branches in their fullness — the Southampton, Wallingford, Litchfield, Groton, Sheshequin, Elgin, Simcoe, Oregon, and Michigan lines — are pointed to **Appendix G, “Bridges to the Other Branches,”** which grades each branch to the same standard and stops, honestly, where the proof stops. Here only the author’s direct line (Edward¹ → John² → John³ → John⁴ → Rev. Jabez⁵ → Nathan⁶ → Jabez B.⁷ → William Valentine⁸ → John Milton⁹ → Daniel William¹⁰ → Albert Sr.¹¹ → Albert Jr.¹² → Albert III¹³) is carried in full, together with exactly enough of the surrounding kin — Robert⁴’s and Timothy⁴’s lines, the four quartette sons, the two Timothys, Esther⁵ — to make the corrections legible and the marriages on which the lines turn exact. The living members of the author’s own household — his grandfather’s four children (no. 19), his father and himself (nos. 20–21), his brother, and their spouses — are named under Albert’s clearance, with relationships only and no dates for those still living; the half-blood Michigan branch that joins the direct line at John Milton⁹ is marked as half-blood and handed to Appendix G, the grandchildren of Daniel William¹⁰ are named at no. 18 under the same clearance, the living without dates; and every other living collateral is left unnamed.

The tiers. Following the standard stated in the Prologue, every claim is graded, entry by entry, to the standard of Wood and Jacobus, “Additions and Corrections to the Colver-Culver Genealogy,” *The American Genealogist* 22 (1945): 107–10 and 31 (1955): 129–54, and the primary records held by the project:

- **proven** — established from a primary record (a deed, will, register, census, gravestone, or court minute).
- **probable** — strong indirect evidence, stated as such and never allowed to impersonate proof.
- **possible** — a lead: a real record whose connection to this family is unproven. Where the person is real but has no demonstrated place in the tree, the entry reads *lead / unplaced*.
- **tradition** — carried by the family literature or local history,

worth recording and clearly labeled.

The Prologue's fifth grade, *name-history only*, does not arise here: this register admits no one on the strength of the surname alone, which is the whole difference between a register and a roll of everyone who ever bore the name. One working sub-grade recurs: **gated** (a link deliberately held open under the rulings stated where they apply, chs. 5 and 10). **The register never computes a cousin degree or assigns a generation number through an unverified link.**

Struck entries. Killing the durable errors is the point of the appendix, so the errors appear — struck through, each with a one-line reason and the record that disproves it. A struck entry is not a person; it is a correction, filed where a reader would otherwise go looking for the myth.

Generation One

1. **EDWARD¹ COLVER** was born in England — parish, parentage, port, and ship all unknown, and honestly unknowable; no birth year is assigned here, every published one being a guess.¹ He first appears in the record at Dedham, Massachusetts Bay, on 28 November 1637, when the town granted “Edward Colver wheelwright” two acres and timber “for employm^t in his trade”; he signed the Dedham Covenant as the sixty-eighth name on the roll as printed.² He married at Dedham, 19 September 1638, **ANN ELLIS**, whose origin is likewise unknown; she was admitted to the Dedham church 17 September 1641, and the children's baptisms run under her membership (“our Sister

¹Edward's English origin is undocumented; Robert Charles Anderson, *The Great Migration Directory* (2015), records no ship, port, or parentage, and the conventional “b. c. 1600” is a convention, not a record. Ch. 2 (“An Unknown Ship”) and the Edward-timeline appendix set out the void in full; the two standing leads (Colfer of Arminghall, Norfolk, bapt. 1618; the Culver smiths of Ratcliff, Stepney) are graded leads only (ch. 1).

²Don Gleason Hill, ed., *The Early Records of the Town of Dedham, Massachusetts, 1636–1659* (Dedham, 1892), 37 (the wheelwright grant, 28 Nov. 1637) and 2–3 (the covenant and signer roll; Edward the 68th name read column-major). The count is defended in ch. 2, in the note on how the signer roll is read. Public domain.

WE ARE DOVES

We Are Doves follows one family, spelled Colver, Culver, and Collver by turns, across four centuries and three countries: from a wheelwright who signed the Dedham, Massachusetts, covenant in 1636 and farmed at the head of the Mystic River near New London, Connecticut, through the Rogerene dissenters of New London, the Colverite migration to Schooley's Mountain in Morris County, New Jersey, a house divided by the American Revolution, the Loyalist walk north to Norfolk County, Upper Canada, under Simcoe's proclamation, and the return to Michigan.

It is a narrative family history built from the records, with the documents reproduced in facsimile, the family legends tested against the evidence, a corrected genealogical register of the early generations, timelines, a DNA appendix, a bibliography, and a full index.

Albert B. Collver III, Ph.D., is a pastor of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the thirteenth generation from Edward Colver of Dedham. He lives in St. Louis, Missouri.

THREE DOVES PRESS



9 798996 756384