

Introduction: The Man and His Journal

Early Methodist Episcopal circuit rider William Colbert (1764-1833) served circuits in Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Delaware, and Virginia. He was admitted on trial in 1790¹ and into full connection in 1792, at which time he was also ordained a deacon. Colbert was ordained an elder in 1795. He served most of his time as a traveling minister and retired from the itinerancy in 1811.

William Colbert was born near Baltimore in Poolesville MD on April 20, 1764. Historian George Peck wrote in 1860² that Colbert was remembered by those who heard him preach for his intolerance of noisy children, crowded barns and other unfavorable meeting conditions. He was, however, a dedicated man of God and served with distinction as a circuit rider and district superintendent (or, as it was then called, presiding elder).

In November 1804 William Colbert married Elizabeth Stroud (1784-1849), whose parents were the original founders of Stroudsburg PA. He died June 16, 1833, in Stroudsburg PA.

William Colbert kept a journal of his travels – which ranks with Francis Asbury's as one of the earliest definitive records of American Methodism and its circuits. While a three-volume edited, indexed and annotated transcription of Asbury's journal has been published, no one has yet undertaken that task for Colbert's journal. The original journal and a typewritten transcription are prized possessions within the special collections at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston IL. In 1957, the Library of Congress microfilmed the typewritten copy. In 1964 the Central Pennsylvania Conference purchased a microfilm copy of the journal from the LOC. The General Commission on Archives and History also owns a typewritten transcription of the journal.

What follows is an edited³, indexed and annotated transcription of those portions of William Colbert's journal that relate to his travels on Methodism's

¹ William Colbert was admitted as an itinerant and assigned to a circuit between regular annual sessions. He is not listed in the General Minutes for 1789, but the General Minutes for 1790 list him as "continuing on trial."

² In *Early Methodism within the Bounds of the Old Genesee Conference from 1788-1828*. This is the earliest known work to make significant use of Colbert's journal for historical research and documentation. Speaking of the journal on page 39, Peck states: And we have been so fortunate as to obtain it. For this favor we are indebted to Miss Elizabeth Colbert, his daughter, who is its owner, and keeps it as a sacred relic.

³ In general, Colbert's original wording has been preserved and any editing has been kept to an absolute minimum in order to correct spelling, give sentence structure, or provide necessary

early Northumberland, Tioga and Wyoming circuits. The material is presented in chapters, according to Colbert's assignments. But first, we present a list of Colbert's appointments as listed in the General Minutes – but as noted in the various chapters, Colbert's actual service and co-workers were not always what was printed in the General Minutes. The bold-face years are the ones presented in whole or in part in this volume of *The Chronicle*.

General Church Appointments

1790 ⁴	Calvert [MD]
1790-91	Baltimore circuit [MD], with John Allen
1791-92	Harford [MD], with Joseph Cromwell
1792-93	Northumberland⁵ [PA], with James Campbell⁶
1793-94	Wyoming⁷ [PA], with Anthony Turck
1794-95	Prince George's [MD], with Solomon Sharp ⁸
1795-96	Milford [DE], with Elisha Cole
1796-97	Bristol [PA], with Joseph Whitby
1797-98	Chester [PA]
1798-99	Wyoming [PA]
1799-00	Chester and Strasburg [PA], with James Herron, Edward Larkin ⁹ & Robert Bonham
1800-01	Somerset [MD], with Daniel Ryan
1801-02	Somerset and Annapessex [MD], with Daniel Ryan & Edward Larkin

clarification. In addition, Colbert's scripture references, which are typically given as John III the 16th, or John 3 ch 16 v, are presented in the more familiar John 3:16 notation.

⁴ See footnote 1. This appointment was made between regular annual sessions and does not appear in the General Minutes. The full story of Colbert's entrance into the itinerancy is given in Appendix A.

⁵ Colbert's appointment was changed mid-year. He served Northumberland circuit from May 1792 to October 1792, and then was switched to Tioga circuit from November 1792 to April 1793.

⁶ As reported in Colbert's journal, it was John Hill and not James Campbell who served with him on Northumberland circuit.

⁷ This is a puzzling year. Colbert started on Wyoming circuit in April. In June and July he and James Campbell agreed to cover two rounds each other's circuit – Colbert returning to Northumberland, and Campbell returning to Wyoming. In August, Asbury stepped in – officially assigning Colbert to Northumberland and sending Campbell to York. In October Colbert was re-assigned to Wyoming with Anthony Turck as his assistant – this is the assignment given in the General Minutes – but Colbert seems to have left Turck in Wyoming while he traveled Tioga, which may have been placed under the care of Wyoming. In December, Colbert was re-assigned to Maryland.

⁸ The General Minutes list only Solomon Sharp for Prince George's circuit and do not list William Colbert at all for 1794, but his journal indicates that he was serving Prince George's circuit.

⁹ This name is sometimes reported as Edward Larkins.

Philadelphia Conference Appointments¹⁰

1802-03	superintendent, Albany District¹¹
1803-04	superintendent, Genesee District¹²
1804-05	superintendent, Chesapeake District
1805-06	Philadelphia, with Michael Coate & James Smith
1806-07	Burlington [NJ], with Thomas Smith
1807-08	Kent [MD]
1808-09	missionary, Chesapeake District
1809-10	missionary, Schuylkill District
1810-11	Antalany ¹³
1811	located

It is the hope that other conferences, historical societies, or capable individuals will be inspired by this volume of *The Chronicle* to edit, annotate and publish additional segments of the journal. Ideally Colbert's entire journal should be assembled in a unified format, as was Asbury's journal, into a multi-volume publication.

Preparation of this volume of *The Chronicle* has included extensive use of the following works and has built on their previous research related to Colbert's journal.

Berkheimer, Charles F. *Manuscript Notes on the Journal of William Colbert*. unpublished, 1964.

Palmer, Louis DeForest. *Heroism and Romance: Early Methodism in Northeastern Pennsylvania*. Engel-Truitt Press, 1950.

Peck, George. *Early Methodism within the Bounds of the Old Genesee Conference*. Carlton and Porter, 1860.

These works are cited in the footnotes as Berkheimer's *Manuscript*, Palmer's *Heroism*, and Peck's *Early Methodism*.

¹⁰ Up to this time there were annual meetings in different sections of the country. There were districts under presiding elders, but there were no formal conferences – and an itinerant could be sent anywhere in the connection. Beginning in 1802, the *General Minutes* divide Methodism in America into conferences. William Colbert became a member of the Philadelphia Conference – which then included not only eastern Pennsylvania, but also stretched from the Delmarva peninsula and New Jersey to western New York state.

¹¹ The Albany District included Tioga circuit. *The Chronicle* includes only the portions of the year spent on Tioga circuit.

¹² The Genesee District included Tioga. The *Chronicle* includes only the portions of the year spent on Tioga circuit and traveling through the Wyoming and Northumberland circuit territories on the way to annual conference.

¹³ Antalany circuit was adjacent to Northampton circuit. The name survives today as Ontelaunee Township and Lake Ontelaunee in Berks County.

Chapter 1 **1792-93 (first part)** **Northumberland Circuit**

[This chapter begins with Colbert's journey from the Harford circuit, by way of Baltimore and Carlisle, to his new assignment on Northumberland circuit.]

Monday, May 14, 1792 – This morning I took my leave of the friends in Abingdon and rode about 43 miles to my father's. On the way I called at the house where there lived a man, his wife and daughter that were members of the Society when I was on Baltimore circuit – but the daughter was afterwards turned out for having an illegitimate child, and indeed such was the distress of the family that I could not resist the sympathetic spirit.

Tuesday 15 – I got to my father's and Wednesday 16, Thursday 17, Friday 18, and Saturday 19 I spent at my father's.

Sunday 20 – I preached to an ungodly set of people, and with little satisfaction, in the old fields near my father's on Romans 8:13, and in the afternoon at the widow Ridgely's¹ on Jeremiah 2:12-13. After this, about sunset, I took an agonizing farewell with my father and set off on my way to the mountains of Northumberland – the greatest journey I ever undertook in my life. O, thoughts of leaving my father all alone wound me in the tenderest part. I lodged at Richard Talbot's.

Monday 21 – I have gotten no farther than Reisterstown.

Tuesday 22 – I got to Abbottstown and preached tonight with little satisfaction to an uncultivated set of people at an old Presbyterian house on Matthew 5:16.

Wednesday 23 – I got into Carlisle and preached with satisfaction at night on I Peter 2:5-8 to a well-behaved people. This is a fine, large inland town.

Thursday 24 – I got to Levi Owen's², where I find myself among the mountains and in some degree among a different sort of people to what I have been used to.

Friday 25 – I have got into my circuit at last at Henry Moore's³ near Juniata.

¹ William Ridgely lived west of Baltimore. Asbury visited his home 6/17/1776, 10/6/1776, and 9/11/1777 – that last time to preach at his burial.

² Levi Owen (1744-1823) lived near Meck's Corners, south of New Bloomfield, in Perry County. His grandson Reuben Owen (1823-1905) became a preacher in the Philadelphia Conference.

³ Henry Moore moved from Hunterdon County NJ in 1780. Two miles east of Mifflintown, his house was a frequent stopping place for Methodist circuit riders and is mentioned in Asbury's journal. Colbert mentions preaching in "Henry Moore's Meeting House" – erected about 1763 by the Presbyterians but open to all denominations. The site, on Industrial Park Road ½ mile east of Cedar Springs Road, is marked today by a small graveyard and an historical monument.

Saturday 26 – I came from Moore’s to Osborne’s⁴ in Greenwood, intending to go on to Northumberland, but I was stopped by the rain.

Sunday 27 – Early this morning I set out on my journey to Northumberland, where I was told brother Browning⁵ was to preach today – but when I get there he was not to be found. He had preached here last Sunday. I found myself hurt in not finding him agreeable to my expectations. I met a class in the afternoon and at night, thanks be to God, I was enabled to preach with uncommon liberty on I Corinthians 6:19-20.

Monday 28 – I have had a long and tiresome ride from Northumberland to Adam Harper’s⁶, a Dutchman, in Penns Valley. As I was never in the backwoods before, I found it very disagreeable in the gloomy narrows between Buffalo and Penns Valleys.⁷

Tuesday 29 – I got to Henry Benn’s⁸

Wednesday 30 – I preached at Henry Benn’s, where Lewis Browning met me. I had but very little satisfaction in preaching on Mark 16:15-16. Brother Browning gave an exhortation and spoke well. I met the class.

Thursday 31 – I have ridden one of the worst roads today that I have ever seen. I was sometimes afraid I would break my horse’s legs going over the mountains

⁴ The home of Samuel Osborne in Turkey Valley, Juniata County, was a Methodist preaching place for many years. His daughter Phoebe married Methodist itinerant Morris Howe (1765-1843) and is the mother of Methodist preacher Wesley Howe (1802-1869). His daughters Elizabeth and Frances married George Wood and Henry McConnell, two persons who appear later in Colbert’s journal.

⁵ Before the official organization of American Methodism into distinct conferences in 1802, the appointment process was a work in progress. The 1792 conference for the preachers in the territory was to become the Baltimore Conference was not held until June 22, but Colbert was already at his new assignment. Richard Parriott and Lewis Browning had been the preachers assigned to Northumberland in 1791, and they were supposed to still be serving there when Colbert arrived. This strange overlap was sometimes necessary in order for the new circuit rider to learn the circuit from his departing counterpart.

⁶ Adam Harper Sr. (1722-1805) was born in Germany and now lived about midway between Woodward and Aaronsburg. He was not a Methodist, but he was a godly man, an elder in the German Reformed Church, and one of the most respected persons in the valley.

⁷ Even today, that stretch of PA 45 between Hartleton and Woodward is desolate and gloomy.

⁸ Henry Benn Sr. came to Penns Valley from New Castle County DE in 1784 or 1785 (when he appears on the Potter township rolls) and brought Methodism with him, having been a friend of Lewis Allfry, a Methodist local preacher who traveled with Bishop Asbury. Included in the extended family that joined him in the move was his daughter Rebecca and son-in-law Robert Pennington – who became known as Father Pennington and the Methodist patriarch of Penns Valley, and about whom more will be said later in Colbert’s journal. Another daughter, Rachel, was the mother of Methodist preacher William Monks (1806-1860) of the Erie Conference.

and stones. Late in the afternoon I got to Henry Collins'⁹ in Kishacoquillas Valley.

Friday June 1, 1792 – I preached at Henry Collins' on Matthew 18:3. While I was speaking, my horse that had had been about the door all the morning went into the woods. I thought no more about him till after dinner when I wanted to cross the hideous mountain called Shade mountain and go to Henry Moore's, but he was not to be found. I myself was a stranger in a wooden country – with my saddle, saddlebags and a great coat with but a few shillings – more than a hundred miles from home, which made me feel very unhappy. What added to my distress was, the old man told me it was a thousand to one if I ever got my horse again. But on my offering a reward of six dollars to any one that would bring me my horse (expecting I could borrow the money), a young man, one of Collins' sons, said if he had a creature he would get him for me before tomorrow night. I thought this was very strange after the father had said it was a thousand to one if ever I got him again. I spent the night in uneasiness at Collins', after running about in the woods in search of my horse till I was very fatigued, and early in the morning...

Saturday 2 – I set off with my things on a poor little creature that Collins led and I drove after to the foot of Shade mountain, where one Wood¹⁰ lived and was kind enough to lend me a horse to go over the mountain – with a boy on another horse who took me to Henry Moore's.

Sunday 3 – I preached at Henry Moore's Meeting House on Matthew 22:24.

Monday 4 – I set out after my horse up the Juniata narrows while he was being brought to me over Shade mountain. I met a man who informed me he was found, and on his word I returned back and soon met Collins' son with my horse coming after me. By the losing my horse for a time, I have been kept from Fetterman's.¹¹

Tuesday 5 – I rode to Samuel Osborne's and heard Lewis Browning preach. I gave an exhortation after him. We had a little meeting in the afternoon at a friend's house, and in the evening returned to Osborne's.

⁹ Henry Collins (1750-1793) actually lived one valley east in Ferguson Valley, and not in Kishacoquillas Valley.

¹⁰ This was likely George Wood Jr., son of "Tuscarora George" Wood, who then lived along the Juniata River below present Thompsettown. The Woods had come from Cumberland County, where they had come under the influence of Methodism. These men were the ancestors of historian Dr. Kenneth Wood of Muncy, who speculated to George Berkheimer in 1959 that the reference here was to the elder Wood. Berkheimer, however, believed that the younger Wood, who was a son-in-law of Samuel Osborne and lived closer to "the foot of Shade mountain," was the loaner of the horse.

¹¹ Mr. Fetterman was a well-known inn-keeper in the vicinity of Mifflintown.

Wednesday 6 – I preached at one Patterson's¹² on Ephesians 5:14 and rode to Straub's¹³ – they are very affectionate Dutch people.

Thursday 7 – I spoke at John Thompson's¹⁴ on Matthew 18:3. I was enabled to speak with freedom.

Friday 8 – I spoke at Thomas Rees's¹⁵ on Luke 14:18, and in the evening at William Search's¹⁶ on I Corinthians 13:13.

Saturday 9 – I have had a long and disagreeable ride to William Pegg's,¹⁷ where I preached on Mark 6:12. After which I rode 12 or 14 miles to Joseph Ogden's.¹⁸ I got there about midnight.

¹² Robert Patterson lived near Richfield in what is now Mahantango township, Snyder County.

¹³ Andrew and Peter Straub are buried at Freeburg, Snyder County, which village Andrew laid out and founded. This name is sometimes rendered Stroub, indicating the pronunciation of the name and accounting for Colbert's rendering it as Strobe.

¹⁴ John Thompson was one of several brothers who lived in what is now Buffalo township, Union County. Another brother was Captain James Thompson, whose capture by Indians and subsequent experiences and eventual escape form one of the epic stories of Union County. Both John and James Thompson were contributors toward the erection of the Buffalo Cross Roads Presbyterian Church, and in 1791 they were among the pew holders there. John had two sons: John Jr. and Benjamin. By 1801, the year of his father's death, Benjamin Thompson was one of the stewards of Northumberland circuit. John Thompson is just one of the godly Presbyterian settlers who opened his cabin to itinerant Methodist preachers and gave them whatever hospitality he could.

¹⁵ Thomas Rees was from Philadelphia and bought land adjacent to that of Ludwig Derr, the founder of Derrstown, later called Ludwigsburg, and now named Lewisburg. In 1788 he is listed as the owner of the house at "Strohecker's Landing" – the point on the river from which the road, now PA 45, ran west into Penn's Valley,

¹⁶ William Search served as class leader for at least two classes on Northumberland circuit and was instrumental in early Methodism in both Milton and Sunbury. At this time he was a resident of Chillisquaque township, whose northern boundary touches Milton. Prior to coming to Chillisquaque township, he had lived in Shamokin township about 1788 and 1789. He later returned to Sunbury, and in 1828 he was living on Arch Street and listed as a carpenter.

¹⁷ William Pegg settled at the headwaters of the Chillisquaque Creek on 297 acres deeded to him about 1785. This land was about two miles southwest of Jerseytown. Pegg came from Sussex County NJ and was one of the first members of the Presbyterian Church at Derry tract – another instance of a Presbyterian who welcomed Methodist itinerants. Although Colbert preached here a number of times, the place appears to have been a convenient stopping place between Milton and Fishing Creek [Bloomsburg] and not a regular preaching appointment.

¹⁸ Palmer states that Ogden lived at the site of present Bloomsburg. Berkheimer, however, believes that he lived several miles from the mouth of Fishing Creek, perhaps as far inland as Millville. In truth, Ogden appears to have owned property and moved about within a wide area between Union and Luzerne counties. He relocated to the area after his house in the Wyoming Valley was burned May 1, 1770, during the Pennamite War. He is referred to by Colbert as "Friend Ogden" and had descendants who were members of the Fishing Creek Society of Friends at Millville. This was a hospitable home and a favorite stopping place for Colbert – and Asbury records preaching here July 1, 1793.

Sunday 10 – I preached at Captain Joseph Salmon's¹⁹ on Revelation 22:17, and in the afternoon about 8 or 9 miles farther I preached in a beautiful little town on the Susquehanna called Berwick²⁰ on Job 22:21. Religion appears to be at a very low ebb in these parts.

Monday 11 – I preached at Christian Bowman's²¹ in the woods on I Thessalonians 5:17 to a few people that came out. I lodged at Joseph Ogden's.

Tuesday 12 – a day of rest.

Wednesday 13 – I preached at William Cox's²² on I Timothy 1:15. In this place some appeared to be much affected. One man was much concerned, and I sent to his house and prayed with him. I lodged at John Egbert's.²³

¹⁹ Joseph Salmon (1754-1822) was a nephew to Joseph Ogden, his mother being Joseph's sister Nancy. Prior to 1777 he was a neighbor of the famous Indian scout Moses Van Campen of "the west branch of Briar Creek." In 1778, Salmon, a man famous in his own right as an Indian scout, was captured by the Indians and held for a year before being released. One version of the episode is that Salmon voluntarily gave himself up to his captors for the safe release of his wife and child. His wife was the daughter of Isaiah Wheeler, for whom Fort Wheeler (along Fishing Creek, near Bloomsburg, and a refuge for those fleeing the Wyoming Massacre) was named and on whose land it was erected in April 1778.

²⁰ This first record of Methodist preaching Berwick is significant in that it challenges the church histories that report the earliest Methodist preaching in Berwick was a result of the great 1805 revival at Briar Creek. Colbert also gives other evidence of the organization of a class at Berwick prior to 1805.

²¹ This is the earliest record of preaching at Bowman's in Briar Creek. Christian (1761-1831) and Thomas (1760-1823) Bowman were converted under the ministry of Francis Asbury in Northampton County PA before they came to Columbia County. Christian brought his family to Briar Creek in 1792, and his brother Thomas followed with his family the following year. As local preachers, the Bowman brothers were the human instruments responsible for the great revival of 1805. Asbury ordained them at a camp meeting near Wilkes-Barre in 1807. In 1808 Old Stone Church, an historical site of the Susquehanna Conference, was erected on their land, and now provides the final resting places of the brothers. The grandson of Thomas Bowman was Bishop Thomas Bowman, who served as the president of Williamsport Dickinson Seminary and DePauw University before being elected to the episcopacy.

²² William Cox was a resident of what is now Mahoning township, Montour County. He came from Burlington NJ with the Frazer family to set out and manage their extensive orchards in what is now part of Danville, near Geisinger Hospital. He is assumed to be the William Cox who wrote *A View of the Cultivation of Fruit Trees*, considered the first American textbook on pomology, in 1815. It is unclear whether this class (the Mahoning class) or the one across the river (the Gearhart class) was organized first and should be considered the origins of Danville Methodism.

²³ John Egbert (1752-1821) was an employee of William Montgomery, father of Daniel Montgomery (founder of Danville) and brother of Captain Daniel Montgomery (one of the original trustees of Old St. George's in Philadelphia). He was another Revolutionary War veteran from New Jersey and is the nephew of the Nicholas Egbert (1728-1812), in whose home Francis Asbury preached and was entertained in 1782. He is the brother of the James Egbert (1759-1825) and Nicholas Egbert (1763-1813) visited by Colbert and mentioned elsewhere in the journal. He is buried in the Dreisbach Cemetery in Union County.

Thursday 14 – I exhorted at old Mr. Carr's²⁴ and lodged with Jacob Depew.²⁵

Friday 15 – I preached at old Mr. Wilkinson's²⁶ to a little company of clean people on Matthew 10:32-33. In showing what would be the end of those who did deny Christ, I raised my voice. This offended some. One who was a member of the little society here got up much displeased went out – and by and by a woman did also, but she came back in again. I very often feel much concerned and troubled, lest while I am striving to do good I should do harm to a poor ungodly ignorant people whose souls are precious. Lord, give me heavenly wisdom that I may be adequate to this important task.

Saturday 16 – I had a day of rest in Northumberland.

Sunday 17 – I preached on Job 22:21 in the forenoon and in the evening on II Peter 1:5-8. I have cause to be thankful that I have been blessed with freedom speaking both in the daytime and in the night.

Monday 18 – Rode to Milltown²⁷ expecting to preach, but no notice had been given. This is a town with three stores, three taverns, and two ball alleys. Agreeable to the size it appears to be one of the most dissipated places I ever saw. I could not tell how to pass them. I enquired at one of the ball alleys if preaching was expected. A religious old Presbyterian standing by where they were playing

²⁴ John Carr lived on the south side of the Susquehanna River, just below the present borough of Riverside. He was one of the early members of the old Derry Presbyterian Church and one of the founders of the Mahoning Presbyterian Church in Danville. He died in 1803.

²⁵ Jacob Depew was a son-in-law of Captain Jacob Gearhart, whose lands included the present borough of Riverside. The Depews settled where Gravel Run enters the Susquehanna River and their lands extended to within a mile of the present Klinesgrove United Methodist Church. Traveling downriver from present Danville, one passed the Gearhart and Carr and Depew plantations on the south side of the river. Captain Jacob Gearhart's son Jacob Jr. was the spiritual force and namesake of the Gearhart class and church building (only the cemetery remains) that served the area. Jacob Depew, his wife, and several generations of their descendants are buried in the graveyard at Klinesgrove – which is much older than the church building there.

²⁶ In 1775, Edward Wilkinson bought 306 acres of land about halfway between the present villages of Elysburg and Snyderstown. This family was divided between the Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists – and was friendly to itinerants of each group. Within sight of the Wilkinson cabin, the old Shamokin Valley Presbyterian Church was erected in 1795, and a few years later the Shamokin Valley Baptist Church was erected a little nearer to present Snyderstown. Edward's son Aaron Wilkinson was probably the first Methodist in Irish Valley, where he moved after leaving the paternal homestead. He is buried at the Presbyterian Church in Shamokin Valley "although he was a Methodist."

²⁷ Milltown is the present Milton. Colbert never mentions where he was supposed to preach in Milton – had it been in one of the taverns, he would have mentioned the owner; had it been at the new Episcopal building, he would have so noted. He seemed to have no Methodist home to which he could go. Bell's 1891 *History of Northumberland County* states there was Methodist preaching in Milton as early as 1788, but the name of the early preacher and the fate of any early converts there remain a mystery.

answered that he did not know. I then asked them that were playing ball, and they answered “No.” I further asked them if they did not think they would be better employed hearing preaching than playing ball. Their answer was with a laugh, that there was time for all things, and that they went to preaching on Sundays. I told them they would not be willing to go to judgment from that exercise; they said they ventured that. So after a little conversation with the old man, I left them ripening for destruction and rode to Isaac Bear’s.²⁸

Tuesday 19 – I rode from Bear’s to John Thompson’s and preached on Matthew 11:28-30. The ignorance of the people in these parts is astonishing.

Wednesday 20 – I preached at William Crawford’s²⁹ to a good many for a week day on Revelation 22:17. To all appearance, these people are very willing to hear.

Thursday 21 – I met brother Parriott³⁰ at Mr. Reily’s³¹ in Buffalo; he preached. I gave an exhortation after him, after which we went to Thomas Rees’ to lodge.

Friday 22 – I preached at Thomas Rees’ on Romans 14:17. Brother Parriott gave an exhortation. We have had sharp lightning and thunder today. A man living near Juniata was at plough with two creatures in the field when he was killed. How many are the accidents that ought to put us on holding ourselves in a state of readiness for a better world.

Saturday 23 – Brother Parriott and I rode to Northumberland, where we held our quarterly meeting. He we met brother Hill³², who has come to take brother

²⁸ At this time Isaac Bear lived at his mill on White Deer Creek, just across the west branch of the Susquehanna from present Watontown. The Bear brothers, Isaac and John, had come to this place and erected a sawmill a few years prior. In 1790 they erected the first grist mill there. A year after Colbert’s visit, they sold their properties and moved to Black Hole Valley, opposite the present town of Muncy and near the western terminus of the Muncy bridge. Isaac Bear died in 1806 at the age of 56 and is buried in the Clinton Baptist Cemetery in Black Hole Valley, near Montgomery.

²⁹ William and Edward Crawford were farmers in Buffalo Valley. Edward was there as early as 1780, and in 1792 he was among the tenants of Colonel Hartley. This is the area now known as Hartleton and confirms local accounts that there was continuous Methodist preaching at Hartleton from the formation of Northumberland circuit in 1791 until the church building (which was erected in 1841) was closed in 1935.

³⁰ This appears to be the first meeting between Colbert and Richard Parriott, who had been appointed to Northumberland the previous year (1791) with Lewis Browning. He had come from being appointed to Little York in 1790 and was assigned to Calvert MD in 1792. Early accounts of Methodism in Central Pennsylvania agree with Colbert in giving him much praise and credit. He apparently left the itinerancy in 1795 and nothing more is known of him. His surname is sometimes given as Parrott.

³¹ This is likely John Reily, Esquire, who lived near present Lewisburg and had been admitted to the bar in 1785. Nothing else is known about Mr. Reily or his Methodist connections.

³² John Hill is listed in the 1792 General Minutes being assigned to neighboring Tioga circuit, and James Campbell is listed as coming from neighboring Wyoming circuit as the replacement for Parriott. But Asbury had a tendency to make mid-year appointment changes and to re-think

Parriott's place. Brother Hill preached, and I gave an exhortation after him. At night I preached on Luke 13:18-19. While I was speaking, a drunken man took a sleep. Spirituous liquors are a great curse to the people of Pennsylvania.

Sunday 24 – We have had a happy Love Feast this morning. Brother Hill preached, brother Parriott preached after him, and at night I preached on Matthew 5:6. And so ended our quarterly meeting. Glory be to God for his wonderful works in this part of the world.

Monday 25 – I spent the day in Northumberland and visited several people with brother Parriott.

Tuesday 26 – I rode with brother Parriott from Northumberland to Samuel Osborne's.

Wednesday 27 – Brother Parriott has now taken leave of Northumberland circuit, where he is much respected. He is an excellent man.

Thursday 28 – I spent part of the day at Samuel Osborne's and lodged at friend McConnell's.³³

Friday 29 – I rode to Henry Moore's

Saturday 30 – I rested at Moore's.

Sunday July 1, 1792 – This has been a very warm day. I preached at the meeting house near Moore's on Revelation 22:14 and in the afternoon rode to Fetterman's.

Monday 2 – I preached at Fetterman's on Hebrews 10:24-25. There is prospect of good being in this place.

Tuesday 3 – I preached again from Hebrews 10:24-25 at Samuel Osborne's.

Wednesday 4 – At Robert Patterson's I lectured on Matthew 22:1-14 and proceeded on to one Johnson's. I have reason to be thankful that my horse's legs have not broke this afternoon crossing Shade mountain.

Thursday 5 – I rode up Middle Creek toward Crawford's, where I preached on Matthew 18:3 with satisfaction. These people behave themselves very well, all

assignments that had already been announced whenever he felt that such adjustments were for the good of the work. It appears that Campbell stayed on Wyoming circuit another year (instead of the 1792 appointee William Hardesty) and moved to Northumberland circuit in 1793. It also appears that Hill did not report to Tioga circuit (a new and unstructured circuit extending from Wyalusing PA to the Finger Lakes of New York state) but reported to Northumberland circuit instead.

³³ Edward McConnell lived in Monroe township, Juniata County, about two miles from the present village of Seven Stars. He had been a steward on the earlier short-lived (1784-86) Juniata circuit, and his home was a stopping place for circuit preachers. His brother Henry McConnell married Frances Osborne, daughter of the Samuel Osborne frequently mentioned by Colbert.

sitting while singing and standing at the time of prayer. O that the Lord may break their hearts of stone, bend the iron sinew of their necks, and bow the marble pillow of their knees.

Friday 6 – I exhorted at Reily’s and preached at Thomas Rees’ on Hebrews 4:9 to a few people.

Saturday 7 – I rode about 20 miles from Thomas Rees’ to William Pegg’s and preached with satisfaction on part of Matthew 6:10 on “Thy Kingdom Come.” Then I set off for Ogden’s and got there about midnight. A gloomy way it is for six or seven miles without a house, among the mountains and in the lofty woods.

Sunday 8 – I preached at Ogden’s on II Peter 4:18 and in the afternoon rode to Berwick and preached on Ephesians 5:14. Tho’ it was with reluctance I came here, on account of my horse being so much fatigued, I do not repent coming.

Monday 9 – I visited Darius Mead³⁴ – a sick man who makes fine promises to reform if he is spared. God grant that he may not break them.

Tuesday 10 – I read in Volume I of Fletcher’s³⁵ works and lodged at widow Salmon’s.³⁶

Wednesday 11 – I preached at William Cox’s on Psalm 1:1-2 and received Daniel Lewis³⁷ into Society. I lodged at John Egbert’s.

Thursday 12 – I preached at old Mr. Carr’s on Isaiah 55:6-7 to a few people and lodged at good Depew’s.

Friday 13 – I preached at old friend Wilkinson’s on II Corinthians 12:15. We gave thanks to God, had a good time. Old Mother Wilkinson has joined the

³⁴ Darius Mead was one of the influential family of Meads which came into the Wyoming Valley from Hudson NY. After they lost their land to conflicting claims of Connecticut settlers, brothers David and John emigrated to Venango County in 1789 and founded the settlement that developed into Meadville PA. It was the Venango County Meads that influenced many Susquehanna Valley Methodist families to migrate to the western part of the state. Darius stayed behind in the Northumberland area when his brothers went west, but he eventually followed after them in 1799. He died in Erie County PA in 1813.

³⁵ John William Fletcher (1729-1785) was a close associate of John Wesley, known for his piety and for being the primary theological defender and spokesperson for early Methodism. His celebrated *Checks to Antinomianism* defends Wesleyan Arminianism. His collected works were published in nine volumes.

³⁶ Nancy Ogden Salmon (1733-c1800) was a sister to Joseph Ogden and the mother of Joseph Salmon. Her husband John Salmon had died in 1780.

³⁷ Originally from New Jersey, Daniel Lewis was a blacksmith who settled in Coles Creek, Columbia County.

Society. I rode to Northumberland. At Mrs. Taggart's³⁸ a man lies who had had his left leg severed from his body. I trust he has the fear of God before his eyes.

Saturday 14 – I spent the day at Sister Taggart's, where I got through Volume I of Fletcher's works.

Sunday 15 – This morning I met the class in the meeting house³⁹, after which I preached on Matthew 25:34. In the afternoon I preached in Sunbury Court House⁴⁰ on II Corinthians 12:15, and at night again in Northumberland on Matthew 25:41. I spoke with more freedom tonight than I have ever done to date. If any good is done, may my hearers ascribe all to the glory of God.

Monday 16 – I rode to Stephen Fields's⁴¹ and exhorted at night to a few people.

Tuesday 17 – I preached at John Farley's⁴² on I Corinthians 2:2.

³⁸ Mary Taggart (1730-1805) was the widow of Thomas Taggart – who was born in Ireland in 1728 and emigrated to Philadelphia, where he married Mary Vanderbilt. The Taggarts came to Northumberland in 1774, settling at the corner of Queen and Front streets, about the same time that Mary's relatives, the Vanderbilts, came to Mahoning township, near present Danville. A merchant and innkeeper, Thomas died had died in 1788.

³⁹ The Northumberland "meeting house" is mentioned by both Colbert and Asbury, who says it was "a meeting house owned by the Methodists and used also for school purposes." As there is no record of the Methodists owning any property until they erected a church in 1819, the exact location of this structure is not known. The Taggart family owned several properties in Northumberland, any one of which, including a lot assessed for a period "with house unfinished" owned by their son-in-law William Bonham, may well have served as a "meeting house."

⁴⁰ The Sunbury Court House in which Colbert preached was not the future log court house erected on Market Square in 1796. It was a stone and brick building on the south side of Market Street used as both the jail and the court house.

⁴¹ Stephen Fields lived in White Deer Hole Valley, which extends westward from the Susquehanna River at present Allenwood.

⁴² John and Caleb Farley came from Hunterdon County NJ in 1787. They built a cabin on White Deer Hole Creek and later erected the area's first grist mill, near the mouth of White Deer Hole Creek, at the very edge of the present village of Allenwood. Shortly after they arrived here, they contributed toward the establishment of the Buffalo Cross Roads Presbyterian Church and are listed among the first who gave to this project. That was the nearest house of worship for many years. John stayed here until 1800 and then went back to New Jersey. He came back to White Deer Hole Creek for a visit in 1822 and died here. He is buried in the family cemetery along the hillside overlooking the site of the mill.

Francis Asbury has visited in the home of Mindurt Farley in "Germantown", the present Oldwick in Hunterdon County NJ, and started preaching there in July 1782. He refers to the Farleys on numerous occasions during his visitations to New Jersey. Mindurt Farley is the father of John and Caleb.

This visit of Colbert is the first such recorded here. Parriott and Browning may have started the work the previous year, but they left no such record. One historian says that Parriott had no preaching place between Northumberland and Amariah Sutton's [Williamsport]. This became a regular preaching place and a class existed here for at least thirty years. Caleb Farley was a class

Wednesday 18 – I preached at Joshua White's⁴³ on I Corinthians 6:19b-20.

Thursday 19 – I preached at Peter Kunkle's⁴⁴ on II Corinthians 13:5.

Friday 20 – I preached at Amariah Sutton's⁴⁵ on I Thessalonians 5:17.

Saturday 21 – I rode to Richard Manning's⁴⁶.

Sunday 22 – I preached at Richard Manning's on Isaiah 32:17, and in the afternoon at Pine Creek⁴⁷ I heard a Presbyterian for the first time. He preached on

leader, and "Farley's" is mentioned regularly in the stewards' books of Northumberland and Lycoming circuits. Caleb was licensed as an exhorter, and probably as a local preacher.

In 1801, Bishop Newcomer of the United Brethren Church, while holding a Quarterly Conference at Dreisbach's in Union County, mentions that he and another United Brethren preacher spoke "after which brother Farley, a Methodist, spoke in English."

⁴³ Joshua White was one of the first settlers on the east side of the West Branch of the Susquehanna, living "north of the Muncy Hills," probably about where the town of Muncy now stands. He is listed as one of the June 1778 petitioners to the Supreme Council of the Colony for relief from the Indians. He left with the "Runaway" of 1778, presumably back to New Jersey, but returned when it was safe to do so.

Indication that he was a Methodist local preacher comes from the diary of Baptist preacher Thomas Smiley [see *Now and Then*, quarterly magazine of the Muncy Historical Society, July 1960, page 277]: "There was at least one Baptist in Muncy prior to the American Revolution. This person was a woman named Mrs. Anna White...Her husband was a local Methodist preacher." Joshua and Anna are assumed to be the parents of Alward White, who preached at Northumberland in June 1793 and was admitted on trial in October 1793. Joshua White died in the spring of 1793, and in June 1793 Colbert refers to "the widow White."

⁴⁴ Peter Kunkle was born in Germany in 1744 and came to America with his family at the age of 5. One of the pioneers of Fairfield township, Lycoming County, he was among the first members of the early class that later developed into the Montoursville congregation. The Kunkle school-house served for years as an appointment on the Lycoming circuit. Peter Kunkle died in 1814.

⁴⁵ A native of England, Amariah Sutton came from New Jersey as early as 1770 and built a double log house near where the Lycoming Creek empties into the Susquehanna River. Richard Parriott is said to have organized the first class here, probably in 1791 – although he may have organized it in 1790 on his first tour of exploration while he was one of the preachers on the Little York circuit. In 1776 Sutton deeded a tract of land from the eastern side of his farm for church and cemetery purposes. A log chapel was erected there in 1806, the society of which later rebuilt on Pine Street. The site of the log chapel was later reclaimed by Methodism, and the Calvary Methodist Episcopal church building, now the Cathedral Apartments, was erected there in 1930.

⁴⁶ Richard Manning is credited with laying out the town of Jersey Shore. His father Reuben Manning, credited with being the first white settler on "the long island near Pine Creek," had come from Essex County NJ about 1783. Tradition has it that the Irish settlers in Nippenose Valley derided the location and called it "Jersey Shore."

The fact that Colbert stayed at Manning's and preached there at this time raises an interesting question – since James Bailey, the class leader at Sutton's is said to have lived in the vicinity. It could be that the Mannings had accommodations the Baileys could not provide, or it could be that Colbert was reaching out in an evangelistic strategy since the Baileys were already "in the fold."

Matthew 5:48. He is an able speaker but could not but (Calvinistic like) speak against sinless perfection. When he had done, I proceeded on to Dunnstown⁴⁸ and preached on Ezekiel 18:27.

Monday 23 – I preached at John Hamilton's⁴⁹ on I John 5:3. Here is but little prospect of good being done.

Tuesday 24 – I preached at Philip Antes's⁵⁰ on Matthew 13:3. After meeting I visited a man that was wounded by a wooden pitchfork that he ran up under his short ribs along with part of his shirt.

Wednesday 25 – I preached at Henry Benn's on Matthew 6:10.

Thursday 26 – I rode to Marsdon's⁵¹ and lodged at Henry Dixon's⁵² near Juniata.

⁴⁷ The Pine Creek Presbyterian Church was organized in 1792. The first pastor was Rev. Grier, who was likely the preacher Colbert heard that day. The following incident (from J.F. Meginess' *Historical Journal*, Vol. I, page 309), which occurred just a month before Colbert's visit, indicates some of the underlying Methodist-Presbyterian tensions: In the spring of 1792 he [Grier] was sent as a missionary to the West and North Branches of the Susquehanna River, by the Presbytery of Carlisle, as far as Albany and Ticonderoga...He rode to Lycoming, now Newberry, June 22nd, and lodged with a Mr. Hepburn. On the 24th he preached there. Finding a man who was going to what was called Pine Creek Station, he sent by him that he would be there to preach to them on the next Sabbath... The congregation was so small that Mr. Grier felt surprised and discouraged. On enquiring of them after the services why there were so few people at the preaching, he was told that the man by whom he sent word of his coming was known to be a Methodist, and the people supposed that it was a Methodist minister who was to preach, whom they did not want to hear."

⁴⁸ Dunnstown was known as Dunnsburg at this time, and is so named in Colbert's journal. *The Chronicle* uses the modern name of the town.

⁴⁹ In 1786 John Hamilton was a resident of Pine Creek township, Northumberland County, of which this entire region was then a part, assessed for 75 acres of land. His property was likely near present Mill Hall. Colbert states later [10/17/1793] that he lived on Bald Eagle Creek.

⁵⁰ Philip Antes was known as the founder of Methodism in the Bald Eagle Valley. He came here with his family in 1787, and as soon as his cabin was under roof he organized a Methodist class of six members – on his own, before the arrival of any circuit riders. Philip was the son of Colonel Henry Antes, builder and namesake of Antes Fort in the Nippenose Valley. Henry was the son of "Pious Henry" Antes, Moravian lay minister of Philadelphia County – and friend of George Whitefield, who preached from his porch to great multitudes in the 1740's. The entire family was very devout, but Philip was the only member of this distinguished family known to be a Methodist.

A marker in front of the Curtin Church reads: "In memory of Philip and Susanna Antes, in whose log cabin near here the first Methodist Episcopal Society in the territory of Center County, of the Little York and Juniata Circuits, was formed in 1787 by Rev. David Combs, Circuit Rider." The short-lived (1784-86) Juniata circuit was re-combined with Little York in 1786. Despite what the marker says, it is likely the Benn class was formally organized before the Antes class. For an account of David Combs, see the 2013 volume of *The Chronicle*, pages 12-17.

⁵¹ The Marsdons mentioned here are not of the Bald Eagle Valley, although a pioneer family of that name lived there. This family lived in the Juniata Valley, southwest of Lewistown.

Friday 27 – I preached at Marsdon’s on John 8:32. The house was full and the people behaved well. After preaching, Marsdon and Dixon called me upstairs, informing me that they should be glad that preaching could be continued among them and insisted on my taking two dollars.⁵³

Saturday 28 – I called at Henry Collins’, where I had lost my horse, to pay them for the trouble they had in bringing him to me. There I found William Clingan⁵⁴, who left the Methodists and joined the Baptists for the sake of ordination and getting what the people would give him, with whom I had sharp contests. I proceeded on to Benjamin Philips’.⁵⁵

Sunday 29 – I preached at the widow Myers’⁵⁶ on Acts 17:11. Here for telling the people they must live without sin, I so offended a Presbyterian that he got up, called his wife, and away he went.

Monday 30 – I called at Hugh Gwynn’s⁵⁷ and got them to consent to receive preaching. I rode on to Hugh McWhorter’s.⁵⁸

Tuesday 31 – I spent the day in Northumberland.

Wednesday, August 1, 1792 – I read in Volume II of Fletcher’s works.

Thursday 2 – I rode to Edwards Crawford’s and preached in the evening on Hebrews 11:24-26.

⁵² Henry Dixon was the nearest neighbor to the Marsdons. In 1879, John Marsdon and Elias M. Dixon were still neighbors on these same farms which their grandfathers settled as pioneers.

⁵³ Methodist itinerants were not to be paid directly, but through the circuit stewards. This was not a regular preaching place on the circuit – and while the boundaries of the circuits were not well-defined, the territory southwest of Lewistown was probably considered outside the territory of Northumberland circuit and within the territory of Huntingdon circuit. This may be why the funds were offered.

⁵⁴ Colbert had noted in Abingdon MD on November 28, 1791, that “this night a local preacher – William Clingan – withdrew from the Methodist connection” and that “I did what lay in my power to persuade him not to give place to the temptation of the devil.” Now, at this July 1792 meeting, William Clingan was an elder of the Baptist Church who had been sent by the Philadelphia Baptists Association into this section of the state to preach the gospel and organize churches. In June 1794 Clingan was one of the organizers of the Shamokin Valley Baptist Church, near Snyder town, with land for a church building and cemetery given by Edward Wilkinson [see the note for 6/15/1792].

⁵⁵ Benjamin Philips was a resident of what is now Beaver township in Snyder County. On this trip Colbert did not cross Shade Mountain into Juniata County, but headed east through the Middle Creek valley of Snyder County. The Methodists did not succeed well in Snyder County, although the “German Methodists” of the Evangelical and United Brethren denominations did. Colbert did not travel through this valley again while on the Northumberland circuit.

⁵⁶ There were several Myers families at that time in present Beaver township, Snyder County.

⁵⁷ Hugh Gwynn (1735-1806) lived in what is now Penn township, Snyder County.

⁵⁸ Hugh McWhorter lived on a 200 acre farm in Point township, Northumberland County.

Friday 3 – I have ridden about 30 miles and preached three times: a funeral of a child on Amos 4:12, at Thomas Rees' on Proverbs 3:35, at night at Northumberland on II Corinthians 12:15.

Saturday 4 – I rode to William Pegg's and preached on Isaiah 55:6-7. I preached to Joseph Ogden's. I fell into conversation with a Calvinist in principle who said that it was the will of God that David should commit adultery and murder. Calvinism must certainly be the most damnable doctrine upon the face of the globe.

Sunday 5 – I preached at Joseph Ogden's on I Peter 4:18, and in the afternoon at Berwick from Hebrews 2:3 on "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation."

Monday 6 – I visited a family of the Meads' and prayed with them. They appear to be open to receive the word of truth.

Tuesday 7 – I preached for the first time in Catawissa, to a company of well-behaved people under a shed, from Amos 6:1 on "Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion." In this little town a woman treated me with kindness. She told me that she had heard the Methodists were a strange kind of people, that they carried knives about them to fight the devil. I lodged at Samuel Boon's.⁵⁹ I was permitted to go to prayer. I had to kneel alone.

Wednesday 8 – This morning at Boon's they professed not to have prayer in their family. I rode to William Cox's and preached on part of Luke 10:42, and in the afternoon at King's I preached on Mark 1:15. Here were some, I am told, that had never heard a Methodist.

Thursday 9 – I exhorted a few people at old Mr. Carr's.

Friday 10 – I preached at old Mr. Wilkinson's on Mark 1:15 and rode to Northumberland.

Saturday 11 – I spend the day at Northumberland.

Sunday 12 – I preached in the forenoon at Northumberland on Revelation 3:18, and in the afternoon at Sunbury on I Peter 4:17. Here I visited the prisoners in Sunbury. There appear to be some marks of penitence in one of them. Armstrong⁶⁰ is in for a rape. Disbury⁶¹ and Ackman are in for dishonesty. At

⁵⁹ Samuel Boon was one of the first settlers at Catawissa. He was a Quaker from Exeter and one of the founders of the Catawissa Meeting. His grandson, Aaron Boon, became a prominent Methodist in Catawissa.

⁶⁰ William Armstrong was under sentence of death, and the sentence was soon to be carried out. He was executed by hanging on November 15, 1792.

⁶¹ Joe Disbury was one of the most notorious criminals in the history of Northumberland County. He received the following sentence in Sunbury in 1784: "39 lashes between the hours of 8 and 9 tomorrow, stand in the pillory one hour, have his ears cut off and nailed to the post, that he be

night I preached at Northumberland on Matthew 25:10. I have cause to be thankful that I have some satisfaction in speaking today.

Monday 13 – This morning John Farley sent for me to preach at his wife’s funeral.⁶² I went and preached on Revelation 14:13.

Tuesday 14 – I exhorted at John Farley’s to a few people. At night I preached at Peter Hastings’⁶³ to more than I expected, considering the shower of rain, with a good deal of satisfaction on Mark 1:15.

Wednesday 15 – I preached at White’s on I Peter 4:17, and in the afternoon at Joseph Hall’s⁶⁴ on II Corinthians 5:2.

Thursday 16 – I preached at Peter Kunkle’s on James 4:7-8.

Friday 17 – I preached at Amariah Sutton’s, Lycoming, on Revelation 3:18.

Saturday 18 – I rode from Lycoming to Martin Reese’s,⁶⁵ up Pine Creek among the spurs of the Allegheny mountains, and preached to a large congregation of willing hearers for such a mountainous romantic place on Matthew 18:3. I returned to Richard Manning’s near the Island to lodge.

Sunday 19 – I preached at Richard Manning’s on Mark 1:15 at 11, and at Dunnstown on Mark 16:15-16. I have cause to be thankful that I had liberty in speaking at both places.

imprisoned 3 months and pay a fine of 30 pounds to the President of the State for the use of the Government.” It is likely that sheriff Henry Antes, the father of Philip Antes, had to carry out these orders.

By 1792 Disbury was an incorrigible thief and was serving a 21 year sentence – from which he is said to have come back into the community “as merry as a cricket” and continuing to steal whenever he had the chance. So far as we know, he never reformed and is not named among the Methodist converts.

⁶² The death date for Mrs. Farley is not known. Necessity dictated that the custom in those days was to bury the deceased shortly after death and have the funeral the next time the circuit rider came around. As the Farley burying ground was not established at this time, the burial likely took place on the family farm. If there ever was a marker, it has not survived. Farley later left the area and returned to New Jersey, where he brought up a second family of considerable size. He died, however, in Allenwood in 1822 and is buried in the family burying ground there.

⁶³ Peter Hastings was a resident of Black Hole Valley, near present Montgomery PA.

⁶⁴ Joseph Hall’s stone house is still standing, just east of the Hall Cemetery, at Hall’s Station, between Muncy and Montoursville.

⁶⁵ Martin Reese lived at this time on the west bank of Pine Creek, several miles from where it empties into the Susquehanna. By 1803 he had moved to the upper end of the borough of Jersey Shore and became part of that town’s lore as the resident to whom Esther McDowell, the “female imposter”, appeared with her claim of having been beaten and robbed.

Monday 20 – I preached at John McFadden’s⁶⁶ on Matthew 22:4 and rode to John Hamilton’s in the afternoon. Here the unhappy souls that were joined together in in society I fear are going to ruin.

Tuesday 21 – I preached at Hamilton’s on John 13:35. I had no desire to meet the class, so disordered are they; therefore, I omitted it.

Wednesday 22 – I preached at Philip Antes’ on part of II Corinthians 2:16: “To one we are a savor of death unto death, and to the other of life unto life.”

Thursday 23 – I preached at a new place, the London Lands, at Hugh Hamilton’s⁶⁷ on Mark 16:15-16. I rode to Henry Benn’s.

Friday 24 – I spent the day reading *Aspasio Vindicated*.⁶⁸

Saturday 25 – I have gotten through Mr. Hervey’s⁶⁹ book containing 450 pages. To me it has been like a long and tedious journey. It seems that I might compare myself to one, while reading, going through an enemy’s land – traveling sword in hand. Nevertheless, I think this book has been of use to me, giving me to see the subtlety of Calvinism.

Sunday 26 – I preached at Henry Benn’s on I Peter 4:17, and in the afternoon in the woods near General Potter’s⁷⁰ on II Corinthians 5:20. On my way home with James Potter, a good-humored Presbyterian fell in with me. As we were riding together, he pointed to a large tree by the road, of which some of the limbs were dead, saying that we might learn something from them. Knowing in part that he wanted to talk about religion, I observed to him that the limbs were once alive – and he said, yes. I told him they would never to life again – and he said, no. I told him they were once alive, and this he agreed to, and that they were now fit

⁶⁶ At this time John McFadden (1748-1834) lived near Dunnstown. Earlier, he had lived near the mouth of Pine Creek. In the first decade of the 1800’s he moved to western Pennsylvania, probably as part of the migration inspired by the Mead family.

⁶⁷ In 1786 Hugh Hamilton was living in what is now Bald Eagle township, Clinton County. In 1792 he is living on “the London Lands.” The London Land Company extended from Half Moon Valley into present Patton township, Centre County. For many years the settlers thereon were in litigation over their rights. This was likely the westernmost preaching point on Northumberland circuit, and it was soon taken over by Huntingdon circuit.

⁶⁸ *Aspasio Vindicated* is a follow-up to the author’s earlier *Theron and Aspasio*. Both are rambling theological books on a variety of topics presented as the ideas of two fictional characters, Theron and Aspasio.

⁶⁹ English clergyman and writer James Hervey (1714-1758) was a member of John Wesley’s Holy Club and sympathetic to Methodism. He ultimately, however, adopted a more Calvinistic point of view and remained in the Anglican Church.

⁷⁰ General James Potter owned 1200 acres near present Potter’s Mills. A Presbyterian, he gave the land for the West Penns Valley Presbyterian Church, in whose burying ground his body lies. He died in 1789, and it was his son James Jr. who hosted Colbert

for nothing but to be burned – this he could not but acknowledge. And so we parted in friendship, without any religious controversy.

Monday 27 – I rode to Robert Howe's.

Tuesday 28 – I preached at Edward Crawford's on John 14:20.

Wednesday 29 – I preached at a school house near Thomas Barber's⁷¹ in Buffalo Valley on Mark 16:15-16, and in the afternoon at John Thompson's on Colossians 4:2. Here lay the woman of the house dangerously ill with flux. I lodged with Benjamin Thompson, son of John Thompson.

Thursday 30 – This morning I visited old Mrs. Thompson and found her better. I prayed with the family and left them. I preached at Mr. Reily's on Psalm 1, and in the afternoon at Thomas Rees' on Matthew 15:24-28.

Friday 31 – I preached at William Search's on Psalm 1:1-2.

Saturday, September 1, 1792 – I preached at William Pegg's on II Timothy 3:12. From thence I rode to Joseph Ogden's.

Sunday 2 – I preached at Joseph Ogden's on part of Matthew 6:13 – “Deliver us from evil” – and in the afternoon in Berwick on II Corinthians 13:5. I have had but little liberty in preaching my last three sermons.

Monday 3 – I see this morning that I have done what I ought not to have done. I have lain awake all night, almost, conversing with a man⁷² in Berwick of some information on subjects in moral and natural philosophy and divinity. And truly my spirit was grieved this day when I heard that this person had made too free with strong liquor. I preached at night at Henry Melick's⁷³ on Matthew 25:10. I thank God that I have felt something more at liberty than I have for three times past.

⁷¹ The schoolhouse near Barber's was the first erected in what is now Union County. Robert Barber built a saw mill on his property near White Springs in 1791. In 1792 he was the Justice of the Peace for this area.

⁷² This person was Isaac Holloway, the son-in-law of Amos Park of Salem, Luzerne County. Holloway was the first school teacher in Berwick. Bishop Asbury preached at his house the next year. Holloway seemed to have been a problem to Colbert. He was well educated, but not very well disciplined.

⁷³ The Melick family came from Hunterdon County NJ and settled near Espy. Henry Melick (1755-1834) settled near Light Street and was instrumental in the founding of that congregation. His grandson Justus A. Melick (1823-1886) was a pastor in the Central Pennsylvania Conference.

Henry was a brother to Peter Melick (1752-1830), who married a Rachel Clingman. In 1778 Peter Melick lived below Espy and his house was burned by Indians, causing the family to escape to Fort Wheeler. Contrary to what Charles Berkheimer states, this is not the Peter Melick (1758-1818) in Northumberland County who married Susanna Egbert – daughter of Nicholas Egbert, in whose New Jersey home Asbury visited and preached in 1782.

Tuesday 4 – I preached at Catawissa Mill on part of II Corinthians 6:19-20. I was enabled to cry aloud. God grant that some may be awakened. They in this place seem to be possessed of a friendly spirit. I lodged at Thomas Clayton's.⁷⁴ It grieves me to see the Quakers, a people professing godliness, so much opposed to family prayer. However, they allowed me to pray in the family – but they did not kneel with me.

Wednesday 5 – I preached at William Cox's. O how I am put to it sometimes to get a passage of Scripture to speak upon. This day I spoke from part of Luke 15:2: "This man receiveth sinners." A good many stayed in class meeting, two men and a woman joined.

Thursday 6 – I lectured at old Mr. Carr's from the first twenty verses of the fourth chapter of Mark.

Friday 7 – I preached at old friend Wilkinson's on II Corinthians 4:7. What a pity it is, that such a good old man as friend Wilkinson appears to be, should have his mind poisoned with Calvinism.⁷⁵

Saturday 8 – I rode to Sunbury in order to speak to a man, William Armstrong, under sentence of death. When I got there, a Baptist preacher was just going to preach. I heard him, after which he spoke to the prisoner, who is in a wretched state. I asked him if he could forgive his prosecutors. He said, "No." I told him he could not have forgiveness if he could not. So also the Baptist preacher told him. The Baptist preacher prayed with him.

Sunday 9 – I preached in Northumberland on Hebrews 12:14, and in the afternoon on revelation 3:20. The sheriff Flavel Roan⁷⁶ interrupted me twice. First, when I

⁷⁴ Catawissa was still largely a Quaker settlement. Thomas Clayton was one of the earliest of this sect to settle in the area, moving to the Fishing Creek area, where Bloomsburg is now located, prior to the Revolutionary War. In 1783, after returning from the Great Runaway of 1778, Clayton moved to Catawissa.

⁷⁵ Both the Baptists and the Presbyterians built churches within sight of Edward Wilkinson's home within two years of this date – and Wilkinson gave the land for the Baptist Church and cemetery. It was probably his interest in this project that disturbed Colbert.

⁷⁶ Commissioned sheriff of Northumberland County on October 18, 1791, Flavel Roan was one of the most colorful personalities of his day in this region. He came to these parts from Lancaster PA, where his father was a minister, likely Presbyterian, who had come from Ireland. He moved here about the same time as his sister, Mrs. William Clingan (wife the one-time Methodist, and now Baptist, preacher) settled in what is now Kelly Cross Roads, Union County.

Roan was one of the most literate men in the territory and taught school a number of terms. He resided at Lewisburg, or Derrsborg as it was then called, and kept an extensive diary that has been partially preserved and reprinted by various historical societies. One of the early members of the Buffalo Cross Roads Presbyterian Church, he died in Lewisburg and was buried in the Old Presbyterian Cemetery there – now the site of the First Presbyterian Church of Lewisburg. When the cemetery was cleared for the church building, Roan's was one of the few graves that were not disturbed. His body now lies under the front steps of the present building.

had quoted I Corinthians 1:21, he said, “There is no foolishness in preaching.” I told him it was Scripture. He said he did not believe it. I told him I could find it. I did, and I read it to the congregation. Several got up and went out of the court house. This seemed to cut him. He told me to proceed, and that he would not interrupt me. I proceeded, but he was not as good as his word for long. He soon interrupted me, and, unfortunately for him, he interrupted me when I was quoting Scripture. Seeing this troublesome drunken fool would not be quiet, I thought it best to conclude as soon as I could. After preaching, this same drunken sheriff requested me to speak to the prisoners – which I did, and I found poor Armstrong hardened and insensible of his danger. At night I preached again in Northumberland on Revelation 22:11.

Monday 10 – I spend part of the day in Northumberland, and in the afternoon I rode 6 or 7 miles to brother Vandervoort’s.⁷⁷

Tuesday 11 – I exhorted at John Farley’s, and in the afternoon I preached at Abraham Swisher’s⁷⁸ in Black Hole on Revelation 3:20.

Wednesday 12 – I preached at Joshua White’s on Ezekiel 18:27, and in the afternoon at Joseph Males’⁷⁹ on Acts 3:19. Here John Mitcheltree kept me in conversation till late bedtime, and the next morning till I went off to preaching. I see my want of watchfulness. Lord, forgive me where I have let one word drop contrary to thy will.

Thursday 13 – I preached at Jeremiah Tallman’s⁸⁰ on Matthew 25:12-13.

Friday 14 – I returned to Joseph White’s.

To Methodists, Roan is notable as the author of the deed of the Beaver Memorial Church – in which he traces the title back through the original patentees to the Penns, through the Penns to the Six Nations, and on back to Adam and Eve, and Almighty God. Colbert apparently saw him at his worst. He was well-versed in Scripture and was a respected leader during his lifetime.

⁷⁷ The Vandervoorts did not remain in the area. On December 17, 1792, while on the Tioga circuit, Colbert called on “my old friend Vandervoort” near present Elmira NY.

⁷⁸ Abraham Swisher was a farmer in Black Hole Valley, between Montgomery and Muncy.

⁷⁹ Joseph Males was then living near present Montoursville. He was probably the immigrant Irish ancestor of the Maley family of the Loyalsock Valley, several of whom were active Methodists at Barbours.

⁸⁰ Jeremiah Tallman was a farmer in what is now Fairfield township, Lycoming County. He had a son, Jeremiah Jr., who was the first boot and shoe maker of any note in the borough of Williamsport, opening his business about 1799 in a frame shop on the northwest corner of Third and Pine Streets. Jeremiah Tallman was one of the trustees of the first chapel at Sutton’s, and also of the first church on Pine Street. He was one of four stewards of the Northumberland circuit in 1802, and he served in that capacity for many years on the Lycoming circuit. The hat of Jeremiah Tallman and the bonnet of his wife are catalogued in the Muncy Historical Society’s collections as “the Quaker [sic] hat and bonnet of Jeremiah Tallman and his wife” and are excellent examples of what was worn by devout Methodists of that time.

Saturday 15 – Our quarterly meeting began at Joshua White’s today. Nelson Reed⁸¹ preached a sermon on I John 2:17, which I heard with as much satisfaction as any I ever heard him preach. John Hill gave an exhortation after him. Then they administered the Sacrament. This was what some thought strange – that the Sacrament should be administered on Saturday.

Sunday 16 – Nelson Reed preached from Romans 8:12, and John Hill concluded the meeting with prayer. Afterwards I rode through the rain to Peter Kunkle’s.

Monday 17 – I rode to the Big Island⁸² and preached at night on John 13:17.

Tuesday 18 – Through a mistake, instead of going to John Hamilton’s to preach agreeable to appointment, I went to one Wilson’s⁸³ in Nittany Valley where I have to preach tomorrow. However, I proceeded to Hamilton’s and preached to a few people by the light of pine knot from Matthew 24:44.

Wednesday 19 – I preached at Wilson’s on Acts 3:19 and intended to go to Philip Antes’ – but I was prevented by the rain. And so I had not a very agreeable time while at Mr. Wilson’s, tho’ they treated me well.

Thursday 20 – It is a very cold, wet morning. It was surprising to see so much snow on the ground at this season of the year. The limbs of the peach trees broke, large limbs broke down off the oaks, and saplings bent across the road. It began to snow last night before we went to bed. I went out of my way by Lamb’s⁸⁴ to Philip Antes’.

Friday 21 – I preached at Hugh Hamilton’s on I Corinthians 6:19-20 and on.

⁸¹ Nelson Reed was the presiding elder, now designated district superintendent. Reed and John Hill, the senior pastor on the circuit, administered the Sacrament as Colbert would not be ordained elder until November 6th in Baltimore.

⁸² The Big Island is the one just downstream from present Lock Haven. The preaching was probably at Dunnstown, although it may actually have been on the island at what became Liberty appointment.

⁸³ These Wilsons lived in the vicinity of the present village of Salona, although there were other Wilsons that lived up the valley nearer top the Nittany post office. The Wilsons at Salona are credited with selecting the name for the place. The story is as follows: “In the first issue of The Christian Advocate was an article on foreign missions in which the name of Salonika, a city in Turkey, occurred. This was seen by Mrs. Samuel Wilson on the day preceding the meeting... and she suggested the propriety of giving the town this name. Mr. Wilson proposed the name at the meeting, and it was unanimously adopted, with a slight modification.” Brothers Henry Wilson (1826-1881), and James T. Wilson (1834-1890) are descendants of these Wilsons who became pastors in the Central Pennsylvania Conference.

⁸⁴ The Lambs were early landholders where Bellefonte now stands. They also owned tracts of land near Hecla. It appears that the snow led Colbert to go “out of his way” and take the Nittany Creek gap through Bald Eagle mountain (the gap through which I-80 now passes) instead of a more direct route over the mountain.

Saturday 22 – I went to one Sackett’s to preach – there were but a few. One of the neighbors could not come, tho’ she was close, because she had to bake. I tried to preach to them on Matthew 18:3.

Sunday 23 – I preached at Henry Benn’s on Revelation 3:21, and in the afternoon at Potter’s mill on Proverbs 14:32 to more people than there were at Benn’s.

Monday 24 – I preached with a degree of liberty at one Francis’⁸⁵ at Bush Valley from Revelation 23:17. I believe some here received the word in love, but at the same time I could perceive that others were very insensible and stupidly taking snuff at the time of prayer.⁸⁶

Tuesday 25 – I preached at Edward Crawford’s on Jude 21, after which I visited a young Dutchman that I believe is not long for this world. The people in this place evidence a love for our preaching. I think if they loved our discipline as well, that it would be well for them.

Wednesday 26 – I preached at a schoolhouse near Barber’s in Buffalo Valley on Acts 3:19, and in the afternoon at John Thompson’s on Matthew 18:19-20. After preaching to them, brother Hill joined 7 or 8 together in a little society when he was here last – and then he preached to as many more that stayed in.

Thursday 27 – I preached at Reily’s on Ezekiel 27:18, and in the afternoon I exhorted at Thomas Rees’.

Friday 28 – I preached at William Search’s on Isaiah 3:10-11.

Saturday 29 – I preached at William Pegg’s on Matthew 5:6 and rode to Joseph Ogden’s.

Sunday 30 – I preached at Ogden’s on Matthew 5:6, and in the afternoon exhorted at Berwick. I lodged at Christian Bowman’s.

⁸⁵ This is a family who came from Washington County MD and changed their name from “Francis” to “Frank”. John Frank and his wife were members of the Lutheran Church in Brush valley as early as 1794. Philip Frank (1757-1830), formerly Philip Francis, lived in Haines township in 1793. Brush Valley was predominantly German and fertile ground for the Evangelical Association, but the Methodists did have a preaching appointment there for a good many years – and even a building at one time in Smullton (1896-1934). James D. Frank, the g-g-g-g-grandson of Philip is the author of “The 1894 Evangelical Association Split in Clinton County’s Sugar Valley” in the 1994 volume of *The Chronicle*, pages 63-72.

⁸⁶ Colbert’s reference to those who were insensible and stupid recalls the final word of a Lutheran pastor in his last sermon to this congregation in Brush Valley. The much publicized and often quoted remark about the lack of intelligence among his members was made by the Rev. Yost Henry Fries as follows: “Money rules the world, and ignorance rules Brush Valley.”

Monday, October 1, 1792 – I preached at night on Matthew 5:4. Here I displeased some in speaking against whiskey drinking and stilling.⁸⁷

Tuesday 2 – I preached at Catawissa on Amos 4:12 with liberty.

Wednesday 3 – I preached at James Egbert's on Matthew 5:4 and joined 8 persons in society. I felt happy in preaching to these people today.

Thursday 4 – I preached at Mr. Carr's on Matthew 5:6, and in the afternoon I exhorted at Jacob Depew's.

Friday 5 – I preached at old friend Wilkinson's on part of Acts 16:30 – “What must I do to be saved” – and in the afternoon I visited the prisoners in Sunbury jail. They appear a little more humble.

Saturday 6 – I spent the day in Northumberland.

Sunday 7 – In the forenoon I preached at Northumberland on Ezekiel 18:27.

Monday 8 – I rode to Thomas Rees'.

Tuesday 9 – I preached at John Farley's on Ezekiel 18:27.

Wednesday 10 – I preached at Joshua White's on Acts 16:30, and in the afternoon at Joshua Hall's on Matthew 5:40.

Thursday 11 – I preached at Peter Kunkle's on Matthew 5:1-16.

Friday 12 – I preached at Amariah Sutton's on Revelation 3:2-5. There was a hard rain today.

Saturday 13 – I rode as far as Pine Creek today, but could not get across to Abel Reese's, and so I was obliged to return. I lodged with Thomas Forster⁸⁸ on an island in the West Branch of the Susquehanna called the Long Island.⁸⁹ The skies tonight were red and flaming.

Sunday 14 – I preached at Mr. Manning's on John 6:27 with liberty. I rode to Dunnstown in the afternoon and preached on Acts 16:30 – “What must I do to be saved” – and lodged with Ananias McFadden.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Stilling was the principal means of getting cash for grain crops in the days when there were no roads on which to haul the grain to market. Hence, any attack on the practice was an attack upon the common method of making a living. This appears to have been a hot issue in the area – see the 11/26/1792 footnote on William Bonham.

⁸⁸ Thomas Forster was one of the most illustrious of the Revolutionary War officers residing in the West Branch Valley.

⁸⁹ Long Island is across from present Jersey Shore – and distinct from Great Island, by Lock Haven, across from present Dunnstown.

⁹⁰ Ananias McFadden (1756-1810) was a brother to the previously mentioned John McFadden. He, too, later moved to western Pennsylvania.

Monday 15 – I returned back as far as Amariah Sutton's at Lycoming.

Tuesday 16 – I lodged with McWhorter's after a long ride from Lycoming to within about 2 miles of Northumberland.

Wednesday 17 – John Hill, James Campbell⁹¹ and myself met in Northumberland. John Hill preached, Campbell and I gave exhortation – each of us after him.

Thursday 18 – We took our farewell to Northumberland and got as far as Samuel Osborne's, where people were waiting to hear preaching. John Hill gave them an exhortation.

Friday 19 – We rode from Osborne's to Levi Owen's. James Campbell preached for us.

Saturday 20 – We rode to Carlisle.

Sunday 21 – We spent the day in Carlisle. This forenoon John Hill preached; in the afternoon, James Campbell. John parted with us here. At night I preached on Proverbs 23:26.

Monday 22 – We traveled all day and lodged at a Dutchman's at night.

[The rest of the journey to the annual conference in Annapolis is beyond the bounds of the Susquehanna Conference. We continue with the conclusion of the annual conference.]

Tuesday 30 – This morning Bishop Asbury ordained Thomas Bell, John Childs (a local pastor) and me to the office of deacon in the Church. At night Joseph Cromwell preached, and I expect gave general satisfaction.

Wednesday 31 – James Campbell, Morris Howe,⁹² John Ragan⁹³ and myself set off from Annapolis to Baltimore, and had a very dangerous passage over the Patapsco. An easterly wind setting up the river raised a very high sea – insomuch that it was with difficulty our horses, four or five in number, could keep on their legs. There was a fox hunter in the boat – whose hound got very sick with the

⁹¹ James Campbell (1760-1840) was coming from the neighboring Wyoming Circuit, where he had been serving since 1791. According to the General Minutes, he had originally been assigned to serve with Colbert on Northumberland circuit in 1792 – but he apparently remained on Wyoming circuit while John Hill (who according to the General Minutes had been assigned to Tioga circuit in 1792) served with Colbert.

⁹² Morris Howe (1765-1843) was a respected elder in the Baltimore Conference. He retired from the active work in 1817 and is the father of Wesley Howe (1802-1869) of the Central Pennsylvania Conference. He was the son-in-law of Samuel Osborne of Turkey Valley, a favorite Northumberland circuit host of Colbert, and that may have been the connection for them to travel together. Morris Howe later moved to Ohio and is buried there.

⁹³ John Ragan (c1760-1796) was a native of Ireland who came to America soon after the peace of 1783. Like Colbert, he was admitted on trial between conferences – as he does not appear in the 1789 General Minutes, but the 1790 General Minutes list him as “continuing on trial.”

motion of the heavy sea that ran, and he puked much. However, we were mercifully preserved and rode in to Baltimore that evening and heard Ira Ellis⁹⁴ preach on part of Amos 7:5 – “By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small.” Campbell, Howe and myself lodged at a Dutch friend’s by the name of Baltzer Shaffer,⁹⁵ where we were treated with kindness.

[This concludes Colbert’s service on Northumberland circuit. The next section begins with the General Conference of 1792 and Colbert’s new assignment to Tioga circuit.]

⁹⁴ Ira Ellis (1761-1841) first appears in the *General Minutes* in 1782, where he is listed as being “continued on trial” (having been admitted on trial between the conferences of 1781 and 1782 and sent to Mecklenburg circuit) and assigned with Caleb Boyer to Pittsylvania VA. His first cousin once-removed to Reuben Ellis (1752-1796) was also an itinerant and the two of them appear in the famous sketch of Bishop Asbury’s 1784 ordination. The Ellis chapel on Sussex circuit was the site of the 1782, 1783 and 1784 conferences. It was Ira Ellis that Asbury appointed to take James O’Kelly’s place as presiding elder in southern Virginia when the latter broke from the connection at the General Conference which began the very next day – November 1m 1792. Asbury wrote the following about Ira Ellis: *Ira Ellis is a man of quick and solid parts. I have often thought that had fortune given him the same advantages of education, he would have displayed abilities not inferior to a Jefferson or a Madison. But he has, in an eminent degree, something better than learning-- he has undissembled sincerity, great modesty, deep fidelity, great ingenuity, and uncommon power of reasoning. His English schooling has been good: he is a good arithmetician, and expeditious and ready with his pen: when asked for an account of his travels, he took his pen immediately, and without a recurrence to books or papers, gave it at once; in the Conferences and elsewhere, as my secretary, he has been of signal service to me. He is a good man, of most even temper, whom I never saw angry, but often in heaviness through manifold temptations: he is a good preacher, too. O may he finish his life as he hath continued it-- faithful, and acceptable, and successful in the traveling and local line!*

⁹⁵ Baltzer Shaffer was a resident of Baltimore, and his name appears in various city records as early as 1791. He was an elder in the United Brethren’s Old Otterbein Church, and as such his name appears as a witness on an 1813 ordination certificate issued by Otterbein and on an 1814 letter from the congregation to the conference. His name also appears on an 1809 request for permission to hold a lottery for funds to erect a building to be called the Baltimore Female Academy.

Chapter 2

1792-93 (last part)

Tioga Circuit

[This chapter begins with the November 1792 General Conference in Baltimore and Colbert's mid-year change in appointment to the Tioga circuit. Colbert left Baltimore when General Conference ended November 16, but he did not reach the southern boundary of the Tioga circuit until December 6.]

Thursday, November 1, 1792 – General Conference of the bishops, elders and deacons of the Methodist Episcopal Church met in Baltimore. The rules of the house were drawn up today, and there were few debates about them.

Friday 2 – It was moved in the General Conference today that the power of the bishop should be so far abridged – that in case a preacher could make it appear that the bishop in his appointment had injured him, by appealing from the bishop to the conference, the bishop should give him an appointment elsewhere. This was seconded and ably defended by O'Kelly¹, Ivey², Hull³, Garrettson⁴ and Swift⁵ – and opposed by Reed⁶, Willis⁷, Morrell⁸, Everett⁹ and others.

¹ James O'Kelly (1757-1826) was born in Ireland. He migrated to America and was admitted to the traveling connection in 1778. He organized those who withdrew with him, who were concentrated along the Virginia – North Carolina border, into the Republican Methodist Church. This body was re-named the Christian Church in 1801, and eventually the remnants of the denomination merged into the Congregational Christian Church.

² Richard Ivey (1755-1795) was born in Sussex County VA and joined the traveling connection in 1778. His obituary in the General Minutes states that "Ivy [sic], a man of affliction, lingered out his latter days, spending his all, with his life, in the work."

³ Hope Hull (1763-1818) is often called the Father of Georgia Methodism. He was received on trial in 1785, was Asbury's traveling companion in 1794, located in 1795, and married in 1796.

⁴ Freeborn Garrettson (1752-1857) was born of well-to-do parentage in Maryland, near the mouth of the Susquehanna River. He was admitted on trial in 1776 and served in leadership positions during the formative years of the denomination. At Wesley's urging, Garrettson sent his journal to England for publication, but it was lost at sea. In 1793 he married Catherine Livingston (of the prominent Livingston family of New York) and, in a move almost without precedent, remained in the itinerancy.

⁵ Richard Swift (1767-?) was born in Goochland County VA and began his itinerant career in 1783. He located in 1793.

⁶ Nelson Reed (1751-1840) was born in Anne Arundel County MD and joined the itinerancy in 1779. He was instrumental in guiding Colbert into the ministry and served as his district superintendent for his first several appointments. When Reed died in 1840 he was reported to be "the oldest Methodist preacher in the world."

⁷ Henry Willis (c1760-1808) was born in Brunswick County VA and joined the traveling ministry in 1779. He was one of very few preachers who married (naming his first child Francis Asbury Willis) and yet remained in the itinerancy – but apparently not full time because of his frail

Saturday 3 – The day was spent in debate about the appeal.

Sunday 4 – Doctor Coke¹⁰ preached a delightful sermon from Romans 8:16. In the afternoon O’Kelly preached on Luke 17:15. The power of the Lord attended the word. At night Willis preached on part of Psalm 95:10-11.

Monday 5 – The day was spent in debate about the appeal. It was put to vote, but was not carried. This grieved O’Kelly that he withdrew from the connection.

Tuesday 6 – The conference undertook the revision of the *Form of Discipline* and the *Duties of Elders, Deacons and Preachers*.

Wednesday 7 to Thursday 15 – Except for the forenoon of Thursday 15, I attended conference. On Wednesday 14, James Thomas¹¹ and I were ordained elders and appointed to fill the stations in Wyoming and Tioga¹² respectively.

Friday 16 – I left Baltimore and rode to Richard Talbot’s.

nature. As stated in his obituary in the General Minutes: “He was of a slender habit of body, a feeble breast and lungs, the great fervor of his mind and energy of his address were too great for his bodily strength... By his own hand he ministered to the necessity of himself and his family: he would not eat the bread of the church of God, as he could not be wholly employed therein... His only argument for continuing in the traveling connection was that his call and qualifications were of a divine nature, and not to be dispensed with but by unfaithfulness, debility, or death.”

⁸ Thomas Morrell (1747-1838) was born on Long Island NY, and his mother was a member of Embury’s first class, but the family soon moved to Elizabethtown NJ. He distinguished himself as a soldier during the Revolutionary War – becoming a personal friend of George Washington, and conducting the official meeting of Asbury and Washington in 1789. Admitted on trial in 1787, he was stricken with illness and located in 1796 – living with his father in Elizabethtown NJ until he recovered in 1799. He married in 1802.

⁹ Joseph Everett (1732-1809) was born in Queen Anne County MD. He was a backslidden New Light Presbyterian layman with very anti-Methodist opinions who was re-awakened by Asbury in 1778 and joined the itinerancy in 1780.

¹⁰ Thomas Coke (1747-1814) was a priest in the Church of England and a co-worker of John Wesley. Wesley sent Coke to America in 1784 to ordain Asbury and to superintend the Methodist work. He and Asbury are considered the first two bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the name Cokesbury is a combination of their two names. Asbury actually did most of the superintending, while Coke traveled back and forth to England – and his last visit to America was in 1803. He died in 1814 en route to begin a Methodist missionary enterprise in India and was buried at sea in the Indian Ocean.

¹¹ For the rest of this conference year, James Thomas (1765-1827) would serve Wyoming circuit, the neighboring circuit to Colbert’s Tioga circuit. Unbeknownst (we assume) to anyone at this time, the two of them would switch circuits at the end of the conference year.

¹² Tioga circuit had been cut off from Wyoming circuit in 1792 to cover Bradford County PA and extend into the Finger Lakes region of New York State. It appears that the person listed for Tioga circuit in the 1792 General Minutes, John Hill, went to join Colbert on Northumberland circuit instead – and that Tioga circuit was without a regular preacher until Colbert finally arrived there on December 6 to finish out the conference year (i.e., to serve until spring 1793).

Saturday 17 – I rode to my father's and spent the day with him. I cannot but be affected by the thoughts of the execution of William Armstrong in Sunbury, tho' at the distance of one hundred and forty or fifty miles from the fatal spot. I visited him both before and after he received the sentence of death – and should have been glad to have been with him today, distressing as the scene is.¹³

Sunday 18 – I preached at the widow Ridgely's on Revelation 22:14 and met a black class, some of them I believe have inward religion. O, unhappy afternoon! I must bid farewell to my father and repair to the northern mountains of Pennsylvania and New York. I find it exceeding hard parting with my father as he has none but me (to his or my knowledge) in America that are anything to him by the tie of nature. But go I must! A sense of duty compels the measure, and away I have come. I am now at Daniel Elliott's¹⁴ in company with Charles Burgoon¹⁵ (destined for the state of Delaware) and Rezin Simpson¹⁶ (destined for Montgomery, in Maryland).

Monday 19 – I rode from Elliott's to Reistertown, through the rain till I was wet – and what was still worse, I lost myself for a while.

Tuesday 20 – I rode from Reistertown to McAllistertown¹⁷ and stayed at Peter Storm's,¹⁸ a papist.

Wednesday 21 – This morning I took breakfast in McAllistertown with Mr. Neas,¹⁹ who is a universalist and treated me very kind. I rode from McAllistertown to Carlisle and lodged at Thomas Jones'.

¹³ Colbert apparently believes that this day, November 17, was the day of the execution, but according to the public records William Armstrong was executed by hanging two days earlier, on November 15.

¹⁴ Daniel Elliott, whose name appears in the journals of Francis Asbury and early Maryland circuit riders, was a member of the Montgomery circuit. He lived in Howard County at Delaware Bottom – near present West Friendship, about 20 miles west of Baltimore.

¹⁵ Charles Burgoon (1757-1800) was born in Anne Arundel County Maryland and joined the traveling connection in 1790.

¹⁶ Rezin Simpson (1758-c1811) was born in Anne Arundel County MD. In his earlier life he worked as a teacher and as a merchant in Triadelphia MD. He married in 1786, and he was admitted on trial at the General Conference of 1792. In 1793 he is listed as continuing on trial and being reassigned to Montgomery – then he is no longer listed, Montgomery being the only appointment he served.

¹⁷ McAllistertown is now Hanover PA, which in 1792 had a large Catholic presence. The first Methodist sermon was supposedly not preached here until the pastor of the Carlisle circuit did so in 1810.

¹⁸ Peter Storm (1761-1840), a Roman Catholic, was born in Maryland to German immigrant parents. He settled and raised in family in the Hanover area, and in 1808 he was part of the company incorporated to build a road from Hanover to the Maryland state line.

¹⁹ This is likely Mathias Neas (1740-1815), whose house is still standing at West Chestnut and High Streets – and is now the home of the Hanover Area Historical Society. He acquired the lots from his brother in 1782 and erected the house within a year. He was Hanover's third

Thursday 22 – I set out this morning for Tioga. It snowed. The mountains are before me. Tho' disagreeable when I first came among them, time, that which reconciles man to his lot, makes them appear pleasant – even at this dreary season of the year. I lodged at Levi Owen's.

Friday 23 – I have had a very disagreeable ride today, through the snow, to Samuel Osborne's.

Saturday 24 – I rested at Samuel Osborne's, where I read through the Prophecy of Daniel.

Sunday 25 – I spoke at Osborne's from Matthew 5:1-12, and in the evening at McConnell's²⁰ on Matthew 18:3. This was a happy season. The Lord be praised for uniting the hearts of the children of men together in bands of Christian fellowship.

Monday 26 – I rode to Northumberland and lodged at William Bonham's²¹, who was not at home. I was treated kindly by his family.

Tuesday 27 – I spent the day in Northumberland, writing and getting ready for my journey. I preached at night on Matthew 18:3.

Wednesday 28 – I spent a little time reading the life of that good man Mr. Brainerd.²² At night I met a class. I am not as much engaged in religious

postmaster, serving from 1790 to 1813, and first burgess, in 1815. He also served several terms in the state legislature.

²⁰ Henry McConnell (1765-c1840) was a son-in-law to Samuel Osborne, having married his daughter Frances. His father and uncle settled in Turkey Valley, Juniata County, in the 1760's.

²¹ William Bonham (1750-1826) was the son-in-law of Thomas and Mary Taggart, having married their daughter Elizabeth. He was born in New Jersey, met and married Elizabeth in Philadelphia, and moved with his in-laws to Northumberland in 1774. Farmers in the area distilled their excess grain into whiskey, which was easier and more profitable to transport over the "roads" of the day than was the more cumbersome grain – hence the 1791 whiskey tax put them at an economic disadvantage compared to grain farmers living in more accessible areas. As part of the 1794 military action to put down the Whiskey Rebellion, William Bonham was transported from Northumberland to Philadelphia and imprisoned as an "insurgent." This little-known aspect of the Whiskey Rebellion is recounted in one source [jcdurbant.wordpress.com/2013/01/10/] as follows: William Bonham, a county constable, was upset about the national government's enforcement of its excise tax on whiskey... He was quoted as saying that he felt the "government had carried themselves too high and must be taken down," that "the Excise Law was oppressive on the poor people," and that "the tax should be on the land, and not on our own produce." His upset was in the context of his having heard about the armed confrontation near Pittsburgh on July 16 and 17, 1794... Bonham began agitating in favor of what he thought was happening near Pittsburgh, speaking with folks throughout his county, "writing letters and dropping them about to stir up the minds of the people," allegedly recruiting for an armed force to resist the army the government was sending to put the insurrection down, and demanding the erection of a liberty pole to symbolize opposition to the government and to taxation without representation.

exercises as I ought to be. Too much of my precious time slips away unimproved. O that I may be more engaged in the work of God than ever.

Thursday 29 – I rode from Northumberland to Joseph Ogden's at Fishing Creek. I fell in company with Mr. Morgan²³ along the way – at Mahoning Creek, where I had to pay a quarter dollar for their riding my horse over the creek, which I could have done myself.

Friday 30 – I spent the day visiting Robert Owen and the widow Salmon. I feel attachment to the people in this neighborhood, for as much as I have been treated kindly by them.

Saturday, December 1, 1792 – I bid farewell to my old friends at Ogden's and set off for my Tioga. I called on Isaac Holloway in Berwick, but saw him not – but from what I heard of him, I fear that he is in a very bad way. From Berwick I rode to Salem and lodged at Amos Park's.²⁴ These are truly friendly people; the woman has had Christian experience. I am happy that I found them. I had called at one Cortright's,²⁵ about a mile back, who, I believe, when they found out I was a Methodist preacher did not want me to stay with them – but readily directed me to the Parks', and I as cheerfully went.

Sunday 2 – I have had one of the worst roads from Salem to Nanticoke, in Wyoming circuit, where I for the second time heard a Presbyterian minister preach. His name is Gray.²⁶ He spoke from II Corinthians 4:17. He preached at Shubal Bidlack's²⁷ – he spoke well. I lodged at Aaron Hunt's²⁸ – where there

²² David Brainerd (1718-1747) was a missionary to the Native Americans who had a particularly fruitful ministry. During his short life he was beset by many difficulties. As a result, his biography became a source of inspiration and encouragement to many Christians. It was the noted evangelist Jonathan Edwards who preached his funeral sermon and published his diary.

²³ Mr. Morgan had a drug store in Wyoming, and Colbert will visit him there 5/11/1793.

²⁴ Amos Park (1739-1804) lived in Salem township, Luzerne County, immediately east of Berwick. This appointment (and western Luzerne County in general) was shifted back and forth over the years between the Northumberland and Wyoming circuits – finally ending with the Central Pennsylvania Conference and not the Wyoming Conference. He sold some his land to the Beach family that founded the town of Beach Haven, and Berkheimer speculates that was the likely area where Park was living at this time. One of the area's earliest settlers, he appears on the tax lists as early as 1775. After the Wyoming Massacre he went back to Connecticut, but later returned to the land he had taken up. His daughter Lucy (b. 1772) was married to Isaac Holloway.

²⁵ This is believed to be Elisha Cortright (1744-1821), who lived in Salem township, Luzerne County.

²⁶ Presbyterian minister Andrew Gray (1757-1837) born in County Down, Ireland. He resided in Paxtang, Dauphin County, before moving to the Wyoming Valley. In 1796 he joined about a dozen area families in a mass migration to found a settlement in western New York State.

²⁷ Shubal Bidlack (1752-1803) was born in Connecticut. The family later settled in the Wyoming Valley. Shubal's brother Capt. James Bidlack was killed in the 1778 Wyoming Massacre, and his

were three beds that he brought out and laid on the floor, and I had one of them. I believe none here have much thought but the old people – their children will not kneel with them in prayer, tho' they were requested to.

Monday 3 – This morning I set off for Tioga. From Aaron Hunt's in Nanticoke I got to Lackawanna²⁹ in the afternoon, where I fed my horse at Baldwin's tavern, on the banks of the Susquehanna, and proceeded on³⁰ – thinking that when I got to Dalymtown³¹ I would get some refreshment for myself. But I was so unfortunate as to wander into an uninhabited wilderness by the carelessness of an unintelligible woman I enquired the way of, till the gloomy wings of a starless and moonless night began to spread over me too many miles from the habitation of human being to stay – in the cold month of December, under the leafless oaks or cold situated pines, surrounded by howling and ravenous wolves and greedy bears, in these regions of barrenness. So, after inferring from several chunks lying by a brook that some weary traveler must take up his solitary abode there, there being no house near, I pensively turned my horse about and measured back the weary steps on the rough and solitary way I had come. And through the merciful providence of God, and the better eyesight of my horse, I returned to the settlement and got a night's quarters at one Scott's – where I thought myself well off in getting a little Indian bread, gruel, and butter for my supper. After some conversation with the family about religion, and prayer, I lay myself down in a filthy cabin to take a little rest after a hard day of toil. May the Lord enable me with true Christian patience and magnanimity of soul to endure all the hardships incident to a traveling life among the hideous mountains before me.

Tuesday 4 – I paid one and sixpence for my accommodations (the man was moderate in his charge), and being impatient to see Dalymtown I set off without

brother Benjamin Bidlack became a Methodist preacher. Shubal lived in Luzerne County, between Salem and Nanticoke.

²⁸ Aaron Hunt lived in Nanticoke. The Hanover class (named for the township) met in the Hunt home, although a Stephen Burnett was the class leader.

²⁹ In the local Indian tongue, "hanna" or "wanna" – as in Susquehanna, Tunkhannok, Lakawanna, Tobyhanna, etc. – signified a stream of water; and in the same tongue, "lacka" signified an intersection. Lackawanna literally means "the intersection of two streams" and refers to the locality of the confluence of the Lackawanna and Susquehanna rivers, which is modern Pittston.

³⁰ Colbert had determined to follow the east bank of the Susquehanna from Pittston to Tunkhannock, thus avoiding have to cross the river twice. But there were three stretches (the Falling Springs narrows, the narrows above Gardner's Ferry, and the narrows below Buttermilk Falls) where the mountains came down to the river and there was no road to follow.

³¹ Dalymtown is the present village of Ransom. It was on the east side of the Susquehanna, just below Gardner's Ferry. This was the first settlement in what is now Lackawanna County. John Gardner had settled near the mouth of Gardner's Creek, at the north end of Ransom, in 1769. He was taken by Indians July 1, 1778, two days before the Wyoming Massacre, and tortured and killed. The ferry built by his son Richard Gardner in 1795 was not yet in operation at the time of Colbert's visit.

breakfast. But O perplexing, I missed my way again – and after traveling up a lofty mountain, I found the road wind around down the river and brought me in sight of the house I had left. I then attempted to keep the river side to Dalytown, but a little distance off this was impracticable. So I had to turn back again, glad enough to get out of the narrows. This morning I breakfasted on a frozen turnip, after which I called at a house, wanting something for me and my horse, but the uncomfortable reply, “No bread,” again was heard. However, here I got something for my horse, and at a house a little distance off I got something for my almost half-starved self at the moderate price of a five penny bit. So, strengthened and refreshed agreeable to directions, I crossed a towering mountain to Dalytown – that long desired place. But how I am mistaken! Instead of finding a tavern here where man and horse should be refreshed with that which repairs the waste of decaying nature, the ideal Dalytown vanished away when the real one – a smoky log cabin or two – heaved into view. I lodged at old Mr. Jones’, the old man I met by the way. The old woman and a girl were at home. I spent the evening very agreeably with them reading the life of John Haime.³² May I never murmur at a few hardships in such a laudable work.

Wednesday 5 – A day or two of rest would have been very agreeable to me in this place. But as the old woman expressed so much satisfaction at the favorableness of the day to the traveler, I bid her farewell with thanks and reached Teagues Hill³³ – a miserable pace indeed – kept by one Mullison.³⁴ It was almost sunset when I got there. The next house was six miles off – and a very gloomy way to it – so on the dirty top of Teagues Hill, with a young woman and the man and his wife, I took up my lodging – on some bed clothes, with my head in the chimney corner. But getting cold in the night, I stirred up the chunks and found a bed before the fire, with the two hunters and the young woman between them.

Thursday 6 – Rejoicing at the kind returning of the morning, I paid two and sixpence for my accommodations and set off on my journey. It is really a low time with me. I had to sell one of Wesley’s funeral sermons for six pence, that I should have had eleven pence for, to help pay my reckoning. I rode six miles before I got anything for my poor horse. At Wigton’s,³⁵ at Meshoppen, I called

³² John Haime (1708-1784) was a British Methodist. Through a lapse into sin, he lost the joy he had once known – but he continued to preach. The story of his spiritual struggles and ultimate return to peace is vividly told in a published biographical sketch.

³³ Teague’s Hill, between Tunkhannock and Meshoppen, is now known as Russell’s Hill.

³⁴ Reuben Mullison Sr. (c1751-1813) lived in Russell Hill, about 6 miles west of Tunkhannock, and is buried the family plot at Dixon Cemetery, about 5 miles east of Tunkhannock.

³⁵ Thomas Wigton (1740-1814) was born in Ireland. In 1775 he acquired 600 acres at the mouth of Meshoppen Creek, the present site of the borough of Meshoppen, on which he operated a sawmill. He supposedly sold the property to his in-laws, the Gaylords, in 1789 and sometime later moved to Homet’s Ferry, north of Wyalusing, and finally to Ohio. As Colbert specifies he stopped at Wigton’s in Meshoppen, this (along with other local history) indicates Wigton must have still been living there in 1792.

for something for my horse, and some smoky dirty corn was brought – but as for myself, I thought I would wait a little longer before I got anything to eat in such a filthy place. I talked to the nasty dirty woman that was sitting near the ashes with 3 or 4 nasty children, by a stinking bed in the chimney corner, something about the things respecting the salvation of her soul. She was kind. She took nothing for what I had had. So I proceeded on my journey and got to Gideon Baldwin's,³⁶ the lowest house on my Tioga circuit. They received me kindly and got me something to eat. I have traveled today till late in the afternoon, over hills and mountains, without breakfast or dinner.

Friday 7 – I rested myself at my good old friend Baldwin's, read my Bible and the experience of several of the preachers.

Saturday 8 – I spent the day reading the Bible and of the preachers' experience, and in the evening I lectured on Matthew 5:12.

Sunday 9 – I preached at Guy Wells's³⁷ on Acts 3:19. Old Mr. Stafford, a Baptist preacher, was present – and when I had done, he preached on the Song of Solomon 2:10. He told the people that Christ had done all, and that they had nothing to do.

Monday 10 – I preached to a few people at Wyalusing Creek at one Pierce's.³⁸ He and his wife have their names on our class paper down the creek at Baldwin's, but they are not well enough acquainted with Methodism to like class meeting. But the woman can give as satisfactory account of her conversion as ever I heard. And what a pity! – she is one of them that believe in the impossibility of a final fall after a real conversion. I returned to Baldwin's – this man's heart and house is open to receive all that come.

Tuesday 11 – I rode from Baldwin's to Birney's³⁹, the third preaching place. I was happy in singing the praises of God. I preached on Matthew 5:6 and sung

³⁶ Gideon Baldwin lived at the lower end of Wyalusing, not far from the creek after which the settlement was named. This was the southern extreme of the Tioga circuit. He had lived in Hanover township, Luzerne County, before settling in the area – and he moved to Wysox in 1794. His mother is the "Mother Baldwin" of Colbert's journal.

³⁷ Guy Wells (1766-1828) was the son of James Wells, a 1774 founding settler at Wyalusing who was killed in the 1778 Battle of Wyoming. Having been born in New London CT, Guy came with his family to the area as a youth and in 1790 married Elizabeth – daughter of Perrin Ross, who also had been killed in the Battle of Wyoming. Some time prior to the coming of Colbert, he had settled about three miles up the creek from Wyalusing, near his brothers Reuben and Amasa.

³⁸ The Pierce family lived near Camptown.

³⁹ Henry Birney (1737-1814), whose wife was a Shears, was a native of Ireland. Having come to Plymouth in 1773, a year or two later he moved to Standing Stone. During the Revolutionary War he moved back to Plymouth and entered the Continental Army. After conditions stabilized, he returned to Standing Stone in 1791 and in 1812 moved to Ohio, where he died.

hymn #56 of our collection.⁴⁰ I rode with Cornelius Mars⁴¹ to our old friend Roberts'. Here I could not enjoy myself – the people are shamefully dirty.

Wednesday 12 – I preached at Elijah Townsend's,⁴² the fourth preaching point, on Revelation 22:17. In this place Satan has been sowing the seed of discord in the society. I expect to have trouble among these people. After preaching I rose with Cornelius Mars to Nathan Brown's⁴³ – across Breakneck Hill,⁴⁴ on a terrible precipice.

Thursday 13 – I preached to a few people at Nathan Brown's, my fifth preaching place, one of whom was Baptist, on Matthew 5:4. This is the most comfortable house I have been in since I left Northumberland. Nathan Brown and his wife are very kind people.

Friday 14 – I rode from Nathan Brown's in New Sheshequin⁴⁵ to Daniel McDowell's⁴⁶ in Chemung, in New York state,⁴⁷ where I was well treated. I

⁴⁰ This is Colbert's only reference to a hymnal, and it's not possible to identify the hymn or the collection with certainty. Hymn #56 in a commonly used hymnbook published in 1782 is a common meter text whose first verse is "Enslaved to sense, to pleasure prone, / fond of created good: / Father, our helplessness we own, / and, trembling, taste our food."

⁴¹ Cornelius Mars is a mystery. He is described in Methodist accounts as "thundering Mars" because of his booming voice and appears to have roots in the Finger Lakes area. He is assumed to be the preacher who accompanied Colbert 6/8/1793. As his name does not appear in the General Minutes, he is assumed to have been a local preacher. He is believed to have migrated to Genesee County MI in 1837 and died there in 1839.

⁴² Elijah Townsend (1745-1821) lived near Wysox. He came from Susquehanna County PA, sold his lands to a John Hinman in 1793, and moved Yates County NY, where he was the first settler at what is now known as Kinney's Corners. He was a blacksmith and maker of cow bells.

⁴³ Nathan Brown lived in Sheshequin. He was a layman, but he sometimes "spoke" on Scripture texts – and apparently did so fairly well.

⁴⁴ Breakneck Hill is a few miles above Towanda, on the east side of the river. When General Sullivan marched against the Indians in 1779 he had great difficulty getting his military equipment down this slope, which drops abruptly 180 feet to the river. There is a legend that an Indian squaw, on a wager for whiskey, leaped to her death from this spot.

⁴⁵ "New Sheshequin" is now simply known as Sheshequin, on the east bank of the Susquehanna. "Old Sheghequin" is now the village of Ulster, across the river on the west bank.

⁴⁶ Capt. Daniel McDowell (1763-1806), a soldier of the Revolution, is described as "a man of indomitable perseverance and education." Early in the spring of 1786, he and his new bride came up the Susquehanna and Chemung Rivers in canoes and Durham boats with several others to found what is now the town of Chemung.

⁴⁷ On this trip Colbert had 4 appointments in southern New York [McDowell's (Chemung), Seeley's (Southport), Konkle's (Elmira), and Kress' (probably between Elmira and Chemung)] and returned to Pennsylvania within four days. This area that was all part of the Tioga circuit in 1792 was eventually split between three later conferences: of the appointments visited by Colbert – those in Pennsylvania east of the Susquehanna and Chemung Rivers became part of the Wyoming Conference, those in Pennsylvania west of the Susquehanna and Chemung Rivers became part of the Central Pennsylvania Conference, and those in New York became part of the Central New York Conference.

preached at night on II Corinthians 13:5. I had not freedom in speaking. This is the sixth preaching place. The land here is excellent, and not so hemmed in with mountains as it is lower down the river. It is on the Tioga River.⁴⁸

Saturday 15 – I rode to Mr. Seeley's⁴⁹ on Seeley's Creek,⁵⁰ the seventh preaching place, and spoke at night on the second paragraph of the 25th chapter of Matthew. This is a very thick settlement, and the land is excellent.

Sunday 16 – From old Mr. Seeley's I rode to John Konkle's⁵¹ to stay at Newtown Point.⁵² He received me very kindly. I went with him and heard Mr. Park⁵³ preach on Revelation 3:2. Mr. Park was very friendly. He wanted me to preach for him, but I refused doing. At night I preached at Lough's tavern at Newtown Point on Matthew 5:6. Part of my congregation was drunk. Lord, give humility and watchfulness.

Monday 17 – I crossed the Tioga River and much to my satisfaction I found my old friend Vandervoort and his family, with whom I was acquainted when I traveled Northumberland circuit. I dined with them, prayed with them, and parted with them till Sunday a week when, if spared, I plan to preach for them. I rode to old Mr. Kress'⁵⁴ and preached at night with freedom on part of I Corinthians 6:19-20. I see and feel my want of more zeal and love. This is my ninth preaching place.

⁴⁸ Colbert refers to the entire river from Tioga County PA, into New York state, and back into Pennsylvania to join the Susquehanna at Athens as the Tioga River – perhaps since the area of present Athens was known as Tioga Point. We know the stretch of river from the joining of the Tioga and the Cohocton rivers near Corning NY to its emptying into the Susquehanna at Athens PA as the Chemung River.

⁴⁹ Nathaniel Seeley (1732-1799) was born in Fairfield County Connecticut and lived in Orange County NY before settling in the Seeley Creek Valley by the present town of Southport. He is reported to have built the first framed house in the region.

⁵⁰ Seeley Creek rises in Tioga County PA and flows into the Chemung River just south of present Elmira NY.

⁵¹ John Konkle and Colonel John Hendy were the first settlers of Newtown/Elmira. They settled in 1788. Konkle was an innkeeper and also served as the town clerk.

⁵² Newtown is the old name for Elmira. The name was officially changed in 1808, to honor the daughter of early tavern owner and prominent citizen Nathan Teall. Newtown Point is at the eastern edge of the present city of Elmira, where Newtown Creek empties into the Chemung River.

⁵³ Moses Park (1766-1817) was a Baptist preacher who subsequently converted to Universalism in 1793, convinced of its truth following discussions with Universalist pastor Noah Murray – to whom Park had gone to show him the errors of his ways! He moved to Ohio for a brief period and then returned to the Sheshequin area, where he died and is buried in the Gore Cemetery.

⁵⁴ Christian Kress (1727-1800) was born in Germany and came to America in 1752, residing in Pennsylvania before moving to New York state in 1789 and purchasing 162 acres along the Chemung River in 1790.

Tuesday 18 – I preached at Nathan Brown’s on II Corinthians 13:5. Wretch that I am! I ought to be thankful to the lover of souls for the freedom I sometimes have in speaking to the children of men. If I should be an instrument in the hands of God in saving any, it would be a great blessing – should I even be lost myself, but no blessing to me.

Wednesday 19 – I rode from Nathan Brown’s to Breakneck Hill, where I crossed the river to one Mr. Foster’s⁵⁵ to be satisfied of whether or not I had an appointment there – but I had none. A Mr. Blackman⁵⁶ took me over, who was honest enough to tell me he never liked the Methodist doctrine. I asked why, and he said that he did not like their preaching – that a man could fall from grace. And as to perfection, he said there was no such thing this side of the Kingdom of Heaven. I told him that it was written in Matthew 4:48, “Be ye therefore perfect, as your father which is in heaven is perfect.” But as he was a man that would fly from one thing to another, I thought it was not worthwhile talking to him. I hope I dealt honestly with him in what I did say before I left him. After I got over Breakneck Hill, I overtook an old man with a keg of whiskey on his back. I could not leave him without telling of the evil of whiskey drinking. I thought he was drunk, but he received what I said. At night I exhorted at friend Townsend’s with freedom.

Thursday 20 – I preached at brother Rice’s⁵⁷ in Shufelt’s Flats⁵⁸ on I Thessalonians 5:17. I felt freedom in speaking. I rode through the narrows on the

⁵⁵ Isaac Foster (1737-1821) lived on the west bank of the Susquehanna, by the mouth of Sugar Creek. He came to the site from Massachusetts in 1785 with his two unmarried sons, Rufus and Abial. He was a mechanic and a manufacturer of spinning wheels. The Fosters were charter members of the Presbyterian Church in Wysox in 1791 and later instrumental in establishing the Presbyterian Church in Towanda.

⁵⁶ Ichabod Blackman (1762-1798) was born in Connecticut, son of Elisha Blackman. The family moved to Wilkes-Barre, where Elisha survived the 1778 Battle of Wyoming but subsequently returned his family to Connecticut. Ichabod returned to Wilkes-Barre with his new bride (Elizabeth Franklin, who was 8 years old when her family fled the area following the Wyoming Massacre) in 1786 and moved to Bradford County in 1790, settling on the east bank of the Susquehanna – below Sheshequin, almost opposite the mouth of Sugar Creek. He was a shoemaker. He died in April 1798, having fallen out of a canoe while crossing the Susquehanna on a dark night – possibly as the result of an epileptic fit. His son Franklin Blackman later built and operated a ferry across the river by the family lands.

⁵⁷ James Rice was still living in Shufelt’s Flats in 1796, as he was one of the signers of a petition seeking resolution of the conflicting Connecticut-Pennsylvania land claims – but nothing else is known about this man. Note: The 1878 *History of Bradford County*, page 148, suggests this “Mr. Rice” might be the Wanton Rice (1768-c1845) who was born in Warwick RI, moved to Ulster PA and opened an inn in 1802, and sold the inn and moved to Athens township in 1815 – but Wanton Rice was still living in Rhode Island in 1793.

⁵⁸ Shufelt’s Flats is the level, fertile area around French Asylum. Its name comes from Peter Schufeldt, who came from Orange County NJ in May 1770 as the first settler to penetrate the area. Six years later he sold his lands to Jacob Forsyth and moved to the West Branch of the

Susquehanna. Here are excellent stores to build with, and yet the people live in miserable cabins – some of them without chimneys. If you speak to some here about being more decent, they will plead up that they are in a new country and have many difficulties to encounter. I feel the need of watching and prayer.

Friday 21 – I spent part of the day in reading and writing, and in the evening I met the class in Shufelt's Flats – the first class I have met in the circuit. I read to them the rules, desiring to know whether they meant to continue in society. One left us – Charles Townley,⁵⁹ he professes to believe that there is no such thing as falling from grace to perish forever. I preached at the house of a friendly man by the name of Alexander on I Corinthians 6:19-20. I have (thank God) reason to hope that general satisfaction was given.

Saturday 22 – Agreeable to the request of a friend, I spent this day visiting. It is for fear of offending that I visit at all. I cannot improve myself in readiness and writing as much as I could wish when visiting. If our visit is to edification, it is well. I wish all my visits were more so. It's with some difficulty I got along the narrows with brother Rice to Gideon Baldwin's at Wyalusing.

Sunday 23 – I preached at Guy Wells' on part of Hebrews 2:3 – "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." Here I was attacked by two Calvinists; the debate was on falling from grace. I asked them if David was not a child of God, and they said he was. I then asked them what would have become of him had he dies in the bed of adultery. One of them said he would have gone to heaven, but the other said he could not have died there. I then observed unto them that according to their doctrine David might have remained alive by continuing in sin. They said they were in a remote part of the world, and they ought to have the truth preached to them, for (they said) they had been used to preaching. I told them that if God had foreordained that I should come and preach to them, I could not help it. It is surprisingly strange that they Calvinists are not ashamed of their doctrines. At night I preached at Mr. Price's⁶⁰ up Wyalusing with liberty on Matthew 5:6. Here we had much talk about final perseverance and perfection, which the Calvinists abhor. Mrs. Price gives a very satisfactory account of her

Susquehanna where he was killed by Indians. It was in 1793 that the lands were acquired as a refuge for nobility from the French Revolution.

⁵⁹ Brothers Richard and Charles Townley were early residents of Shufelt Flats, but subsequently sold their lands to the incoming French and removed to Tompkins County NY. Richard Townley had ten children, five of each sex, and was a prominent citizen in New York, a judge of the county courts, and a member of the State legislature for several terms. He died in 1838. Charles Townley had two sons and one daughter, was a highly esteemed farmer and a deacon in the Baptist church. He died in 1820.

⁶⁰ Zachariah Price lived at Merryall, about half-way between Wyalusing and Camptown. He and his wife Ruth were 1793 charter members of the Presbyterian Church at Wyalusing, and his son Eleazar organized the Presbyterian Sunday School there in 1818.

conversion. It is well if she does not trust too much in what has been done for her in times past instead of striving to advance in the divine. She is much opposed to Christian perfection. I told her from the Scripture she must be perfect or she could never enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Monday 24 – I rode from Price’s to Gideon Baldwin’s and spent some time in reading and writing.

Tuesday 25 – I left friend Baldwin’s oppressed in spirit under a sense of my unprofitableness. I found it very disagreeable going through the narrows I came through on Saturday night last. I forded the river, and I have reason to be thankful I was not drowned. It was very late when I got to Birney’s. Some of the people had gone away. I endeavored to preach to them that stayed on Hebrews 3:14. After I had done, a poor unhappy son of Belial came in and showed as if he wanted to abuse me. Mrs. Birney reproved him. I left Mr. Birney’s and crossed the river to old Mr. Cole’s.⁶¹ Here I wanted to regulate the society, but found them very refractory and unaccustomed to Discipline – meeting their class among a number of wicked people. Old Mr. Cole’s daughter Mary⁶² is the wife of the man that abused me at Birney’s – she is a great enthusiast and has a turn for poetry.

Wednesday 26 – I preached at Towanda on Hebrews 13:1 – “Let brotherly love continue.” I endeavored to enforce the necessity of union among Christians.

Thursday 27 – I rode to Nathan Brown’s.

Friday 28 – I preached at night at Daniel McDowell’s on Romans 8:13.

⁶¹ Samuel Cole (1733-1797) was the father of the noted Elisha Cole (1769-1812), the father of area Methodism. The family moved from Connecticut to Shufelt’s Flats in 1775. During the Revolutionary War they retreated to perceived safety in the Wyoming Valley – only to find themselves caught in the Wyoming Massacre of 1778, in which nine-year-old Elisha lost both a brother and a brother-in-law. The family then returned to Connecticut and did not come back to reclaim their land in Bradford County until the end of the war. Samuel had been a devout Methodist in Connecticut, and it was about this time that Elisha was converted – very possibly through the preaching of Colbert. In 1794 Elisha Cole was granted an exhorter’s license, and he began traveling circuits in Maryland and Virginia as an assistant to the appointed preacher. In 1796 he returned to the area and established a regular preaching place in Monroeton at the home of Henry Salisbury. Elisha Cole subsequently married Henry’s daughter Amy and settled on the land across from the cemetery in which he is now buried. Although his marriage and commitment to settling down prevented him from traveling a circuit, he continued his association with the conference and served as a local preacher. He was elected a deacon in 1798 and ordained in 1802 – although he never returned to the itinerant ministry.

⁶² The facts about Mary Cole (1756-?) are not clear. It appears that she lost her first husband, Joseph Budd, in the Wyoming Massacre and that it was her second husband, a Mr. Culbertson, who was rude at Mrs. Birney’s. Mary later became deranged – sometimes singing hymns and quoting scripture, sometimes talking randomly and incessantly, sometimes exhibiting strange behaviors – but she was loved and cared for by her family until her death.

Saturday 29 – I preached at Mr. Seeley’s on Hebrews 11:5 and lodged at my old friend Vandervoort’s.

Sunday 30 – I preached at Newtown Point on Acts 16:30, and in the afternoon at friend Vandervoort’s on Acts 3:19. The little house was crowded. Doctor Park spoke to me here in a very friendly manner and invited me to stay with him. There is some little prospect of good being done in this place. O that God may carry on his glorious work.

Monday 31 – I preached at old Mr. Kress’ on Ephesians 5:14. Here a man who came to meeting was taken extremely ill puking. I sometimes thought he would not recover. I spoke to him concerning a preparation for death. He received what I said in good part – but I thought I could discover he was a Calvinist, as he said that he did not think there any such thing as perfection in this life.

Tuesday, January 1, 1793 – I preached at Nathan Brown’s on part of Amos 4:12.

Wednesday 2 – I preached at one Foster’s at Sugar Creek on Hebrews 12:14, and at night at my friend Townsend’s on the first two paragraphs of Matthew chapter 22. Here was another jangle among some who had made much ado about religion. The class leader was expelled.

Thursday 3 – I exhorted at James Rice’s and met the class. Here one who had been possessed with Calvinistic notions applied to be received by his brethren again – and was, to the satisfaction of the class.

Friday 4 – I rode to my friend Baldwin’s.

Saturday 5 – I spent some time in writing a letter. I am much straitened for time on this circuit. I want to read and write more. I ought to embrace every opportunity I can for improvement. I spent the evening very agreeably in conversing on the Scriptures.

Sunday 6 – I felt the power of darkness. I preached at Guy Wells’ with freedom on Acts 4:12, but I am informed that a poor unhappy drunkard got disturbed with my prayer. He said that I said that God had made us capable of saving ourselves. If I said so, I do not remember it. God Almighty, grant that I may never drop a word contrary to the truth.

Monday 7 – I spent part of the day in writing, and spoke at night on the first two paragraphs of Matthew 22 at Guy Wells’, where I was very much interrupted – before, and at the time, and after I had done speaking – by an old drunken esquire of Wyalusing.

Tuesday 8 – I exhorted at Birney’s and at Townsend’s, where I heard Nathan Brown speak. I believe he is a good man and means well, and I don’t know but

he does good. I sometimes think he might be useful if he were free of his little Calvinism, respecting falling from grace.

Wednesday 9 – I preached at Captain Clark's⁶³ on I Corinthians 6:19-20. I was enabled to speak with freedom – but after I was done, I was afraid that I did not enforce the necessity of repentance as I thought I ought to have done. I think when we preach, whatever subject the text may lead to, we ought not to omit enforcing the necessity of repentance toward God – faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and holiness, without which none can see the Lord – but it is a difficult matter to do this without being censured for attributing too much to the power of man. If God did not give man the ability to repent, believe and obey, I know not how he could – as an impartial righteous judge – consign the unbelieving part of mankind to eternal torments.

Thursday 10 – I exhorted at Nathan Brown's and baptized his little daughter, which was the first I ever baptized. At night I preached at Jacob Snyder's⁶⁴ with a degree of liberty and power on Matthew 18:3.

Friday 11 – I felt a degree of dejection of spirit. I ought to be more fearful of sinning.

Saturday 12 – I preached at my friend Kress' on Romans 8:14 with a degree of freedom – at night there were more there to hear a pretended singing master than there were to hear me preach in the day.

Sunday 13 – I road from my friend Kress' to Newtown Point – and a disagreeable ride it was. I had but little satisfaction in preaching on I Corinthians 6:19-20. In the afternoon I preached at Esquire Hammond's⁶⁵ on Proverbs 14:32. I have a little class in this neighborhood; God grant that they may adorn the Gospel.

⁶³ Benjamin Clark (1750-1834) migrated from Connecticut and was one of the first to build a house in what is now Wilkes-Barre. He served seven years in the Revolutionary army, was part of the detachment that came into the area after the 1778 Wyoming Massacre, and took part in Sullivan's expedition against the Indians the following year. Among the first to move up the Susquehanna after the war, he moved to Frenchtown in 1784 and settled permanently in Ulster the following year. He was an ardent Methodist and gladly opened his home to circuit riders for preaching and lodging. He is buried in the Ulster Cemetery.

⁶⁴ Jacob Snyder (1771-?) and Jemima Simpson (1769-?) were both born in Sussex County NJ. Their families moved to the east side of the Susquehanna River near Sheshequin when they were young, and Jacob and Jemima married there in March 1792. In 1793 they moved north to Owasco NY (by the Finger Lakes), and in 1813 Jacob and Jemima (and their 10 children) moved farther north to become one of earliest permanent families in Red Creek NY (near Lake Erie).

⁶⁵ Lebbeus Hammond, Esq., (1754-1826) was born in Connecticut before his family moved into the Wyoming Valley. He was a survivor of the 1778 Wyoming Massacre and in 1788 was one of the earliest settlers in the Chemung Valley. He is buried in the Griswold (aka Fitzpatrick) Cemetery in Southport.

I have been informed of a great accident – a young man at Colonel Miller's⁶⁶ in the neighborhood, throwing hay from the stack with a fork with a sharp handle, wanting to come down, let the fork slip out of his hand down the stack until it reached the bottom, when it stood partly up on end against the stack. He carelessly slid down and ran the handle of the fork up his body. He lived about 48 hours after, and then launched into an awful eternity.

Dangers stand thick through all the ground

To push us to the tomb.

And fierce diseases wait around

To hurry mortals home.⁶⁷

Monday 14 – It was so very cold, and there was so much ice, that there was scarcely any crossing in the Flat. At night I preached at Daniel McDowell's on Malachi 3:18. I received a letter today from a man living in Ahwaga,⁶⁸ in which I was requested to come and preach. Mr. Martin,⁶⁹ the son of old Mr. Martin the Presbyterian minister, invited me home with him. This is his complaint – he says he believes it is his duty to pray in secret, but says he has no heart to do it. I told him as God has convinced him it is his duty to pray in secret, he ought to pray for a heart to pray. He told me he thought he would pray one day, but the thought of calling upon God frightened him. I exhorted him to his duty, and not to neglect it.

He gave very strange accounts of the Shaking Quakers⁷⁰ and their manner of worship – which is singing and dancing. He says they do not approve of marriage, and men and women in times of worship occupy two parts of the house – and at that time the men durst not look towards the women's side while they are dancing. He tells me they will whirl around in an astonishing manner until the women's petticoats will be extended as tho' they were hooped – and that they not get giddy or stagger in the least after it.

⁶⁶ Abraham Miller (1735-1815) was born in Holland and came to America as a small child. Having served in the Revolutionary army, he was the first settler, in 1789, at what is now Southport and erected, on a branch of Seeley's Creek, the area's first saw mill.

⁶⁷ This common meter text is a verse from a hymn written by Isaac Watts.

⁶⁸ Ahwaga is the original Indian name for Owego, about 25 miles to the east, in Tioga County NY. A subsequent entry identifies writer of the letter as a Mr. Deane in Nichols NY, about 8 miles downriver from Owego.

⁶⁹ Rev. Ebenezer Martin (1732-1795) was the Presbyterian missionary/preacher in the region from 1792 to 1794. He was born in Windham County CT, and sent as a missionary by the Presbyterians of that state, and he died in Broome County NY within 3 years of this entry. He had more than one son, and Colbert does not identify the one with whom he had the conversation.

⁷⁰ Originally known as the "Shaking Quakers," the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing are more commonly called "Shakers." The name comes from the uncontrolled ecstatic motions that accompanied their worship. Already a member of an ecstatic breakaway group of Quakers, the British founder of the Shakers was "Mother" Ann Lee. She ultimately led her followers to America in 1774, and she died in 1784. Shakers lived communally, and in 1793 there were several colonies and thousands of members across the eastern United States.

He further informed me that an old woman among them, called the Elect Lady, foretold her own death and would not suffer any person to be in the room at the time – but one of her followers looked through a hole or crack to see in what position she would lay, and says he saw to his great surprise something like a small black boy on her breast, who put his tongue in her mouth, and she expired. This, says Mr. Martin, the man has published to the world.

Tuesday 15 – Agreeable to request and promise, I visited a Mr. Bosworth,⁷¹ whose wife (I have been told) would not come with him to Susquehanna and has taken up with another man. Mr. Bosworth appears to be an inoffensive man. He has a daughter that keeps house for him, a likely well-behaved young woman – but alas, what a bad mother! Mr. Bosworth, I believe, has good desires. I endeavored to deal honestly with him. He gave me a very strange account of a Mr. Culver,⁷² the son of a Presbyterian minister. One thing may not be improper to mention, as I had it from him: Mr. Culver, in his trance, as he calls it, says he saw a young man in hell who was drowned in the Jerseys in the following manner – he was fishing with another young man who took a canoe, contrary to his will, from the shore; he who was drowned swore he would be damned to hell if he would not take it from him; he went along and was drowned. Here, says Mr. Culver, the Lord took him at his word. I prayed with this little family and left them.

I am sometimes almost brought to think that I am in one of the most abandoned places. It appears to me from what I have heard, that Susquehanna must abound with whores, whoremongers and drunkards – and for all I know, murderers. Mr. Daniel McDowell at Chemung told me of the murder of Colonel Erwin,⁷³ who was shot in his house while sitting in his chair – and some expected by a man who then at this time lives on his land. He was shot through the body, part of his heart cut with the ball. Immediately after the explosion, he started and said, “What is that?” and cried, “I am shot, I am shot – Lord, have mercy on me” and dropped down dead! O how the ancient murderer resides in this part of the world – may the Lord dethrone him by the preaching of the Gospel.

I rode to Nathan Brown’s and strove to preach at night from Job 22:21. Here the children were so restless and noisy whilst I was speaking, that I scarcely knew what I was about.

⁷¹ David Bosworth (1746-1808) was born in Connecticut and came to Chemung with some of his children. The story is told that his son David, whom he left behind with relatives, later ran away and traveled by himself as a young child from Connecticut to Chemung to re-unite with his father and siblings. Mr. Bosworth later moved downriver to Athens PA.

⁷² Rev. Jabez Culver (1731-1818) was sent to this region by the Connecticut Presbyterian Missionary Society in 1791. The first of that denomination to preach here, he was the immediate predecessor of the aforementioned Rev. Ebenezer Martin. Culver organized the area’s first Presbyterian congregation at Wysox in October 1791. He had several sons, and Colbert does not identify the one with whom he had the conversation.

⁷³ Colonel Arthur Erwin was shot and killed on June 9, 1791, while sitting in the house of Daniel McDuffee at Athens, by a man supposed to be an ejected squatter.

Wednesday 16 – I preached at Captain Clark’s at Old Sheshequin on Matthew 19:16-22. The woman of this house put me in mind of Martha – attention was wanting. I had not much satisfaction in preaching. After meeting was over, in came Esquire Murray⁷⁴ – he is a great universalist, a believer in eternal justification. I believe he is an ungodly man. He says he was once a public speaker among the Baptists, and thought Christ died only for a part of mankind and that some of them would perish. And now, he says, he believes with the Arminians that Christ died for all and that none will perish. I felt sorry that I spent so much time in argument with him – yet I must confess that some of his conversation was edifying to me, while I think his principles are bad.

Thursday 17 – I spent part of this day at my friend Townsend’s, where I wrote a little, and read some in Volume I of Fletcher’s works.

Friday 18 – I wanted to cross the Susquehanna, but could not with my horse – so I left him at a house and crossed in a canoe. I visited a little society at Shufelt’s Flats – where I gave an exhortation at night, met the class, and joined one in society who had formerly been in but foolishly withdrew because her name was set down under her husband’s as “ditto.”

Saturday 19 – I crossed the river, paid 18 pence for my horse being kept, and rode to my friend Baldwin’s, where I spent the evening reading Doctor Tillotson’s⁷⁵ *Sermon against Atheism*.

Sunday 20 – I preached at Guy Wells’ on Revelation 2:7 with a degree of freedom, and in the evening on Job 22:21. An old Calvinist woman here in Wyalusing says the people are a set of villains because they do not whip me out of the place. What makes this old lady so uncharitable? I hold forth the possibility that the wounds sin has made may fester after they are healed by the blood of Christ so as to need a fresh application of the leaves that are for the healing of the nations – and this, with the old woman, is little less than blasphemy.

Monday 21 – I rode through the snow to my old friend Townsend’s.

Tuesday 22 – I spoke from Psalm 1. This is a very cold night.

Wednesday 23 – I rode from my old friend Townsend’s to Nathan Brown’s, and on the way I called on Mr. Horton⁷⁶ near Breakneck Hill. Mrs. Horton was

⁷⁴ Noah Murray (1747-1811) was a noted and persuasive universalist orator. Before embracing universalism, he had been a Baptist preacher. An early settler in Tioga Point [Athens], he was justice of the peace there in 1788. Springfield township in Bradford County was originally named Murraysfield township for him.

⁷⁵ John Tillotson (1630-1694) was an English scholar, theologian and pastor who promoted political and ecclesiastical reform and eventually became the archbishop of Canterbury. He wrote and spoke strongly against both atheism and Catholicism.

desirous of hearing preaching, and set off with me for Captain Clark's, but was afraid to cross the river. I got over in a canoe, however, and preached with more satisfaction than I expected – as I was so much fatigued – on Mark 15:16. I crossed back over the river.

Thursday 24 – I preached at Nathan Brown's on John 6:27, and at Jacob Snyder's on Hebrews 11:24-26. There were a few in this place that appear to be desirous.

Friday 25 – It was with difficulty, on account of the ice, that I got through the narrows. I preached at one Bennett's⁷⁷ near Maughantowano⁷⁸ with freedom on I Corinthians 6:19-20. To God be all the glory if there is any good done. These people are very willing to hear. I went home with a Mr. Deane, who appears to be a man who has experienced the goodness of God. It is a pity he has Calvinistic notions – strange delusions indeed, to think that a man can be a child of God while laying in the bed of adultery. Mr. Deane was the man who sent for me to preach in this neighborhood. My poor unhappy friend D.M.D, who was to have met me today, called on me in the night – I expect liquor and company kept him from coming in the day.

Saturday 26 – I rode to my friend Vandervoort's at Newtown.

Sunday 27 – I could not cross the river today to preach at Newtown Point on account of the ice running. Dr. Park on the other side desired me to go to Mr. Seeley's and hold meeting, so I went and preached on Amos 4:12 with a degree of freedom. Mr. and Mrs. Vandeventer⁷⁹ were kind enough in giving me a passage in an ox sleigh with them. I had a little conversation with Mrs. Vandeventer on the subject of falling from grace as we rode to my friend Vandervoort's, where I preached in the afternoon on Revelation 2:7. The house was crowded. Mrs. Vandeventer asked me to go home with her. She said she wanted to talk to me about some points, however I did not go – but I promised to go in the morning. I spend the evening reading *The French Convert*.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Elijah Horton (1739-1821) and Jemima (Currie) Horton (1744-1825) were born in Westchester County NY and married there in 1762. He was a soldier in the Revolutionary army, and the family moved to Bradford County about 1790. The Hortons are buried in the Hornbrook Cemetery.

⁷⁷ There were Bennett families in the Wyoming Valley, where they would have heard Methodist preaching, at the time of the Wyoming Massacre who later moved up the Susquehanna and Chemung rivers.

⁷⁸ Maughantowano is the present town of Nichols, in Tioga County NY, where the Wappasening Creek enters the Susquehanna River from the south, about 9 miles east of Sayre. These flats were very fertile and home to a thriving Indian village prior to the 1778 Wyoming wars.

⁷⁹ Peter (1755-1837) and Mary Durham (1761-1845) Vandeventer were born in Somerset County NJ, where they married in 1781, and moved to Newtown [Elmira] NY about 1787. They moved to Conneaut, Erie County PA, where they died and are buried, about 1800.

⁸⁰ The full title is *The French Convert: a True Relation of the Happy Conversion of a Noble French Lady, from the Errors and Superstitions of Popery, to the Reformed Religion by Means of a*

Monday 28 – Agreeable to promise, I visited Mr. Vandeventer and found them very kind, friendly people. Mrs. Vandeventer does not believe in the horrid doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, but is of the opinion that a true child of God cannot so fall as to perish everlastingly. I hope she will be better informed by reading Mr. Wesley's treatise on that subject. I went to prayer with them. They told me I was welcome to their house. I thanked them and left them and rode to my friend Gray's.⁸¹

Tuesday 29 – I preached at my old friend Kress' on Matthew 13:47-50. I had but little freedom in speaking. At night I preached at Shemungo Schoolhouse on Hebrews 11:24-26. Thirteen out of Kress' neighborhood came down; the house was full. I was enabled to speak with freedom. O that there may be a people raised up in this place to glorify God.

Wednesday 30 – I preached at the schoolhouse in New Sheshequin on Malachi 3:18. I had but little satisfaction in preaching. I did not publish myself to preach there again. Moses Park, who preaches there on Sundays, would not make any appointments for me – but he cannot hinder me from preaching in the house if the people are willing to open it, and whenever I come to the place I expect to preach there. God only knows when his word is made a blessing. Bad as I made out, I heard some women, when I was coming away, wishing that they could have such a sermon every week. I called at Mr. Green's⁸² on my way home with Nathan Brown.

Thursday 31 – I rode the river to Mr. Townsend's. This is a very cold day and night.

Friday, February 1, 1793 – I crossed the river on ice and called at old Mr. Cole's. These people appear to be unsettled in their minds. The old man desired his name to be taken off the class paper because his daughter Molly is affronted that her name was not entered by the leader. I feel my want of patience among the people in this circuit. I lodged at brother Rice's.

Saturday 2 – I preached at brother Rice's on II Corinthians 5:17 with much satisfaction – and for the help of others, I gave an account of the work of God within myself. I intended to go to Wyalusing and made attempt to cross on the

Protestant Gardener, Her Servant. Written by A. d'Auborn and originally published in London in 1696, it was reprinted in 2010 and is available in paperback.

⁸¹ Joseph Gray, as further identified by Colbert in a later entry, is listed on the Newtown tax rolls (which included the entire Chemung valley) for 1794.

⁸² This may or may not be the Josiah Green that appears later in the journal. All the references to the surname Green suggest a location in the Wysox area, and so they are treated in the surname index as referring to the same family. Willard Green (1762-1831), who died in Wysox and whose father Elias died in the Wyoming Massacre was apparently living in Wilkes-Barre at the time and did not move into the Wysox area until 1804 or later).

ice, but my horse fell in up to his neck and I declined going. I lodged with my friend Mayhew⁸³ on Shufelt's Flats.

Sunday 3 – I preached at Mr. Alexander's on I Peter 4:17, and at night a prayer at brother Rice's. I feel my want of more watchfulness. I sometimes feel as if I talked too much. Lord, help me to be more on my guard.

Monday 4 – I spent the day at brother Rice's.

Tuesday 5 – I crossed the Susquehanna on the ice and preached at my friend Townsend's on Matthew 1:21 and spoke to the class. One of the members refused telling the state of her mind, yet she wished to be spoken to. I baptized Uriah Townsend's⁸⁴ daughter Elizabeth.⁸⁵

Wednesday 6 – I preached at Captain Clark's on Hebrews 2:3 and lodged at Benjamin Luce's.⁸⁶

Thursday 7 – I preached at my friend Green's on John 3:14-15. Here I had not much satisfaction in preaching for so many noisy children that were brought to meeting. I lodged at Nathan Brown's.

Friday 8 – I preached at Maughantowano on Romans 8:14 and lodged with my Baptist friend Deane – who will not yet be persuaded that a man that has once been converted and born of God can so fall as to perish everlastingly.

⁸³ This is believed to be Richard Mayhew, a veteran of the Revolutionary army – whose daughter Susan married Stephen Horton, son of Colbert's friend Elijah Horton who lived near Breakneck Hill.

⁸⁴ Uriah Townsend (1763-1825) was a son of Elijah Townsend, the Wysox area host of Colbert. Later in the year, he and his wife and their young children moved with his father to Yates County NY, where he became a class leader in the town of Jerusalem. His wife was Dolly Fox, daughter of Randolph Fox, whose family had purchased land and settled along the Towanda Creek between the river and Monroeton about 1773 and dramatically escaped to safer territory during the 1778 Wyoming Massacre – at which time Dolly was 11 years old – only to return 5 years later to find their house burned and the property desolate.

⁸⁵ Elizabeth Townsend (1792-1878) was less than one year old when she was baptized. In 1807, at the age of 14, she was converted at a camp meeting at Oaks Corners, Ontario County NY. In 1812 she married an Ashbel Beers, a tailor and wool-carder, and both were active members of the Methodist Church in Jerusalem.

⁸⁶ Few details are known about this Benjamin Luce, except this note to him marked "Lackawany, October 8, 1784" – which appears in the *Pennsylvania Archives*, volume X, page 679. It was written to Benjamin Luce after yet another assault by Pennsylvanians to drive the Connecticut settlers from the Wyoming Valley. "*Sir, We understand that you are obstinate and treat the Yankees ill ; therefore this is to warn you in the name of the Connecticut Claimants to depart and leave the house of Richard Hollsted, in 12 hours in peace, or expect trouble. If we are obliged to send a party of men to do the business you must abide the consequences. EBENEZER JOHNSTON, WATERMAN BALDWIN.*"

Saturday 9 – After having some talk with friend Deane about principles, I rode about 20 miles to my friend Vandervoort's.

Sunday 10 – I preached at Newtown Point on Genesis 19:17. A man they called Lawyer Loop⁸⁷ behaved very badly and made himself very ridiculous. In the afternoon I preached at Esquire Hammond's with a degree of pleasure on Mark 1:15. I have old Mr. Culver, a Calvinist minister, as one of my hearers. In this place they talk of very strange things – such as hearing groans. One says he saw an apparition – but he will not tell who it was, or what it said to him.

Monday 11 – I spent a little time with Doctor Park, who is very friendly to me. He told me a remarkable dream of Judge Miller's⁸⁸ daughter, which was, as well as I can recollect, as follows: "That the young man that was killed by the handle of a pitchfork came to her to inform her that there is a hell – which, it is said, her father's family did not believe." Mr. Park says, "groans were heard in the day, while the people have been sitting by the fire" and, if I mistake not, "while the young woman was relating her dream." But I do not understand that it has had any effect on them.

Tuesday 12 – I preached at my old friend Kress' on Isaiah 55:6-7. I felt very much engaged. I think some felt in a measure the power of the word. At night I preached at the Shemungo Schoolhouse on II Corinthians 5:17. It appears to me that if we had a few in this place that were zealous for God and the cause of Methodism, there would soon be a glorious work.

Wednesday 13 – I visited two friendly, apparently well-deposed people today on my way from Shemungo to Nathan Brown's. I thank God that I was neither killed nor crippled coming through the narrows between Tioga Point and New Sheshequin. It snowed hard, and my horse balling⁸⁹ made the riding very unpleasant in the very best of roads, but when I came to where the water flowing from the bottom of the precipice was frozen and covered with snow, it then became intolerable – so I had to dismount. I was driven to the dangerous alternative of leading my horse on the ice on the side of the river, which broke under the weight of me and my horse into large pieces under me and let me down into the water more than knee deep. I had to exert myself to keep my horse from plunging on me. By a kind Providence, I was able to mount my horse and he took

⁸⁷ This would appear to be Martin Loop (1766-c1819), who is listed in the 1790 census for Chemung County. His brother Peter Loop (1760-1825), who married a Henry Birney's daughter Sarah, also lived in Elmira for a while – but not until after 1800. Their sister Neeltje Eleanor Loop (1884-1877) married William Cameron (1781-1850) of the Oneida Conference.

⁸⁸ John C. Miller (1760-1833) was married to Henry Birney's daughter Hannah. It appears that "Judge" was the name by which he was known, and not necessarily a position that he held.

⁸⁹ This likely refers to the snow balling up inside the horse's hoof. Present day horse care manuals recommend applying Vaseline to the hooves (not the shoes) to prevent snow balling.

me through. By this time I was well out. My settuit⁹⁰ was frozen as stiff as a horn, but I felt no cold. I soon rode to Nathan Brown's, and I was sorry that the people did not come to preaching on this dismal night after I had had such a distressing journey.

Thursday 14 – I preached at Mr. Horton's with much satisfaction on Acts 3:19. I trust the word reached some of their hearts, and I rode to my friend Townsend's.

Friday 15 – I crossed the Susquehanna on the ice and preached in the evening at James Rice's on Luke 21:36.

Saturday 16 – I had the Susquehanna to cross three times on the ice going from friend Rice's in Shufelt's Flat to friend Baldwin's in Wyalusing.

Sunday 17 – I preached at Guy Wells' on Matthew 26:41. Soon after I read my text, I knew not but I should be obliged to sit down and say nothing – as there were so many noisy children – but their noise abated and I made out through the assistance of God to speak with satisfaction. By what I hear, I expect the people in these parts think I have a very weak head because I cannot preach with satisfaction when there are a number of noisy children about me bawling louder than I can speak.

Monday 18 – I spent the day in writing letters.

Tuesday 19 – I had to ride in the rain to my friend Townsend's. Having my horse to get shod, it was night before I got there – so they were disappointed. I was sorry for it, but I could not help it. A pamphlet fell into my hands today in which the author (Samuel Wetherill⁹¹) undertakes to prove that Christ did not suffer in the place and stead of man – and, consequently, his righteousness is not imputed to him. Tho' I come short in many duties, yet if my heart does not deceive me

⁹⁰ This could be a euphemism for "rear end" – or, more likely, the result of handwriting and/or misspelling that cannot be deciphered.

⁹¹ Material by Samuel Wetherill (1736-1816) appears in the following 48-page pamphlet printed in Philadelphia in 1790: *A Confutation of the doctrines of Antinomianism; delivered in the College Hall, in the City of Philadelphia, on Seventh Day Evening, June 17, 1790. Together with some observations on the reply made by John Murray, on the Second-day Evening following.* This is not be the actual pamphlet read by Colbert – he gives a more complete title in his entry for 4/2/1793 – but it is undoubtedly similar to it. Wetherill was a Philadelphia Quaker who was outspoken on both civil and religious issues. He was also a key player in the split that resulted in the formation of the Free Quakers, as described on their web page: In 1780 a small group of Quakers who were disowned by the Society of Friends for various reasons, including support of the Revolutionary war effort, met in the home of Samuel Wetherill, a carpenter and merchant. They discussed forming their own Society, which they did the following year, and requested permission to meet for worship and business in existing Friends' meeting houses. Their request was denied and, for a time, they continued to meet in one another's houses. Happily for the infant Society, membership expanded and they resolved to build their own meeting house, purchasing a lot on the southwest corner of Mulberry (now Arch) and Fifth Streets in summer 1783. Construction began immediately. George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and Robert Morris were among the contributors to the building fund.

(according to my knowledge) I have as great an aversion to Antinomianism and Calvinism as the author – yet I am fearful of giving into his scheme lest I should rob Christ of the glory due unto him for our salvation.

In my view there is more consistency in his theme, but I would wish always to be taught of God – lest I should give way to new-fangled doctrines, or make the death and resurrection of Christ of none effect. Yet I must acknowledge that the author reasons well – and if I were thoroughly convinced that it was entirely free from a tendency of driving men into Deism, I could freely acquiesce with him: not that I think that Calvinism does not lead to Deism, notwithstanding all their professed veneration for the Christian system.

Wednesday 20 – I preached at Captain Clark's on Luke 21:36.

Thursday 21 – I preached at my friend Green's at New Sheshequin with a degree of satisfaction on Acts 16:30-31. They had a frolic at the next house.

Friday 22 – I preached at Mawhontowongo on II Corinthians 5:17, and at night at friend Alden's⁹² at Pipe Creek⁹³ on Mark 1:15. This has been a hard day's work. I have ridden 18 miles, crossed a mountain, and preached twice.

Saturday – I rode nearly 30 miles.

Sunday 24 – In the forenoon I lectured at Newtown Point on Mark 4:9, and in the afternoon I preached at my friend Vandervoort's on Matthew 24:42. Blessed be God. I have reason to believe some felt the word.

Monday 25 – I rode to Mr. Kress'

Tuesday 26 – I preached at Mr. Kress' on II Peter 1:5-8. I observed that three people in this congregation kneel – and one of them was a Baptist. At night I preached in the schoolhouse at Shemungo on Acts 16:30-31. Some of the congregation appeared to be well satisfied.

Wednesday 27 – I visited Mr. Mallory and Mr. Martin. These two men and their wives appear to be under awakening. Mr. Martin told me that one of the neighboring women came and invited him to go to a meeting, and that he went – not knowing but it was so ordered that he should get converted that night. But he

⁹² Andrew Alden (1766-1824) settled in Tioga County NY, by the mouth of Pipe Creek, at the site of the present town of Tioga, in 1785. At the same time, his brother Prince Alden settled about two miles downriver. The Aldens were born in Connecticut, direct descendants of the John Alden who came over on the Mayflower, and their family moved to Newport township (by Nanticoke) in 1772, where they were the first permanent settlers and the namesake for the town of Alden. Andrew and Prince are brothers to Abigail Alden Bidlack, wife of Shubal Bidlack. Andrew later moved west and died in Madison County OH.

⁹³ Pipe Creek flows into the Susquehanna River from the north in Tioga County NY, about 4 miles south of Owego.

said afterwards that he did not know when he had less satisfaction of a sermon. I rode to Nathan Brown's and preached at night on Mark 4:1-9.

Thursday 28 – I rode to my friend Townsend's expecting to preach, but none but one girl – beside the family – came out.

Friday, March 1, 1793 – I rode to my friend Baldwin's. It was with difficulty that I crossed the mountain on the way. I never saw more wild deer together before.

Saturday 2 – I rested myself at my friend Baldwin's.

Sunday 3 – In the forenoon I preached at Guy Wells' on I Corinthians 13:13, and in the afternoon on Matthew 13:31-32. In the interval of preaching, I had a dispute with a universalist who said he thought I had made a mistake in saying that the universalists expected to be cleansed by hell fire. He wanted to make it appear from Scripture that there was no hell, but was not able to support his argument. He said that it was sin that would be punished, not man. I then strove to show him the weakness of his argument by a similitude: If a man was sentenced to die for a crime and being brought to the place of execution, what would be said? Would it be said by any present that the man must not be punished, but his sin? How ridiculous would this be.

In the forenoon I had some satisfaction in preaching, but in the afternoon I believe the people had very little in hearing – on account of the crying of children (to me a very hateful noise). But in this country it is not pleasing to the people if they see the preacher get discomposed by this distressing din. I would wish such people to know that I do not preach for the sake of hearing myself – if I did, I could have as much satisfaction in preaching to the trees as to them that cannot hear me.

Monday 4 – I went with my old friend Baldwin today to see old Mrs. York,⁹⁴ one of our greatest enemies in Wyalusing. In her opinion I am a heretic, blasphemous, and almost everything that is bad, because I believe God has given man a capacity to do his own will – and that the Almighty never will save a man whether the man is willing to be saved or not.

I am a blasphemer in her judgment because I say that the wounds sin made in the soul, healed by the blood of Christ, may fester and need another application of the same. She says she doesn't believe that one that has once been a child of God can by adultery or murder become a child of the devil, even tho' they commit such crimes. She says, "They are God's children." And to hold forth that we can live without sin is what this old Calvinistic saint abhors. She would give no reasonable answer to any question I would ask her, nor explanation to any text of Scripture that I would ask her the meaning – but she said we took a text here and

⁹⁴ Mrs. Lucretia (Miner) York (1732-1818) was born in Voluntown CT and died in Wysox PA. Her son Manassah Miner York was the local Presbyterian minister.

there, and did not take the Scripture as a chain linked together, and from such she said she was to withdraw herself. She desired me to preach no more, and told my friend Baldwin she would come to meeting no more if he did not take his hand from the Legate.⁹⁵ Neither did she forget telling me of a public collection I proposed to make. She need do no more to convince me she has no religion.

Tuesday 5 – I rode through the rain on my way to my friend Townsend's, but could not cross the Wysox. I lodged at Mr. Mosher's. May the Lord keep me from murmuring on account of the difficulties I meet in this part of the world. Sometimes I think there is sure prospect of good being done, and at other times a horrid darkness appears to hang over many places.

Calvinism, Universalism, and the opposition that the doctrine of Christian Perfection and the possibility of a child so sinning as to perish everlastingly meet with, very much hinder the progress of religion on the Susquehanna. Indeed, there are few of the Methodists that are clear on the doctrine of Christian Perfection. There are three – one a Presbyterian, one a Baptist, and the other a Universalist – which I believe do much harm in my circuit. I sometimes think were these three swept away my labours would be blessed, for they confuse the people – and they all oppose the doctrine I preach. They all, directly or indirectly, tell the people they can do nothing, and if they are to be saved God will save them without their striving – and upon Antinomian ground, the Universalists tell them they will be saved whether they die in sin or not. In honor to this antinomian doctrine, it is not as bad as Calvinism – but both are bad enough to people in the regions of darkness.

Wednesday 6 – I disappointed a congregation today at Mr. Ballard's⁹⁶ at Old Sheshequin, on account of the Wysox being impassable for a horse.

Thursday 7 – I preached with a degree of liberty at Josiah Green's on Revelation 22:7, but afterwards I felt somewhat cast down.

Friday 8 – I omitted going to Maughantowano and 8 miles above on account of the bad riding, but I rode to Daniel McDowell's in Chemung – and a very unpleasant ride it was. I feel I want more patience.

⁹⁵ "did not take his hand from the Legate" is assumed to mean "did not stop supporting Colbert, the envoy of apostacy."

⁹⁶ Stephen Ballard (1771-1812) lived in Ulster, coming to the area in 1792 as the first of several Ballard relatives from Framingham MA. In July 1801 he was one of several area residents who were subjects of a grand jury investigation for their part in disguising themselves, assaulting an agent carrying papers signed by persons trying to clarify their Connecticut claims to area land, burning the papers, and tarring and feathering the agent. The grand jury did not indict. His uncle Joseph Ballard (1733-1806), mentioned later by Colbert, came in 1794 and settled along Sugar Creek.

Saturday 9 – I rode from Daniel McDowell’s to Joseph Gray’s – and a disagreeable passage I had through the Chemung Narrows, as the stones were falling from the top of the precipice, occasioned by the melting of the snow. Daniel McDowell and a man by the name of Reed were with me coming through.

Sunday 10 – I preached with a degree of liberty at Newtown Point on Matthew 18:3, and in the afternoon I preached at Esquire Hammond’s on Ephesians 5:14 and met the little class. Sometimes I have a hope that some of the people in the circuit will get stirred up, and at other times it appears that they are impregnable.

Monday 11 – Where I crossed the Seeley Creek I called at Gardner’s, where I was desired to pray with a woman who had a sick child. I have but little satisfaction in praying among those in the country, for neither in public nor family worship will they kneel – and when I kneel, I am gazed at as tho’ I were some uncommon creature. I lodged at Kress’.

Tuesday 12 – I preached at my friend Kress’ on Matthew 25:26 and baptized three children, and in the evening I preached at Shemungo Schoolhouse on part of Luke 15:2 – “This man receiveth sinners.” I lodged at Daniel McDowell’s. I have not had much freedom in speaking today.

Wednesday 13 – I visited Mr. Mallory and Mr. Martin, and conversed a while and prayed with them, and came on to Nathan Brown’s.

Thursday 14 – I have had the pleasure of seeing an Indian and, this evening, of preaching at Mr. Ballard’s on Matthew 18:3. I wish that some who profess to be Methodist in this place may not be lost. I have my fears of them.

Friday 15 – I rode to my friend Townsend’s.

Saturday 16 – I rode to Shufelt’s Flats and preached on Psalm 119:156.

Sunday 17 – I rode to my friend Parshall’s,⁹⁷ who went with me to Wyalusing, where I preached at Guy Wells’ on Matthew 25:26 – but with little satisfaction, on account of the noisy children.

Monday 18 – I preached at James Rice’s at Shufelt’s Flats on part of Matthew 6:10 – “Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.”

Tuesday 19 – I spent the day on Shufelt’s Flats.

⁹⁷ Israel Parshall (1760-1843) lived in Terrytown, on the west side of the river between Shufelt Flats and Wyalusing. The Parshall and Terry families were many times interrelated by marriage. Parshall Terry (1734-1811), a 1763 Connecticut settler in the Wyoming Valley, was the father of Jonathan Terry (the founder of Terrytown in 1787) and Deliverance Terry (the wife of Israel Parshall). Parshall Terry, Israel Parshall, and other relations moved into Terrytown soon after its founding. To further reinforce the familial interrelationships, in 1795 Israel and Deliverance gave Parshall Terry a grandson named Terry Parshall.

Wednesday 20 – I preached at Mr. Alexander's.

Thursday 21 – I was detained on Shufelt's Flats by the high waters.

Friday 22 – I came to Mr. Cole's – but as I could not get my horse over the river, I sent him back to Shufelt's Flats by my friend Mayhew.

Saturday 23 – I crossed over the river to Townsend's.

Sunday 24 – I preached at Townsend's on Matthew 24:42 with a degree of pleasure.

Monday 25 – I rode up to New Sheshequin and undertook to preach at the schoolhouse at night on Mark 13:37. The night was pleasant. More were out than common – and among them their preacher, Mr. Park, who did not stay long. I felt very much embarrassed in speaking, and unhappy in my mind.

Tuesday 26 – I kept close quarters at my friend Green's, on account of the rain.

Wednesday 27 – I rode from Green's to Mr. Gustin's,⁹⁸ and called at Mr. Horton's, near Breakneck Hill, on the way. Mr. Gustin loves to talk about religion.

Thursday 28 – I preached at Mr. Horton's on II Corinthians 5:17, but rode to my friend Townsend's to lodge.

Friday 29 – I stayed at friend Townsend's.

Saturday 30 – I came by water to Wyalusing.

Saturday 31 – I preached at Wyalusing on John 5:24-29. Four weeks ago, I gave out for a public collection in this place to be made today. My friend Baldwin spoke to the public, but nobody said anything in reply – so I came off without anything. And I can truly say I should be happy that this was all I had to trouble me in this circuit.

Monday, April 1, 1793 – I preached at Mr. Alexander's on Mark 10:28-30 and rode to Mr. Cole's.

Tuesday 2 – I preached with satisfaction at my friend Townsend's on Matthew 18:15-17. Old Mr. Cole was there, and I find he is more off his antinomianism notions of universal salvation since he read Wetherill's pamphlet (which is called

⁹⁸ Eliphalet Gustin (1766-1860) is the son-in-law of Elijah Horton, having married his daughter Jemima in Stroudsburg in 1787. He came to Sheshequin in 1791 – journeying up the river in a canoe with his wife, two children, and a few household effects. In 1800 he sold his property at Hornbrook and moved across the river to the mouth of Hemlock Run, where he remained for 3 years before settling permanently at Luthers Mills. Eliphalet and Jemima are buried with many of their descendants in the family's Gustin Cemetery.

Defense of the Doctrines Contained in a Pamphlet Called 'A Confutation of the Doctrine of the Antinomian').

Wednesday 3 – I came to Captain Clark's and preached at night on Matthew 7:21-23. I expect some of the Calvinists got displeased, for I was not very reserved in speaking my sentiments on the subject of so falling from grace as to perish everlastingly.

Thursday 4 – I preached at my friend Green's on the last paragraph of Matthew 25, and at night at old Mr. Schneider's⁹⁹ on Romans 5:18. I have heard that Captain F. did not like my sermon last night. I expect the arguments brought forward to prove that Judas was once a child of God did not please him, as I expect he hold to Calvinistic perseverance.

Friday 5 – I rode to Daniel McDowell's.

Saturday 6 – I rode to brother Vandervoort's at Newtown.

Sunday 7 – I preached at Newtown Point on Psalm 1, and in the afternoon at Esquire Hammond's on Job 22:21 – and here I collected 21 shillings and 3 pence. Coming from Newtown Point, I fell in with a young man – a Baptist – who told me that he had been in the dark ever since he joined the Baptist Church, and that he cannot be reconciled to the doctrine of election and reprobation as held by the Baptists.

Monday 8 – I rode to Kress'.

Tuesday 9 – I preached at Kress' on Jude 21, and in the evening at the schoolhouse in Shemango on Psalm 1. In this place a collected 4/10 [i.e., 4 shillings and 10 pence].

Wednesday 10 – I spent the day at Daniel McDowell's, and visiting Mr. Mallory.

Thursday 11 – I rode to my friend Townsend's, where I found brothers Ware¹⁰⁰ and Thomas.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Peter Schneider (1735-?), father of Jacob Snyder, was born in Sussex County NJ and by 1789 he had moved his family to Sheshequin, where he was a tanner and made harnesses and shoes.

¹⁰⁰ Thomas Ware (1758-1842) was born in New Jersey and was encouraged by Asbury to enter the ministry. He was present at the 1784 Christmas Conference, but apparently as an interested observer. He began itinerating the following year. The 1792 General Minutes place him on Staten Island, but he – like Colbert – appears to have been switched to a new appointment in mid-year and was now the superintendent of a new District that included Tioga and Wyoming (and other) circuits. He appears to have scheduled this meeting with Thomas and Colbert to advise them that they will be trading circuits for the 1793-94 conference year.

¹⁰¹ James Thomas (1765-1827) was born in Talbot County MD, ordained with Colbert at the 1792 General Conference and sent to Wyoming circuit at the same time Colbert was sent to Tioga. Now, under superintendent Ware, he is about to trade circuits with Colbert. The Tioga circuit

Friday 12 – Brother Ware preached at friend Townsend’s on part of Matthew 6:9 – “Our father which art in heaven.”

Saturday 13 – Brother Ware preached at Nathan Brown’s, where we hold our quarterly meeting, on Micah 7:7. Brother Thomas gave an exhortation. At night brother Ware preached in the schoolhouse, much to my satisfaction, on Luke 10:41-42.

Sunday 14 – We have had a very good Love Feast this morning, which we held at friend Green’s – after which I heard brother Thomas preach at the schoolhouse with much satisfaction on John 7:37-38. I gave an exhortation after him, and then brother Ware preached on part of Luke 22:19 a sermon well-suited to the time of administering the sacrament – which was the first time I ever assisted in the administration of this sacred ordinance.

[This ends Colbert’s service on Tioga circuit. The next chapter beings with his travel to his new appointment, the Wyoming circuit.]

Chapter 3 1793-94 (first part) Wyoming Circuit

[This chapter begins in April 1793 with Colbert and his out-going superintendent Thomas Ware, who had just officiated at the Love Feast closing out Colbert's year on the Tioga circuit, traveling to their new appointments – Colbert to the Wyoming circuit and Ware to Wilkes-Barre to "install" Colbert before heading up the Lackawanna trail to superintend the circuits under him at his new assignment in central and upper New York State. For reasons that have not been preserved, Colbert also returns to the Northumberland circuit for two brief (a week or less) preaching tours.]

Monday, April 15, 1793 – Brother Ware and I rose early and got into a boat at New Sheshequin going down the river – which runs through the mountains at all points of the compass – till dark, when we stopped at a cabin by the riverside where we could not get even straw to sleep on. Brother Ware, however, fixed himself on a chest with a bunch of tow for a pillow – I suppose he thought himself well off. As for my part, I had to get hay out of the boat for my bed, which another passenger begged part of.

Tuesday 16 – About 12 o'clock we landed at Wilkes-Barre, the seat of justice for Luzerne County. It was very pleasant coming down the Susquehanna this morning after breakfast – and had the men behaved themselves as well as they did this morning, I would have been happy continuing on the river. We dined at old friend Mann's¹ in Wilkes-Barre, then rode to Richard Inman's², where I do not feel very well in my mind. His wife is a Calvinistic perseverian. I have been four months and 8 days in Tioga circuit – one of the most disagreeable places for travel I ever was in, among a refractory sort of people. I lived hard and laboured hard, but I fear did little good. I joined but three in society while I was there. But

¹ Adam Mann at this time was the owner of uninhabited Fish's Island – which directly connects him with to other persons in Colbert's journal. In 1776 or 1777, this island was granted by vote of the town of Wilkes-Barre to the Rev. Jacob Johnson, who possessed it until August, 1791, when he conveyed it to Adam Mann. In March, 1796, the latter conveyed it to Putnam Catlin. While Adam Mann had property in Wilkes-Barre, he seems to have stronger ties to Wysox. In 1782 his daughter Jane married Nathan Carey (1755-1835), a Wyoming massacre survivor whose father was the founder of Careytown.

² Richard Inman (1751-1831) was born in Connecticut and came to the area before the Revolutionary War with his parents and six brothers, three of whom were lost in the Wyoming Massacre. They all settled in Buttonwood, Hanover township, between Wilkes-Barre and Nanticoke. He is buried in the Hanover Cemetery.

I think there is a prospect of good being done. May the labours of my successor be blessed more than mine were.

Wednesday 17 – Brother Ware left me. He is a man I have a high opinion of. Now I have the charge of Wyoming circuit. May the Lord give me wisdom, grace and patience that I may deal with these people like one who hath the worth of souls at heart.

Thursday 18 – I spent the day with brother Waller.³

Friday 19 – I came to Nanticoke and stopped at Aaron Hunt's. In the evening I went to a prayer meeting at Shubal Bidlack's, where I gave an exhortation, and returned to friend Hunt's.

Saturday 20 – I have seen 29 years this day. Amidst many difficulties and dangers I have been protected and preserved by the providence of God. O that the remainder of my days may be spent to his glory! I dined with three of our Methodist sisters in a mill. I rode to Wilkes-Barre and called at my old friend Mann's, where I am very kindly received. Wanting my boots mended, I carried them to the prison under the courthouse, for a prisoner to mend, as there was no shoemaker in town – and paid him double what he asked for mending them, as he was a poor prisoner.

Sunday 21 – This morning the prison was evacuated⁴ in Wilkes-Barre – and only one of my boots was mended. I suppose they thought they had not time to stay to mend both. I preached at the courthouse on Mark 6:12, and in the afternoon at Richard Inman's on II Corinthians 13:5.

Monday 22 – I spent the day at my friends': Waller's, sister Burnett's⁵ and Hunt's.

Tuesday 23 – I preached at Aaron Hunt's on Luke 12:22. Thanks to God! I do not know when I had a better meeting.

Wednesday 24 – I went to Newport. Nine women, one man, and some children were out at Bennett's⁶, and I gave them an exhortation.

³ Ashbel Waller (1759-1849) was born in Cornwall CT and lived in Careytown – the lower part of Wilkes-Barre – along the River Road north of Buttonwood and was a brother to Joseph Waller. He later became a local preacher, and was instrumental in organizing the classes at Plymouth and elsewhere. Still later he removed to the Holland Purchase in western New York.

⁴ Some sources suggest this is Colbert's way of saying that all the prisoners had escaped during the night.

⁵ The Burnetts lived between Careytown and Nanticoke.

⁶ Thomas Bennett (1720-1796) was one of the original 40 settlers who came from Connecticut in 1770 and erected a fort along the Susquehanna to give the town of Forty Fort its name. He and his family escaped the Wyoming Massacre and fled to Stroudsburg before returning to the area.

Thursday 25 – I exhorted a few people at one Bennett’s in Shawnee.⁷ Here I am informed that one of our sisters was turned out of doors by her husband for giving one of our preachers a quarter of a dollar.

Friday 26 – I rode to brother Owen’s⁸.

Saturday 27 – I rode to one Jackson’s whose wife is in society – he was once in himself.

Sunday 28 – I preached at Rosencrans’⁹ on Matthew 7:21-23, and in the afternoon at Captain Parish’s¹⁰ on I Corinthians 6:19-20, and at night at Captain Ransom’s¹¹

He was a Methodist and the apparent patriarch of the numerous Bennett families in the valley, but precise identification of the Bennett family in Newport that entertained Colbert during his visits is not possible.

⁷ Shawnee is the old name for Plymouth. Besides Main Street [US route 11], Shawnee Avenue is the borough’s other major east-west thoroughfare – and the borough is home to Shawnee Cemetery.

⁸ Anning Owen (1751-1814), “the Wyoming Blacksmith,” is considered the father of Methodism in the Wyoming Valley. In 1793 he lived in Kingston and functioned as a local preacher. Received into the itinerancy on trial in 1795 and ordained an elder in 1797, he went on to serve numerous appointments in the Wyoming region, and also as a superintendent. He is one of the few active combatants that survived (in dramatic and traumatic fashion) the 1778 Wyoming Massacre – at one point reportedly shouting to his companions “My gun is so hot that I cannot hold it!” He returned to the area in 1788 and traveled widely preaching on his own before any circuit rider was appointed to the region. The site of his home and shop is an historical site of the Susquehanna Conference, and there is a marker in front of the Kingston church commemorating his ministry. A full obituary appears in the 1814 General Minutes.

⁹ Mr. Rosencrans reportedly lived “on the bluff near the railway station in what is now Wyoming.” He is likely one of the 5 sons of the Daniel Rosencrans Sr. (1737-1782) who was captured at the Wyoming Massacre and taken to Seneca Lake, where he escaped from the Indians and returned to New Jersey to rejoin his family that had fled to that place following the battle. After the Revolutionary War, Daniel’s widow returned with her family to the Wyoming Valley, disposed of the farm, and returned to New Jersey, where she died in 1808. Her son Daniel Rosencrans Jr. (1773-1848) is known to have returned to the area before moving to Ohio in 1808. John Rosencrans (a younger brother of Daniel Sr.) and his 4 sons also lived in the Wyoming Valley, and Colbert’s host could have been from that family.

¹⁰ Ebenezer Parish lived in Ross Hill and was a member of that class. Palmer’s 1950 book says his home “stood a block or two in the rear of the Edwardsville high school.” It was the first regular Methodist preaching place in the valley and hosted Francis Asbury on his first visit to the valley. Peck’s 1860 book identifies him as “the first Methodist class leader in Wyoming.”

¹¹ George Palmer Ransom (1762-1850) was the son of the Samuel Ransom killed in the Wyoming Massacre. Samuel’s house was burned, and his family fled down the valley with the other refugees. After the advance of Sullivan’s army the family returned and occupied their land, only to become involved in the Pennsylvania-Connecticut land dispute. In November 1783, Mrs. Ransom and her daughters were, in the most inhuman manner, turned out of their house by Pennsylvanians in a cold and bitter storm to seek shelter as best they might. Mrs. Esther (Lawrence) Ransom married James Bidlack Sr., the father of Shubal and Benjamin Bidlack.

in Shawnee on Mark 16:15-16. Mrs. Ransom¹² is a daughter of affliction; she was desirous of hearing preaching and being baptized with her children. I thank God I have been enabled to speak with freedom today.

Monday 29 – I rode a rough road from Shawnee to Salem – expecting to meet brother Campbell¹³ at Amos Park's, but he did not come.

Tuesday 30 – I preached to a few people in Salem at Mr. Park's on John 3:16 and rode to my good old friend's, the widow Salmon, near Fishing Creek.

Wednesday, May 1, 1793 – I met brother Campbell at Joseph Ogden's in Northumberland circuit and preached at night from I Corinthians 6:19-20. I was very glad to see my old friends.

Thursday 2 – I spent the day with brother Campbell at Joseph Ogden's.

Friday 3 – on my way from my friend Ogden's to Mr. Park's on the North Branch of the Susquehanna, I called at Berwick and had some conversation with Mr. Isaac Holloway – a man formerly happy in religion, and a man of good sense, but spoiled with liquor and bad company. He acknowledges his faults, that he is too easily drawn from his duty by the error of the wicked. He told me when I called on him Tuesday that he was almost destructed after one of his drinking spells, and that he had been so tempted by the devil that he could not look at the name of JESUS without finding something rising in him against the name – and he was obliged to shut the Book. He very candidly acknowledges that he expects by the act of study his mind has acquired a little more knowledge than some of the common people that have had no better opportunity than himself – and that his proud heart wants him to communicate to others, but that while he is about it he gets off his guard and involves himself into trouble. How we ought to increase in humility as we do in knowledge!

Saturday 4 – I rode from Salem to Wilkes-Barre and called to see sister Burnett on the way. She is a good woman that meets with opposition, but I trust she is determined to persevere.

George Palmer Ransom was himself a captured survivor of the Wyoming Massacre, although he is not listed on the Wyoming Monument. He was captured during the battle and taken to Canada – where he succeeded in making his escape from an island in the St Lawrence River, and with two others made his way through the forests to Vermont, and thence to Connecticut. He then returned to the Wyoming Valley and is buried in Shawnee Cemetery. His house was at the corner of what is now Main and Coal Streets in the borough of Plymouth.

¹² Olive (Utle) Ransom was apparently ill at the time of this visit, and she died within 3 months – on July 14, 1793. She had 4 children, ages 2 to 9.

¹³ James Campbell was now serving on the neighboring Northumberland circuit, and the Salem appointment was the easternmost appointment on Northumberland circuit. At this point Colbert makes a brief and unexplained excursion (April 29 to May 4) into the Northumberland circuit.

Sunday 5 – This forenoon I preached with a hearty desire for the salvation of souls in the courthouse at Wilkes-Barre on Acts 16:30-31. In the afternoon I preached at Richard Inman's on II Corinthians 5:17, and in the evening at Aaron Hunt's on Matthew 7:21-23.

Monday 6 – I want to acquaint myself with the nature and design of the Christian Sacraments – viz., baptism and the supper of the Lord. I have reason to take shame to myself that I have not studied these points more before I was ordained. I have for a considerable time been studying the scriptural doctrine of election and reprobation, and whether a child of God can so sin as to be lost – and it appears to me that these doctrines are contrary to the doctrines held by the Calvinists on these points. Calvinism is very unfriendly to the progress and prosperity of religion.

Tuesday 7 – I lodged at my friend Mann's in Wilkes-Barre.

Wednesday 8 – I rode to Lackawanna Forge and preached at James Sutton's¹⁴ on I Corinthians 6:19-20. Here I met with a disputing Calvinist. Sister Sutton and her daughter appear to be very clever women. Our friend Sutton has not joined the society, but he appears to be a man of very excellent disposition.

Thursday 9 – On my way to Capoose¹⁵ I called at a Baptist's house. The man looked as if he wanted to talk, and as I suppose I thought myself ready for him, I got off my horse and went in – but I found the man as much out with the Calvinistic doctrine of election and reprobation as myself, yet he cannot bear the doctrine the Methodists preach that a saint can so sin as to lose his soul. I bid the old man farewell, who wished me well, and came to Capoose where I prayed and gave an exhortation to four or five friends.

Friday 10 – I rode from Capoose to brother Owen's.

Saturday 11 – I went to Mr. Morgan's store. About six months ago, this gentleman invited me to call on him when I came to Wyoming. He treated me exceedingly kind and invited me to call again. Mr. Morgan is a master of music.

¹⁴ James Sutton (1744-1834) was born in Westchester County NY. In 1776 he and James Hadsall erected the first gristmill and sawmill in Luzerne County at the mouth of Sutton's Creek, in Exeter township – this was within the area described generally as "Lackawanna." Hadsall was murdered and the mill was destroyed in the 1778 Wyoming war, and all that remains of the old mill is a crank preserved by the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society as a relic of the oldest mill in the Wyoming Valley.

¹⁵ Capoose Meadows is a flat area west of the Lackawanna, within the present city of Scranton. A Pennsylvania historical marker there reads "Capoose: On the nearby flat was located an Indian village under the chief, Capoose. It was settled by Munsee following their removal from the upper Delaware valley after 1743." The Munsee were one of the native American tribes in the area. This is the namesake of Capoose Avenue in northern Scranton, parallel to and a few blocks east of the Lackawanna River.

A pity it is, that he has no religion – that he who can sing so well should not be employed in signing the praises of God eternally in heaven. From Mr. Morgan's I rode to Abraham Goodwin's.¹⁶

Sunday 12 – I preached in the forenoon at Mr. Rosencrans' on Matthew 13:3, and in the afternoon at Captain Parish's on Revelation 22:17. In the evening I went to Shawnee, but as no notice was given previous to my coming I had not the trouble of preaching a third time.

Monday 13 – I rode from the lower end of Shawnee to Briar Creek.

Tuesday 14 – I spent the greater part of this day at Thomas and Christian Bowman's with satisfaction – and toward evening went to my old friend Ogden's, where I gave a few words of exhortation to a few people.

Wednesday 15 – I spent the day at my friend Ogden's and Sister Salmon's, and at night I preached at Thomas Bowman's with much satisfaction (considering the peculiar exercise of my mind) on Matthew 18:3.

Thursday 16 – I rode from brother Bowman's to Mr. Park's at Salem to preach very distressed in mind – but, thank God, not from doing anything that I know to be contrary to the will of God. When I got to my friend Park's, I knew not how I should preach – but I thought I would try and do as well as I could. I did and, the Lord be praised, I don't know that I have seen the word attended with more power since I left Maryland. My text was Amos 4:12. Tho' a life of traveling is very labourious and fatiguing, it is what I glory in.

Friday 17 – I rode to Aaron Hunt's.

Saturday 18 – I spent the day at friend Hunt's.

Sunday 19 – I preached at the meetinghouse¹⁷ on Job 22:21, and in the afternoon at Wilkes-Barre on Hebrews 12:14. I fear these are a hardened people.

Monday 20 – I spent the day at my old friend Mann's.

Tuesday 21 – I spent the day at Mann's reading and writing.

¹⁶ Abraham Goodwin (1750-1822) settled with his family in the Wyoming Valley in 1784. He had 8 sons and 4 daughters. He and his wife Catherine King Goodwin (1762-1814) are buried in the cemetery at Forty Fort. His son Abraham married Sarah Myers, daughter of Philip Myers [see footnote for 10/27/1793]. His nephew Richard Goodwin (1769-1842) of Delaware Water Gap was ordained by Francis Asbury when they happened to meet in the woods after a conference that Goodwin was prevented from attending because of high water.

¹⁷ This log meetinghouse was erected by the Methodists in Hanover township, about one mile from the Inman home.

Wednesday 22 – I rode to friend Sutton’s at Lackawanna and endeavored to show a few women the necessity of repentance, faith and holiness.

Thursday 23 – I preached to a few people at brother Howe’s¹⁸ at Capoose on Matthew 18:3. I met a small class; the Lord was present. I lodged at Joseph Waller’s.¹⁹

Friday 24 – I came from my old friend Waller’s to my friend Goodwin’s. I spent part of the day in reading the life and death of that very good and great man the Rev. John Fletcher, which gave me satisfaction.

Saturday 25 – I have observed a great circle around the sun – some think it denotes rain. I spent part of the day at Abraham Goodwin’s reading Fletcher on imputed righteousness.

Sunday 26 – This morning I finished reading the *Life and Death of Fletcher*. In the forenoon I preached at Rosencrans’ on I John 2:14. In the afternoon I preached at Ross’ Hill²⁰ on Revelation 3:18, and at night at Shawnee on II Peter 1:5-8.

Monday 27 – I rode from Shawnee to Berwick²¹ and met brother Campbell, who preached in Isaac Holloway’s house. I exhorted after him, and brother Thomas Bowman spoke after me.

Tuesday 28 – I spent the greater part of this day at Christian Bowman’s.

Wednesday 29 – I preached at Christian Bowman’s on part of Luke 14:17 – “Come, for all things are ready.”

Thursday 30 – I preached at Salem on Matthew 7:21-23. I believe some felt the power of the word – may the Lord fasten it on their hearts.

Friday 31 – I rode from Salem to Kingston and lodged at friend Owen’s.

Saturday, June 1, 1793 – I had to ride in the rain.

Sunday 2 – I preached at our meetinghouse between Wilkes-Barre and Nanticoke on Revelation 22:14. I endeavored to show the necessity of keeping the

¹⁸ The name is also rendered How. Howe lived in Slocum Hollow, now Scranton.

¹⁹ Joseph Waller (1764-1849) lived on the main road, in or near what is now the Hyde Park section of Scranton, and was a brother to Ashbel Waller. Later he moved to western New York.

²⁰ Ross Hill is between the present boroughs of Kingston and Plymouth. The actual hill is just west of Kingston, on the north side of US 11, the only section of which that is not built up.

²¹ Berwick is on Northumberland circuit, to which James Campbell is assigned. At this point Colbert makes another brief and unexplained excursion (May 27 to May 31) into the Northumberland circuit.

commandments of God. In the afternoon I preached in the courthouse at Wilkes-Barre to more people than I expected (considering the rain) on Luke 14:17.

Monday 3 – Coming from Wilkes-Barre to Aaron Hunt’s I called at Ashbel Waller’s and at Mr. Burnett’s. Mr. Burnett’s wife is a worthy member of our society, but he is much opposed to the Methodists. Calvinism makes him worse than I believe he would be. He professes to believe that none can so sin after being converted so as to perish everlastingly – which he cannot defend well.

Tuesday 4 – I spent the day at friend Hunt’s reading an old book – *The Post Angel*²² – for twelve months in the year.

Wednesday 5 – I met with a little disagreeable business today – with a tailor in Wilkes-Barre who had spoiled some clothes he had to make for me. He wanted me to take them, which I would not do.

Thursday 6 – A remarkably heavy rain. I stayed at my old friend Mann’s in Wilkes-Barre.

Friday 7 – We have had great falls of rain, which made crossing the Susquehanna difficult. I got over, however, and set off with brother Owen for the Northumberland quarterly meeting²³ held at Joseph Ogden’s. On our way, brother Owen preached at Shawnee at Captain Ransom’s on II Peter 3:18. I exhorted after him.

[This chapter ends with a stop on the way to the Northumberland circuit quarterly meeting. At that meeting Colbert and Campbell agree to a temporary “trade” of circuits for one round, but that arrangement continues. The next chapter finds Colbert riding Northumberland circuit again.]

²² *The Post Angel* was a monthly religious periodical printed in London beginning in 1700. It is unclear how long the publication continued, but Colbert appears to have the issues of a particular year bound into a single volume.

²³ It is unclear why Colbert is attending the June 8-9 quarterly meeting of Northumberland circuit, but following the meeting he and Campbell switched circuits for one round. On June 9 Colbert says that Campbell set off on the way to Wyoming circuit and on June 10 Colbert says that he is now on Northumberland circuit. As each would be spending a round on a circuit he had previously served, the people and the territory would be familiar.

Chapter 4

1793-94 (middle part)

Northumberland Circuit

[This chapter begins in June 1793 with Colbert heading for a quarterly meeting on Northumberland circuit, where James Campbell was serving. Following the meeting, Colbert and Campbell “trade” circuits – and Colbert rides one round on Northumberland, while Campbell rides one round on Wyoming. As each was returning to a circuit he had previously served, both the people and the route would be familiar. In July Colbert and Campbell re-unite and agree to ride each other’s circuits for another round. In August, Asbury makes a mid-year visit – formally assigning Colbert to Northumberland and sending Campbell to York. Colbert serves Northumberland until October when he appears to be assigned to Wyoming-Tioga circuit with Anthony Turck.]

Saturday, June 8, 1793 – Early this morning brothers Owen and Marrs¹ and myself set off for the Northumberland quarterly meeting. When we got there, Alward White² was preaching. He is an excellent young man who has given himself up to the work of the ministry and promises great usefulness. Brother Owen exhorted after him, and brother Campbell concluded the meeting. At night, brother Owen preached.

Sunday 9 – This morning we held a Love Feast – the doors were left open, and none were hindered from coming in. After Love Feast, brother Campbell preached on Colossians 1:28. I preached after him from II Peter 1:5-8, and brother Owen preached after me from I Timothy 2:4. Brother Owen and brother Campbell set off for Berwick on their way to Wyoming, and I went with some of friend Ogden’s family to Mr. Melick’s, where I gave an exhortation. This evening we have had a very heavy shower of rain.

¹ This may be Archibald Marrs (1769-1846), born in Ireland and died in Giles County VA. He is known to have lived in Northumberland County PA from 1790 to 1806.

² Alward White (1772-1832), son of Joshua White of the Muncy Hills area, was admitted on trial in October 1793 and appointed as one of the preachers on the Pittsburgh circuit. In June he was still a young man seriously considering a call into the itinerancy. He was appointed to Wyoming circuit in 1795 and again in 1796, when he married Clara Pierce, whose father Timothy Pierce was killed in the Wyoming massacre when she was four years old. He then located in Baltimore for 8 years, was readmitted in 1805, served one year and was ordained an elder, located for 12 more years, was readmitted into the Philadelphia Conference in 1819, and served until he retired in 1830.

Monday 10 – I am now on my way around Northumberland circuit. I have ridden from Mr. Melick's to the widow White's³ near Muncy – and I called on at Mr. Funston's on the way.

Tuesday 11 – I rode to Loyalsock and lodged at Peter Kunkle's. I have begun reading Fletcher's fourth volume of polemical divinity.

Wednesday 12 – I preached at Jeremiah Tallman's on Matthew 6:10 with a degree of freedom.

Thursday 13 – I rode to Mr. Manning's

Friday 14 – I rode to Dunnstown and visited a woman that appeared to be dying – where I gave a few words of exhortation, as there were a few people there. I spoke again at night at Mr. Updegraff's.⁴

Saturday 15 – I have had a long and tiresome ride from Mr. Updegraff's to my old friend Henry Benn's. I got there in the night.

Sunday 16 – I preached at Henry Benn's on part of Luke Luke 14:17 – “Come, for all things are ready.” In the afternoon I preached at Potter's Mill on Acts 3:19. I lodged at Mr. Potter's. Here I fell in with young Doctor Reed, whose father is a Presbyterian minister. The Doctor was much displeased with brother Campbell – I suppose he did like being dealt plainly and honestly with. I conversed with him freely, and he appeared to be very friendly. He said that he never met with a Methodist preacher that he agreed with so well. I was surprised that he did not know the third article of the Westminster Confession of Faith. He told me he believed the Presbyterians were the best people, and that he believed Christ died for all, and that saying to the contrary was blasphemy. Is it not strange that people will disapprove of the Methodists, when the Methodists preach what they profess to believe?

Monday 17 – I rode from Mr. Potter's to Mr. Francis' in Brush Valley and preached on Matthew 18:3.

Tuesday 18 – I rode from Francis' to Mr. Crawford's in Buffalo Valley and preached on Matthew 6:10.

Wednesday 19 – I rode to my friend Thompson's and preached on Luke 9:23. I baptized a child and rode to Mr. Thomas Rees'.

³ This is the mother of Alward White and the widow of Joshua White, who had died earlier in the year.

⁴ Herman Updegraff moved to the West Branch of the Susquehanna from York County. Updegraff is a prominent name in Williamsport history, but the Updegraff home visited by Colbert appears to be farther west, perhaps near Pine Creek.

Thursday 20 – I rode from Mr. Rees’ to Thomas Burrell’s⁵ and preached on I Corinthians 15:34. I hope some felt the weight of the word. In the afternoon I preached with freedom at friend McWhorter’s on Matthew 6:10. If ever one person was rejoiced at meeting another, sister Peggy White⁶ was in meeting today at friend McWhorter’s. She was afraid to come and speak to me at first, and when she did she began to cry. When I left this country about 8 months ago, she was single and Peggy Reynolds, living with her parents, but is now married to Henry White⁷ – a religious young man. I was very glad when I heard of it, as she was a young woman I respected very much.

Friday 21 – I preached at night in Northumberland on Psalm 8:4. There were three or four young women of indecent behavior that made their appearance tonight.

Saturday 22 – I rode from Northumberland to John Egbert’s.

Sunday 23 – I preached at James Egbert’s on Ephesians 5:17. Here I felt distressed for one that had been awakened last summer but has since been drawn aside by the error of the wicked. I joined two young women in society. In the afternoon I was enabled to preach with freedom at Joseph Ogden’s on Matthew 6:10. I think this has been the happiest meeting I ever had in this place. There appeared to be a groaning for redemption in the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins. A man in this settlement that was amazingly irritated with me last fall called me out and asked me how a person felt that was under conviction for sin. I told him as well as I could and advised him to be careful, lest he should be drawn aside by the error of the wicked – which he acknowledged he had been.

Monday 24 – I exhorted a few people at Christian Bowman’s. I spent the day there, and the night at his brother Thomas’.

Tuesday 25 – I held a prayer meeting at the widow Salmon’s at night.

Wednesday 26 – I spent the day at sister Salmon’s and Joseph Ogden’s, and with pleasure read the life of Mr. Wesley.

Thursday 27 – I left friend Ogden’s and rode to Catawissa and appointed to preach there next Monday. From Catawissa I rode on to old Mr. Wilkinson’s –

⁵ Thomas Burrell lived in White Deer township, west of Allenwood, about where the famed Devitt Camp (tuberculosis sanitarium) was located in the early 1900’s. He purchased his land in 1793 but appears to have lived there only a short time. Colbert finds him some years later near Halifax, Dauphin County.

⁶ Margaret Reynolds White (1763-1843) was born in Cumberland County PA and died in Illinois. By 1813 Peggy and Henry had had 12 children, the last of which was named Charles Wesley White. The family moved to Canada in 1817 and to Illinois in 1837.

⁷ Henry White (1767-1851) was born in New Jersey and died in Illinois.

but the people were gone, for which I was very sorry. A few came together at night, however, and I tried to preach to them from I Corinthians 13:13.

Friday 28 – I preached at Jacob Depew’s on Matthew 5:8 and finished the fourth volume of Fletcher’s works. My mind for some days has experienced very disagreeable exercises.

Saturday 29 – I spent the day at Depew’s. I read some in Nelson’s⁸ Journal, which to me was very affecting.

Sunday 30 – I met Bishop Asbury in Northumberland. I found him upstairs at the widow Taggart’s. When I entered the room, he rose and spoke to me in a way I was never spoken to by him before. He was very agreeable. At 11:00 he preached in the meetinghouse, and in the afternoon at Sunbury. At night brother Hill⁹ preached in Northumberland. I was very much rejoiced seeing four preachers in this part of the world – but I got my feelings hurt very much before I went to bed at William Bonham’s. I have been so distressed with the toothache that I had very little satisfaction in hearing brother Hill, tho’ he preached well. At my mentioning this, something was dropped that harrowed up my feelings.

Monday, July 1, 1793 – I am through the mercy of God preserved alive. I have passed the shades of a very uncomfortable night. O, that all pride was taken out of me. This morning I set out with Bishop Asbury and brother Henry Hill from Northumberland to Joseph Ogden’s at Fishing Creek. I directed them the way to friend Ogden’s and went to Catawissa and preached to a congregation of decent people in a mill from Acts 16:30-31. Isaiah Hughes¹⁰ invited me to drink tea with him, and I accepted the invitation. In the afternoon I rode to Joseph Ogden’s, where Bishop Asbury preached at night. Brother Hill exhorted, and after he was done I sung and prayed and – seeing the people unwilling to leave the house – I spoke for a short time. I never saw them wrought on so before.

Tuesday 2 – We left friend Ogden’s, called and prayed with our good old mother Salmon, and then went on to Berwick. Here Bishop Asbury preached to a

⁸ John Nelson (1707-1774) was a British preacher whose spirit was awakened by the field preaching of George Whitefield and John Wesley. The publication of his journal – *An Extract of John Nelson's Journal* [“being an account of God's dealing with his soul from his youth to the forty-second year of his age, and his working by him: likewise the oppressions he met with from people of different denominations”] – served to make him one of Wesley’s best known lay preachers.

⁹ Henry Hill was bishop Asbury’s official traveling companion. From North Carolina, he was admitted on trial in 1791 and served two different circuits in the Carolinas before becoming Asbury’s aide in 1793. He returned to a regular appointment in 1796 and located in 1797.

¹⁰ Isaiah Hughes was one of the Quakers from Exeter meeting in Berks County who established the meeting at Catawissa. He was also the proprietor of Catawissa’s first store, which was one of the first such enterprises between Sunbury and Wyoming.

considerable congregation at Isaac Holloway's, considering the notice the people had. After this we proceeded on to Captain Parish's at Ross' Hill, Wyoming.¹¹ It was late before we got there, along the most disagreeable roads. Too, I had the pleasure of killing two rattlesnakes – I had never seen a live one before.

Wednesday 3 – Bishop Asbury preached at Captain Parish's. The discourse was made a blessing to me.

Thursday 4 – We spent the day at Captain Parish's. We have had a heavy thunderstorm.

Friday 5 – I went with the Bishop to Captain Satterthwaite's – where I expected he would not attend at the captain's house, as there was drinking and reveling there yesterday. The people met at Rosencrans', but the captain was so affronted that he would not attend. This afternoon we had another thunderstorm.

Saturday 6 – We came to Wilkes-Barre. The Bishop preached to a small congregation in the courthouse. We went home with Richard Inman.

Sunday 7 – At the meetinghouse, by request of the Bishop, I exhorted, sang, prayed, and read the first lesson for the day. Brother Hill sang, prayed, and read the second lesson –after which the Bishop preached, and after him brother Owen and brother Hill exhorted. In the afternoon, the Bishop and brother Hill preached in the courthouse at Wilkes-Barre. The people had 4 sermons preached to them today in this house.

Monday 8 – I rode from Wilkes-Barre to Christian Bowman's. Here there are complaints among the children of sore throats.

Tuesday 9 – I rode to our sister Salmon's. We have had a thunderstorm today.

Wednesday 10 – I came back to Christian Bowman's. His little daughter Susie,¹² complaining yesterday tho' walking about the house, is gone into eternity today. This afternoon I preached in Berwick on Isaiah 55:6-7.

Thursday 11 – I attended the funeral of little Susie, Christian Bowman's child, and preached at Berwick from Matthew 18:3 and visited a few families.

Friday 12 – I rode from Berwick to Aaron Hunt's.¹³

¹¹ At this point Colbert is making a brief (July 2 to July 8) excursion into Wyoming circuit territory, apparently for the purpose of escorting Asbury and Hill on their way east.

¹² Susan Ann Bowman was two years old, having been born in 1791 – the year before the family moved to Briar Creek.

¹³ Aaron Hunt lived in Nanticoke, and so Colbert is briefly (July 12 to July 23) back on the Wyoming circuit. He appears to be biding his time in the area for a week until the Wyoming

Saturday 13 – I spent the day at Aaron Hunt’s reading Wetherill’s *Confutation of the Doctrines of the Antinomians*.

Sunday 14 – I preached at Hunt’s on Matthew 6:32 and baptized 3 children; in the afternoon I preached in the Wilkes-Barre courthouse from I Corinthians 6:19-20.

Monday 15 – I spent the day at brother Owen’s.

Tuesday 16 – I read a little in Doctor Taylor¹⁴ on original sin and came to my old friend Mann’s in Wilkes-Barre.

Wednesday 17 – I spent part of this day writing and reading, and I rode to Ashbel Waller’s.

Thursday 18 – I read some in the Bible and some in the first volume of Tillotson’s works, and in the evening I went to a prayer meeting at friend Bingham’s in Wilkes-Barre.

Friday 19 – At night I preached at old friend Inman’s, but with little liberty, from I John 4:18. One of the Inmans came home drunk. I was afraid he would quarrel with me – because I was particular about having my horse put up in safety, as he was lame.

Saturday 20 – I held quarterly meeting at Aaron Hunt’s. Brother Campbell preached with a degree of liberty and power from II Peter 3:19. Brother Owen and myself spoke after him. The Lord was present. At night brother Owen preached, several of the friends prayed, and the windows of heaven were opened. An old Presbyterian by the name of Moore, who came about 30 miles up the North Branch of the Susquehanna to this quarterly meeting, was in raptures of joy seeing so many people engaged with God.

Sunday 21 – This was a glorious morning in the Love Feast. We had a feast of love, after which brother J. Campbell preached and brother Owen exhorted after. When he had done, I preached from Hebrews 2:3 and then for the first time in my life administered the Lord’s Supper. This meeting was held in the widow Bidlack’s¹⁵ barn. The Lord confines himself not to the heavens or to temples built

circuit quarterly conference – which is his responsibility – at which time he and James Campbell will re-unite and discuss their rounds on each other’s circuits.

¹⁴ John Taylor (1694-1761) was an English dissenting preacher, Hebrew scholar and theologian. His *The Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin* was first published in 1740.

¹⁵ “Widow Bidlack” is believed to be Abigail Fuller Bidlack Franklin (1753-1834), the widow of Capt. James Bidlack who was killed in the 1778 Wyoming Massacre and a sister-in-law to Shubal Bidlack. She fled back to her native Connecticut (pregnant with her second child) in 1778, but later returned to area. This identification is problematic, however, because she married to John Franklin in Luzerne County in 1879 and no longer would have been a widow. Since James Bidlack was such a local hero and the Bidlack name was locally known, however, she might still be

with hands, but is to be found by all the faithful followers of him who left a celestial palace to be born in an earthly manger in whatever place he is sought with sincerity.

Monday 22 – Last night brother Campbell and myself were called out of our beds at Aaron Hunt’s to see Elizabeth Ogden, a young woman of about 18 years of age, and a daughter of our friend Ogden at Fishing Creek. At the sight of Doctor Davis lancing a child’s knee, she had fainted and fell backward out of a mill door, I suppose about 4 feet from the ground, on the back of her head. She was taken up and brought in, refusing to be bled,¹⁶ but soon fainted away. The doctor bled her in both arms but got very little blood. We found her convulsed and speechless – and I must confess I was very much alarmed, fearing we should have to send her home to her father and mother in her coffin.

This happening at my quarterly meeting made me feel more uneasy than I should have felt on a similar occasion. She lay speechless for a long time, but coming in a very low tone of voice articulated, “My Lord.” Then she appeared to die away again, but soon came to so far as to give us understanding by the motion of her lips that she wanted us to pray for her. Brother Campbell sung and went to prayer. And while he was calling on the Lord on her behalf, she broke out praying, praising the Lord and warning sinners of the danger of living and dying in sin – professing to believe that if it was the will of God to call her from time to eternity he would receive her to himself, and that she was willing to go. She had never before made a profession of knowing herself in a state of acceptance with God. She soon fainted away again. I never to my knowledge saw a person appear to be so near death and then raised up again.

Tuesday 23 – Brother Campbell wishing to spend some time with his brethren in Wyoming, and having left his horse at Fishing Creek and come up the river with our friend in a canoe, requested me to leave my horse and go with friends to Fishing Creek to take his horse and go on the circuit. So I set out in a canoe down the river from Nanticoke toward Fishing Creek, about 30 miles. It was night before we got to our friend Ogden’s. I then felt glad his daughter had got home safely from my quarterly meeting. But to my astonishment, a few minutes after she had been in the house she was taken as bad as ever – speechless and convulsing so that the family was in great distress, expecting that she would never recover.

referred to as “widow Bidlack.” The Franklins later moved to Athens PA, where they are buried. Note that “widow Bidlack” cannot be the mother of James and Shubal (and their brother Rev. Benjamin Bidlack) because she died in 1782 – and, besides, their father lived past 1800. Nor does there appear to be another Bidlack brother (or uncle) whose widow would be in the area.

¹⁶ “Bleeding” was then the common accepted medical approach to a variety of problems. It was believed that this would reduce the pressure within the body and allow the cause of the problem to leave the body. George Washington, for example, asked to be bled in 1799 after he had developed a throat infection.

Wednesday 24 – I set off with brother Paynter¹⁷ for Catawissa. He preached from Acts 16:30. I spoke after him, and I returned to Joseph Ogden's.

Thursday 25 – I spent the day at friend Ogden's and sister Salmon's. I thought Betsy Ogden's soul would fly to a world of spirits. I have read Doctor Coke's sermon on the witness of the spirit.

Friday 26 – I spent the day among the friends at Briar Creek and at Fishing Creek.

Saturday 27 – I rode from Fishing Creek to Northumberland, where I met brother Paynter – who is a very holy and upright man.

Sunday 28 – Brother Paynter preached at Northumberland and Sunbury. I exhorted after him at both places, and at night I preached at Northumberland from part of Mark 7:37 – “He hath done all things well.” I did not feel much freedom in speaking. Brother Paynter prayed after me with power, but some of the people had left the house.

Monday 29 – I preached at Mr. Marrs', a little above Mill Town¹⁸, on the West Branch of the Susquehanna, from Acts 3:19.

Tuesday 30 – I preached at Thomas Burrell's to a few people in the afternoon on Ephesians 5:14.

Wednesday 31 – I preached at Thomas Burrell's again, on Job 22:21, and at night at friend Thompson's from Matthew 7:7-8 to more people than I ever saw in this place. May the Lord give the word success.

Thursday, August 1, 1793 – I preached at friend McWhorter's from Acts 16:28 – “Do thyself no harm” – and in the evening at Northumberland from II Corinthians 5:7. I felt for this people in this place.

Friday 2 – I rode to James Egbert's. This is a peaceable and friendly family.

Saturday 3 – I preached with a degree of satisfaction from II Corinthians 13:5 and rode to widow Salmon's.

Sunday 4 – I preached at Joseph Ogden's from I Peter 2:25 and administered the Sacrament. I suppose curiosity drew out some. One young woman in the class professed to get converted; her mother cried out in great distress, and the friend appeared to be earnestly engaged for the kingdom of heaven.

¹⁷ James Paynter (1764-1840) served as a supply for one year before being admitted on trial in 1792. In 1793 he was Campbell's junior preacher on Northumberland circuit. Now that Colbert had taken over, he was Colbert's junior preacher. Drinkhouse's 1899 *History of Methodist Reform* states that Paynter “labored for 48 years and was as successful as he was indefatigable.”

¹⁸ Mill Town is the old name for Milton, in Northumberland County PA.

Monday 5 – I preached to a few people at Thomas Bowman’s from I Peter 4:18, and at night held a prayer meeting at sister Salmon’s – the people came out well, and I gave an exhortation. I am here informed that two men that were filled with prejudice against me last fall have agreed to get me to baptize their children. May they, and their children, be baptized with the Holy Ghost and the fire of God from heaven.

Tuesday 6 – I baptized 4 children for Joseph Salmon¹⁹ and one for Matthias Lemon.²⁰ At night I preached at Moses Van Campen’s²¹ from Amos 4:12 and baptized a woman and 4 children.

Wednesday 7 – I was stopped going to Berwick today, to preach, and stayed at Christian Bowman’s. It was truly a delight to see the people going from house to house this week – and joining in the worship of the Almighty in the blessed exercise of singing and prayer. O that this may be the beginning of the best days among them. From what has been said, I have some reasons to hope that my visit among these people since I left Tioga has been rendered a blessing – and if so, may I have a heart to ascribe all the glory to God, from whom all good comes.

Thursday 8 – I got a few people together at Berwick and preached to them from Acts 16:30 and lodged at my kind old friend Park’s at Salem.

Friday 9 – We had a heavy fall of rain last night. From Salem I road to Newport²² and preached to a few careless mortals at Mr. Bennett’s from Hebrews 11:6 – and began reading the *Life and Death* of that eminent servant of God Thomas Walsh.²³ O that I may be made like him. May the same spirit that influenced him enable me to live like him.

Saturday 10 – I spent the day in reading my Bible, and the *Life and Death of Thomas Walsh*, at Aaron Hunt’s.

¹⁹ Joseph was the son of the frequently mention “widow Salmon.” The four children (and their birthdates) baptized were Margaret (3/28/1782), Sara (12/9/1783), John B. (4/24/1788) and William (11/28/1791). Joseph and Ann Wheeler Salmon had had another son William who had died aged 11 months, and Mrs. Wheeler was expecting another child in November.

²⁰ Matthias Lemon (1762-1841) was born in Lancaster County PA and died in Green County IN.

²¹ Moses Van Campen (1757-1849) was born in Hunterdon County NJ and moved with his family to the Wyoming Valley in 1769. He was a military hero in the Revolutionary War, a noted Indian scout, and well-versed in the ways of the native Americans. He lived along Briar Creek from roughly 1790 to 1795, and is reported to have hunted with area native Americans.

²² Newport is on Wyoming circuit. At this point Colbert makes a brief (August 9 to August 19) excursion into that territory.

²³ Thomas Walsh (1730-1759) converted from Catholicism to become a Methodist preacher in Ireland. John Wesley is reported to have said, “Give me half-a-dozen men like Tommy Walsh, and I’ll turn the kingdom upside down.” The book *The Life and Death of Thomas Walsh* was “composed in great part from his own accounts” and written by James Morgan, who died in 1772.

Sunday 11 – I preached at Aaron Hunt’s from part of Romans 8:9 – “If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his” – and in the afternoon in the courthouse at Wilkes-Barre from Mark 16:15-16. I made a public collection and got 13. Lawyer Catlin²⁴, formerly an opposer of the Methodists, invited me home with him and treated me kindly. I received a friendly letter today from Miss Christiana Johnson²⁵, a young woman I believe to be of good sense and of an excellent spirit. What she has in “friendship” addressed to me in verse, I shall for my own satisfaction here insert verbatim.

You, sir, have ventured thus to come,
 A wild and craggy road –
 Willingly left your former home,
 To visit our abode.
 I hope your labour’l not be spent
 In vain along our shores,
 Nor you have reason to repent
 You came within our doors.
 And may your path with flowers be spread
 Whilst thro’ the woods you rove;
 May you with joy the Carpet tread
 Thro’ out the Luzerne Grove.
 May heaven grant you sweet repast,
 Religion all your theme,
 Make each day happier than the last
 Along the winding stream.
 And when those borders you do leave,
 And can no longer stay,
 May you a Laurel Crown receive,
 That never fades away.

Tuesday 13 – Too much of this day I have suffered to ruin to waste. I lodged at Abraham Goodwin’s.

²⁴ Putnam Catlin (1764-1842) was born in Connecticut and served as a fifer in the Revolutionary army. After the war he entered the legal profession and located in Luzerne County. He married Mary “Polly” Sutton, daughter of Colbert’s frequent host James Sutton in 1789 and resided in Wilkes-Barre. Catlin later became a land agent and at various times resided in Brooklyn, Montrose and Great Bend PA – in which latter place he again entertained Colbert 6/24/1803 and 1/2/1804. He confided late in life that it was his wife’s Christian devotion that led him to become a Methodist and encouraged him in his Christian life.

²⁵ Christiana Olive Johnson (1769-1831) was the daughter of Rev. Jacob Johnson (1713-1797), sometimes called “Old Priest Johnson,” the first minister of the Congregational Church in Wilkes-Barre. Though raised in the Congregational Church, Christiana became a Methodist and in 1801 married a Methodist – a William Russell, Jr., who for many years owned and operated a pottery business in Wilkes-Barre on River Street, below Union.

Wednesday 14 – I preached at our friend Sutton’s at Lackawanna on I Thessalonians 5:17.

Thursday 15 – I preached at Joseph Waller’s at Capoose on Matthew 25:30.

Friday 16 – At night I preached at brother Baker’s²⁶ on part of II Corinthians 6:2 – “Behold now is the accepted time! Behold now is the day of salvation!”

Saturday 17 – I spend part of this day at Baker’s, and in the afternoon I met brother Thomas at Abraham Goodwin’s. Brother Thomas is in a very low state of health, no longer able to endure the hardships of traveling thro’ the northern regions of Tioga and the dreary swamps and mud of the country of mountains and lakes.

Sunday 18 – This has been to me a day of labour. In the forenoon I preached at Rosencrans’ on II Peter 1:5-8, at noon at Captain Parish’s at Ross’ Hill on Matthew 25:30, and in the evening at friend Coleman’s²⁷ in Shawnee from Acts 16:30.

Monday 19 – I rode from Shawnee to Christian Bowman’s, “a long and craggy road” indeed.

Tuesday 20 – Brothers Campbell, Paynter and myself held a watch-night at Joseph Ogden’s. Brother Campbell preached, brothers Paynter, Bowman and I exhorted. When we had done, our old Presbyterian friend Moore gave an exhortation, and believe what little the old man said was attended with a blessing. Several of us prayed, and the Lord was with us.

Wednesday 21 – My horse being lame is the cause of a congregation being disappointed at Catawissa.

Thursday 22 – I have felt unwell, but I rode to Edward Wilkinson’s in Shamokin Valley and preached with freedom from part of Romans 5:9. I find when I have a fever I have freedom in speaking. Tonight I am distressed with a chill and fever.

²⁶ Stephen Baker was one of the original members of the Ross Hill class as organized by Anning Owen in 1788.

²⁷ This is Jeremiah Coleman (1728-1800), who moved to Plymouth from Goshen NY prior to the Revolutionary War. George Peck’s 1860 *Early Methodism*, page 115, states: *The first family in Plymouth brought thoroughly under the influence of Methodism was the Coleman family. Mr. Jeremiah Coleman, his wife and two daughters, lived and died exemplary influential members of the church. Mr. Coleman had a comfortable home, to which he invited the preachers, and that was no small part of the “material aid” so necessary during the early history of the Church. Mr. Coleman was the first class-leader in Plymouth. His two daughters, Mrs. Hodge and Mrs. Holley, were active members of the Church and made up a part of one of the most admirable circles of pious women that we ever became acquainted with.*

Friday 23 – I spoke at Jacob Depew’s, but with little freedom, to a few women from Hebrews 11:6. Reading the *Life* of Mr. Wesley, I was brought to examine myself. I believe that religion consists of loving God supremely; Lord, enable me to do so.

Saturday 24 – I rode to Northumberland and met brother Campbell at sister Taggart’s.

Sunday 25 – Thanks to God I have had a very good class meeting this morning in Northumberland, but I had little liberty in preaching from Matthew 5:4. In the afternoon I head brother Campbell preach in Sunbury with freedom from the 1st Psalm. I exhorted after him. At night he preached again, in Northumberland, from the Balm of Gilead. I spoke after him. I am much distressed with a cold.

Monday 26 – Brother Campbell took his leave of Northumberland²⁸ and set off for his appointment, which is in York circuit. I went up to my appointment at McWhorter’s on the West Branch of the Susquehanna, where I preached from II Timothy 4:6-8. Tho’ unwell, I thank God for the liberty I had in preaching today.

Tuesday 27 – I have had a very disagreeable ride this morning from Mill Town to Farley’s mill. I feel much distressed. Lord Jesus,

Stir up thy interposing power,
Save me from sin, from idols save,
Snatch me from fierce temptation’s hour,
And hide, O hide me in the grave.²⁹

Wednesday 28 – With a mind harassed and perplexed I preached at Daniel Sunderland’s³⁰ on Romans 5:18. I have reason to be thankful for the liberty I have in preaching – it is then I get comfort. Lord, grant that I may strive against everything that is wrong.

Thursday 29 – I preached at Peter Hasting’s on Hebrews 11:6 and lodged at Abraham Swisher’s, where I preached last year.

²⁸ This switch was likely arranged by Asbury when he met Colbert June 30 in Northumberland and they traveled together until parting in Wilkes-Barre July 7. James Campbell was moved from Northumberland to York, and Colbert was officially moved from Wyoming to Northumberland, which circuit he had been riding anyway.

²⁹ This is a Charles Wesley hymn text.

³⁰ Daniel Sunderland lived on White Deer Hole Creek, near present day Elimsport. He was a class leader, and services were held in his home for years. Later his son succeeded him as leader of the class.

Friday 30 – I preached with liberty at friend Coleburn's³¹ on II Corinthians 4:7.

Saturday 31 – I preached at Joseph Hall's on II Timothy 4:6-8. Here John Hall, who had been speaking disrespectful of me and, for all I know, without just cause, went out while I was preaching. He used to speak freely to me last year, but now he is very shy. It may be that he expects I have heard of his hard speaking. I lodged at Peter Kunkle's.

Sunday, September 1, 1793 – I preached at Peter Kunkle's with a degree of warmth from Malachi 3:18 – several appear to be affected – and in the afternoon at Amariah Sutton's on Luke 19:10.

Monday 2 – I preached at Richard Manning's from Hebrews 11:6.

Tuesday 3 – I preached on Isaiah 55:6-7 at Martin Reese's up Pine Creek, where I found myself walled by 4 enormous mountains. It is an excellent place to preach out of doors; there is such an echo of the voice. I lodged at James Mills'.³² I suppose he may be called a mighty hunter – he informs me of his taking his canoe 50 or 60 miles up Pine Creek and bringing down at times as much as 2000 weight of meat of deer, bear, elk, etc. He treated me well.

Wednesday 4 – I preached at Ananias McFadden's at Dunnstown on Matthew 5:4. I cried aloud and spared not. I heard afterwards that two men said they thought I was "out of my head." A woman that I told to sit by the door with her child because it disturbed the congregation, and not to think hard of the request, went off offended – and meeting a man coming to preaching, she turned him back by telling him that I was not preaching, but crying, and that I told her to "get out." Of how small a share of common sense are some people possessed.

Thursday 5 – I rode from McFadden's to Richard Manning's, where I dined with a number of women who were quilting. There came over to Mr. Foster's on the island a man who had a small child dead, with whom I – with a little company of five women and a man – went and prayed and gave an exhortation.

Friday 6 – I preached on Hebrews 9:27 at one Smith's, whose child lay dead in the house.

Saturday 7 – Brother Paynter and I have to hold a quarterly meeting at Amariah Sutton's at Lycoming. He preached, and after him I gave an exhortation.

³¹ Charles Berkheimer believes this to be Robert Colburn (1776-1852) east of Muncy, in Moreland township, near the village of Opps. He and his wife are buried in an old Methodist cemetery there. But Colbert later specifies that the family lived "at Muncy."

³² Colonel James Mills (1756-1833) was born in New Jersey and died in Ohio. He lived along Pine Creek, in present Watson township, Lycoming County, Pine Creek from about 1780 to 1800.

Sunday 8 – In the Love Feast, our brother Peter Kunkle this morning professed that God converted his soul yesterday while I was making some observations on John 3:14-15 – “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” Brother Paynter preached, and after him I preached from Acts 16:30 and administered the Sacrament. After the meeting, we crossed a large mountain and lodged at John Farley’s.

Monday 9 – I rode with brother Paynter to Mill Town and heard him preach. I exhorted after him. I believe the Calvinists have no regard for me in this place.

Tuesday 10 – I rode to Northumberland and found the long expected Thornton Fleming³³ at William Bonham’s. Here some words were dropped that harrowed up my feeling. Men of delicate feelings ought to be tender of the feelings of others.

Wednesday 11 – I heard brother Fleming preach at Thompson’s in Buffalo Valley.

Thursday 12 – I heard brother Fleming preach at McWhorter’s. We lodged at Thomas Rees’ over the river, opposite McWhorter’s, where we were kindly treated.

Friday 13 – I parted with brother Fleming and rode to Nathaniel Parker’s expecting to preach – but as no appointment was made, there were none that came to be preached to. I read a pamphlet published by the Rev. Mason Locke Weems,³⁴ which had brought a flood of reproach upon him. But I think that no reasonable man that fears God will join in the clamor of the ignorant that is raised against him.

Saturday 14 – I rode from Parker’s to James Egbert’s. No appointment was made for me here, so I proceeded on to Joseph Ogden’s.

³³ Thornton Fleming (1764-1846) was born in Virginia and ordained in 1791, one year before Colbert. He rose to prominence in western Pennsylvania and served as presiding elder [district superintendent] for 14 years. Earlier in the year he had written a letter to George Washington pledging the support of Methodists during the Whiskey Rebellion – and he preserved the President’s reply to him, which was published in the 1834 conference journal. He is the author of the 1834 book *History of Methodism in the West*. It appears that he and Colbert linked up at this point so that Colbert could lead him to his appointment on Tioga circuit.

³⁴ Mason Locke Weems (1759 –1825), generally known as Parson Weems, was an American book agent and author. He is best known as the source of some of the apocryphal stories about George Washington – including the famous “I cannot tell a lie” cherry tree story included in his 1800 *The Life of Washington*.

Sunday 15 – I preached at Joseph Ogden’s on I John 5:1, and in the afternoon at a new place a few miles from Ogden’s on Job 21:15. I lodged at Henry Melick’s. I have not felt much freedom in speaking today.

Monday 16 – This morning I baptized a child for Henry Melick, spent the greater part of the day at sister Salmon’s, and at night preached to an attentive congregation at Matthias Lemon’s from Romans 5:18.

Tuesday 17 – I spent the day at Joseph Ogden’s and Robert Owen’s. In the afternoon brother Fleming arrived, and in the evening he preached for us at Joseph Ogden’s. I gave an exhortation and prayed after him.

Wednesday 18 – We rode from Ogden’s to Berwick, and called at Thomas and Christian Bowman’s on the way. At night brother Fleming preached at Berwick, and I exhorted after him. We spent a great part of the night in conversation with Isaac Holloway, a man of reading and sense. Where this and religion meet, how agreeable is the companion.

Thursday 19 – We rode from Berwick to Salem. Brother Fleming preached at Amos Park’s. I feel the necessity of being more watchful.

Friday 20 – We rode from friend Park’s in Salem to Aaron Hunt’s in Nanticoke.³⁵ Here brother Fleming was taken ill, but made out to give a few words of exhortation to a few people who came out – who were women.

Saturday 21 – I visited a sick woman – old Mrs. Hide. She wants a knowledge of her acceptance with God. In the afternoon I preached as well as I could among so many noisy children at old Mr. Inman’s on I John 1:6-7. It will be well if the devil does not get some of the Methodists in this place.

Sunday 22 – I preached at Aaron Hunt’s from Malachi 3:16 and met the class. I rode with brother Fleming to Wilkes-Barre, heard him preach, and exhorted after him.

Monday 23 – I rode from Wilkes-Barre to Kingston, where I heard brother Fleming preach the funeral of a child of one Hudson from II Samuel 12:23. After preaching we lodged at Abraham Goodwin’s.

Tuesday 24 – This morning brother Fleming took leave of me. He is gone to explore the dreary regions of Tioga, and I rode to my friend Sutton’s at Lackawanna.

Wednesday 25 – In the afternoon I preached a short sermon to a few women and one man at my friend Sutton’s from Matthew 18:20.

³⁵ Nanticoke is on Wyoming circuit. Colbert makes a brief (September 20 to September 30) excursion into that territory in order to set Fleming on the right path to Tioga circuit.

Thursday 26 – I preached at Joseph Waller’s in the afternoon from Proverbs 1:24-26. I found it hard speaking.

Friday 27 – I preached at Laban Blanchard’s³⁶ from Jeremiah 2:12-13. So many people being in the house, and so much fire, made it so warm that I had very little satisfaction in speaking – being overcome with the heat.

Saturday 28 – I spent part of the day at Stephen Baker’s. In the afternoon I went to brother Owen’s with sister Baker and spent some time there speaking on a few things I wish may not bring disturbance to the society. Then I returned to friend Baker’s.

Sunday 29 – In the forenoon I preached at Rosencrans’ on II Corinthians 5:20, took three persons into society, and labored to show the necessity of union with each other. In the afternoon I preached at Captain Parish’s on Matthew 10:32-33, and at night in Shawnee at Mr. Coleman’s on the first paragraph of Matthew 25. I had not much liberty in speaking. A woman who never heard a Methodist preach before asked me if I thought that all who possessed religion professed. I told her that I believed they did so by a holy life and holy conversation. She said that she thought that some might experience the goodness of God and others not know it. We talked about religion till I found she was one who thought when a person once got real religion he could never so lose it as to lose his soul. I then asked her if she believed that man was a probationer. She said she did. I then asked her if she believed he was a probationer until death, or until he was converted? She said until death. I then told her she must give up the point. But before she would do this, she chose to recant part of what she had said – and chose to believe a man’s probation ended when he was converted.

Monday 30 – This morning I took breakfast with friend Presson and his wife. This is a decent family. I rode from Shawnee to Thomas Bowman’s and exhorted a few people to flee the wrath to come.

Tuesday, October 1, 1793 – I met brother Paynter at the widow Salmon’s. At night I preached at Joseph Ogden’s to more people than I expected on account of the rain on Isaiah 21:5. Brother Paynter spoke after me, and brother Emmett³⁷

³⁶ Laban Blanchard (b. 1764) lived in Kingston township. He married the widow of Lieutenant Elijah Shoemaker, who was killed the day following the Wyoming Massacre. He is reported to have later moved to New York, buying property there in 1794, and selling all his Pennsylvania property to his wife’s relatives in 1795.

³⁷ This is believed to be the Samuel Emmett at whose house Colbert later (10/26/1798) lodged for the night and who later (1806) preached in Sparta NY “*where Samuel Emmett, a Methodist minister, preached a sermon to a congregation of twenty-five or thirty persons, who had gathered from a circuit of two or three miles. His text was Ecclesiastes 10:1. I had heard the good man preach in Pennsylvania five years before, and seeing him here renewed*

spoke after him. Brother Emmett believes it is his duty to speak in public, and he has made repeated application for license, and tonight we gave him a hearing.

Wednesday 2 – I preached at Catawissa from Revelation 22:17 with a degree of liberty, tho' before I began I felt very dull. I told them if they wanted preaching in this place, we would preach to them if they would open a door – for it would soon be too cold to preach in the mill. They said they expected a door would be opened.

Thursday 3 – I preached on Matthew 25:10 at old Mr. Wilkerson's and lodged at Jacob Depew's.

Friday 4 – I preached at Jacob Depew's from I John 4:8. I was sent for today to preach the funeral of William Bonham's youngest child. I little expected that I should have been sent for on this occasion, however, I went and thanks to God was enabled to preach with freedom to a large company of Calvinists from II Samuel 12:23. Brother Campbell unexpectedly came in while I was speaking.

Saturday 5 – I spent the day in Northumberland. I did not feel my mind as much composed as I could have wished.

Sunday 6 – This morning I met the class in Northumberland – two of the principal members were absent. The want of love I believe kept one, and the Presbyterian minister's preaching in Sunbury the other. After class meeting I preached from I Thessalonians 5:17, in the afternoon at Sunbury courthouse on Acts 3:19, and at night again in Northumberland on Micah 6:8.

Monday 7 – I preached to a few people at McWhorter's from I John 4:10 and proceeded to Mill Town where I exhorted a few people at John Alward's³⁸ and lodged at Mr. Marrs' – where a few friendly people came out and spent the evening with us.

Tuesday 8 – I rode to John Farley's, but two besides the family came out. With them and the family I went to prayer.

Wednesday 9 – I rode to friend Sunderland's and preached with satisfaction from Mark 16:15-16 and baptized five adults and three children.

agreeable associations. His voice was loud enough to lift the bark roof from the low-browed house, and he had all the earnestness of early Methodism. There was much shouting, and some of his hearers fell with 'the power', as it was called. Thedoxology was sung, but no benediction was said except 'meetin's over'." [Doty's 1935 *History of Genesee County*, vol. 2, page 952]

³⁸ John Alward (1747-1806) came from Berks County and built a mill by the mouth of Muncy Creek in 1772. This mill was burned by the Indians in 1778. The Alwards fled to New Jersey during the Great Runway, but returned to the Muncy area.

Thursday 10 – Blessed be God. I was enabled to preach with satisfaction on Psalm 8:4 at Abraham Swisher's. Here I baptized Jane Swisher and three of her children. I believe the Lord has converted this woman's soul since I was here last; she is a new creature. Abraham Swisher, I hope, has good desires.

Friday 11 – I preached at Coleburn's at Muncy from Amos 4:12. I often feel miserable before I begin to preach, and very much assisted after I do begin.

Saturday 12 – I preached at Joseph Hall's on II Peter 1:5-8. At night I held an unprofitable argument with John Hall (Joseph's brother), a Calvinist in principle – and, like his system, full of contradictions. I look upon him to be very inconsistent. He says that God's foreknowledge, and fore-ordination, is one simple act in God – and yet God is not the cause of sin, or man's damnation. If there is no difference between God's foreknowledge and God's fore-ordaining things, certainly he must be the cause of that we call sin – for he cannot but foreknow everything. It is very unreasonable to say he decrees it because he foreknows it, because there are many things he knew from eternity would be done that he commanded not to be done – therefore if he decreed that they should be done he never would have commanded them not to be done, contrary to his decree. It pours contempt on God's knowledge to say that he knows nothing but what he intends to do – have we not such knowledge ourselves? Admitting we have health and reason, we may foreknow and foretell a thing we intend to do.

Further, if God knows nothing but what he intends to do, there is no harm in robbing, ravishing, or murdering – because agreeable to this doctrine, man is a machine and no more accountable for what he does than was the Ammonite's sword with which brave Uriah was slain. What a strange scene will be exhibited on the Day of Judgment if God's foreknowledge and God's fore-ordination are one and the same thing. May not the majority then justly accuse their maker with making them on purpose to burn in the unquenchable flame if his foreknowledge and his fore-ordination are one in the same thing? That he knew what they would do, we do not deny; but that he made them do what he forbids, we do deny – because he says he has no pleasure in the death of sinners. If he made them to burn in hell for ever and ever, he must have pleasure in their death – because he has pleasure in all his acts and will not do a thing he does not please to do.

When he finished his Creation, he pronounced that everything he had made was very good. He himself is goodness and has pleasure in what is good – not in the death of poor sinners. They kill themselves by sinning – that is, they lose the life of God out of their souls by doing what they are commanded not to do, when they might leave it undone – as effectually as I should lose my natural life were I to run a dagger thro' my heart. "Your sins and your iniquities have separated between me and you," says God, "that is, doing what I commanded you not to do, when you might have left it undone, has separated between me and you."

But if God, who knew they would do what was contrary to his will, decreed they should, then certainly he is the cause of their eternal death. For they could

not help it if his foreknowledge and fore-ordination are one and the same thing – or, to use Mr. Hall’s words, “one simple act of God.”

Sunday 13 – I preached at Peter Kunkle’s on II Corinthians 5:10. I had not much liberty in speaking. In the afternoon I preached at Amariah Sutton’s with more freedom and lodged at James Bayley’s. For an hour or two while I was there I was very sick. What a necessity of always being ready.

Monday 14 – I lectured at night at Mr. Manning’s on the Parable of the Ten Virgins.

Tuesday 15 – I preached at Martin Reese’s up Pine Creek on Proverbs 14:34. I felt confined, yet I hope God will do some thing for these people. I know not that there is a prejudiced person among them. I lodged at James Mills’. He and his wife are kind people.

Wednesday 16 – I preached at Martin Updegrove’s with a degree of liberty to a few people from Ephesians 5:14.

Thursday 17 – I went to John Hamilton’s on the Bald Eagle Creek and spoke a few words to a few people. I do not think that it is worth the preacher’s while to stop here.

Friday 18 – I rode to Philip Antes’ and preached at Mr. Malone’s at night on Romans 5:18 and baptized a child for a relation of Mr. Malone.

Saturday 19 – I preached at one Gregg’s³⁹ at the end of Nittany Mountain on Luke 13:5 – I felt liberty – and at night at Henry Benn’s with freedom from Acts 16:30. I have heard brother Young⁴⁰ from Ireland give a few words of exhortation twice. He speaks well and has a good gift in prayer, and I believe he will be useful if he continues faithful – which I pray God he may.

Sunday 20 – I preached at our friend John Graham’s⁴¹ in Penn’s Valley from I Peter 2:25 and administered the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. In this employ I often have a deep sense of my unworthiness. Lord, give me more grace.

³⁹ Andrew Gregg (1755-1835) was the son-in-law of General James Potter and the grandfather of the noted Andrew Gregg Curtin, the Civil War governor of Pennsylvania. He lived in Penn’s Valley, on the south side of Nittany Mountain, near where the Pennington meeting house was later erected.

⁴⁰ William Young (1756-1829) was born in Ireland and came to America with his family in 1791 – settling in Penn’s Valley and receiving a local preacher’s license. He was part of the extended Kinnear family [see 4/29/1797]. His obituary in the 11/10/1829 *Christian Advocate* states that “he had moderate talents as a preacher but lived a holy life and his greatest influence was though his conversation.”

⁴¹ John Graham was born in Ireland about 1738. He came to America and settled in Chester County in 1775. He lived in Penn’s Valley from 1791 to 1794, before moving on to Bellefonte and

Monday 21 – This morning I arose about daylight, and I suppose I have ridden 40 or 50 miles. On the way, I stopped and prayed with an old woman that appears to be just entering thro' the gate of death. She says she feels no terror, and that she loves Jesus. I lodged at William Search's.

Tuesday 22 – I spent some time with brother Paynter, in conversation on the rise and fall of man, at friend Search's. After dinner we crossed the Susquehanna and went to Mr. Rees', where we were kindly treated by Mrs. Rees – and where I was much delighted reading one of the volumes of Mr. Law's⁴² works.

Wednesday 23 – From Mr. Rees' we rode to James Egbert's by Northumberland. I preached at night from I Corinthians 6:19-20. Brother Paynter exhorted.

Thursday 24 – We rode to Berwick. On the way we called at Joseph Ogden's – and as it was a day of fasting and prayer in which the mercy of God was implored on behalf of the distressed inhabitants of Philadelphia, there were many assembled to whom I preached from part of Amos 4:12 – "Prepare to meet thy God." After that we proceeded to Berwick, where brother Paynter preached at night from part of Hebrews 2:3. The word was attended with power. I exhorted after him. I think there is some prospect of good being done in this place.

Friday 25 – We rode from Berwick to Shawnee, in Wyoming circuit, and at night heard for the first time a Universalist. He had begun to preach before we got in. He was an able speaker. Some things he advanced were excellent – among which was his description of the righteous entering into glory. He likewise gave us a description of the punishment of the wicked – which he told us would be for a time, to reduce them to obedience. He said that if a small degree of punishment did not reduce them to obedience, then a larger degree shall – that they shall be brought into heaven in a state of regeneracy, and that without holiness none should see the Lord. If this gentleman slips out of time into eternity destitute of that holiness without which none shall see the Lord, and if such is the will of God that he may obtain it in another stage of existence and not find himself mistaken, I trust my heart joyfully will say, "the will of the Lord be done." We lodged at friend Presson's.

[This chapter ends as Colbert's travels take him from Berwick on Northumberland circuit to Shawnee on neighboring Wyoming circuit, to which circuit he has been assigned in a mid-year change of appointments.]

then to Clearfield County – where the family became the namesake of the erstwhile town of Grahamton. He is the grandfather of noted Central Pennsylvania Conference preacher Cambridge Graham (1816-1885).

⁴² William Law (1686-1761) was a British mystic and member of the Nonjuror faction in the Anglican Church. His works include *Practical Treatise upon Christian Perfection* (1726) and *A Serious Call* (1728), both of which were read by Wesley at Oxford.

Chapter 5 1793-94 (third part) Tioga Circuit

[This chapter begins in October 1793 with yet another adjustment in appointments. Anthony Turck has been assigned to join Colbert – ostensibly on Wyoming circuit, as that is what is reported in the General Minutes. It appears, however, that the fledgling Tioga circuit is still struggling (and perhaps temporarily re-joined to Wyoming) – and Colbert leaves Turck to care for Wyoming while he cares for Tioga. In December, another change will send Colbert to Maryland – thus ending his confusing ride on the 1793 Wyoming-Northumberland-Tioga merry-go-round.]

Saturday, October 26, 1793 – Our quarterly meeting commenced, where I met with my new colleague – brother Turck,¹ who has preached us a long but entertaining metaphorical sermon from Isaiah 21:5. Brother Paynter and myself exhorted after him.

Sunday 27 – The morning we held a Love Feast. I preached at Esq. Myers'.² Brother Paynter preached on Matthew 10:22-23. After him, I preached from Luke 22:19 and administered the Lord's Supper. Brother Owen assisted, while brother Turck and Paynter exhorted powerfully.

Monday 28 – I lodged with brother Turck at our brother Ashbel Waller's, who I believe devotes himself and all he has to the service of God.

Tuesday 29 – I took my leave of brother Turck and set out on my journey for the dreary ice-glazed mountains of Tioga.³ I came as far as Abraham Goodwin's.⁴

¹ Anthony Turck was a German, with a reputation for being plain and rough – but he proclaimed the truth with love and was often referred to as “Daddy Turck.” Having been admitted on trial in 1793, this was his first appointment. He labored for 10 years and died in 1803 while serving Freehold circuit in New Jersey. His obituary is given in the General Minutes for 1803.

² “Squire” Lawrence Myers (1754-1810) lived in Kingston, and his brother Philip (1759-1835) lived near Forty Fort. The brothers were born in Germany and came to America with their parents in 1760, settling in Frederick County MD. They fought together in the Revolutionary War, moved to the Wyoming Valley in 1780 and 1785 respectively, and are buried in the cemetery at Forty Fort. Philip married Martha Bennett (1763-1851), daughter of Thomas Bennett [see the footnote for 4/24/1793], and their daughter Mary became the wife of the noted editor, author and historian George Peck (1797-1876). See also footnote 4 below.

³ Colbert and Turck were appointed to Wyoming circuit. It is not stated why Colbert left Wyoming circuit to Turck and set out for Tioga circuit. James Thomas was supposedly the itinerant appointed to Tioga – but his name does not appear in Colbert's journal, and it appears that Thorton Fleming was serving there.

Wednesday 30 – From my friend Goodwin’s I rode to a Mr. Massey’s on Tunkhannock. Mrs. Massey is a Baptist. She says that she believes Christ died for all, but that she does not believe a person can so fall from grace as to be finally lost. She gave me a very clear and satisfactory account of her conversion to God. She acknowledges that she gives way to sin, and that she is always sorry for it afterwards, but thinks she cannot go to hell as she was once converted to God. I awfully fear that the belief of this doctrine will be the ruin of many souls.

Thursday 31 – I arrived at good old friend Baldwin’s at Wyalusing, where I met with a kind reception.

Friday, November 1, 1793 – I rode from my friend Baldwin’s to my friend Mayhew’s on Shufelt’s Flats. Here I am kindly received.

Saturday 2 – From my friend Mayhew’s I set off for New Sheshequin, where their quarterly meeting is held. The wings of night were spread over me before I reached the place – however when I got there I had to preach, and was enabled (glory to God) to speak with a degree of life and power at my friend Green’s from part of Acts 16:28 – “Do thyself no harm.” I believe some felt the word go home to their hearts. Brother James Smith,⁵ a good young Irishman who was on his way to the Lakes, exhorted after me. Brother Smith has just taken the field. May he be enabled to put the armies of the aliens to flight thro’ the all-conquering grace of God in Christ Jesus the Lord.

Sunday 3 – The evening I opened the Love Feast – the Lord was present. After the Love Feast we went to a school house at a small distance. Brother Fleming⁶ preached to the people, brother Smith exhorted, and the people sat attentive – but when I got up to speak some got uneasy and went out, while others sat very attentive. After preaching and exhorting, we administered the Lord’s Supper and repaired to friend Green’s, where we spent the evening in conversation – which I trust was to edification.

Monday 4 – We rode from friend Green’s to our old friend Cole’s. On our way down the river we called at a friend’s – Lydia Newell⁷ (formerly Lydia Ogden, in whose father’s house I have often preached in Northumberland circuit). We

⁴ In 1793, Abraham Goodwin had a 3 year old son Abraham and Philip Myers [footnote 2 above] had a 1 year old daughter Sarah who would become husband and wife in 1812.

⁵ James Smith had just been received on trial and was on his way to the newly constituted Seneca Lake circuit – which area had previously been part of Tioga circuit.

⁶ Thornton Fleming was the itinerant serving Tioga circuit.

⁷ This is strange. There was a Lydia Ogden (1773-1833) born in Wysox who married a Josiah Newell (1768-1830) and became the founders of Newelltown, on Lycoming Creek in Tioga County. But this Lydia Ogden was not related to the Joseph Ogden of Northumberland circuit, and the Joseph Ogden of Northumberland circuit appears to have no relations named Lydia.

prayed with them and proceeded to friend Cole's. These are a sensible people, and very free to converse.

Tuesday 5 – Brothers Fleming and Smith with me, I spent part of the day at my friend Cole's writing and reading Carver's⁸ *Travels*. At night I was enabled to preach with freedom on Matthew 10:32-33.

Wednesday 6 – I spent the day at friend Cole's.

Thursday 7 – With brother Fleming, I came to our friend Parshall's – which we found to be a very agreeable place.

Friday 8 – Brother Fleming and myself were very agreeably entertained reading Carver's *Travels* and accounts of the different tribes of Indians in the northwest part of the continent of America.

Saturday 9 – Our quarterly meeting at Wyalusing commenced today. I preached to them from Acts 16:30. At night brother Smith preached from part of Jeremiah 18:11. Brother Fleming lectured on the third chapter of I John.

Sunday 10 – This morning brother Fleming opened the Love Feast by administering the Lord's Supper. This Love Feast I believe was so spoiled by so many being admitted that were not members, that none of the friends spoke their experience. I felt very much hurt, as did Fleming and Smith. But I was enabled to preach with great liberty from Mark 16:15-16. Brother Fleming preached afterwards from Hosea 14:1-3, and brother Smith concluded with singing and prayer.

Monday 11 – With brother Smith I rode up to New Sheshequin, and at night preached at friend Green's from Job 21:15. Brother Smith exhorted after me and, I expect, pleased the people better than I did.

Tuesday 12 – At night brother Smith preached at friend Kress' in Chemung, and I exhorted after him.

Wednesday 13 – I rode to my old friend Vandervoorts' at Newtown and found the family in great distress with the ague and fever.

Thursday 14 – I rode to Catharine and preached at night at Mr. McClure's.⁹ Brother Smith proceeded on to Horseheads to preach if he got hearers.

⁸ Captain Jonathan Carver (1710-1780) of Massachusetts set out to explore the territory won by Great Britain in the French and Indian War and to find the elusive Northwest Passage. He is the namesake of Carver County MN. His grandson Samuel Carver (1768-1835) was a local preacher near Kingston, Luzerne County PA, and the family donated the land for the Carverton church.

⁹ Thomas McClure, a Scotch-Irishman, who had located at Wyoming and served in Capt. Simon Spalding's company during the Revolutionary War, came to Athens PA 1786, settling on the west

Friday 15 – I rode from Catharine down the east side of Seneca Lake, in Herkimer County¹⁰ NY, to a Mr. Kinney's. He was not at home, but I was treated kindly by Mrs. Kinney.

Saturday 16 – I preached at Mr. Kinney's from John 3:19 before Mr. Judd¹¹ – a Presbyterian minister, with his three-cocked hat and gold ring on the little finger of his right hand.

Sunday 17 – I went to hear Mr. Judd preach. He gave us two discourses from Ephesians 1:12. I am in duty bound to acknowledge that I have been treated with more respect by this gentleman than I expected from a Presbyterian minister. At night he came to hear me at Mr. Depew's, where I had a room full. I felt happy singing the first hymn, and was enabled to preach with life and power from I Corinthians 6:19-20 – and I expect to the satisfaction of the people in general. God, make it a savor of life unto life.

Monday 18 – The ground is covered with snow, and more is falling. I dread the thought of riding, but opening my Bible on Proverbs 24:10 – “If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small” – I gathered all the strength and resolution I had, called for my horse, and rode to brother Fleming's where I had appointed to meet Mr. Judd, who was going as far as Geneva. He was not at the house, and I being in a hurry was not for waiting, but Mrs. Fleming telling me that Mr. Judd wanted to have some conversation with me on what I asserted last night, I felt inclined to stay and defend myself if attacked about putting “all men” as she said he said “on a level.” But when he came he spoke friendly and said nothing about it. I then thought, as we had to ride a great part of the way together, we should have the conversation on the road to ourselves – but not one word was said on the subject. We parted in Geneva, a beautifully situated little town on the northwest corner of the Seneca Lake.

side of the Susquehanna River. In 1788 he opened the first tavern in Athens. In 1793 he sold his holdings and removed to Catharine NY.

¹⁰ Today this is Seneca County NY. When counties were established in New York State in 1683, the present-day Seneca County was part of the vast Albany County. In 1772, a portion of Albany County became Tryon County, named for William Tryon, colonial governor of New York. In 1784, Tryon County was changed to Montgomery County in honor of the American general, Richard Montgomery. In 1791, portions of Montgomery County became Tioga, Otsego, and Herkimer Counties. Onondaga County was established from a portion of Herkimer County in 1794, and the western portion of Onondaga County became Cayuga County in 1799. Seneca County was established from the western part of Cayuga County in 1804.

¹¹ Rev. Benjamin Judd (1755-1834) was at this time a missionary under appointment of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. An 1885 graduate of Harvard, he had an interesting and unsettling career. He was dismissed from the Ware MA Congregational Church in 1787, from the Poundridge NY Presbyterian Church in 1793, and from a Litchfield CT Congregational Church in 1804.

I went to Mr. Anning's¹² as I was directed by Mr. Depew, an acquaintance of Mr. Anning. Mr. Anning was not at home, and I felt that I was not at home. But to leave the town before I preached, I dared not – if I could get my place to preach in. I asked Mrs. Anning, after telling her my errand, if she was willing to let me preach in her house. She consented, tho' with a little reluctance, and considering the little pains taken to notify the people, I had a large congregation for the place – with the Rev. Mr. Henry (a Presbyterian minister), and James Smith (a young preacher received last conference at Philadelphia and sent to the Lakes), and John Cole¹³ (a local Methodist preacher). I was, thank God, enabled to preach with a degree of life and power from John 3:16. The people behaved as well as I could expect, considering all things, and some spoke to me in that friendly manner that men who behave with decency in a strange country ought to be spoken to.

Tuesday 19 – Brothers Smith, Cole and myself were well treated at Mr. Manning's, where we lodged last night. This morning Mrs. Jennings, the tavern keeper's wife, invited us to breakfast. I found the people very friendly and agreeable. By the time I rode from Geneva to the ferry, on the Cayuga Lake, I was very hungry. At the house on the west side of the lake I stopped and asked for something to eat, but they told me they had no bread. Then, as a pot of potatoes was by the fire, I was glad to get some of them – with some good butter, without bread. But to my great satisfaction, while we were setting over the potatoes pot, a man came in with a bag of wheat flour on his back. I then got some bread for the present, and some to take with me. And it is well I did, for when I crossed the lake to Captain Harris',¹⁴ where I lodged and got supper, they had no bread.

Wednesday 20 – From Harris' Ferry,¹⁵ I rode up the east side of the Cayuga Lake, thro' an Indian settlement,¹⁶ to a small place called Scipio. I stopped at the

¹² While Colbert is consistent in reporting this surname as "Anning," local histories suggest that it probably should be "Manning."

¹³ Colbert is mistaken in the first name. This is Ezra Cole (1751-1821) from Benton, about 10 miles southwest of Geneva, where he settled in 1792. He attended the annual conference in Philadelphia in 1793, and upon his return organized a Methodist class. The 1873 *History of Yates County* states: "Mr. Cole did not long continue a preacher. The iron strictness of early Methodism did not agree with his views of life, and he gradually fell away from the faith." He later owned and operated a tavern in Benton.

¹⁴ John Harris (1760-1824) was the grandson (through Samuel) of the John Harris (1673-1748) who founded Harrisburg PA. He was born in Harrisburg PA and settled on the Cayuga Reservation, on the east bank of Cayuga Lake, in 1788. He was the first white man to settle and trade among the Cayuga Indians and one the first, if not the first, white man to settle in what is now Cayuga County NY.

¹⁵ John Harris started a ferry across the lake in connection with James Bennett, who came with him from Pennsylvania and settled on the west side of the lake. The two men did a thriving business, as there was a great demand to ferry both white men and Indians, and this was the

widow Franklin's, and had preaching appointed at Esq. Phelps'. The people would not attend until an arbitration was ended. I became impatient waiting for them and was about to go away, but I was persuaded to wait a little longer, which I consented to, and the people began to come in and I began singing. By the time I was done praying, I had a house full, to whom I preached from Romans 5:19. They were attentive until the last prayer – when by the time I was on my knees they began to pour out of the doors, fit to tumble over each other. Before I rose from my knees I knew not what to make of it, but was soon enabled to account for it when I got up – for the house next door but one was wrapped in flames, and a poor dog within lost. I lodged at Mrs. Franklin's.

Thursday 21¹⁷ – I rode to William Goodwin's.

Friday 22 – I preached at Mr. Atwater's from Acts 3:19 and baptized a child, for Mr. Konkle, and at night preached at Robert McDowell's¹⁸ at the head of Cayuga Lake from Isaiah 21:5.

Saturday 23 – I had a very cold night's lodging last night. I got very little sleep, so that I was obliged to rise early – especially since I had a long ride before me for near 30 miles without an inhabitant to Andrew Alden's at Owego on the North Branch of the Susquehanna. I was fortunate that I found two fires on the roadside this cold morning.

Sunday 24 – I felt unwell last night, but thro' mercy was enabled to preach with a degree of life and power at Andrew Alden's from II Corinthians 5:20.

only ferry on the lake. A 1795 traveler described the ferry as "a rough boat, propelled sometimes by oars and sometimes by sail."

¹⁶ Colbert was traveling through the Cayugas Reservation, which was established (for the third time) in 1789 and included significant areas on both sides of the lake. The reservation was dismantled with minimal financial reimbursement to the tribe in 1795, at which point most of the Cayuga Indians left the area and the state sold the land to white settlers who flocked in.

¹⁷ The 1966 book *Silently They Stand* by Jennie H. Conlon and published by the historical society in Tompkins County NY makes the following statement on page 24. "From the journal of the circuit rider William Colbert... comes the following dated November 21, 1793: Very muddy ride to Wm. Winters, met a class. Very wet and dirty ride to Samuel Weyburns' where I preached. Very disagreeable ride through the bushes to Dyer Smiths. Our friend Smith, his wife, a brother and three children live in a little log pen, covered with split pieces of wood. I found two people who came to the meeting, and man and his wife by the name of Buck. In this place I enjoyed myself very well. I would rather be in a pen, clean and decent, than in a palace with the filthy. I rode to Richard Goodman's on Cayuga Lake – these are clean people." The only date quoted in Conlon's book, this is troubling and raises serious questions that merit further investigation beyond the intent of this volume of *The Chronicle* – but all other known sources, including some independent of each other, agree with the narrative in the main text.

¹⁸ Robert McDowell (1760-1802) lived at "the head of Cayuga Lake" [modern Ithaca] and is the brother of the previously mentioned Daniel McDowell of Chemung.

Monday 25 – I rode from Alden’s to Nathan Brown’s.

Tuesday 26 – I rode with another man from Nathan Brown’s to Gideon Baldwin’s at Wyalusing. I had to climb a very disagreeable mountain, but thro’ mercy got safely over. At my old friend Baldwin’s I met brother Fleming.

Wednesday 27 – I heard brother Fleming preach from Romans 5:1-5. In the evening I met the class at Wyalusing and preached at James Rice’s from Romans 5:18.

Thursday 28 – I rode from my old friend Baldwin’s to Meshoppen and lodged at Mason Alden’s.¹⁹

Friday 29 – I rode from Meshoppen to Tunkhannock, where I met with sister Sutton, who lives in Lackawanna, and with Mrs. Benedict, a Baptist sister. As we were in a kind of wilderness, we had victuals with us – and with a degree of satisfaction we all three sat down on a rock in the woods and ate our dinner. Then we crossed a mountain over to Lackawanna. The bushes on the top of this mountain were bent over the road with ice, but on the side of the mountain we found no ice. We traveled till night came on, and very dark it was. I was under fearful apprehension of having to lodge in the woods with these two women tonight, but fortunately we got to Doctor Smith’s,²⁰ sister Sutton’s father.²¹

Saturday 30 – This morning I felt no freedom to call the family together to prayer, and I went away without saying anything about it to them. I rode to brother Waller’s, where I met with brother Turck.

Sunday December 1, 1793 – I preached in Wilkes-Barre from Matthew 7:21-23; brother Turck met the class. In the afternoon brother Turck preached at Captain Parish’s at Ross’ Hill. I trust the labour of this day has not been altogether in vain in the Lord.

¹⁹ Mason Fitch Alden (1750-1812) is a brother to the previously mentioned Andrew Alden. He was born in Connecticut and is buried in the Overfield Cemetery in Meshoppen. His father Prince Alden is the namesake of Alden PA, south of Wilkes-Barre in Newport township, where the family settled before moving up-river.

²⁰ Dr. William Hooker Smith (1725-1815) was a Presbyterian minister and medical doctor. He served under Col. Dennison at Forty Fort from 1778-1779 – including during the Wyoming Massacre. Congress, by a special act in 1836, gave Dr. Smith’s heirs \$2,400 for the services he rendered during the Revolutionary War.

²¹ Peck’s 1860 *Early Methodism* adds a detail to this adventure as recounted by a daughter of Mrs. Sutton who remembered the night very well: “When it became so dark that they were obliged to trust entirely to their horses, Mr. Colbert being in advance, his horse refused to go on. He spurred the animal, but it would not advance another step. Whereupon he dismounted, and laying hold of a shrub, he reached forward with his feet until he found he was upon the verge of a precipice. They changed their course and escaped being dashed to pieces. They were upon the brink of a perpendicular ledge of several hundred feet in height.”

Monday 2 – I met a class at brother Baker’s, where brother Turck formed 4 bands,²² and at night I preached at Baker’s from II Peter 1:58.

Tuesday 3 – I spent part of the day at brother Baker’s. At night brother Turck preached at Rosencrans’, I exhorted after him, and he met the class – and a time of confession was had.

Wednesday 4 – I went to Inman’s and exhorted a few people and met the class – here are a refractory people. I rode to Ashbel Waller’s and lodged.

Thursday 5 – I met with brother Cook²³ at Anning Owen’s. He informed me that I was appointed to Montgomery circuit on the western shore of Maryland, the place of my nativity. After my rough tour into the lake country I felt very willing to spend the winter in Wyoming, but a journey of more than a hundred and fifty miles to the southward lies before me. This evening I went to Rosencrans’ with a desire to reconcile the contending parties, but as both parties did not appear, I sung, prayed and parted with them – it may be till the morning of the resurrection. I lodged at Captain Parish’s.

Friday 6 – I heard brother Cook preach at Shawnee. He is an excellent preacher, and an excellent man. I parted with brother Cook and went with brother Turck to Andrew Blanchard’s.²⁴

Saturday 7 – I rode to Berwick. The Lord has done great things since I was here – a notorious backslider has been healed, a sinner brought to the knowledge of the truth, and some groaning for redemption in the bold name of Jesus. The Lord be

²² A “band” is assumed to be the same as a class. Colbert used this term on one other occasion, but for clarity and consistency we chose to render it “class.”

²³ Valentine Cook (1765-1820) was the presiding elder [i.e., superintendent] of the district – which at that time included four circuits: Northumberland (James Campbell & James Paynter), Seneca Lake (James Smith), Tioga (Thornton Fleming), and Wyoming (William Colbert & Anthony Turck). He had been licensed and admitted to the itinerancy in 1788. In 1798 he became principal of the newly-founded Bethel Academy in Jessamine County KY. When that school failed in 1800, Cook located and devoted himself to farming and preaching at revivals and camp meetings. He is credited for introducing the “mourner’s bench” – as prior to that, those under conviction simply knelt and were prayed for whenever they happened to be in the congregation.

²⁴ Andrew Blanchard (b. 1754) is an older brother of the previously mentioned Laban Blanchard. He served under Zebulon Butler and survived the Wyoming Massacre – during which time his brother Jeremiah was in command at Fort Pittston. He married the widow of Jonathan Hunlock (d. 1779), of Hunlock Creek. Other details about his life are not clear – but it appears he was living below Plymouth in 1793, later moved to Huntington (Luzerne County) and/or Hunlock Creek, and was still receiving a federal pension in 1840.

praised, and I am happy with them. This day I parted with brother Turck. I lodged at sister Doan's.²⁵

Sunday 8 – I preached at Berwick from II Corinthians 5:20, joined a class of children, and rode to Christian Bowman's. This has been a happy day with me.

Monday 9 – I rode from Christian Bowman's to Joseph Ogden's and (I trust) found them all striving for the kingdom of God but poor Betsy. This young woman professed and appeared to be happy in God last summer, but I fear she has fallen from her steadfastness into the condemnation of the devil. I strove hard to bring her to a sense of the danger to which she lies exposed. She told me her distress was great – that she saw the Lord frowning on her, that she could not rest day or night, that she had a continual burning in her breast, and that her distress was exceeding great. At night we had a happy prayer meeting.

Tuesday 10 – I spent the day at friend Ogden's and Robert Owen's, and at night I preached at Ogden's from Matthew 5:4. I have been treated kindly by the people in this place. I perceive there is a spirit of love among them. May the Lord increase it.

Tuesday 11 – I rode from Fishing Creek to Berwick to hear that good man Valentine Cook. He preached to the people in the German language, and I trust that good was done in the name of the Lord.

Thursday 12 – I came back with brother Cook to Joseph Ogden's, where he preached. It being a day of thanksgiving, a number of people were out. I baptized a child for Joseph Salmon.

Friday 13 – I have bidden adieu to Fishing Creek – it may be forever – and set off with brother Cook, Thomas Bowman and Betsy Ogden for my native country, the western shore of Maryland, intending to attend the Northumberland quarterly meeting on the way. We got in town a little after night and lodged at the widow Taggart's.

Saturday 14 – Brother Cook preached for us a very useful sermon. Brothers Bowman and Paynter exhorted after him. I concluded the meeting with prayer; I felt liberty in calling on the Lord. In this quarterly meeting conference I met with some difficulties with one that had been steward of the circuit.

Sunday 15 – We had a happy time this morning in the Love Feast. Brother Paynter gave a long and powerful exhortation, after which brother Cook preached to an attentive congregation. I believe the word was spoken in power, and in the demonstration of the spirit. I spoke afterwards, on who ought and who ought not

²⁵ This is assumed to be Hannah Doan, wife Benjamin. Benjamin Doan was one of the 1786 founders of Berwick and among the charter members when the first class was formed there in 1805.

to partake of the Supper of the Lord, and assisted brother Cook in the administration of it. I now expect I am done preaching and exhorting on the Susquehanna. I have been about 18 months in the mountainous country and, in general, I found the people hardened – tho’ many pay great attention to what is said in preaching, it is as tho’ they hear with the ear of a critic. Many of them are Calvinistic in their religious principles, and too many that are in connection are in need of more religion. Tho’ I have borne many hardships among these people, I found it hard parting with some of them.

Monday 16 – I bid adieu to Northumberland. I felt great freedom in prayer this morning in my kind old sister Taggart’s family. I went and parted in love with William Bonham. I hope the Lord has done something for him; if so, God grant that he may not lose it. I got as far as McConnell’s.²⁶

[This chapter ends as Colbert continues toward his new assignment in Maryland. He thought his labors on Northumberland, Wyoming and Tioga circuits had permanently concluded – but, as further entries in his journal reveal, God had other plans. This was only the beginning of his work in the Susquehanna Valley.]

²⁶ Henry McConnell was the son-in-law of Samuel Osborne and lived in what is now Juniata County PA – between McKee’s Half Falls on the Susquehanna and Thompsontown on the Juniata. This would have not been far off the main road to Carlisle in that day – which went from the Susquehanna to the Juniata via Pfoutz Valley, crossed the Juniata via ferry, and proceeded south over Croghan’s [now Sterrett’s] Gap to Carlisle. Henry McConnell died before 1806, but one of his sons became a leading steward on Juniata circuit. He was a brother to the previously mentioned Edward McConnell.

Chapter 6

1797

Travel Interlude

[The General Minutes list Colbert serving Bristol PA 1796-97 and Chester PA 1797-98. But Colbert experienced another mid-year appointment change that is not reflected in the General Minutes and served Seneca circuit from May 20 to September 12, 1797. This chapter covers his travels through the areas covered by the Northumberland, Wyoming and Tioga circuits on his spring 1797 travel from Bristol to Seneca and his fall 1797 travel from Seneca to Conference in Philadelphia, where he was assigned to Chester.]

Friday, April 7, 1797 – I rode thro’ the rain , thro’ the shades of death¹, crossed the Susquehanna, and got once more to Darius Williams’² in Wyoming, where I found my old colleague Elisha Cole.

Saturday 8 – I preached extra at the quarterly meeting held at Darius Williams’ from Luke 12:32. Alward White and Elisha Cole exhorted. We lodged at Aaron Dean’s.³

Sunday 9 – This morning we had a happy Love Feast. Elisha Cole preached from Acts 28:22. Alward White gave an exhortation after him, and I preached from Luke 22:19 and administered the Lord’s Supper. At night Elisha Cole preached at the schoolhouse near Colonel Dennison’s⁴ from Galatians 6:9. I sung and prayed

¹ The “shades of death” was the Pocono plateau between Stroudsburg and Wilkes-Barre/Scranton – a wasteland thought incapable of supporting life, with nothing to eat. Colbert had traveled north through New Jersey and crossed into Pennsylvania near the Delaware Water Gap.

² Darius Williams succeeded Captain Ebenezer Parish as the class leader in Kingston, after the latter had drifted back into his former patterns of drink. Williams later became a local preacher. George Peck [*The Life and Times of Rev. George Peck*, pages 108-109] reports of his conversion that Williams “shook like a mighty wind” when he recognized his awful condition and “fell helpless in a prayer-meeting, and lay for two hours in his father’s arms” before he received his strength and “declared that he had found peace.”

³ Aaron Dean (1767-1855) of Kingston was born in Connecticut and died in Ohio. He was married first to Eunice Gallup, who died from complications of a Caesarian birth in 1795, and then to her sister Lucy Gallup Gates – which marriage sources report for either April 4 or April 9, 1797, either four days before Colbert’s visit or one day after.

⁴ Colonel Nathan Dennison (1741-1809) was one of the original 40 Connecticut settlers who came to the valley in 1769. He was second in command of the colonial forces at the Wyoming Massacre and tried unsuccessfully to negotiate a non-bloody end to the standoff. The house he built in Forty Fort in 1790 is administered by the Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission and open to the public. He entertained Colbert, Asbury and other circuit riders on a regular basis. He is buried in the cemetery at Forty Fort.

after him, and lodged with Michael Robey Hines Wilson⁵ – a young invalid preacher – at Colonel Dennison’s. I have felt well among my brethren in Wyoming.

Monday 10 – I spent the day at Colonel Dennison’s, for I felt my want of rest.

Tuesday 11 – I crossed the river and preached at Burger’s from Colossians 2:6. While I was speaking, a sick young man came in and desired liberty to lie down. After I had preached and spoke to the class, I spoke to him – but found him of Deistic principles. I crossed the river again, drank tea at Mr. Smith’s, and lodged at Esq. Carpenter’s.⁶ This family treated me with kindness. Since I was in the country, the Lord has taken from them a daughter⁷ who had not been long married – but happy that she embraced religion while in health. She was a delightful singer, and I trust she has gone to sing on high.

Wednesday 12 – I rode from Carpenter’s to my old friend Rosencrans’, where I formerly used to preach, and from Rosencrans’ I rode on the Darius Williams’. From Williams’ I walked a little distance to a friend by the name of Pierce.⁸ And while I was sitting conversing with sister Pierce, who should walk up but David Downing⁹ from Delaware State – who had moved his family, a wife and seven children, and has 70 or 80 miles of the worst of the road to go yet. It is well if this is not the beginning of sorrows with these people. At night I found it hard to preach among a swarm of noisy children at Darius Williams’ from Colossians 2:6.

Thursday 13 – At night I preached at Jeremiah Coleman’s from Matthew 12:43-45 and met a class. Here the friends are lively.

⁵ Michael Hines Wilson was born in 1769 to George Wilson and Lydia Robey. He was named for Lydia’s father, Michael Hines Robey. He was engaged to Colonel Dennison’s daughter Elizabeth, but he died the following year.

⁶ Benjamin Carpenter (1753-1823) is a brother-in-law to Anning Owen, the latter having married his sister Mary Carpenter. Both Benjamin and Anning survived the Wyoming Massacre and were wrestling with calls to the ministry. It is reported in Palmer’s 1950 *Heroism*, page 62, that the two agreed that the verse revealed in a casual opening of the Bible should direct their paths. When the passage “Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel” appeared, Benjamin deferred but Anning committed himself to preaching. Although he never entered the ministry, Squire Carpenter remained an active layman and later moved to Delaware OH, where he died.

⁷ This was Catherine Carpenter – who had been married to Jacob Bedford (1762-1849), who would later marry Deborah Sutton (1773-1869), the daughter of frequent Colbert host James Sutton.

⁸ Abel Pierce lived in the upper part of Kingston. His wife survived him by many years and was known first as “Aunt Ruth” and later as “Grandmother Pierce.” One of Abel’s daughters married a son of Zebulon Butler. Two of Abel’s unmarried sisters, Alice and Hannah, were also prominent and exemplary Methodists in the community.

⁹ The Downing family was on their way to property near Athens PA, and they will appear later in Colbert’s journal.

Friday 14 – I preached at Ashbel Waller’s from Malachi 3:16-18 and spent the afternoon and part of the evening reading *The Shipwreck* – an elegant poem written by William Falconer¹⁰.

Saturday 15 – I got thro’ *The Shipwreck*, and preached at old Mother Hide’s in Hanover from I Corinthians 13:13, and returned to Ashbel Waller’s.

Sunday 16 – I preached in the courthouse at Wilkes-Barre from Acts 3:19 to an attentive congregation, some of whom I expect were Deists.¹¹ I felt myself for some time at a loss for a subject to address these people on. I wanted to preach pointedly against Deism, but was afraid I should not do justice to such an important subject – and so for as much as it is probable a great part of them profess to believe the Bible, I spoke to them as people believing the Bible and concluded with a word of caution to the Deists. I dined at the widow Johnson’s,¹² crossed the river, and preached at the schoolhouse near Colonel Dennison’s from Romans 1:16 and lodged at Colonel Dennison’s.

Monday 17 – I preached at Benjamin Carpenter’s from Hebrews 12:14 and lodged at Abraham Goodwin’s. These are kind people, but the children are so noisy there is no satisfaction to be had in the place.

Tuesday 18 – I rode to Benjamin Carpenter’s. The weather was too inclement to travel without, and my time was too short to accomplish my business if I stayed – but then, no weather a man can live in ought to stop him.

Wednesday 19 – I rode from Carpenter’s to James Rice’s,¹³ attended a prayer meeting at friend Smith’s at night, and found myself in my element.

Thursday 20 – I rode from James Rice’s to Amos Park’s in Salem. A glorious change has taken place in this family since I was here. The old woman who used to be dead and Calvinistic is now alive – and several of the children converted.

Friday 21 – I rode from Amos Park’s to Christian Bowman’s, where I met with a very kind reception, and at night we had a prayer meeting.

Saturday 22 – Richard Sneath¹⁴ met me at Christian Bowman’s, where I held a quarterly meeting. Brother Sneath preached from Jeremiah 4:14. David Davis¹⁵

¹⁰ William Falconer (1732-1769) was a Scottish poet whose considerable first-hand experience as a seaman contributed to his epic poem *The Shipwreck*.

¹¹ Several leading citizens in Wilkes-Barre at this time were followers of an Elihu Palmer (1764-1806), author of the Deistic book *The Principles of Nature*, whose brother Nathan Palmer (1769-1842) was practicing law in the city.

¹² Mary Giddings Johnson (1729-1805) had just lost her husband, Presbyterian Rev. Jacob Johnson on March 15, 1797. She is buried in the Hollenback Cemetery in Wilkes-Barre.

¹³ This James Rice, according to George Peck’s 1860 *Early Methodism*, page 301, lived in Trucksville – and is not the James Rice on Tioga circuit.

¹⁴ Richard Sneath (1751-1824) was born in Ireland and emigrated to America in 1774. He “embraced religion” and joined the Methodist Church in 1782 and became an itinerant in 1796.

gave an exhortation, I preached with a degree of freedom from Colossians 2:19, and Ashbel Waller gave an exhortation. At night we held a prayer meeting at Thomas Bowman's. I have had strange feelings today – but I hope I shall be enabled by grace to overcome my soul's enemy.

Sunday 23 – We had a happy Love Feast, after which Richard Sneath preached from Isaiah 51:1-3. Ashbel Waller preached after him from Matthew 22:14, and I preached after Waller from I Corinthians 11:26 and administered the Lord's Supper. In the afternoon I rode with Richard Sneath to my old friend Joseph Ogden's and preached from Matthew 24:44. Here his poor backslidden daughter Betsy appeared as though she sat on nettles. I cannot look on this poor creature, but with pity.

Monday 24 – I rode with Richard Sneath to Northumberland. Here my feelings were hurt.

Tuesday 25 – I rode from Northumberland to Thomas Rees', where I used to formerly preach, and rode with Richard Sneath and Polly Bonham¹⁶ to Benjamin Thompson's¹⁷ – where our reception was so unfavorable that we rode to Stahl's¹⁸

Currently on his first assignment, as the junior preacher on Northumberland circuit, he would itinerate for 28 years and earn a reputation as an effective evangelist. He married, raised 8 children, and lived in Delaware and Lancaster Counties PA.

¹⁵ David Davis was a class leader, circuit steward and local preacher who came from Philadelphia to live in Sunbury about 1792 – although he had owned land there as early as 1780. Sometime after 1800 Davis moved his family to what is now Beaver township, Columbia County PA. It is reported that the first sermon delivered by a Methodist in Beaver township was preached in the home of David Davis in 1815. A church was built there in 1822, but the Methodists turned it over to the Evangelicals and the congregation eventually disbanded. Davis became a well-known local preacher and was elected one of the original trustees when the Mooresburg church was organized in 1834.

¹⁶ This is Elizabeth Taggart (Mrs. William) Bonham (1753-1829), daughter of the Mary Vanderbilt Taggart mentioned by Colbert in his journal when he served Northumberland circuit. Amazingly, she joins Colbert and the others and accompanies them at least until May 1.

¹⁷ Benjamin Thompson lived about a mile east of Youngmanstown [Mifflinburg] and is considered one of the founders of Mifflinburg Methodism. When Colbert served the circuit previously, he had been hosted by Benjamin's Presbyterian father John Thompson.

¹⁸ Philip Stahl (1758-1799), his brother Jacob, and blacksmith Jacob Lutz settled near the present village of Mazeppa in 1793 and became the first in a long line of expert wagon and carriage makers that helped Mifflinburg earn the title of "Buggy Capital of the World." They were born in Germany but moved into the area from Springfield township, Berks County PA.

Philip's will declared: "I do allow the interest of 25 pounds for 10 years to be paid to the ministers preaching here, or near to this, commonly called Methodists." From 1802 to 1812 the steward's book of Northumberland (later Lycoming) circuit showed an annual payment of \$4.00 from the estate of Philip Stahl. After Philip's death, Jacob Lutz became the leader of the class – which was known as the White Deer class.

where we were kindly received and met with brother John Seward.¹⁹ In justice to our good friend Benjamin Thompson, I must say he was not at home when we called there – if he had been home, I have no doubt but we should have been treated well.

Wednesday 26 – We returned to Benjamin Thompson’s, where Richard Sneath preached from I John 3:12. After him, I preached from Matthew 10:32-33 and administered the Lord’s Supper. Brother Sneath baptized two adults, and we rode to our friends Crawford²⁰ and Hedden.²¹

Thursday 27 – With Brothers Sneath and Seward, and Polly Bonham, I rode from Crawford’s and Hedden’s to Robert Pennington’s²², where I preached at night from Malachi 3:16-18. Brother Seward gave a lively exhortation, and brother Sneath spoke a few words after him and concluded the meeting.

Friday 28 – We rested at Robert Pennington’s – for of rest we stand in need, after our long journey yesterday.²³

Saturday 29 – We rode to the quarterly meeting at Kinnear’s²⁴ in Nittany Valley. I began the meeting, and felt very well during the singing and prayer, but much confined in preaching from Luke 12:32. Brother Young, a local preacher, spoke after me. After him, Brother Sneath gave a wonderful sermon from I Peter 2:25.

¹⁹ John Seward was the senior preacher on Northumberland circuit. He had been admitted on trial in 1795 and ordained a deacon in full membership in 1796.

²⁰ The Crawfords lived in Hartleton, Union County

²¹ William Hedden was a neighbor to the Crawfords.

²² This is Colbert’s first mention of “Father” Pennington, considered to be the patriarch of Centre County Methodism. He came from New Castle DE about 1786 with his father-in-law Henry Benn, with whom Colbert had significant contact during his earlier appointment to the region. When the Benns moved westward, leadership of the class fell to Robert Pennington. It was on his land that the first Methodist church in Penns Valley was erected in 1814. The old chapel is long gone, as the congregation eventually relocated to the village of Centre Hall – but the cemetery, final resting place of the Penningtons, remains. One of Robert’s daughters married a Sankey, and in their home was organized the Sankey class – which became the nearby Potter’s Mills, or Sprucetown, Church. The great gospel soloist Ira Sankey was the grandson of this couple. The *Methodist Magazine* carried a memoir of Mrs. Robert Pennington in 1826 (volume 9, pages 16-18) and another of her husband in 1827 (volume 10, page 147).

²³ It is 25 miles along present PA 45 from Hartleton in Buffalo Valley, through the gap near Woodward, to Robert Pennington’s in Penns Valley.

²⁴ James Kinnear, a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Ireland, came to America and settled in Philadelphia, where he became one of the first members of St. George’s Church. After the Revolutionary War, he moved to 2400 acres near present Axemann. During the 1790’s the families of five of his half-brothers came to join him, and the extended Kinnear family produced several local preachers and was instrumental in the founding of the Axemann and Pleasant Gap congregations. James Kinnear died in 1798. The story of this extended family is told in the 1918 book *The Kinnears and Their Kin*, by Emma Siggins White. More Information about James Kinnear is given in Charles Berkheimer’s article “Early Central Pennsylvania Methodism: from Whitefield to Asbury,” in the 2003 volume of *The Chronicle*, pages 25-26.

After him, Brother Seward gave us an exhortation and concluded the meeting. We dined at Kinnear's and lodged at David Goodfellow's²⁵, where we had a happy prayer meeting. I have often pitied this man's daughter – an accomplished and pious young woman, brought by her parents from Ireland and confined in these American woods, among few that she enjoys much satisfaction with. I expect she feels her want of stimulation.

Sunday 30 – We had a happy Love Feast this morning. John Seward preached from Exodus 32:26. I preached after him from Psalm 84:11 and administered the Lord's Supper – after which Brother Young preached from Revelation 20:12, and Brother Sneath from John 1:29. Many, I believe, felt the weight of the word, and the meeting ended in a great shout.

Monday, May 1, 1797 – I dined at my old friend Graham's, with Seward and Sneath and Polly Bonham, intending in the afternoon to ride to Robert Pennington's. But I was taken sick after I set off, and I had to return and stay all night – for my horse was taken sick as well as myself.

Tuesday 2 – With my sick horse, and myself very weak, I have made but to travel about 20 miles. I lodged at one Bunch's – a Dutchman who, it is said, can cure sick horses. And a strange method he fell on to cure mine: stroking him from his nose, up his face, and down his mane and back to the end of his tail – and then lightly slapping him on the flank – very gravely three time successively. And though I was pensive enough, I could scarcely help laughing at the way of affecting a cure.

Wednesday 3 – I was treated well at my strange friend Bunch's, who was kind enough not to take anything for what he did for me and my horse. I rode on to Northumberland, upwards of 50 miles, and was very sorry I did not get in in time to preach.

Thursday 4 – I rode to Joseph Ogden's, but did not get along soon enough to preach. But it was well that William Brandon²⁶ was there, and he preached for me. At night Brother Brandon preached, and I exhorted a few people and prayed.

Friday 5 – I spent the day at the widow Salmon's with William Brandon, and at night held a prayer meeting at Joseph Ogden's. I believe a great fall of rain prevented a number of people from coming to meeting.

²⁵ This family, parents and four sons and two daughters, came from Cavan County Ireland to America about 1792.

²⁶ William Brandon was a local preacher from Ireland who was admitted to the conference on trial in 1801 and expelled after only 4 years. He continued as a local preacher, however, and was useful in revivals in the Luzerne County section of the Wyoming Valley. He lived near Town Hill and was probably a school teacher as well as a farmer.

Saturday 6 – I dined at John Salmon's,²⁷ prayed at Robert Owens' and at the widow Salmon's, and rode to Christian Bowman's. Thus I have bid adieu to Fishing Creek once more.

From much loved friend when ere I part,
A pensive sadness fills my heart.
Past scenes my fancy wanders o'er,
And sighs to think they are no more.

Sunday 7 – I spent the forenoon at Christian Bowman's. I felt very unhappy in mind. I preached at 3 o'clock from Matthew 18:30. William Brandon gave an exhortation, and with William Brandon I lodged at my old friend Isaac Holloway's – where I suppose we spent half the night in conversation.

Monday 8 – I preached in Berwick, though with little freedom, from Matthew 7:21-23. Brother Brandon spoke after me. We dined at our good old sister Doan's, rode on back to Amos Park's in Salem, where we had a meeting, and spent the evening very agreeably.

Tuesday 9 – We rode from Salem to Andrew Blancher's,²⁸ and from Blancher's to Jeremiah Coleman's in Shawnee.

Wednesday 10 – We rode from Coleman's to Colonel Dennison's and dined with Alward White and Michael Wilson – then I rode on to James Sutton's. Thus have I got over the frontiers of Wyoming once more on my way to Tioga. Hard toiling I now expect.

Thursday 11 – I have had a long and tiresome ride over the Luzerne mountains from Sutton's to Humphrey Brown's tavern²⁹ – a disagreeable place. I had to lodge in a room with 3 or 4 vile wretches. As the company of such abominable beings is so disagreeable here on earth, what care ought to be taken to escape hell where they are much worse.

Friday 12 – I rode from Brown's to my old friend Cole's, where I believe they were glad to see me. O how much better it is to be here than where I was last night.

²⁷ This is assumed to be John Salmon (1751-1837), son of widow Salmon and brother to Joseph Salmon.

²⁸ Andrew Blancher lived in Huntington township, Luzerne County, and appears on the tax rolls for 1796. This may be the same person previously identified as Andrew Blanchard.

²⁹ This tavern was in Wyalusing. An announcement in the 8/7/1807 *Luzerne County Federalist* reads as follows: *The subscriber informs his friends and the public in general, that he has again opened A House of Entertainment, at his old Stand, two miles below the mouth of Wyalusing Creek. Having furnished himself with the best of Liquors and other accommodations, he hopes to obtain the patronage of the public, and will endeavor to give satisfaction to those who may call upon him. Humphrey BROWN, Springfield.*

Saturday 13 – I rode from Cole’s to my old friend Green’s at Sheshequin, dined, and rode to Daniel McDowell’s in Chemung – here I have severe exercise of mind.

Sunday 14 – I preached at my old friend Kress’ from I Corinthians 11:26 and administered the Lord’s Supper. Here the children were so noisy that I have not had much satisfaction in preaching.

Monday 15 – I rode thro’ a wilderness of about 18 miles on the east side of the Seneca Lake in company with a very conversable man by the name Landers.

[Colbert is now in the territory covered by Seneca circuit. His official duties start with a quarterly meeting and Love Feast on May 20-21 and end with a quarterly meeting and Love Feast on September 9-10. He stays in the area another day “to try to settle a disagreeable piece of business” and then departs back through the territory covered by the Tioga, Wyoming and Northumberland circuits on his way to Conference in Philadelphia.]

Wednesday 13 – We rode to Catharine Town and lodged at Thomas McClure’s. Here H. Jefferson³⁰ preached from Psalm 116:7 and I gave a word of exhortation after him.

I have traveled from the 20th of May until the 12th of September on Seneca circuit, in Ontario and Onondaga counties in the state of New York, among the lakes – Canandaigua, Honeoye, and the crooked lake west and southwest; and Cayuga, Owasco and Skaneateles east and northeast of the Seneca Lake. Hamilton Jefferson has been my colleague – a man high in the esteem of many of the people, who have been raised under a Calvinistic ministry, some who pretend to some knowledge of experimental religion, of which I will not say they are totally ignorant, but I am afraid there are but few that enjoy it. The Calvinistic system is a system of dangerous consequence. Some who joined us appear to be much alive to God. In many places there are to be found an ignorant people, and some of very excellent natural abilities. The face of the country is beautiful, and the land very fertile. The cattle grow to an enormous size – and tho’ plenty abounds* in the land, living is very bad. The [weeds] grow very large. The water is bad to wash, and disagreeable to drink. Truly I can say that my life has been since I have been in this country one of continuous toil.

*I have been credibly informed that 400 bushels of wheat have been reaped from 8 bushels of sowing.

Thursday 14 – We rode from Thomas McClure’s to our old friend Kress’ at Chemung.

³⁰ Hamilton Jefferson (1769-1821) was Colbert’s colleague on Seneca circuit. He was born in Calvert County MD, admitted on trial in 1793, and served until his death – attributed to cancer that could not be halted even by the surgical removal of his eye. His obituary is given in the 1822 General Minutes.

Friday 15 – At Daniel McDowell's we fell in with Anning Owen and rode on to our friend Green's in Sheshequin, where we were kindly received and lodged all night.

Saturday 16 – We attended a quarterly meeting at Henry Salisbury's³¹ at Towanda. Hamilton Jefferson preached from II Samuel 14:14. I preached after him from Psalm 84:11. Brother Owen concluded the meeting. I lodged with my old friend and fellow traveler Elisha Cole at Gideon Baldwin's – where I spoke on the subject of prayer. Brother Cole gave a long exhortation after me.

Sunday 17 – I believe the Lord was among us before our Love Feast broke up. We had three sermons. I preached from I Thessalonians 5:17, Hamilton Jefferson preached from Romans 6:17, and Elisha Cole from John 3:14-15. Brother [Owen] concluded the meeting – and I say this day's labour of love will not be in vain in the Lord.

Monday 18 – I spent part of this day with Hamilton Jefferson and Anning Owen at Solomon Franklin's³² (I am now on the banks of the Susquehanna) and in the afternoon came to Samuel Cole's.³³

Tuesday 19 – I visited an old man by the name of Mann, at whose house I used to lodge when I traveled in Wyoming and was treated well. He appears to be near his long home, and happy in the Lord. In the evening the Lord was with us in a prayer meeting at Solomon Cole's.³⁴

Wednesday 20 – I spent the day at Samuel Cole's, writing.

Thursday 21 – I went with Elisha Cole to Black Walnut Bottom and preached at a Baptist meeting house from Acts 16:30-31. Brother Jefferson gave an exhortation. We lodged at a kind old Baptist preacher's house – a man by the name of Sturdivant,³⁵ or something like it, who married one of our friends. I believe he enjoys religion. We spent the evening in agreeable conversation.

³¹ Henry Salisbury (c1740-1821) was born near Boston MA, married Catharine Head of Nine Partners NY, and settled at Kinderhook NY – where his children attended school with Martin Van Buren. At a public celebration over the capture of General Cornwallis, while loading a cannon, he had his right hand shot off. In 1797 he purchased 1000 acres south of Towanda from the Cole family. Described as a "handsome old gentleman of a sunny disposition with a fondness for little folks and a faithful and consistent Methodist," he is buried in the Cole Cemetery.

³² Solomon Franklin lived north of Towanda, his father Jehiel Franklin (1750-1821) being one of the area's earliest settlers. He moved to Canada with his father in 1804 and died there about 1811.

³³ Samuel Cole is the father of Elisha Cole.

³⁴ Solomon Cole is the grandfather of Elisha Cole.

³⁵ Samuel Sturdevant (1741-1828) moved from Connecticut to Black Walnut Bottom in 1792, preached Baptist theology, and eventually founded what is now the Braintrim Baptist Church in Laceyville.

Friday 22 – We rode to James Sutton’s, where we were kindly received and well entertained.

Saturday 23 – On my way to quarterly meeting at Gilbert Carpenter’s,³⁶ I stopped to get my horse shod – and left my saddlebags at the shop. Tho’ I got down to tie up my great coat, I never missed them until I was going to take them off at the meeting. Hamilton Jefferson preached from Romans 12:1, I preached after him from Judges 3:10, and Michael Wilson (a young man who traveled on Tioga until thro’ hardships he became an invalid) gave an exhortation after me. At night Elisha Cole preached from Luke 10:11 and brothers Waller, Bidlack, Owen and Williams exhorted.

Sunday 24 – We had a profitable Love Feast in Esq. Carpenter’s house, which was succeeded by three sermons. I preached first from John 3:16, and brother Jefferson from I Samuel 12:23-24, and brother Elisha Cole from Ephesians 5:25-27. The sacrament was then administered, and brother Wilson gave an exhortation and concluded the meeting. I lodged with Elisha Cole at Aaron Dean’s. This day my heart sank within me, at the remembrance of times that are passed and at hearing at the misfortune of poor William Brandon who has been employed as a traveling preacher by Thomas Ware our presiding elder. Lord preserve me.

Monday 25 – I preached in Wilkes-Barre, though not with much freedom, from Amos 4:12, and lodged at the widow Johnson’s.

Tuesday 26 – We started from Wilkes-Barre for Philadelphia. A man by the name of Moody fell in with us. As he appeared to be a decent man, we meant to use him with good manners, but we soon found he was a Deist. I was pestered with him for several miles before brother Jefferson was kind enough to take him off my hands. We put up at one Sox’s³⁷ at Tobyhanna.

[This chapter ends with Colbert and his companions on their way to the Conference scheduled for October 10 in Philadelphia, where they would receive their new appointments.]

³⁶ Gilbert Carpenter (1743-1823) was a millwright and in 1790 built the first grist mill at what was commonly known as Shoemaker’s mill. Among the most active and influential early Methodists in the Wyoming Valley, he was a local preacher and the organizer of what became the Carverton class. He was admitted on trial in 1801 and served one year on Northumberland circuit – which apparently was his only year of formal itinerancy. He moved to Delaware County OH about 1808, where he and his nephew Benjamin Carpenter Jr established and supplied Methodist congregations.

³⁷ George Sox (1775-1828) was born in New Jersey and came to Tobyhanna about 1797. He built a hotel and tavern where today’s PA 155 crosses Tobyhanna Creek, just south of the present town of Blakeslee. Soon there was a community of about ten houses and a school – once known as Soxville, but now as Fern Ridge. He is one of the founding members of the Blakeslee Methodist Church. His children adapted the surname to “Sax.”

Chapter 7 1798-99 Wyoming Circuit

[The 1797 General Minutes state that William Colbert and William P. Chandler were appointed to Chester and Strasburg circuits respectively. Either Colbert was re-assigned at mid-year to Strasburg, or the circuits were combined into one – as they were in 1799 when Colbert was assigned to “Chester and Strasburg” circuit. At the June 5, 1798, conference in Philadelphia, William Colbert was re-assigned. This chapter begins with Colbert traveling to his new appointment on Wyoming circuit.]

Monday, August 13, 1798 – I rode from Samuel Jones’¹ through Cornwall and Hummelstown to Middletown. I preached at night from Mark 16:15-16 with a degree of freedom and lodged at the widow Scott’s.

Tuesday 14 – I have at last bid adieu to Strasburg circuit. It is something like going out of Paradise, when compared to where I am going. Before I got to Harrisburg I was overtaken in a great fall of rain. I stopped at an inn in Harrisburg, to dine, where I saw Thomas Burrell of Halifax. He persuaded me to wait for him, until I felt that those who wait for him will stand in need of patience. It was night before we got to his house in Halifax, where I lodged – and I found it not very agreeable.

Wednesday 15 – From Halifax it took me until the night to get to Mrs. Taggart’s in Northumberland.

Thursday 16 – I rode from Northumberland to Joseph Ogden’s.

Friday 17 – I rode to John Hunlock’s² (where Andrew Blanchard formerly lived) and was treated well there.

Saturday 18 – I rode to Darius Williams’ in Kingston, on Wyoming circuit, where I held a quarterly meeting.³ Thomas Ware⁴ preached from Isaiah 54:5-8. Leach⁵,

¹ Samuel Jones was local pastor living in Springfield, Chester County PA.

² This is assumed to be Jonathan Hunlock Jr, stepson of Andrew Blanchard (see the footnote for 12/6/1793).

³ This Wyoming circuit quarterly meeting was Colbert’s first responsibility on his new assignment. But following the meeting he assists on Northumberland circuit for four weeks before returning to his own work.

⁴ In 1798 Ware was superintendent of a district mostly in Pennsylvania that included 7 circuits: Cecil MD, Wilmington and Newport DE, Philadelphia, Strasburg and Chester, Bristol, Wyoming and Northumberland.

Lackey⁶ and myself spoke after him. At night I preached to a full congregation from Romans 10:13. I had not much liberty in speaking. Brother [Ware] spoke after me and lodged with me at Squire Pierce's.

Sunday 19 – The morning we had an excellent Love Feast. One or two professed to get converted. Thomas Ware (after the Love Feast) preached an excellent sermon from Proverbs 23:23. Leach, Lackey and I exhorted after him.

Monday 20 – We rode from Darius Williams' to our old friend Coleman's in Shawnee, where Thomas Ware preached at night from Matthew 11:16-17. I spoke for a little while after him.

Tuesday 21 – We rode to Salem.⁷ Leach and Lackey lodged at old friend Park's, and Ware and myself at William Brandon's.

Wednesday 22 – Thomas Ware preached at Park's from Psalm 146:6. I exhorted after him. There appeared to be some life among the people.

Thursday 23 – We rode to Christian Bowman's – where we were kindly received, treated well, and got some rest.

Friday 24 – Brother Ware preached at Christian Bowman's from Luke 13:23-25. I exhorted after him.

Saturday 25 – We commenced our quarterly meeting for Northumberland circuit. Thomas Ware preached from Matthew 6:33. Leach and myself exhorted after him. Some were in rapture, others much engaged, and one woman professed to get converted. At night I preached from Amos 4:12. There was life among the people.

Sunday 26 – This morning we held a Love Feast. Some rejoiced in the Lord, after which we repaired to the Presbyterian meeting house where brother Ware preached from II Corinthians 6:17-18 and the first verse of chapter 7. Lackey, Leach and myself exhorted after him. There were a number of very ill-behaved people at this place, and some that behaved very well. After the meeting, I parted

⁵ John Leach was assigned with John Lackey to Northumberland circuit in 1798. He had just been admitted the previous year, was not a physically strong person, and served five different circuits in 5 years before dying in 1802. His obituary is given in the General Minutes for 1803. It may have been his inexperience and physical condition that led Colbert to supplement the work on Northumberland circuit.

⁶ John Lackey was assigned with John Leach to Northumberland circuit in 1798. He was received on trial in 1795, and his name disappears from the records subsequent to his appointment in 1799 to Lancaster VA.

⁷ Salem is on Northumberland circuit. Colbert now begins a four week round (August 21 to September 18) on Northumberland circuit.

with the preachers and rode to William Pegg's in company with friends Coleman, Doan and his daughter.

Monday 27 – I came home with friend Coleburn. I felt much fatigued.

Tuesday 28 – I spent the day at Jonathan Coleburn's, where I wrote some.

Wednesday 29 – I preached at Thomas Hamilton's⁸ from II Corinthians 6:2. I hope some received benefit. At night I preached at John Alward's with freedom from Luke 10:42 on "One thing is needful." I lodged at Jonathan Coleburn's.

Thursday 30 – I preached at Abraham Swisher's from Colossians 2:6, and here I think are the most extravagant shouters I ever met with.

Friday 31 – I spent the greater part of this day at Abraham Swisher's, and in the afternoon I rode to Peter Kunkle's.

Saturday, September 1, 1798 – I preached at Peter Kunkle's with some satisfaction from Amos 8:6. But when I came to meet the class of only 5 members, I found they were absent. They were called in, and when they came in all was turned into confusion. The people in the next room could hear us plainly. I was really shamed of them – and I thought it my duty, in justice to the cause of religion, to tell the people they need not to expect preaching again. Tho' I had made an appointment, I thought it best to recall it. It was night before I got to Amariah Sutton's.

Sunday 2 – I preached to a few people at Sutton's in the forenoon from I Thessalonians 5:7, and in the afternoon at Henry Thomas's⁹ from Luke 10:42. I expect I should have had more people to preaching today if the Presbyterians had not have had the sacrament at Lycoming, near Sutton's.

Monday 3 – As there were but four or five at the widow Baird's,¹⁰ I gave an exhortation. I am informed that a number of people in this neighborhood are afflicted with the ague.

⁸ Thomas Hamilton was a member of the Muncy class.

⁹ Henry Thomas (1731-1807) was, according to Charles Berkheimer, "one of the most influential men of his day in the West Branch Valley, both in the church and in the community." He was born in Germany, came to America and settled in Philadelphia, served in the Revolutionary War, and then removed to Larry's Creek – where he erected an iron furnace, a forge, and a blacksmith's shop – and was killed Near Linden in a fall from his horse. His son John Thomas (1783-1867) and step-son George Thomas were effective itinerant preachers in the area.

¹⁰ William Baird (1713-1792) was born in New Jersey and secured 218 acres just east of Liberty in 1785. This was where his widow hosted Colbert. William's son Benjamin Baird married Frances Siggins from Ireland, where her parents were friends of John Wesley – whom she heard preach in her home. Rev. William Baird, the son of Benjamin and Frances, graduated from Allegheny

Tuesday 4 – I rode to Christopher Helford's¹¹ and preached at Peter Jones's¹² on Isaiah 55:6-7. This day I felt my want of resignation.

Wednesday 5 – I preached at Christopher Helford's from II Peter 3:18 and met the class. At night, after riding a distance, I preached from Acts 3:19 – where, had it not been for the hideous barking of so many dogs, good might have been done, for I thought I should have had great satisfaction in preaching.

Thursday 6 – I preached at William Young's from Amos 5:6 with freedom, and held a prayer meeting at night.

Friday 7 – I preached at Robert Pennington's from I Peter 4:18.

Saturday 8 – I had a long and tiresome ride from Pennington's in Penn's Valley to William Heddens's in Buffalo Valley.

Sunday 9 – Thro' grace I was enabled to preach with freedom and power at Hedden's from Amos 4:12. The people were very attentive, and some of them were affected. In the afternoon I preached at Benjamin Thompson's from Matthew 10:3. The congregation was large – and stupid. It was about 6 years in June last since I first preached in this neighborhood – and now there are only four men joined in a society.

Monday 10 – I preached at Philip Stahl's from Luke 16:30-31. John Leach gave an exhortation and met the class.

Tuesday 11 – I visited Thomas Rees near Lewisburg, or Derrstown, on the west bank of the Susquehanna. When I traveled here in 1792 I used to preach here every four weeks. There is no preaching here now. They kindly received me, and treated me well.

Wednesday 12 – I tried to preach at night at Nicholas Egbert's¹³ from Hebrews 2:1, but the noise of the children was so interrupting that I had but little satisfaction in speaking.

College, was ordained in the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and became editor of *The Episcopal Methodist* in Baltimore MD. William Baird is buried in the Dunnstown Cemetery.

¹¹ Christopher Helford and his wife were 2 of the first class of 6 formed at Philip Antes'. They settled in Bald Eagle in 1786, a year before Antes. The 1801 Northumberland circuit steward's book lists Antes' and Helford's as two separate classes, and the April 1802 entry lists the class as "widow Helford's."

¹² Peter Jones was a miller who erected a sawmill near Howard after the Revolutionary War. He later became a local preacher and then an itinerant, serving in the Genesee Conference 1813-1821 and the Canada Conference 1821-33 before joining the Wesleyan Conference (i.e., the British Methodist Church).

¹³ Nicholas Egbert was the keeper of the steward's book for Northumberland circuit. He and his brother John later moved to Union County, where they died and are buried.

Thursday 13 – Three people came to Webster Winn’s.¹⁴ I prayed with them and gave them a word of exhortation.

Friday 14 – I preached at John Egbert’s from I Thessalonians 5:17. I endeavored by divine assistance to stir them up in class meeting, and I have a hope that I succeeded in the attempt.

Saturday 15 – I rode to Robert Owen’s and spent part of the evening with good old mother Salmon.

Sunday 16 – I preached with freedom at Joseph Ogden’s from Mark 16:15-16. Thomas Bowman gave an exhortation. In the afternoon I heard John Lackey preach at Christian Bowman’s a part of a sermon. I exhorted after him, and we had here a happy class meeting.

Monday 17 – After spending part of the day at Thomas Bowman’s, I rode to William Brandon’s in Salem.

Tuesday 18 – I preached at my old friend Coleman’s in Shawnee¹⁵ from Acts 16:25 on “Do thyself no harm.” Here we had a good class meeting, and a prayer meeting at night.

Wednesday 19 – I crossed the mountain from Shawnee with sisters Holley¹⁶ and Hodge¹⁷ and preached at Eben Russell’s in Bedford¹⁸ from Isaiah 55:6. Here we had a happy class meeting.

Thursday 20 – I spent the day at Samuel Holley’s reading the *Life of Baron Trenck*,¹⁹ who suffered ten years imprisonment in a dungeon at Madgeburg.

¹⁴ Webster Winn at this time lived in Chillisquaque township. Like many other pioneers in whose homes Colbert preached or lodged, he must have been a tenant farmer who had not yet become settled – for the tax lists indicate that he moved frequently.

¹⁵ Shawnee [Plymouth] is on Wyoming circuit. Colbert has now returned to the circuit to which he was formally assigned.

¹⁶ Mrs. Samuel Holley was the former Millicent Coleman, daughter of the oft-mentioned Jeremiah Coleman. Samuel Holley had been in the area at least since 1794, when records show he purchased 11 acres. A public sale of “horses, cattle, swine, and household furniture” was advertised by Samuel Holley in June 1800 – suggesting the Holleys may have been preparing to move out of the area.

¹⁷ Mrs. William Hodge was the former Sarah Coleman, daughter of the oft-mentioned Jeremiah Coleman. William Hodge had been in the area at least since 1790, when his name appears in the 1790 census.

¹⁸ Bedford is Trucksville.

¹⁹ Baron Frederick von der Trenck (1726-1794) was a Prussian army officer and adventurer who had a remarkable life of military experiences and imprisonments before his death by guillotine. The book Colbert was reading was his autobiography, written during one of the calmer periods near the end of his life.

Friday 21 – I rode to Aaron Dean’s in Kingston and preached at night at a schoolhouse near Colonel Dennison’s from Amos 5:6.

Saturday 22 – I rode to James Rice’s – where I spent part of the afternoon in writing, and the evening in reading.

Sunday 23 – I preached at Darius Williams’ from Malachi 3:16-18, and in the afternoon at Carpenter’s from Mark 16:15-16.

Monday 24 – I took my book and went to James Sutton’s saw mill trough, where I sat down and tried to read – but I fell into a sleep out of which I did not wake until half after 3 o’clock – half an hour after the time. Then I was so stupefied that it was with difficulty I made out to preach from Matthew 18:3. However weary, tired or sleepy I may feel, it is best for me to work by exercise than to allow myself to sleep in the day.

Tuesday 25 – I rode from James Sutton’s to Joseph Waller’s (at Capoose, or Providence) and preached. I lodged at Daniel Taylor’s.²⁰

Wednesday 26 – A day of trouble. After a long ride I got to Jesse Gardner’s,²¹ where there were but 5 members who began to quarrel as soon as they came together. They got into much confusion. I had to expel 4 of them.

Thursday 27 – I dined at Wilkes-Barre, rode on to Elijah Inman’s,²² and preached from Psalm 19:11.

Friday 28 – I spoke a little at Bennett’s from Matthew 25:13 and lodged at Reeder’s²³ in Newport. This Newport is a disagreeable place.

Saturday 29 – I have thought myself well off in finding a better road down from Wyoming to Salem²⁴ than I ever found before. I dined at William Brandon’s and lodged at Amos Park’s.

²⁰ Palmer states that Daniel Taylor lived in Providence, while Peck gives the location as “below Hyde Park”. Colbert seems to use Capoose (or Providence) to refer to a large area that includes the present areas of both Providence and Hyde Park. It appears that both Joseph Waller and Daniel Taylor lived in what is now known as Hyde Park.

²¹ Jesse Gardner lived in Plains.

²² Elijah Inman (1715-1804) of Buttonwood [Hanover] is the father of the previously mentioned Richard Inman and of the Elijah Inman killed in the Wyoming massacre.

²³ Benjamin Reeder (1769-1840) was born in Hunterdon County NJ and died in Trumbull County OH.

²⁴ Colbert is back on Northumberland circuit for another round (September 29 to October 29). Given the imprecision of the General Minutes, and the fact that “Wyoming and Northumberland” is listed as a single three-man circuit in the 1799 General Minutes, the most likely scenario is that the two circuits were actually a single circuit at this point in time.

Sunday 30 – I preached at Park’s from I Thessalonians 5:17 and in the afternoon at Christian Bowman’s from Psalm 84:11. Here we had a happy class meeting.

Monday, October 1, 1798 – John Leach and I had a day of rest at Christian Bowman’s.

Tuesday 2 – I preached at William Rogers’ near Roaring Creek from Hebrews 2:3. At night a few came out, and I gave an exhortation.

Wednesday 3 – I preached at Shrontz’s²⁵ from Colossians 6:2 and lodged at Peter Hoffman’s.²⁶

Thursday 4 – I preached at Olp’s²⁷ from I Corinthians 6:19-20. These are agreeable people.

Friday 5 – I rode to Sunbury, dined with David Davis, and rode out to Jacob Depew’s. Here I found noise of children (old enough to be made to know to do better) so unsufferable that I had to leave the house once or twice in the night to get out of the racket.

Saturday 6 – I was glad this morning to go away from my friend Jacob Depew’s to David Davis’ in Sunbury. Here I enjoyed myself very well.

Sunday 7 – I preached in Sunbury in a schoolhouse²⁸ from Luke 13:5, after which I went to the Presbyterian meeting house²⁹ and heard part of Mr. Morrison’s³⁰ sermon. At night I preached in Northumberland from Matthew 18:3 and lodged at Mary Taggart’s.

²⁵ Peter Shrontz (1767-1851) was a mason living in Shamokin township at least since 1792. Berkheimer notes that he is listed as an original trustee on two Northumberland County Methodist Episcopal church deeds: 6/23/1820 in Shamokin township, and 6/5/1833 in Augusta township.

²⁶ Peter Hoffman was a neighbor of Peter Shrontz in Shamokin township.

²⁷ In 1798, Micahel Olp (c1775-c1824) was a tenant farmer in Shamokin township. In 1802 he purchased land in Shamokin township. Berkheimer notes that an 1833 deed describes (Book Y, page 520) Methodist Episcopal church property as adjoining “land of the late Michael Olp, deceased.” This surname us also rendered “Ulp.”

²⁸ The schoolhouse was erected on lot 136, at the northeast corner of present Arch and Center Street, purchased for such purpose in 1796 (Book I, page 173). The Methodist church was later erected on adjacent lot 135 on Arch (then Dewberry) Street.

²⁹ The Presbyterian church was two blocks from the schoolhouse. It was a union log building erected by the Presbyterian and Reformed congregations in 1794 at the corner of Second and Chestnut Streets (then, Blackberry and River Streets). The Presbyterians sold their interests to Reformed congregation in 1841 and the latter later erected a modern church building at the site.

³⁰ Presbyterian Rev. Hugh Morrison (1728-1804), originally licensed in Ireland, was installed as pastor of Buffalo, Sunbury and Northumberland in 1788.

Monday 8 – I rode from Northumberland to Philip Stahl’s. Brother Lackey had preached, and he was meeting the class when I got there.

Tuesday 9 – I had but three out at Caleb Farley’s, besides the family, to whom I read part of the fifth chapter of Matthew, gave a word of exhortation, sung, prayed, and concluded the meeting.

Wednesday 10 – I dined at John Farley’s and rode to Jacob Snyder’s.³¹ I did not preach, as but two or three were out beside the family.

Thursday 11 – I preached at Abraham Swisher’s to a large congregation from Mark 16:15-16 and administered the Lord’s Supper.

Friday 12 – I preached at Thomas Hamilton’s from Acts 3:19 and heard that some of the society from Black Hole disturbed some of the society at Muncy.

Saturday 13 – I rode to Amariah Sutton’s at Lycoming.

Sunday 14 – I preached at Sutton’s from Amos 5:6, and in the afternoon at Larry’s Creek at Henry Thomas’ from Mark 16:15-16.

Monday 15 – I rode to widow Beard’s near the Big Island, but it being the day of the battalion being received, none were out in the day. And at night so few were out that I did not preach.

Tuesday 16 – I preached at Peter Jones’ from Acts 16:30-31 and lodged at Christopher Helford’s.

Wednesday 17 – I preached at Christopher Helford’s from Job 22:21 and at night at Philip Antes’ from I Peter 4:18. Here a woman cried aloud. I suppose some people here thought of this very strange.

Thursday 18 – I preached at William Young’s from Colossians 2:6. I expect the training kept some away. At night we held a prayer meeting.

Friday 19 – I preached to a few people at Robert Pennington’s from John 5:6 on “Wilt thou be made whole.”

Saturday 20 – I rode from Robert Pennington’s to James Hedden’s.

Sunday 21 – I preached at William Hedden’s from Matthew 12:44-45 and in the afternoon at Benjamin Thompson’s from Psalm 88:10. I have had some

³¹ Jacob Snyder lived where the village of Elimsport now stands.

satisfaction in preaching today. I lodged with Mishael Lincoln³² and was treated with great kindness.

Monday 22 – I preached at Philip Stahl's (where brother Leach met me) from Colossians 2:6.

Tuesday 23 – I rode to Nicholas Egbert's and to William Search's. Three or four were out at Search's. I gave them an exhortation after singing and prayer.

Wednesday 24 – I preached at Nicholas Egbert's from Psalm 19:11.

Thursday 25 – I preached at night at Webster Wynn's from Mark 15:15-16, but met with not much satisfaction.

Friday 26 – A remarkably warm day. I preached to a small sleepy congregation at John Egbert's from Romans 6:1 and lodged at Samuel Emmett's.

Saturday 27 – I rode to Joseph Ogden's. We have had a cold rain today.

Sunday 28 – I preached at Joseph Ogden's from II Peter 3:18 to a sleepy congregation. In the afternoon I met the class with satisfaction at Christian Bowman's, and at night I preached at Bowman's from Psalm 88:10. Many were brought to cry, and some professed to find the Lord. It was a joyful time.

Monday 29 – Very cold. I rode from Bowman's to Amos Park's in Salem.

Tuesday 30 – I rode to Benjamin Reeder's in Newport³³ expecting to hold meeting at night, but a few met before night and went away before I came.

Wednesday 31 – I called at Elijah Inman's expecting to preach, but none came out. I rode to Wilkes-Barre, and to Jesse Gardner's, where I preached at night from Psalm 84:11. Here a man placed himself right before me and began to nod. This is always very interrupting to me. But this nodder was very full of talk about religion when the service was over. Snow at night.

³² Mishael (pronounced "My-shall") Lincoln (1761-1849) was one of the more prominent citizens of East Buffalo township, now Union County. His father Thomas Lincoln had been killed by Indians, and his grandfather Mordecai Lincoln was the great-grandfather of Abraham Lincoln. In 1798 he had just moved into his new stone house one mile east of Mifflinburg. Although a 1791 pew holder (#18) in the Buffalo Valley Presbyterian Church, he became a devout Methodist. Likely the prime mover in the organization of the Mifflinburg class, he was one of the original trustees of the log church erected by the Methodists in Mifflinburg in 1803. Mishael Lincoln was married to Rachel Thompson, daughter of the previously mentioned John Thompson and a sister to Benjamin Thompson. Their son John Lincoln (1782-1862) gave the land for Lincoln Chapel UMC, one mile west of Laurelton.

³³ Colbert is now on Wyoming circuit.

Thursday, November 1, 1798 – I rode thro' the snow to Daniel Taylor's and preached to a few of the society from Matthew 18:15-18. Here a drunken man took the attention of some of the people.

Friday 2 – I rode to James Sutton's.

Saturday 3 – I rode to Colonel Dennison's.

Sunday 4 – I preached at a schoolhouse near Colonel Dennison's (tho' not with much satisfaction) from Matthew 24:42, and in the afternoon at Darius Williams' (with satisfaction) from Isaiah 3:10-11, and at night at William George's in Wilkes-Barre from Colossians 2:6 with freedom. Here Mrs. Hollenback was kind enough to invite me to lodge at her house, as our friend George is a poor man. She appears to be a Christian woman and treated me with much civility.

Monday 5 – I came to Samuel Holley's. Here I found John Lackey confined to his bed.

Tuesday 6 – I crossed the mountain back of Shawnee and went into Bedford expecting to preach, but as but two women came to hear I only sung a hymn, prayed with them, and returned to Shawnee.

Wednesday 7 – I preached at Jeremiah Coleman's from I Corinthians 6:19-20. We have cause to be thankful – we had a good meeting.

Thursday 8 – I rode to Andrew Blanchard's in the new settlement of Huntington.³⁴

Friday 9 – I rode thro' Huntington (and found it to be a better settlement than I expected) to Isaac Holloway's.

Saturday 10 – I rode to Amos Park's in Salem.

Sunday 11 – I preached at Park's from Matthew 5:16. It was a good time, and in the afternoon I rode to Christian Bowman's and heard John Leach preach a powerful sermon from Matthew 5:3. I gave an exhortation after him.

Monday 12 – I rode with brother Leach to William Rogers'.

Tuesday 13 – I rode to our friend Shrontz's. Here Leach preached at night from II Corinthians 6:1. I gave an exhortation after him – we had a good meeting.

Wednesday 14 – We returned to Roaring Creek. I preached at Rogers' from Acts 3:19. A friend by the name of Ryerson gave an exhortation, and we had a good time.

³⁴ Colbert is now back in Northumberland circuit territory.

Thursday 15 – We came up to Ogden’s. Here Leach preached from Habakkuk 3:2. I exhorted after him.

Friday 16 – I preached at Christian Bowman’s from Luke 12:32. It was a time of happiness to be remembered. Sally Stackhouse,³⁵ Christian Bowman’s wife’s sister, who had long been in distress under conviction, got converted.

Saturday 17 – An unfavorable day for our quarterly meeting, which we held at Salem at Amos Park’s. Thomas Ware preached from Hebrews 11:13. Bidlack preached from Isaiah 42:11 – “Let the inhabitants of the rock sing.” Brandon, Waller, Williams and Leach spoke after him. Brandon’s was a very well connected discourse – but in my opinion, very unseasonable and subject to criticism.

Sunday 18 – I have had but little satisfaction in the Love Feast this morning. Brother Ware preached from Proverbs 12:15. Brother Bidlack spoke after him, and I concluded the meeting. At night, brother Ware preached at Christian Bowman’s from Psalm 146:8 – “The Lord loveth the righteous.” Brother Leach and myself spoke after him. This has been a better meeting to me than the quarterly meeting.

Monday 19 – I have had an unpleasant ride with my friends Ware and Leach thro’ the rain to Northumberland.

Tuesday 20 – We rode to Benjamin Thompson’s.

Wednesday 21 – I heard brother Ware preach at Benjamin Thompson’s from Matthew 10:34-38 and administered the sacrament. Ware then left us and proceeded down to Northumberland, and Leach and I came to James Hedden’s.

Thursday 22 – We rode to Robert Pennington’s.

Friday 23 – I preached at Robert Pennington’s from II Peter 1:10 – “If ye do these things ye shall never fall.”

Saturday 24 – We began our quarterly meeting at William Young’s in Nittany. Jacob Calvert³⁶ preached the first sermon from Romans 16:20. John Leach and I spoke after him. At night we held a prayer meeting at our friend Graham’s.

³⁵ Christian Bowman married Rebecca Stackhouse (1762-1857). Her younger sister Sarah [Sally] Stackhouse (1764-1788) never married.

³⁶ Jacob Calvert was admitted on trial in 1795, was ordained a deacon in 1799, and located in 1800. His surname name appears more often in Methodist records as Colbert than as Calvert, but it may be assumed that William Colbert would not have misstated in his journal a surname identical to his own.

Sunday 25 – We held a Love Feast and administered the sacrament. I preached from I Corinthians 6:19-20. Jacob Calvert preached from Luke 18:26 – “Who then can be saved?” John Leach concluded the meeting. From the appearance of things I expect that general satisfaction was given, tho’ we had no presiding elder, and if any good has been done may the Lord have all the glory.

Monday 26 – I rode to Philip Antes’.

Tuesday 27 – I spent the day very agreeably in a room by myself at Antes’ – the first time I have had a room to myself since I have been in the circuit.

Wednesday 28 – I rode to Christopher Helford’s, but few met. I gave a short exhortation, met the class, and returned to Antes’ and preached at night from Hebrews 2:3. Here they made the room so intolerably hot that the congregation got so restless that I had but very little satisfaction while preaching to them.

Thursday 29 – I preached at William Young’s from Luke 19:10 and rode to Robert Pennington’s.

Friday 30 – I preached at Robert Pennington’s from Hebrews 13:1.

Saturday, December 1, 1798 – I rode to William Hedden’s. Here I am informed that there had been a great fall of snow down in the country near Philadelphia.

Sunday 2 – I preached at William Hedden’s from Hebrews 2:3 and rode to Benjamin Thompson’s.

Monday 3 – I preached at Philip Stahl’s from Malachi 3:15-18. John Leach met the class.

Tuesday 4 – Very cold and windy. On my way to William Search’s I called at Thomas Rees’ and widow Rees’.

Wednesday 5 – Very clear and very cold. I exhorted at Tunis Egbert’s.³⁷

Thursday 6 – I preached at night at Webster Wynn’s from Hebrews 2:3. It may be the snowing in the day prevented some from coming.

Friday 7 – I rode to John Egbert’s where so few were out that I did not preach.

Saturday 8 – I rode to the widow Salmon’s.

Sunday 9 – A snowy, uncomfortable day. I preached at Joseph Ogden’s from Psalm 8:4, and in the evening at Christian Bowman’s from I Corinthians 6:19-20. I have cause to be thankful for the good meeting today.

³⁷ Tunis Egbert (b. 1767) is a younger brother of the previously mentioned Egbert brothers: John, James and Nicholas.

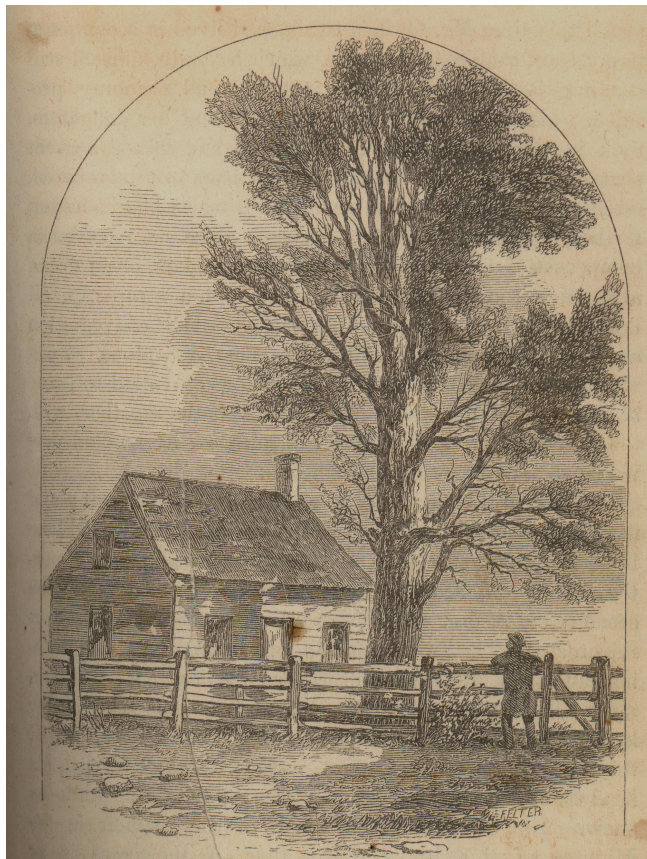
Saturday 10 – I rode to Amos Park's in Salem.

Tuesday 11 – I forded the Susquehanna below Lee's ferry and broke a track thro' the woods about 5 miles (a very fatiguing time I had) to Benjamin Reeder's in Newport. It is a wretched place. I could scarcely get a feed of grain for my poor tired horse.

Wednesday 12 – On my way to Jesse Gardner's I called at Wilkes-Barre – where I unexpectedly saw John Lackey, who had been sick.

Thursday 13 – I rode from Jesse Gardner's to Daniel Taylor's in Providence and preached from I Corinthians 13:13.

[Colbert's journal for the next several months is missing. The journal is actually composed of several books, each covering about two years. The December 13, 1798, entry completed a book. The next surviving book picks up several months (but not the usual two years or so) later with Colbert on his 1799 appointment, Chester & Strasburg circuit. The most likely explanation is that Colbert started a new book on December 14, 1798, and then lost it several months later.]



Anning Owen's Cottage
from Peck's 1860 *Early Methodism*

Chapter 8

1802-03

Albany District (Tioga Circuit portions)

[The Albany District of the Philadelphia Conference consisted of ten circuits. As superintendent, Colbert was responsible for general oversight of the itinerants assigned to these circuits and to hold quarterly meetings on each of the circuits. Tioga was one of those ten circuits. Wyoming and Northumberland circuits were in the Philadelphia District of the Philadelphia Conference. Tioga circuit included area in both Pennsylvania and New York. This chapter gives the portions of Colbert's journal that relate to his Tioga travels in and immediately adjacent to Pennsylvania.]

Thursday, July 29, 1802 – I rode from Horseheads to Mr. Curry's¹ on Queen Esther's Flats – they have withdrawn from society. On my journey, I called on Daniel McDowell's on Chenango circuit. Daniel was not at home. His wife, whom I had not seen for five years, was at home and treated me kindly. This woman I believe still has the fear of God before her eyes, and I believe she would make a bright member of our Church if her husband were not such a miserable drunkard. And he when sober is a very agreeable man – and has been under awakening and been a member of our society.

Friday 30 – I had a disagreeable ride thro' the rain from Queen Esther's Flats to Elisha Cole's. After dinner I walked to my old friend's from Sussex in Delaware, David Downing's. And alas! What did my eyes behold! Poor sister Downing, a woman very tenderly brought up, was lying on a poor mean bed in a poor cabin on the banks of the Susquehanna. About 5 years ago they moved into this country thinking to better themselves, but alas what an unpleasant reverse. In the evening I returned to Elisha Cole's. I do not know that Tioga has improved any from the time I came on in 1792 – except in the roads.

Saturday 31 – With brothers Osborn² and Booth³, we began our quarterly meeting at friend Tabor's⁴ barn in town, I preached from Colossians 2:6, and brothers

¹ James F. Curry (1775-1857) later moved to Tompkins County NY and is buried in the Quaker Settlement (Jacksonville) Cemetery a few miles northwest of Ithaca. He named a son Thornton Fleming Curry (1795-1887) after Thornton Fleming, who served Tioga circuit in 1793.

² Joseph Osborn (1767-1835) was the senior of two itinerants assigned to Tioga and Unadilla circuit. He was admitted on trial to the Philadelphia Conference in 1800 and because of frail health rotated between the itinerancy, serving as a supply, and being on leave. An obituary is given in the 1835 General Minutes.

³ Sharon Booth was the junior of two itinerants assigned to Tioga and Unadilla circuit. He was admitted on trial in 1802, and this was his first appointment. The following year he was assigned Seneca circuit, but after that he is no longer listed. He could be the Sharon Booth (1771-1845) of

Williams, Booth and Osborn exhorted. Nothing remarkable occurred. Brother Osborn returned with me to brother Cole's. In the evening we visited brother Downing, where we had a little prayer meeting – and the Lord was present.

Sunday, August 1, 1802 – This morning the Lord favored us with gracious showers both of rain and of his spirit. Several were brought on their knees to cry for mercy in the Love Feast. I thought it a pity that we could not continue praying with them on account of attending to the appointment to preach at 11 o'clock. However, so concerned were the distressed that after the Love Feast broke up they retired to the woods and spent some time on their knees on the damp ground in prayer to God – tho' I do not know whether they were brought into liberty or not. I preached from Luke 16:9. Brothers Cole, Booth and Osborn exhorted. I then baptized Benjamin Aikins,⁵ his wife, and several children of other people. I rode to Captain Clark's (where I used to preach 9 or 10 years ago when I traveled Tioga circuit) thro' an awful thunder shower which came on us in the mountains – the lightnings apparently setting the woods on flame, glistening on the falling rain. With the thunder roaring thro' the mountains, this afforded a scene of terror and delight. I am informed that it is a time of sickness and mortality here in old Sheshequin.

Monday 2 – I rode to friend Minier's⁶ on Queen Esther's Flats, stopped, took a little refreshment, prayed with them, and came on to Benjamin Aikins'. There we got dinner, prayed with them, and rode on to Andrew Alden's at Owego. We prayed there and rode on in company with Jesse Lamphear, a local preacher, to brother Wilcox's, another local preacher, where we lodged.

[Colbert continues through the New York portion of Tioga circuit and on to other circuits, returning to Pennsylvania in December.]

Thursday, December 30, 1802 – I rose early and rode from Andrew Alden's to Benjamin Aikins' before breakfast – and from Aikins' to Daniel Minier's, where I met brother Booth and preached at night from II Peter 1:8.

Friday 31 – I rode with brother Booth from Daniel Minier's to our friend

Ontario County NY, who was already married in 1802 and had a family – in which case two years of traveling may have convinced him of the incompatibility of marriage and itinerancy.

⁴ The Tabor barn was supposedly in Towanda, Bradford County PA.

⁵ Benjamin Aikins lived in Barton, Tioga County NY, where he was instrumental in organizing a Methodist class about 1805 and became its first local preacher.

⁶ Daniel Minier (1749-1822) was the son of the original German immigrant and the family surname appears in different forms (in Colbert's journal and in other documents) before settling on Minier. Other forms of the name include Minear, Mineer, Miner, and Miniger.

Campbell's⁷ on Sugar Creek. This Sugar Creek is a gloomy looking place. Here I wrote to Ephraim Chambers⁸ on Wyoming circuit.

Saturday, January 1, 1803 – May I begin this year to the glory of God. Our quarterly meeting commenced today on Sugar Creek, Tioga circuit. I preached from Matthew 7:21, and old brother Tabor rose up behind me and gave a lively exhortation. After him, a man rose up who had been reclaimed from a state of apostasy and gave an account of himself. After him, brother Osborn gave an exhortation and concluded. We lodged at Stephen Ballard's. Upon the whole, we have had a profitable waiting on the Lord today – glory to his holy name.

Sunday 2 – We had a blessed time this morning in the Love Feast. The Lord attended his word with power while I was preaching from Hebrews 12:14. Brother Williams gave a long exhortation. After him, brother Cole spoke on the subject of administering the sacrament – and at the administration of the sacrament the Lord favored us with a manifestation of his presence to the joy of the hearts of his people. We lodged at Stephen Ballard's.

Monday 3 – I had a tiresome cold ride from Sugar Creek to our friend Daniel Minier's, where we dined. We rode on to Tioga Point ferry, where it was with difficulty we got over on account of the ice. It was near dark when we got out of Village, and then I had to ride 8 miles and preach at Benjamin Aikins'. When I got there the congregation was small – but cold and fatigued as I was, I said something to them from Luke 13:5. These people are kind, almost to an extreme, and I believe they have religion – but my feelings have been very much hurt since I came to this place at seeing the fondness of a foolish mother. Flying to her husband when he was prudently correcting his child, she snatched the rod out of his hand, throwing it into the fire, crying and saying that a child 16 months old knew not what he was being corrected for. I very freely told her my opinion.

Tuesday 4 – I rode from Benjamin Aikins' to Andrew Alden's at Pipe Creek and preached from Matthew 18:3 to an attentive congregation. This has been a day of trial to me. Rustic parents and untutored children – a house full of such – more disagreeable to me than a wilderness at midnight swarming with screaming owls and howling wolves. Was it not for the love I believe God has given me for souls, I should prefer the life of a hermit to the very many disagreeable things I meet with in other people's houses.

⁷ Lieutenant James Campbell Sr (1739-1812), a native of Massachusetts and a veteran of the Revolutionary War, settled with his family in the wilderness along Sugar Creek in 1791. He had 5 sons and 6 daughters. James and his wife and several descendants are buried in the Campbell family cemetery west of Luthers Mills, Bradford County PA, in a field about 150 feet off Route 6.

⁸ Ephraim Chambers and William Brandon were the itinerants assigned to Wyoming circuit in 1802. He was admitted on trial in 1792 and had previously been appointed to Wyoming circuit with Anning Owen in 1800. Chambers traveled for 14 years and located in 1806. His daughter married Rev. Leonard Castle of the Baltimore Conference.

Chapter 9 1803-04 Genesee District (Tioga Circuit portions)

[The Genesee District of the Philadelphia Conference consisted of eleven circuits. As superintendent, Colbert was responsible for general oversight of the itinerants assigned to these circuits and to hold quarterly meetings on each of the circuits. Tioga was one of those eleven circuits. Wyoming and Northumberland circuits were in the Susquehanna District of the Philadelphia Conference. This chapter begins with the fourth and final quarterly conference on Tioga circuit and follows Colbert through Wyoming and Northumberland circuit territory on his way, via his home near Baltimore MD, to annual conference in Philadelphia to receive his new assignment]

Friday, February 24, 1804 – This day I rode from Jacob Kress' to Tioga Point – with a trembling heart, expecting to find in the post office a letter informing me of my father's death. But to my great satisfaction, I found one informing me of his recovery from affliction. I little expected this, which relieved my mind from a burden under which I have labored since the last of November last. From Tioga Point I rode to Daniel Minier's, dined and rode to Joseph Ballard's at Sugar Creek.

Saturday 25 – I am now at Joseph Ballard's at Sugar Creek, at my last quarterly meeting in the Genesee District on Tioga circuit. Elisha Cole preached from Psalm 126:1-3. John B. Hudson¹ exhorted. I exhorted after him, and brother Herron² concluded the meeting.

The conduct of Samuel Budd³ has hurt my mind. On a visit to St. Martins in Maryland I became acquainted with him (he was at that time stationed on that circuit) and formed a peculiar attachment unto him. He was not twenty-four years

¹ John B. Hudson (1770-1859) was a local elder active in church planting. He is the subject of the 1838 176-page book *Narrative of the Christian experience, travels and labors of John B. Hudson* – described as being “with notices of the introduction of Methodism into various sections of the state of New York” and “written by himself, with the assistance of a friend.”

² James Herron was one of the three itinerants appointed to Tioga circuit in 1803. Received on trial in 1799, he was presiding elder of the Susquehanna District in 1808 and located in 1814 – most likely to marry.

³ Samuel Budd (1784-1853) was born in New Jersey, admitted on trial in the Philadelphia Conference in 1802 and assigned to Broadkill in the Delaware and Eastern Shore District. In 1803, as stated by Colbert, he was assigned to Tioga in the Genesee District. Despite what happened as recorded by Colbert, Budd was appointed to Elizabethtown in the Jersey District in 1804, received into full membership in 1805, and continued to serve in the ministry. He appears to have located in 1814. He and his wife (whom other sources identify as Elizabeth Simpson) are buried in the Methodist cemetery in Pemberton NJ. Samuel Budd is a first cousin to Thomas Budd (1783-1810) of the Baltimore Conference.

of age, apparently very zealous, and had been useful, so that I desired the Bishop to let me have him in my District after he had appointed him to Ohio – which he readily complied with. And to Tioga circuit he was appointed and labored, I thought, faithfully and successfully with James Herron and John P. Weaver⁴, unto whom he appeared to be united in heart for the three quarterly meetings I visited them. Our third quarterly meeting we held at Randolph's, and a blessed season it was. On the Monday following I parted with them – after which Budd began his courtship with Liza Rose at Nanticoke⁵, a young woman who joined the society after he came into the circuit. He cut his business short (but, as one brother says, I fear not in righteousness) and promised to be married after a few days conversation on the subject. He got married and went off to the Jersey with his wife and left his business unsettled, so that he has lost my confidence. I look upon such men to be a disgrace to the ministry, and I should not wonder if the curse of God was to follow such men as would leave the work of God for the sake of a woman.

Sunday 26 – This morning we were blessed with a time of refreshment from the presence of the Lord at our Love Feast. John B. Hudson gave an exhortation and I preached after him from Colossians 2:6. John P. Weaver spoke after me, and James Herron gave us an excellent exhortation and concluded the meeting. At night, at the request of my good old mother Baldwin,⁶ I preached a farewell sermon at the house of friend Lawrence (who married a granddaughter of the old woman) from II Corinthians 13:11. John P. Weaver and James Herron exhorted and concluded the meeting.

Monday 27 – I rode from friend Lawrence's to old friend Campbell's in company with James Herron, John P. Weaver and John B. Hudson. We dined and prayed with them, and so parted. Every one went his way, and I to Elisha Cole's. I have now parted with all my brethren in the District, and am on my way to Baltimore, in Maryland.⁷

⁴ John P. Weaver was one of three itinerants appointed to Tioga circuit. He was admitted on trial in 1803, and this was his first appointment. He served until locating in 1815.

⁵ This is Nanticoke NY, in Broome County and on Tioga circuit – not Nanticoke PA, in Luzerne County and on Wyoming circuit.

⁶ This is the mother of the previously mentioned Gideon Baldwin. Heverly's 1913 *Pioneer and Patriot Families of Bradford County*, Volume I, page 150, includes the following anecdote. "The mother of Gideon Baldwin was a pious old lady, a Methodist, and her house the home of the minister. She had the habit of falling asleep as soon as the meeting began. When she roused up at the close of the exercise, the question would generally be asked her by some wag, 'Well, Mother Baldwin, how did you like the sermon?' Her invariable answer would be, 'I never heard such an awakening sermon in my life'."

⁷ Even though Colbert says he has ended his assigned duties, he will continue to preach his way to Philadelphia through Tioga, Wyoming, Northumberland and other circuits he enters along the

Tuesday 28 – I have once more preached at my old friend Samuel Cole’s from Psalm 84:11. I had more hearers than I expected, and some of them appeared to be affected under the word.

Wednesday 29 – I indulged my old friend with so much of my company – as it has been so long since I have seen them that they talked me tired. I spent the day at Elisha Cole’s and David Downing’s.

Thursday, March 1, 1804 – I took leave of my friends Elisha Cole and David Downing and their families. And a disagreeable ride I have had in the snow to John Hollenback’s⁸ tavern in Wyalusing, where I was well entertained and treated with more politeness than at any tavern between the Mohawk and Genesee rivers. I rode on to Mason Alden’s at Meshoppen, where I was kindly received by my old acquaintance. I must here not forget to mention, I am told, that John Hollenback is a Virginian – therefore I do not think it strange that I was treated with so much politeness by him.

Friday 2 – I have had a very disagreeable ride thro’ and over mountains and the Susquehanna river to Asahel Atherton’s.⁹ On the way, I went a little astray to the cabin of a poor black man, by the name of Prince Perkins¹⁰, who directed me the way to Exeter and invited me in to warm, myself. I saw his hut looked decent, and being hungry I thought I would get my dinner there if I could, so I asked them if they had any bread. His wife told me, “No.” I asked if she could bake me some. She told me she could, and so to work she went and I got a tolerably good

way. Apparently this was not considered an infringement into territory under other appointed itinerants.

⁸ George Hollenbach came from Germany to the Philadelphia area in 1717, after which children spread to (among other places) Wilkes-Barre PA, Lebanon PA, and the colony of Virginia. John Hollenback (1775-1867) was born in Martinsburg, [West] Virginia. In 1793 the family moved to Wilkes-Barre and John became quite an entrepreneur. In 1796 he worked for his uncle, Matthias Hollenback in trade along the Susquehanna river. The next year he came up the river in a Durham boat and established a shad fishery at Wyalusing, the first in that part of the country. He soon afterward returned down the river with his boat heavily laden with salted shad. In 1801 he opened a store at Wyalusing, which was considered a marvel at the time, as he brought 2,400 pounds of goods from Philadelphia in wagons to Middletown, where they were, loaded on boats and pushed up the river.

⁹ Asahel Atherton lived in Tunkhannock. One of the forty original 1769 settlers in Forty Fort, he moved to Putnam township Luzerne County [now Tunkhannock, Wyoming County] in 1788 and lived there until sometime after the 1810 census.

¹⁰ Prince Perkins, a free black from Connecticut, bought land along the Susquehanna River in 1793. In 1814 he paid \$175 for 70 acres beside Marten Creek in Waterford [later called Brooklyn, Susquehanna County] where he shared his home with his daughter and son-in-law, Revolutionary War veteran Bristol Budd [a.k.a. Bristol Sampson]. They were among the first ten families to settle in what is now Susquehanna County and the property remains in the family to this day as a significant historical site as a stop on the underground railroad and location of the county’s only African-American cemetery.

dinner – for which the good woman at first refused taking anything. But I insisted that I would not have it for nothing, and I gave her a quarter of a dollar for what I and my horse had. I talked to them about religion and found the woman a Baptist – and I hope a well-meaning good woman. I prayed with them, bid them farewell, and rode to Atherton’s – where I fell in with Doctor Jackson, a Huntingtonian¹¹ Universalist very fond of caviling and very desultory in his reasoning.

Saturday 3 – I have had a very disagreeable journey, wallowing through the snow to James Sutton’s in Exeter, where I felt myself very drowsy and unfit for any business.

Sunday 4 – I rode to Gilbert Carpenter’s and got there in time for their class meeting. I preached at night at Esq. Benjamin Carpenter’s from Matthew 12:43-45. Esq. Carpenter, I am in hope, is about doing his first works over again. He is a man of excellent sense – what a pity it is he should have been burned out for the many years.

Monday 5 – I rode to Colonel Dennison’s and preached at night in the schoolhouse in the neighborhood from Hebrews 2:3. I lodged at Colonel Dennison’s, where I fell into a dispute with Mr. Patterson, the son-in-law of the Colonel, and found him one of the most consistent Calvinists I ever conversed with. He professed to believe that God had decreed whatsoever comes to pass and purposes to damn him – that’s a belief representing the author of all good to be worse than the devil can be. May the Lord give every man in the belief of such a doctrine to see his error.

Tuesday 6 – I rode from Dennison’s to Darius Williams’ and preached at night from Psalm 46:4 – “There is a river the streams of which shall make glad the city of God.” I found not much life in this society.

Wednesday 7 – I dined and prayed at Esq. Pierce’s, rode to William George’s in Wilkes-Barre, and preached at night from Mark 4:28-29 to a pretty littlely well-behaved congregation. I do rejoice to find my good friends William George and his wife have weathered out the storms of this troubled world for five years since I have seen them.

Thursday 8 – I preached at night at Shawnee, in their schoolhouse, from Luke 16:9 and lodged at Mr. Hodge’s. He appears to be a kind-hearted man, but he ruins himself with liquor. His wife sister Hodge is a very active, sensible and, I believe, good woman.

¹¹ William Huntington (1745-1813) was an English preacher who claimed to have visions from Christ and espoused doctrines related to Calvinism and antinomianism. His followers formed several congregations and Huntingtonians still exist to this day.

Friday 9 – I rode to Andrew Blanchard’s. Here the Lord has revived his work. I dined and prayed with them, and rode on to Amos Park’s in Salem. Here I found out good old sister Park on her way to glory. This very kind family joyfully received me.

Saturday 10 – On my way from Salem to Christian Bowman’s, I visited Isaac Holloway. To appearance, the hour of his dissolution is drawing nigh. He has been a man of great Christian experience – but a great backslider. Hearing of his affliction, I thought on the score of our former acquaintances. I would pay him another visit before he was called off the stage of life if the Lord spared us – not thinking I should pray with him now, from an awful fear of his day of grace being gone because of his infamous conduct. But when I came to converse with him, my heart melted so that I could not help feeling a hope springing up within me – that as God was very merciful, he would yet save his soul. I was surprised in hearing him say he was resigned to death, and expected mercy would be shown, or words to that purpose. He proposed praying when I moved to come away – so I went to prayer. And while at prayer, tho’ I had not a flow of words, my hope of his salvation revived. He requested an interest in my prayers, and so I parted with him and came up to Christian Bowman’s.

Sunday 11 – I spent the day at Christian Bowman’s reading my Bible and in Brown’s¹² excellent *Sermons*. At night I preached at Thomas Bowman’s from Luke 16:9.

Monday 12 – I spent the day at Thomas Bowman’s reading Paley’s¹³ *Natural Theology* and the Bible.

Tuesday 13 – This was an unpleasant day of snow and rain, so I spent another day at Thomas Bowman’s reading my Bible and Paley’s *Natural Theology* – with which I am highly delighted.

Wednesday 14 – With Thomas Bowman, I have paid Isaac Holloway another visit – and perhaps the last I shall pay him in this world. As much as he has dishonored the cause of God, I cannot but feel a regard for him and hope in the mercy of God that he will yet be saved. The father-in-law of his son, who had left him for about 12 or 13 years, visited him near a year ago – with whom he intended to go to Louisiana. This old man died within about 3 day’s journey of his home. After this his son-in-law set off to come after, reached his house, stayed

¹² John Brown (1715-1766) was the vicar of Newcastle. His *Sermons on Various Subjects* was published in 1764.

¹³ William Paley (1743-1805) was an English clergyman and Christian apologist, known for his 1802 work *Natural Theology, or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity*.

with him a month, and he died – so that the Louisiana expedition as, I expect, ended. This appears to be a remarkable providence.¹⁴

Thursday 15 – I spent today at Christian Bowman’s reading the Bible and Paley’s *Natural Theology* and transcribing a piece out of Brown’s *Sermons* on the sufferings of Christ. But, oh! How disagreeable it is to be in other people’s houses among noisy children.

Friday 16 – I took leave of my friend Christian Bowman and his family and found the riding very hard to John Egbert’s – where I was kindly received and treated well.

Saturday 17 – I rode to Jacob Depew’s, where I fell in with James Ridgaway,¹⁵ a young man who was the stationed preacher on Northumberland circuit.

Sunday 18 – I preached at Jacob Depew’s with some satisfaction from Luke 16:9. Brother Ridgaway exhorted after me and met the class. In my opinion he is too lengthy in speaking to the members, tho’ what he says is good. In the afternoon I rode to Northumberland, where I preached at night from Matthew 12:43-45 and met the class – after which Polly Bonham gave me a very pressing invitation to go home. Tho’ her father was there, with whom I was twelve years ago in habit of intimacy, he never spoke to me. This I observed to Polly – and told her I could have gone with much satisfaction had her father spoken to me, and that I was afraid I should not be welcome, and that I did not want to impose on him. However, she insisted. Brother Ridgaway told me Mr. Bonham asked whether I might not come with him and told him that I knew the way and if I come I should be welcome.

So to gratify Polly, I ventured. Mrs. Bonham and the children spoke to me very friendly – but all the old man said was “How do ye do” when I shook hands. He went off to bed after sitting near an hour conversing with brother Ridgaway and his family – however he did not appear to be free to converse, and what a fool did I sit like. The cause of this is between 11 and 12 years ago: he and I exchanged a few sharp words, just before I left the circuit a second time. When I parted with him I thought I parted in friendship – I know I did for my part – but now it is beyond all dispute that he has never forgiven me. But I pray that God may forgive him. It hurts me to think that any man should have an eternal hatred to me.

Monday 19 – It was so late before I got from Northumberland this morning that I did not reach Daniel Miller’s¹⁶ until after I undesignedly left the river road and

¹⁴ The exact names, relationships, dates or circumstances involved in this “Louisiana expedition” are unclear.

¹⁵ James Ridgaway (1783-1825) was admitted on trial in 1803, and Northumberland circuit was his first appointment. He was elected to General Conference in 1816 and 1820, and he located in 1824.

came four miles out of my way.¹⁷ But how different was my reception with Daniel Miller to what it was with William Bonham – here I knew I was welcome. I was received in the open arms of Christian affection.

Tuesday 20 – I rode from Daniel Miller’s near Wiconisco to Thomas Burrell’s in Halifax, where I preached at night from Mark 4:28-29.

Wednesday 21 – I rode from Halifax to a Mr. Zullinger’s in Harrisburg, where I expected to have preached – but as he was unnecessarily called from home and not expected to return until in the night, it was thought best not to appoint a meeting. However, Mr. Zullinger told me I was welcome to stay, and he behaved very well. But as I was acquainted in Middletown,¹⁸ I rode on to Frederick Rodfong’s¹⁹ and attended a prayer meeting at Doctor Roemer’s²⁰ – where petitions were made in Dutch [German] and English.

Thursday 22 – I spent the day in Middletown and preached at night at Doctor Roemer’s from Matthew 25:27 and lodged at Frederick Rodfong’s.

Friday 23 – I set out from Middletown, crossed the Susquehanna a little below the famous Connewago Falls, rode to York, dined with an old friend there by the name of Dobbins – and prayed with them, his wife being very ill. I rode on to Edward Manifold’s, arriving between 9 and 10 o’clock. Here I was kindly received and well treated.

¹⁶ Daniel Miller is the founder of Millersburg. He purchased the land at the mouth of Wiconisco Creek in 1790 and erected a log cabin there in 1794. It was not until 1805 that he erected a more suitable dwelling and brought his wife and children from Lancaster County. That building still stands on the northeast corner of Pine and Walnut. He laid out the town and began selling lots in 1807. About this time Daniel Miller also hosted the United Brethren circuit rider Christian Newcomer for lodging and/or preaching on at least three occasions – in 1800, 1801 and 1808.

¹⁷ This probably happened where PA 147, the modern river road, leaves the river and follows Fidler’s Run inland toward Mandata.

¹⁸ Middletown was so named for being half-way between Lancaster and Carlisle. It purports to be the oldest town in Dauphin County.

¹⁹ Frederick Rodfong was married to Elizabeth Alleman, but nothing more is known about this 1804 Middletown couple.

²⁰ Dr. Ignatius Roemer [Ignace Romer] (1749-1820) was a hospitable German physician with ties to all three branches of United Methodism. More specifically, he was a Swiss-born Roman Catholic who had settled in Middletown in 1798 and was converted during a Methodist revival through the witness of a saintly widow, Mrs. Jane Flannigan. He hosted Methodist Bishop Francis Asbury (8/1/1810) as well as Colbert and other Methodist itinerants and meetings. He hosted United Brethren Bishop Christian Newcomer (5/02/1809) and other United Brethren itinerants and meetings. In 1808, at the urging of Henry Boehm, he translated the Methodist Discipline in to German – a work that became the basis for the Disciple of the Evangelical Association printed in 1809. He is buried in Lewistown PA.

Saturday 24 – I spent the day at Edward Manifold's,²¹ reading the Bible and Falconer's beautiful poem *The Shipwreck*.

Sunday 25 – I preached at Manifold's with freedom from Luke 16:9. Alexander Ewing²² gave a very fiery exhortation after me – after which the class was met, and several were filled with ecstasies. The Lord has done great things in this place since I formed a society here.

Monday 26 – I rode with aching heart from Edward Manifold's to Baltimore. When I got to my father's, what did my eyes behold – my father lying on his bed, and several standing by him! I expected he was dying. However bad as he was, I did not find him as bad as I had expected. But it has been a sleepless night to me.

Tuesday 27 – I found my father something better, but very weak.

Wednesday 28 – I spent the greater part of this day with my father, reading.

Thursday 29 – I spent the day in Baltimore – a place in which I see little but trouble.

Friday 30 – I spent the day in Baltimore, reading. I feel much dejected.

Saturday 31 – I am not well – in body nor mind. I lodged at Samuel Carter's.

Sunday, April 1, 1804 – I heard Bishop Whatcoat²³ preach from Colossians 3:4, after which the sacrament was administered. In the afternoon I preached in the Old Town meeting house from Matthew 18:3, and at night I heard Samuel Coate²⁴ preach an excellent sermon from Daniel 12:2. After him I gave a few words of exhortation to the society that stayed after the congregation was dismissed and concluded the meeting.

²¹ Edward Manifold (1734-1821) lived near Gatchelville, York County PA. When on Harford circuit 6/24/1791, Colbert received three "newly converted" persons into membership: Edward Manifold, and brothers Alexander and James Ewing. Edward Manifold became the class leader of what is now Prospect UMC in Gatchelville and his daughter Prudence married Alexander Ewing's son Rev. James Ewing.

²² Alexander Ewing (1751-1831) was a local pastor the father of James Ewing (1786-1861) of the Baltimore Conference, and his daughters Eleanor and Esther married Baltimore Conference itinerants James Reiley (1784-1841) and Tobias Reiley (1789-1843).

²³ Richard Whatcoat (1736-1806) entered the itinerancy in England in 1769 and accompanied Coke to America in 1784 with orders from Wesley to organize American Methodism. In 1800 he became the second (after Francis Asbury) elected bishop of American Methodism.

²⁴ Samuel Coate (1776-1813) was born in Lumberton NJ, admitted on trial in 1796 and spent most of his career serving circuits and superintending in Canada, where he met and married Miss Ann Dulmage, a niece of the celebrated Barbara Heck. To seek funds for the Canadian work, he traveled to London – where he died and is interred (with John Wesley and other Methodist pastors) at City Road Chapel.

Monday 2 – I rode with heavy heart from Baltimore to Edward Manifold's.

Tuesday 3 – I spent the day on the neighborhood. I fear inquiring after what I shall not come at.

Wednesday 4 – I set off from Edward Manifold's to Martin Boehm's²⁵ and had a disagreeable ride thro' the rain from McCall's ferry – where I was informed of an ark with about a thousand bushels of grain being lost.

[Colbert is now out of the bounds of the present Susquehanna Conference and on his way to the Annual Conference in Philadelphia, where he will be appointed superintendent of the Chesapeake District. Colbert's journal contains no more significant references to or accounts of activity within the bounds of the present Susquehanna Conference.]

²⁵ Martin Boehm (1725-1812) was former Mennonite pastor who joined with Reformed pastor Philip William Otterbein (1728-1813) to found the United Brethren in Christ denomination. Martin's son Henry Boehm (1775-1875) became a Methodist itinerant – and Boehm's Chapel on the family farm in Lancaster County, to which Colbert was heading, is a Heritage Landmark of the United Methodist Church.

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Hull: 1792 – 11/2

Hunlock: 1793 – 12/6 (footnote); 1798 – 8/17

Hunt: 1792 – 12/2, 12/3; 1793 – 4/19, 4/22, 4/23, 5/5, 5/17, 5/18, 6/3, 6/4; 1793 – 7/12, 7/13, 7/14, 7/20, 7/22, 8/10, 8/11, 9/20, 9/22

Huntington: 1804 – 3/2 (footnote)

Inman, Elijah: 1798 – 9/27, 10/31

Inman, Richard: 1793 – 4/16, 4/21, 5/5, 7/6, 7/19, 9/21, 12/4

Ivey: 1792 – 11/2

Jackson [clergy]: 1804 – 3/3 (no note)

Jackson [laity]: 1793 – 4/27 (no note)

Jefferson: 1797 – 9/13, 9/16, 9/17, 9/18, 9/21, 9/23, 9/24, 9/26

Jennings: 1793 – 11/19 (no note)

Johnson [Shade Mountain]: 1792 – 7/4 (no note)

Johnson [Wilkes-Barre]: 1793 – 8/11; 1797 – 4/16, 9/24

Jones [Carlisle]: 1792 – 11/21 (no note)

Jones [Dalytown]: 1792 – 12/4 (no note)

Jones, Peter [Howard]: 1798 – 9/4, 10/16

Jones [Springfield]: 1798 – 8/13

Judd: 1793 – 11/16, 11/17, 11/18

King: 1792 – 8/8 (no note)

Kinnear: 1797 – 4/29

Kinney: 1793 – 11/15 (no note), 11/16

Konkle: 1792 – 12/14 (footnote), 12/16; 1793 – 11/22

Kress: 1792 – 12/14 (footnote), 12/17, 12/31; 1793 – 1/12, 1/13, 1/29, 2/12, 2/25, 2/26, 3/11, 3/12, 4/8, 4/9, 11/12; 1797 – 5/14, 9/14; 1804 – 2/24

Kunkle: 1792 – 7/19, 8/16, 9/16, 10/11; 1793 – 6/11, 8/31, 9/1, 9/8, 10/13; 1798 – 8/31, 9/1

Lackey: 1798 – 8/18, 8/19, 8/21, 8/26, 9/16, 10/8, 11/5, 12/12

Lamb: 1792 – 9/20

Lamphear: 1802 – 8/2 (no note)

Landers: 1797 – 5/15 (no note)

Law: 1793 – 10/22

Lawrence: 1804 – 2/26 (no note), 2/27

Leach: 1798 – 8/18, 8/19, 8/21, 8/25, 8/26, 9/19, 10/1, 10/22, 11/11, 11/12, 11/15, 11/17, 11/18, 11/19, 11/21, 11/24, 11/25, 12/3

Lemon: 1793 – 8/6, 9/16

Lewis: 1792 – 7/11 (no note)

Lincoln: 1798 – 10/21

Loop: 1793 – 2/10

Luce: 1793 – 2/6

Males: 1792 – 9/12

Mallory: 1793 – 3/13 (no note), 4/10

Malone: 1793 – 10/18 (no note)

Manifold: 1804 – 3/23, 3/24, 3/25, 3/26, 4/2, 4/4

Mann: 1793 – 4/16, 4/20, 5/7, 5/20, 5/21, 6/6, 7/16; 1797 – 9/19

Manning: 1792 – 7/21, 7/22, 8/18, 10/14; 1793 – 6/13, 9/2, 9/5, 10/14, 11/18 (footnote), 11/19

Mars [clergy]: 1792 – 12/11, 12/12; 1793 – 6/8

Marrs [lay]: 1793 – 7/29, 10/7

Marsdon: 1792 – 7/26

Martin: 1793 – 1/14, 2/27, 3/13

Massey: 1793 – 10/30 (no note)

Mayhew: 1793 – 2/2, 3/22, 11/1, 11/2

McClure: 1793 – 11/15; 1797 – 9/15, 9/14

McConnell: 1792 – 5/26 (footnote), 11/25; 1793 – 12/16

McDowell, Daniel: 1792 – 12/14, 12/28; 1793 – 1/14, 1/15, 3/8, 3/9, 3/12, 4/5, 4/10; 1797 – 5/13, 9/15; 1802 – 7/29

McDowell, Robert: 1793 – 11/22

McFadden: 1792 – 8/20, 10/14; 1793 – 9/4, 9/5

McWhorter: 1792 – 7/30, 10/16; 1793 – 6/20, 8/1, 8/26, 9/12, 10/7

Mead: 1792 – 7/9, 8/6

Melick: 1792 – 9/3; 1793 – 6/9, 6/10, 9/15, 9/16

Miller, Abraham: 1793 – 1/13

Miller, Daniel: 1804 – 3/19, 3/20

Miller, John: 1793 – 2/11

Mills: 1793 – 9/2, 10/15

Minier: 1802 – 8/2, 12/30, 12/31; 1803 – 1/3; 1804 – 2/24

Mitcheltree: 1792 – 9/12 (no note)

Moody: 1797 – 9/26 (no note)

Moore [Juniata Rive]: 1792 – 5/24, 5/26, 6/1, 6/2, 6/3, 6/29, 6/30

Moore [Susquehanna (North Branch) River]: 1793 – 7/20 (no note), 8/20

Morgan: 1792 – 11/29, 5/11

Morrell: 1792 – 11/2

Morrison: 1798 – 10/7

Mosher: 1793 – 3/5 (no note)

Mullison: 1792 – 12/5

Murray: 1793 – 1/16

Myers [Luzerne County]: 1793 – 10/27

Myers [Snyder County]: 1792 – 7/29

Neas: 1792 – 11/21

Nelson: 1793 – 6/29

Newell: 1793 – 11/4

Ogden: 1792 – 6/9, 6/11, 7/7, 7/8, 8/4, 8/5, 9/1, 9/2, 9/29, 9/30, 11/29, 12/1; 1793 – 5/1, 5/2, 5/3, 5/14, 5/15, 6/9, 6/23, 6/26, 6/27, 7/1, 7/2, 7/22, 7/23, 7/24, 7/25, 8/4, 8/20, 9/14, 9/15, 9/17, 9/18, 10/24, 11/4, 12/9, 12/10, 12/12, 12/13; 1797 – 4/23, 5/4, 5/5; 1798 – 8/16, 9/16, 10/27, 10/28, 11/15, 12/9

O'Kelley: 1792 – 11/2, 11/4

Olp: 1798 – 10/4

Osborn [clergy]: 1802 – 7/31, 8/1; 1803 – 1/1

Osborne [laity]: 1792 – 5/26, 6/5, 6/26, 6/28, 7/3, 10/18, 10/19, 11/23, 11/24, 11/25

Owen, Anning: 1793 – 4/26, 5/10, 5/31, 6/8, 6/9, 7/7, 7/15, 7/20, 7/21, 9/28, 10/27, 12/5; 1797 – 9/15, 9/16, 9/18, 9/23; 1802 – 12/31 (footnote)

Owen, Levi: 1792 – 5/24, 10/19, 11/22

Owen, Robert: 1792 – 11/30 (no note), 9/17, 12/20; 1797 – 5/6; 1798 – 9/15

Paley: 1804 – 3/12, 3/13, 3/15

Parish: 1793 – 4/28, 7/1, 7/3, 7/4, 8/18, 9/29, 12/1, 12/5

Park [clergy]: 1792 – 12/16, 12/30; 1793 – 1/27, 1/30, 2/11, 3/25

Park [laity]: 1792 – 9/3 (footnote), 12/1; 1793 – 4/29, 4/30, 5/3, 5/16, 8/8, 9/19, 9/20; 1797 – 4/20, 4/21, 5/8; 1798 – 8/21, 8/22, 9/29, 9/30, 10/29, 11/10, 11/11/11/17, 12/10; 1804 – 3/9

Parker: 1793 – 9/13 (no note), 9/14

Parriott: 1792 – 5/27 (footnote), 6/21, 6/22, 6/23, 6/24, 6/25, 6/26, 6/27

Parshall: 1793 – 3/17, 11/7

Patterson [Luzerne County]: 1804 – 3/5 (no note)

Patterson [Snyder County]: 1792 – 6/6, 7/4

Paynter: 1793 – 7/24, 7/27, 7/28, 8/20, 9/7, 9/8, 9/9, 10/1, 10/22, 10/23, 10/24, 10/26, 10/27, 12/14, 12/15

Pegg: 1792 – 6/9, 7/7, 8/4, 9/1, 9/29; 1798 – 8/26

Pennington: 1797 – 4/27, 4/28, 5/1; 1798 – 9/7, 9/8, 10/19, 10/20, 11/22, 11/23, 11/29, 11/30

Perkins: 1804 – 3/2

Phelps: 1793 – 11/20 (no note)

Philips: 1792 – 7/28

Pierce [Tioga]: 1792 – 12/10

Pierce [Wyoming]: 1797 – 4/12; 1798 – 8/18; 1804 – 3/7

Potter: 1792 – 8/26; 1793 – 6/16, 6/17

Presson: 1793 – 9/30 (no note), 10/25

Price: 1792 – 12/23, 12/24

Randolph: 1804 – 2/25 (no note)

Ransom: 1793 – 4/28

Reagan: 1792 – 10/31

Reed [clergy]: 1792 – 9/15, 9/16, 11/2

Reed [NY]: 1793 – 3/9 (no note)

Reed [PA]: 1793 – 6/16 (no note)

Reeder: 1798 – 9/28, 10/30, 12/10

Rees, Thomas: 1792 – 6/8, 6/21, 6/22, 7/6, 7/7, 8/3, 10/8; 1793 – 6/19, 6/20, 9/12, 10/22, 10/23; 1797 – 4/25; 1798 – 9/11, 12/4

Reese, Martin: 1792 – 8/18, 10/13; 1793 – 9/2, 10/15

Reily: 1792 – 6/21, 7/6, 8/30, 9/27

Reynolds: 1793 – 6/20

Rice [Tioga]: 1792 – 12/20, 12/22; 1793 – 1/3, 2/1, 2/2, 2/3, 2/4, 2/15, 2/16, 3/18, 11/17

Rice [Wyoming]: 1797 – 4/19, 4/20; 1798 – 9/22

Ridgaway: 1804 – 3/17, 3/18

Ridgley: 1792 - 5/20, 11/18

Roan: 1792 – 9/9

Roberts: 1792 – 12/11

Rodfong: 1804 – 3/21, 3/22

Roemer: 1804 – 3/21, 3/22

Rogers: 1798 – 10/2 (no note), 11/12, 11/14

Rose: 1804 – 2/25

Rosencrans: 1793 – 4/28, 5/12, 5/26, 7/1, 8/18, 9/29, 12/3, 12/5; 1797 – 4/12

Russell: 1798 – 9/19 (no note)

Ryerson: 1798 – 11/14 (no note)

Sackett: 1792 – 9/22 (no note)

Salisbury: 1797 – 9/16

Salmon, John: 1797 – 5/6

Salmon, Joseph: 1792 – 6/10; 1793 – 8/6, 12/12

Salmon, widow: 1792 – 7/10, 11/30; 1793 – 4/30, 5/15, 6/25, 6/26, 7/2, 7/9, 7/25, 8/3, 8/5, 9/16, 10/1; 1797 – 5/5, 5/6; 1798 – 9/15, 12/8

Satterthwaite: 1793 – 7/5 (no note)

Scott [Lackawanna]: 1792 – 12/3 (no note)

Scott [Middletown]: 1798 – 8/13 (no note)

Schneider: 1793 – 4/4

Search: 1792 – 6/8, 8/31, 9/28; 1793 – 10/21, 10/22; 1798 – 10/23, 12/4

Seeley: 1792 – 12/14 (footnote), 12/15, 12/16, 12/29; 1793 – 1/27

Seward: 1797 – 4/25, 4/27, 4/29, 4/30, 5/1

Shaffer: 1792 – 10/31 (no note)

Shrontz: 1798 – 10/3, 11/13

Simpson: 1792 – 11/18

Smith [Northumberland]: 1793 – 9/6 (no note)

Smith [Wyoming]: 1797 - 4/11 (no note), 4/19

Smith, Rev. James: 1793 – 11/2, 11/3, 11/5, 11/9, 11/10, 11/11, 11/12, 11/14, 11/18, 11/19

Smith, Dr. William: 1793 – 11/29

Sneath: 1797 – 4/22, 4/23, 4/24, 4/25, 4/26, 4/27, 4/29, 4/30, 5/1

Snyder, Jacob [Northumberland]: 1798 – 10/10

Snyder, Jacob [Tioga]: 1793 – 1/10, 1/24

Sox: 1797 – 9/26

Stackhouse: 1798 – 11/16 (no note)

Stafford: 1792 – 12/9

Stahl: 1797 – 4/25; 1798 – 9/10, 10/8, 10/22, 12/3

Storm: 1792 – 11/20

Straub: 1792 – 6/6

Sturdevant: 1797 – 9/21

Sunderland: 1793 – 8/28, 10/9

Sutton, Amariah: 1792 – 7/20, 8/17, 10/12, 10/15; 1793 – 9/1, 9/7, 10/13; 1798 – 9/1, 9/2, 10/13, 10/14

Sutton, James: 1793 – 5/8, 5/22, 8/14, 9/24, 9/25, 11/29; 1797 – 5/10, 5/11, 9/22; 1798 – 9/24, 9/25, 11/2; 1804 – 3/3

Swift: 1792 – 11/2

Swisher: 1792 - 9/11; 1793 – 8/29, 10/10; 1798 – 8/30, 8/31, 10/11

Tabor: 1802 – 7/31; 1803 – 1/1

Taggart: 1792 – 7/13, 7/14; 1793 – 6/30, 8/24, 12/13, 12/16; 1797 – 4/25 (footnote); 1798 – 8/15, 10/7

Talbot: 1792 – 5/20 (no note), 11/16

Tallman: 1792 – 9/13; 1793 – 6/12

Taylor: 1798 – 9/25, 11/1, 12/13

Teall: 1792 – 12/16 (footnote)

Thomas, Henry: 1798 – 9/2, 10/14

Thomas, James: 1792 – 11/7, 4/11, 4/13, 4/14; 1793 – 8/17

Thompson: 1792 – 6/7, 6/19, 8/29, 8/30, 9/26; 1793 – 6/19, 9/11; 1797 – 4/25, 4/26; 1798 – 9/9, 10/21, 11/20, 11/21, 12/2

Tillotson: 1793 – 1/19, 7/18

Townley: 1792 – 12/21

Townsend: 1792 – 12/12, 12/19; 1793 – 1/8, 1/17, 1/21, 1/22, 1/31, 2/5, 2/14, 2/19, 2/28, 3/5, 3/15, 3/23, 3/24, 3/29, 4/2, 4/11, 4/12

Trenck: 1798 – 9/20

Turck: 1793 – 10/26, 10/27, 10/28, 10/29, 11/30, 12/1, 12/2, 12/3, 12/6, 12/7

Updegraff: 1793 – 6/14, 6/15, 10/16

Van Campen: 1792: - 6/10 (footnote); 1793 – 8/6

Vandeventer: 1793 – 1/27, 1/28

Vandervoort: 1792 – 9/10, 12/17, 12/29; 1793 – 1/26, 1/27, 2/9, 2/24, 4/6, 11/13

Waller, Ashbel: 1793 – 4/18, 4/22, 7/17, 10/28, 12/4; 1797 – 4/14, 4/15, 4/22, 4/23, 9/23; 1798 – 11/17

Waller, Joseph: 1793 – 5/23, 5/24, 6/3, 8/15, 9/26, 11/30; 1798 – 9/25

Walsh: 1793 – 8/9, 8/10

Ware: 1793 – 4/11, 4/12, 4/13, 4/14, 4/15, 4/17; 1798 – 8/18, 8/19, 8/20, 8/21, 8/22, 8/24, 8/25, 8/26, 11/17, 11/18, 11/19, 11/21

Weaver: 1804 – 2/25, 2/26, 2/27

Weems: 1793 – 9/13

Wells: 1792 – 12/8, 12/23; 1793 – 1/6, 1/7, 1/20, 2/17, 3/3, 3/17

Wesley: 1793 – 6/26, 8/23

Wetherill: 1793 – 2/19, 4/2, 7/13

Whatcoat: 1804 – 4/1

White, Alward: 1793 – 6/8; 1797 – 4/8, 4/9, 5/10

White, Henry: 1793 – 6/20

White, Joshua: 1792 – 7/18, 8/15, 9/12, 9/14, 9/15, 10/10, 6/10

Wigton: 1792 – 12/6

Wilcox: 1802 – 8/2 (no note)

Wilkinson: 1792 – 6/15, 7/13, 8/10, 9/7, 10/5; 1793 – 6/27, 8/22, 10/3

Williams, Darius 1797 – 4/7, 4/8, 4/12, 9/23; 1798 – 8/18, 8/20, 9/23, 11/4, 11/17;
1804 – 3/6

Williams [Tioga]: 1802 – 7/31' 1803 – 1/2

Willis: 1792 – 11/2, 11/4

Wilson, Michael: 1797 – 4/9, 5/10, 9/23, 9/24

Wilson [Northumberland]: 1792 – 9/18, 9/19

Wood: 1792 – 5/26 (footnote), 6/2

Wynn: 1798 – 10/25 (no note), 12/6

York: 1793 – 3/4

Young: 1793 – 10/19; 1797 – 4/29, 4/30; 1798 – 9/6, 10/18, 11/24, 11/29

Zullinger: 1804 – 3/20 (no note)

Appendix A. The Wyoming Valley – Relevant Historical Background

Editor's note: The Wyoming and Tioga circuits traveled by Colbert in the 1790's have a character all of their own. Most of the families came from Connecticut, many of them are inter-related, and almost all of them have connections to the "Wyoming Massacre" of July 3, 1778. This appendix is given to help the reader better understand the dynamics of the region. The list of names involved in the Wyoming Massacre (either as victims or survivors) is also given, because so many of the surnames are the same as those encountered by Colbert. Associated with almost every surname is a dramatic story of how that particular family fled, suffered, survived, escaped or otherwise dealt with that singular event. Unfortunately, space limitations and the purposes of this volume do not permit the telling of those stories here, but interested readers are encouraged to seek them out from other sources.

While the "Wyoming Valley" is typically taken as a reference to the land on either side of the Susquehanna River from Pittston to West Nanticoke, in its broadest sense the words refer to the entire drainage of the North Branch of the Susquehanna within the state of Pennsylvania – from Athens, through Wilkes-Barre, to Northumberland.

The land is due west of the present state of Connecticut, and in 1662 King Charles of England (ignoring the claim of the Dutch on what is now New York City/State) granted the territory to Connecticut – in fact, he granted Connecticut the slice of land between the 41st and 42nd parallel continuing all the way to the Pacific Ocean. In 1681, however, he also granted that same territory west of the Delaware to William Penn and Pennsylvania. But since the land was wilderness in control of the Native Americans, and neither colony saw any immediate need for expansion beyond its settled coastal areas, the issue was moot for almost 100 years.

Because the land was north of the original boundaries of the Penn family's 1737 "walking purchase" agreement with the Lenape tribe, it remained unsettled and without direct affiliation with any particular one of the colonies. The Susquehanna Company was formed in Connecticut in 1753 for the purpose of developing the Wyoming Valley as an expansion of that colony. A tract of land was purchased from the Iroquois confederacy in 1754 and named Connecticut's Westmoreland County. While there were isolated efforts to enter and settle the land in the early 1760's, the first permanent settlers were a band of 40 Connecticut citizens who entered the valley in 1769 and in 1770 erected along the Susquehanna a fort to protect them from any hostilities – hence the origin of the name Forty Fort. In 1771, Connecticut's claim was upheld by King George III.

This intrusion of Connecticut Yankees riled the citizens of Pennsylvania's Northumberland County, who felt that the land was theirs. Soon Pennsylvania was purchasing the same land from the various tribes, telling the tribes that their transactions with the Connecticut white men were not valid, and selling the land to Pennsylvania citizens. This resulted in there being Connecticut and Pennsylvania deeds to different families for the same properties. Legal and physical battles known as the Pennamite-Yankee War broke out. In general, there was bitter rhetoric and some violence, but little bloodshed – although there were isolated fatalities on both sides.

Perhaps the most serious incident in this war occurred when the Connecticut settlers moved even further inland and established settlements named Judea and Charleston on the West Branch of the Susquehanna near the present borough of Muncy. These settlements were illegal even by Connecticut standards, as the general assembly of Connecticut had set the western limits of Westmoreland County at 15 miles beyond the point where the North Branch dipped below the 41st parallel (i.e., at 15 miles west of current Bloomsburg) and, not, therefore, reaching to the West Branch or Muncy. In November, 1775, Pennsylvania sent an armed expedition against the towns of Judea and Charleston and destroyed them – and then menaced the people of Westmoreland. On November 4, the Continental Congress, on being advised of the attacks on Judea and Charleston, and the threatened attack on the people of Westmoreland, and “being apprehensive that there is great danger of hostilities being commenced at or near Wyoming between the inhabitants of the colony of Pennsylvania, and those of Connecticut,” passed a resolution asking both sides to take immediate steps to prevent such hostilities. The action of congress was not heeded by John Penn, the then governor of Pennsylvania – and equally reckless was he of the fact that the supposedly united colonies were now at war with England.

Very soon the American Revolution became the major focus of everyone, even though the Pennsylvania-Connecticut issues were far from resolved. The culmination of all area hostilities (British-American, Pennamite-Yankee, white-Indian) occurred on July 3, 1778, in what has become known as the “Wyoming Massacre.” By then Connecticut settlers, had sparsely inhabited the entire North Branch of the Susquehanna, from Athens to Berwick. By the spring of 1778 it had become apparent that these scattered New England settlers were in serious danger from a growing coalition of Native Americans, British soldiers, and Pennsylvania Tories. Isolated incidents of attacks, murders, scalplings and kidnappings were beginning to occur on a regular basis. It was obvious that the small forts, which were really nothing more than sturdy farmhouses surrounded by stockades, constructed at strategic points along the river would not be able to protect the settlers from an all-out offensive. Able-bodied men from the entire length of the river gathered at Fort Mifflin. Some brought their families, others left them in the belief that women and children would be respected by the British, still

others sent their families back to Connecticut or across the mountains through the dangerous “Shades of Death” to the safety of Stroudsburg.

Soon the expected coalition of Indians, British and Tories came down from the north, beginning from Newtown [Elmira] and Tioga Point [Athens], capturing and/or destroying each fort or any resistance along the way. The force was led by Colonel John Butler (an American loyalist who had removed to Canada) and included about 500 of Butler’s Rangers, 700 Iroquois Indians, a detachment of Sir John Johnson’s Royal Greens (Scottish Highlander immigrants who with loyalist Johnson had removed to Canada when the War began), and several Pennsylvania Tories. The last forts to fall, on July 1, 1778, were Fort Jenkins [West Pittston] and Fort Wintermoot [Pittston], which sites are indicated today by historical markers. The number of men and physical construction at Forty Fort posed a major barrier for the invaders. Even though they greatly outnumbered the defenders, it appeared that – save for a surrender by the inhabitants – a major confrontation might ensue. Talks were arranged, with Major Zebulon Butler, on furlough from the Continental Army, representing the Connecticut people.

Inside the Fort, to face the trained British soldiers and savage Iroquois, Zebulon Butler had six irregular companies, mostly raw recruits and old men, as follows:

Capt. Dethic Hewitt’s company – about 40 men

Capt. Asaph Whittlesey’s company, from Plymouth – 40 men

Capt. William McKarrican’s company, from Hanover – about 40 men

Capt. James Bidlack’s Lower Wilkes-Barre company – 38 men

Capt. Rezin Geer’s Upper Wilkes-Barre company – small, number unknown

Capt. Aholiab Buck’s Kingston Company – number unknown

and an assortment of local citizens who had sought refuge in the fort and volunteered to fight.

Zebulon Butler knew that he was seriously out-manned. He also knew that Forty Fort contained ample provisions and that Captain Spalding was force-marching with trained men from the Continental Army to reach them within 48 hours. And so Butler argued that their best strategy was to parley for a delay. While some agreed with this, a very vocal contingent argued that a direct attack upon the invading force was necessary. Their most compelling argument was that Captain Jeremiah Blanchard with but one company of about 40 men was holding Pittston Fort – a compound of about 35 uniform log houses arranged in a defendable triangle, and now sheltering over 400 women and children who had fled there for protection. There was a real danger, they argued, that any delay on their part would encourage the British and Indians to attack Pittston Fort and slay all the inhabitants.

And so the brave men from Forty Fort went out to meet the foe. The fight was waged valiantly and with the best strategy, but the battle and its aftermath were so one-sided that the confrontation has gone down in history as the Wyoming Massacre. Tales of the courage, horror, sacrifice and brutality of the battle can be found elsewhere. Here we simply list, by various categories, the known names of the participants as they appear (i.e., without the additions or corrections that historians have suggested over the years) on the monument later erected near the site of the battle and over the bones of the fallen that were gathered and interred in a mass grave.



Monument to the July 8, 1777, Wyoming Massacre

SLAIN IN BATTLE FIELD

COLONELS	Enos Brockway	Thomas Foxen	Noah Pettebone, jr.
George Dorrance	John Brown	John Franklin	Gershom Prince, col.
John Garrett	Thomas Brown	Stephen Fuller	William Reynolds
	William Buck	Thomas Fuller	Elisha Richards
CAPTAINS	Joseph Budd	---- Gardner	Elias Roberts
James Bidlack, jr.	Amos Bullock	George Gore	Timothy Rose
Aholiab Buck	Asa Bullock	---- Green	Jeremiah Ross, jr.
Robert Durkee	Henry Bush	William Hammond	Constant Searle
Rezin Geer	John Caldwell	Silas Harvey	Abram Shaw
Dethick Hewitt	Isaac Campbell	Benjamin Hatch	James Shaw
Wm. McKarrachen	---- Campbell	Cyprian Hebard	Joseph Shaw
Samuel Ransom	Joseph Carey	Levi Hicks	James Spencer
Lazarus Stewart	Josiah Carman	James Hopkins	Levi Spencer
James Wigton	Joel Church	Nathaniel Howard	Darius Spofford
	William Cofferin	John Hutchins	Eleazer Sprague
LIEUTENANTS	James Cofferin	Samuel Hutchinson	Joseph Staples
A. Atherton	Samuel Cole	Elijah Inman	Reuben Staples
Stoddart Bowen	Robert Comstock	Israel Inman	Aaron Stark
Aaron Gaylord	Kingsley Comstock	Samuel Jackson	Daniel Stark
Timothy Peirce	---- Cook	Robert Jameson	Rufus Stevens
Perrin Ross	---- Cook	Joseph Jennings	James Stevenson
Elijah Shoemaker	---- Cook (3 brothers)	Henry Johnson	Nailer Sweed
Asa Stevens	Anson Corey	Joshua Landon	Ichabod Tuttle
Lazarus Stewart, jr.	Jenks Corey	Daniel Lawrence	Abram Vangorder
Flavius Waterman	Rufus Corey	William Lawrence	John Vaulbie
James Welles	Christopher	Francis Ledyard	---- Wade
	Courtright	James Lock	John Ward
ENSIGNS	John Courtright	Conrad Lome	Elihu Waters
Jeremiah Bigford	Joseph Crocker	Jacob Lome	Bartholomew Weeks
Asa Gore	Samuel Crocker	William Lester	Jonathan Weeks
Silas Gore	Anderson Dana	Nicholas Manville	Philip Weeks
Titus Hinman	Jabez Darling	Job Marshall	Peter Wheeler
Jonathan Otis	Conrad Davenport	Nero Mattewson	Stephen Whiton
William White	D. Denton	C. McCartee	Eben Wilcox
	James Devine	Robert McIntire	Aziba Williams
PRIVATES	George Dowling	Alexander McMillan	Elihu Williams, jr.
---- Ackke	---- Ducher	Andrew Millard	John Williams
Jabez Atherton	Levi Dunn	John Murphy	Rufus Williams
Christopher Avery	Benjamin Finch	Joseph Ogden	John Wilson
Jabez Beers	Daniel Finch	Abel Palmer	Parker Wilson
A. Benedict	John Finch	Silas Parke	William Woodring
Samuel Bigford	Elisha Fish	William Parker	Ozias Yale
David Bixby	Cornelius Fitchett	John Pierce	
John Boyd	Eliphalet Follett	Henry Pencil	

SURVIVORS

COLONELS	SERGEANTS	Joseph Elliott	Henry Lickers
Zebulon Butler	Jabez Fish	Samuel Finch	Joseph Morse
Nathan Denison	---- Gates	Hugh Forsman	Thomas Neill
	Phineas Spafford	Roswell Franklin	Phineas Peirce
LIEUTENANTS		Thomas Fuller	Josiah Pell
Daniel Gore	PRIVATES	John Garrett	Abraham Pike
Timothy Howe	John Abbott	Samuel Gore	Roger Searle
	Gideon Baldwin	Lemuel Gustin	John N. Skinner
ENSIGNS	Zera Beach	Jacob Haldron	Giles Slocum
Daniel Downing	Rufus Bennett	Lebens Hammond	Walter Spencer
Matthias Hollenback	Elisha Blackman	Elisha Harris	Edward Spencer
	Nathan Carey	Ebenezer Heberd	Daniel Washburn
	Samuel Carey	Richard Inman	Eleazer West
	George Cooper	John Jamison	Cherrick Westbrook

PRISONERS TAKEN FROM WYOMING

Samuel Carey	John Gardner	Daniel Rosenkrans	Elisha Wilcox
Daniel Carr	---- Pierce	Daniel Wallen	

KILLED ON APPROACH TO WYOMING

William Crooks	James Hadsall, jr.	Stukely Harding	Quocko, colored
James Hadsall	Benjamin Harding	William Martin	Miner Robbins

And so the battle in the Wyoming Valley went into history as the Wyoming Massacre, no doubt additionally fueled by accounts of what occurred following the battle at the infamous Queen Esther's Rock. According to the story, Queen Esther (actually Esther Montour, a descendant of several white-Indian mixed marriages), a ruthless leader of the Iroquois whose headquarters were at Queen Esther's flats, west of Tioga Point [Athens] and south of the Chemung River, arrived after battle. Angered by the death of her son during the battle, she reportedly personally smashed the skulls of 14 or more captured American soldiers on a large flat rock.

The invading forces approached Forty Fort the next morning and demanded an unconditional surrender. As Zebulon Butler and seventeen of his soldiers had escaped to the mountains during the night, Colonel Denison was in command – in command of a few wounded and aged men, frightened children, and women with broken hearts. The victors granted terms of honorable capitulation, agreeing to respect private property and requiring the soldiers taken to pledge not again to take up arms against the king of England. These were honorable and, under the circumstances, very liberal terms. The observance of the terms of surrender was kept so far as no further human lives were taken, but private property was not

fully respected. The valley was devastated, and homes and buildings were burned. Wilkes-Barre, for example, where there had been twenty-five buildings, was left with but three houses. The Indians, in particular, engaged in plundering and destroying.

It is now believed that Colonel John Butler's inability to control the Iroquois hastened his departure. The invading army remained in possession of Forty Fort only four days, or until July 8, when Butler called his army together and took up his return march northward. This departure saved the forts (and the people that had taken refuge in them) erected in present Columbia County to protect the western boundary of Connecticut's Westmoreland County: Fort Jenkins (on the North Branch of the Susquehanna, just north of the present I-80 bridge), Fort McClure (the home of James McClure – near the mouth of Fishing Creek), and Fort Wheeler (the home of Isaiah Wheeler – about 3 miles up Fishing Creek, near the present village of Light Street).

An interesting fact relating to the Pennamite-Yankee War is that Colonel John Butler had inserted a clause into the Forty Fort articles of capitulation allowing the Pennsylvania "suspects" (which included Tories) that had been driven away by the Connecticut Yankees (who supported the Revolution), to return and live here in peace and quiet and to repossess their property. There would prove to be some significance in that clause.

Most families that had fled the area eventually returned – some as early as late August, in an attempt to harvest any remaining crops. While the majority reclaimed their original property, a significant number relocated to other locations within the Wyoming Valley.

At the end of the American Revolution, the old conflicts resumed between Pennsylvania and Connecticut over the Wyoming Valley, and in 1782, the Continental Congress overturned King George III's ruling and upheld Pennsylvania's claim to the area. But when the state sought to force the Yankees from the land, another Pennamite war ensued, with Connecticut and Vermont sending men to help the settlers. Problems remained until the Pennsylvania Legislature confirmed the various land titles in 1788. The controversy finally ended in 1799, with the Wyoming Valley becoming part of Pennsylvania and the Yankee settlers becoming Pennsylvanians with legal claims to their land.

Appendix B. William Colbert and his Descendants – A Brief Family History

Rev. William Colbert and Elizabeth Stroud

by Elizabeth Stroud Colbert¹

Rev. William Colbert:

William Colbert was born in Poolesville, Montgomery County, Maryland, April 20, 1764. His parents, William and Sarah Colbert, came from England. His mother died in Baltimore, October 7, 1782, but his father lived until May 23, 1814, and spent his last days in the family of William and Elizabeth Stroud Colbert at Stroudsburg.

Quoting from a sketch of the life of Rev. William Colbert written by himself, we read: “After the death of my mother, I lived with my father, who with myself, was entirely destitute of religion until the year of 1785, when it pleased the Lord to direct our wandering feet to where the Methodists preached the Gospel in its purity. For until we heard them, we considered ourselves Church people. Here the Lord reached our hearts.

“I continued with my father until the year 1789, when I began to think very seriously that I ought to speak in public by way of exhortation, and that I should preach the Gospel. And though I have some reasons to hope that my first attempts were not altogether fruitless, I was very much out of conceit of myself.

“However, it still followed that I had work to do for the Lord, and the good of man, and I continued to speak in public more frequently and at different places until I left my father to teach at a school about sixteen miles distant. I boarded with Ignatius Pigman, an old traveling preacher who, on account his family, had located. This man was one of the most musical and agreeable preachers, and was very useful.

¹ Appendix B is taken from twelve pages that have been in the in the William Colbert collection at the conference archives at least since the 1960’s. The pages are white on black copies from part of some larger scrapbook-type volume, but the original source is not noted. The author identifies herself in the document as a granddaughter of William Colbert, and internal evidence places the date of composition as 1925. A publication of the Monroe County Historical Society states: “Miss Elizabeth Stroud Colbert spent many years in working up a complete record of the Stroud family which she presented to the Society in 1926. It is carefully typewritten and bound in morocco.” This 237 page document apparently is the immediate source of the pages in the conference archives. The material was updated in 1928 to 248 pages titled *Stroud Record: including the ancestry and a brief history of Colonel Jacob Stroud and Elizabeth McDowell, his wife, and a record of their descendants*. While some sources cite this 1928 update as published material, both the 1925 original and 1928 update appear to exist only as typewritten manuscripts.

“Here, as there was a great revival of the work of God and a great ingathering of souls, I labored hard. I walked six or seven miles some nights to a prayer meeting, was up with the distressed until after midnight, and returned home. Though this was trying on the constitution, it was truly delightful to the soul.

“I continued to teach school in this place for about eight months, when the death of a preacher in the circuit opened a door for me. Accordingly, I was recommended by Ignatius Pigman, with whom I had lived, to Nelson Reed, the Presiding Elder. Reed sent me to Calvert circuit on the Western shore of Maryland. Here I labored from the first of March until September 1790.²”

He speaks of the being ordained at the General Conference in Baltimore in November 1792, and being sent to Tioga. Rev. Abel Stevens, L.L.D., in his *History of American Methodism* says: “We have already noticed the extraordinary rise of Methodism in the Wyoming, Cumberland and Tioga regions, and the outspread of the Hudson River District, by Garrettson’s and Ware’s itinerants to those then remote fields – the labors of Anning Owen, Nathaniel B. Mills, and William Colbert.” Ware’s trials among the Tioga Wilds were fully shared by his associates.

Colbert set out from the General Conference of 1792 for this wilderness, confronting wintry hardships most of the way, and arrived at Nanticoke, in Wyoming Valley, early in December. His story of privation and suffering seems almost incredible. We read of his breakfasting on a frozen turnip, sleeping at night in a wretched cabin with his head “in the chimney corner,” fording streams, living on the poorest fare, preaching in cabins – sometimes with “part of the congregation drunk” and “with children about me bawling louder than I could speak.” He received for the four months of his toil “three dollars and fourteen cents.”

When Ware reaches him, ready to share his trials, he writes: “At one place we could get no straw to sleep on; however, Brother Ware fixed himself on a chest, with a bunch of tow for his pillow, and I suppose he thought himself well off. For my part, I had to get hay out of a boat for my bed, part of which a passenger begged. Though the life of a Methodist preacher is very laborious and fatiguing, it is what I glory in.” Such are mere examples of the primitive itinerancy of Methodism in the wilderness, but through such struggles has come the prosperity of later years.

Rev. Henry Boehm (called Father Boehm in his old age, for he died in 1875 aged a hundred years and six months) says of Rev. William Colbert: “I joined Society in 1797, when William Colbert and Dr. Chandler were on our

² This was the regional conference held in Baltimore September 6, 1790.

circuit. Colbert had a particular aptitude for reaching the feelings of his hearers. His congregations were generally fine, for when a preacher made a stir among the people, they rallied to hear him. He was a man of slight build, below the average stature, with a very expressive countenance, indicative of life and energy, with a strong voice, neither shrill nor piercing, but commanding in its sound.

“Colbert was lively in preaching, but did not use much gesture, nor did he vociferate. He was fearless and powerful. He brought the truth to his hearers with great effect. He was a full man, in every respect well qualified for his work. He was a man of ready speech, which was accompanied with a great deal of unction, and his success was great. He was a great revivalist.

“Brother Colbert and myself, in the year 1801, had about eight hundred conversions in Annamessex Circuit – a circuit which extended from the neighborhood of Indian River, across the peninsula into Deals Island in the Chesapeake. We had almost every soul converted on that Island – there were, I believe, very few left.”

In respect to preaching in bad weather Colbert said, “No weather a man can live in ought to stop him.” While on Seneca Circuit in June, 1797, he says: “I was overtaken in a very lonesome place by a thunderstorm. The wind was blowing, the lightning blazing, the thunder rolling, and the rain so pouring that by looking up I could not see to escape the timber that was falling about me. I was wet enough when I got to my appointment, and found it well to get a dry corner to stand in to preach.”

The next month he writes in his journal: “I believe long rides through the mud where we cannot go faster than a walk, being exposed to heavy rains, bad victuals, and dirty houses in consequence of swarms of fleas, have been the cause of my sickness. But these are light things and scarcely worthy of being put into the catalogue of what is suffered for Christ and the good of souls.”

In the *History of Wayne, Pike and Monroe Counties* by Matthews, we read: “The name of William Colbert, son-in-law of Colonel Jacob Stroud, cannot be too highly honored by the church in Stroudsburg. Although not the founder of Methodism in that vicinity, and although his name does not appear in our class record until his appointment to Bristol Circuit in 1796, he may not inappropriately be styled the foster father of Methodism in the present county of Monroe.”

He located in 1811. From 1808 he had made his home at Stroudsburg. In 1825, William Colbert, who had previously located, was re-admitted to the traveling ministry and appointed to Stroudsburg. That was the first appearance of Stroudsburg as a named appointment in the Annual Minutes of the Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1826, Stroudsburg retained William Colbert

as pastor. He seems to have continued to preach there, and on that circuit, until the time of this death in 1833.

Up to 1829 the society in Stroudsburg was without a church edifice. The Sunday services, class and prayer meetings were held at different places – but primarily at the residence of Rev. William Colbert. When the academy, which stands at the corner of Green and Elizabeth Streets, was built, it became the regular place for preaching. Father Boehm says: “To the last, he preached to the admiration of the people and to the edification and comfort of the followers of Christ.”

The day before he died, Colbert said: “It is a great thing to die. My only dependence is on a bleeding, all sufficient Savior.” We are told that: “A few moments before his departure, he called his children to his bedside, and exhorted them not to grieve at his death, for he would soon depart from his afflictions and be with Jesus. He likewise urged, with parental affection, his eldest son to be dutiful to his mother, a father to his younger brothers, and above all to take care of his precious soul. And while these exhortations were quivering on his lips, the immortal spirit left its tabernacle of clay.” Pneumonia was the immediate cause of his death, which occurred June 16, 1833.

Now concerning the wife:

In July, 1804, Elizabeth Stroud was paying a visit to her sister, Rachel (Stroud) Rees, in Trappe, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. While there, she traveled nearly thirty miles on horseback to attend a Methodist quarterly meeting – and while there, she first met her future husband.

Quoting his words, we read: “Being out of the meeting house, near the door, I saw David James’ remarkable attention to a genteel, plain and well-dressed young woman who had on an olive colored silk gown. His attention to her induced me to ask him who she was. He informed me it was Betsy Stroud, who had been at her sister’s for some time and had come near thirty miles to the quarterly meeting by herself.”

This is the beginning of a very interesting little story. The friendship progressed very rapidly, and on November 1 of the same year they were married. Colonel Stroud did not favor this union – although he did not forbid it, he urged his reasons against it.

He foresaw what hardships were before his youngest daughter – who had been accustomed to full and plenty and every comfort and luxury her parents could give her, and who could not realize the privations which must needs come to her as the wife of an itinerant Methodist preacher of those early days. However, on Thursday evening, November 1, 1804, at the close of a Methodist

meeting held at the home of Lawrence Van Buskirk, William Colbert and Elizabeth Stroud were united in marriage by Rev. David Bartine.

Mr. Colbert says in his journal for the following day: "Friday, 2nd – I rode with my Elizabeth to her father's with a trembling heart and found things not so unfavorable as I thought I should. Saturday, 3rd – I spent at Colonel Stroud's and felt my mind in a measure relieved." There is a story told of a man getting up in a meeting near Stroudsburg and saying to the preacher: "I don't think you have any cause for complaint, Mr. Colbert – you have your hair and your teeth and Colonel Stroud's prettiest daughter."

The writer's father was the youngest of the Colbert children, and he can remember his mother only in middle and elderly life. He says she was rather tall and of full habit, and very pleasing in appearance. He remembered her wearing a white kerchief, poke bonnet and drab dress. She dressed like a Friend, but in those early days the Methodists dressed quite as plainly as Friends. He says she had a beautiful face, dark brown hair, clear complexion and blue eyes. She had a very even disposition and was very patient.

He was an invalid for some years as a boy, and says he was "made up" when his mother would sit beside him. He remembers her saying to him: "My son, never use the harsher way, if love can do the deed." He was but six years of age when his father died, so his recollections of Rev. Colbert were not so vivid as his recollections of his mother. He has heard it told in the family that his father was drafted out from Maryland to help guard the British soldiers at the time of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown in 1781.

It was also told in the family that Rev. William Colbert said his name was originally Calvert, but that people got to writing it Colbert – and that he accepted the situation and did the same.

Children of Rev. William Colbert and Elizabeth Stroud:

1. Elizabeth S. Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, December 4, 1805, and died there December 5, 1805.
2. Sarah Colbert. Born at Stroudsburg PA, October 21, 1806, and died there January 12, 1807.
3. James Anderson Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, November 15, 1807, and died the same day.
4. Miriam Anderson Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, August 24, 1809, and died at Rahway NJ, December 10, 1891. She is buried in the old graveyard at Stroudsburg. On September 2, 1846, she married widower

Simon Lee of Sterling, Wayne County PA. He died November 12, 1849. One child was born to this union.

- a. Simon Colbert Lee, born March 31, 1849, and died at Pen Argyl PA, January 28, 1895, unmarried.
5. Elizabeth McDowell Colbert,³ born at Stroudsburg PA, October 30, 1811, and died there November 2, 1896, unmarried. She is buried in the old graveyard at Stroudsburg PA, where a stone marks the spot.
6. Cyrus Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, October 31, 1813, and died in Philadelphia, unmarried. He was buried June 10, 1837.
7. Mary Ann S. Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, September 1, 1816, and died at Falls of Schuylkill, Philadelphia PA, March 24, 1863. She is buried in the old graveyard at Stroudsburg, where a monument marks the place. On May 25, 1843, she married Rev. Peter Jacquett Cox, a Methodist minister who was born in Philadelphia PA on August 29, 1818, and died at Flushing, Long Island NY, at the home of his son Charles on July 23, 1892. He is buried beside his wife and their daughter Mary Ellen.⁴ Five children were born to this union.
 - a. Elizabeth Colbert Cox, born at Pottstown PA, died in infancy at North East MD.
 - b. Deborah Lydia Cox, born at Pottstown PA, died in infancy at North East MD.
 - c. William Colbert Cox, born at North East MD, March 28, 1847, and died at Chicago IL, December 30, 1901. On September 7, 1885, he married Harriet B.S. John, born April 28, 1852. He became a medical doctor and is buried in the Stroudsburg Cemetery. They had no children.
 - d. Mary Ann Cox, born at Mt. Bethel PA, died quite young at Milford DE.
 - e. Charles Benjamin Cox, born in Philadelphia PA, August 6, 1854. On November 21, 1882, he married Kate Preston Wallace in Philadelphia PA. Their family home (in 1925) is in Ridley Park PA. They had three children.

³ Elizabeth Colbert was the keeper of Colbert's journal who allowed historian George Peck access to the material in 1860.

⁴ This is an internal inconsistency in the document, as there is no Mary Ellen listed among the children. Perhaps the "Mary Ellen" buried in Stroudsburg is the "Mary Ann" who died "quite young."

- (1) Mary Ellen Cox, born at Jersey City NJ, August 15, 1883. Unmarried.
- (2) Jessie Wallace Cox, born at Elizabeth NJ, March 3, 1885. Unmarried.
- (3) David Wallace Cox, born in Brooklyn NY, January 1, 1889. On June 3, 1916, he married Lillian Madeline Butz in Wilmington DE. They presently have two children.
 - Deborah Cox, born at Wilmington DE, September 10, 1921.
 - Joanna Cox, born at Wilmington DE, November 15, 1925.
8. Ellen Colbert Cox, born at Stroudsburg PA, July 26, 1819, and died there April 23, 1920.
9. Harriet Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, March 7, 1821, and died there April 23, 1821.
10. William S. Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, February 23, 1822, and died there July 15, 1824.
11. William Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, August 10, 1824, and died in Philadelphia PA. November 4, 1895. He is buried in the old graveyard at Stroudsburg PA, where a stone marks the spot. He married Mary Ann McGinley, born June 1, 1851, and died January 13, 1897. They had five children.⁵
 - a. Elizabeth McDowell Colbert, Jr., born at Alcorn Farm near Oil City PA, May 8, 1868. Unmarried.
 - b. William S. Colbert, born at Alcorn Farm near Oil City PA, October 29, 1869. Unmarried.
 - c. Miriam Anderson Colbert, born at Alcorn Farm near Oil City PA, May 1, 1871. She married in Philadelphia on January 2, 1899, to Dr. John Jacob Rapp. They had four children.

⁵ This is the end of the twelve pages that have been in the conference archives for 50+ years, but the section on William Colbert contains fourteen pages. The remaining information was secured from the 1928 update of the document in possession of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, hence the post-1925 references in the final portion of a document originally presented to the Monroe County Historical Society in 1926.

- (1) Harold Colbert Rapp, born at Ames IA, October 22, 1899. He married his cousin Dorothy C. Rapp (daughter of George E. and Maud [Beeler]Rapp) in New York City on July 6, 1924. They are living in Philadelphia (in 1927).
 - (2) John Rapp, born at Ames IA, May 26, 1902. He married Emma Jane McKee on January 6, 1923. They are living in Philadelphia (in 1927).
 - (3) Edward Martin Rapp, born in Philadelphia PA, September 10, 1904. He married Dorothy Johnson Smyth (daughter of Joseph Watson and Jennnie [Johnson] Smyth) at Media PA on December 18, 1923. They are living in Philadelphia and attending the University of Pennsylvania (in 1925).
 - (4) Francis Asbury Rapp was born in Philadelphia PA, February 10, 1906.
- d. James Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, about 1873. Died in infancy.
 - e. Mary Ann Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, June 4, 1876. She married Charles Carroll. They had one child.
- (1) Marion Agnes Carroll, born in Philadelphia PA, March 7, 1903. She married Herbert E. Ford in Philadelphia on January 25, 1928.
12. Charles Stroud Colbert, born at Stroudsburg PA, March 12, 1827, and died December 11, 1905. He is buried in the Easton Cemetery, where a stone marks the spot. He married Susannah Rebecca Huckel, born in Frankford, Philadelphia PA, April 28, 1831. She is the daughter of Samuel Huckel (also born and lived all his life in Philadelphia PA) and Rebecca A. Ming, his wife. Susannah R. Colbert died in Easton PA, November 22, 1912, and is buried beside her husband. They had one child.
 - a. Elizabeth Stroud Colbert,⁶ born at Alcorn Farm near Oil City PA, April 23, 1867, and living in Easton PA since November 1880.

⁶ This is the author, the only child of William Colbert's twelfth and youngest child. Miss Colbert would have been 58 years old when she completed this labor of love in 1925.

EDITOR'S EPILOGUE

We close this volume dedicated to William Colbert's travels on Northumberland, Wyoming and Tioga Circuits with selected comments from George Peck's 1860 *Early Methodism within the Bounds of the Old Genesee Conference*, pages 272-275, the earliest known attempt to capture for posterity the person of William Colbert.

"Mr. Colbert was a native of Maryland, and had been accustomed to the comforts and luxuries of refined society. The contrast between the comfortable and elegant homes of Maryland and Delaware and the log cabins and the stinted and homely fare of the New England settlers was so great as to shock the sensibilities of his nature and fill him with disgust and loathing.

"The poor cookery, cold houses, dirt, and insects of a new country were to him real evils, for he had not been accustomed to such things. When he wanted retirement, to be compelled to sit down among a troop of noisy children was more disagreeable than the terrors and gloom of a howling wilderness. These, with a thousand and one unmentionable troubles, our missionary endured for the sake of Christ and the love of souls. In labors he was abundant. In journeys, exposure, frequent preaching, persevering, earnest efforts to extend the reign of Christ and save souls, he had few equals and perhaps no superiors.

"Mr. Jesse Bowman of Briar Creek, Pa., recollects the subject of this sketch perfectly, and has furnished us the following note of some of his peculiarities: *Mr. Colbert was a small, slender man, about one hundred and twenty-five pounds, not more; wore buckskin breeches, or small clothes, which he furbished up and repaired with yellow ochre, with which he was always supplied.*

"Mr. Colbert was a good preacher, sound in doctrine, clear in method, plain and practical, cogent in reasoning, and earnest in his appeals. He read the best books, as his scanty time and opportunity allowed, and profited by them. His object was not so much to shine as to do good.

"No labor or hazard turned him aside from the path of duty. He traveled in all extremities of weather, and endured the greatest privations in his Master's service. He broke up as much new ground as any other man of his period. Of what he passed through as a pioneer preacher we of the present generation can form but an imperfect estimate... He was a true-hearted Methodist."