

BOOK REVIEWS

The Papers of William Penn. Volume One: 1644-1679. Edited by MARY MAPLES DUNN, RICHARD S. DUNN, RICHARD A. RYERSON, SCOTT M. WILDS, and JEAN R. SODERLUND. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981. Pp. xv, 703. Acknowledgments, illustrations and maps, introduction, editorial method, chronology, calendars of documents, index. \$28.50.)

A group of scholars headed by Mary Maples Dunn and Richard S. Dunn has produced an outstanding initial volume for the projected four-volume series of the William Penn Papers. Teamwork and electronic equipment account for the speed with which so large a book could be issued, although the effort rests upon the work of a committee that was formed in 1968. The editors freely acknowledge an intellectual debt to many twentieth-century William Penn scholars, but the headnotes that precede many of the documents show that the Dunns have advanced some new statements about the great Quaker leader. In 1975 the Historical Society of Pennsylvania issued fourteen microfilm reels of Penn Papers, the results, to that point, of the committee of 1968. Since then, for the period ending in 1679, thirty-six more items have been found. Eighteen of these are among the 152 documents in this volume.

Excellent editorial judgment was exercised in deciding which documents to print. Fifty-five pages of Philip Ford's accounts with Penn, from 1672 to 1680, were included, as well as purified transcriptions of three lengthy items previously in print: the Irish Journal of 1669-1670, the account of Penn's trip into Holland and Germany, and the West New Jersey Concessions. These four items filled 208 pages. Unfortunately, there was apparently not enough space to include either of two accounts of Penn's disputation with Richard Baxter. This would have complemented the Penn-Richard Baxter letters which are important from the point of view of religious controversy, although the publication of the accounts in older works justifies the decision not to include either one.

Among these documents there are few descriptions of physical circumstances, or of private, everyday life. Although many of the statements center around the Quaker sufferings, physical discomfort

is not described in realistic terms. One does not have the impression that the Quakers were treated as a subculture in England, or that they were unofficially regarded with contempt by the non-Quaker population. Those themes must be documented elsewhere. However, matters of separatism within the Quakers and disputes with other religious organizations are well represented. The importance of the John Wilkinson-John Story separation is clear. It receives more attention than it does in any of the familiar Penn biographies.

Four characteristics of Penn are brought out. He had an inclination toward indebtedness that preceded his earliest intentions of financing colonization. Equally characteristic was the exhaustive and aggressive manner in which he carried on both legal and religious disputes. Also, Penn developed a veneration for George Fox which, by 1676, went beyond his original affection for the Quaker founder. On March 4, 1676, he wrote "Very Dr: G: F: And eternally beloved, yea all Ages shall bless thee, & Magnefy the Powr that has guirded, does guird & Crown thee over all envy, pride, darkness, & thy kingdom is not of this world . . . for I feel thee to Raign over all such things & spirits. & thy place is very neer that lamb . . ." (p. 359). Finally, Penn often revealed that ambivalence toward persecution which has characterized other religious movements. Around 1677, for example, he wrote the Scottish Quakers that "a letter from our deare brother G: Keith . . . broke our hearts and deeply affected our Soules to behold with you the Goodness of the Lord to you in yor tribulations" (p. 375).

Through no fault of the editors several questions about Penn remain unsatisfactorily answered. No significant new information about the strange pairing of Penn and his followers with Catholicism has appeared. A short item in the microfilm collection, "To a Roman Catholic, 9 October 1675," says little. Penn's alliance with Algernon Sidney has also never been fully explained. Alas, in this matter the editors have frustrated us by listing two newly found, unfiled letters from Sidney to Penn (July 10, 1678, and August 29, 1678), without publishing them or revealing their provenance (p. 664). Vagueness also surrounds the accumulated quitrents Penn owed on his Irish lands (p. 334 and note), although further research might explain everything.

The breadth of the information conveyed in the section introductions, document headnotes, and document endnotes is excellent.

The document texts are in a literal form and should give pause to those groups of editors who prefer to print modernized transcriptions. Shades of meaning in seventeenth-century expression ought to be preserved. Seven maps enhance the book, making it easy to understand Penn's movements and environment.

*Pennsylvania Historical and
Museum Commission
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania*

LOUIS M. WADDELL

Pennsylvania: The Colonial Years, 1681-1776. By JOSEPH J. KELLEY, JR. (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1980. Pp. xiv, 848. Introductory note, illustrations, maps, bibliographical notes, index. \$19.95.)

First, a rhetorical question is in order: is it possible to write a history of the colonial era of Pennsylvania without placing undue emphasis on the deeds of William Penn and Benjamin Franklin? The answer, as provided by Joseph J. Kelley, Jr., in this ambitious work, and recently by Joseph E. Illick in his *Colonial Pennsylvania: A History* (1976), is probably no. Many reasons explain this phenomenon, not the least being the importance and influence of those two men in their own times. A second rationale is the vast amounts of letters and documents they left to posterity that have shed so much light for several generations of historians. They simply cannot be ignored.

Kelley's book is popular history at its best. It lacks the scholarly apparatus of explanatory footnotes (incidentally as does Illick's), but the detail combined with the judicious quotations from primary sources should also attract academics to his efforts. A great lure for researchers is the extensive and most helpful index. As far as this reviewer can determine, every person mentioned in the text has been included. A minor fault is that he fails to distinguish between the two Thomas Whartons, Junior and Senior, but that confusion unfortunately is all too common among scholars of the period.

In general, Kelley follows a familiar pattern by emphasizing the political aspects of the era. He gives considerable coverage to the disagreements between the Assemblymen and the members of the Council and between the legislature and the various governors, in-