
An Old LITTELL Family Bible

By Alvy Ray Smith, Ph.D.*

A crumbling Bible, printed in 1793, was obtained in October 2000 by the author, via an e-mail transaction,¹ because it contained family records of old New Jersey families, particularly the Littell and Acken families, with dates spanning 1768–1881. The Bible originally belonged to Mary Ross Clark, wife of Caleb Maxwell Littell. Following is a transcription of the family data in the Bible, which provides far more extensive information on these two families than is found in John Littell's *First Settlers of Passaic Valley*, and corrects some errors there.² The Bible and digital scans of its genealogical pages have been donated by the author to the New England Historic Genealogical Society in Boston.

[First frontpaper, separated from binding, as received:]³

M^{rs} Mary C Littell's Book
13 College Place
December 7th 1848—New York &
Caleb M Littell
13 College Place
December 7th 1848—New York

[Second frontpaper, separated from binding, as received:]

Mary R. Littell⁴

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1. The author thanks A. O. Turner of Ada, Oklahoma, for detecting the possible value of the Bible to the genealogical community and finding a home for it there.

2. John Littell, *Family Records or Genealogies of the First Settlers of Passaic Valley (and Vicinity) above Chatham—With Their Ancestors and Descendants, as Far as Can Now Be Ascertained* (1852; reprinted Westminster, Maryland: Family Line Publications, 1957), 217.

3. There are also two lines in pencil that have been crossed out. The words of the second line are "and two silver dollars," and "PAINT."

4. Ornate calligraphy, with an illegible notation below it right. Also, very faintly in pencil, "Caleb M. Littell," and "Caleb M Littell's [Bible?] book."

The first printed page, numbered A2 at the bottom, contains a formal introduction addressed to "Most High and Mighty Prince, James"—*i.e.*, to King James for whom this version is usually named.

On the reverse side is a listing of, respectively, the books of the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, and the New Testament, showing the order of the books and the count of chapters in each. It is like a table of contents, but without page numbers. The single word "The" appears at the lower right of the page, echoing a practice in handwritten documents of the period that placed the first word of the succeeding page at the lower right of the current page. Thus this page, though not attached, assuredly belongs just before the first one still in the binding.

The first bound page begins, "The First Book of Moses, called Genesis." At the lower right corner is the word "And." The reverse page begins, "And God blessed the seventh day." And so forth for succeeding pages.

The pages of the Old Testament are bound together. Between Psalms and Proverbs are inserted, as received, three pages of Psalms printed a different way (see more below).

On the front side of the last page of the first bound section appear the words "The End of the Old Testament." On its reverse side is written, in ink:

Ages

Anthony Littell was born September 3rd, 1768.

Anna Littell was born March 7th, 1769.

Eliza Littell was born May 22nd, 1790.

Caleb [Maxwell]⁵ Littell was born November 16th, 1791.

Samuel Cory Littell was born June 16th, 1793.

Amos Littell was born July 22nd, 1794.

Fanna Marsh Littell was born August 6th 1797

Elizabeth⁶ Littell was born May 22nd 1790 And was married to William Hand October 14th 1848 and Died at Scotch Plains N.J. January 6th 1869 and was buried at Westfield N.J.

At this point a complete break occurs in the binding. There are five loose sheets, followed by the entire New Testament, still bound, beginning with "The Gospel according to Saint Matthew, Chap. 1." Bound to this is an Index to the Bible and then the Psalms "in Metre." The three pages of Psalms mentioned above, inserted between Psalms and Proverbs, are in fact from this last section of the original Bible. They are the last pages of the metered Psalms section, and have become unbound. Its now remaining last pages are beginning to unbind too. Both covers are entirely separated from the binding. Thus the two major bound sections of the Bible, as received, are essentially the Testaments. There is no

5. A caret has been inserted here and the name "Maxwell" inserted above the line. The additions are in pencil, in a different handwriting.

6. Someone has, with pencil, hatched across the "beth" in Elizabeth.

Apocrypha; it is missing or has been removed. The two halves of the Bible as received, are clearly parts of one original object.

The five loose sheets between the Old and New Testaments contain most of the genealogical information. The first is apparently the title page of the New Testament: *Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Translated out of the Original Greek; and with the Former Translations Diligently Compared and Revised, By His Majesty's Special Command. Appointed to be Read in Churches, [Seal of Great Britain here] Edinburgh: Printed by Mark and Charles Kerr, His Majesty's Printers. MDCCXCIII.*

This is the only publication notice anywhere in the Bible, as received. Someone has conveniently penned "1793" next to the Roman numerals. Clearly, the dates for the oldest people have been recorded after the fact, since they occurred before 1793.

The title page features several curiosities. A small dried flower is mounted at the center of the page, held in place by a strip of paper glued to the page. Its right end has been folded around the stem of the tiny flower, and a straight pin has been inserted through the paper strip into the fold. A tiny dot of red, sealing wax perhaps, applied to the lower edge of the strip to hold the fold closed, is broken in two now. The strip has the following on it, written in pencil:

Taken from Mother's hand, before she was buried at Westfield May 1st 1863

—M.C Briggs

There are two small newspaper clippings pasted along the top edge of the title page. They may be covering some writing, because at the outside edge of the right clipping are visible the words "New Testament," positioned as if there were more writing to the left.

DIED.

LITTELL—On Wednesday, 29th instant, Mary R. Littell, widow of Caleb M. Littell, of the city, in the 65th year of her age. Further notice of the funeral will be given.

HICKS—On 26th inst. of old age, Betsy Hicks, wife of Captain Sandford Hicks, in the 72d year of her age. Her relations are respectfully invited to attend her funeral, which will take place on Friday morning at 8½ o'clock, from the residence of her daughter, No. 18 Horatio-st. Her remains will be taken to Westfield for her interment. [---?] Californian papers please copy.

[On the reverse of the title page is written:]

Deaths.

Anthony Littell Departed this Life 16th, May 1798

Samuel Cory Littell Departed this Life, the first Day of October 1793.

Fanna Marsh Littell Departed this Life, April 22nd, 1798

Amos Littell departed this life April 11th 1823

[On the front of the second of the five loose sheets:]

Jonathan [torn, but enough remains to suggest it is] Acken was born Sept. 17 [torn]
 And was married to Sarah Marsh March 22^d, 1786 1786 [the second "1786" is written below the
 first, which is crowded against the edge of the paper]
 She being born January 24th 1770.

Ages of the Children

Rachel was born Decem^r 4th 1786, & died 21st of the same month
 Second Rachel was born Decem^r 1st 1787.
 William Acken was born Sept^r 3^d, 1789.
 Jonathan Acken was born Augst 23th 1791.
 Simeon Acken was born July 5th 1793. & died Augst 24. 1793.
 Gideon Acken was born Sept^r 14th 1794.
 Jonathan Acken died March 11th 1796.
 John Acken was born Augst 28th 1796.
 Joseph Acken was born June 16th 1798. died July 1st 1798.
 Gideon Acken died Nov^r 8th 1797.
 Sarah Acken Mother to the above Children died February 22^d 1802. in the 33^d year of her Age.

[On the reverse of this sheet:]

Births

Caleb M Littell was born Nov 16 th 1791	
Mary R Littell was born Nov 22 1797 and was Married Dec 4 th 1813.	
Thomas P Littell was born Oct 4 th 1814.	John C. M Littell was Born 2 ^d Apr 1834
Ann Elizabeth Littell was born Jan 24 th 1817	John C M Littell was Born 18 Nov 1836
Amos C. Littell was Born Dec ^r 26 th 1818.	Josephine A. Littell was Born June 27. 1840
Geo. W. Littell was Born Feby 22 ^d 1821	Mary Agasta Littell was Born June 12 th 1847
Marcus A Littell was Born Feby 21 1823	Marcus Frederick Briggs was Born Feb 28 th 1849
John C Littell was Born July 6 th 1825	Josephine Hilyard Tappen was Born December 21 st 1852
Mary & Irene Littell was Born Aug 10 th 1827.	Albert Howe Tappen was Born December 21 st 1855
Mary C. Littell was Borne 28 th Sep ^r 1829	George Littell Tappen was Born January 19 th 1858.
Sarah Ann Brown Littell was born 15 th Oct 1831	May Tappen was born June 4, 1862

[Third sheet, front side:]

Jonathan Acken [tom, but context makes what is missing clear]
& Anna Littell was married August 10th 1803.

Ages of the Children

Sally Ann, was born Sep^r 21st 1804.

Joseph Acken was born Sept^r 11th 1806. and died Feb^y 19th 1806.

Jonathan Acken died December 2nd 1807

Deaths & Marriages
of the Family of Caleb M & Mary R Littell

John C Littell Died Apr 14th 1827

Mary C. Littell Died Sep^r 1st 1827

John C M Littell Died 28th Nov 1834

John C. M. Littell died Aug 27th 1837

Mary Agasta Littell Died June 26 1847 and
Mary G Littell Died August 24th 1847.

[Reverse side of third sheet:]

Ann Elizabeth Littell Married [to W^m S. Archer
interlined below] 11th Sep 1836

Thomas P. Littell & Mary C. Archer were
married May 12th 18[tom]

George W. Littell & Mary G. Acken were
married June 2nd 1846.

Amos C. Littell & Emeline G. Oldis were
married May 184[4?] [4 has been gouged in
pencil over a 3 in ink]

Deaths & Marriages
of the Family of Caleb M. & Mary Littell

Caleb M. Littell Died May 28th 1848 Aged 57
years

at Sacramento City California Gilbert C. Briggs
died March 29th 1850 Aged 25 years.

Ann E Archer was Married to Albert G Howe
December 23rd 1851

Betsy Hicks died October 26th 1854 Aged 72
years

Captain Sandford Hicks died April 4th 1858,
Aged 78 years.

Mary R. Littell died April 29th 1863, Aged 65
years 5 months & 7 days

Mary Clark Littell Married May 16th 1848 To
Gilbert C Briggs Esq

Sarah Ann Littell Married January 22nd
185[tom] To Frederick D. Tappen Esq.

George W. Littell died January 15th 1863 aged
41^y 10^m 2[4]^d [a 6 *overwritten with a 4*]

Josephine A. Littell was married to John W.
Brown Nov 30th 1864

Mary Clark Briggs died March 30th 1881.
Wednesday morning 51y 6m 2d

[Fourth sheet, front side:]

Feb 22nd 1821, C M Littell[,] Mary Ross Clark[,] Provision Business[,] 101?. West 22nd
Mary Augusta Littell[,] June 12, 1847[,] not known —[,] New Brunswick

[Its reverse side, in very faint writing left by a pencil, that might be as follows, by reading indentations left by the pencil in the paper:]

Caleb M. Littell [Corner? Cones? Bones?]⁷ of Curch [sic; back? Birth?] of [Water? Weber?] St
reformed Duchth [sic] Curch [sic] NY

C M [written strongly; several single letters 'l' scattered about the page]

[The fifth sheet is blank on both sides.]

A CORRECTED ACCOUNT OF TWO FAMILIES

A comparison of the data above with page 217 of John Littell's *First Settlers of Passaic Valley*, compiled in 1852, proves that this old Bible has much more information than appears in that venerable reference. Where they intersect, the two mainly agree, but with a date or two not quite matching. However, the Bible corrects Littell, who misattributed Jonathan Acken's first family to his second wife, and adds many names and dates. A remaining puzzle is the relationship between Caleb M. Littell and the Dutch Reformed Church in New York, apparently mentioned on the fourth sheet.

1. Dr. Anthony¹ Littell was born 3 September 1768, Essex (now Union) County, New Jersey, and died 16 May 1798. He married Ann[a] Maxwell, who was born 7 March 1769, daughter of Caleb Maxwell, and granddaughter of Samuel Maxwell of Boston. Anthony was a physician. Anthony Littell appears in the tax lists for Westfield, Essex (now Union) County, New Jersey in August 1781 and June 1796.⁸

After Anthony's death in 1798, his widow Ann married, second, 10 August 1803, Jonathan Acken [*q.v.*, p. 280], as his second wife, and had two children. After Jonathan's death in 1807, she married, third, Deacon William Sayre, son of Ephraim Sayre. William was an elder of the Presbyterian Church in New Providence, Essex (now Union) County, New Jersey, and had been married first

7. The author's first choices for the words in question are listed first in the bracketed lists of words and question marks. Above these lines is also written "Caleb M. Littell," and below, "[Irene? Jane? June?] Littell." Church and Water Streets run parallel to each other, so there is no corner available.

8. Ronald V. Jackson and Accelerated Indexing Systems, *New Jersey Tax Lists Index 1772-1890* (Provo, Utah: Ancestry.com, 1999-), online at Ancestry.com, cites database *New Jersey Tax Lists Index 1772-1882*.

to Esther High, daughter of John High. They moved to Plainfield, Essex (now Union) County, where he died. William and Ann had no children.⁹

Children of Anthony and Ann/Anna (Maxwell) Littell:

- 2 i. ELIZA[BETH]² LITTELL, born 22 May 1790; died 6 January 1869, Scotch Plains, Essex (now Union) Co., New Jersey, buried at Westfield, Essex Co., New Jersey. She married 14 October 1848, WILLIAM HAND, born 15 June 1774, son of Hezekiah Hand. They had no children. Elizabeth was William's third wife. He married first Sarah Shaw, daughter of John Shaw, and had four children. He married second Elizabeth Richards, daughter of Samuel Richards, and had no children.¹⁰
- +3 ii. CALEB MAXWELL LITTELL, born 16 November 1791; married MARY ROSS CLARK, and had fourteen children.
- 4 iii. SAMUEL CORY LITTELL, born 16 June 1793; died 1 October 1793.
- 5 iv. AMOS LITTELL, born 22 July 1794; died 11 April 1823, aged 28. He inherited his father's 257-acre farm and sold it to Ezra Miller of Westfield.
- 6 v. FANNA MARSH LITTELL, born 22 May 1797; died 22 April 1798.

3. Caleb Maxwell² Littell (Anthony¹) was born 16 November 1791 and died 28 May 1848, aged 57. He married 4 October 1814, Mary Ross Clark, who was born 22 November 1797, daughter of Joshua and Elizabeth (Ross) Clark of Westfield. She died 29 April 1863, aged 65 years 5 months 7 days, and was buried 1 May 1863 at Westfield. Caleb was a grocer, and they were living in New York City on 22 February 1821 and 7 December 1848.

Mary's mother, Elizabeth ["Betsy"] Ross, who was born about 1782, daughter of Ichabod Ross, died 26 October 1854, aged 72. She married, first, Joshua Clark, son of Robert Clark, and second, Capt. San[d]ford Hicks, who died 4 April 1858, aged 78.¹¹

Children of Caleb Maxwell and Mary Ross (Clark) Littell:

- 7 i. THOMAS PICTON³ LITTELL, born 4 October 1814; married 12 May 18__, MARY C. ARCHER.
- 8 ii. ANN ELIZABETH LITTELL, born 24 January 1817; married (1) 11 September 1836, WILLIAM S. ARCHER, cousin of Mary; married (2) 23 December 1851, ALBERT G. HOWE.

9. Littell, *First Settlers of Passaic Valley* [supra, note 2], 183, 372.

10. Littell, *First Settlers of Passaic Valley* [supra, note 2], 170, 172.

11. Littell, *First Settlers of Passaic Valley* [supra, note 2], 358-60.

- 9 iii. AMOS CLARK LITTELL, born 26 December 1818; married May 1843[or 4], EMELINE G. OLDIS.
- 10 iv. GEORGE W. LITTELL, born 22 February 1821; died 15 January 1863, aged 41 years 10 months 24 days; married 2 June 1846, MARY G. ACKEN, who died 24 August 1847, daughter of John Acken.¹²
- 11 v. MARCUS A. LITTELL, born 21 February 1823.
- 12 vi. JOHN C. LITTELL, born 6 July 1825; died 14 April 1827.
- 13 vii. IRENE LITTELL, born 10 August 1827, twin to Mary C.
- 14 viii. MARY C. LITTELL, born 10 August 1827, twin to Irene; died 1 September 1827.
- 15 ix. MARY CLARK LITTELL, born 28 September 1829; died 30 March 1881, aged 51 years, 6 months and 2 days. She married, 16 May 1848, GILBERT C. BRIGGS, who was born about 1825. He went to California, probably in the 1849 Gold Rush, and died 29 March 1850, aged 25, at Sacramento, California. Child: 1. *Marcus Frederick Briggs*⁴, born 28 February 1849.
- 16 x. SARAH ANN BROWN LITTELL, born 15 October 1831; married, 22 January 185— [or 15 February 1851],¹³ FREDERICK D. TAPPEN of New York. Children: 1. *Josephine Hilyard Tappen*⁴, born 21 December 1852. 2. *Albert Howe Tappen*, born 21 December 1855. 3. *George Littell Tappen*, born 19 January 1858. 4. *May Tappen*, born 4 June 1862.
- 17 xi. JOHN C. M. LITTELL, born 2 April 1834; died 28 November 1834.
- 18 xii. JOHN C. M. LITTELL, born 18 November 1836; died 27 August 1837.
- 19 xiii. JOSEPHINE A. LITTELL, born 27 June 1840; married 30 November 1864, JOHN W. BROWN.
- 20 xiv. MARY AGASTA [AGUSTA] LITTELL, born 12 June 1847; died 26 June 1847.

The second family established by the old Littell Bible is the Acken family. Ann Maxwell is the spouse in common.

1. Jonathan¹ Acken was born 19 September 17—, son of Deacon Joseph and Rebecca (Crane) Acken and grandson of Jonathan Crane, and died 2 December 1807. He married, first, 22 March 1786, Sarah Marsh, who was born 24 January 1770 and died 22 February 1802, aged 32. He married, second, 10 August 1803,

12. Littell, *First Settlers of Passaic Valley* [*supra*, note 2], 217, spells it *Aiken*. It is not known if John Acken is related to Jonathan Acken.

13. Littell, *First Settlers of Passaic Valley* [*supra*, note 2], 217, gives 5 February 1851; the Bible gives the other date.

Ann[a] (Maxwell) Littell, widow of Anthony Littell (*q.v.*, p. 278). After Jonathan's death, Ann married a third time, as "the widow of Jonathan Acken, of Scotch Plains," to William Sayre.¹⁴

Children of Jonathan and Sarah (Marsh) Acken:

- 2 i. RACHEL² ACKEN, born 4 December 1786; died 21 December 1786.
- 3 ii. RACHEL ACKEN, born 1 December 1787; married EZEKIEL ROSS, son of David Ross, of Westfield.
- 4 iii. WILLIAM ACKEN, born 3 September 1789; married (1) ELIZABETH MILLER, daughter of Benjamin Miller; married (2) HANNAH SQUIER, daughter of John Squier.
- 5 iv. JONATHAN ACKEN, born 23 August 1791; died 11 March 1796.
- 6 v. SIMEON ACKEN, born 5 July 1793; died 24 August 1793.
- 7 vi. GIDEON ACKEN, born 14 September 1794; died 8 November 1797.
- 8 vii. JOHN ACKEN, born 28 August 1796; married MARGARET VAIL, daughter of William Vail, of Piscataway.
- 9 viii. JOSEPH ACKEN, born 16 June 1798; died 1 July 1798.

Children of Jonathan and Ann/Anna (Maxwell) (Littell) Acken:

- 10 ix. SARAH ["SALLY"] ANN ACKEN, born 21 September 1804; married MATTHIAS A. BROWN of Titusville, probably of Mercer County, New Jersey. Children: 1. *Ellen Louisa Anna Brown*³. 2. *Amos Littell Brown*. 3. *Caroline Elmer Brown*. In 1852, Mrs. Brown was living in New York City and keeping "a select school for young ladies."
- 11 x. JOSEPH ACKEN, born 11 September 1806; died 19 February 1806.

14. Littell, *First Settlers of Passaic Valley* [*supra*, note 2], 372.

Only Dates, No Names The McCoon Family Record

By Edward H. L. Smith III and Henry B. Hoff, CG, FASG*

Sewn into the account book of Derrick McCoon, blacksmith, of Smithtown, Suffolk County, Long Island, New York, is the following fragmentary family record:¹

..... born December 25 1726
..... born March 17d 1763
..... September 10 D 1766
..... born February 21 D 1768
..... born October 8 D 1761
..... vember 5 D 1729

The paper is ripped so that no names have survived, even as an ink impression on the facing page. And it appears this family record has never been transcribed.²

While this is still a frustrating document, it yielded some important clues when combined with existing research on this family.³ Derrick McCoon's date of birth was already known to be 8 October 1761, based on the family Bible of his son-in-law.⁴ Thus the six dates would appear to be the birth dates of his father

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1. Derrick McCoon Account Book in The Handley Collection, The Long Island Room, Smithtown Public Library, Smithtown, New York.

2. For example, it is not listed in General Peter Gansevoort Chapter, *Revised Master Index to the New York State Daughters of the American Revolution Genealogical Records Volumes*, 2 vols. (Zephyrhills, Fla.: Jean D. Worden, 1998).

3. Henry B. Hoff, "The McCoon Family of Oyster Bay, L.I.," *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* 108 (1977):159-62, 209-16; 114 (1983):212-13; 130 (1999):261. Derrick and his siblings usually spelled their name McCoon rather than McCoun. For a corrected account of the immigrant, see C. Melvin Bliven, "John Macccone of Westerly, Rhode Island," *The American Genealogist* 76 (2001):227-33.

4. Family Bible of Major Nathaniel Smith [husband of Phebe McCoon, daughter of Derrick and Anna (Albertson) McCoon], owned by a descendant: *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments*. . . (New-York, Published by Smith & Forman, 195 & 213 Greenwich Street, George Long, Printer, 1813), with various births, marriages, and deaths on "Family Record" pages and on blank pages (some inserted) between the Old and New Testaments.