

Jonathan Doan, The Patriarch of Yarmouth

Donald Anger

"Being one of the first settlers there and a man of energy and influence, he was known in old age as the Patriarch of Yarmouth"

Arthur Dorland (1887-1979), in his landmark book *A History Of The Society Of Friends (Quakers) In Canada*, a work which constituted his doctoral dissertation in 1927, writes of the settling of Yarmouth: "The pioneer of this district was a Quaker, Jonathan Doan, who came from near Philadelphia in 1813. He was, according to his own claim, the first white settler in this district south of Talbot Street."¹ Dorland then goes on to briefly describe the subsequent growth of Yarmouth Meeting in the after years. At that time he was unaware that Doan had been a resident of Upper Canada for twenty-four years before initiating the Yarmouth experiment; further, he gives no explanatory causal or antecedent origins of the settlement. To be fair to Dorland, we must attribute some of this brevity to the difficulty at the time of locating and accessing the relevant records, but even more to the broad challenge of his overall task. In his Introduction, for example, he laments "the paucity of personal or biographical material" left behind by Quakers and "as far as most of the standard histories of Canada are concerned, the Quakers might never have existed."

In 1929, Charles S. Buck (1892-1976), in his master's thesis entitled "Old Sparta and its Neighbourhood,"² essentially began his study by noting the circumstance of the arrival of Jonathan Doan at the Sugar Loaf in the Niagara District with his small family in 1789, and then added: "Nothing else is known of Jonathan Doan's sojourn at Niagara for twenty-five years except that his family was increased by nine children."²

With due regard to the well-deserved reputations of these two historians, but also cognizant of the limited research resources each man experienced nearly a century ago, I have attempted in the study which follows to continue where Dorland and Buck left off: to determine, for example, what were the salient factors in those missing twenty-five years of Doan's life at the Sugarloaf Settlement that eventually led to his development of the Yarmouth Settlement. In that process, light can hopefully be shed on what may have motivated or driven Jonathan Doan, a middle-aged grandfather at the time, to have taken his seven year old grandson out into the far wilderness with him, in the midst of the War of 1812, to tackle the building of a new Quaker Settlement.

Further, a yet more complete understanding of the complex man who was Jonathan Doan can only be arrived at by first examining, as best we can, the range

¹ Arthur G. Dorland, *A History of The Society Of Friends (Quakers) In Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan Co., 1927), 72.

² Charles S. Buck, "Old Sparta and Its Neighbourhood" (St. Thomas: Elgin County Library Bd., 1979), 5-6. This was Buck's 1929 Master's thesis, which remained unpublished until 1979. Buck was a contemporary of noted south-western Ontario historian Fred Landon and submitted many historical articles in the *London Free Press*.

of experiences he underwent in the initial twenty-four years of his life in the United States, and that is where we must begin.

Leaving the Quaker Fold

Daniel Doan (c.1670-1743), great-grandfather of Jonathan Doan, joined the Religious Society of Friends in the 1690s at Sandwich Meeting on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, the oldest continuous meeting in the United States. In 1696 he applied for and received a certificate of removal for his family: "At a Meeting of Friends at Sandwich in New England ye 17th of 3rd mo. 1696, We here are to signify to all whom it may concern that our friend Daniel Doan & his wife Mehetabel ... with whom we have great unity." After a journey of about two hundred miles, the family arrived in Bucks County, Pennsylvania and presented their credentials to the Middletown Meeting near Newtown. There, from time to time, the enigmatic Daniel would be in conflict with his Meeting, with one reason being "that Daniel Doan should meddle in Predicting astrologie."³

Jonathan Doan's grandfather Israel Doan (1699-c.1797)⁴ of Bucks County, married Esther Dillon out of unity with Friends about 1724 and so, when they soon

thereafter moved to Plumstead from Newtown, he was disowned by the Middletown Monthly Meeting after they stated "the distance into the country where he lived was so great it was difficult to see him."⁵ However, a later family historian asserted: "While we have no evidence that he was restored to membership with them, there is proof that he ever maintained his fealty to Friends and attended their meetings for worship at Plumstead, and that his children were recognized and treated as members."⁶ Even so, the essential link to the Society of Friends, or Quakers, had been broken. Some years later, Israel's second son Elijah, the father of Jonathan, married Sarah Groves and settled across the Delaware River near Trenton, New Jersey, where Jonathan, the second eldest of Elijah's eight children, was born on 16 March 1765.⁷

Many decades later in 1843, and writing from his home in the Yarmouth Settlement in Upper Canada at age seventy-eight, Jonathan Doan continued with his own story: "Your Petitioner was born in New Jersey...[but]...was settled on the breaking out of the Revolutionary War in the County of Bucks in Pennsylvania."⁸ Census records tell us that Jonathan's sister Elizabeth was also born in New Jersey, in 1773,⁹ and so it may well have been near the time of

³ Alfred Alder Doane, *The Doane Family* (Boston: A.A.Doane,1902; Facsimile 4th Edition, Doane Assoc. of America, 1984), 54-56.

⁴ Israel was the brother of the Joseph Doan (1697-1754+) who, because of his great strength and power of endurance, was employed by Thomas and Richard Penn in 1735 to do a 'trial walk' in preparation for the 'Walking Purchase' Treaty with the Delawares in 1737.

⁵ 'Middletown Monthly Meeting Minutes, 2nd d., 10 mo., 1725'. Cited in *The Doane Family*, 81.

⁶ Doane, *The Doane Family*, 81.

⁷ Doane, *The Doane Family*, 131.

⁸ Jonathan Doan Land Petition, Yarmouth 1843, Vol.165, Bundle D2, 32 (mfm. C-1880), Archives of Ontario (AO), Toronto, ON.

⁹ 1850 U.S. Federal Census, Berwick, PA, 159A. Elizabeth Cooper, age seventy-seven, b. New Jersey, living with family of nephew Wm. Doan, age fifty, son of her brother Benjamin Doan who was also brother to Jonathan Doan.

Washington's crossing of the Delaware River on Christmas Eve of 1776 and the subsequent Battle of Trenton that the Elijah Doan family came back across the Delaware to re-settle in Bucks County near Plumstead. It was here that the troubles began. During the course of the war, Jonathan's age grew from eleven through to eighteen years of age by war's end and he was speaking for his entire family when he stated: "During the said War, Your Petitioner gave shelter and food to parties of Royalists at many different times, also conveyed provisions to the British Camp and rendered what assistance he was able to the Royal Cause, for which the Insurgent Troops were quartered upon them, who drove off their cattle, and threshed off their grain and otherwise annoyed them in every possible way."¹⁰

Concurring with Jonathan's statement in 1843 was his first cousin Joseph Doan (1752-1844), formerly of Plumstead, who was age ninety-one by this time, and also living in Upper Canada. Joseph attested: "I Joseph Doan ... do hereby solemnly declare that I am well acquainted with Jonathan Doan now... and have known him since his youth." He then went on to describe similar harshness that had been experienced by Jonathan, adding that they "committed him to Jail" and "in consequence of which violence and persecution the said Jonathan Doan Emigrated to Upper Canada in or about the Year 1789 in Company with me and my Brother Aaron Doan where he suffered incredible hardships, and where he has remained to this time a true loyal Subject of the British Crown."¹¹

Completely unsaid in the dialogue above

was any mention of the extreme savagery which had befallen Joseph Doan himself during the war, and also to Joseph's brothers Moses, Aaron, Levi and Mahlon, because of what had happened to their father Joseph Doan Senior. Being a son of Israel, and a brother of Elijah, Joseph Doan Sr. as we now know, had not been brought up as a Quaker. Consequently, when about 1750 he married Esther Vickers who was a Quaker, their marriage was 'out of meeting' and she was asked to leave the Quaker Meeting. Six years later, Esther desperately wished to return to the fold and as the Buckingham Monthly Minutes reveal on 2 August 1756: "At this Meeting Esther Doan brought a Paper of Acknowledgement & Condemnation for her Outgoing in Marriage which was read & accepted."¹² From that moment on, the Society of Friends in Bucks County probably had no stronger or more fervent supporters than Esther and Joseph Doan.

The outbreak of the American Revolution changed everything. Joseph Sr. and his family were staunch Quakers, and, therefore, strictly pacifist. Joseph Sr. refused to pay the fines required by law by the new American government to exempt himself and his five sons from serving in the militia. His straight-forward logic was that since the monies collected went directly to support the military cause, neither he nor his sons could, in all conscience, contribute any money. The end result was that his farm was seized to pay the fines. His sons, by similar cause-and-effect logic, now saw the American government as the enemy and consequently tried by many inventive means to aid the Loyalist cause. The effects were

¹⁰ Jonathan Doan Land Petition, AO.

¹¹ Jonathan Doan Land Petition, Yarmouth 1843, Vol.165, Bundle D2, 32d, 'Affidavit of Joseph Doan'. (mfm. C-1880), AO.

¹² Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Bucks Co., Buckingham Monthly Meeting Minutes (1722-1763), 2 August 1756.

catastrophic for the family of Joseph Sr. and his wife Esther.¹³ Their son Moses, the reputed 'Eagle Spy' for British General Howe, was shot and killed on 1 September 1783 in Plumstead. Mahlon escaped from prison in late 1783 and abruptly disappeared, never to be seen again. Even later in 1783, the father, Joseph Sr., "was again arrested and lodged in prison at Newtown, and at the March term of Court the next year, he was tried and convicted of the 'heinous' crime of harboring and comforting his own children... for his offence he was sentenced to be burned in the hand and to suffer six months imprisonment." Aaron was sentenced to be hanged, but before the sentence was executed, he petitioned directly to Benjamin Franklin on 17 April 1787 and, as a result, on 17 May 1787 the Executive Council ordered he be pardoned on condition he leave the country and never return on pain of death. His brother Joseph, a school teacher, was shot and wounded but finally escaped from jail and fled to Upper Canada with his wife and young son, Moses. The two brothers ended up at the Sugarloaf Settlement in Humberstone Township in late 1787 or 1788 on the edge of Lake Erie shortly before their cousin Jonathan Doan arrived in 1789. Then, Levi was hanged along with his cousin Abraham Doan on the commons in Philadelphia on 24

September 1788, this time following an unsuccessful petition to Benjamin Franklin, President of the Executive Council. Following the execution of Levi and Abraham in Philadelphia, Joseph Sr. "went to the city and carried the two bodies in a cart to Plumstead. The Society of Friends in that village, after deliberating awhile, refused to grant permission for the interment in their graveyard, consequently they were buried in the edge of the woods nearly opposite the Plumstead Meeting-House.¹⁴ An old lady who once lived on the Doane farm remembers that Levi's mother, Esther, was in the habit of visiting his grave, over which with Bible in hand she would read and weep for hours at a time." This time, and for this branch of the Doan family, the Quaker bond was completely shattered and, at least so it seemed at the time, could never be reunited.

A century after the unfortunate events took place, Henry C. Mercer (1856-1930), a pre-eminent American archaeologist,



Plumstead Meetinghouse

¹³ Doane, *The Doane Family*. The tragic events surrounding this family are described and explored in great detail in Doane's book as follows: Joseph Doan Sr. (126-133); Moses Doan (231-233); Joseph Doan Jr. (233-238); Aaron Doan (238-241); Levi Doan (230-244); Mahlon Doan (244-245).

¹⁴ The Plumstead Meeting House, where Joseph Doan Sr. and his family once attended Meeting, is still in existence today. It was built c.1752 and was used as a hospital by the Continental Army during the fall and winter of 1777 during the Battle of Germantown. In 1788 Levi and Abraham Doan were executed and buried adjacent to the cemetery which lies behind the Meeting House. Both of their stones are visible just outside the cemetery walls.

historian, designer, museum curator and founding member of the Bucks County Historical Society,¹⁵ took special interest in the mid-1880s in the plight of the Doan brothers and referred to them as “the much maligned and misunderstood Doans.”¹⁶ During this same period, Alfred Alder Doane (1855-1918), was making a systematic investigation of this same branch of Doans in preparation for his monumental work *The Doane Family*, first published in 1902. After intensive study of the family of Joseph Doan Sr. and his sons, relying heavily on first-hand accounts and multiple character witnesses in addition to documentation in order to cut through the welter of misinformation, 'anti-Tory' hysteria, and the stories and legends, the Doan family emerges in his book as a ramrod-straight, upright and honest family before the war. Even their 'enemies' admitted to this. Their strict adherence to what they deemed to be their basic Quaker principles, and how they chose to react to incremental provocations eventually doomed them. If the vagaries of war had instead tipped the balance finally in favour of the British cause and the 'rebels' were defeated, no doubt the perspective on this family in today's history south of the Canadian border would instead be largely positive.

As their cousin Jonathan Doan made his way northward to Upper Canada in the summer of 1789 with his young family, he carried within him the observations of this family trauma and would always be sensitive to the need to protect his own children from similar dangers. At a certain point in the future after entering Upper Canada, he

would make the conscious decision to actively seek to join the Society of Friends and once more reunite the link that had been broken in the time of his grandfather Israel Doan in Bucks County. Unfortunately, along the way in his life's journey he would be subjected to one of the most tragic ironies ever to form part of Canada's history – the death of a son in eerily similar fashion to what had befallen the sons of his own uncle Joseph Doan Sr. Despite this, and true to his indefatigable personality, the Patriarch of Yarmouth would continue to persevere. Until the very end of his life he would continue to walk, mile after mile, in his lifelong quest to support the Society of Friends.

A New Home in Upper Canada

At some unrecorded time in early 1786 Jonathan Doan had married Jane Thompson, daughter of John Thompson, in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. The couple's first child, Sarah Jane, was born on 30 September 1786, followed over two years later by a son, Elijah, on 22 May 1789, both children being named after their paternal grandparents. Surprisingly, we find that Elijah was not born in Pennsylvania as his sister Sarah had been. Instead, he was born in nearby Virginia, as his father's words would show twenty-seven years later when he completed the following Land Petition as 'attorney' on behalf of his son in Upper Canada:

The Petition of Elijah Doan of the Township of Woodhouse, Yeoman, Humbly Sheweth: That your

¹⁵ The impressive Mercer Museum at Doylestown, Bucks County, has been visited by this author. According to Henry Ford, it was the only museum worth visiting in the United States and it was apparently the inspiration for Ford's own museum built later in Dearborn, MI. (*Wikipedia*: Henry Chapman Mercer)

¹⁶ Bucks County Hist. Society (Vol.1: 1885), “The Doans and Their Times,” 271.

petitioner was born in Virginia, but has been resident in this Province from his infancy, & is 27 years of age. That having purchased Lands in the Township of Yarmouth where he is about settling, he is desirous of obtaining a Lease of the Reserved Lot 11 in the 7th Concession of the Township of Yarmouth and humbly offers his Father Jonathan Doan of ... Yarmouth as a surety for the due payment of the rent ... Elijah Doan by his Father and Attorney (Signed) Jonathan Doan. York 18th July 1816.¹⁷

We can only speculate on why Jonathan Doan and his young family were in Virginia in early 1789, but given his testimony in his 1843 petition, the reason could well have been outlined in an article in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* on 4 February 1789 in which the editor decries the present treatment of Quakers in Pennsylvania and states: "Virginia, and the governor of Canada, have already taken advantage of our folly, they invite Quakers, and other sects who are opposed to oaths, and promises of fidelity to government to come and settle among them."¹⁸ Although at this particular time Jonathan Doan was not a Quaker, he had, according to his own words and also those of his cousin Joseph, suffered at the hands of those people in Bucks County who certainly did not like members of the Doan family, even if unlike his Doan cousins Jonathan had not done anything to merit mistreatment. Thus, Jonathan may have found it beneficial to leave Bucks

County and cross the border for the comparative haven of the State of Virginia. Then, perhaps he later determined that leaving for Upper Canada may have more advantages in the longer run as he heard about acquaintances and relatives readying to go there. Regardless of the actual reasons involved, about four months after the birth of their son, this small family, led by a twenty-four year-old Jonathan Doan, crossed the Niagara River at Black Rock and entered Upper Canada, sometime in early September of 1789. They had been accompanied on their journey northward by Jonathan's younger unmarried brother, Israel.

The Doan brothers settled along the lakeshore in the Township of Wainfleet, at the far western edge of the Sugarloaf Settlement. The settlement was given this name because of the large cone-shaped hill which was located on the Humberstone - Wainfleet Township Line near the water's edge.¹⁹ The hill's shape reminded the earliest settlers of a sugar loaf, which they might keep in their cabin's larder. However, many years earlier during the French Regime, the hill was instead called Monte Cristo by the early French explorers and was used as a navigation guide-post. In 1788, Christian Zavitz (1750-1826) and his family had arrived from Pennsylvania. He was the descendant of two generations of mill builders and, by 1790, had built his own mill at Gravelly Bay near the base of Sugarloaf Hill. Within a short time, all paths would lead to this mill which soon became the heart of the new Sugarloaf

¹⁷ Upper Canada Sundries, Land Petition of Elijah Doan of Woodhouse for Land in Yarmouth (1816), pp. 13348-50, AO.

¹⁸ Colonial Records of Pennsylvania, XV, 418, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 4 Feb. 1789 (Philadelphia: 1852)

¹⁹ Sugarloaf Hill is the highest point of land along the northern shore of Lake Erie and is located within the city of Port Colborne today. During the War of 1812 it was one of several high points on the Niagara Peninsula supplied with beacons to be fired to serve as a warning signal in case of surprise attack.

Settlement as it grew.²⁰

Years later, Jonathan's cousin Joseph Doan did not exaggerate when he spoke of the "extreme hardship" which had been experienced during the first years of settlement by Jonathan Doan's family. As he and Israel would soon find out, underlying much of their new lots and only a few inches beneath their feet, was limestone bedrock. Immediately to their west was wilderness for a hundred miles virtually devoid of human beings, and "immediately north of the territory on which the pioneers settled was an impenetrable marsh which harboured beasts of prey and reptiles. The deadly rattlesnake was a great source of alarm to the people."²¹

Equally concerning, most of these families who had arrived had no direct or sure way to gain title to this land because most of them were squatters. Since the appropriate infrastructure was not yet in place to efficiently settle large numbers of people, most immigrants in this part of Niagara simply chose a piece of ground and settled on it without any authority being given, thereby hoping that their possession could be legally confirmed later. Four years after the Doans' arrival, some of the families at the Sugar Loaf signed the following petition dated at Newark (Niagara-On-The-Lake), on 30 March 1793:

"The Petition of the Inhabitants settled round the Point called Sugar Loaf above Fort Erie Humbly Sheweth -- That near one hundred Families are now Settled in that Quarter on Lands not yet Surveyed, Subject from this Circumstance the many inconveniences attending this Situation, particularly to disputes about Limits & encroachments the one on the other -- Therefore most humbly Supplicating your Excellency will have the Goodness to order a Survey to be made of their Lands, with such dispatch as you in your wisdom may think fit."²²

Following the survey, in 1796 Jonathan Doan appeared before the local justice of the peace and Member of the Assembly, Isaac Swayze, and requested a grant of land. Swayze wrote down on a certificate the following information which Jonathan provided: "The bearer, Jonathan Doan of thirty-one years of age, born in the Steat of pensellvani, professing the Christian Religion and a wever by tread, having been this day examined by me, and taken the oaths prescribed by law, is recommended for a location of two hundred acres of land within this district, provided it does not appear from the surveyor's books that he has had any prior grant of lands in any district of this province. Given under my hand this 13th day of June, 1796. Isaac

²⁰ Zavitz Mill was one of the few mills along the northern shore of Lake Erie to survive the war. In 1813 the settlement became a virtual 'no man's land' and the mill was taken on three occasions by American raiders under Major Chapin of Buffalo. The *Buffalo Gazette* reported on 21 September 1813: "A company of volunteers embarked for Sugar Loaf under the command of Major Chapin ... the party took several prisoners ... there were several hundred barrels of flour at the mill, but there being no proof of its being public property it was not taken ... we hope it will tend to counteract the scandalous stories respecting Major Chapin's corps being an organized set of marauders". On the Canadian side of the river Chapin's men were given the title "The Band of Forty Thieves."

²¹ *History of County of Welland, 'Wainfleet Township'* (Welland, ON: Welland Tribune Printing House, 1887), 376.

²² Upper Canada Land Petition, LAC 's' Bundle 1, 1c, AO.



Swayze, J.P.” The certificate was then given to D.W. Smith, the Surveyor-General, in order to obtain his location ticket.²³ On 23 September 1796, Jonathan was officially granted 200 acres in the Township of Wainfleet described as “lot 21 on the lake shore.” The lot immediately to the east of his was given to Israel Doan, another “wever by tread.” It must be assumed that these were the same two lots that each family had been settled on since 1789.²⁴

Meanwhile, back in Bucks County, there were efforts being initiated to make it possible for Joseph Doan Sr. and his wife

Esther (Jonathan’s aunt and uncle), to come north to join their sons Joseph and Aaron and their families at the Sugarloaf Settlement. The couple, by this time entering their seventies, were living in comparative poverty back in Plumsfield, and Joseph’s father Israel had recently died about 1797, at roughly the century mark in age. A resident of that town in later years described Joseph Doan Sr. as “a hale and venerable old man, an habitual attendant on the Meetings of Friends, that he was poor and made a scanty living by erecting post and rail fences for the farmers.”²⁵

²³ All information relative to Jonathan Doan’s land certificate and ultimate title to Lot 21 is abstracted from Buck, ‘Old Sparta’, 5, where he states: ‘The original certificate as filled out by Swayze is in the Department of Public Records and Archives, Toronto’.

²⁴ Jonathan’s 1796 statement of being ‘born’ in Pennsylvania seems to contradict his three later land petitions where he asserts his state of birth was ‘New Jersey’, but this discrepancy is not unusual. Sometimes the questioner’s way of phrasing the question can elicit a different reply. The clear prevailing evidence is that he was, in fact, born in New Jersey.

²⁵ Doane, *The Doane Family*, 129.



Gravelly Bay

Accordingly, the Buckingham Monthly Meeting Minutes inform us on 5 August 1799 that “Esther Doan, a Member of this Meeting, is about to remove with her Husband Joseph Doan to Upper Canada, and stands in need of Assistance.”²⁶ Within a year, all obstacles had been cleared away, the long-awaited move was made, and a removal certificate was subsequently sent by Buckingham Monthly Meeting to Pelham Monthly Meeting on 4 August 1800, which stated in part: “Dear Friends we wish to inform you that Esther Doan, Wife of Joseph Doan, hath Removed from among us with her Husband and Settled in your Parts, we therefore Certify on her behalf...that she hath been a Woman of an Inoffensive life and frequently attended Our Religious Meeting.”²⁷

Once settled in Upper Canada, the elderly couple lived out the remainder of their lives with their son Joseph Doan Jr. and family on the shores of Gravelly Bay

within close view of the Sugar Loaf. Although the tragedies of the past could never be truly forgotten, the Quaker grandparents were now able to enjoy being with their grandsons, Moses and Mahlon, both boys carrying the names of their unfortunate, long-dead uncles. Gradually, the unshakable Quaker faith of the grandparents became instilled in their two grandsons and a few years later, when Jonathan Doan first established his new Quaker Settlement at Yarmouth, the two brothers, Moses Doan and Mahlon Doan, settled there in 1816 and history records that they became life-long Quakers. Incredibly, in a way that no one could have predicted, the once-shattered Quaker bonds of this family were being gradually restored. The grandfather, Joseph Doan Sr., lived to the age of ninety-two, well past the end of the War of 1812, and long enough to see his two grandsons set down their new Quaker roots in the Yarmouth Settlement.

²⁶ Bucks Co., Buckingham Monthly Meeting Minute (1792-1803), 5 August 1799, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

²⁷ Esther Doan Removal Certificate from Buckingham Monthly Meeting To Pelham Monthly Meeting, 4 August 1800, Canadian Yearly Meeting Archives (CYMA), Newmarket, ON.

March 4 1804	by one lb of Tobacco at 4/0 per lb -	0	4	0
1808	By thirty flower barrel @ 3/6 pc.	5	5	0
April	By five dollars paid Christian winter	2	8	0
May 30	By paid Isaac miner	0	7	0
	By reaping 3 1/2 days @ 6/0 -	1	1	0
	By one day mowing	0	6	0
		9	11	0

Graybiel Ledger

As the years crept by, and Jonathan Doan's family increased to include eleven children, it would have become increasingly evident to him that his family's stay along the shoreline in Wainfleet could not be unlimited in time. If he did not at some point seek a better, more expansive location for his growing family, each of them in time would do so separately on their own and scatter like the different points on a compass. Perhaps this pressure was exacerbated by the marriage of his thirteen year old daughter, Sarah, in 1799 to 'Big John' Steele, the son of local Loyalist William Steele, and the subsequent birth of Jonathan's first grand-child, Elizabeth, on 22 July 1800. Four more grandchildren would follow before the unfortunate death of their mother Sarah during the War of 1812. More, and better land, was going to eventually be needed to keep this family together.

In 1803, another important immigrant family arrived from Pennsylvania and settled close by on the lakeshore just east of the Doan families. By 1805, this Graybiel

family had built a substantial stone Pennsylvania-Dutch style home on the edge of the lake.²⁸ Blacksmith Michael Graybiel (1777-1851) brought with him his deceased father's ledger, begun in 1791, and by mid-1804 this talented blacksmith was beginning to keep his own accounts for many of the local settlers. In the next few years the Mennonite Graybiel and the soon-to-be Quaker Doan would conduct much business together. Since they lived in quite close proximity, Jonathan Doan was able to pay off much of his extensive blacksmithing account by providing labour in the field to the blacksmith. On 30 May 1808, for example, "By one day Mowing," Jonathan was allowed six shillings on his account. On 5 September 1809, "By 1 days chopping" he was also allowed six shillings. Again, in 1810 on an unnamed date he was credited with three shillings for "Half day's reaping."²⁹

Unsaid in these blacksmith records is the hint that Jonathan Doan was a man of high energy and physical strength and endurance well beyond the ordinary, as he had the

²⁸ The Michael Graybiel home is still standing beside Lake Erie. In the second half of the twentieth century it was greatly modified and was known as the Rathfon Inn which catered to tourism, but has since returned to private ownership.

²⁹ The Michael Graybiel Ledger, first begun in Pennsylvania by his father, Johannes Graybiel (1752-1801), in 1791, is located at the L.R. Wilson Archives at the Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum (PCHMM). It contains accounts for most families in the Sugarloaf Settlement circa 1804-1816.

stamina not only to perform his own farm labour, but also that of his neighbour as well. He certainly came from good stock. His grandfather Israel lived to be nearly one hundred. His grandfather's brother Joseph exhibited such stamina that he was selected by the sons of William Penn in 1735 as one of three men to perform a 'trial walk'³⁰ begun on 22 April 1735 in preparation for the 'Walking Purchase' Treaty of 1737 with the Delawares. His cousins, the infamous 'Doan Outlaws', were invariably described in the documentary records and also in the legends that followed as having physiques that allowed them to perform astonishing feats of athleticism. Of Jonathan's own son, Israel, it was said in later years: "George Prior of St. Thomas remembered him as an old man and has said that he was the finest built man he ever saw. He weighed 230 pounds. At cradling wheat he could beat any man in the township. One day over ten hours he cut eight acres."³¹ In the years yet to come, it would be necessary on many occasions for Jonathan Doan to tap every possible ounce from these well-springs of physical energy and endurance which lay beneath the surface.

From the Graybiel Ledger comes yet another important piece of knowledge about Jonathan Doan. In his early years of life beside Lake Erie, we know from his initial acquisition of land in 1796 that Jonathan was a weaver by trade. This was certainly an important skill, but in the

subsistence economy that typified the Sugarloaf Settlement in its beginning years, there would be scant opportunity to find a lucrative market for any textiles above his own family's needs. Many other local families would also have their own spinning wheel and loom upon which to make their own clothing. Consequently, by the early 1800s at the latest, the Graybiel Ledger tells us that Jonathan had also acquired the skills of a cooper, and he made flour barrels to be ultimately used at the mill of Christian Zavitz. In April of 1808, for example, Jonathan paid Graybiel for many blacksmith items in the following manner: "By thirty flouer barrels @ 3 sh. / 6 pc." each, for a total of 5 pounds and 5 shillings in credit to his account. Two years later on 25 April 1810: "By 17 flouer barrels & Sundries" for a total this time of five pounds and seventeen shillings.³² By this time, Jonathan



Zavitz Mill

³⁰ Doane, *The Doane Family*, 80.

³¹ Elgin Co. Tweedsmuir Histories, *Sparta Village History Vol.1*. (Sparta Women's Institute, 1950), 28.

³² Jonathan Doan Accounts (1807-1814), Michael Graybiel Ledger, 115,116,165,166,193,194, PCHMM.



M. Graybiel House

had three teenaged sons, each of whom he had no doubt carefully taught the skills of the cooperage trade. Jonathan would have bought the sawn lumber from Zavitz's sawmill, and then sold the finished product in the form of barrels back to Zavitz for his gristmill.

Behind the Zavitz Mill were two large stone storehouses. During the War of 1812, which was yet to come, the Sugarloaf Settlement became a virtual 'no man's land' in 1813, and one target of the American raiders led by Colonel Chapin from Buffalo was Zavitz Mill. Chapin's men usually came in the middle of the night, took prisoners, and often stole from the settlers' cabins and as a result were given the nickname The Band of Forty Thieves. One such attack by Chapin's men against the mill was reported in the *Buffalo Gazette* of 21 September 1813: "The party took several prisoners, who were immediately paroled, and 34 barrels of flour and a bale of blankets, all of which

was the property of government. There were several hundred barrels of flour at the mills, but as there was no proof of its being public property, it was not taken."³³ Many of those hundreds of barrels holding the flour were undoubtedly made by Jonathan and his sons. This cooperage business between Jonathan Doan and Christian Zavitz would be the beginning of a long and profitable partnership between the two men which would extend, in later years, to the new settlement at Yarmouth. For Jonathan, this barrel-making business his family was engaged in would become the economic engine which would allow him the personal and economic freedom to pursue an important dream which would soon appear on his horizon.

Joining the Society of Friends

On 7 May 1806 an important decision had been reached by Jonathan Doan. On

³³ Cruikshank, E.A., *Documentary History of War of 1812*, Vol.7:154, *Buffalo Gazette* (21 Sept. 1813).

that date "Black Creek Reports Jonathan Doan Requests to Come under the Care of Friends."³⁴ Probably he had been mulling this decision for a long while, but was perhaps held in check by the nearly impossible distance he would need to travel to even attend at Black Creek in Bertie Township (well over two townships away), and also the time commitment required in the face of the needs of a large and still growing young family. However, on 5 November 1806, "The Friend appointed to inform Jonathan Doan of His Reception Into Membership, Reports the service is Perform'd."³⁵ Following his inclusion as a Friend, the minutes over the next several years indicate that Jonathan took a very active role in the Meeting. On the occasions that it was necessary to attend Meeting at Pelham, Jonathan must have found a pathway northward through "The Great Cranberry Marsh", and then was able to cross the Chippawa Creek (Welland River today) into Pelham via Brown's Bridge which had been built in 1797.³⁶

A very important Meeting was held at Black Creek on 25 October 1808 at which event "a committee of the Yearly Meetings of Philadelphia and New York, part of which committee to wit: John Brown, John Shoemaker, Rebecca Archer & Hannah Fisher from Pennsylvania and Reuben Haight, Ann Shipley and Anne Merrit from New York now present produced Minutes from the Meeting above."³⁷ This was probably Jonathan's first opportunity to see

at first hand and in action the very broad Quaker perspective which now spanned significant parts of two countries and contained many moving and inter-related parts. This committee from the United States then reported back to the Yearly Meetings of Philadelphia and New York in 1809. Out of this came the permission to open Canada's Half Year Meeting on the 31st of the First Month 1810 at West Lake in Prince Edward County.

At the meeting held at Black Creek on the 3rd Day of the 1st Month 1810, preparations were made for "the insuing half Years Meeting to be held at West Lake, to attend which this Meeting Appoints William Shotwell, Samuel Taylor and Jonathan Doan as our Representatives."³⁸ All three men attended the meeting as shown by the following month's minutes at Black Creek on 14 February 1810: "The Representatives to the half Year's Meeting Report they all attended and Brought two books of Dicipline & some advice from said meeting."³⁹ We know that Jonathan was present to give his 'advice' in person because he was appointed to yet another committee at that same meeting. At the Half Year's Meeting at West Lake, Jonathan had met Quaker luminaries not only from various regions in Upper Canada, but also "four of the committee from New York, and one from Philadelphia were present."⁴⁰ Among those present from Upper Canada was Timothy Rogers of Yonge Street, who regarded himself as "The Best Man for

³⁴ Pelham Monthly Meeting Book (1799-1806), H-7-2, 170, CYMA.

³⁵ Pelham Monthly Meeting Book (1806-1834), H-7-3, 1, CYMA.

³⁶ Brown's Bridge spanned the river at the foot of today's South Pelham St. It was built by John Brown, a former British soldier who fought for Wolfe at Quebec.

³⁷ Pelham Monthly Meeting Book (1806-1834), H-7-3, 22, CYMA.

³⁸ Pelham Monthly Meeting Book (1806-1834), H-7-3, 33, CYMA.

³⁹ Pelham Monthly Meeting Book (1806-1834), H-7-3, 35, CYMA.

⁴⁰ "Half Years Meeting At West Lake," *Friends Intelligencer*, Vol.33 (Philadelphia: John Comly Publishing, 1876-7), 83.

Settling New Country'. From subsequent actions taken by Jonathan Doan soon after his return home from West Lake, the suspicion cannot be easily turned aside that at some point during his sojourn at West Lake, Jonathan Doan and Timothy Rogers spent time together in earnest consultation about how to 'settle new country'.

Land Fever in Western Upper Canada

In 1799 surveyor Augustus Jones completed his survey of Yarmouth Township, which was recognized at the time as "nearly the pick and choice of Canada."⁴¹ Thomas Talbot was too late in his efforts to gain a personal foothold there. Instead, he was beaten to the punch by Jacques 'James' Baby (1763-1833), the elder son of an important family from the French Regime in the Detroit area. He was born within Fort Detroit's stockade yet was educated in the classics in Quebec and Europe. In 1794 the Baby family crossed the Detroit River and moved to Sandwich (present-day Windsor). James Baby held several important governmental positions in Upper Canada through the 1790s and early 1800s and by 1805 had acquired 7,000 acres in south Yarmouth Township alone.⁴²

In 1809, Thomas Talbot instructed surveyor Mahlon Burwell to lay out the Talbot Road, thereby opening up a pathway to allow the beginning of settlement in the interior of western Upper Canada. In the very forefront of this potential land rush to Yarmouth was the Wilcox family of Wainfleet Township, close neighbours to Jonathan Doan. Solomon Wilcox and his family which included three grown sons, Justus, William and Caleb, had come to

Wainfleet in 1803 from New York State. When William Wilcox died decades later in 1863, his obituary stated: "The deceased was the first settler in Yarmouth, having located in 1810 or 1811."⁴³ The Wilcox family was quite likely Jonathan Doan's main early information conduit and practical partner on how to solve the problems of early settlement in Yarmouth Township.

After leaving West Lake's Half Year Meeting in early 1810 with probable thoughts of a future cohesive Quaker Settlement in his mind, Jonathan Doan needed to be able to marry that visionary concept with a practical geographical solution, and Baby's lands in south Yarmouth were made to order for this purpose. The lots could be purchased in block form, without the mercurial Thomas Talbot interfering. The lots were isolated in



James Baby

⁴¹ Edward Ermatinger, *Life of Colonel Talbot*, (St. Thomas: McLachlin's Home Journal Office, 1859), 25.

⁴² "Hon. James Baby - A Forgotten Loyalist," *Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report* (1933-34), 57-67.

⁴³ *St. Thomas Weekly Dispatch*, 12 February 1863.

the wilderness, free from other social and political encroachments and entanglements. Best of all, these lots contained some of the best farmland available in Upper Canada, much better than was available in Wainfleet and certainly much better than was then available to most Quakers in New York and Pennsylvania, many of whom did not even have land of their own.

The situation appeared to be ideal but contact first had to be made with James Baby, who would have to be persuaded of the soundness of the plan as well as have full confidence in both the integrity and the ability of its proponent Jonathan Doan. We do not know exactly when this first initiative took place, however it was necessarily later on in 1810 or possibly early 1811. The initial contact may have been in person, but it is more likely that Jonathan Doan sent an introductory letter to James Baby, addressed to his home at Sandwich on the Detroit River. Either way, the resultant response back to Doan from Baby must have been positive, thereby allowing the next step in the process to take place.

Meanwhile, the Wilcox family was gearing up for their eventual move to northern Yarmouth on the Talbot Road. In April of 1811, local Wainfleet blacksmith Michael Graybiel made some 'boat irons' for the Wilcox family, no doubt indicating that the construction of some type of small water craft or bateau was underway. On August 6th, 1811 a 'bellows' costing ten pounds was completed by Graybiel which was to be taken to Yarmouth by the Wilcox family. On August 16th, William Wilcox settled his account with Graybiel and sometime in early September of 1811 the boat left for Yarmouth. Later, we find in

reference to William's brother that "By Colonel Talbot's List of Returns, it appears that he located Justus Wilcocks in the month of September 1811 on Lot No. 55 on the South side of Talbot Road in Yarmouth Township."⁴⁴

Now, with hindsight, we can say with fairly high probability that Jonathan Doan was also on that boat in September of 1811. While the Wilcox family was busy finalizing their land arrangements with Colonel Thomas Talbot at Port Talbot, Jonathan Doan was also in the process of doing likewise with Colonel James Baby. We know this because on 17 July 1816 Jonathan mentioned on a land petition that "Your Petitioner in the year 1811 purchased of James Babee [sic] Esquire Fifty Lots of Land in the Township of Yarmouth each containing two hundred acres".⁴⁵ Additionally, in another petition of 8 March 1813 Jonathan explained more generally "that he has bargained with James Baby Esq'r for a considerable tract of land lying in the Township of Yarmouth south of the lands appropriated to accommodate the street commonly known by the name of Talbot Street."⁴⁶ Jonathan's use of the word "purchased" in his land petition was probably slightly premature. Perhaps the phrase "agreement to purchase under the following conditions" might have been more in order, but land petitions were notoriously succinct. Regardless of the exact details involved, it is clear that the conceptual framework for a fairly massive settlement proposition had been agreed upon between Jonathan Doan and Colonel James Baby by late 1811.

In order to have this second important conversation with Baby, Jonathan would

⁴⁴ Land Petition of Justus Willcocks of Wainfleet, W Bundle 10 (1812-16), 127, AO.

⁴⁵ Land Petition of Jonathan Doan of Yarmouth (1816), Vol.172, D Leases 1799-1819, 34, AO.

⁴⁶ Land Petition of Jonathan Doan of Wainfleet (1813), Vol.172, D Leases 1800-18, 40, AO.

have had to walk the many miles from Yarmouth westward to arrive at Sandwich. Before the completion of the Talbot Road West to Sandwich in the 1820s, there was no easy way to get there. The Talbot Road by 1811 had been surveyed and chopped out only as far as Southwold Township, the township immediately west of Yarmouth. From there, Jonathan had to follow a former Indian trail a short distance due westerly to reach the Thames River, which ever since the French Regime had become the well-travelled 'highway' between Niagara and Fort Detroit. Once at the Thames, he could begin to follow the old Longwoods Road west along the river. After about twenty miles he would arrive at the Delaware Indian village named Fairfield, which was established beside the Thames River in 1792 with the assistance of Moravian Missionaries, thus the unofficial name of "Moraviantown" by which it was often called. Most travellers stayed there for at least a meal, or perhaps overnight, before continuing west. Jonathan would encounter few other people before finally arriving at the substantial home of Colonel Baby at Sandwich. There the two men would actually meet for the first time and both take the measure of the other. This meeting proved to be the beginning of a strong relationship, which Jonathan would have with the Baby family which would continue for over a decade and a half despite the roadblocks an approaching war was about to bring. Then, the meeting completed, Jonathan had to retrace his many steps back to Yarmouth where the Wilcox family probably stayed only long enough at their new site to build a rough shelter useful for succeeding trips. It would take them two years to fully complete their move to Yarmouth and so they and their boat,

probably along with Jonathan Doan, quickly returned back to their homes beside Lake Erie in Wainfleet Township in the fall of 1811.

It is worth noting, however, that before Jonathan could even go with Wilcox to Yarmouth in early September, an important family problem had arrived at his doorstep which needed to be solved. Moses Doan, the son of his cousin, Joseph Doan, was apparently about to be inveigled out of a land grant by Samuel Street, the noted businessman and land speculator from Niagara. Joseph, despite being a very literate former schoolteacher and master of the English language himself, asked Jonathan to take up his son's cause at York with the Lieutenant-Governor In Council, and to present to them the following document from Joseph Doan, dated 13 August 1811, which stated in part: "My son is destitute of land, will settle immediately on the land if he can obtain permission. He has appointed the bearer, Jonathon Doan, to superintend his business relative to the land, and I hope he may succeed. There appears something that looks mysterious to me in Mr. Street's assertion, it must be a mistake or something worse."⁴⁷ Fortunately, within a few days in mid-August, Jonathan had seen to it at York that the apparent wrong was righted, and on 2 September 1811 a grant of land was forthcoming to Moses Doan as a son of a Loyalist.

Two key points about Jonathan Doan are notable in this incident. First, this is the initial instance we have on record of Jonathan acting as an informal 'attorney' concerning a land question, but the fact that his cousin, Joseph, had confidence in Jonathan to take this problem to the highest levels in the province, speaks volumes about the perception of competence in

⁴⁷ Land Petition of Joseph Doan to Lieutenant-Governor (13 Aug. 1811). RG5, A1, 5660, AO.

Jonathan's abilities which must have been generally present. Secondly, but more importantly, five years after this incident, Jonathan acted once more as an attorney for a grateful Moses Doan by composing and presenting at York on 16 July 1816: "The Petition of Moses Doan of the Township of Humberstone, a Quaker"⁴⁸ for a Lease of land in Yarmouth. During the settlement of Yarmouth after the War of 1812, Jonathan Doan would continue to act as 'attorney' in many such instances at York to assist both Quakers and non-Quakers in acquiring land.

Carrying His "Travelling Minute"

With the makings of a land deal with James Baby for a future settlement in Yarmouth now completed, Jonathan sprang into action as quickly as possible upon his return to Sugarloaf. First, his prolific multi-year account with blacksmith Michael Graybiel suddenly ceased. Secondly, and even more interesting, on 1 October 1811

he quickly opened an account with the trader Macklem based in Chippawa, and purchased on credit, for twelve shillings, "2 pair spectacles."⁴⁹ The very next day we find out why Jonathan was going to require new spectacles. He would be going on a long journey, or series of journeys, in which he was going to require glasses for all the extra reading and writing he anticipated he would be required to perform, and he would need to carry an extra pair of glasses in case of breakage on the way. This was a small, but important, early window into the mental make-up of a man who we will find would subsequently leave 'no stone unturned' in the pursuance of a goal.

The next day, at the Monthly Meeting of Pelham held 2 October 1811: "Jonathan Doan Inform'd this Meeting that he has a prospect of going to the United States, this may certify that he is a Member of this Meeting. Signed in and by order of the Meeting. By Isaac Willson, Clerk."⁵⁰ The piece of paper prepared for him by Isaac Willson was termed a "Travelling Minute."

A handwritten document in cursive script, enclosed in a rectangular border. The text reads: "Jonathan Doan Inform'd this Meeting that he has a prospect of going to the United States, this may Certify that he is a Member of this Meeting, Signed in and by order of the Meeting. By Isaac Willson } Clerk. —"

⁴⁸ Land Petition of Moses Doan, A Quaker (16 July, 1816) U.C. Sundries, 13318-13320, AO.

⁴⁹ James Macklem (1759-1838) came to Chippawa in 1795 from Pennsylvania and was soon established as an important businessman. He had one of the first stagecoach lines in Upper Canada. At the L.R. Wilson Archives at the Port Colborne Museum is one of his trading ledgers spanning the years 1809-1816 and shows his trading 'empire' stretched from Montreal in the east to Fort Detroit and Sandwich in the west. He had the sloop *Adventure* which made regular runs to Sugar Loaf on Gravelly Bay, and another ship *Chippawa* which when war broke out was leased by the government of Upper Canada and took part in the Battle of Lake Erie. Many settlers at the Sugar Loaf had accounts in his ledger, including Jonathan Doan.

⁵⁰ Pelham Monthly Meeting Book (1806-1834), 60, CYMA.

1811		1812	
Oct. 1	To 2 pair Spectacles	4	230
184 Feb. 18	By Cash	275	12
	To Sundries per Journal	374	41 17 5
	By Ditto per do	31	17 5
20	Cash in full per Mr Zavitha	279	10

The Macklem Ledger

Jonathan would carry it with him on his intended trip and present it to the clerk at each of the Quaker Meetings he would visit on his itinerary. On behalf of the Meeting, the clerk would usually examine the contents added by previous clerks, and then endorse the minute, then add his or her own comments or words of welcome as the occasion warranted. The travelling minute thereby became a permanent record of the itinerary of the bearer. In the next few months, covering late 1811 and early 1812, Jonathan would visit as many Quaker Meetings as possible in both New York State and Pennsylvania with the sole purpose of eventually enticing prospective settlers among them to migrate across the border to his planned new settlement in Yarmouth Township. A month after receiving his travelling minute, Jonathan's last child, Joshua Gillam Doan, was born on 7 November 1811. It is not known whether his itinerary contained a plan to be home for that birth or not.

Unfortunately, to date it would appear that Jonathan Doan's travelling minute has not survived and so we can only surmise where, in specific terms, he went on his travels. However, in an 1813 petition he

states that "he has bargained in Conjunction with his Friends who can be well recommended now living in Pennsylvania and the State of New York who contemplated with their families and your Petitioner with his to settle on said tract."⁵¹ One destination we can almost certainly assume he visited in Pennsylvania was a settlement outpost at Brier Creek (later to become the town of Berwick) in Columbia County. There, after years apart, he could meet again his brother Benjamin Doan and his wife Hannah (Iddings) who had been married at Wrightstown Monthly Meeting in Bucks County on 17 February 1793,⁵² also his sister, Elizabeth, who married Jacob Cooper, his brother, Joseph, and probably his brother, Elijah, of whom family sources said he once came to the Sugarloaf Settlement, but upon the death of his wife, he returned to Pennsylvania to be near his brothers and sister.

After six months, at the Monthly Meeting of Pelham 1 April 1812: "Jonathan Doan Return'd a Minute given him Last tenth month."⁵³ Unfortunately, in less than two months' time following his return of the travelling minute, war was officially declared. Although most people on both

⁵¹ Land Petition of Jonathan Doan of Wainfleet (1813) Vol.172, D Leases 1800-18, 40, AO.

⁵² Wrightstown Monthly Meeting (1796-1917), 70-71.

⁵³ Pelham Monthly Meeting Book (1806-1834), 75, CYMA.

sides of the border had been fearing the receipt of this news for months, the final stark truth must have been a heavy blow to Jonathan. Whatever successes he may have experienced in his travels in the form of positive indications from future candidates for settlement in Yarmouth, these stated intentions were now about to be seriously compromised. All former plans would now necessarily be placed on hold. Even all 'Friends' south of the border were now officially enemies of the British province of Upper Canada. Despite this huge setback, however, Jonathan's resilient inner strength did not waver and he continued with his settlement planning on this side of the border.

1812: The War Begins

War was declared officially on 18 June 1812, but it would take several days for the news to reach the Sugarloaf Settlement. For Quakers such as Jonathan, and for Mennonites as well, the declaration of war meant that "the sum of twenty shillings" to be levied on those professing "certain scruples of conscience" was automatically raised in time of war to "the sum of five pounds, and in default of such payment ... to levy the same by distress and sale of the offender's goods and chattels." In the Doan family this meant an almost prohibitive total of twenty pounds per annum "to be paid on or before the first day of December in each and every year" as Jonathan and his three eldest sons Elijah, John and Samuel all fit the profile of being sixteen years of age or above and under sixty.⁵⁴ Since most

Quakers refused to pay the fine which went to support the war effort, this meant that the government was forced to come on to the Quaker property and remove goods equal in value to the prescribed fine. As a result, in all probability the stock of barrels on the Doan property therefore became diminished by the value of twenty pounds by December of 1812.

Jonathan's son-in-law, John Steele, became a private in Captain John Baxter's Company in the 3rd Lincoln Regiment of Sedentary Militia, meaning that he was to be called upon only in times of emergency, which seemed to be the majority of the time in the fall of 1812. His muster roll records indicate, however, that he had taken a month off from duty during most of November which was a good thing because his wife Sarah had her final child, Mary Catharine, born on 14 November 1812.⁵⁵ Later on that winter, in late 1812 and also in early 1813, a severe epidemic seeming to include various types of fevers and other related varieties of sickness, rolled across Upper Canada, taking in its path the young and the old, the soldier and the citizen. Its spread was undoubtedly exacerbated by the thousands of military men camped nearby in nearly intolerable conditions. One victim was Jonathan's daughter, Sarah (Doan) Steele. Another victim, one of many, was the young wife of Colonel James Baby; at that time Baby was leading the 1st Kent Militia at Amherstburg.

As Jonathan's complete land petition of 8 March 1813 clearly shows, the cares of the world were beginning to really close in on him:

⁵⁴ For a more comprehensive look at how Article 27 of the Militia Act of 1808 affected Quakers and Mennonites in the Sugarloaf Settlement during the War of 1812, see Donald Anger, 'Scruples of Conscience'- *The War of 1812 In The Sugarloaf Settlement* (Port Colborne: The Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum, 2008).

⁵⁵ Anger, *Scruples of Conscience*, App. B: Soldiers Enrolled In 3rd Regt. Lincoln Militia: Records of Pte. John Steele, 150.

The petition of Jonathan Doan of Wainfleet, Yeoman, one of the People called Quakers; Your Petitioner Sheweth; with respect and deference that he became a settler in this Province and Subject in the year 1789; has a number of sons who will soon want Settlement in lands --- that he has bargained with James Baby Esq'r for a considerable tract of land lying in the Township of Yarmouth south of the lands appropriated to accommodate the street commonly known by the name of Talbot Street and as he has bargained in Conjunction with his Friends who can be well recommended now living in Pennsylvania and the State of New York who contemplated with their familys and your Petitioner with his to settle on said tract; having a wife and fourteen children in care -- four of the Second decent (ie: *descent*); Being born in the State of New Jersey nearly forty Eight years old -- and as war now being proclaimed has shut up the way that said Friends cannot proceed till the non-intercourse is done away to settle on said lands and your Petitioner having disposed of his former location is now about to move on the said lands with a few of his friends. Begs leave if found consistent to obtain a Lease for two Lots of Land in the Township of Yarmouth, as his fees being ready and his security namely Mahlon Burwell Esq'r of the Township of Dunwich in the District of London and if found Consistent that the same mite be granted --- your

Petitioner will consider himself greatly favoured who in duty bound with Sentiments of Esteem doth ever pray -- York, 8th March 1813 (Signed) Jonathan Doan.⁵⁶

Jonathan's petition reveals that the war had, in a sense, brought his visionary plan to a standstill. At the time of his writing, he could no longer count on Quakers from the United States to come across the border to utilize the lots he had available. Therefore, to a certain extent being desperate to at least get the settlement process started, he and his family, as well as some of his friends (Quakers and non-Quakers) were going to start moving on to the lots as soon as possible. In 1813 he had fourteen dependents, including four of his grandchildren: Jane (age eleven); William (age nine); Jonathan (nearly seven); Mary Catharine (four months old). The oldest grand-child, Elizabeth, has gone to live with the family of Christian Zavitz Jr. (nephew of the miller Christian Zavitz) who live at the base of Sugarloaf Hill in Wainfleet Township. Since Jonathan and Jane Doan originally had a total of eleven children of their own, and then ten after Sarah died, we can surmise after reading his petition that their son Jonathan Jr., born in 1798, has not yet died, although his time left was to be short. Jonathan's sons were growing up quickly and were at the age to want land of their own in short order. Also, there is one important problem that Jonathan was about to experience that he was not aware of yet. It came in the form of the following letter written by Mahlon Burwell shortly after Jonathan signed his petition:

Niagara 26th March 1813

Sir: During the late Session of the

⁵⁶ Land Petition of Jonathan Doan of Wainfleet, (1813) Vol.172, D leases 1800-1818, 40, AO.

Legislature a Quaker by the name of Jonathan Doan whom I have known a number of years, and who has always borne the Character of an Honest industrious Farmer was going to Petition for a Lease for Crown Lands in the Township of Yarmouth, and applied to me for a recommendation, which I gave him and believe was joined by a Member of the House of Assembly who was acquainted with him. Mr. Doan also applied to me to be his Surety in a Bond to the Honorable Executive for the payment of the annual Rents, as the Regulations may be, which I acceded to -- Since my return from York, I have been informed by several respectable Farmers that Mr. Doan, notwithstanding his being a Quaker, has endeavoured to stir up the minds of the Militia by telling them that great efforts were made by the Government to have Martial Law put into force whilst the House was sitting, which is basely false. I would never intentionally make myself responsible for any person, to the attention of the Government, whom Loyalty towards it might be suspected --- I therefore think it a duty incumbent on me to request that the Honorable Council will not attend to my recommendation which is affixed

to his Petition, nor to the Bond before alluded to in which I make myself liable for the payment of the Rent --- The Petitioner and Bond was left by Doan in the care of Mr. Benson of York as his agent.

I have the Honor to be Sir: Your Obd't Serv't. (Signed) Mahlon Burwell.”⁵⁷

Shortly after sending in his land petition on 8 March 1813, Jonathan began taking steps to head back to Yarmouth, this time to actually begin the settlement process. Perhaps again he used the Wilcox boat, or perhaps by now had purchased his own boat. In 1812, we know that most of the Wilcox family, including the sons William and Justus, had remained in Yarmouth as they appear on the militia lists there in that year. The third brother, Caleb Wilcox, however, still appeared on the rolls for the Sugarloaf Militia over the winter of 1812-13 and in fact was still out on duty until 16 December 1812. He therefore had stayed until the spring of 1813 in Wainfleet to look after any family goods still to be transported to Yarmouth.

1813: In The Middle of War

The *Buffalo Gazette* had reported on 12 January 1813: “Cold Friday -- On Friday last, Fahrenheit’s thermometer stood at 12

⁵⁷ A Letter by Mahlon Burwell attached to Jonathan Doan’s 1813 Land Petition; Vol.172, D Leases 1800-18, 40, AO. The request by Mahlon Burwell for a hold to be put on the process of leasing the two lots in Yarmouth to Jonathan Doan was successful for the duration of the war. A further petition was entered by Jonathan in 1816 for the two lots and this time: “The Lots were ordered to be Leased to the Petitioner 27th April 1816 and the Warrants were issued.” Regarding the question of martial law, both Jonathan and Mahlon Burwell were essentially correct. At the first of the war, General Isaac Brock wanted to suspend habeas corpus and institute martial law because of the number of desertions and disloyalty being widely displayed. The Assembly representatives of the people would not accept it. From then on, various British generals instituted martial law for short periods as they deemed necessary. However, after the wanton destruction in 1813 in Upper Canada by American forces, General Drummond instituted and maintained martial law for the remainder of the war across Upper Canada.

degrees below cypher---The lake is, we believe, completely and effectively closed.”⁵⁸ Consequently, it could have been the middle of May or perhaps even later in the spring of 1813 before conditions were suitable for the boat to once again head for Yarmouth. This time it would be piloted by Jonathan Doan himself. He had brought along with him two of his elder sons, twenty-two year-old John Thompson Doan, and nineteen year-old Samuel Doan. His eldest son, Elijah, now twenty-four years of age, remained in Wainfleet, helping his mother keep an eye on the younger children. There was yet another reason Elijah had stayed behind. Two months earlier, on 7 March 1813, he had married Esther Winters of Wainfleet, and so had new responsibilities to deal with. A special passenger would also be coming with them in the boat in the person of Jonathan’s grandson, Jonathan Steele, now beginning his seventh year. This was going to be a special trip for him, one which in much later years he would relate to his own grand-children. Rounding out the passenger list was probably Caleb Wilcox. They boarded the small craft and slowly began to ply their way westward towards Yarmouth. What the passengers in the boat did not know, was that the war was going to take an ominous turn for the worse, and it all would happen very soon after they left the Wainfleet shoreline.

On 25 May 1813, a massive bombardment from Fort Niagara on the American side began to destroy Fort George and the British Army had to evacuate and begin their retreat towards Burlington Heights. The next day, on 26 May, the British naval ship *Queen Charlotte* lay off Point Abino, at the eastern edge of the Sugarloaf

Settlement, ready to take on supplies not far from the fields and farm of Jonathan Doan’s friend and fellow Quaker Obadiah Dennis. On 27 May, the British troops and mobile artillery began a hurried retreat from Fort Erie, heading west past Point Abino towards the Sugar Loaf. The 3rd Lincoln Militia, including men from the Sugar Loaf, were asked to keep firing cannon from Fort Erie across the river, then destroy their cannons, blow up the powder magazine and head for their homes.

The order then went out that all British ammunition and stores that could not be carried were to be destroyed. It happened that much of the British food supplies were at Point Abino in the barn of Obadiah Dennis. Despite the soon-to-be dire need of these stores by General Procter’s hungry British Army and the hundreds of Indians under Tecumseh quartered at Amherstburg, a hasty decision was made to burn the materials and the barn so they would not fall into the hands of the advancing Americans. The unfortunate deed was ordered by Militia Adjutant William Stanton who provided Obadiah with this certificate: “Point Abino, Lake Erie, 28 May 1813. I do certify that in order to destroy Three Hundred Barrels of Pork belonging to Government... that a barn belonging to Mr. Obadiah Dennis, built of Logs, forty seven feet long, by twenty six feet broad, together with a Cattle Shed & small out Stables, were set fire to and burnt in my presence -- The Barn Mr. Dennis Valued at Two Hundred and fifty Dollars, exclusive of the outbuildings. (Signed) Wm. Stanton Adj.”⁵⁹

As a result, within only a few days, the supply situation had already become grim indeed for Procter’s army. British General

⁵⁸ Cruikshank, Documentary History, *Buffalo Gazette*, ‘Cold Friday’, 12 Jan., 1813, Vol.5, 40.

⁵⁹ War Losses Claim of Obadiah Dennis, RG19 E 5(a), Vol. 3757, File 1: No.1138, National Library and Archives of Canada (NLAC).

Vincent wrote on 4 June regarding “General Procter’s misery” that “He is at this present time in great distress for provisions, and unfortunately the *Queen Charlotte* was unable to take thirty barrels of pork from Point Abino.”⁶⁰ The situation was beginning to unravel very quickly for Procter and his Indian ally Tecumseh. The burning of the barn of Obadiah Dennis was rapidly developing into a much larger tragedy than the loss of a Quaker family’s barn. It was an extremely important link in a chain of events that would ultimately lead to the defeat of Procter’s army and the death of Tecumseh at the Battle of Moraviantown; a defeat which would significantly affect the future actions of both Colonel James Baby and Jonathan Doan. Meanwhile, the British 41st Regiment of Foot continued to retreat towards the Sugar Loaf, assisted by three Mennonite farmers from the Sugarloaf Settlement whose teams were conscripted to carry luggage and supplies along the beach.⁶¹ On 30 May 1813, the now-ragged British soldiers retreated westerly past the log home of Jonathan Doan on their way to the Grand River and thence north to Burlington Heights. Assuredly watching the straggling army go by her house was Jane Doan, undoubtedly worried mightily about what might be happening to her husband, her two sons and her grandson Jonathan Steele out on Lake Erie in this maelstrom.

Her question was partially answered many years later by Jonathan Steele’s grandson Granville Steele in *Old Sparta*, in which Charles Buck wrote: “In 1813, Jonathan Doan, accompanied by his grandson, Jonathan Steele, seven years old,

left the Niagara District and came to South Yarmouth. One of their descendants, Granville Steele of Union, remembers an incident told by his grandfather Steele, about the voyage in a small boat up Lake Erie to Kettle Creek. They encountered a coast guard vessel which fired a shot in their path to give notice to Doan that he was to stop the boat, a hint which he was not slow in obeying. Jonathan Steele remembered particularly the ricocheting of the ball upon the water.”⁶² If the grandfather Jonathan Steele did not embellish the story in its telling to his grandson Granville, then it was indeed a somewhat terrifying ordeal. What is evident in all British army and naval communications at the time was the extent to which the British were concerned about any unusual activity on the lake as a prelude to an enemy landing somewhere along the northern Lake Erie shoreline, a landing which would be largely unopposed and would effectively split the province in two. In this context it would have been very surprising, in fact, if the Doan boat had not been stopped to be questioned. Individuals and groups found to not have appropriate documentation or explanations for their travel or behaviour were being rounded up all over Upper Canada in mid-1813.

By the time their small boat pulled into the outlet to Kettle Creek about May 30th, or soon thereafter, the alarm about the Niagara invasions had probably already reached Yarmouth and perhaps even Amherstburg. After securing the boat, they began to head due north along a blazed trail chopped out by Daniel Rapelje in 1810.⁶³ It led to his new lot which would become the

⁶⁰ Cruikshank, *Documentary History*, Vincent to Baynes, 4 June 1813, Vol.5: 299.

⁶¹ War Losses Claim of Christian Zavitz Jr., RG19 E 5(a), Vol. 3752, File 1: No.1142.

⁶² Buck, *Old Sparta*, 6-7, NLAC.

⁶³ Warren Cronmiller, ed., *Vignettes Of Early St. Thomas*, Ch.2: ‘Daniel Rapelje (1775-1828), First Citizen’, 6-11.

future site in later years of St. Thomas, being the point at which the new Talbot Road crossed Kettle Creek at the Yarmouth-Southwold boundary line. At Rapelje's lot, Caleb Wilcox would then have headed east along the new Talbot Road until coming to where the rest of the Wilcox family already resided at their new log home near where New Sarum is today on Highway #3.

The Doans, however, did not need to go north as far as the Talbot Road. Instead, they veered east off the blazed trail, about midway to Rapelje's, in order to locate the pristine land of James Baby. Upon reaching their destination, Jonathan Doan thereby validated his future claim of being the first white settler 'south' of the Talbot Road in Yarmouth Township. We turn again to the words of Charles Buck: "Having landed safely and stored their boat, they walked up through a level stretch of woods until they came to some rising ground. A mile south of the ridge not far from where the village of Sparta now stands, Jonathan Doan made his first shelter of boughs and brush... For two years he laboured to make a clearing and to erect a log house for his family by the Sparta Road. He is said to have settled just west of what is now the Friends' burying ground, although the first purchase of land registered in his name, dated 8th June, 1813, from James Baby, is for Lot 7, Concession 4, a location considerably west of Sparta."⁶⁴

Time, however, was in short supply. Jonathan had only two or three days at the most to explore his potential new holdings, make his initial choice of lot to purchase, and then begin to set out once again for

Sandwich, leaving behind his grandson, Jonathan Steele, in the care of his sons John and Samuel. Ever the strategist, we find out later that the lot that Jonathan signed for a few days later at Sandwich (Lot 7, Con.4), is the exact location where he would have his first sawmill built two years later in 1815.⁶⁵ He has obviously decided that if he is going to soon sink his capital into a saw mill, he wanted to ensure that it was in the best location possible along the creek and that the land was registered in his name. By the time Jonathan left for Sandwich on or about June 4th, 1813, his two sons would be starting the hard work of clearing a spot reserved for their new cabin. While en-route along the same set of pathways west that he had taken over a year earlier, Jonathan sensed a noticeable difference in the air. At Moraviantown, for example, he found the Delaware Indians in a quandary and nearing a state of panic. They were prepared to flee to avoid the catastrophe they feared would be arriving soon from the west, but they could not agree on where to go.

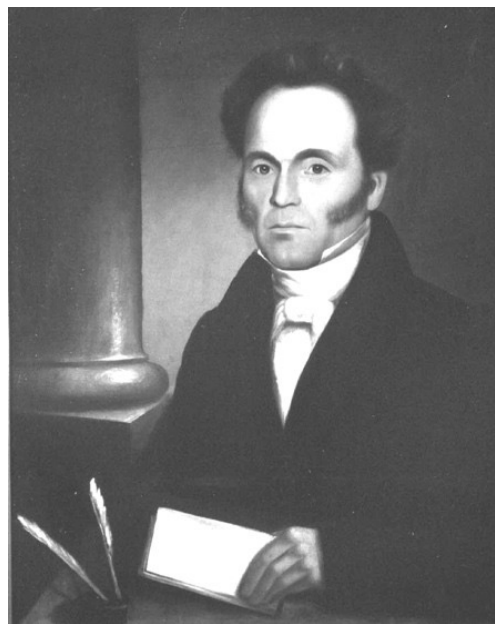
By 8 June 1813 Jonathan arrived at Sandwich and would have quickly found out that Colonel Baby was not there. He was still at Amherstburg with his Kent militia. However, acting as his attorney at Sandwich was William Hands, Senior (1756-1836). He was the Sheriff, Customs Officer, Postmaster, Registrar and Judge of the Surrogate Court in Sandwich. He was also related through marriage to the Baby family. Expeditiously they got to the task at hand and on 8 June 1813 the Indenture was completed: "Between James Baby of the Township of Sandwich in the County of

⁶⁴ Buck, *Old Sparta*, 7.

⁶⁵ In his 1816 Petition, Jonathan Doan states: "that he has built a Saw Mill on Lot No. 7 in the 4th Concession of Yarmouth and is desirous to obtain a Lease of Lot No. 6 in the 4th and Lot 10 in the 3rd Concessions, to accommodate his said Mill."

Essex in the Western District of Upper Canada, Esquire ... and Jonathan Doan of the Township of Wainfleet in the County of Lincoln... Farmer” for Lot No. 7 in the fourth concession of Yarmouth containing two hundred acres. After being witnessed by “William Hands Senior of Sandwich, Esquire and William Hands Junior, of the same place, Gentleman”, the deed was then “required to be Registered by me the Grantee as witness my hand & seal at Sandwich aforesaid... (Signed) Jonathan Doan.”⁶⁶

Taking his leave immediately, and with his new deed in hand, Jonathan Doan headed back once more to Yarmouth. Within a month’s time, on 13 July 1813, the American army would cross the Detroit river, invade Sandwich and ransack and nearly destroy the home of James Baby which Jonathan had just left. Any correspondence lying there between Baby and Doan would have been destroyed. Baby himself would never recover the six hundred pounds in resulting damage. His house was about to become headquarters for American General Harrison for a time. Heading east back through Moraviantown, Jonathan would have no inkling that within four months this village of peace would be callously burned to the ground on 7 October 1813 and its inhabitants scattered, nor that his business partner Colonel Baby would soon be taken prisoner here in battle. Before arriving back at Yarmouth, a short detour to Port Talbot was necessary by Jonathan to drop off his new deed at the primitive Land Registry office located in the home of Mahlon Burwell. There his deed was registered the following morning on “the 12th day of June 1813 at 9 o’clock A.M.” Jonathan then headed back to his



Mahlon Burwell

new lot at Yarmouth to meet his sons and grandson. He had just completed a round trip walking to the far end of the province in a week or possibly even less.

Meanwhile, at this time back in the Sugarloaf Settlement, conditions were steadily deteriorating. On the 19th, 20th, and 21st of June 1813, U.S. Major-General Dearborn ordered a round-up of suspected ringleaders, militia leaders, and even some leading citizens on the Niagara Peninsula. Among those on the list seized was Joseph Doan Junior. Alfred Doan in *The Doane Family* points out why: “In early life in Canada he was known as an outspoken man, with an inveterate hatred of all Americans, who as a people, he said, had oppressed and persecuted him and his kindred..(and)..when the American army landed at Fort Erie in the War of 1812, Joseph was pointed out as a man inimical to the American interests, and, though not in arms, was seized, made a prisoner of war and sent to Greenbush, N.Y., where they

⁶⁶ Information abstracted from Yarmouth Deed No.135: James Baby Esq. of Sandwich to Jonathan Doan, Yeoman of Wainfleet. (8 June 1813; Reg. 12 June 1813 at 9 A.M.)

kept him confined for eighteen months, and where through exposure and hunger he suffered all but death.”⁶⁷ Most of these arrests and seizures took place at the homes of those being sought, and in Joseph’s case it would almost certainly have taken place at his home near the Sugar Loaf. One can only imagine the turmoil which would have returned once again to his now-aged parents, Joseph Sr. and Esther, as they contemplated the possible final loss of one of their two remaining sons.

In contrast, back in Yarmouth the forest was blissfully quiet except for the sound of axes in the clearing. In the short summer remaining, the three men constructed what probably was a somewhat rough cabin, but sufficient for John and Samuel to spend the winter there. Later that summer or in early fall, Samuel Doan joined the 1st Middlesex Militia and served under their new neighbour in Yarmouth, Capt. Daniel Rapelje. Company muster rolls indicate that after being on furlough for most of August, the company was out on duty from 25 August to 24 November 1813.⁶⁸ Samuel’s brother, John, did not join the militia until the following spring. During that first winter, the nearest neighbours would have been the Wilcox family in their cabin, about three miles distant straight north through the woods to the Talbot Road. The return voyage to the Sugar Loaf, probably completed by late summer, was apparently completed without incident by Jonathan and his grandson.

Meanwhile, out on Lake Erie, matters were about to come to a conclusion. At Put-In-Bay, on 10 September 1813, the heavily out-gunned British fleet was

decisively defeated by Perry’s fleet and suddenly all of Upper Canada was now vulnerable. Procter’s British army began their retreat easterly along the Thames River but the American army under General Harrison began to close the gap. The decisive moment came at the Battle of Moraviantown on 5 October 1813 when the British force, hungry and demoralized, was disastrously defeated and Tecumseh was killed. Taken prisoner at the battle, among others, was Col. James Baby. Although he was not long in captivity, Baby was soon in need of medical care and much-needed rest. He was tired, ill, grief-stricken over the loss of his wife, was attempting to look after his small children, and his house interior was virtually a total loss. Baby headed to Quebec in late 1813 for a much-needed retreat. At this point, further progress on Jonathan Doan’s Yarmouth Settlement project via James Baby seemed to be in real jeopardy.

1814: Settlement at Yarmouth

The setback regarding Colonel Baby left Jonathan Doan undeterred. On 18 February 1814 he finally paid Macklem for the two pair of spectacles which had been ordered and taken on his trip to New York and Pennsylvania in October of 1811. Then he paid Macklem for “Sundries per Journal” by cash in the amount of forty-one pounds.⁶⁹ This sizable purchase completed his final account with Macklem and probably acts as yet another signal that Jonathan was getting ready for a major ‘expedition’ back to Yarmouth as early as possible in the spring, probably with a view to complete the

⁶⁷ Doane, *The Doane Family*, 235.

⁶⁸ Elgin County Genealogical Society, *War of 1812 Veterans*. Information abstracted from Middlesex Militia Payrolls for Private John Thompson Doan and for Private Samuel Doan.

⁶⁹ Jonathan Doan Account, Macklem Trading Ledger, 359, PCHMM.

family's move to Yarmouth by late fall of 1814 if possible.

In a sense, Jonathan was lucky that his new Yarmouth home site was isolated in the middle of the forest. During much of 1814, as he and his sons continued with the gruelling labour of carving a homestead out of raw wilderness, southern Yarmouth was an island of relative tranquillity. Meanwhile, on the Niagara Peninsula, the battles of Chippawa, of Lundy's Lane, and the siege of Fort Erie would take their historic course. However, much closer to the new Doan home was the 13 May 1814 raid on Port Dover by seven hundred and fifty American regulars and militia, which resulted in the complete destruction of every building in the settlement and the slaughtering of all the livestock. Six days later, another raiding party hit even closer to their home, virtually destroying Port Talbot. The man who had registered Jonathan's deed, Mahlon Burwell, was carried off as a prisoner of war to Chillicothe, Ohio for the next six months.⁷⁰

More was yet to come. On 9 September 1814, American Gen. McArthur, accompanied by six hundred mounted Kentucky soldiers, appeared from the west and camped at Daniel Rapelje's for the night on the nearby Talbot Road. His family was left unharmed but the farm was virtually destroyed. Two months later, McArthur's force again reappeared on the Talbot Road, this time from the east as they were on their way back to Detroit after being stopped at Malcolm's Mills on the Grand River by Canadian Militia. On 10 November 1814, they passed by on the Talbot Road, just north of the Doan home, stealing horses and causing destruction as they sped by. Two years later in 1816

Jonathan's former Wainfleet neighbour William Wilcox would submit: "An Account of losses sustained by William Wilcox of Yarmouth, Talbot Road, during the late War with the United States of America -- Occasioned by the Enemy -- One team taken by a party under the command of General McArthur on the 10th November 1814; valued 16 pounds 5 shillings."⁷¹

A month later, peace was finally declared on 24 December 1814 by the Treaty of Ghent. Similar to most other families in Upper Canada, the Jonathan Doan family had mercifully endured. Extending for years after the war ended, travellers from abroad would be struck by the evidence of war destruction which still existed. Luckier than many, the Doan house was not destroyed nor was a family member lost in the war. Finally, the more constructive process of actually building a new settlement at Yarmouth could begin.

Epilogue

Along with the declaration of peace, additional good news was received by Jonathan in late 1814 that his partner in land dealings, Hon. James Baby, was again returning to Upper Canada from Quebec. He had been appointed to the position of Inspector General (or Treasurer) of Upper Canada and his new home would soon be at Baby Point on the Humber River at York where he had 1500 acres of uncultivated land. There, he quickly became one of the key figures in the government of Upper Canada and a signature member of the 'Family Compact'. However, his personal wealth had been badly damaged without compensation during the War of 1812, and he was assuming a life style at York which

⁷⁰ War Journal of Mahlon Burwell, 16 Aug.1814-15 Jan. 1815. Mitchell Collection, Vol.5/6, NLAC.

⁷¹ War Losses Claim of William Wilcox, RG19 E 5(a), Vol. 3754, File 3: No.1432, NLAC.

would need a strong source of funding through the sale of land. Consequently, Jonathan Doan was a man with whom he should continue to do business.

At the end of the war, however, the Alien Land Question quickly caused economic and political eruptions across the province. Lord Bathurst, the British Secretary for War and the Colonies, directed the Administrator of Upper Canada to grant no land to citizens of the United States and to try to prevent them from settling in the province until further notice, despite the vocal objections by many Upper Canadian Representatives in the Legislative Assembly at York and also the more subtle opposition by large landowners in Upper Canada with thousands of acres ready to sell to land-hungry Americans.⁷² The British government, with the active cooperation of many in Upper Canada, wished to populate the empty lands of the Crown with British immigrants instead. For more than a decade, this policy would prevail in one form or another, and would have a far-reaching effect on the settlement efforts of men such as Jonathan Doan.

Despite the new land regulations, Jonathan Doan was extremely busy at York in July of 1816. From the 15th through to the 18th he acted as the attorney for ten men on ten different land petitions, each of whom was asking for a grant of a lease of 'reserve' land.⁷³ Two weeks later, the next purchase of land by Jonathan Doan himself

from Baby took place at York on 30 July 1816 and fifteen lots of 200 hundred acres each in Concessions 3 and 4 in Yarmouth for a total of 3,000 acres at a cost of £1,125.⁷⁴ Signing the deed as a witness for Jonathan was David Graybiel, Blacksmith, brother of his old friend Michael Graybiel of Wainfleet. Four years later, on 26 August 1820, Jonathan purchased another 1,000 acres, this time from Jean Baptiste Baby, with his brother James Baby acting as his attorney. Other smaller transactions were made in later years for an approximate total of about 5,000 acres in outright purchases by Jonathan Doan from various members of the Baby family.

It must be emphasized that, in every instance where Jonathan arranged for land leases from the government, or resold those parcels of land purchased from Baby, an analysis of the registered deed indicates that he sold it to a native born Upper Canadian or Nova Scotian (Quaker or non-Quaker), or to a former American (Quaker or non-Quaker) who had at least seven years as a resident in Upper Canada or Nova Scotia and also, importantly, had been a resident here before the War of 1812 and gave no indication of disloyalty during the war.⁷⁵ Obviously, Jonathan Doan was trying to play by the given rules in his land dealings.

Arthur Dorland, as a follow-on to his 1927 statement in which he referred to Jonathan Doan as having arrived from Philadelphia in 1813, then added the

⁷² Lillian F. Gates, *Land Policies of Upper Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968) 98-119.

⁷³ The men were: John Doan (son), Elijah Doan (son), Jonathan Doan, Samuel Doan (son), Seth Preffer, Christian Zavitz Sr., Moses Doan, Jesse Zavitz, Calvin Witt, Joseph Moore.

⁷⁴ Memorial No. 157: Hon. James Baby of Sandwich to Jonathan Doan of Yarmouth, Yarmouth Township Deed, (30 July 1816; Reg. 4 Oct. 1816).

⁷⁵ Lots were re-sold by Jonathan Doan to: Christian Zavitz (1816), Isaac Moore (1816), Joseph M. Moore (1816), Isaac Minor (1816), Ezekiel Dennis (1816), Jacob Preffer (1816), Isaac Laing (1817), Abraham Laing (1817), Finlay Grant (1817), Thomas Millard (1817), David Graybiel (1817), Elias Moore (1817), Samuel Axford (1818), Samuel Moore (1819), Anderson Montross (1820), William P. Shoff (1820), John Widdifield (1824), Benjamin C. Doan (1826), Mahlon Doan (1827), Samuel Street (1829), John T. Doan (1830).

following sentence: "At the end of two year's residence in the new township, Jonathan Doan was so satisfied with the prospects that he went back to Pennsylvania; and on returning to Canada, brought a number of settlers with him, among whom were William Harvey, John Kipp, John Mills and Joseph Albertson."⁷⁶ This particular statement, almost word for word, was then repeated by Charles Buck in *'Old Sparta'* in 1929.

Was this statement by Dorland, which was later borrowed by Buck, actually based on fact? Almost certainly it was not, and for several reasons. First, we know that Dorland was not aware of the pre-war evidence found in the Pelham Quaker Minutes or in Jonathan's land petitions concerning his trip(s) to New York State and Pennsylvania in 1811-1812. Consequently, when Dorland in the 1920's talked to people from Yarmouth Meeting about Jonathan Doan's activities over a century earlier, it is not surprising that Dorland assumed that the journey he heard about Jonathan taking to the United States must necessarily have taken place immediately after the war, since Jonathan and his family spent most of 1813 and 1814 clearing their land and building their cabin.

Second, it would have been extremely difficult during a period of almost frenetic planning and building activity within the Yarmouth Settlement itself in 1815 and 1816 (including the numerous land transactions previously mentioned), for Jonathan to spare the several months required to go south to New York State and Pennsylvania and promote a scheme to sell land to American Quakers who, upon

entering Upper Canada, could not legally purchase the land. Third, unlike the evidence found in the Pelham Minutes and in Jonathan's land petitions for his trips in 1811-1812 to the United States, there is no corresponding documentary evidence existent which suggests that such a land-promotion journey was undertaken by him during 1815-1816.

Finally, Dorland's statement that Doan, after visiting Pennsylvania, "on returning to Canada, brought a number of settlers with him," oversimplifies and telescopes together a difficult period of land settlement which extended over several years. The settler John Kipp, for example, had nothing to do with Pennsylvania. He was in fact born in Nova Scotia, the son of a Loyalist, and after his father died there, his mother and family returned to New York State. On 22 August 1817, a Removal Certificate was created for John Kipp and family from Crum Elbow at Creek Monthly Meeting in Dutchess County, NY, which was presented at Pelham Monthly Meeting on 4 Feb. 1818.⁷⁷ On 9 Feb. 1818 Jonathan Doan presented the following land petition at York for John Kipp for a lease of a Crown Reserve lot, and which states in part: "Your Petitioner came into this Province in October last under the patronage of Peter Lossing, and has taken the oath of allegiance."⁷⁸ This request went nowhere and three years later in 1821 Kipp presented another petition for a lease of the same lot, this time stating: "That Your Petitioner is a native of Nova Scotia and has resided a number of years in this province."⁷⁹ This time, a warrant was finally issued on 9 April 1821 for the lease of Lot No. 20. This John Kipp situation

⁷⁶ Dorland, *A History of the Society of Friends (Quakers) In Canada*, 73.

⁷⁷ Pelham Monthly Meeting Book (1806-1834), 172, CYMA.

⁷⁸ Petition of John Kipp of Yarmouth (1818), U.C. Sundries, 38, 17833-17835, AO.

⁷⁹ Petition of John Kipp of Yarmouth (1821), Vol.283, K Leases, 49, AO.

illustrates the difficulty in which even a native-born Canadian had to prove his past in order to receive even a leased lot from the Crown in this post-war anti-American climate. The above documentation also implies that, although Jonathan Doan tried his best to assist Kipp once he arrived in Upper Canada, it was actually Peter Lossing, a native of Dutchess County himself, who apparently was the initiating force behind Kipp's migration. Investigation also reveals that both the Kipp and Lossing families were members, at the same time, of Oswego Monthly Meeting for several years before Lossing removed to Norwich.

A brief look at the remaining three settler families mentioned by Dorland will suffice. The John Mills family was also from New York State. Being Quakers, in 1810 they had moved from Marlborough Meeting in Ulster County, New York, to Adolphustown in Upper Canada. Then, after the war in 1816 they had moved from Adolphustown to Junius Meeting in Seneca County, New York. Finally, in late 1818 or 1819, they had removed once again, this time to Yarmouth. The other two families mentioned were from Pennsylvania. William and Cynthia Harvey and their children had a Removal Certificate sent from Wrightstown Monthly meeting in Bucks County, PA to Pelham Meeting dated 6 August 1817 and were at Yarmouth by 1818. Joseph Albertson's family was also from Bucks County, but they came later, in 1822, following a Quaker visitation to Upper Canada by Jacob Albertson, probably Joseph's uncle, in late 1821 and early 1822. In summation, it appears that none of the four families listed by Dorland had settled in Yarmouth as a direct or even indirect result of any journey taken to Pennsylvania

by Jonathan Doan immediately after the war. All, however, were welcomed and given assistance by Jonathan Doan following their arrival.

By 1818 and afterwards, it can be seen that American-born Quaker families, such as those listed above, began to slowly filter into the Yarmouth Settlement. Their entrance into Upper Canada coincided with the ongoing battle headlined by the organizing efforts and ultimate arrest and expulsion from Upper Canada of Robert Gourlay, a Scotsman who had arrived in the province at the end of May 1817, and who tried to get the anti-American laws rescinded in the Legislative Assembly. Although Gourlay himself was unsuccessful, popular opinion had shifted and creative minds, such as Jonathan Doan, were beginning to find a way around the onerous laws. A close examination of the Yarmouth Ledger of Registered Deeds is very instructive in this regard. The first deed registered by any American Quaker who had come in after the War of 1812 to Yarmouth, occurred on 15 February 1832 when John Mills Sr. registered a deed that he had executed on 29 January 1829 at which time he sold part of Lot 22, Concession 6 in Yarmouth to his brother-in-law Samuel Minard. Minard had come into the Yarmouth Settlement in 1820 after obtaining a Removal Certificate "Signed by Direction of Plainfield Monthly meeting, State of New York, the 25th of 7 mo. 1820."⁸⁰ At some point in the past John Mills had purchased this land from the Baby family, probably via Jonathan Doan, but he had held the land in 'quiet possession' without registering it until after the discriminatory policies were finally discontinued in 1827.⁸¹ Since we know that

⁸⁰ Norwich Monthly Meeting Record Book A, 1819-1842, 48, CYMA.

⁸¹ Alan Taylor, *The Civil War of 1812* (Toronto: Random House of Canada, 2010), 441-458.

other American Quaker families also similarly became landowners in Yarmouth, but there were no deeds registered under their names in those early years, we can assume that the same procedure had occurred in their situations also. Consequently, in addition to the five thousand acres which Doan had sold outright to qualifying settlers, behind the scenes there were undoubtedly many additional acres which flowed from the Baby family through Jonathan Doan to prospective Quaker settlers.

Ever the planner and strategist, by mid-summer of 1816 Jonathan Doan's land petitions indicate that he had one sawmill built in 1815, and was in the process of building another in 1816 with the assistance of Christian Zavitz and his son Jesse. Then, on 16 July 1816, Jesse Zavitz had also sent in his own petition, using Jonathan Doan as his attorney, in which he stated that he wished also to build a sawmill on Lot 3,

Concession 4, but required a lease for the surrounding land.⁸² The early advance planning for these three mills illustrates the degree of coordinated and cooperative planning being instituted for this new settlement. By pre-empting the local lumber production industry and getting first-mover advantage, Jonathan was setting the stage for a nascent industrial centre happening in his settlement rather than elsewhere. The sawmills were soon followed by a blacksmith shop, a tannery, a distillery, and two grist-and-flour mills. As expected, Charles Buck readily found statements from the elder citizens of Sparta on how "the Doan settlers were much more fortunate than their neighbours some miles away."⁸³

Jonathan Doan considered the 'spiritual' to be equally as important as the 'temporal' in his settlement planning. The arrival of two new Quaker families in Yarmouth, and their almost immediate readiness to assume spiritual responsibilities, must have given



Steele Cabin

⁸² Petition of Jesse Zavitz of Humberstone (1816), U.C. Sundries, 13311-13313, AO.

⁸³ Buck, *Old Sparta*, 12.

Jonathan the confidence he needed for his next step. Consequently, on 8 April 1820, Jonathan executed a deed with, "John Kipp and William Harvey, both of Yarmouth, Farmers, as Trustees of the Society of Friends entrusted with lands and money belonging to said Society" in which for the nominal sum of five shillings, Jonathan sold to the Trustees one acre of land from Lot 19, Concession 4 for the purpose of building a Meeting House thereon.⁸⁴ This first Meeting House was constructed in 1820 on the corner of the Doan farm next to the present cemetery. By 1821, a regular Preparative Meeting was established. The spiritual foundation had been put into place by Jonathan Doan. Increasingly, it would be up to others in the Yarmouth Quaker community to continue in the same path which had been clearly laid out.

Jonathan Doan was, it seemed, always the methodical planner who could anticipate approaching problems and find practical ways of diffusing or in some way dealing with them, otherwise Yarmouth Quaker Settlement never would have existed. However, in the later 1830s, as the Rebellion of 1837 approached, he could do little to forestall what he must have instinctively feared could happen to his family and surrounding community. From his distant past in Bucks County, as we have so intimately seen, he would have been all too aware of what the consequences could be when emotions ran high and events began to spiral out of control. In family discussions around the kitchen table, we can surely imagine how he must have resorted to both pleading and scolding, and even recounted in very graphic detail from his own experience what had happened to his

own cousins several decades before. But it was ultimately to no avail. As we know, on 6 February 1839, Jonathan's youngest son, Joshua Gillam Doan, the baby who was born as Jonathan was in the midst of his quest twenty-seven years earlier with his travelling minute, was hanged at London for the part he played in the Rebellion of 1837. Implicated also, but spared from such extreme punishment, were Jonathan's second youngest son Joel Patterson Doan, and his eldest grandson Jonathan Steele, the boy in the boat when it first headed to Yarmouth in 1813.

At the time of his son's death, Jonathan was in his seventy-fifth year. He and his wife Jane grieved heavily over their loss, but instead of confining himself to quarters, the tragic event almost seemed to drive Jonathan onwards, perhaps to what purpose even he did not know. In January of 1885, for example, Henry Mercer wrote an article in the *Bucks County Historical Society Journal* entitled "The Doans and Their Times." In the article Mercer spent some time describing the events surrounding the death of Joshua Doan, including the irony that "one of the Doans, so noted for their hostility against the American Colonies and loyalty to the British during the Revolution, should have thus turned against the mother country." Then came this very surprising revelation: "Not long after this, as Mr. Alfred Doan tells us, the father of the dead man visited Chester County. His name was Jonathan Doan, and he had come from Canada in a wagon accompanied by a grandson named Jonathan York. At the time of his visit he was mourning for the son above-mentioned."⁸⁵ Chester County includes part of the outskirts of present-

⁸⁴ Yarmouth Township Deed, Memorial No. 262: Jonathan Doan Sr. of Yarmouth to John Kipp and William Harvey, Trustees of the Society of Friends (8 Apr. 1820; Reg. 10 Apr. 1820).

⁸⁵ Bucks County Hist. Society (Vol.1: 1885), *The Doans and Their Times*, 274.

day Philadelphia and is next door to Bucks County. Jonathan's visit to Pennsylvania probably took place in 1840 and if so, his grandson Jonathan York would have been about fifteen years old at the time. What could compel a man of Jonathan's age to drive several hundred miles to Pennsylvania and back in a covered wagon? The answer may be that although he could have gone anywhere, he chose instead to return to the area where he grew up. In all probability he also visited Bucks County; perhaps he crossed the river to Trenton; he probably went to visit once more those of his siblings still alive; or possibly, he went to visit for a last time the burial places of his parents, his grandparents, or even those of his 'outlaw' cousins. It would have been a journey of remembrance and much reflection.

Following his return home, and presumably after much thought while on his travels, Jonathan began a project in very late 1841 which culminated in early 1843 with the submission of a petition by him (already referred to) in which he requested that his name be officially added to the 'U.E. List' (United Empire Loyalist List). Looking back now, it would seem that this was more about the establishment of a 'rightful' family legacy by Jonathan and less about the acquisition of yet more land. The persecution that Jonathan had described at the beginning of the petition, and which was quoted earlier in this study, had taken place almost sixty years before, and so the statute of limitations had clearly run out long ago. Jonathan then went on in the petition to give his reasoning: "Your

Petitioner imagined that his name had been placed upon the U.E. List of the Province at the same time with his first Cousins Aaron and Joseph Doan who came into the Province about the same period with Your Petitioner, but now finds that their names only have been inserted and his omitted. He therefore humbly prays that Your Excellency may be pleased to order that his name be placed on the U.E. List of the Province, That he may receive a Grant of the Lands to which he is entitled, as such, and also that his children, viz: Elijah, John, Benjamin, Israel, Joel, Jane and Tacy may each receive a grant of 200 acres of Land to which they are entitled under the Royal Proclamation as the Sons and Daughters of an U.E. Loyalist. Kingston, 29th Dec'r 1842 Jonathan Doan Elder."⁸⁶

Almost exactly a year earlier, on 30 December 1841, Jonathan had acquired his first endorsement for his petition, from John Harris, the renowned builder and owner of Eldon House in London. Then, over the course of 1842 and early 1843 Jonathan received written endorsements from ten additional men.⁸⁷ This list included several of the more important people in the Family Compact structure of the province such as Mahlon Burwell, Samuel Street, and William Dickson, the latter being the founder of Galt and perhaps the most powerful merchant and politician at Niagara. Despite these somewhat high-powered endorsements, the official response was as expected: "The name of Petitioner does not appear ever to have been inserted in the U.E. List -- he did not bear arms being of the Society of

⁸⁶ Land Petition of Jonathan Doan (1843), Vol. 165, Bundle D2, 32, AO.

⁸⁷ The complete list of men endorsing Jonathan's U.E. Petition: Joseph Doan (cousin); John Harris Esq.; Elias Moore; Benjamin Birdsall Sr.; Daniel Birdsall J.P.; Henry Warren J.P.; Benjamin Willson J.P.; Mahlon Burwell J.P.; Samuel Street Esq.; William Dickson Esq.

Friends -- The facts stated in some of the accompanying documents might have been considered had application been made at the proper period.”⁸⁸

Jonathan Doan was an astute man who was well aware of Upper Canadian land regulations, and therefore must have known his chances of acceptance were extremely slight. However, given the circumstances surrounding the death of his son, the submission of this petition may have been a way for a proud and complex man, who was undergoing much inner turmoil, to validate the trials he had undergone in his own early life and also to burnish the image of his family in the present and for the future. In reality, after his son’s execution, newspaper journalists and others seemed to refer to Jonathan with universal respect and sympathy. Perhaps indicative of this respect gained over the years was the presence of Mahlon Burwell’s certificate on the list of men who endorsed Jonathan’s U.E. request. This was the same blunt, self-willed and opinionated man who in early 1813 had withdrawn his support for Jonathan’s land petition because of Jonathan’s apparently inappropriate comments concerning martial law during the war. Now, years later, and despite the charge of treason which had been laid against Jonathan’s son, associated blame was not being laid against the father. Also, despite his son’s treasonous acts in the eyes of the law, witnesses across Upper Canada spoke with awe of the quiet dignity shown by Joshua in his final days and hours, a demeanour appreciated even by many Tories in the province.

From the *Tweedsmuir Book* under the heading “Sparta’s First Settler” we read: “It is quite an interesting fact that Jonathan

Doan walked from Sparta to Farmington, New York -- a distance of perhaps 250 miles -- to the Yearly Meeting of Friends. He was quite a curiosity as he walked from the village to the Meeting House knocking all the large stones out of the road with his cane so they wouldn’t hurt the horses’ feet. He walked to Pelham, near Welland, to Meetings when he was 82 years old at the rate of four miles an hour.”⁸⁹ Consequently, it is worth emphasizing that up to and including his final year of life, Jonathan Doan continued to add to those countless miles walked over many years for the furtherance of the Society of Friends. As Alfred Doan retrospectively observed in his book with regard to Jonathan Doan: “Being one of the first settlers there and a man of energy and influence, he was known in old age as the Patriarch of Yarmouth.”⁹⁰

Jonathan Doan died on 22 September 1847 at eighty-two years of ages, and his wife Jane died the following year on 13 May 1848 at the age of eighty-three. Both were buried in the Friends Cemetery at Sparta beside their son Joshua Gillam Doan.



⁸⁸ Addendum page to Jonathan Doan’s 1843 Petition, 32(c)

⁸⁹ Elgin County Tweedsmuir Histories, *Sparta Village History, Vol.1*, (Sparta Women’s Institute, c.1950), 26.

⁹⁰ Doan, *The Doane Family*, 245.