

THE ENGLISH SETTLERS IN COLONIAL  
PENNSYLVANIA.

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Though the English were the dominant racial element in colonial Pennsylvania, no one has hitherto been at pains to tell the story of this race, as such, in the settlement of the province. A large number of monographs and articles have been written to describe the migrations, settlements and achievements of other elements of the population, such as the Germans, the Scotch-Irish, the Welsh, and the Swedes, but the English have been strangely neglected. It would appear that the English of Pennsylvania take themselves for granted, and hence have not felt called upon to write up their own history. Again, they have not been so race-conscious and clannish as some others have been, but rather have been content to dispense with the hyphen and to become thoroughly Americanized in thought and feeling. Even so, in view of the considerable body of literature describing the other original elements of the population and the almost total lack of such literature devoted specifically to the English, it would seem to be in order to give at least a brief survey of the English settlements in the provincial era.

For the purposes of this article the colonial period will be construed as extending to 1790, partly because it is a convenient stopping place, and partly because by so doing it is possible to incorporate some of the data gleaned from the first census. No attempt is here made to give an extended treatment of the subject, but merely to call attention to some of its salient features. It may be further stated that the term "Eng-

lish'' is used by the writer to designate race rather than nationality, and therefore includes all settlers of English blood regardless of whether they emigrated to Pennsylvania directly from the mother country or had settled previously in other colonies.

The Dutch were the first Europeans to gain lodgment on the banks of the Delaware and were in undisputed control until 1638, when the Swedes began the settlement of the colony of New Sweden. Soon outnumbering the Dutch, the Swedes established a flourishing community and were making considerable headway when they were conquered by a Dutch expedition from New Amsterdam in 1655. Though a minority of the population the Dutch remained thereafter in control until in their turn they were conquered in 1664 by the English, who established the Duke's Laws on the Delaware. Henceforth interest centers chiefly in the English throughout this region, as they were the real founders of Pennsylvania and eventually absorbed both the Dutch and the Swedes who had preceded them. The Delaware region, regarded as an appendix of the government of New York, remained under the rule of the Duke of York until Penn assumed control under his charter.

People of English stock had appeared in the Delaware territory at an early period. In 1639 New Haven had become interested in founding a colony in the vicinity of the present town of Salem, New Jersey, and in 1640 had sent out about sixty colonists to settle there. These were expelled by the Swedes and Dutch, however, and the English made no further attempt to colonize the east bank of the river until after the conquest of the Dutch in 1664.<sup>1</sup>

Under the Duke's rule Dutch and Swedish immigration practically ceased along the Delaware, but the English began coming in increasing numbers. By

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<sup>1</sup> Davis, "History of Bucks County," pp. 21, 41.

1670 civil government was well established, with Upland as the capital, and in the ensuing decade a number of English immigrants effected settlements on the west side of the river, especially in the vicinity of the falls.<sup>2</sup>

Considerable land was taken up within the bounds of Pennsylvania by English settlers between 1674 and 1681, while Governor Edmund Andros ruled New York as the Duke's representative. According to Proud, "The first most considerable settlement in Pennsylvania proper is said to have been near the lower falls of the river Delaware, in Bucks county . . . some of the inhabitants having settled there by virtue of patents from Sir Edmund Andros, Governor of New York."<sup>3</sup> The "Falls of the Delaware" became the centre of a little English colony several years before Penn's arrival. Among these early settlers were William Yardly, James Harrison, Phineas Pemberton, William Biles, William Dark, Lyonel Britain, William Beaks, and others, "and soon afterwards there, and near Neshaminy Creek, Richard Hough, Henry Baker, Nicholas Walne, John Otter, Robert Hall; and in Wright's town, John Chapman, and James Ratcliffe."<sup>4</sup> Among those who received grants of land in this vicinity from Governor Andros in 1678-80 were Thomas Fairman for 200 acres; William Clark for 309 acres; John Ackerman, 309 acres; Gilbert Wheeler, 205 acres; William Biles, 309 acres; Samuel Sytle, 218 acres; Richard Ridgeway, 218 acres; Robert Lucas, 145 acres; and John Wood, 478 acres. These tracts adjoined each other and bordered on the Delaware. Samuel Bliss owned a large tract which included the present site of Bristol. Another prominent pioneer in this region was William Warner, a large landowner

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<sup>2</sup> Davis, "History of Bucks County," p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> Proud, "History of Pennsylvania," I, p. 217.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

and a man of consequence who became a member of the first assembly in Pennsylvania.<sup>5</sup>

When West New Jersey came into the possession of William Penn and other Quaker proprietors, colonists of that faith soon began to arrive, settling Salem in 1675 and Burlington in 1677. It is estimated that by the close of 1678 at least 800 immigrants, mostly English Quakers, had settled in West Jersey. Some of these located in Salem and vicinity, but Burlington became the Quaker headquarters and chief center of influence. As a by-product of this invasion of West Jersey by English Quakers, a respectable number of the newcomers crossed over to the west side of the Delaware and added to the slowly growing number of the English within the bounds of Pennsylvania. This was the source of the Quaker settlements in the province before the arrival of Penn, and they located chiefly at the Falls of the Delaware, Shakamaxon, Upland, and Marcus Hook, or in the vicinity of these places.<sup>6</sup> Prior to the coming of Penn, the following Quaker heads of families had settled in or around Upland and Marcus Hook: Robert Wade, Roger Pedrick, Morgan Drewett, William Woodmanson, Michael Izzard, Thomas Revel, Henry Hastings, William Oxley, James Browne, Henry Reynolds, and Thomas Nossiter.<sup>7</sup> It is estimated that about 1400 Quakers, mostly English, emigrated to New Jersey and Pennsylvania before Penn's arrival, though the majority of these settled in West Jersey. Some, however, settled lower down the Delaware in and around Newcastle and Hoarkills. In 1681 a Yearly Meeting was established at Burlington, with jurisdiction over all the Quakers within the bounds of the present states of New

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<sup>5</sup> Davis, "History of Bucks County," pp. 35-37, 39.

<sup>6</sup> Sharpless, "Two Centuries of Pennsylvania History," p. 29.

<sup>7</sup> Smith, "History of Delaware County," p. 134.

<sup>8</sup> Sharpless, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware.<sup>8</sup> Prominent among this group of early English Quakers was Robert Wade, who settled at Upland, bought 650 acres of land and built the famous "Essex House," at which was held in 1675 the first meeting of Quakers on Pennsylvania soil. Other early English settlers in the vicinity of Upland were John Test, Walter Wharton, Richard Noble, and Richard Bovington.<sup>9</sup>

Thus it appears that before the founding of Pennsylvania proper under Penn's charter there was already within the present bounds of the Commonwealth an advance guard of English settlers, deriving their land titles from Governor Edmund Andros, the Duke's representative on the Delaware. These settlers were mostly Quakers, and were established principally at the Falls of the Delaware, Shakamaxon, Upland, and Marcus Hook, and vicinity. There were doubtless a few other English settlers between these points, just as there were others at Newcastle and vicinity, though it is difficult to trace them. They were not numerous and were greatly outnumbered by the Swedes above Upland and by the Dutch below that point. Like the Dutch and Swedes, they were not in the line of the real beginning of Pennsylvania, which was the work of William Penn, founder of the Quaker commonwealth under the charter granted him by the king in 1681. Nevertheless they were the pioneer English settlers in Pennsylvania and are entitled to recognition as such.

The sources of English emigration into Pennsylvania may be described as direct and indirect, the former term applying to those who came directly from England, and the latter to those who came from the British colonies. If their racial strain was English, we are concerned with them, whether they came directly or indirectly from the mother country.

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<sup>8</sup> Jenkins, "Pennsylvania Colonial and Federal," I, pp. 168, 171.

William Penn received his charter March 4, 1681, and in the summer of that year sent over his cousin, William Markham, to represent him as deputy governor until he himself should arrive. Accompanying Markham, who probably sailed on the *John and Sarah*, were three commissioners appointed by Penn to confer with the Indians respecting their lands and to cultivate with them friendly relations.<sup>10</sup>

The first group of English emigrants who sailed directly for Pennsylvania left England in the summer of 1681 in three ships, the *John and Sarah*, the *Amity*, and the *Bristol Factor*, the two former sailing from London and the latter from Bristol. The *John and Sarah* was the first to arrive, and her passengers were called the "first landers" by those coming later. Among these were Nathaniel Allen, John Otter, and Edmund Lovett, who settled in Bucks county along the Delaware. The *Bristol Factor* arrived at Upland December 11, 1681, "where the passengers, seeing some houses, went on shore at Robert Wade's landing, near the lower side of Chester creek; and, the river having froze up (sic) that night, the passengers remained there all winter."<sup>11</sup> The *Amity* was blown off the coast to the West Indies, and did not land her passengers in Pennsylvania until the following spring.<sup>12</sup>

Penn sailed from England in August, 1682, on board the ship *Welcome*, accompanied by about one hundred passengers, of whom about thirty died on the voyage. These immigrants were mostly English Quakers, the majority of whom came from Sussex, Penn's place of residence. After a voyage of about seven weeks the *Welcome* arrived at Newcastle October 27, 1682.

The population along the Delaware numbered prob-

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<sup>10</sup> Proud, "History of Pennsylvania," I, p. 194.

<sup>11</sup> Proud, I, p. 193.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

ably two thousand at the time of Penn's arrival. Of these about one thousand were located on the Jersey side of the river and consisted principally of English Quakers, though some Swedes and other nationalities were represented. On the west side of the river the population likewise numbered about one thousand and consisted of Swedes, Dutch, Finns, English, and a few Germans, with the Swedes largely in the majority. Of those on the west side of the Delaware about five hundred were in the present state of Delaware and about as many more in the present state of Pennsylvania. Within the borders of Pennsylvania the English at that time probably did not exceed one hundred in number. Penn thus found a cosmopolitan population in his new domain, though these early settlers were later to lose all trace of their national identity by being merged with the English. Even the "Lower Counties," at first strongly Dutch, Swedish and Finn, were to become English as time passed and the increasing English population throughout that region absorbed the original racial elements.

The great majority of English settlers in Pennsylvania came directly from the mother country. Following Penn's arrival there was a large and steady stream of English emigrants, sailing chiefly from London and Bristol as ports of embarkation. Though other nationalities were present from the beginning and continued to come, nevertheless the English Quakers were the dominant element in the founding of Pennsylvania. In 1682 and the two succeeding years about fifty ships arrived with immigrants to Pennsylvania. These came from London, Bristol, Ireland, Cheshire, Lancashire, Holland, and Germany, but the large majority of them were English Quakers. According to Proud, these "settlers amounted to such a large number, that the parts near Delaware were peopled in a very rapid manner, even from about the falls of Trenton,

down to Chester, near fifty miles, on the river; besides the settlements in the lower counties, which, at the same time, were very considerable: for the first settlements, for the most part, were made nigh the river, according to the different shares of land, which were respectively allotted for each settler.’<sup>13</sup> After the colony was fairly started under Penn, the Welsh came over in large numbers and for a time rivalled the English; but the Welsh immigration practically ceased after 1700, while the English continued a steady stream throughout the whole colonial period. But few of the English coming after 1700 were Quakers, however, but rather Church of England men and Baptists. Nevertheless, the Quaker element predominated and gave direction to the affairs of the colony for many years. After about 1701 the Quaker population increased by a high birth rate rather than by immigration.<sup>14</sup>

Thus it appears that in the first generation after Penn’s coming the great body of English settlers came to Pennsylvania directly from the mother country and, being greatly in the majority, founded Pennsylvania as an English community, predominantly Quaker. Though the stream of English immigration continued steadily throughout the entire provincial period, it was less pronounced after 1720 than it had been previously; while after 1730 it was far exceeded by the influx of Germans and Scotch-Irish. During the Revolution and the period of the Confederation, however, the German and Scotch-Irish immigration declined rapidly, whereas that from England again became much the strongest tide until 1790, and for many years thereafter.

Though the large majority of immigrants of English stock came to Pennsylvania directly from England,

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<sup>13</sup> Proud, I, 216.

<sup>14</sup> Keith, “Chronicles of Pennsylvania,” I, p. 727.



especially in the early years of the colony, many also came from the neighboring British colonies on the mainland, and some from the British West Indies. This latter group was more important than has ordinarily been supposed, and embraced some of the most eminent Pennsylvanians of the colonial period. Certain of these immigrants settled as isolated communities far in the interior of the province and their existence has generally been ignored in estimating the English population of the colony, which it has been customary to lump together as the community in and around Philadelphia. It might also be noted, incidentally, that quite a respectable number of immigrants of English blood, known as the English-Irish, came from Ireland to Pennsylvania and further swelled the English population of the province. These considerations might well lead to a revision of the customary estimates as to the relative numerical strength of the three main elements of the population of colonial Pennsylvania—the English, the German, and the Scotch-Irish—and to dispel some of the illusions that appear to have gathered around this subject.

Pennsylvania proved to be an attractive colony not only to emigrants from Europe, but to the inhabitants of the British colonies in the New World as well; and inasmuch as these colonies were inhabited chiefly by people of English stock, those of them who came to Pennsylvania were nearly all English in ancestry and traditions. Some of these were attracted to Pennsylvania because it offered a greater degree of religious liberty than was to be found elsewhere in America, except in Rhode Island; others, because of its vast stretches of fertile land awaiting occupancy; and others because, as time went on, Philadelphia became the metropolis of America and presented all the attractions of a city at once the largest, handsomest, wealthiest and most cultured, to be found in the land.

This position it had attained by 1750 and continued to maintain, with increasing prestige, not only throughout the later colonial era, but well into the national period. People of English antecedents and habits found in Philadelphia a congenial society, together with professional and commercial opportunities beyond those afforded elsewhere in America, and consequently were attracted thither. Apart from these considerations, there were special causes inducing immigration from Connecticut and to a certain extent from Virginia, growing out of the boundary claims of these two provinces; and the great majority of this class of immigrants were of English stock.

Of the English settlers coming to Pennsylvania from other British colonies by far the largest number came from New England, especially from Connecticut. In 1684 Rev. Thomas Dungan, of Rhode Island, came with his family to the vicinity of Bristol, in Bucks county, gathered a Baptist congregation composed of English and Welsh, and organized a Baptist church which held together until 1702.<sup>15</sup> Benjamin Franklin came to Philadelphia from Boston and was followed by quite a number of other New Englanders, among whom was Jared Ingersoll of Connecticut. Practically all the New Englanders of the colonial period were of English stock, and the great body of those emigrating to Pennsylvania in this era came in connection with the attempt of Connecticut to establish her claim to northern Pennsylvania through the settlement of Wyoming and the extension of the jurisdiction of Connecticut throughout that region. However slight the merits of this claim might be, it was the occasion of introducing into Pennsylvania, in a remote and isolated section of the province, a considerable number of Connecticut people of English stock. This movement resulted not

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<sup>15</sup> Davis, "History of Bucks County," p. 129.

only in swelling the English element of the population of Pennsylvania in colonial times, but had important and lasting effects in peopling the northern tier of counties with settlers from the same source at a later date. In 1762 about two hundred immigrants from Connecticut arrived in the Wyoming Valley (now embraced in Luzerne county) and settled there under the authority of the Susquehanna Company. In January, 1774, Connecticut passed an act, "erecting all the territory within her charter limits, from the river Delaware to a line fifteen miles west of the Susquehanna, into a town, with all the corporate powers of other towns in the colony, to be called Westmoreland, attaching it to the county of Litchfield." Thus Connecticut, not at all backward, sought to establish her jurisdiction over this part of Pennsylvania, and prepared to enforce her claims. Immigrants from Connecticut poured into the Wyoming Valley, and a census taken in 1774 shows that the town of Westmoreland contained 1922 inhabitants. Miner estimates the population of this settlement in 1776 at 2580, but Trumbull estimates it at five thousand. During the Revolution it received a severe blow by the "Wyoming Massacre," from which it rallied appreciably within a few years; and by 1786 the tide of immigration from New England had again set in strongly and soon peopled the region on both sides of the Susquehanna from Wilkes-Barre to the New York line. In 1790 the Connecticut settlers were scattered along the Susquehanna and its branches for a distance of a hundred miles, and probably numbered at least six thousand people. A small number of the immigrants to Westmoreland were located on the Lackawaxen, in present Wayne county, in what was known as the "Lackawa settlement." This settlement, though a long way from the Wyoming Valley, was not merely within the territorial limits of Westmoreland, but was united to it in jurisdiction and

took part in the government by attending the elections at Wilkes-Barre.<sup>16</sup>

The Connecticut people in the Wyoming Valley were an isolated group, who led a life of their own and took no part in the general affairs of the province of Pennsylvania. They drew their inspiration from Puritan New England, cherishing the political, religious, and educational traditions of Connecticut, and possessing no sympathy for Pennsylvania life and institutions. With true Yankee tenacity they persisted in holding on to their shadowy claim to Pennsylvania territory, and when this claim was disallowed by the Trenton Decree they held out obstinately for some years, but finally submitted to what they could not avoid. Nevertheless, as a result of their activities a considerable element of energetic, intelligent, and moral people of English stock was added to the population of Pennsylvania and this group formed the majority of the pioneer settlers of the northern tier of counties of the Keystone State.

Far out on the extreme frontier of southwestern Pennsylvania was another group of settlers composed at first chiefly of immigrants of English stock coming from Virginia and, to a less extent, from Maryland. The principal inducing cause of this immigration is found in Virginia's claim to a large strip of territory centering around the forks of the Ohio, and in the easy terms upon which she granted lands to pioneers in this region. Furthermore, the natural connections of southwestern Pennsylvania were with Virginia and Maryland; by water along the Monongahela, the Youghiogheny, and the Potomac rivers, and by land along Braddock's Road. Again, the Ohio Company fostered settlement throughout this territory, while

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<sup>16</sup> Miner, "History of Wyoming," pp. 153, 163, 188, 390, 412, 451, 464-6; also, Chapman, "A Sketch of the History of Wyoming," p. 65; Fisher, "The Making of Pennsylvania," pp. 246-7.

Virginia recognized the strategic value of the forks of the Ohio, whether for trade or for military purposes, and as early as 1752 planned the erection of a fort there.<sup>17</sup>

In 1750 the Ohio Company sent out Christopher Gist to explore this region and to report conditions as he found them. In 1752 Gist made what appears to have been the first actual settlement in Pennsylvania west of the Alleghenies, locating on a tract of land west of the Youghioghenny river at a place now known as Mount Braddock. Eleven other families settled in the same vicinity on lands supposed to be within the Ohio Company's grant, in present Fayette county. The southern part of western Pennsylvania, now comprising Greene, Washington, Fayette, and part of Somerset counties, was assumed by the first settlers to be within the bounds of Virginia, and the great majority of the pioneers throughout this region came from Virginia and Maryland by Braddock's Road. Braddock's defeat and the troublous times that followed caused a temporary abandonment of the settlements west of the Alleghenies, but the settlers returned after 1762, and thereafter immigration continued in a slow but steady stream. In 1765 a considerable body of emigrants from Virginia and Maryland settled in the present counties of Fayette, Greene, Washington, and Westmoreland. The early settlers in the valleys of the Monongahela and the Youghioghenny, and in the vicinity of Pittsburgh, were from Virginia for the most part. The majority were of English stock, but some were Scotch and a few were German. Among these were some Quakers from Berkeley and Frederick counties, Virginia. Pennsylvania settlers did not begin to preponderate throughout this region until after 1784, when the Scotch-Irish commenced their

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<sup>17</sup> Veech, "The Monongahela of Old," p. 250; Fisher, "The Making of Pennsylvania," p. 350.

heavy migration to the southwestern part of the State and became the dominant people thereabouts. Virginia established her jurisdiction throughout this territory, erected the counties of Yohogania, Monongalia, and Ohio, and issued certificates for lands in great numbers, especially in 1779-80. Most of the first settlers in this region held their land titles under Virginia, and these, by a compromise between the two states, were recognized as equally good as Pennsylvania warrants. When Pennsylvania passed the act for the gradual abolition of slavery in 1780 and Virginia conceded the disputed territory to her, many of the Virginians and Marylanders who had located there became dissatisfied at this turn of affairs and emigrated to Kentucky. Others remained, however, as a reminder that the pioneer settlers of Southwestern Pennsylvania came chiefly from Virginia and Maryland, and were mostly of English stock.<sup>18</sup>

New Jersey was peopled principally by settlers of English stock, and from the beginning there was a tendency for these to migrate to Pennsylvania. We have seen how the pioneer Quaker immigrants to West Jersey overflowed into Pennsylvania. Throughout the entire provincial period Pennsylvania was constantly receiving accessions to its population from New Jersey, which in the aggregate amounted to a considerable number and still further swelled the English element of the colony. Many of these settled in Philadelphia and the adjoining counties, but others went farther into the interior, and some to the extreme frontier. In 1770, after the opening up of the land to which the Indian title had been quieted by the Purchase

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<sup>18</sup> Doddridge, "Notes on the Settlements and Indian Wars of the Western Parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania," pp. 99-100; "Rupp, Early History of Western Pennsylvania," pp. 40-48; Creigh, "History of Washington County," p. 47; Ellis, "History of Fayette County," pp. 56, 58, 65, 127; Albert, "History of Westmoreland County," pp. 38, 44; Scharf, "History of Western Maryland," I, 58-9.

of 1768, "settlers began pouring in from New Jersey and the lower counties of Pennsylvania, attracted by reports of the fertility of the land and the ease of acquiring tracts through the land office at a nominal cost." Robert Martin of New Jersey was the first settler in the present town of Northumberland. In 1777 New Jersey was over-run by both the British and the Continental armies, and this led to an exodus from that state of a large body of emigrants who settled chiefly along the West Branch of the Susquehanna in the present county of Lycoming. In this way originated the name of the town of Jersey Shore in that county. Still farther out on the frontier many people from New Jersey at a somewhat later period availed themselves of the opportunity to purchase on easy terms the lands vacated by the early settlers of southwestern Pennsylvania who migrated to Kentucky after 1780.<sup>19</sup>

Throughout the colonial period Pennsylvania was constantly receiving accessions to its population from the neighboring colonies. The pioneer settlers of York county were chiefly from Maryland, and from that province came James Tilghman, John Dickinson, and Benjamin Chew. Benjamin Franklin came from Massachusetts, Jared Ingersoll from Connecticut, Joseph Reed from New Jersey, Andrew Hamilton from Virginia, Gouverneur Morris from New York, John More from South Carolina, and Edward Shippen and Francis Richardson from New England. All these were of English ancestry and rose to eminence as Pennsylvanians. Many others followed in their train.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Meginness, "Otzinachson, a History of the West Branch Valley of the Susquehanna," pp. 123, 307; Veech, "The Monongahela of Old," p. 100; Meginness, "History of Lycoming County," p. 103.

<sup>20</sup> Donehoo, "Pennsylvania, a History," Vol. I, p. 435; Davis, "History of Bucks County," pp. 129, 131; Jenkins, "Pennsylvania, Colonial and Federal," I, 307.

From the British West Indies came Isaac Norris and Jonathan Dickinson from the island of Jamaica, and Samuel Carpenter from Barbados. Carpenter, who was a native of Surrey, England, came to Pennsylvania in 1683, and by 1701 had become the richest man in the province. From Ireland came a considerable number of immigrants of English ancestry—the English-Irish, who came early and were mostly Quakers. Among these were Robert Turner and Nicholas Newlin.

- ✓ Such were the sources of the English population of colonial Pennsylvania. The larger number came directly from England; but many came from the neighboring British colonies, some from Ireland, and a few from the British West Indies. Among the latter group were not a few of the most distinguished men in Pennsylvania in the provincial period.

Certain non-English elements of the early population settling the three original counties of Pennsylvania lost their national identity as time passed, and merged so completely with the English community in and around Philadelphia that they were counted among the English in the enumeration of the first census. These elements were the early Swedes, Finns, Dutch, Welsh, and perhaps some of the Scotch. Constant mingling of these numerically small elements with the dominant English population, together with intermarriages, had to all intents and purposes obliterated all their distinctive characteristics of race or nationality and made them one with the English population. They were thus absorbed by the English just as the early Huguenots of Lancaster and Berks counties were absorbed by the dominant German population in those counties, and were enumerated as Germans in the first census.

The early English settlers in Pennsylvania were overwhelmingly Quaker in their religious affiliations down to about 1700. Pennsylvania was founded by



English Quakers under Penn as a Quaker colony offering religious and political freedom from the persecutions endured in Europe. It was the Quakers who dominated the colony, gave it its distinctive tone and atmosphere, and moulded its early career. At first the Welsh Quakers nearly equalled the English, but after 1700 the English outnumbered and finally absorbed the Welsh element of the population. Thus it happened that by the end of the colonial period the Quakers of eastern Pennsylvania presented the appearance of a compact, wealthy, and influential body of English people, speaking the English language, accustomed to English laws, and wedded to English institutions and traditions. The English Quakers were the most influential single element of the heterogeneous population of Pennsylvania down to the Revolution.

The first meeting held by the Quakers in Pennsylvania was at the house of Robert Wade at Upland in 1675, "at whose house the first meeting of record was held, on the tenth of the eleventh month, 1681." Proud further informs us that, "The Quakers had meetings for religious worship, and for the economy of their society so early as the fore part of the year 1681, at the house of Thomas Fairlamb, at Shakamaxon, near, or about the place where Kensington now stands, nigh Philadelphia; and in the next following year, 1682, at the place itself, where the city is since built, in a boarded meeting-house erected for that purpose. . . . In the year 1682, they had a religious meeting regularly fixed at Darby. Among the first and early settlers of the society, at or near this place, are mentioned John Blunston, Michael Blunston, George Wood, Joshua Fearn, Henry Gibbons, Samuel Sellers, Robert Bonsall, Edmund Cartlidge, Thomas Hood, John Bartram, Robert Naylor, and Adam Rhoads;—who all came from Darbyshire, in England."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Proud, "History of Pennsylvania," I, 218.

Other English Quakers arriving in 1682 were Thomas Worth, Samuel Bradshaw, John Hallowell, William Wood, Thomas Bradshaw, Robert Scothorn, and Richard Parker, from Nottinghamshire; and John Hood, William Garret, Robert Cliffe, William Smith, John Smith, and Thomas Smith, from Leicestershire.<sup>22</sup> Attention has been called above to the group of English Quakers who settled in the vicinity of the falls of the Delaware, and established a meeting there prior to Penn's arrival.

Following the coming of Penn, Quakers arrived in large numbers, and in the beginning Pennsylvania was essentially a Quaker colony. Though other sects were present, they were largely outnumbered by the Quakers for over a generation. Even after the Quakers became a minority of the population they continued to control the colony down to the Revolution, and to impress upon it essentially English laws and institutions. It must not be forgotten that Pennsylvania was founded by Quakers as a Quaker commonwealth, and that their influence was paramount for many years; and it is to their everlasting credit that when they had a giant's strength they did not use it "like a giant," but established their government on the broad basis of civil and religious liberty. Unlike the Puritans of New England, they did not seek an asylum from religious persecution themselves merely to persecute others when they had the power to do so. They were remarkably free from intolerance and bigotry, nor did they imprison and hang, or persecute and expel, those who differed from them in religious belief.

The Quakers of Philadelphia, being mostly English, built their first meeting-house in the city in 1684. This was a brick structure near the center of the town.

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<sup>22</sup> Proud, "History of Pennsylvania," I, 218.

Another meeting-house was erected by them in 1685; and a third and more imposing one on High Street in 1695, referred to by Proud as "their great meeting-house." As their numbers increased a fourth meeting-house was erected on Pine Street in 1753, and a fifth on High Street in 1755. This last was the chief one in use in the later colonial period. At the time of the Revolution, the Quakers had four meeting-houses in Philadelphia, of which three were in constant use at the appointed times for worship, and the fourth was for use "on particular occasions."<sup>23</sup>

The Quakers, however, were much more numerous in the rural districts than in Philadelphia. They were very strong in the English counties, where they constituted the most numerous and substantial element of the population. They were also present in considerable numbers in Lancaster county, but in general were represented by inconsiderable numbers outside of southeastern Pennsylvania. Proud estimates their number in Philadelphia in 1770 at one-seventh the population of the city. If this included the suburbs of the city, the Quakers could not have exceeded seven thousand in that vicinity, at most. They had between sixty and seventy meeting-houses in Pennsylvania and Delaware in 1770, which would indicate a strong constituency of perhaps fifty churches in Pennsylvania.<sup>24</sup> They lost rather than gained ground during the Revolution, and these figures would represent their approximate strength at the maximum of their prosperity. Statistics giving their numerical strength are not in existence and this can only be conjectured, but it would seem to be safe to say that at the outbreak of the Revolution there were probably about forty thousand Quakers in Pennsylvania. This would include the

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<sup>23</sup> Proud, "History of Pennsylvania," I, 218.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 280, 339.

households of heads of families, or the total Quaker population, at the time of their greatest strength. After the Revolution they began to decline in numbers, not only relatively but absolutely as well. Nevertheless, in the colonial era they were generally regarded as the wealthiest and most substantial element of the population, and their influence was profound, politically, commercially, and socially.

Next in importance to the Quakers among the English population of colonial Pennsylvania were the Church of England people, or the Episcopalians. Though a numerically small group, their influence was out of all proportion to their numbers. Their following in Pennsylvania was chiefly English, though their constituency included some Swedes, Welsh, Scotch, and Irish. Like the Quakers, they were found chiefly in Philadelphia and vicinity, while a few of them were sprinkled over the colony. Christ Church was founded by them in 1694. This was the handsomest church edifice in the colony, especially when enlarged and embellished at a later date, and had a strong membership. Other Episcopal churches in Philadelphia were St. Peter's and St. Paul's. St. Peter's was begun in 1758 and completed in 1761, and St. Paul's was likewise completed in 1761. These three constituted the Episcopal churches in Philadelphia in the colonial era. Their congregations embraced not a few of the most eminent men in the province. Outside of Philadelphia were Trinity Church at Oxford, built in 1711; St. David's at Radnor, built in 1714; and St. Thomas' Church, at White Marsh. There were also Episcopal congregations at Chester, Bristol, Perkiomen, Pequea, Lancaster, and Huntingdon. The number of the clergy at the time of the Revolution did not exceed ten, and their membership may have been as many as three thousand. Their most prominent leader was Rev. Wil-

liam Smith, D.D., first Provost of the College of Philadelphia.<sup>25</sup>

When the sons of William Penn left the Quaker faith and united with the Church of England, they filled most of the offices in Pennsylvania which were subject to their appointment with Episcopalians. Thus the deputy governor, judges, and certain other officials were nearly all members of this church, and formed a political party favorable to the proprietaries and consistently antagonistic to the Quakers. The government of the province was largely in the hands of the Quakers and the Episcopalians down to the Revolution; the former controlling the assembly, and the latter the executive and judicial departments. Thus despite their small numbers, the English Episcopalians, by reason of their political influence, wealth, social position, and general culture, were an important factor in the colony.

The constituency of the Baptists of Pennsylvania was also mainly English and, like that of the Quakers and Episcopalians, was located principally in Philadelphia and vicinity. Though the Baptists drew some recruits from other racial elements, especially from the Welsh, they were overwhelmingly English and hence were found mainly in the English counties. A Baptist church was founded in 1684 at Cold Spring, near Bristol, in Bucks county, by Rev. Thomas Dungan, of Rhode Island. This church did not prove permanent, but in 1687 a second and permanent church was organized at Pennypack, or Lower Dublin, in Philadelphia county. A Baptist church was organized in Philadelphia in 1698, but had no house of worship until 1707 when they came into possession of the small wooden building, formerly occupied by the Keithian Quakers, on Second Street below Mulberry. In 1731

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<sup>25</sup> Scharf and Westcott, "History of Philadelphia," II, 1346-9; Fisher, "The Making of Pennsylvania," 197-8, 356; Stillé, "Christ Church, Philadelphia, and the Province of Pennsylvania," pp. 13-14.

this building was pulled down and a substantial brick edifice was erected in its place. The membership increasing, a larger building was erected in 1762. This building, which was 61 x 42 ft., cost 2200 pounds and, though later enlarged, was in use at the time of the Revolution. The membership of this church in 1770 numbered one hundred and twenty families, and it was a flourishing body. Morgan Edwards estimates the Baptist families in Pennsylvania in 1770 at six hundred and fifty. The Baptist church in Northern Liberties was founded in 1769.

Baptist churches outside of Philadelphia were the Great Valley Baptist Church, in Chester county, organized in 1711; Vincent Baptist Church, in Chester county, organized in 1771; London Tract Baptist Church, in Chester county, organized in 1780; Brandywine Baptist Church, in Delaware county, organized in 1715; Pittston Baptist Church, organized in 1776; and Roxborough, or Ridge Baptist Church, organized in 1789. Several Baptist churches were founded in Southwest Pennsylvania in 1776. At the time of the Revolution there were perhaps two thousand Baptists in Pennsylvania.<sup>26</sup>

While the English population of Pennsylvania in the colonial era was more generally diffused over the province than was any other racial element, it predominated only in the original counties of Philadelphia, Chester, and Bucks, and in the city of Philadelphia. In 1790 there were twenty-one counties in the commonwealth, and among these the English predominated in Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery, as well as in the city of Philadelphia. By reason of the Connecticut invasion the English were in an overwhelming majority in the newly formed

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<sup>26</sup> Scharf and Westcott, "History of Philadelphia," II, 1301, 1303, 1307-12; Watson's Annals, I, 448; Smith, "History of Delaware County," p. 226; Futhey, "History of Chester County," p. 259.

county of Luzerne, which was erected in 1786. The English also prevailed along the North Branch of the Susquehanna and in northeastern Pennsylvania generally, being recruited chiefly by immigration from New England. As ordinarily used, however, the term "English counties" referred to the original settlements in southeastern Pennsylvania and served to differentiate these from the German and Scotch-Irish counties farther to the westward, though in 1790 there was no county in Pennsylvania containing as large a percentage of people of English descent as was found in Luzerne.

Though the English were the majority element of the population only in the regions mentioned above, they were strong in the German counties of Northampton, Lancaster, York, Berks, and Dauphin, and were fairly well represented in the Scotch-Irish counties of Cumberland, Franklin, Northumberland, Huntingdon, Bedford, Westmoreland, Washington, Fayette, and Allegheny.

The English counties of eastern Pennsylvania were the most thickly settled part of the province and, being the first to be settled, were the first to develop the ordered institutions of civilized life. Within a generation after the coming of William Penn the characteristics of a frontier community had vanished throughout this region. The German and Scotch-Irish counties, however, especially the latter, being farther inland as well as later settled, long retained pioneer conditions of life. Each of these three principal groups of the inhabitants had a numerical preponderance within a distinct geographical area and developed a life all its own; whence originated the three Pennsylvanians—the English, the German, and the Scotch-Irish—each of which was sharply differentiated from the other two by location, religious belief, customs, and traditions. Of these three groups it was the English com-

munity of Eastern Pennsylvania that developed the highest type of civilization and was the dominant factor politically, economically, culturally, and socially, in the colonial era. In and around Philadelphia were centered the forces that ran the province. Not all the leaders in this predominantly English community were English; but a large majority of them were, and those who were not had become sufficiently Anglicized to conform to their language, customs, political ideals, and institutions. In Philadelphia, as time went on, there arose many enterprising business men who developed a thriving trade at home and, as merchant princes, grew rich from foreign commerce. Ship-building and manufactures likewise flourished, and the Quaker city became the most prosperous trading community in America. Political control remained in the hands of the English counties, which furnished the leadership, manned the Council, controlled the Assembly, and governed the colony. Here also was centered the culture that was to give Philadelphia its early pre-eminence as the "Athens of America." The rural districts of the English counties were thriving farming communities, inhabited by a prosperous and contented people of great moral worth.

The English community of Eastern Pennsylvania not only led the colony politically, commercially, socially, and culturally, but was also by far the most numerous element of the population at the close of the provincial era. In 1790 the population of the commonwealth was 434,373, of which number 423,373 were whites. The first census does not give the nationality of the inhabitants, hence it is not possible to give exact statistics of the numerical strength of the different elements of the population of Pennsylvania at that time, but approximate estimates can be given. Rositer, in "A Century of Population Growth," arrives at a "classification . . . of blood, or what may be



termed nationality strain," of the population of the various states at the time of the first census by analyzing the names of heads of families. Upon this basis he estimates the English population of Pennsylvania in 1790 at 249,656, or 59.0 per cent; the Germans at 110,357, or 26.1 per cent; and the Scotch-Irish (including the Scotch) at 49,567, or 11.7 per cent. In this enumeration the Anglicized Welsh population is included in the English. While the estimate of the English population is probably too large, and that of the Germans and Scotch-Irish, especially the latter, probably too small, it is nevertheless apparent that the English element was in a large majority throughout the state in 1790. After making due allowance for errors in Rossiter's estimates, it would appear that the English were about twice as numerous as any other racial element in the commonwealth at that time. Though this statement is contrary to the popular impression and would doubtless be controverted by some, the facts in the case would seem to substantiate it. Attention is again called to the fact that the English immigration poured into the colony from many sources in a steady stream; that it was more generally diffused than was any other; that it had a genius for absorbing certain minor racial elements; and that it continued with increasing force in the period of the Confederation, when the Scotch-Irish immigration declined and the German practically ceased. In view of these considerations it would seem that a revision of our estimates to bring them more in accord with the facts would be in line with the truth of history.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> W. S. Rossiter, "A Century of Population Growth," p. 116.