NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

William Penn's Journal: Kent and Sussex, 1672

“This place affords no news but that Sir William Penn's son, a renowned Quaker, and two or three brethren more are very busy in the Weald of Kent in planting their gospel and enlightening that dark country, which is the receptacle of all schisms and rebellion. A gentleman of this country told me this news yesterday and that these impostors have numerous companies following them.”1 So wrote Major Nathaniel Darrell, Governor of Sheerness Castle, on August 6, 1672, to the Honorable Sir Joseph Williamson, chief collector of news for the government at Whitehall, London. Then as now Whitehall had its ear to the ground with listening posts in several places, though “country” in 1672 meant in this context only an English shire or county. Just such a journey is described by William Penn himself, though in more flattering language, in a brief manuscript which is here published in full, perhaps for the first time.

In 1672 Penn was approaching, not his three hundredth birthday, but his twenty-eighth. A Quaker then of less than six years' standing and married less than six months to Gulielma Maria Springett, the young son of the late Admiral had had an exciting life before he undertook his journey “on Truth's account” into southeastern England.

His companions were “Bro. J. P.” and “Dr. A. P.” The first was his new stepbrother-in-law John Penington (1655–1710) whose father, the saintly Isaac Penington, son of the regicide of the same name, had married Guli's mother, the widow of Sir William Springett in 1654. At the time of this journey John Penington was only sixteen years old. He grew up to be one of the substantial Friends of the second generation. The second companion I understand to be “Dear” Alexander Parker (1628–1688/9), many years Penn's senior and a Friend of long standing. A native of one of the northern counties, he

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1 Calendar of State Papers, Domestic for 1672, p. 450 (reprinted in the Extracts from State Papers Relating to Friends, 1654-1672 (1913), 356, the last item in the book).
married in 1669 and settled in or near London. He was at the marriage of William Penn in April, 1672. A considerable writer of Friends' tracts, he was an active missionary of the Quaker movement, often in company with George Fox. He had a part in planting Quakerism in Sussex in the early days.

Penn's bride was left behind, not at their new home at Rickmansworth, but at Watford, where Penn's own parents had lived and where perhaps now Lady Penn was still living.

Quakerism had come to both Kent and Sussex in 1655. Accounts of the local beginnings were collected and sent up to London and may now be read in *First Publishers of Truth*. There had been much opposition since the beginning and the Quakers endured for their faith many sufferings of which also a careful record was preserved. The Conventicle Act of 1670 had renewed the crop of victims but in March, 1672, Charles II issued a Declaration of Indulgence which brought nonconformists temporary relief. Friends at once obtained a single pardon for 491 persons in prisons throughout England. Among the number thus released were Nicholas Beard, Ambrose Rigge and John Ellis each of whom Penn mentions as at liberty when he visited their homes in this journey. Most of the persons mentioned by name in the Journal appear at various dates in the records of Quaker sufferings. Other information about them can be derived from the Quaker registers.

2 For Alexander Parker see the *Journal of Friends Historical Society*, VIII (1911), 30-32. Charlotte Fell Smith contributed articles to the *Dictionary of National Biography* on Parker and on the Peningtons as well as on Fisher, Howard, and Rigge mentioned below.

3 The notes on persons and on the location of meetings given below could be considerably expanded. They are based on the registers of Friends for these counties and the great *Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*, by Joseph Besse (2 vols., London, 1753). The earlier manuscript lists of sufferings for Sussex and for Kent are extant but have not been printed. See however a partial publication of the former for East Sussex by William Figg in "Extracts from Documents Illustrative of the Sufferings of the Quakers in Lewes," in *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, XVI (1864), 74-124, and for West Sussex "The Persecutions of Sussex Quakers" (1655-1690) by William Albery in *Sussex County Magazine*, VII (1933), 521-524, 600-603, 658-662, 738-741, 787-791. A summary of the registers for Sussex, valuable especially for showing the places and houses where meetings were held, was published by Perceval Lucas, *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, LV (1912), 74-96. The minutes of three Monthly Meetings were used by Thomas W. Marsh in *Some Records of Early Friends in Surrey and Sussex* (London, 1886). On Quarterly Meeting records for Sussex see Maude Robinson in *Friends Quarterly Examiner*, LV (1926), 126 ff. The Kent records, at least for East Kent, are equally full, but they have not received the same amount of publication.
The visitors evidently devoted themselves intensively for three weeks to spiritual matters in these counties. In this respect this journal differs from Penn’s Irish Journal of 1669–1670 for there his efforts for Quakerism were incidental and his main concern was with his father’s tenants and properties. And yet Penn had business interests of his own in these English counties, as did also his wife and the Peningtons. Guli had made a business trip to Sussex a few years before. Penn had properties in Kent and had had trouble in Sussex within less than a year. In 1677 the Penns moved their residence to the Sussex estate at Worminghurst, which Guli had inherited from her father.

The Journal was evidently “his own memorandums” mentioned in 1716 by Penn’s biographer, Joseph Besse, who summarized it and quoted two of its concluding sentences. Beyond what Besse gave other biographers do not seem to know anything of the journey, or of the Journal. They represent Penn as remaining at home with his wife for many months after their marriage in April, 1672, or suggest that “his bride accompanied him, despite long, hard riding on horseback, the prevalence of marauding ‘moss-troopers,’ and the holding of meetings in twenty-one different places within as many days.”

The manuscript of the Journal is extant on pages 57, 58 and 59 of a folio blankbook containing a good number of epistles and papers by William Penn. The contents belong, so far as they are dated, between 1668 and 1678 and are all written in the same hand, but at the top of the first page is written in Penn’s own handwriting: “A Book of Letters and some other Papers given forth at severall times as required of the Lord [& otherwise in zeal and good understanding of them] whether to Friends, Rulers, people or any particular persons, by me William Penn from the 7th month in the year 1667.” There are 180 numbered pages with two indexes added at the beginning. Some pages evidently are now lacking at the end. The volume belonged formerly to Granville Penn but got into the hands of dealers.

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5 W. I. Hull, William Penn: a Topical Biography (New York, 1937), 123. The Journal, however, explicitly says the wives were left at home. William W. Comfort, by saying in the preface to his William Penn 1644-1718 (Philadelphia, 1944), that “William Penn left no journal, except some account of his brief visits to Ireland and the Continent,” ignores this still briefer journal as well as the autobiographical fragments now in The American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.
It was bought part in 1874 and part in 1882 for The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, its present owners, by whose courtesy this edition is allowed.

Parts of the Journal sound as though it had been written on the spot before the journey was completed, e.g., at Mary Akehurst’s at Lewes. But a much later date is suggested in the reference to “the defunct Earl of Lindsey,” who did not die before 1676—some authorities say 1678. The Earl retired from public life, but not from the Earldom, in 1663, and perhaps that is what “defunct” means. Or perhaps the word was added when this transcription was made. Since the papers in this book do not follow one another in chronological order, they were perhaps copied in as late as the latest of them. Being a copy, the Journal contains various detectable errors. The proper names especially are even more awry than the usual vagaries of spelling would justify. Obviously, mere initials cannot always be identified and were easily miscopied.

There is one contradiction in date which is too serious to be easily resolved. Major Darrell’s letter is plainly dated as August 6 and refers to Penn and others as reported already in “the Weald of Kent.” The Journal represents him as first reaching Kent more than a month later. Was the Major’s report a mere unfounded rumor, or prophecy?

Harvard University

Henry J. Cadbury

Journal: Kent and Sussex, 1672

7th month My Journey on Truths account through Kent, Sussex and the Skirt of Surrey, began the 11th 7bris, 1672 & ended 4th 8bris, 1672.

It being in my Heart to devote myself to the service of my God, in a way of visit to his People in the Countries of Kent & Sussex (as it had for some time upon me) on the 8th day of the 7th month in the year 1672 I left my own House at Rickmansworth & my dearest Wife at Watford both in Heartfordshire, in order to my said journey. My company was my Bro: J.P. & W.G. at

6 William Gibson (c. 1629–1684) lived and married in Lancashire, but removed to London about 1670, where he lived on Bull and Month Street.
whose house in London I lodged that night. The 9th & 10th I stay’d in that Citty, employing myself in seeing of Friends, & dispatching some papers then in the press.

The 4th morning and the 11 instant Dr A.P. myself & Bro. J.P. left London in order to the afore mentioned journey, it being as well the intention of A.P. to visit the Friends of God in that Country, as it had been mine for some time. That night we came to Tinsbery, were lodg’d att the Widdow Clemens, had a little Meeting, but not being clear in ourselves as well as that the Friends were unsatisfied with so short a stay, we had a Large, Living & Open Meeting the next morning in Rochester in which the Lord’s presence was manifest unto the laying low many exalted Professors, who were then there; from thence we parted that day, bated at littenburn & came to Canterbury where we were lodged at the House of Tho; Tenterden, Shoemaker, an honest tender man, & whose wife is of a sober, grave, & exemplary deportment. The next day we had a Meeting in the same House, but few besides Friends, who were comforted in us; we remained there that Night & the next Day, at which time there came a young Ruffin, son to the Defunct Earl of Lindsey, he was high, peremptory, knowing, but pragmatical he often run out into unhandsome

7 A location near Rochester is called for and is not well met by Tilbury across the Thames in Essex, and still less well by Finsbury in northern London. There is a small Filbury a few miles northwest of Rochester. Probably the original was Frindsbury, a place just north of Rochester.

8 Widdow Clement, perhaps connected with Norman Clements arrested at a meeting in Deptford, in 1660 (Besse, I, 291). There was a “George Clements of Finsbury, mariner,” whose daughter Sarah (b. 1670) was a Friend and married a West Kent Friend (JFHS, I, 35).

9 Sittingbourne.

10 Thomas Tenterden. There is no evidence of the place name Tenterden used as a personal name. I think there is confusion with Thomas Everden, a well-known Friend of Canterbury (see below). That the latter was a shoemaker is well attested by the anecdote of him in the “Journal of John Farmer’s First American Journey, 1711-1714” in Proceedings of American Antiquarian Society, LIII (1943), 85.

11 A not uncommon spelling of ruffian.

12 John, 17th Earl of Crawford, created 1st Earl of Lindsay in 1633, retired into private life in 1663 and died aged eighty in 1676. He had two sons, William the 2nd Earl, an ardent Presbyterian (d. 1698), and Patrick (d. 1680).
expressions against us, & very wicked epithets he gave the Light, but God's power was over him, & he fell mightily under, in so much, that he came creeping in at Night, confessing to what had been said to him at noon, acknowledging his mistake & unhandsomeness, & promising to be at Meeting next Day, being the first Day.

15 About the 12th hour we went to the Meeting, which was soon crowded with all sorts of People, base & Noble, rich & poor, young & old, learned & unlearned, Men, Women & Children; And great was our Travail for the Seed's sake, & our weights were many, but the glorious Power rise and stained the Glory of all Flesh before us, & the grass withered in our Presence & all Hearts seemed bare & naked, & we felt an Answer in most Consciences, so that we came away in Triumph over all, & Truth was set upon the Head of that great City. In the Evening we had a good Meeting at our Lodging, which consisted mostly of Friends.

16 The next Day we went to Sandwich, accompanied by the Friends of Canterbury, & L. H. of Dover, it rained and was very Dirty but our Joy was more than all which we received after a very open sound Meeting, which we had the same Day, many Professors being present, & all down; We lay there that night at the House of Tho: Louten, a Master of a Ship.

17 The next Day we departed thence to Nonington, where we had a Meeting mostly of Friends, it being their Monthly Meeting; from thence we came that Night to Deal, and were lodged at Tho: Holimans a Glover; The next day we had a very Convincing, open, Powerful & exceeding tender Meeting to the bringing all

13 Luke Howard (1621–1699) of Dover, shoemaker, was converted to Quakerism in 1655 and remained one of its most important upholders in Kent. It will be observed that he accompanied Penn for ten days from Canterbury to Ashford as well as being his host at Dover. There is a recent biography by L. V. Hodgkin, The Shoemaker of Dover (London, 1943).

14 Several early Quaker visitors to Kent mention the “dirty” weather.

15 Luton (Lutton) is an old Kent family name. I do not identify this individual.

16 Thomas Holiman, with his wife Sarah, were Friends of Deal as shown by the record of children born there from 1664 to 1672. He was arrested and imprisoned at Dover in 1665.
under, & our Spirits joyed in the God of our Life, who was our plentifull rewarder that Day. One Valentine Brooks\(^\text{17}\) a notable wise man is there convinced; We left Deal that Night & came to Dover accompanied of L.H. at whose House we lodged. The next Day we had a strong & sound Meeting, & was of good report among those that came, & there were many Professors & others. The next Day we left Dover, for Faulkstone, & that Day had a preious, sweet & Heavenly Meeting, whether the Priest came, was quiet, & Several Professors, some came from Dover, never at a Meeting before, as several did from Deal to Dover; we rested there that Night. The next Morning I left Dr A.P. to be there on the next Day, being first Day, & on the 3th [sic] Day at Swinfield\(^\text{18}\) at a Monthly Meeting where he had heavenly good Service. I passed away accompanied by B. Tideman,\(^\text{19}\) T. Tambridge\(^\text{20}\) and Bro. John for Lid the Town where honest S. Fisher\(^\text{21}\) was first National Priest and then a Baptist Teacher. We got thither that Night & the next Day had a very large publick Meeting, whether T. Everden\(^\text{22}\) came, & Luke Howard, who was assistant. The Lord God appeared in his Power to the renowning of his Truth, & comforting of his People, & confounding of

\(^\text{17}\) Valentine "Brooks," probably Valentine Bowles of Deal, to whom his wife Elizabeth bore 11 children from 1659 to 1676. A Friend of this name died 5m. 10, 1711 and was buried at Wingham where at that time was one of the six meetings of Friends in East Kent. Besse refers to him under 1678 and 1684. So does the Calendar of State Papers for 1682.

\(^\text{18}\) Swinfield.

\(^\text{19}\) Henry Tiddeman and his wife Elizabeth of Timford near Canterbury appear in the records between 1666 and 1689 when she died; Henry Tiddeman and his wife Susanna of Preston, Kent, between 1687 and 1694.

\(^\text{20}\) T. Tambridge. Evidently this is Thomas Tunbridge, of Folkestone, a member and minister among Friends whose sufferings from 1660 to 1684 are reported in Besse. T.T. senior died in 1688, T.T. junior in 1707/8.

\(^\text{21}\) Samuel Fisher (1605–1665) of Lydd, an Oxford graduate and learned minister whose life and writings as a Quaker are well known.

\(^\text{22}\) Thomas Everden. Cf. above, note 10; and for information about him see the note to John Farmer's Journal, loc. cit., p. 84 f. But there were several of the same name, including a father and a son who lived in Canterbury and died there in 1680 and 1686 respectively. The latter's wife was named Hannah.
Gaynsayers. That evening we had a sweet & heavenly Meeting at my Lodging, where we might have halfe a hundert people; The next Day T.F. & E.T.\textsuperscript{23} returned for Faulkstone, & L.H., T.E., & Bro. John came with me to Wey, where at a great Notionists House & Lover of Friends\textsuperscript{24} I had a Meeting, & Gods Dreadful Power trampled false Coverings under foot, & the plain simple Truth was felt over all, & in good Dominion I came to my Inn, but the Love of the Professors was so great, that they constrained me to one of their houses, where they entertained me with exceeding openheartedness. The Day following the Alarm being given, many of the Town came to J.B.\textsuperscript{25} about two miles from thence, whether many Friends & Abundance from Ashford resorted, the very Passengers stopt, I came in, & I \textit{sic} mighty large Meeting I had, & the glorious Power was so strong, opening, piercing, & tendering that Truth became of good savour, & all seemed to confess & rejoice. From thence that Night I went to Ashford, where contrary to my desire though according to my fear, the Town came crowding in, in so violent a manner, that people were forc'd to go out for breath, the parler, Kitchen, Entry, Garden etc. were cram'd. The Lord was with us, & the Way to the Everlasting Kingdom was declared in the Demonstration of Power & Spirit, as many confessed that never were at Meetings before. The next Morning we had an other Meeting & desired it might be of Friends only, but many prest in unavoidably, we cleared our Consciences, so I took my leave, L.H. & T.E. staying behind me for home, & myself & Bro: J.P. accompanied with two Friends went to Tenterden where we met A.P. & had a Meeting fresh & tender. From thence we all came to Cranbrocke & were lodged at J. Asfords\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{23} T.F. and E.T. The initials must be deciphered or corrected to agree with those of Tideman and Tunbridge above.

\textsuperscript{24} The householder at Wye has not been identified.

\textsuperscript{25} J.B. Perhaps John Bennett, see note 28 on page 427.

\textsuperscript{26} John Asford of Cranbrook was a sufferer in Kent between 1660 and 1684.
that Night. Next Day we went to J. Colvils, where we had a precious good Meeting, most Friends, & from thence came to J. Bennets where we stay'd that Night. The Day following accompanied by J. Asford we came to J. Elleses, where we met with J.P. and had a very living thorough Meeting, remained there that Night, and came next day through much wett & dirt safe to Lewes, & are lodged at the Widdow Acres's.

This Day being the first of the Week we had in the same House a good Meeting, the Lords heavenly precious Power was with us, & a good sence there was, we came the same Night to Nicholas Beards at Rottingdean, where we lay, being by him accompanied thither.

This Morning we left his House & came to Kingston bony (?), much decay'd somebody in fault that has lived on rack rents, & not minded improvements, we came presently to Blechington, the Widdow & her 4 sons inhabiting there. The Lord is with us.

27 John Colvil or Colvill suffered as a Quaker at times from 1660 to 1682, including about two years and a half at Maidstone jail, apparently in 1670 to 1672. The Kent Quarterly Meeting MSS Records of Sufferings mention (as Besse does not) other distraints made in 1682 and 1683 upon John and Susannah Colvill of Cranbrook for their refusal of military requisitions.

28 John Bennett suffered on Truth's account as early as 1656.

29 Without notice the Journal now passes from Kent, where Colvil and Bennet are located by the record of their sufferings, to Sussex where there were at this time two Friends named John Ellis. The son lived at the Cliff near Lewes and died in 1681/2. The home of the other at Rushlake Green near Warbleton was a meeting place for Friends. Here "John Ellis of Warbleton, yeoman," was buried in 1685 "in a piece of ground that he gave to Friends to bury their dead in." Evidently Warbleton suits this itinerary better, since a long journey to Lewes is implied.

30 Mary Akehurst (d. 1691) of the Cliff near Lewes, widow of Ralph Akehurst, suffered much from her husband before his death as well as from the authorities. Meetings were often held at her house until September, 1675, when the meeting house at Lewes was finished.

31 Nicholas Beard (c. 1615-1702) and Susanna (d. 1702), his wife, lived at Rottingdean where at least eighteen children had been born to them between 1650 and 1672. Nicholas Beard was a member of the gentry who had been converted to Quakerism by George Fox in 1655 and became a leading Friend of Sussex. Meetings were held for Friends in his house since 1660 and were provided for there in the future in his will (1702).

32 Kingston Bowsey must be intended, now called Kingston Buci or Kingston by Sea.

33 Blatchington was early the site of a Friends meeting. The widow's name is not given here. Perhaps she was "Widow Scrase" of West Blatchington, at whose house the Quarterly Meeting established by George Fox in August, 1668, was called to meet in the following November. Later meetings were held at the house of Richard and John Scrase, known as
Octobr. 1 We went to Stening Town where we had a large & very sound & thorough Meeting, & the Lord’s presence & power was strong opening & refreshing among us, we lay at the same House, being the Widdow Blâ:34 that Night.

Next Day we passed to the House of Tho: Parsons35 where Amb. Rigg36 met us, he spok first, we had a precious time there with Friends, & things thus far continued very well. We came that Night to Horsham to the House of A.R. being about 5. Miles from T.P.'s House, & were kindly entertained. We came accompanied next Day by A.R. & his wives Mother37 to Charlewood38 in Surrey, where there was a very large & good Meeting, we went that Night to Rigate & lay at

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34 John Blackfan, the Constable of Steyning, received Fox and Parker when they first brought the Quaker message in 1655. He became a Friend and meetings were held at his house in 1664. The present meetinghouse was leased in 1678 for a thousand years. See Sussex County Magazine, VI (1932), 500-504, illustrated. In 1672 John Blackfan was buried in his own burying place adjoining his dwelling house at Steyning. Evidently his widow is intended here. The records give his death as 29th of 11 mo. 1672 which I suppose means January, 1671/2.

35 Thomas Parsons of Patchgate and Thomas Parsons, Jr. of Slangham (Slafam, Storham) or of Cowfold, are frequently mentioned in the various records of Friends. A meeting place of Friends at this time was at the latter’s house at Cowfold. All of these places are near together, any could be described as “about five miles” from Horsham. On Parsons of Cowfold see Sussex Genealogies: Horsham Centre, compiled by John Comber (Cambridge, 1931), 297-298. Apparently both bearers of this name died in June, 1694.

36 Ambrose Rigge (c. 1635-1705), born at Brampton in Westmoreland, became a prominent Quaker preacher and writer. From 1662 to just before Penn’s visit in 1672 he was a prisoner at Horsham, where he lived. From Horsham he moved in 1673 to Gatton Place near Reigate. He married in prison in 1664 Mary, the daughter of Captain Thomas Luxford, of Hurstpierpont. On Rigge and his marriage see beside other sources Quakeriana, II (1895), 51-54. Mary Rigge died in 1688.

37 Elizabeth Luxford (d. 1689) was now the widow of Thomas Luxford. Meetings were held at their house at one of which Ambrose Rigge was arrested in 1662. Later she made her home with him. Apparently she had been the daughter of John Stapley of Hickstead (Comber, Sussex Genealogies: Lewes Centre, p. 164).

38 For Charlwood meeting see Marsh, op. cit., p. 27.
the House of T.B.\footnote{Meetings were held at Reigate as early as 1669. Before the meeting house was built about 1688 there is reference to meetings at the house of John Blatt, tanner (1670), or of John Bicknall (1684). Thomas Blatt, tallow chandler, was one of the first to receive Friends at Reigate, and continued an active member. The initials in Penn's Journal may refer to one of these persons.} being 8 miles. The following morning we had a Meeting, & indeed the Lord sealed up our Labours & Travills according to the Desire of my Soul & Spirit with his heavenly refreshments & sweet living Power & Word of Life unto the reaching of all & consolating our own Hearts abundantly: After Meeting thus clear of our work it rise in the Liberty & sweet Love of the Lord in both our Hearts to go home to our Dear Wives & Families, which we accomplisht that Day so that Dr A.P. left me 5 miles on London Rode from Rigat & gott to Enfield that Night being about 30 miles, & I went by Kingston (where I stay'd one houre) cross the country to my Dear Wife & got home before the 7th hour in the evening being about 20 miles, & after the 12th hour of the Day.

And thus hath the Lord been with us in all our Travells for his Truth, & with his Blessings of Peace are we returned, which is a reward beyond all worldly \(\text{sic}\) Treasure.

Laus Deo in aeternum,
the End.