Scull and Heap's East Prospect of Philadelphia

The most distinguished of all prints of the city of Philadelphia in terms of age, rarity, and historic importance are known as the Scull and Heap East Prospects. These present the first engraved likenesses showing the city's appearance. Although the titles of the prints announce that the representation was "taken" by George Heap under the direction of Nicholas Scull, there is little evidence of Scull's direction in the work prior to Heap's death other than his help in obtaining subscribers. However, since the two had co-operated in 1750 in the production of a map, it is more than likely that Heap did consult the older man when he prepared to make his drawing.

Scull's career is relatively well known and has been frequently mentioned in many issues of this Magazine. He was chiefly prominent as Surveyor General of the Province and as a cartographer. Mention has been made of his first map, the 1750 Philadelphia and Parts Adjacent, which he produced in partnership with Heap. In 1759, Scull brought out his important map of Pennsylvania, and in 1762, the year after his death, his Plan of Philadelphia was given to the public. In contrast to Scull, very little is known about George Heap.

It is probable that the latter was born in Philadelphia around 1715, the son of John Heap and his wife, Ann Bingham, who had been married in Christ Church in 1713. John Heap died in 1726, and was survived only two years by a son of the same name. There is record of another child, Mary, born in 1722. Left fatherless at an early age, it is quite possible that George Heap came under the influence of his relation by marriage, Nicholas Scull. In 1708, Scull had married an

1 Although the exact date of this map is not fixed, the year 1750 has been generally accepted.
2 For this and subsequent dates of marriages, births, and deaths, see the records of Christ Church, Philadelphia. Transcripts in the Collections of The Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania.
Abigail Heap described as a relation of his partner in surveying, "a Mr. Heap," and so was probably an uncle to George Heap. An additional family bond was tied in 1738, when Scull's son, Edward, married an Ann Heap, possibly a sister of George. From this union of apparent first cousins sprang the renowned William Scull, whose cartographic genius, as shown in his 1770 map of the Province of Pennsylvania, was truly of Scull and Heap origin.

Indicative of Scull's influence is the fact that Heap adopted the former's profession by becoming a surveyor, though it seems that in this he was simply following in his father's footsteps. Apparently a man of some refinement, he was one of the first members of the Union Library Company.

In 1738 he married Mary Classon and had three children before her death in 1745. The following year he married Mary Jacobs, "a subtle, crafty woman" in the opinion of Richard Peters, and had four more children. Of these seven at least four died in infancy.

Heap appears to have prospered modestly, since on March 10, 1744, he was able to secure for himself one hundred acres in Philadelphia County. Public recognition was accorded him in 1749, when he was elected Coroner of the city, an office in which he was continued the following year. It was in 1750 that he produced his first recorded artistic effort, a Map of Philadelphia, and Parts Adjacent With a Perspective View of the State-House. By N. Scull and G. Heap. This, the first engraved map of its type of Philadelphia since the great maps based on Thomas Holmes' surveys, was "embellished" by Heap with the first engraved view of a Philadelphia building.

Such in brief are most of the known facts of George Heap, whose principal fame rests on his spectacular East Prospect of the City of Philadelphia, the story of which is the purpose of this article.

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3 The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography (PMHB), XIV (1890), 378-380; newspaper articles by Gideon D. Scull pasted on pages 15 and 19 in the copy of his The Family of Scull (1876) at The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
4 PMHB, LXV (1941), 17.
5 PMHB, XXIX (1905), 464.
6 Pennsylvania Archives (Harrisburg, 1894-1897), Third Series, XXIV, 20. Heap had made a prior purchase in 1742 of lands in Lancaster County, Penn-Physick Manuscript Journals, 1742-1772. All manuscripts herein cited are from the collections of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
7 Colonial Records (Harrisburg, 1838-1853), V, 411, 464.
8 PMHB, LIX (1935), 57.
Thomas Penn, Pennsylvania’s principal proprietor, was undoubtedly familiar with the Burgis views of New York and Boston. The first of these, *A South Prospect of Y*e Flourishing City of New York in the Province of New York in America*, was issued around 1720, and later followed by other impressions; the second, *A South East View of Y*e Great Town of Boston in New England in America, made its first appearance about 1723. Both prints have much in common, showing their respective cities with their harbors in the foreground filled with busy shipping. Such a print of Philadelphia showing that city to be equally as prosperous, thought Penn, would make attractive presents for his friends. Consequently, in May, 1750, he wrote his trusted agent, Richard Peters, desiring him to employ the best available painter to take “a perspective view of the City” either from the Jersey shore or from Windmill Island.

Peters viewed such a project rather dismally, informing Penn that “Philadelphia will make a most miserable Perspective for want of steeples.” Moreover, Lewis Evans had already made the attempt, only to discover that there was no good place on the Jersey shore or on the Island from which the town could be viewed advantageously. To make matters worse there was no one in Philadelphia capable of doing the work.

Such arguments had no weight with Penn, who admitted that Philadelphia would look better had it some steeples, but added that he would be glad to have it as it was. Any painter, in Penn’s estimation, should be capable of doing the work; he saw no reason why the view could not be taken from the Jersey shore opposite to Market Street.

In the face of this reasoning, Peters was constrained to attach the services of one of the Philadelphia Claypooles in the summer of

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11 Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, October 28, 1750, Penn Papers, Official Correspondence (PPOC), V, 61.
12 Thomas Penn to Richard Peters, Feb. 24, 1751, PLB, III, 47.
Claypoole's experimental sketches, however, showed so little promise that Peters felt obliged to engage another artist. Early the following year a painter by the name of John Winter, an Englishman and partner of the Swedish painter, Gustavus Hesselius, was hired for the job. Winter made several attempts to sketch the city from Daniel Cooper's Ferry, opposite Market Street, while the river was frozen over, but each attempt was thwarted by rain, haziness, or dull weather. These initial efforts seem to have exhausted Winter's initiative, for he subsequently proved "so indisposed and indolent that he gave it up of his own accord."\textsuperscript{14}

While Winter was dallying, George Heap decided to make the drawing of the city for himself. Word soon reached Peters of this undertaking and in company with a friend of Penn's, Richard Hockley, he crossed the river to see the drawing. Since the work was found to be far better than expected, Peters offered to purchase the picture, but Heap refused to sell save for an exorbitant price. It was, therefore, thought best to let him undertake the expense of reproducing it himself, raising the necessary funds by subscription. Penn would then be able to obtain as many prints as he wanted at the subscription price.\textsuperscript{15}

Heap completed his work by September, 1752, and advertisements for subscribers to it were published in most of the issues of both the \textit{Pennsylvania Journal} and the \textit{Pennsylvania Gazette} from September 28 to December 26. In these proposals for the subscribers, Heap promised to furnish the print for twenty shillings, stipulating that it would be seven feet and four inches long and would be engraved in England. Ten shillings were to be payable in advance, the rest on delivery of the print. Subscriptions were taken in New York by James Parker and in Philadelphia "by Nicholas Scull, in Second-Street, and by the Author in Third-Street, where the Prospect (which has been taken with great Care and Exactness and is allowed by good Judges to make a most beautiful Appearance) may be seen by any inclining to encourage this Undertaking."

This work "which the Governor, and indeed everyone commended much," Heap refused to send to Penn to have engraved, but insisted

\textsuperscript{14} Richard Peters and Richard Hockley to Thomas Penn, March 16, 1752, and Dec. 4, 1752, PPOC, V, 221, 307.
\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid.}, V, 307.
on going to England himself to oversee that operation. The artist was worried concerning the piratical tendencies of certain English print dealers. To finance his trip to London he had the benefit of the advance in the subscription money, but demanded, in addition, £50 from the Proprietor. Since there seemed no other way of getting the picture published, Peters reluctantly authorized the money to be given. Heap receipted for it on November 30, 1752, in an agreement which promised Penn fifty prints in return.16

A few days later the artist embarked for England taking with him in his sea chest his drawing of the city. The voyage, however, had scarcely commenced when, without any previous illness, the unfortunate man was seized with a pain in his head and died at Reedy Island a few miles below New Castle on the Delaware. His personal effects were returned to the city in a pilot boat, probably accompanied by the corpse which was buried at Christ Church the day after Christmas, 1752.17

Since Peters did not feel authorized to advance any more of the Proprietor’s funds, he encouraged Nicholas Scull to purchase the picture from the Widow Heap. Both Peters and Scull felt that with Penn’s patronage money could be made by selling the prints. Scull was successful in securing the drawing for £100, and seems at the same time to have assumed responsibility for the money advanced Heap by the subscribers and Thomas Penn. As Heap’s drawing had become soiled from handling, Scull paid Winter £15 to make a copy, thought by many to be superior to the original.

Scull’s hopes for a successful investment seemed dashed to the ground when Peters received Penn’s reactions to the employment of Heap and the taking of subscriptions for the prints: “I expected you would have imployed some person to draw a perspective view of Philadelphia for me, as I wanted a plate of my own to make presents of prints to my friends, & not to be printed for sale. This man you imployed is ignorant of the Rules of Perspective by his view of the State House on the map.” Nevertheless, Peters was able to save Scull from what appeared to be a serious financial difficulty by ultimately obtaining Penn’s interest in the Heap drawing. The

Proprietor agreed to take fifty prints in return for the £50 he had advanced and to make all arrangements relative to its publication and the sending of three hundred copies to Philadelphia, the number which had already been subscribed. Peters further assisted by advancing credit for the enterprise through his London banker.\footnote{Thomas Penn to Richard Peters, Feb. 2, 1753, PLB, III, 210; Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, April 18, 1753, PPOC, VI, 43; Nicholas Scull to Thomas Penn, Nov. 6, 1753, \textit{Ibid.}, VI, 121.}

Accordingly in May, 1753, the drawing, Winter's copy (not Heap's original, which was retained by Scull), was shipped to Thomas Penn together with certain supporting papers; a draught of the association battery; a description of Philadelphia and its port; a list of the principal places referred to in the drawing by numbers; the title, which was to be "A Prospect of the City of Philadelphia taken from the East by George Heap—Or, An East Prospect of the City of Philadelphia taken by George Heap on the Jersey Shore"; and lastly the dedication by Scull to Thomas and Richard Penn. Thomas Penn later chose the second of the two suggested titles and elaborated the dedication in his own favor.\footnote{Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, May 11, 1753, \textit{Ibid.}, VI, 57.}

The drawing arrived at Penn's country home in Braywick, near Maidenhead, early in July, 1753, and Thomas Penn thought it very "prettily done," having no objection to it except its length. A month later he wrote Peters that he had agreed with a very honest man, a capable engraver and painter, Gerard Vandergucht, to do the work, "and bound him in Articals not to suffer any copy to be taken." With respect to its size Penn reported that Thomas Jefferys, a print dealer, had told him it would sell better if contracted to two thirds, but that Vandergucht advised the original size expected by the subscribers.\footnote{Thomas Penn to Richard Peters, July 3, 1753, and Aug. 13, 1753, PLB, III, 235, 238. On receiving this news of progress Scull ran advertisements in both Philadelphia papers on Nov. 1, 1753, and continued them with some regularity until March 19, 1754.}

It was not until June, 1754, that the four copper plates of \textit{The East Prospect} were completed and the printing begun. Penn presented one of the first sets to the King "who is pleased with it, and has hung it in his own private apartment."\footnote{Thomas Penn to Richard Peters, June 11, 1754, PLB, III, 339.} In August, three hundred prints, in-
A second shipment of one hundred and fifty went over in November, and as Penn received fifty copies for himself, five hundred were issued in this first state. Meanwhile, Vandergucht opened subscriptions, to close March 25, 1755, for a second printing following which the plates, the property of Nicholas Scull, were to be sent to America. Vandergucht also began the drawing of a smaller version of the view in order that a new plate of more popular dimensions could be engraved.  

The large print seems to have been a success in Pennsylvania, since Peters requested Penn to send three hundred more. Scull, however, was a little disappointed that his name was given as “Skull,” and it was pointed out that the spelling of Dutch “Calveran” Church, number five in the key, should be Dutch Calvinist Church. Vandergucht corrected the name of the Church for the second impression, but left Scull’s in its original spelling. As not enough paper was ordered to make the three hundred copies, only two hundred and fifty were printed. Three of these were delivered to English subscribers and the rest shipped on the Beulah for Philadelphia in June, 1755. Thomas Penn thought they looked “very well on Rowlers & did not take up near so much room as in Frames.”  

The large print, a line engraving, was composed of four folio sheets usually joined to form a continuous scene. When so joined, the dimensions of the print are 82.12 inches by 20.13 inches. Above the view of Philadelphia, which incorporates characteristics of the Burgis views, is the title: *An East Prospect Of The City Of Philadelphia; Taken by George Heap From The Jersey Shore, under the Direction of Nicholas Skull Surveyor (general of the Province of Pennsylvania. The dedication is given below the view together with a description of the city and a key of numerical references. Inset in the picture is a scene of the Battery wherein may be found the engraver’s name, “G.

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23 Thomas Penn to Richard Peters, Nov. 5, 1754, PLB, IV, 15, 16. The disposition of the original drawing was mentioned some twenty or thirty years later when a copy of the Scull and Heap view appeared, allegedly “Engraved From the Original Drawing sent over from Philadelphia, in the Possession of Carrington Bowles.” Stokes and Haskell, 24.

24 Thomas Penn to Richard Peters, Feb. 21, 1755, and July 1, 1755, PLB, IV, 39, 40, 127.
A DESCRIPTION OF THE SITUATION, HARBOUR &c. OF THE CITY AND PORT OF PHILADELPHIA.

PHILADELPHIA, the Capital of Pennsylvania, is Situate on the West Side of the River Delaware, it stands on a high, dry & pleasant Plain, the City is laid out in form of an Oblong or long Square, two Miles in length, and one in breadth, bounded on the East by Delaware River, and on the West by the River Schuylkill, the streets are all strait and parallel to the sides of the Plan, and consequently cut each other at right Angles, none of which are less & the widest 100 feet in breadth, the Houses are built with Brick, and are from two to three & four Stories high; the Buildings are extended on Delaware Front a considerable distance North and South beyond the Verge of the City the depth of several Streets to the Westward. The Harbour is one of the safest and most commodious that is known, where Ships of the greatest Burthen may safely Anchor in seven or eight Fathom at Low Water, and may unlade close to the Wharfs without the least Danger, and as this Harbour is at least thirty Miles above Salt Water, it must consequently be free from the Ship Worm; The Tides rise and fall here seven or eight feet, and flow up the River thirty Miles above the Town. The great Distance of Philadelphia from the Sea adds much to its Security, as the Channel is intricate and long, and is a natural Fortification, which together with the Battery a little below the Town, of twenty-seven pieces of large
An East Prospect of the City of Philadelphia, 1754 (Second State). From the collections of The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
PHILADELPHIA; taken by GEORGE HEAP from the

To the Honourable Thomas Penn and Richard Penn, true and counties of Newcastle, Kent and Sussex on Delaware,
JERSEY SHORE, under the Direction of NICHOLAS SCULL Surveyor

and absolute Proprietors of the Province of Pennsylvania. This Perspective View is humbly Dedicated by Nicholas Scull.
large Cannon, is thought a sufficient Defence against an Attack by Sea. This flourishing City was founded by the honourable William Penn, first Proprietor of the Province of Pennsylvania & Counties of Newcastle, Kent & Sussex on Delaware, in the Year 1682, and has increased so fast, that in the Year 1753 the number of dwelling Houses were near two thousand three hundred. The City is govern'd by a Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen & Common Council, is very full of Inhabitants, & the Trade so extensive that there was in the Month of October last one hundred & seventeen Sea Vessels in the Harbour at one time, and the Export from December 25th 1751, to December 25th 1752, by the Naval Office appears to be as follows, Wheat 86,550 Bushels, 125,960 Barrels of Flour 90,743 Bushels of Indian Corn, 599 Hogheads, 812 Tierces, 28338 Barrels, 7588 quarter Casks & 249 Tons of Bread, 925 Barrels of Beef, 3431 Barrels of Pork, 4,812,943 Staves, 4491 Bars, 189 Tons of Bar & 205 Tons of Pig Iron, 305 Chests, 32 half Chests & 15 quarter Chests of Skins and Furs, 57 Chests, 112 Barrels 6 Boxes 2 Tierces & 5 Hogheads of Ginseng, 9865 Hogheads 454 half Hogheads 39 Tierces & 221 Barrels of Flaxseed, and the Import from England to Philadelphia for 3 Years from Christmas 1748, to Christmas 1751, amounted to £647,267/8/9, of which £178,282/5/5 was ye Product & Manufacture of Great Britain.

REFERENCES

1. Christ Church
2. State House
3. Academy
4. Presbyterian Church
5. Dutch Calvinist Church
6. The Court House
7. Quakers Meeting House
8. High Street Wharf
9. Mulberry Street
10. Sassafras Street
11. Vine Street
12. Chestnut Street
13. Drawbridge
14. Cornmill

Published according to Act of Parliament Sep' 1st 1754
Vandergucht Sculp." Despite Peters' comment on the lack of steeples, four are shown, identified in the key as the State House, Christ Church, Dutch Calveran Church (first state) and the Presbyterian Church.25

In August, 1755, the drawing of the contracted view of Philadelphia was finished. Thomas Penn liked it much better than the large one, "the perspective is well preserved, the Jersey shore, put in, which makes the water look like a River which in the first it did not."26 Months later, January, 1756, Penn wrote Peters: "The contracted view of Philadelphia will be finished next week but I think you should not be in a hurry for them, but sell the large ones you have first."27 It was not until September that Penn sent over the first copies of this smaller view, seventy in all out of the initial printing of one hundred. Jefferys, who had engraved the plate, had only been able to sell about twenty prints in the English market.28

Peters in acknowledging receipt of these asked for two hundred more in his own name, since Scull was still in arrears to him some £125 for the money advanced by Peters' banker for the manufacture of the large prints. Another two hundred were spoken for in Scull's name conditional upon his paying his debt to Peters. We have no record that these last were ever called for.29

Scull was much grieved to find that his name was again misspelled on the new print. In February, 1757, Peters wrote the Proprietor, "The Contracted Views are not yet offered to sale except one or two—but tho known to be here no Enquiry is made after them—no subscriptions I understand can be got as there is an objection made to the Draft of the City because it is bounded by Schuylkill and contains some other unpopular Errors." Penn ordered Scull's name to be altered to its proper spelling, but omitted to correct the spelling of Schuylkill. In September, the two hundred prints requested were shipped to Peters.30

25 A check of the history of the buildings concerned discloses that the years 1750 to 1753 witnessed a notable erecting of steeples in Philadelphia.
27 Thomas Penn to Richard Peters, Jan. 10, 1756, Ibid., IV, 211.
This smaller print, designed to secure the popularity which was felt denied to the larger because of its size, was not a success and it seems that only three hundred copies were made. With respect to an objection raised to the plan of the city included in it, Penn later wrote Peters that he could have some printed without the plan, but it is doubtful any were made in that state.\textsuperscript{31}

Although much reduced in size from the first print, the second is by no means small, measuring 35.14 inches by 18.10 inches. The title remains the same, but there are numerous differences in the composition. Beneath the description of Philadelphia, which in turn is below the view, are three insets, a plan of the City of Philadelphia, The Battery and the State House. Thomas Jefferys' name is given as engraver and publisher.

A check has been made to determine how many Scull and Heap views are to be found in this country. As there are doubtless other copies, the following list should not be considered as definitive.

I. The 1754 large print:

(a) First State. 500 copies known to have been printed.

Mr. Brooks Bromley
Mr. Charles Sessler
American Philosophical Society

(b) Second State. 250 copies known to have been printed.

Mr. Henry F. du Pont
Mr. Charles Sessler
Haverford College
Historical Society of Pennsylvania (3 copies)
New York Public Library
Another copy in this state is known to have been recently purchased by a private collector.

II. The 1756 small print:

(a) First State. 100 copies known to have been printed.
None located.

(b) Second State. 200 copies known to have been printed.

Mr. Boies Penrose
Mr. Charles Sessler
American Philosophical Society
Free Library of Philadelphia
Historical Society of Pennsylvania
Library Company of Philadelphia
The Library of Congress
New-York Historical Society
New York Public Library
Yale University Art Gallery

Philadelphia  

Nicholas B. Wainwright