SOME ACCOUNT OF THE PROVINCE OF PENNSILVANIA IN AMERICA; Lately Granted under the Great Seal of ENGLAND TO William Penn, &c.

Together with Priviledges and Powers necessary to the well-governing thereof.

Made publick for the Information of such as are or may be disposed to Transport themselves or Servants into those Parts.

LONDON: Printed, and Sold by Benjamin Clark Bookseller in George-Yard Lombard street, 1681

Title page of Penn's first effort to promote the colonization of Pennsylvania. This pamphlet, one of the earliest and finest examples of "Promotion Literature" on empire building in history, was translated into German and Dutch and published in equally attractive form in Amsterdam.
The William Penn Number

The tercentenary celebration of Penn’s birth will have been observed shortly before this number of the Pennsylvania Magazine appears. As was to be expected, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania took a leading part in this celebration. Mr. Charles F. Jenkins, President of the Society, served as Chairman, and several other of its Councillors were members of the Governor’s William Penn Tercentenary Committee. The Society furnished headquarters for the Committee, and on October 10 entertained at tea Dr. Stoddard, the members of the City’s School Board, and all superintendents and principals of schools in the Philadelphia area who were interested in the celebration. The Society also provided for the general meeting at the Academy of Music on October 24. The chief speakers on this occasion, the Earl of Halifax, Ambassador from Great Britain, Justice Owen Roberts, and Governors Martin, Edge, and Bacon, were honored on the same evening at a dinner given by the Officers and Councillors in the Hall of the Society.

The present Penn number of the Pennsylvania Magazine is intended to serve as one among these many contributions of The Historical Society to the tercentenary. It is of course appropriate to devote this issue entirely to the memory of the Founder, not only as a gesture of respect but also in order to reconsider his historical achievements and their significance for our day. For it is clear that
Penn is not only of interest in terms of his own times, but that his thought and actions anticipated modern outlooks and developments to an extraordinary degree. As a great religious leader in actual political authority—a close approximation of Plato's ideal of the philosopher at the head of the state—he was unique among the founders of the American colonies. Despite difficulties, Pennsylvania was an outstanding success among the many English experiments in planting settlements in the New World. When it is recalled that this success was due in no small measure to the Proprietor's careful planning and early administration, the usual criticism of the philosopher as an impractical dreamer would not seem to apply. Penn was indeed remarkable for the combination of these two qualities, of farsighted idealism and practical sagacity—qualities rarely united in the one leader.

Penn's idealism merits especial consideration because of the degree to which it was widely accepted in later times. Historians and the public at large would do well to recall, among later tributes, Jefferson's high esteem quoted in these pages. While many of the colonial thinkers were absorbed in theological problems which are today of little concern, and so in a sense looked backward, the great Quaker advocated those very principles of toleration and peace for which the world is still striving.

The contributors have not attempted to repeat all the details of Penn's life and work, but rather have interpreted those aspects which have the greatest contemporary significance. For the reasons noted, the Quaker Founder deserves relatively more attention than he has usually received outside of the Society of Friends. To many he has remained a largely legendary figure. It is hoped that this issue of the Magazine, by bringing together the latest and most scholarly interpretations of Penn's achievements, will contribute to a wider and more meaningful recognition.

Richard Harrison Shryock