

THE COLLECTION

Bought November 21

A Revolutionary War private bought a Bible in 1795 and wrote his family into it.

CHRIS VALLETTA

Holy Bible, Isaac Collins, Trenton, 1793
Bought by Jacob Edick, November 21, 1795

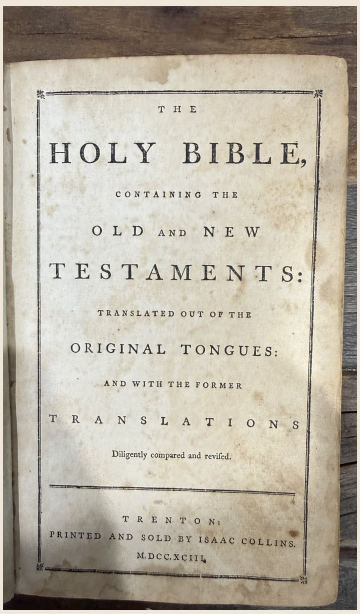
This is the oldest Bible in my collection. I found it in an antique bookstore in 2020.

It was printed in Trenton in 1793 by Isaac Collins, a Quaker printer. It is the second edition of the Bible ever printed in New Jersey. The leather is worn through at the corners, and the covers are held on by the cords of the binding.

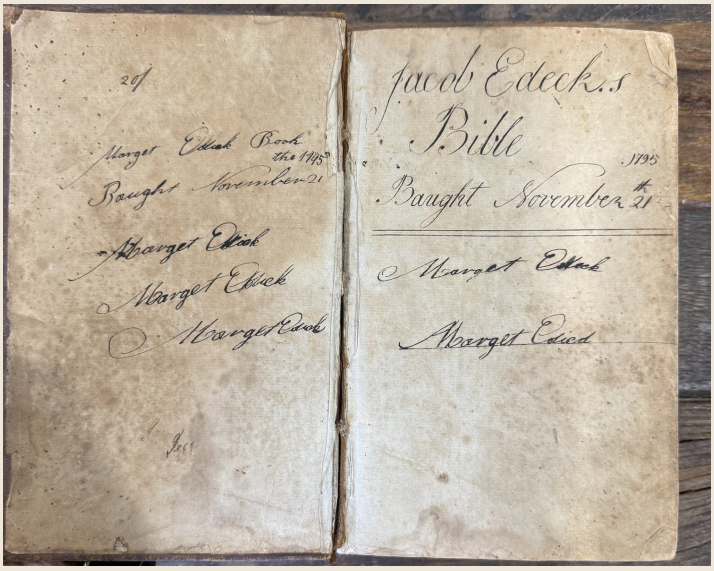
Inside the cover, in brown ink, a man wrote: "Jacob Edeck's Bible Baught November 21th 1795."

Baught. That was not a mistake in 1795. American spelling had no standard yet. Noah Webster did not publish his first dictionary until 1806, so people spelled words the way they sounded. This one book spells the family name two ways, Edeck and Edick. It has "Maried" for married and "Marget" for Margaret. Jacob wrote the way he talked, and he wanted it on the record that he paid for this book.

On the facing page is his wife's name: "Marget Edick." Then again, and again. His name appears on these two pages once. Hers appears six times.


THE
HOLY BIBLE,
CONTAINING THE
OLD AND NEW
TESTAMENTS:
TRANSLATED OUT OF THE
ORIGINAL TONGUES:
AND WITH THE FORMER
TRANSLATIONS
Diligently compared and revised.
TRENTON:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY ISAAC COLLINS.
M.DCC.XCIII.

The title page: "Trenton: Printed and sold by Isaac Collins. M.DCC.XCIII."



"Jacob Edeck's Bible Baught November 21th 1795." Margaret's name fills the facing page.

THE VALLEY

Jacob Edick was born about 1764 at German Flatts, a settlement of German farmers in New York's Mohawk Valley. His father died when he was about five.

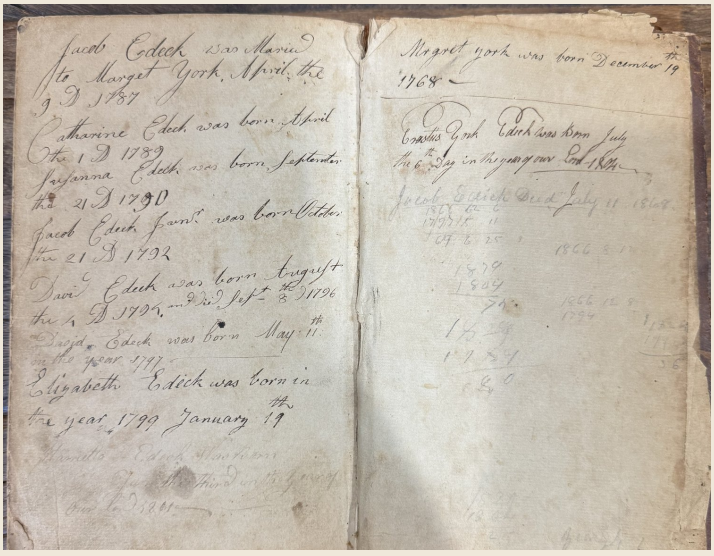
On September 17, 1778, Joseph Brant led a force of Iroquois and Loyalists into German Flatts. They burned 63 houses, nearly as many barns, and the mills. The families made it into Fort Dayton and Fort Herkimer because a scout named Adam Helmer ran 26 miles to warn them. Jacob's family was there. He was about fourteen.

He served as a private in the Tryon County militia, in Colonel Peter Bellinger's regiment, the German Flatts men. Militia meant the farmers of the valley, called out to defend their own homes. The Daughters of the American Revolution recognize him as a patriot.

THE BOOK

After the war, on April 9, 1787, he married Margaret York. She was eighteen. They moved south to the Delaware River, to the frontier settlement that became Deposit, New York. The town got its name from the logs piled on the riverbank to be rafted downstream.

Eight years later he bought this Bible. Then he wrote his family into it, starting with the wedding.



The family record, from Jacob and Margaret's wedding in 1787 to the birth of their son Erastus in 1804.

"Jacob Edeck was Maried to Marget York April the 9 D 1787." Then the children. Catharine. Susanna. Jacob Jr.

Then this: "David Edeck was born August the 4 D 1794 and died Sept 8th 1796." He was two.

The next line: “David Edeck was born May 11th in the year 1797.”

> *They named the next boy David too.*

Then Elizabeth. Then Harriet, in ink so faded you have to tilt the page to read it. Then Erastus York Edeck, “born July the 6th Day in the year of our Lord 1804.”

Three years later Jacob was dead. His stone in Deposit reads: “Here lies Jacob Edick. Died Octr 3d 1807.” He was 43. Margaret was 38, with seven children. The youngest was three.

The book kept going. The family went on recording in it until 1877. On the page facing the children’s names, someone did arithmetic in pencil: 1868 minus 1792, then the months, then the days. It comes out to 75 years, 8 months and 20 days. That is the exact age carved on Jacob Jr.‘s gravestone. His family worked out his age for the stone a few inches from where his father had written down his birth.

In 1928 a marker went up on Laurel Bank Avenue in Deposit, headed “Soldiers of the War 1776.” Jacob Edick is on it, next to his brother Conrad.

AFTER THE WAR

We honor veterans for what they did in uniform, and we should. But most of a soldier’s life comes after the war. Jacob came home from a burned valley. He married, moved his family to the edge of the frontier, buried a son, and wrote every name down so none of them would be lost.

Leadership is service, and most of it happens after you come home. The war needed Jacob for a few years. His family needed him every day after that.

> *“Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom.”*
>
> PSALM 90:12 (NLT)

Jacob spelled it wrong by our rules and right by his. He bought the book. His family spent the next eighty years filling it.

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CHRIS VALLETTA

Scripture quotation marked NLT taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

SOURCES AND NOTES

1. The Holy Bible, Trenton: Isaac Collins, 1793 [issued 1794]. Hills 43; Evans 25171, 26666; Felcone, *Printing in New Jersey* 683. Described as the second Bible printed in New Jersey by Felcone Books.
2. Edick family record and inscriptions, in the Bible (collection of Chris Valletta).
3. Daughters of the American Revolution, Ancestor A036203, Edick, Jacob II: Private, Capt. Herder, Col. Peter Bellinger, 4th Regt., Tryon County Militia; died 3 Oct 1807, Deposit, N.Y.; spouse Margaret York.
4. Gravestone, Revolutionary War Cemetery, Deposit, Delaware County, N.Y.: "Here lies Jacob Edick, Died Octr 3d 1807, AE 43." Find a Grave memorial 66132902.
5. Marker, "Soldiers of the War 1776," Laurel Bank Avenue, Deposit, N.Y., erected 1928 by Mrs. Nancy M. Parker (Historical Marker Database 304501).
6. Attack on German Flatts, 17 Sep 1778: 63 houses, barns, mills burned; Adam Helmer's warning run.
7. Biography of Capt. Conrad Edick, 19th-century Broome County history (copy with the Bible).
8. Noah Webster, *A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language*, 1806.

Not claimed. The Bible was printed and bought after the war; it was not carried in the Revolution. Papers that came with the book place Jacob at the Battle of Oriskany (1777), when he was about thirteen; no record found supports that, so it is left out.