William Penn's Experiment in Race Relations

As the Plymouth Rock landing is to the history of the Pilgrims, as the rescue of John Smith by Pocahontas to early Virginia, so is the signing of the Great Treaty under the Shackamaxon elm to the history of William Penn and the relations of the Pennsylvania Quakers with the Indians. This legend made famous by the wit of Voltaire, the brush of Benjamin West, and the romancing of Parson Weems, is the great folk tale of early Pennsylvania. It is the schoolboy's story of the Quaker Commonwealth, the point of departure for Pennsylvania's colonial history. True in essence if not in detail, like so many of the folk myths of history, it characterizes in the popular mind the Quaker Indian policy from that day to this, teaching the truth that the way to peaceful race relations is that of kindliness, mutual respect, equality, and justice. Few of the legends of American history are less well established in the minds of historians. None is more deeply engrained in the hearts of the people nor more to the point in its lesson for today. To recall the story of this great compact, "never sworn to and never broken," to review the known facts of Penn's relations with the Indians, to compare his policy with that of his contemporaries, and to examine its implications for the twentieth-century world is the purpose of this anniversary essay.

The Great Treaty story is a typical product of the romantic age, of the imagination and sentiment of the late eighteenth century. Its creator, Benjamin West, the Pennsylvania Quaker boy whose talent for the forbidden art of painting soon took him out of the prosaic actuality of colonial Quaker life into the brighter world of London, was himself an example of the romantic possibilities latent in the American forest primeval. He capitalized on his American background, as did other shrewd Americans of his day, and produced something American which struck the fancy of the sophisticated but romantic Europeans whom it was his business to please. What Franklin and his homely
American philosophy were to Paris, Benjamin West and his romantic delineation of the American scene, the good Quaker, and the noble savage were to London. His painting in 1771 of "William Penn's Treaty with the Indians," following closely upon his first successful historical painting with a New World setting, the "Death of General Wolfe," caught on immediately. People flocked to the Royal Academy to see this idealization of Penn's great compact with the Indians. They purchased John Hall's 1773 engraving of it with great enthusiasm, and they have been making and buying copies and re-copies ever since. There are now dozens of variations on the Penn-West theme, as Ellen Starr Brinton has interestingly described in her recent article in the *Bulletin of Friends' Historical Association*.1 By means of engravings, aquatints, and lithographs, by china platters, gravy boats, and vegetable dishes, by letterheads, printed cloth and handblown glass, tavern signs, banknotes, and cast iron stoveplates, the memory of Penn's Great Treaty which sealed forever the friendship of red men and white in Pennsylvania is still kept green. Especially in times of stress such as the present is the spirit of the Treaty popularly invoked, almost unconsciously, in contrast to the horrors of war which have gripped our generation. For as late as 1940 an insurance company, a department store, and a publishing house used the West painting on calendars, "merchandise bonds," and Christmas greetings, while in 1941 a great public utility company purchased the Edward Savage copy of the picture to decorate its executive offices.2 Clearly Benjamin West produced something which aroused a response in the hearts of the people.

It doesn't matter to the general public that there is no authentic record of any such grand treaty under the elm as West depicted, nor that the William Penn he painted was an aging, portly gentleman rather than a lithe young man in his middle thirties who could outrun and outjump the Indians at their own games and races, nor that the Quakers in the painting were dressed in the style which West himself knew rather than in Quaker garb of a century earlier, nor that the buildings in the background were first constructed in West's own boyhood, nor, finally, that West's father and half brother were among the Quaker dignitaries in the picture, as well as James Logan, who came

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2 Ibid., 100.
with Penn to Pennsylvania in 1699 rather than in 1682. All this is acceptable artist’s license for a public with the will to believe. The fact that the details of the treaty story were told in a biography of Penn in 1813 by the Englishman, Thomas Clarkson, who heard it from the aged West himself, and repeated with elaborate embellishments by the American, Parson Weems, in 1822, gave popular authority to the painter’s brush against which later and more meticulous biographers and historians have cavilled in vain. Like Weems’ own cherry-tree story of George Washington, the Penn treaty legend is too good not to be true. It represents the ideal toward which men are ever striving, and it is true in the larger sense, then, now, and forever.

So much for the legend. What of the facts?

To seventeenth-century Englishmen at home the Indians were unreal beings far across the sea. To the adventurous individuals who were bent on establishing colonies, or on building homes in the wilderness, they were a difficult if not dangerous reality. These American Indians gave Britain her first experience with people of a different color and culture, and, as usual, she entered into it pragmatically, without much forethought or planned purpose. Builders of the empire, safe at home, might think imperially, using Spain’s and Portugal’s Indian policies as models if they wished. The colonizers and colonists who expected to face the Indians in the flesh could pray and keep their powder dry.

Should they try to Christianize the Indians? Yes, but there was no great missionary urge among English Protestants such as that which moved their Catholic Majesties and their subjects to the south.

Should they use the Indians as a source of labor? Yes, if possible. But Spain’s efforts to subdue the Florida and Gulf Coast natives had met with small success, and there was no great hope in England that the Indians of North America would slave for them as those below the Gulf had done for Spain. They might, however, be useful as suppliers of furs and skins, if not as miners, cattle hands, and workers on plantations.

Did the Indians own the New World? No. Here there was no question in the mind of any ordinary European, as the Pope had assumed when he divided the colonial world between Spain and Portugal in 1693. All were agreed that the great discovery of Columbus was God’s gift to the Christian monarchs of Europe and to their peoples. No English charter gave the slightest recognition to Indian land titles, and Lord Balti-
more's patent even specifically denied the right of anyone to recognize Indian claims to any part of the Maryland grant.

Political and personal relations with the natives? Unplanned and unregulated at first, a policy gradually evolved by which the English Crown sought to concentrate authority over Indian affairs in the hands of royal officials, for purposes of imperial defense and the control of the lucrative fur trade. Assuming that North America belonged to England by right of discovery and occupation, the British government left the basic questions of Christianization and personal relations with the Indians largely to the colonies themselves, each to work these out as experience and their own genius indicated.

The results of this policy of laissez-faire were often unpleasant for the colonists and mostly disastrous for the Indians. South and north, the century before Penn came to English America was one of misunderstanding, exploitation, and bloodshed. The southern colonies were notably unfortunate in their adjustment to the native tribes, and their history was punctuated by bloody incidents in a life and death struggle between the races. Violence was the rule and massacre the means by which white men and red strove to drive each other from the land. By Penn's time the Indians had been driven westward toward the mountains, but the Carolina frontier was exposed to attack until well on into the eighteenth century, when the buffer province of Georgia was created to guard it from the natives and their Spanish allies. In New England the Puritan colonies had pushed back the Indians with fire and sword, while few but Roger Williams and the Baptists and Quakers of Rhode Island questioned the violent methods of God's elect. New York, inheriting its Indian policy from the Dutch, was fortunate in that the natives were already gone from Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley. With the stronger Indians up the Mohawk the New Yorkers made friends, using them as buffers against the French and as middlemen in the fur trade with the West.

In all the colonies land was purchased from the Indians on the spot, but as a matter of expediency rather than right, and rum and the threat of force were used as handy instruments in the bargaining. Except in Rhode Island, Indians taken captive were usually enslaved, and exchanged with West-Indian planters for their more tractable Negroes when the red men proved too recalcitrant to employ in the vicinity of their own homes. All in all there was little Christianization of the
Indians, little mixing of Indian and white blood and culture, little effort on the part of the whites to understand or to share the Indian point of view, and no sympathy or quarter for Indians who refused to move out as fast as the whites desired their land. This was the seventeenth-century rule. "No good Indian but a dead Indian" early took its place as a basic tenet of the American creed. The "American Dream" of the seventeenth century was a white man's dream of a white man's heaven and a white man's world.

William Penn knew all this before he became interested in West Jersey in 1675, and received Pennsylvania from Charles II in 1681. He might well have been expected to follow in general the familiar English strategy of driving the Indians from his proprietorship as soon as possible, and locally, perhaps, to profit from the tactics of the Dutch and Swedish settlers already on the ground. They were too few in numbers and weak in military power to threaten the Indians in their ample hunting grounds, and their relations with the Delawares had been relatively friendly. But this would hardly remain the case when Penn and his thousands of English settlers came to occupy the land. The fact that it did remain so, that New Jersey in a small way, and Pennsylvania in a large one were shining exceptions to the general rule of violence between Englishmen and Indians, was almost entirely due to the fact that William Penn and most of his early colonists were members of the Society of Friends, friends in fact as well as in name. It was this which distinguished them from other colonizers and other colonists from Massachusetts to the Carolinas. These Quakers brought with them a unique point of view and a manner of life which made warfare both unnecessary and unknown between them and the American savages. Penn himself was a man and colonizer of genius. But it was Penn the Quaker who became the colonizer, and it was Penn's Quaker colonists who helped him put his Quaker ideals into practice.

Quaker interest in the Indians and a Quaker way of dealing with them had developed some time before William Penn became involved in American affairs. Perhaps he first heard about them from Josiah Coale in 1667, as William W. Comfort suggests in his tercentenary estimate of Pennsylvania's founder, when he talked with that intelligent Quaker leader who had already travelled in the colonies and had worked with George Fox on a plan for purchasing a Quaker haven from the
Indians on the Susquehanna.\(^3\) Undoubtedly Penn had also talked with Fox himself after the Quaker founder’s own visit to America in 1671–1672, and he must have been familiar with the Indian situation as Fox had found it in the Baptist-Quaker colony of Rhode Island and elsewhere, as well as with Fox’s published essay on the subject of race relations. Rhode Island had provided for indentured rather than lifelong servitude for both Negroes and Indians in 1652, before the Quakers came, and her Quaker governors and assembly in the early 1670’s had done everything they could to avoid participation in the great war into which Puritan pressure goaded King Philip and his Narragansetts in 1676.

George Fox’s Indian and Negro policy, as he outlined it in a letter to American Friends as early as 1657, and amplified it by further letters and sermons in 1671–1672, was summarized in his *Gospel Family-Order* in 1673. It was simply this, that men of all colors, the “Tawnies and the Blacks,” as he called them, as well as the whites, were children of God for whom Christ had died. Indians and Negroes in Friends families, therefore, ought to be treated in a Christian manner, brought up in the knowledge of God’s law and God’s love, kindly and humanely cared for, and held as indentured white servants were held, for a term of years, rather than for “term of life.” This advice was generally followed by American Quakers, at least as far as Indians were concerned. Negroes, it is true, most Friends held as slaves, although William Edmundson, the Irish Quaker preacher who accompanied Fox on his American journey, spoke out vigorously against the practice as early as 1676 and the Rhineland Quakers who founded Germantown condemned it in 1688. Penn himself owned Negro slaves in Pennsylvania, although he endeavored to improve their moral condition, and freed them by his first but inoperative will of 1701. With Indian slavery he had nothing to do, however, as was true of Friends everywhere.

Thus William Penn, before he had ever seen an Indian, was sure in his own mind as to the proper policy for dealing with the red man. He instructed the Quaker emigrants to Burlington, New Jersey, in 1677–1678 to buy their lands from the Indians before occupying them, according to the rule he had already laid down in West Jersey’s “Concessions and Agreements.” For he completely disagreed with the accepted

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theory as to the clear title of Europe’s monarchs to the lands of the New World, as he protested when discussing the claims of the Duke of York in New Jersey, saying, “The soil is none of his, ’tis the natives by the jus gentium, by the law of nations.”

When Penn outlined his first “Conditions and Concessions” for the settlement of Pennsylvania, dated July 11, 1681, he followed this basic assumption that Indian land titles should be fairly and freely purchased. In this he agreed with the advice of his enlightened friend, Henry Compton, Bishop of London, but his Quaker principles assured him of both the morality and justice of the policy. He also set down the rules which were to govern the relations between his settlers and the Indians in the new American province. In brief they were, that the Indian trade should be carried on in the open market in order to prevent imposition and detect fraud, that punishments for the crimes of Indians and whites should be equally laid, with mixed juries of six white men and six Indians to guarantee justice in cases involving individuals of both races, that the Indians should have the same privileges of planting and providing for their families which were enjoyed by the English settlers, and should be free to come and go among the whites without fear of molestation. These basic principles Penn adhered to throughout his life, although experience taught him that the mixed-jury scheme was impracticable, as the Quaker Governor Archdale in Carolina, and Friends in Rhode Island also discovered. Penn likewise found that few of the Indians cared to settle down and cultivate the soil in the prosaic manner of the English. Otherwise he never lost faith both in the wisdom and the expediency of his liberal Indian policy.

More than once Penn was tempted, urged, or provoked to relax his high and novel standards. In the matter of land purchases, for instance, he ran up against the conflicting claims of various Indian tribes to the same hunting grounds, and was troubled, as other colonists had been before him, by the Indian concept that a sale was not a sale but a lease of the use of the land, revocable at the will of the seller and renewable upon the succession of his heirs. In the one case, however, Penn carefully paid all claimants, whether Delawares near at hand or their Iroquois overlords far away. In the other he followed a policy similar to that of Roger Williams in Rhode Island, believing

it better to pay the Indians what they considered their due by their own laws and customs than to force the European idea of land ownership upon them at the point of a gun.

In the matter of trade the temptation to violate his open-market rule came early, in the summer of 1681, when Penn was hard pressed for funds with which to promote his new enterprise. Would-be monopolists made him an offer of £6,000 plus a nice commission for exclusive rights to the Indian trade, but the new Quaker proprietor refused their proposal as a compromise with principle which he could not bring himself to make. He would not, he said, "abuse God's love, nor act unworthy of His providence, and so defile that which came to me clean."5

Penn's approach to the Indians themselves was direct and personal. He treated them as he himself liked to be treated, expecting the best of them and usually getting it. In three early letters sent through deputies or commissioners, and in person thereafter, Penn addressed the Indians as one would speak to intelligent and friendly white men. He invoked the name of the great God who made them all, who ruled men's hearts with the law of love, of doing good to one another. He cited his authority to possess Pennsylvania by the charter from the King, but he sought the Indians' consent as well, and said that his commissioners were directed to purchase such lands as the white men needed, and to enter into a firm league of peace which Penn and his people would take care to preserve forever in justice and good will. Above all, he promised on behalf of himself and his colonists to refrain from angering God and bringing trouble upon them all by indulging in the injustice and bloodletting which was the way of some of the English. Finally, he sent gifts in token of his peaceful intentions, and signed himself in Quaker fashion, "your loving friend, William Penn."6

The Proprietor and his Quaker colonists were as good as their word, and the Indians responded in kind, as Penn's faith had convinced him they would. Tradition is more fertile than fact as to the details of Penn's reception by the natives when he arrived on the Welcome in October, 1682, and as to their subsequent relations with

5 Ibid., 176.
6 Penn's three letters to the Indians, dated October 18, 1681, April 2, 1682, and June 21, 1682, are printed in the Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, VI, 251-253.
each other. But the facts which can be pieced together from the few documents which have survived, from accounts of contemporaries, and from Penn's own writings, confirm the spirit if not the letter of the popular story of the friendly intercourse which took place between Governor Penn and the Indians. In visits and conferences, both casual and formal, Penn and the natives established a league of friendship which was not broken either by the Indian tribes or by the Pennsylvania government for many years after the Founder's death. He purchased land from them, not in one grand treaty, as West would have it, but at various times and various places, and then only as fast as was necessary, measuring the purchases conservatively, from creek to creek and back into the country, by "walks" in genuine Indian fashion, leisurely stopping for rest and food, and travelling a moderate distance rather than the eighty-six miles in a day and a half which the white runners covered in the later and infamous "Walking Purchase" of 1733.

A spring tour of the province in 1683 gave Penn ample opportunity to study the character and habits of the Indians, to find out whether his expectations as to their culture and attitudes had been correct. What he found on his visits and sojourns with the Indian chiefs and their people, as he described them at length in his famous Letter to the Free Society of Traders (1683),\(^7\) amplified his knowledge of the ways of the Indians but in no way weakened his confidence that they were children of God who were worthy of absolute justice and genuine love. Their habits were strange, their culture "rude." They might, Penn thought, be descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel. But whatever they were, they were human beings, keen in their sense of right and wrong, faithful in their engagements, generous with their friends, and ruthless with their enemies. What could be more just or more wise than to treat them lovingly and honorably as befitted a Christian and a Quaker!

Penn's opinion of the Indian character was more favorable than that of any other colonial leader, the liberal Roger Williams not excepted. This Seeker-Baptist, and first New England missionary to

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\(^7\) This letter, dated August 16, 1683, and printed in London the same year, was reprinted, together with other manuscripts and deeds involving Penn's relations with the Indians, in Albert Cook Myers, *William Penn, His Own Account of the Lenni Lenape or Delaware Indians, 1683* (Moylan, Pennsylvania, 1937).
the Indians, their life-long companion and friend, looked upon them as "wolves . . . with men's brains," to be dealt with warily as such. And although Williams endeavored to keep peace with the Indians, and condemned their wanton slaughter by the Puritans in the Pequot War, yet it was he who had engineered the strategy of that war, and he willingly served as captain of the Providence militia in 1676 when King Philip took to the warpath. The difference between the two men was that Roger Williams asked mere justice for the Indians, while William Penn sought for them loving kindness as well. It was the difference between the New England Seeker and the Pennsylvania Quaker. Both were far in advance of the Puritans, Presbyterians, and Anglicans, but Penn stood out as the most Christian of them all.

It may be argued, of course, as has been done by defenders of the Pilgrim and Puritan fathers, that the New Englanders had to deal with much more difficult and warlike Indians than the New Jersey and Pennsylvania tribes, who were peaceful vassals of the friendly Iroquois. This was true at the time, but it does not fully justify the difference between the Indian policies of the Quakers and the Puritans, nor does it explain their different results. Indians everywhere were bloodthirsty savages when goaded to fury by wrongs and rum, as Pennsylvania herself discovered when her Indians attacked in 1755 to revenge the outrages heaped upon them by Penn's Anglican heirs and the Presbyterian frontiersmen. The Quaker way was a workable way, as Penn had earlier proved, but it was a way that had to be practiced faithfully and continually if it were to remain effective. As Governor Gordon said in a speech to the Pennsylvania tribes in 1728, the league and chain of friendship between the English and the Indians must be forever kept free from spot or rust, "while the creeks and rivers run, and while the sun, moon, and stars endure." This sacred obligation was a mutual affair, and if white men allowed the chain to corrode and break, who could expect the Indians to clean and repair it alone?

Penn was no weakling with the Indians. He was as firm in demanding right conduct of them as he was quick to punish the trespasses of white men. He also recognized the difficulties which alcohol intro-

duced into the delicate relations between white men and red. He experimented with various approaches to the problem, from a generous payment of rum at treaty time, to a complete prohibition of the gift or sale of rum to the Indians, a prohibition which, it was found, could not be enforced. Finally, Penn and the Pennsylvania Assembly decided to regulate closely the sale of rum to the Indians, and then to permit it to be placed only in the hands of the chiefs, who could distribute it among their tribesmen as they saw fit. This demonstrated Penn’s practical approach to the difficulty, an approach which is characteristic of the Quaker method of dealing with most of the problems of the world. Idealism tempered by experience, practice by circumstances, is the Quaker way.

William Penn was thus guided by his Quaker faith in dealing with the Indians, just as he built his whole commonwealth on Quaker principles. And the results justified his faith, judging by the Indians’ response. As one of them said to Penn when they gathered at Penns-bury to bid him farewell on his return to England in 1701, the Indians “never first broke covenant with any people,” for they made their treaties not in their heads but in their hearts. Their friendship for Onas or Miquon, the Iroquois and Delaware names for William Penn, and their fidelity to their agreements with him stood firm until his death and long after. His memory remained green among them for many, many moons, and the name of Onas and the influence of his people had a pacifying effect upon the Indians long after they had been driven over the mountains and across the Mississippi by people and methods radically different from those of William Penn.

The Pennsylvania Friends shared Penn’s views as to the proper treatment of the Indians, as is shown by the early minutes of their Yearly Meeting and by the laws of the Quaker-dominated Assembly. They kept Penn’s pledge to the Indians as long as they controlled his province, but the increasing pressures of imperial politics, the short-sighted avariciousness of Penn’s sons, and the growth of non-Quaker settlements on the Pennsylvania frontier gradually weakened the influence of the Quakers in the provincial government. In 1756, in order to avoid responsibility for fighting the war which had broken out with the aggrieved Indians, the Friends retired from the Assem-

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10 Ibid., 446, quoting An Account of the Life of that Ancient Servant of Jesus Christ, John Richardson (2d. edition, London, 1758), 137.
bly, and gave up their political attempts to direct Pennsylvania’s Indian policy along peaceful lines. But as long as the Quakers directed the affairs of Pennsylvania their policy was Penn’s policy, and Penn’s policy was Quaker.

Whatever the strengths and weaknesses of the Quaker way, it had conditioned Penn’s whole attitude toward the Indian problem. The basic principles of the Quaker faith, as Dr. Comfort has analyzed them in his new study of Penn—a belief in the Light Within, a faith in the universality of God’s grace for men of all colors and conditions, a sense of obligation to seek the perfection to which Christ called his followers, and a conviction that God’s will is revealed continually and forever in sensitive human hearts—these basic tenets of the Society of Friends produced in practice the Quaker way of life. It was not a perfect way, indeed, but it was a way of friendliness and peace in the course of man’s long search for God’s kingdom.

Why then did Penn’s Quaker way fail to build a more enduring peace between the English and the Indians? The failure arose from several causes, some of them inherent in the times and the peoples involved, and some arising from the imperfect application of their ideals by Penn and the Friends themselves.

William Penn and the Quakers of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were white men and Englishmen, with all that this connotes as to social attitudes and racial prejudices. They had to deal with primitive American Indians, a people completely different in culture and point of view, but just as ethnocentric and fiercely proud in their own way, and as little willing or able to change their culture quickly as were the English. To many observers, then and now, a collision between the two races—one with an aggressive, agricultural-commercial civilization, the other still in the warlike hunting stage—was as inevitable as it was tragic. One race or the other had to yield, for they could not both occupy the same country and continue to follow their different ways.

Penn had the same sense of destiny, of superiority even, as other Englishmen, and he confidently expected, perhaps too confidently, that the Indians would adapt themselves to English customs, with resignation if not with alacrity. By providing them with ample land to support themselves in white-men’s fashion, and by assuring them

equal treatment and justice in his white-men's world, Penn hoped to make their transition from savagery to civilization as quick and easy as possible. Perhaps no one could have done more at the time.

But the religion and the culture of the white men, Quaker or non-Quaker, held no attraction for the Indians. They recognized a similarity between their own Great Spirit and the Christian God, but they were not much drawn by the theology and practice of the Protestant faith of any Englishmen, of whatever creed or practice. Quaker missionary efforts among the Indians, conducted in colonial times on a voluntary, individual basis, rather than with the effectiveness of an organized enterprise, were quite successful in obtaining a respectful hearing from the Indians, but completely unsuccessful in converting them to Quakerism. No single Indian adherent to the Quaker faith is recorded throughout the entire colonial period.

Nor was there any racial amalgamation or fusion of culture between the Friends and the Indians. To the exclusiveness of race which has so peculiarly marked the English, the Quakers added their own jealously-guarded social sectarianism, prohibiting their members from "marrying out" of the Society upon pain of expulsion from the group. Intermarriage between Friends and Indians did not take place, therefore, and the Quakers' puritan-like moral standards and strict group control made illicit cohabitation a thing unknown if not impossible. Neither with Indians nor with Negroes have the Friends shown any tendency to amalgamate.

The Quaker pressure on the Indians of Pennsylvania to give way, to sell out and move west when the whites desired it, was, therefore, just as strong as that of other English settlers, although its instruments were those of persuasion rather than of violence. There was no real compromise.

Furthermore, Friends of the second and third generation relaxed into the quietism which characterized the Society of Friends in the eighteenth century, in contrast to the flaming evangelism of the Quaker founders. Their failure to proselytize among the non-Quaker whites in Pennsylvania, to convert them to the Quaker faith and the Quaker way while admitting them to the colony in ever-increasing numbers, made violent frontier clashes with the Indians eventually inevitable. If the Quaker way was a product of the Quaker faith, then Friends could hardly expect that even in Penn's Holy Experi-
ment the Scots-Irish, notable warriors of the Lord, would cease to follow their Presbyterian way, nor that the practical-minded Churchmen who came to the colony would not call for the help of the imperial armed forces whenever they thought it was needed. If the Indians got in these people's way they would certainly attack them, in the name of God and of the King.

Pennsylvania's Indian relations were therefore peaceful as long as Penn and the Quakers were in command, and deteriorated rapidly thereafter. The Quaker peace policy paid good dividends for all while Penn's Quaker ideals were scrupulously followed. But the later pushing of the Indians over the Alleghenies, under threat of force and without fair compensation, brought ill-feeling and retaliation by the middle of the eighteenth century. Quaker energies were subsequently directed into unofficial efforts to pacify the Indians, through gifts and acts of individual reconciliation, as has recently been described in Theodore Thayer's biography of the Quaker "king," Israel Pemberton. Some "political" Quakers even reconciled themselves to supporting "defensive" war for the sake of preserving Quaker political power. But the "religious" Quakers, such as Pemberton and his party, remained true to their faith, and surrendered their offices rather than compromise their principles of peace. That the Indians still respected their sincerity is amply demonstrated by the fact that although many Friends suffered losses of property in the various Indian wars, and five individuals were killed and two families taken captive in earlier troubles in New England and the South, where Friends had no direction over Indian policy, Quakers were remarkably spared from loss of life in Pennsylvania's Indian conflicts. As Israel Pemberton said in 1758, after the Indian uprising had run its course, "In all the desolation on our frontiers, not one Friend we heard of has been slain or carried captive, and we have reason to think both from their [the Indians'] conduct in places where Friends were as much exposed as others, and from their declarations to us, 

12 Theodore Thayer, Israel Pemberton: King of the Quakers (Philadelphia, 1943), is an interesting account of the Quakers' hopeless efforts to repair their waning political fortunes and safeguard their own principles and privileges after war broke out in 1755. I cannot agree with his judgment, however (p. 138), that if the Friends had occupied the frontier region at this time that they would have "acknowledged a defense policy inescapable." Their long and consistent history refutes it.
they would never hurt Friends if they knew us to be such." Penn's Quaker peace with the Indians worked well as long as it was tried. The pity of it is that it was tried so little and by so few.

This is, perhaps, the inevitable destiny of a faith so radical and so logical as Penn's Quaker belief in the love of God and the brotherhood of man. Even in Penn's day, the Friends lived their high principles in only a limited, tentative way. They too were unable to practice at once and completely the best that they preached and knew. Their relations with Negroes were much less consistent than with the Indians, for it was a hundred years before American Quakers came fully to realize that Negro slavery was as contrary to their religious principles as was the Indian slavery which they had opposed from the beginning. Both originated in war and violence, both relied on the continued application of force, and both denied the Quaker doctrines of the Light Within and the universal gift of grace. But Negroes were desirable for their labor, they cost less but required more discipline than white servants, and they were easier to manage than Indians. So the Quakers' Negroes long remained slaves, although finally, in the 1770's, and before any other religious body of consequence had done so, the Society of Friends came to understand the unchristian character of slavery in any form, and required its members not only to emancipate their Negroes, but to compensate them for past services as well.

Even today Friends in Pennsylvania are arguing the expediency if not the necessity of admitting Negroes to their schools, for these institutions are still bound by the racial mores of a white society as far as education is concerned. But the fact that the question is now being discussed, though it never occurred to Friends in Penn's day, shows the truth of the Quaker doctrine of the continuing nature of God's revelation. Some Friends have already hearkened to the Voice Within which tells them that racial discrimination is unchristian and unwise. Others will hear it before very long, and together they will pioneer in this new phase of race relations as Penn and his Friends did with Indian relations in colonial days.

13 Letter of December 2, 1758, quoted in Rayner Wickersham Kelsey, *Friends and the Indians: 1655-1917* (Philadelphia, 1917), 75-76. This is the standard Quaker account of Quaker-Indian relations in colonial times, and of Quaker missionary activity among the Indians of the West since the Revolution.
This is the lesson and the hope of Penn's Holy Experiment and the truth of Benjamin West's famous "Treaty With the Indians," that now, when we are faced with growing contacts and tensions between race and race, between European stocks and the so-called colored and colonial peoples, that the simple application of the teachings of Christ, not by Quakers alone but by all His followers, may help to solve the growing problem of race and color in this democratic world, and we may press forward a little way toward that kingdom of God on earth which Christians everywhere profess to seek.

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