

**THE LIFE OF WILLIAM PENN, THE SETTLER
OF PENNSYLVANIA, THE FOUNDER OF
PHILADELPHIA, AND ONE OF THE FIRST
LAWGIVERS IN THE COLONIES, NOW
UNITED STATES, IN 1682**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649635580

The Life of William Penn, the Settler of Pennsylvania, the Founder of Philadelphia, and One of the First Lawgivers in the Colonies, Now United States, in 1682 by M. L. Weems

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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CONTAINING ALSO,

HIS CELEBRATED TREATY WITH THE INDIANS—HIS PURCHASE OF
THEIR COUNTRY—VALUABLE ANECDOTES OF ADMIRAL PENN—ALSO
OF KING CHARLES II., KING JAMES II., KING WILLIAM, AND QUEEN
ANNE, IN WHOSE REIGNS WILLIAM PENN LIVED—CURIOUS CIRCUM-
STANCES THAT LED HIM TO BECOME A QUAKER—WITH A VIEW OF
THE ADMIRABLE TRAITS IN THE CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE
CALLED FRIENDS OR QUAKERS, WHO HAVE DONE SO MUCH TO
MELIORATE THE CONDITION OF SUFFERING HUMANITY.

BY **M. L. WEEMS,**

Author of the Life of Washington, &c.

Character of William Penn, by Montesquieu.

"William Penn is a real LEONARD. And though the former made PEACE his principal aim, as the latter did WAR; yet they resemble one another in the singular way of living to which they reduced their people—in the astonishing ascendancy they gained over freemen; and in the strong passions which they subdued."

Character of William Penn, by Edmund Burke.

"William Penn, as a legislator, deserves immortal thanks from the whole world. His pleasing to do honour to those great men whose virtues and generosity have contributed to the peopling of the earth, and to the *Abolition* and *Happiness* of mankind; and who have preferred the interest of a remote posterity and times unknown, to their own fortune, and to the quiet and security of their own lives."

PHILADELPHIA:
URIAH HUNT & SON,
No. 41 NORTH FOURTH STREET.

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UNITED STATES.

1852.

Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-seventh day of July, in the fifty-fourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1825, URIAH HUNT, of the said District, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"The Life of William Penn, the settler of Pennsylvania, the founder of Philadelphia, and one of the first Law-givers in the Colonies, now United States, in 1683. Containing also his celebrated treaty with the Indians—his purchase of their country—Valuable anecdotes of Admiral Penn—also of King Charles II., King James II., King William, and Queen Anne, in whose reigns William Penn lived—Curious circumstances that led him to become a Quaker—with a view of the admirable traits in the character of the people called Friends or Quakers, who have done so much to meliorate the condition of suffering humanity. By M. L. Weems, author of the Life of Washington, &c."

Character of William Penn, by Montesquieu.

"William Penn is a real Lycurgus. And though the former made peace his principal aim, as the lat^r did war; yet they resemble one another in the singular way of living to which they reduced their people—in the astonishing ascendancy they gained over freemen; and in the strong passions which they subdued."

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In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an Act, entitled, "An Act Supplementary to an Act, entitled, 'An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching, historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,

Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

THE LIFE
OF
WILLIAM PENN.

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CHAPTER I.

If, by your ancestors, yourself you rate;
Count me those only who were good and great.

If ever a son of Adam and of Eve had cause to glory in the flesh, that son was HONEST, BROAD-BRIMM'D William Penn. "A generation there is," says Solomon, "O how they can lift up their eyebrows, and how they can roll their eyes;" swelling and strutting like the star-tail'd birds of the dunghill, because their fathers before them were *knights* or *baronets*! though all beyond were shoe-blacks or rat-catchers. But not so the noble founder of Pennsylvania. He was of the "*well born*," in the worthiest sense of the word. For fifteen generations, the best and bravest blood in England had flowed in the veins of his family, unstained by a single act that history should blush to record. No scoundrel sycophants were made *drunk* at their tables, while the poor tenant's children cried for bread; nor the needy hireling pined for his pay, while their proud drawing-rooms were filled with costly carpets and sideboards. No unsuspecting stranger, after sharing their splendid hospitalities, was fleeced of his purse by their *gambling* arts, and then turned out of doors, to curse the polished robbers.— No! Such stams

of pride and villany were never known to sully the Penn coat of arms. For, on the contrary, the flood-tide of wealth, won by their high-toned virtues, was constantly turned into such active channels of private and public usefulness, that they were the boast and blessing of all the country. And to this day, often, as the traveller through Buckinghamshire, charmed with the stately mansions, shining amidst clovered meadows and fields of golden grain, inquires, "*what lovely farms are these?*" the honest rustic, with joy brightening on his sun-burnt face, replies, "why, sir, *this is PENN'S DALE! or PENN'S HOUSE! that, is PENN'S WOOD! or PENN'S LAND!*"

As like generally begets like; and the ring-dove that saddens the grove with his cooings, is never sprung from the fire-ey'd falcon: so many have supposed that our gentle William Penn must have descended from a long succession of Quaker ancestors. But this is altogether a mistake; for he was the first of that sect ever heard of in his numerous family. Indeed, so far from having been a meekly looking PARENT, his father was a fierce iron-faced admiral in the British navy: and not as in these halcyon days neither, when British captains, like ladies' lap-dogs, can sleep on velvet cushions, and move about in clouds of sweet-scented bergamot and lavender. But he was a sea captain in the bloody days of Van Tromp, and the Duke of York, when the great rival republics of England and Holland were rushing forth, in all their thunders and lightnings, striving for the rule of the watery world. And it is but justice to record of him that, so many were the proofs which he had given of an extraordinary valour and skill, he was appointed to the command of a man of war, at the green age of twenty-one. And he continued gallantly fighting, and rapidly rising, till after passing all the degrees of admiralship, such as rear-admiral, vice-admiral, admiral of the blue, admiral of the red, &c. he had the highest honour of all, conferred

on him; the honour to be next in command to the brave Duke of York in the Dutch war of 1665. And the triumph of the British flag in the great and terrible sea-fight in that year was so largely due, under God, to his courage and seamanship, that he was created a knight; and was always received at court with the utmost cordiality. Though then but in the middle of his days, (45) yet his constitution was so wrecked by hard services, that he left the sea, and set himself in good earnest, to prepare for his last great voyage—to heaven. And it is generally thought that he is safely moored there too: for he was a man, in many respects, of a noble heart: and, for a sailor, uncommonly devout; as would appear, among many other still better proofs, from the following epitaph, written by himself, on one of his unfortunate sailors, who, drowned with many others on the coast of Deal, was picked up and buried in the church-yard near that place:—

The boist'rous winds and raging seas,
Have tost me to and fro;
But spite of these, by God's decrees,
I harbour here below—

Where safe at anchor I do ride
With many of our fleet;
In hope one day, again to weigh,
GREAT ADMIRAL CHRIST to meet.

From what has been said of him, most of my readers are, I suppose, so well pleased with our honest admiral as to be ready to pray that, if ever he had a son, that son proved to him a Barnabas, a “son of consolation.”

Well, glory to him whose goodness often prepares the richest answer to prayer, even before it is formed in the generous breast!

And still greater glory to him who has made us capable of that amiable philanthropy whereby we can

send back our sympathies to the generations that are past, and take a lively interest in the joys of those who lived long before our day. By virtue of this 'tis pleasing to learn of our good admiral that he married—married *early*—and begat a son: but not in his own image. For, while the *father* lived only to represent the miseries of that *IRON AGE* spoken of by the prophet, when wretched men, blinded by their passions, could rush into bloody fight for *filthy lucre*, the *son* lived to give some blessed signal of that golden age to come, when filled with all the sweetness of divine love, men should deem it "*glory to suffer the spoiling of their goods for conscience sake.*" This child of honour was born to the admiral in the year 1644.

When the incarnate God descended on the earth, the temples of horrid war were shut that self same year; and silver-tongued angels were heard to chaunt their anthems of "*Glory to God for coming in the flesh to restore the golden age of peace and good will among men.*" It is not pretended that any testimonials of this high character were given at the birth of this true disciple of the BENEVOLENT SAVIOUR: but it appears, from the unanimous testimony of his historians, that the dove-like spirit of meekness descended upon him even in the cradle.

And here I cannot but relate an anecdote of little William, which will serve to show how soon the ideas of moral right, if not *innate*, may be *planted* in our nature. According to that famous historian, Xenophon, the schoolmasters among the ancient Persians, took much less pains to teach their children the knowledge of *letters* than to inspire them with the love of *Justice*, because, in their opinion, "*Honest dealing among men is far more important to happiness than all human learning.*" They neglected no opportunity to inculcate this on the youthful mind. If, for example, they saw a little man with a big coat, and a big man with a little coat, they would straight fall to catechising the

child as to what ought to be done in that case. If the child said, *exchange the coats*; they answered *no*: that might be convenience, but not justice. For if the little man, by his virtues, had got himself a big coat, would it be justice to take it away from him and give it to a big man whose idleness had brought him to rags?

That the Admiral had taken pains to educate his son in this sublime style, may, I think, very fairly be inferred from the following story of little William when only seven years old. Among his father's tenants was a poor man named Thomas Pearce, just such an honest good natured soul as every body loves. The Penn family set great store by him, and especially little William, whom honest Thomas had so often carried in his arms, and returning from the Fair, had brought him many a cake and apple. On some sudden emergence, the Admiral had got Tom with his cart to assist him. After looking, with an air of much sympathy on the poor man, where he wrought till the sweat in big drops trickled down his pallid face, little William came to the Admiral, and said "*father an't you going to pay poor Tom Pearce for working for you so?*"

What makes you ask that, William, replied the Admiral.

Why, because, father, I think you ought to pay him.

Why so, my son?

Why, because, father, I don't see why he should work so hard for you for nothing.

Well, I dare say, William, I shall pay him.

But, father, if you don't pay him money, I'll tell you what you ought to do.

What, my son?

Why, father, when poor Tom comes to want any work done, you should send your wagon to help him.

My cart, you mean, William, for you see I have only his cart.