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The Best Poor Man's Country?: William Penn, Quakers, and Unfree Labor in Atlantic Pennsylvania

Peter B. Kotowski
Loyola University Chicago

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

“THE BEST POOR MAN’S COUNTRY?”: WILLIAM PENN, QUAKERS, AND
UNFREE LABOR IN ATLANTIC PENNSYLVANIA

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN HISTORY

BY

PETER B. KOTOWSKI

CHICAGO, IL

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this day, I am in awe of Dr. Bucholz's ability to produce exceptional scholarship and incredible lectures. He is a role model for how to act inside and out of the classroom. He is also one of the most generous individuals I have had the pleasure of meeting. His door was always open and I spent a staggering number of hours in his office discussing my teaching, my dissertation, and my struggles moving through the writing process. His advice and sympathy are so very appreciated. I am also thankful for the direct hand he had in making this dissertation a success, particularly in helping me unravel the mysteries of early modern England. The countless hours he spent writing extensive and illuminating comments vastly improved the content and style of this manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

William Penn's writings famously emphasized notions of egalitarianism, just governance, and moderation in economic pursuits. Twentieth-century scholars took Penn's rhetoric at his word and interpreted colonial Pennsylvania as nothing less than "the best poor man's country," as reflected in the title of one of the most popular histories of the colony. They also imagined a world where all men had access to economic opportunity and lived free from the barbarity endemic to Atlantic world colonies. Despite this halcyon vision of the Peaceable Kingdom, the reality was the opposite: a colony where religious convictions justified what we today (and radicals then) condemned as an exploitative labor system. In fact, those very religious and moral imperatives reinforced Quaker conceptions of masculinity that were used in shaping the labor regime in the colony. My dissertation is the first to explore how Penn's mental world was shaped by early modern conceptions of gender and how, in turn, his and other Quaker founders' ideological vision affected the lived experiences of the servants and slaves building the colony's economy. While scholars have paid increasing attention to the intersections of labor, race, and the economy within the Atlantic world, they have too often reified Penn's vision without reference to the social or economic exploitation that complicated its implementation; this dissertation argues that it needs to be understood as more in line with these practices, with catastrophic results for its laborers.

INTRODUCTION

“WE ARE A QUAKER COLONY”

In a letter to his son, William Penn averred, “We are a Quaker Colony... but lett us not be persecuted in our Country [when our] Consciences are tender.” Penn was careful to emphasize the distinct Quaker journey; how Friends had come “so farr & have endured and spent so much that we might enjoye them with more ease than at home.”¹ In settling along the Delaware, Penn aspired to build a colony where Quakers could abide by their religious values and live free from the persecution of England. Yet, liberty of conscience was not the only benefit Penn described in his promotional literature. The Quaker colony was also cast as a place where a “man of recommended great skill” would have the opportunity to “have his passage paid,” labor in the colony, and achieve a degree of economy self-sufficiency unavailable to many in England.² Many men in England, especially Quakers, feared that religious persecution would hinder their ability to provide for their families, achieve economic self-sufficiency, and perform their patriarchal duties as early modern men. For many, Pennsylvania promised an opportunity for these

¹ William Penn to William Penn Jr., January 2, 1701, in *The Papers of William Penn*, ed. Mary Maples and Richard S. Dunn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 4:28 (Hereafter cited as *PWP*). William Penn Jr. was the eldest surviving son from Penn’s first marriage to Gulielma. The issue of Quaker suffering was an important part of the colony’s identity, particularly how Quakers “lying under some Hardships in their native Country” absconded to Pennsylvania where they were “capable of enjoying the Privilege sof English Subjects, without violation to their religious principles.” See Charles Hoban, Gertrude MacKinney, and George Edward Reed, eds., *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg, 1931-1935), 2:1190 (Hereafter cited as *Votes and Proceedings*).

² William Penn to James Harrison, October 25, 1685, *PWP*, 3:66.

individuals to fulfill their roles as men and earn a living planting a new colony.

The legacy of persecution and suffering was essential not only to the Quaker identity, but also to their vision for the future. Penn and other Quakers saw their venture as a “holy experiment” deeply rooted in their faith. In traveling across the Atlantic in pursuit of religious liberty, Quakers joined other religious dissenters who, like the Puritans, were intent upon establishing “a Beacon set on a Hill,” where “the Eye of God, Angels and Men are upon us.”³ For Penn and others, the holy experiment was an attempt to be “a community motivated by an awareness of the indwelling spirit of God; it was to be ‘Primitive Christianity Revived.’”⁴ This image of William Penn has become an integral part of the historical memory, both for Penn and his contemporaries as well as observers and historians. Penn’s colonial experiment received praise from Enlightenment thinkers like Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Louis de Jaucourt, who celebrated how Penn’s views on religion and government discredited the *Ancien Régime*.⁵ Penn would also be remembered thanks to the artwork of Benjamin West and Edward Hicks, who helped

³ *The Tryals of Peter Boss, George Keith, and William Bradford, Quakers, for Several Great Misdemeanors*, in *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, ed. J. William Frost (Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions, 1980), 186. The specific phrase “holy experiment” was used in a letter from William Penn to James Harrison. See William Penn to James Harrison, August 25, 1681, Extracts of Letters, Memorandums, Etc. relating to Pennsylvania, Box 2, Parrish and Pemberton Family Papers (Collection 1653), The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Hereafter cited as HSP).

⁴ Edwin Bronner, “The Failure of the ‘Holy Experiment’ in Pennsylvania, 1684-1699,” *Pennsylvania History* 21, no. 2 (1954): 95.

⁵ Christopher Ryan Pearl, “‘For the Good Order of Government’: The American Revolution and the Creation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1740-1790,” (PhD Diss., Binghamton University State University of New York, 2013), 31. Voltaire, in particular, lauded the work of Penn, particularly his approach to dealing with Pennsylvania’s Indian population. The famous treaty signed in 1701 at Shackamaxon was celebrated in Voltaire’s *Letters to the English Nation* as “the only Treaty between these people and the Christians that was not ratified by an oath, and that was never infringed.” See J. William Frost, “‘Wear the Sword as Long as Thou Canst’: William Penn in Myth and History,” *Explorations in American Culture* 4 (2000), 22.

immortalize the Quaker proprietor as the unquestioned political ruler and principle landowner in Pennsylvania.⁶

As the memory of Penn has passed from contemporaries to historians, his role as the proprietor of the holy experiment has become a powerful narrative. In many ways, the myth of Penn as an enlightened ruler has reinforced the notion of Pennsylvania as a holy experiment in religious freedom and good governance. Scholars have explored how, as proprietor, Penn was “a spiritually-minded Christian” who used spiritual power and love to govern his colony. Others have lavished praise on Pennsylvania for its legacy of religious toleration and separation of church and state. In discussing the colony’s role in shaping the relationship between religion and the government, J. William Frost contends, “Pennsylvania stood for non-coercion of conscience, divorce of the institutional church from the state, and the cooperation of the church and state in fostering the morality necessary for prosperity and good government.” Frost goes so far as to claim that it was in Pennsylvania that the groundwork was laid for the eventual inclusion of separation of church and state in the United States Constitution.⁷

Emphasizing the religious history of early Pennsylvania is understandable because religion was important to Penn, but it is only part of the story of colonization. Penn’s religious motives were accompanied by a desire to plant “a flourishing Countrey

⁶ Kevin Kenny, *Peaceable Kingdom Lost: The Paxton Boys and the Destruction of William Penn’s Holy Experiment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 15.

⁷ J. William Frost, *A Perfect Freedom: Religious Liberty in Pennsylvania* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 2. Frost’s account downplays the interconnectedness between religion and politics in the late seventeenth century. Penn’s attitude towards liberty of conscience was intimately linked to his political positions and the political discourse of the age. See Andrew R. Murphy, *Conscience and Community: Revisiting Toleration and Religious Dissent in Early Modern England and America* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001).

blest with Liberty Ease & Plenty beyond what many of themselves cou'd expect.”⁸ This emphasis on economic gain reflected the intertwined nature of commerce and religion in the seventeenth century. Penn was granted a charter during a time when an emerging capitalist order saw a strong connection between merchant capitalism, colonialism, and unfree labor.⁹ This emphasis on the economic aspects of colonization was made clear in the colony’s charter, which was granted to Penn in March 1681. As proprietor, Charles II bestowed upon Penn “and his Heirs forever” 45,000 square miles of land formerly belonging to Nieu Nederlandt, “bounded on the East by Delaware River” and right in between New York and the Chesapeake. With such a large swath of land under his control, King Charles expected Penn to “enlarge our English Empire, and promote such useful Commodities as may be of Benefit to us and our Dominions.” This large acquisition of land made Penn the largest individual landlord in the British Empire.¹⁰

The founding generation of Quakers portrayed Penn’s Woods as a “holy experiment” open to all settlers in an effort to wed their religious and economic goals and lay the groundwork for expansion and growth. Penn’s decision to emphasize liberty of

⁸ William Penn to Friends in Pennsylvania, June 29, 1710, *PWP*, 4:675.

⁹ Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), 328. Linebaugh and Rediker see the rise of Atlantic capitalism occurring in three phases. The first phase (1600-1640) saw capitalism’s birth in England and expansion through trade and colonization throughout the Atlantic. The second phase (1640-1680) saw resistance from groups like antinomians. The third phase (1680-1760) saw Atlantic capitalism fully secured throughout the British Empire during a period of consolidation and stabilization. William Pettigrew also illustrates the ways in which emerging capitalism was linked to colonization and politics. See William Pettigrew, “Free to Enslave: Politics and the Escalation of Britain’s Transatlantic Slave Trade, 1688-1714,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (2007): 3-38.

¹⁰ *A Collection of Charters and other Publick Acts* (Philadelphia, 1740), 1-2; Kenny, *Peaceable Kingdom Lost*, 2; Dan Richter, *Before the Revolution: America’s Ancient Past* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 251. Charles II’s decision to bestow upon Penn a grant for land originated in a debt owed by the Crown to the Penn family. Sir William Penn loaned the Stuart family at least £16,000 by his death in 1670.

conscience, economic opportunity, and Quaker nonviolence was a conscious effort to entice settlers from throughout Europe who were no longer willing to suffer through persecution of conflict.¹¹ In many regards, this approach was widely successful. Religious dissenters and other men and women came from throughout Europe and the Atlantic World seeking land and economic opportunity. Alongside the Quakers came a large number Germans, European indentured servants, and African slaves. The colony quickly became one of the more heterogeneous in the Atlantic world, a fact that drove Quakers to use a firm hand in maintaining their own authority over the social order. The Quakers attempted to legitimate their authority and create a viable colony through several methods, all of which were tied together by early modern notions of manhood. In particular, Penn and his colleagues sought to build a colony that was ordered around a notion of masculinity that emphasized economic independence, liberty from arbitrary government, and well-ordered patriarchal households. By acting as godly patriarchs, Quaker men would organize their families and their state.

Much of the traditional literature has focused on the notion of Pennsylvania as a holy experiment, and while scholars have more recently emphasized the economic motivations that underpinned Pennsylvania's colonization, very little work has been done that explicitly focuses on the relationship between gender and the role of unfree labor in the Quaker colony. Early modern conceptions of gender, particularly manhood, played a significant role in shaping both Penn's overall worldview, and also his specific approach

¹¹ The notion of nonviolence and peace was also an important aspect of Penn's policy towards the Delaware's Native American population. See William Pencak and Daniel Richter, ed., *Friends and Enemies in Penn's Woods: Indians, Colonists, and the Racial Construction of Pennsylvania* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004).

to colonization. Penn and his fellow Quaker settlers embraced a concept of godly Patriarchy that encouraged men to achieve economic independence, exert political agency, and fulfill their duties as responsible heads of households. Yet, because the colony was rooted in the Atlantic trade, Pennsylvania Quakers grappled with the paradox of attempting to maintain honest and plain living while simultaneously seeking to maximize profits while living increasingly lavish lifestyles.¹²

This paradox is most evident when seen through the colony's reliance on the labor of servants and slaves. Unfree laborers were essential to building the Quaker colony. But they also posed a notable problem to colonists, as the growing exploitation of unfree labors was in stark contrast to gendered expectations for comportment among Quaker masters. My project explores the tensions between Quaker attempts to legitimate their authority through establishing godly patriarchy and Pennsylvania's increasing dependence on unfree labor. Over time, I argue that the pursuit of profits undermined Quaker notions of proper manhood as derived from economic independence, good governance, peace, and patriarchal authority. The dictates of godly patriarchy established, in theory, a way to use unfree labor within the proper ordering of the household. Yet, the desire to maximize profit and capitalize on Pennsylvania's growing place in the Atlantic led the godly household to dissolve as Quakers faced problems executing the proper master-servant relationship in practice. In place of Quaker values, colonial elites succumbed to the economic realities of colonization and Pennsylvania's continual need

¹² For example, Quakers continued to wear relatively simple clothing. The garments themselves, however, were of greater and greater quality, reflecting the struggle among Quakers to balance their desire for luxury with their religious impulses to live simple lifestyles. See Ross E. Martinie Eiler, "Luxury, Capitalism, and the Quaker Reformation, 1737-1798," *Quaker History* 97, no. 1 (2008): 11-31.

for exploiting unfree labor. By the time of the Seven Years' War, Penn's gendered social order had broken down, and the internal tensions between elite Quakers, other European settlers, and the colony's unfree laborers erupted and tore down Quaker control and Penn's "holy experiment."

Historiography

Much of the traditional scholarship on colonial Pennsylvania affirms a narrative of Pennsylvania exceptionalism. This interpretation dates back to the promotional literature Penn used to advertise his colony. Quaker scholars such as William Braithwaite, J. William Frost, Jack Marietta, and Isaac Sharpless subsequently reinforced this theme in their scholarship.¹³ Braithwaite, for example, frequently lavished praise on the colony's proprietor for his work in settling such a unique and important colony. The "founder of Pennsylvania," Braithwaite argues, was "the vindicator of justice to native races, the framer of laws which presaged the Constitution of the United States, and the champion of liberty of conscience."¹⁴ This historiographical trend promulgates a view of the founder that considers his role "on behalf of Quakers in the English colonies" as "virtually unique."¹⁵ This dissertation engages with this historiographical trend by adopting a more

¹³ William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961); J. William Frost, *A Perfect Freedom: Religious Liberty in Pennsylvania* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993); *The Quaker Family in Colonial America: A Portrait of the Society of Friends* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973); Jack Marietta, "Conscience, the Quaker Community, and the French and Indian War," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 95, no. 1 (1971): 3-27; Isaac Sharpless, *A Quaker Experiment in Government: History of Quaker Government in Pennsylvania, 1682-1783* (Philadelphia: Ferris & Leach, 1902); *Quakerism and Politics* (Philadelphia: Ferris & Leach, 1905).

¹⁴ Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 175-6;

¹⁵ Melvin Endy, "George Fox and William Penn: Their Relationship and Their Roles within the Quaker Movement," *Quaker History* 93, no. 1 (2004): 23. See also, Hugh Barbour, *William Penn's "Holy Experiment": The Founding of Pennsylvania, 1681-1701* (New York: Temple University Press, 1962);

critical approach to analyzing Penn's promotional literature. By employing deep readings of these texts, I better explore their role within larger early modern discourses about gender, labor, and individual rights.

At the center of this exceptionalist narrative of Pennsylvania is the colony's history of liberty of conscience. Pennsylvania's emphasis on religious liberty is particularly important to scholars endeavoring to uphold a halcyon image of Pennsylvania. This approach to religious toleration is often portrayed as groundbreaking, with scholars attributing its success to Quakers and Quakerism. Historians point to the importance of the Quaker family, education, and the idea that Quakers were one of the most radical sects of religious dissenters because their religious views were "a right to all individuals regardless of their particular beliefs. Everyone was obligated to follow the dictates of his or her own conscience."¹⁶ The emphasis on Pennsylvania's views on religion has been championed for having "first encountered the dilemmas that separating churches from the state" and the implications this would have for the United States' approach to religious liberty.¹⁷

William Penn on Religion and Ethics: The Emergence of Liberal Quakerism (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1991); Melvin Endy, *William Penn and Early Quakerism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973); J. William Frost, "William Penn's Experiment in the Wilderness: Promise and Legend," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 107, no. 4 (1983): 577-605; "Wear the Sword as Long as Thy Canst': William Penn in Myth and History," *Explorations in Early America* 4 (2000): 13-45; Paul Douglas Newman, "'Good Will to all Men... from the King on the throne to the beggar on the dunghill': William Penn, the Roman Catholics, and Religious Toleration," *Pennsylvania History* 61, no. 4, William Penn: To Honor his 350th Anniversary (1994): 457-479.

¹⁶ Sally Schwartz, "William Penn and Toleration: Foundations of Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History* 50, no. 4 (1983): 285. See also, J. William Frost, *The Quaker Family in Colonial America: A Portrait of the Society of Friends* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973); Sally Schwartz, "'A Mixed Multitude': The Struggle for Toleration in Colonial Pennsylvania" (New York: New York University Press, 1987); Richard T. Vann, "Quakerism: Made in America?" in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Mary Maples Dunn and Richard Dunn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 157-172.

The singular approach to religious liberty in Pennsylvania has two key problems. First, the emphasis on the uniqueness of Pennsylvania's relationship to religious toleration comes to the detriment of a wider understanding of religion in the early modern Atlantic. In particular, the scholarship's emphasis on *Pennsylvania's* role in promoting religious toleration neglects the fact that these issues were not new to Pennsylvania. The issue of religious toleration was hotly debated throughout the British Empire. Rhode Island, in particular, formally adopted liberty of conscience in its colonial constitutions several decades before the Quaker colony.¹⁸ This project endeavors to correct this historiographical trend by better contextualizing Pennsylvania's history of liberty of conscience and the origins of its government within the Atlantic World's network of religious dissenters. Second, historians have been too quick to draw connections between Pennsylvania's views on liberty of conscience and the United States' embrace of the separation of church and state. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, issues of church and state were inextricably linked. This is particularly true with toleration, which cannot be divorced from the political history of the English Civil Wars and Glorious Revolution.¹⁹ Drawing conclusions about the relationship between church and state in the

¹⁷ J. William Frost, *A Perfect Freedom: Religious Liberty in Pennsylvania* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 2.

¹⁸ For an example of Rhode Island's constitutional protection of liberty of conscience, see John Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes: An Atlantic History of the English Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

¹⁹ For an explanation of the roots of religious toleration and its relationship to late Stuart politics, see Murphy, *Conscience and Community*. Dan Richter also addresses how toleration was a product of late Stuart political rule. See Dan Richter, *Before the Revolution: America's Ancient Past* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011). See also, Evan Haefeli, "Toleration," *Religious Compass* 4/4 (2010): 253-262.

early republic based on Pennsylvania is problematic, as religion and politics were intimately linked in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century.

Political histories of Pennsylvania have also adopted an exceptionalist stance on the Quaker colony. As Wayne Bodle has shown, the 1970s and 1980s saw an outpouring of work pushing back against the disproportionate emphasis on the Chesapeake and New England. The Middle Atlantic colonies, these scholars argue, were more important for understanding the nature of colonial America than were other parts of mainland British North America. Moreover, the heterogeneity of the Middle Atlantic better predicted “the contours of the nineteenth-century United States than did New England’s or the South’s homogeneity.”²⁰ In addition to the praising of the Middle Atlantic as a true representation of American values, scholars have also lauded Pennsylvania for its political climate. While he has since placed more attention on the rampant factionalism in Pennsylvania, Alan Tully originally praised the Quaker-governed Pennsylvania as a “paradigm for peace.”²¹ Adding to this literature, scholars like Gary Nash have made important contributions to the process of creating Pennsylvania’s governmental framework. Other historians have lauded the colony’s legal framework, often attributing its successes to the influence of Quakerism.²² Recently, historians have begun to examine Pennsylvania

²⁰ Wayne Bodle, “Themes and Directions in Middle Colonies Historiography, 1980-1994,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (1994): 355.

²¹ Alan Tully, *William Penn’s Legacy: Politics and Social Structure in Provincial Pennsylvania, 1726-1775* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977); “Ethnicity, Religion, and Politics in Early America,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 107, no. 4 (1983): 491-536; *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and Institutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

²² For general works on Pennsylvania politics, see Gary Nash, “The Framing of Government in Pennsylvania: Ideas in Contact with Reality,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (1966): 183-209;

politics more critically. John Smolenski's work is particularly informative in illustrating the dynamic nature of Quakerism and the ways in which the realities of the colonial experience forced an evolution in Quaker thought and practice. This dissertation will attempt to build on the work of Smolenski and others by examining some of the contradictions between Penn's political rhetoric and what his actions reveal about his true aspirations.²³

My project builds on some of the recent scholarship exploring the role of Quakerism as a specific network used by British colonists living throughout the Atlantic.²⁴ I bridge the gap between these disparate threads by addressing the influences of capitalism in shaping the colony's economy and how the region's economic development affected notions of manhood and Quakerism. Pennsylvania was founded during a period of great transition in England. In the wake of the Glorious Revolution, the imperial economy witnessed a breaking of monopolies like the Royal African Company. In its place, an increasingly militarized state sought to bring disjointed American colonies

Quakers and Politics: Pennsylvania, 1681-1726 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968). On the role of Quakerism and Pennsylvania's law and politics, see Jane Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism and the Political Thought of John Dickinson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Jack Marietta and G.S. Rowe, *Troubled Experiment: Crime and Justice in Pennsylvania, 1682-1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); William Offutt Jr., *Of "Good Laws" and "Good Men": Law and Society in the Delaware Valley, 1680-1710* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995).

²³ John Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers: The Making of a Creole Culture in Colonial Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010). See also, Michael Goode, "Gospel Order among Friends: Colonial Violence and the Peace Testimony in Quaker Pennsylvania, 1681-1720," (PhD Diss., University of Illinois-Chicago, 2012).

²⁴ Frederick Tolles, *The Meeting House and the Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682-1763* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1963); James Walvin, *The Quakers: Money and Morals* (London: John Murray, 1997). See also, Douglas Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the Rise of Capitalism* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1995). For works examining Quakerism, religious networks, and Atlantic trade, see Jordan Landes, *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World: The Creation of an Early Modern Community* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Nuala Zahedieh, *The Capital and the Colonies: London and the Atlantic Economy, 1660-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

into a more unified imperial power. Pennsylvania was settled in the midst of this transformation, and this impacted the colonies development in terms of its labor force, Atlantic economy, and the ways in which Quakers conceptualized their relationship between their religious practices and the practicalities of building a colony reliant on Atlantic trade.²⁵

While much of the literature exploring the colony's economic history are disproportionately focused on the 1750s through the early republic, James Lemon's *The Best Poor Man's Country* is the single defining work that focuses on the earlier era of colonization. Lemon emphasized the early colonists' "liberal" attitudes and focus on material gain over the good of the community. While Lemon has received challenges, his work played a key role in shaping the debate and reinforcing the exceptionalist nature of the Quaker colony.²⁶ I engage with Lemon's work by examining the mindset of Pennsylvania's early colonists while building on the extant work tracing the relationship between Quakerism and profit. Frederick Tolles and James Walvin, in particular, explore the language Quakers used to talk about the relationship between religion and profit. Both works address the mechanics of Quaker education and the early efforts to build Pennsylvania's economy.

²⁵ For an excellent analysis of this transformation, see Pettigrew, "Free to Enslave;" *Freedom's Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1672-1752* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

²⁶ James T. Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972). Lemon's characterization of colonial farmers was challenged in James A. Henretta, "Families and Farms: Mentalité in Pre-Industrial America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (1978): 3-32. The two continued this discussion in a subsequent issue of the journal. See James A. Henretta, "Families and Farms: Mentalité in Pre-Industrial America": Reply," *William and Mary Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (1980): 696-700; James T. Lemon, "Comment on James A. Henretta's 'Families and Farms: Mentalité in Pre-Industrial America,'" *William and Mary Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (1980): 688-696.

The literature on early Pennsylvania's economy, specifically unfree labor, has also been influenced by the economic histories of the 1980s and 1990s. At the forefront of this trend are the contributions from John McCusker and Russell Menard. Their monograph, *The Economy of British America*, provides a general overview of the commercial orientation of Dutch and Quaker settlers in the Mid-Atlantic, and can be taken alongside Lemon and Henretta's analysis of the nature of early Pennsylvania farmers.²⁷ The influence of Menard's scholarship can also be found in the literature on Pennsylvania's servant population. Historians like Menard, David Galenson, and Farley Grubb have brought a strong quantitative analysis to the study of servitude, often adopting a "rational choice theory" that empowered servants with, in the words of John Donoghue, the ability to "place themselves metaphorically in the benign custody of the invisible hand of the market mechanism."²⁸

The influences of Menard, Galenson, and Grubb can be seen in the work of Sharon Salinger. Her book, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, remains one of the few full-length works dealing explicitly with Pennsylvania's servant population. While an

²⁷ John McCusker and Russell Menard, *The Economy of British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). Allan Kulikoff has provided an updated analysis of the nature of British American farmers. See Allan Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

²⁸ John Donoghue, "Indentured Servitude in the 17th Century English Atlantic: A Brief Survey of the Literature," *History Compass* 11, no. 10 (2013): 898. For examples of quantitative studies embracing rational choice theory, see David Galenson, "The Rise and Fall of Indentured Servitude in the Americas: An Economic Analysis," *Journal of Economic History* 44, no. 1 (1984): 1-26; *White Servitude in Colonial America: An Economic Analysis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Farley Grubb, "The Market for Indentured Immigrants: Evidence on the Efficiency of Forward-Labor Contracting in Philadelphia, 1745-1773," *Journal of Economic History* 45, no. 4 (1985): 855-868; "Does Bound Labor Have to be Coerced Labour?: The Case of Colonial Immigrant Servitude Versus Craft Apprenticeship and Life-Cycle Servitude-in-Husbandry," *Itinerario* 21, no. 1 (1997): 28-51; Russell Menard, "British Migration to the Chesapeake Colonies in the Seventeenth Century," in *Colonial Chesapeake Society*, ed. Lois Green Carr, Philip Morgan, and Jean Burrell Russo (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 99-132.

important update on earlier scholarship exploring servitude in the Quaker colony, Salinger's work is overly focused on the role of servants within an evolving economic system, as Pennsylvania march towards the market-oriented economy that would characterize the nineteenth century. Absent from the text are the lived experiences of the servants. Salinger also remains fixed on the economics and labor of servitude, eschewing a cultural analysis of the implications of unfree labor in a colony founded by Quakers.²⁹ Christopher Tomlins recent monograph has also addressed unfree labor in Pennsylvania as part of a comparative study exploring the Chesapeake, Delaware, and New England regions. Drawing on the empirical research of McCusker, Menard, and others, Tomlins focuses on changes to regional legal codes to chart the rise and fall of free and unfree labor. In doing so, he contends that historians have overestimated the prevalence of indentured servitude and that their "performance of work" was only a part of colonial and early republic labor.³⁰ Like with Salinger, Tomlins' emphasis on statistics overshadows the perspective of the servants. Additionally, neither Salinger nor Tomlins appreciate the influences of Quakerism on the colony's unfree labor force or the ways in which both masters and servants operated under cultural assumptions. This dissertation will engage with both these historians, challenging Tomlins' assertions of the "performance of work"

²⁹ Sharon Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully: Labor and Indentured Servants in Pennsylvania, 1681-1800* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987). See also, Sharon Salinger, "Colonial Labor in Transition: The Decline of Indentured Servitude in Late Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *Labor History* 22, no. 2 (1981): 165-191; "'Send No More Women': Female Servants in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 107, no. 1 (1983): 29-48. For early work on Pennsylvania servitude, see Cheesman Herrick, *White Servitude in Pennsylvania: Indentured and Redemption Labor in Colony and Commonwealth* (New York: Negro University Press, 1969).

³⁰ Christopher Tomlins, *Freedom Bound: Law, Labor, and Civic Identity in Colonizing English America, 1580-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

by examining the ways in which the master-servant relationship shaped notions of manhood, liberty, or personal rights.

Studies of slavery in prerevolutionary Pennsylvania do a better job of wedding quantitative analysis with the cultural impact of unfree labor on the Quaker colony. Darold Wax, Jean Soderlund, and Gary Nash have all made important contributions establishing a foundation for scholarship by articulating the demographics and labor patterns of Pennsylvania slavery while also first exploring early antislavery activities by Quakers.³¹ Their work has been joined by contributions from historians like Geoffrey Plank and Brycchan Carey, who have added a more rigorous cultural analysis of the relationship between Quakerism and slavery in Pennsylvania. Also influential is the work of Kristen Block, who has helped explore the relationship between religion, profit, and unfree labor in the Atlantic world, and David Waldstreicher, who furthered the understanding of notions of slavery and freedom in the colonial North.³² These works are instrumental in providing a theoretical foundation, as this dissertation builds on the complicated relationship between religion, personal liberties, and unfree labor in the early modern Atlantic.

³¹ Gary Nash, *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720-1840* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988); Gary Nash and Jean Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees: Emancipation in Pennsylvania and its Aftermath* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Jean Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery: A Divided Spirit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); Darold Wax, "Quaker Merchants and the Slave Trade in Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 86, no. 2 (1962): 143-159; "The Demand for Slave Labor in Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History* 34, no. 4 (1967): 331-345.

³² Kristen Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean: Religion, Colonial Competition, and the Politics of Profit* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012); Brycchan Carey, *From Peace to Freedom: Quaker Rhetoric and the Birth of American Antislavery, 1657-1761* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012); Geoffrey Plank, *John Woolman's Path to the Peaceable Kingdom: A Quaker in the British Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); David Waldstreicher, *Runaway America: Benjamin Franklin, Slavery, and the American Revolution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004).

While studies of Pennsylvania's politics, religion, and economy are important contributions to the colony's historiography, what remains critically understudied is the gendered history of early Pennsylvania. Gender played an important role in shaping early modern thought, from the organization of the household to the organization of the state. Yet, despite its influence on Pennsylvania and the men and women who helped build the colony, scholars have generally neglected this topic. Instead, gender studies focusing on Pennsylvania begin in the late eighteenth century and primarily engage with gender in the early republic.³³ Using gender as a primary lens of analysis, this dissertation will correct this gap by examining gender, specifically notions of manhood, and the ways in which gender shaped the colonizing experience. Studying the influences of gender on early Pennsylvania helps complicate the exceptionalist narrative of the colony by better highlighting the gaps between promotional rhetoric and the realities of colonization. Specifically, by examining the role of gender in shaping notions of godly patriarch, Quaker gospel order, and good governance, this project will make an important contribution to a historiography in need of gender study.

Sources and Methodology

The chapters of this dissertation are thematic and explore Penn's efforts to impose social order, the ways in which gender tied together these efforts, and the role of unfree labor in acting as a counterbalance to the proprietor's efforts. It considers the values of

³³ Wayne Bodle, "Soldiers in Love: Patrolling the Gendered Frontiers of the Early Republic," in *Sex and Sexuality in Early America*, ed. Merrill D. Smith (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Toby L. Ditz, "Shipwrecked; or, Masculinity Imperiled: Mercantile Representations of Failure and the Gendered Self in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *Journal of American History* 81, no. 1 (1994): 51-80. Michael Goode's dissertation engages with household management, and his conception of gospel family order is taken into consideration in this project. See Goode, "Gospel Order among Friends."

Quakerism, conceptions of early modern gender, and the implications of building an Atlantic economy through exploiting the labor of indentured servants, redemptioners, and slaves. This dissertation explores how Penn used early modern conceptions of gender as a framing device and a recruitment tool. It traces how Penn and other Quakers used notions of natural law and the ancient constitution to promote a notion of good governance rooted in godly patriarchy. This project looks at how Quakers and other colonists stressed masculine honor and fair business practices to build an Atlantic economy. Additionally, this dissertation examines Quaker writings on the treatment of unfree laborers, their day-to-day lives, and the shifts in the law as it pertained to servants and slaves.

In order to address these myriad issues this dissertation draws from a wide variety of sources. The most important sources for this dissertation are manuscript and archival documents drawn primarily from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and the American Philosophical Society. In particular, the Penn, Logan, and Pemberton family papers have proved invaluable. This dissertation relies on correspondence—personal and official—account books, diaries, Quaker meeting minutes, and court records. Personal papers and manuscript material provides insight into many aspects of early Pennsylvania history. These documents often reveal quantitative data, particularly in the form of merchant letterbooks, information about changes to the colony’s legal code, or insight into the development of Pennsylvania’s economy and government. Most importantly, personal correspondence offers, as Toby Ditz notes, “a site of abundant experimentation” for colonists’ “modes of defining the self.”³⁴

³⁴ Ditz, “Shipwrecked; or, Masculinity Imperiled,” 53.

This project makes a point to take seriously the experiences of the subjects it studies. Correspondence can convey important “concrete” information, daily instructions, information about markets, or reports about the buying and selling of servants or slaves. Experiences, particularly those recorded in letters, diaries, and other written accounts, are products of ideologies and cultural productions that reflect how these individuals viewed the world in which they lived. An eighteenth-century merchant’s letterbook, for example, reflects cultural notions of manhood and honor and the way they impacted eighteenth-century trade. In adopting some aspects of postmodern thought, specifically intertextuality, deconstructing texts, and historicizing texts, this dissertation seeks to take seriously the experiences and words of its subjects. As Saul Cornell notes, deconstructing a text might help illustrate how “an author’s rhetoric actually undermines her argument.” Considering the emphasis this dissertation places on the disjunction between rhetoric and reality, this is an important methodological approach. In stressing the centrality of experience and the complicated ways in which it can be interpreted, this project draws from Joan Scott’s contention that scholars should treat experience as something “that takes all categories of analysis as contextual, contested, and contingent.”³⁵

In addition to archival material, this dissertation draws from a number of other sources. Newspapers play a key role in this project. In particular, *The Pennsylvania Gazette* and *American Weekly Mercury* feature prominently. These newspapers are valuable sources for quantitative information. This project uses newspapers for data about economics, particularly for accounts of laws and policies affecting trade, reports on crop

³⁵ Saul Cornell, “Early American History in a Postmodern Age,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 50, no. 2, *Early American History: Its Past and Future* (1993): 332, 334-5; Joan W. Scott, “The Evidence of Experience,” *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 4 (1991): 796.

prices, and information about imports and exports. Newspapers also provide much insight into unfree labor, particularly the buying and selling of servants and slaves and runaway accounts. A deep reading of accounts of absconding servants and slaves yields much in terms of the experience of the unfree laborers and the factors motivating them to escape servitude or slavery. Newspapers also provide a wealth of other information, such as writings by Ben Franklin, reactions to Parliamentary policies, and statements from the colony's leadership.³⁶

The final component to this project's primary source material is printed pamphlets, tracts, and conduct materials. Seventeenth-century conduct literature provides valuable insight into the nature of early modern gender norms. This dissertation also uses pamphlets authored by religious dissenters. These tracts provide important insight into the mindset of sectarians throughout the Atlantic world. Mining these tracts leads to insight into religious beliefs, notions of just governance, and views on the family. These pamphlets provide a firm base of primary sources for several chapters in this project.

Several methodological approaches are incorporated into this dissertation. As noted, experience of actors in this dissertation is an important part of this dissertation's theoretical framework. The individuals populating this project include colonial officials, Quaker writers, Barbadian merchants, Irish servants, and African slaves. It covers a wide spectrum of class and social status. This dissertation makes an earnest effort to write "history from below," a "variety of social history that emerged in the New Left" exploring the lived experiences of marginalized peoples. As Marcus Rediker notes, "the

³⁶ This project draws inspiration from the work of David Waldstreicher, in particular, for his effective use of newspapers as sources. See Waldstreicher, *Runaway America*.

people I study did not often speak through documents of their own making,” so I strive to uncover their voices through court records, newspaper accounts, and personal correspondence.³⁷

Alongside the efforts to approach history from below, this dissertation takes class seriously. As Billy Smith and Simon Middleton show, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries first saw class used as the “preferred term of social classification for different ‘sorts’ of people.” In particular, I adopt their call for scholars to examine “the intersection of class, race, and gender,” as this dissertation engages heavily with notions of manhood, the family, and unfree labor.³⁸ The period covered by this dissertation is one in which classes began reifying. As Simon Newman notes, seventeenth and eighteenth century individuals “found themselves in new social positions with new social groups, a situation that required them to define and defend new interests, sometimes against powerful contending interests.”³⁹

The emergence of new notions of class was not the only transformation the Atlantic World experienced during a period of burgeoning capitalism. Another important development was growing reliance on unfree labor, specifically chattel labor that took the form of slave labor.⁴⁰ The chattelization of labor—indentured servitude and slavery, in

³⁷ Marcus Rediker, “The Poetics of History from Below,” *Perspectives on History* 48, no. 6 (2010).

³⁸ Billy G. Smith and Simon Middleton, “Introduction,” in *Class Matters: Early North America and the Atlantic World*, ed. Billy G. Smith and Simon Middleton (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 2, 11.

³⁹ Simon Newman, “Theorizing Class in Glasgow and the Atlantic World,” in *Class Matters*, ed. Middleton and Smith, 31.

particular—plays a central role in chapters four and five of this dissertation. As such, it is important to precisely define chattel labor. This dissertation first addresses the notion of chattel by understanding that there is a link between the rise of unfree labor and class formation and development of capitalism during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. When understanding this in the context of chattel labor, Tom Brass notes, “the unfreedom inherent in chattel slavery derives from property rights exercised by one person over another.” Brass also contends that, because property rights are exercised by another individual, an unfree laborer is prohibited from entering the labor market to sell his or her own labor power. They are prevented from commodifying their own labor. Instead, their labor and their bodies are commodified by others; specifically, those who control and own their bodies.⁴¹

Building on the work of Brass and others, David Brion Davis provides a more rounded definition of chattel that will be employed in this dissertation. In discussing the traditional definition of slavery, Davis notes, “the slave’s person is the chattel property of another man or woman, and thus subject to sale and other forms of transfer.” While similar to Brass’ definition, Davis expands this analysis. He adds to this the idea that the slave’s will was subject to an owner’s authority; that the slave’s labor was obtained through coercion, violence, and the threat of violence; and that the master-slave

⁴⁰ For a powerful discussion of the relationship between slavery and the rise of capitalism, see Edward E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014). Baptist argues that “Slavery’s expansion was the driving force in US history between the framing of the Constitution and the beginning of the Civil War,” and that nations throughout the Atlantic World benefitted from the labor of slaves. While focused on the nineteenth century, this dissertation will explore the early beginnings of the relationship between unfree labor and capitalism.

⁴¹ Tom Brass, “Some Observations on Unfree Labour, Capitalist Restructuring, and Deproletarianization,” in *Free and Unfree Labour: The Debate Continues*, ed. Tom Brass and Martin van der Linden (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 57-8.

relationship was outside of the “limits of family relations” characteristic of a patriarchal family.⁴² Davis’ definition of chattel and his explanation of the various facets of the chattel relationship will feature prominently in the discussion of unfree labor in this dissertation. This project diverges from Davis’ work, however, by building on recent trends in the historiography of unfree labor. In particular, this dissertation will broaden the view of chattel labor to examine the ways in which indentured servitude was a state of temporary chattel labor. John Donoghue and Simon Newman, who have shown how indentured servitude in the seventeenth-century Atlantic World bore the hallmark characteristics of chattel labor, have put forward this argument in their recent works. In doing so, this project will embrace the notion that “slavery was a brutal and violent institution, and the chattel principle did indeed make it distinct from other forms of coerced labor such as impressment or indentured servitude. But the labor and violence of slavery must be understood as part of the spectrum of coercion of labor – some of it violent – in the early modern world.”⁴³

Finally, gender plays an integral role as a lens of analysis in this dissertation. In particular, this project explores the role of masculine self-fashioning in shaping Penn’s approach to colonization, the nature of Pennsylvania’s government and economy, and the relationship between Quakers and their unfree laborers. In particular, this project draws heavily from the work of Alexandra Shepard and Daniel Vickers. Shepard introduces the

⁴² David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 30.

⁴³ Simon Newman, *A New World of Labor: The Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 3. See also, John Donoghue, “Out of the Land of Bondage”: The English Revolution and the Atlantic Origins of Abolition,” *American Historical Review*, 115, no. 4 (2010): 943-974; *Fire Under the Ashes*.

idea of male honor, or credit, which she describes as “a composite of social and economic appraisal, incorporating a wide spectrum of definitions of honesty ranging from chastity to plain-dealing.” Alongside this idea of credit is Vickers’ notion of competency, which he describes as “the possession of sufficient property to absorb the labors of a given family while providing it with something more than a mere subsistence. It meant, in brief, a degree of comfortable independence.”⁴⁴ Notions of gender intimately shaped Quaker values, and many of the foremost theorists like William Penn were concerned with male honor. The role of the male patriarch was important in shaping Quaker views on religion, the family, government, and laborers.

While this project emphasizes notions of masculinity, credit, and competency, it takes seriously the need to consider the role of men within the larger context of early American history. As Toby Ditz encourages, this project endeavors to remember “that the engendering of men involves power over women.” Moreover, it strives to consider how “kinship and household organisation are chiefly responsible for allocating labour and economic resources or regulating participation in politics.”⁴⁵ While the history of masculinity is still an emerging and evolving field, two clear lines of historiographical emphasis have emerged. One strand of scholarship, influenced by Elizabeth Foyster, is concerned with gender and the patriarchal household. Another path has drawn from

⁴⁴ Alexandra Shepard, “Manhood, Credit, and Patriarchy in Early Modern England, 1580-1640,” *Past and Present* 167, no. 1 (2000): 77; *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Daniel Vickers, “Competency and Competition: Economy Culture in Early America,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (1990): 3.

⁴⁵ Toby L. Ditz, “The New Men’s History and the Peculiar Absence of Gendered Power: Some Remedies from Early American Gender History,” *Gender and History* 16, no. 1 (2004): 12, 16. For an example of a work setting the history of masculinity within the larger context, see Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

Philip Carter and explored the rise of civility and politeness. The latter tends to place its periodization in the eighteenth century. I approach this problem drawing, once again, from Shepard, who contends that gender historians have too readily drawn from other scholarship in using 1640 as a focal point in determining their periodization and chronology. As she illustrates, men throughout this period are not so different as the two historiographical trends indicate. Given the prevalence of patriarchal language in Quaker writings and the organization of Quaker meetings, this dissertation adopts Shepard's call for a history of masculinity that explores "how gender identities and experiences were related to concepts of patriarchy and constitutive of patriarchal relations both between men and women."⁴⁶

Organization

This dissertation is divided into five chapters that trace the rise and fall of Quaker Pennsylvania from its mid-seventeenth century origins through the end of the Seven Years' War. Taken together, the chapters explore the tensions between Quaker conceptions of gender, the family, and just governance and the realities of building a colony intimately linked to Atlantic networks of trade and reliant on the unfree labor of servants and slaves. Chapter one serves as an introduction to early modern conceptions of gender, walking the reader through the various ways in which men and women asserted

⁴⁶ There are several important works influencing this dissertation's approach to masculinity and its relevant historiography. For overviews of the field, see Karen Harvey, "The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800," *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005): 296-311; Karen Harvey and Alexandra Shepard, "What Have Historians Done with Masculinity? Reflections on Five Centuries of British History, circa 1500-1950," *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005): 274-280; Alexandra Shepard, "From Anxious Patriarchs to Refined Gentlemen? Manhood in Britain, circa 1500-1700," *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005): 281-295. See also, Elizabeth Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex, and Marriage* (London: Longman, 1999); Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain, 1660-1800* (New York: Pearson, 2001).

themselves, their roles in the family and society, and the various ways in which they established their public reputations. Gender, particularly the proper ordering of a household was a powerful force in early modern England, as contemporaries believed a well-ordered household would translate into a well-ordered society. Central to the early modern conception of gender was the idea of male credit. Male credit was, essentially, the outward reflection of their status and honor among their peers. It was derived through their political agency, economic independence, and ability to properly order their family as the head of household. Early modern conceptions of male credit emphasized modesty and the mastery of one's feelings and emotions.

One particularly important aspect of a man's reputation was his ability to achieve self-mastery. Conquering one's impulses was particularly important for Quakers, who struggled to resolve their growing businesses and industry with their religious emphasis on plain dealing. Quakers attempted to resolve these tensions by encouraging a method of business rooted in the idea that men should conduct their economic transactions with respect and in good faith, not to use dubious measures to earn extra profit. For Penn, early modern gender norms became an important rhetorical device when he began settling Pennsylvania. Chapter one closes by exploring Penn's use of gendered norms as both a promotional tool to recruit new settlers and a framing device to create social order.

Men lived under the gendered expectation that they needed to achieve economic independence in order to provide for their families. This was not, however, the only means men had to perform their gender. Being politically active and maintaining personal autonomy was also a hallmark of early modern manhood. This often proved challenging

for seventeenth-century Quakers living in England, who lived through numerous acts and statutes targeting religious nonconformists. Chapter two, divided into three sections, addresses how Penn and other Quakers carved out political and personal rights, particularly religious freedom. The first section illustrates how Quakers joined a growing network of nonconformists throughout the Atlantic World who used the language of natural law and the ancient constitution to defend their rights and religious practices. The second section explores how Penn used these discursive traditions in West New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Chapter two closes with a third section revealing how colonists co-opted this language to challenge the proprietor and other members of Pennsylvania's government who they deemed to be acting with arbitrary and intrusive authority.

While Chapter one traces the rhetorical links between manhood and economic success, chapter three addresses the practicalities of Pennsylvania's Atlantic economy. This chapter shows how Pennsylvania's economy matured from its humble beginnings, heavily reliant on the Free Society of Traders, to a colony that rivaled New York by the 1760s. This chapter emphasizes the Atlantic nature of Pennsylvania's economy. This not only includes the extensive trade between Pennsylvania and places like the West Indies and England, but it also stresses the importance of Quakers migrating from places like Barbados to Pennsylvania and shaping its economic direction. The chapter is also, in part, a study of several important Quaker merchants to establish the links between economic success and influence in government.

Chapters four and five deal more intimately with the family. Specifically, they test the limits of Quaker ethics and the moral imperatives of godly patriarchy when

confronted with the realities of unfree labor in the Atlantic World. Chapter four looks at indentured servitude in the Quaker colony. Quakers wrote extensively about the proper treatment of servants and apprentices, yet, as the chapter reveals, servants were commodified and exploited as the market imperatives of a burgeoning capitalist economy began to trump patriarchal expectations. Chapter four traces the experiences of servants from the docks in England or the war-torn regions of Germany to the auction block in Philadelphia. From there, it explores the legal and extralegal means masters used to reduce their servants to temporary chattel and the limited means of resistance employed by servants.

Chapter five explores similar themes. It begins in Barbados, a West Indian colony known for being one of the first landing points for Quaker migrants as well as its brutal and exploitative plantation labor regime. There, Quakers received firsthand exposure to the harsh methods of extracting labor from slaves. It describes George Fox's visit to Barbados and the first rumblings of antislavery sentiment among Quakers. The chapter then moves to Pennsylvania, describing the quantitative and qualitative experience of slaves in Penn's Woods. It closes with a discussion of early Quaker antislavery efforts, particularly the ways in which advocates invoked the language of the family and patriarchal responsibility to contest the enslavement of men and women. Taken together, Chapters four and five explore the lived experiences of unfree laborers, and by exploring their day-to-day lives, one can see the limits of Penn's gendered vision for Pennsylvania and the ways in which the colony privileged an elite class profiting through Atlantic trade and exploited labor.

CHAPTER ONE

“HONEST MEN... OF GOOD UNDERSTANDING”¹: SELF-MODERATION AND THE GENDERED ORIGINS OF PENNSYLVANIA

William Penn first contemplated North American colonization in 1675 while playing peacekeeper between two Quaker colleagues, John Fenwick and Edward Byllynge. Fenwick and Byllynge were both proprietors of West New Jersey, a tract of land purchased from Sir John Berkeley and the first Quaker colony. Yet the two men fell into dispute over their financial stake in the territory. Penn, a well-respected member of the Quaker community, was asked to settle the disagreement.² In February, he wrote to Fenwick and expressed his misgivings, “John, I am sorry, that a Toy, a Trifle, should thus Robb men of tyme, Quiet, & a more proffitable employ.” His concern was clear, imploring his friend to “make the best of which thou hast, thy great Grand children may be in the other world before which Land thou has allotted will be employed.”³ Penn’s cautious words drew on an emerging Quaker approach to economy practices and social

¹ William Penn to Friends in Pennsylvania, December 17, 1687, Extracts of Letters, Memorandums, Etc. relating to Pennsylvania, Box 2, Parrish and Pemberton Family Papers (Collection 1653), HSP.

² Richard and Mary Dunn attribute the tension between Byllynge and Fenwick to a quarrel over money. Byllynge offered to purchase West New Jersey from Berkeley for £1,000. Byllynge, however, fell into bankruptcy and sought the aid of Fenwick to help finalize the transaction. Fenwick agreed to pay Berkeley the interest in trust but demanded Byllynge offer some financial compensation. Byllynge refused and the dispute between the two quickly escalated to the point that they sought a mediator. See the editors’ comment, *PWP*, 1:383. See also, William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 402.

³ William Penn to John Fenwick, February 13, 1675, *PWP*, 1:386. Richard and Mary Dunn note that this letter reflects Penn’s belief that colonization was “a dubious road to wealth.” See *PWP*, 1:383.

comportment. Quaker theology urged individuals to practice self-moderation and to avoid taking unnecessary risks. West New Jersey represented a risk that diverted attention away from the more urgent task of combatting religious persecution. Despite Penn's misgivings, West New Jersey saw early success as a haven for Quakers looking to escape the persecution they faced in England. Emboldened by his involvement in New Jersey, Penn sought his own colonial charter in 1681, so that he, too, would have the opportunity to colonize a new land modeled after his vision of an ideal settlement.

The acquisition of a colonial charter in April 1681 represented a pivotal moment in which Penn turned away from combatting vice and corruption in England. Instead, he turned his gaze across the Atlantic Ocean, contending "an example may be Sett up to the nations. There may be room there, tho not here, for such an holy experiment."⁴ The religious imperatives driving Penn's desire to settle along the Delaware are well known. Historians have long explored the ways in which Quakerism, persecution in England, and Penn's desire for religious freedom drove him to colonize Pennsylvania.⁵ Penn believed

⁴ William Penn to James Harrison, August 25, 1681, Extracts of Letters, Memorandums, Etc. relating to Pennsylvania, Box 2, Parrish and Pemberton Family Papers (Collection 1653), HSP. Also cited in *PWP*, 2:108.

⁵ Edwin Bronner, "The Failure of the 'Holy Experiment' in Pennsylvania, 1684-1699," *Pennsylvania History* 21, no. 2 (1954): 93-108; *William Penn's "Holy Experiment": The Founding of Pennsylvania, 1681-1701* (New York: Temple University Publications, 1962); J. William Frost, "William Penn's Experiment in the Wilderness: Promise and Legend," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 107, no. 4 (1983): 577-605; *A Perfect Freedom: Religious Liberty in Pennsylvania* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993); Michael Goode, "Gospel Order among Friends: Colonial Violence and the Peace Testimony in Quaker Pennsylvania, 1681-1720" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Illinois-Chicago, 2013); Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family: British Settlement in the Delaware Valley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); John Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy* (New York: Pearson, 2007); Gary Nash, *Quaker and Politics: Pennsylvania, 1681-1726* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968); Sally Schwartz, *"A Mixed Multitude": The Struggle for Toleration in Colonial Pennsylvania* (New York: New York University Press, 1987); John Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers: The Making of a Creole Culture in Colonial Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

that “it is a business, that though I never undertook before, yet god has given me an understanding of my duty & an honest minde to doe it uprightly.”⁶ He saw this business as a personal responsibility in large part motivated by the failings of Quakers to create change and combat vice and corruption in England. Penn also saw this venture as a personal business; an opportunity for him to earn a profit after having his coffers drained supporting the Quaker cause.⁷ Scholars tend to treat the religious, political, and economic histories of early Pennsylvania separately. Economic histories, in particular, neglect the gendered dimensions of labor and the ways in which gender shaped how merchants conducted business. This is particularly important because Penn’s worldview, both as a religious reformer and a practical businessman concerned with the profit-driven realities of the colonizing project, was intimately shaped by early modern conceptions of gender. To that end, scholars have yet to plumb the relationship between the founding of Pennsylvania and the ways in which gender norms shaped his rhetoric and approach to the work of colonization.⁸

⁶ William Penn to the Inhabitants of Pennsylvania, April 8, 1681, *PWP*, 2:84.

⁷ Penn’s financial interest in Pennsylvania and his role as a businessman has also been well documented. See Kristen Block, “Cultivating Inner and Outer Plantations: Property, Industry, and Slavery in Early Quaker Migration to the New World,” *Early American Studies* 8, no. 3 (2010): 515-548; Richard S. Dunn, “Penn Wise and Pound Foolish: Penn as a Businessman,” in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Mary Maples and Richard S. Dunn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 37-54; Douglas Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the Rise of Capitalism* (Wallingford, Pennsylvania: Pendle Hill Publications, 1995); Elizabeth Milroy, “‘For the like Uses, as the Moore-Fields’: The Politics of Penn’s Squares,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 130, no. 3 (2006): 257-282; Gary Nash, “The Free Society of Traders and the Early Politics of Pennsylvania,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 89, no. 2 (1965): 147-173; “The Framing of Government in Pennsylvania: Ideas in Contact with Reality,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 23, no. 2 (1966): 183-209; Frederick Tolles, *The Meeting House and the Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682-1763* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1963).

⁸ Studies of masculinity, in particular, are much needed. Current scholarship on masculinity is heavily skewed towards the late-eighteenth and nineteenth century. For examples, see Wayne Bodle, “Soldiers in Love: Patrolling the Gendered Frontiers of the Early Republic,” and Rodney Hessinger,

Penn came of age during a period in which gender norms greatly affected the organization of not only families and but societies at large. Men, in particular, felt the pressure to conform to prescribed roles. They performed their masculinity by exerting authority over the household, achieving economic independence, and securing political agency. Born to wealthy parents, Penn grew to embrace these norms. While his conversion to Quakerism shifted his focus from courtly engagements to religious pursuits, he drew on his religious beliefs to reinforce conventional gender norms. The idea of self-moderation, essential to the early modern man and particularly important to Quakers, became a central part of Penn's worldview and his approach to colonization.

Understanding the ways in which early modern gender shaped Penn's language and his rhetoric of colonization is essential to understanding how he viewed the project he undertook in Pennsylvania. The language of self-moderation provided Penn with a way of fusing Quaker religious and ethical beliefs with the capitalistic imperatives inherent to the colonizing process. Penn drew on contemporary gender norms, particularly the masculine ideal of self-moderation, which was extremely important to mastery. These ideals functioned as a framework for colonial order and in an effort to impose a sense of stability along the Delaware Valley. In doing so, he attempted to use such a colonial framework to privilege the wealthy Quaker elite that supported his colonial venture.

This chapter begins by defining and articulating early modern gender norms. It then explores William Penn's early life and conversion to Quakerism, illuminating the

“‘Insidious Murderers of Female Innocence’: Representations of Masculinity in the Seduction Tales of the Late Eighteenth Century,” in *Sex and Sexuality in Early America*, ed., Merrill D. Smith (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

gendered world in which he lived and the ways in which this shaped his worldview. From there, chapter one looks at the specific role of self-moderation both as a way for men to assert their gender and as a specific concept men struggled to define within the Quaker faith. Finally, it engages with Penn's attempt to impose self-moderation as a moral and ethical framework for Pennsylvania's settlement and as a means of privileging the Quaker colonists who helped establish the colony.

Gender and Penn's Upbringing

William Penn Jr. was born on October 14, 1644 beneath the shadow of the Tower of London into a wealthy family with a rich history.⁹ Penn's grandfather, Giles Penn, earned a reputation under the early Stuart monarchs as a wealthy merchant and legendary sea captain. By the 1630s, Giles owned a fleet of six ships that sailed out of Bristol to trade throughout the Mediterranean, where he served as consul for the English trade in the region.¹⁰ His son, William Penn Sr., was born in 1621 and received personalized training from Giles in all manner of seafaring knowledge. This training proved useful, as Penn gained notoriety for his service in the English Navy in expeditions throughout the Mediterranean and during the first Anglo-Dutch War. He drew the attention of Oliver Cromwell when he helped suppress rebellions in Ireland by bombarding Irish fortresses and razing villages. Together, Penn and Cromwell worked to forge "a weapon of righteousness and discipline, dedicated to victory." The "dedication to victory" had

⁹ Baptismal Record, *PWP*, 1:30; Catherine Peare, *William Penn: A Biography* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956), 9.

¹⁰ Howard M. Jenkins, "The Family of William Penn," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 20, no. 1 (1896): 4, 8-10; John Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy* (New York: Pearson, 2007), 1.

disastrous results. Penn launched a failed attack on Hispaniola under the auspices of Cromwell's Western Design. After an aborted attempt to take Hispanola, Penn seized Jamaica, much to the displeasure of Cromwell.¹¹ His failures landed him in the Tower of London, from which he was eventually freed and retired to his land in Ireland before becoming a Member of Parliament, parlaying his popularity as a naval officer into a seat in the House of Commons as a representative from Weymouth.¹²

William Penn's mother, Margaret Jasper, was born in Rotterdam to the "opulent" merchant, John Jasper. Like Admiral Penn, Margaret grew up in a wealthy family; her father made his living as a merchant in the Dutch-English colony of Kilrush, County Clare, on the Atlantic coast of Ireland. Jasper married Nicasius Vanderschuren, a Dutch Merchant who died in 1640. One year later, in the wake of the Irish Rebellion of 1641, Margaret fled to England where she met Penn. The two married in June 1643.¹³ Unlike the Admiral, William Penn did not receive his education from his father, who was often absent due to his responsibilities to the Navy. Instead, Margaret assumed the task of educating Penn. Despite the fact that his father was frequently absent, Penn witnessed firsthand the influences of contemporary gender norms in the rare occasions that he *did* interact with his father. Admiral Penn believed it was his patriarchal duty to provide for

¹¹ Jenkins, "The Family of William Penn," 16-7; Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 3, 10-12; Peare, *William Penn*, 17-18; On William Penn and the Western Design, see John Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes: An Atlantic History of the English Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 233-6; Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution, 1640-1661* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 120.

¹² Peare, *William Penn*, 25.

¹³ Jenkins, "The Family of William Penn," 17; Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 4-5; Peare, *William Penn*, 11.

his family by taking care of them by providing them with financial securing and the requisites their lifestyle demanded, namely a country home, servants, and an education.¹⁴

The lack of a strong male influence prompted Admiral Penn to take a more active role in the management of his son's life. William was, after all, the heir to the reputation and lifestyle the Admiral built thanks to his exploits in the navy and the influential connections he formed during his life. When William went off to Oxford, the Admiral hoped his exposure to the "rowdies" would lead to stronger bonds with other men. Penn's entrance into Oxford corresponded with the Admiral receiving a knighthood from Charles II, and he felt this would be an ideal time for his son to escape the coddling he received from his mother and develop the "manner, mien, and finesse of a courtier and gentleman." By the time Penn converted to Quakerism in 1667, he had been well exposed to the distinctly gendered norms and expectations befitting a young man of his class.¹⁵

The gendered norms surrounding the Penn family played an important role in the structuring of seventeenth-century English society. Seventeenth-century England was predicated on a series of God-ordained hierarchies. Intended as a means of providing stability, this great chain of being was a system of ordering power and authority. Certain groups, like men or nobles, held positions of authority, while others, like women or servants, filled subordinate roles. In England, the ideally ordered family was one in which a responsible husband, along with the aid of his wife, guided and corrected erring

¹⁴ Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 7-8.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 19-20, 23. Moretta argues that Penn Jr. rejected his father's world in large part because of the time the Admiral spent away during his son's formative years. I hesitate to embrace this psychological analysis, in particular because the Admiral later returned to play an active role in his son's life. The influence he played on Penn's worldview, particularly contemporary norms of masculinity and patriarchy, will be evident throughout this chapter.

children and servants along the proper path of behavior and decorum.¹⁶ The family assumed such a prominent role in early modern conceptions of gender specifically because of its relationship to the state. During the early modern period, a patriarchal model of the household acted as a metaphor and a building block for the proper government of the state, as well as for a larger cosmic order.¹⁷ The family was a “domestic kingdom” where the father ruled over his family just as the King might rule over his subjects. Indeed, the model for the proper relationship of the family was the relationship that humans shared with God.

Within the nuclear family, wives were subject to the authority of their husbands. These relationships were reciprocal; while a patriarch was owed respect and obedience, they were given with the understanding that the man would perform duties on his own part. This can be seen in the Penn family, as the Admiral clearly believed it was his responsibility to provide financial security and material comfort for his wife and children. Both husband and wife were expected to work together in managing the household, but as Susan Amussen explains, “in spite of the obvious importance of the wife in running the household, her subjection to her husband, as well as her love and respect for him, were crucial to maintaining a godly, orderly household.”¹⁸

¹⁶ Susan Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1988), 95-6.

¹⁷ For a discussion of the relationship between the state and the family, see Amussen, *An Ordered Society*; Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination in England, 1500-1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Robert Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman Inc., 1998); Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580-1680* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University press, 1982); Allan Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 36.

¹⁸ Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, 41-2.

This conception of gender and the family had far-reaching consequences that spanned all of England as well as the Atlantic Ocean. As settlers moved across the Atlantic and encountered new peoples, they adapted the gendered hierarchy of the great chain of being to maintain order and stability. In the Chesapeake, the relatively low number of women settlers in proportion to the high number of male servants undermined the ability of patriarchs to maintain traditional English gender norms. Gender also shaped the way that “anxious patriarchs” constructed the racial hierarchies upon which Chesapeake slavery depended.¹⁹ Colonists in New England were influenced both by the gender roles articulated by Puritans like John Winthrop and a societal transition “from aristocratic feudalism to agrarian capitalism.”²⁰ Decades before Penn and other Quakers began formulating their own conceptions of gender, John Winthrop argued that “A man must lay upp for posterity, and he is worse than an Infidell that provideth not for his owne.”²¹ For Winthrop and other Puritans, women were “the weaker to resist; the more flexible, tender, and ready to yeeld.”²² When women like Anne Hutchinson challenged

¹⁹ Kathleen Brown, *Foul Bodies: Cleanliness in Early America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Kirsten Fischer, *Suspect Relations: Sex, Race, and Resistance in Colonial North Carolina* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

²⁰ Anne S. Lombard, *Making Manhood: Growing Up Male in Colonial New England* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 3.

²¹ John Winthrop, “A Modell of Christian Charity” (1630), quoted in Lombard, *Making Manhood*, 101. Also quoted in Daniel Vickers, *Farmers and Fishermen: Two Centuries of Work in Essex County, Massachusetts, 1630-1850* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 219-220.

²² John Winthrop, *A Short Story of the Rise, Reign, and Ruin of the Antinomians, Familists & Libertines that Infected the Churches of New-England* (London, 1644), preface. Puritan power structures and gender norms are also reinforced in captivity narratives. Steven Neuwirth argues that Mary Rowlandson’s narrative relies on a masculine voice to “draw on male constructions of virtuous femininity” while reinforcing “the Puritan Way.” See Steven Neuwirth, “Her Master’s Voice: Gender, Speech, and Gendered Speech in the Narrative of the Captivity of Mary White Rowlandson,” in Smith, ed., *Sex and Sexuality in Early America*, 57.

the male-dominated hierarchy in New England, elites were quick to cast her out and reinforce patriarchal authority.

Popular culture and social pressures laid out a set of expectations and qualities men and women were expected to follow. Literature, sermons, art, and conduct manuals all reflected the “proper” role for the sexes. At the center of these emergent conceptions of gender was the idea of self-regulation or self-moderation. In line with the patriarchal nature of English society, “submissiveness was central” to the expectations for women, whether that be as a wife or a daughter.²³ This submissiveness was part of a woman’s “necessary feminine Vertu.” A woman who overstepped her boundaries in “behaviour and Conversation” with men was, in theory, failing to regulate and moderate her behavior. Women were expected to “take Virtue and Prudence along with you for your Guard: Be Vigilant and Cautious, because in this you will have many Eyes upon you.”²⁴ Women contributed to the labor of the household, but in such a way that their actions were done in support of their husbands. Thomas Tusser, a seventeenth-century author of conduct manuals, explained the relationship between husbands and wives by stating that “Good husbands abroad, seeketh all well to have: Good housewives at home, seeketh all well to save. This having and saving, in place where they meet, make profit with pleasure such couples to greet.”²⁵ Women were idealized through their clothing, demeanor, and the tools of a dutiful housewife; they were expected to maintain a calm, rational demeanor

²³ Amussen, *An Ordered Society*, 120.

²⁴ *The Whole Duty of a Woman: or, a Guide to the Female Sex from the age of Sixteent o Sixty*, 2nd ed. (London, 1696), 4-5, 44; see also, Richard Allestree, *The Ladies Calling in Two Parts* (London, 1673).

²⁵ Thomas Tusser, *A Hundreth Good Points of Husbandrie* (London, 1557) quoted in Susan Cahn, *Industry and Devotion: The Transformation of Women’s Work in England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 89.

and act in such a way as to uphold the honor of the household through their own virtue and modesty.²⁶

Conduct literature articulated a standard of behavior and decorum for men and women. Individuals often found ways to adjust these idealized standards to fit the realities of their day-to-day lives. Despite the overly idealized nature of conduct manuals, they underscored the important role gendered notions of self-regulation and modesty played in English life. This was due, in large part, to the fact that gender served as a lens through which a man or woman's self-worth was assessed. Social class did not limit such evaluations, either, as individuals were evaluated regardless of their rank or wealth.²⁷ For men, though, notions of self-regulation were even more important. Conduct literature stressed the need for men to conquer their passions, contending that men waged a constant battle for self-mastery: "Man's differing motions are the jar in question. The Combatants are *Passion*, and *Discretion*: Each striving to be chiefe in the desire."²⁸ A man was expected to "governe his wife, and maintaine her" while keeping authority within the household through wisdom and love.²⁹ An inability to obtain mastery over the

²⁶ Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 26.

²⁷ For a wonderful example of the ways in which English society evaluated and judged the self-worth of individuals, see Alexandra Shepard, *Accounting for Oneself: Worth, Status, and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

²⁸ Edward Calver, *The Foure Ages of Man* (London, 1635), title page. For a specific discussion of manliness and masculinity in early modern England, see Michelle Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Michele Cohen and Tim Hitchcock, eds., *English Masculinities, 1660-1800* (London: Longman, 1999); Elizabeth Foyster, "Male Honour, Social Control, and Wife Beating in Late Stuart England," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6, no. 6 (1996): 215-224; Alexandra Shepard, "Manhood, Credit, and Patriarchy in Early Modern England c. 1580-1640," *Past and Present* 167 (2000): 75-106; *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

passions of the heart prevented men from carrying out their duties as masters of the home and patriarchs of their family. If men did not stabilize the household, they failed in one of their most basic responsibilities.

The most important aspect of manliness in the seventeenth century was the idea of male honor, or credit. Credit referred to a man's reputation, which was essentially a composite of social and cultural appraisals incorporating a wide spectrum of definitions ranging from chastity to plain dealing.³⁰ Inherent to the notion of man's credit was the inseparable link between a man's honor in the eyes of his peers and his ability to achieve financial success and economic independence. John Dod and Robert Cleaver, both nonconforming Puritans, discuss the economic function of men in *A Godlie Forme of Householde Government* when they posit that:

The dutie of the Husband is to get goods: and of the Wife to gather them together, and saue them. The dutie of the Husband is to travell abroad, to seeke living: and the Wives dutie is to keepe the house. The dutie of the Husband is to get money and provision: and of the Wives, not vainely to spend it. The dutie of the Husband is to deal with many men: and of the Wives to talke with few... It is to be noted, and noted againe, that as the provision of [the] household dependeth onely on the Husband.³¹

For a man to fail as a provider was to invite the denigration of his character. Men unable to pay off their debts or earn enough money to support their families were seen as

²⁹ William Whately, *A Bride-Bush: or, a Direction for Married Persons* (London, 1619), 97; A man's legitimacy within the household was rooted in his ability to achieve self-mastery and act with reason. See Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England*, 30.

³⁰ Shepard, "Manhood, Credit, and Patriarchy," 77. Elizabeth Foyster describes credit as the link between a man's "private" behavior and his fortune in the "public" sphere. She notes, "A man's word had to be his bond if this economic system was to work. At each transaction a judgment of the man's trustworthiness had to be made, and evidence suggests that this was usually based on an assessment of his moral worth." See Elizabeth Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex, and Marriage* (London: Longman, 1999), 7.

³¹ John Dod and Robert Cleaver, *A Godlie Forme of Householde Government: For the Ordering of Private Families, According to the Direction of Gods Word* (London, 1612), 167-8.

untrustworthy, dangerous, and unmanly. Certain professions were emphasized in conduct literature, particularly “some trade or craft to live by” that could be self-sustaining for men. A man’s ability to provide for his family was seen in a yeoman’s ability to plow the land, a craftsman’s talents molding raw materials, or a merchant’s network of trade and exchange.³²

For young boys looking to become men, achieving economic self-sufficiency was an important part of their maturation. From an early age, boys were expected to mature into well-tempered men who conquered their impulses and achieved self-mastery. The expectations of upper-class society expected men’s speech, for example, to be “bee so reasoned, as it may relish discretion: rather learne the art of silence, than to incurre the opinion of rashnesse.”³³ Male youths were traditionally seen as troublesome and hyperactive due to a surfeit of vitality. This excess was something men had to overcome in order to achieve the constancy and moderation attributed to proper manhood.³⁴ The excessive influence of mothers and their tendency to smother their sons was frequently deemed the primary cause in preventing young boys and men from achieving self-mastery. According to many, mothers too frequently diverted the attention of their sons away from “serious and proper education” by spoiling them and setting them up for “future depravity.” In order to counteract this feminine influence, wealthy young men would go on a “grand tour,” often seen as an opportunity for these boys to gain independence as part of their coming of age. Such a grand tour would expose men to

³² Ibid., 350; Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs*, 26.

³³ Richard Braithwaite, *The English Gentleman and the English Gentlewoman* (London, 1641), 22.

³⁴ Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 24, 56.

polite society—usually that of the French court—and remove them from the “effeminating influence of his mother.”³⁵

Admiral Penn hoped that his son’s experience at Oxford would result in him picking up many of the manly qualities the Admiral desired in his son. This did not prove to be the case. Early in his education at Oxford, Penn began associating with religious nonconformists like John Owen, the deposed Dean of Christ Church, attending unauthorized worship services, and listening to the itinerant Quaker, Thomas Loe. Penn was expelled in 1662, in large part thanks to his participation in a riot alongside Robert Spencer, the future Earl of Sunderland. After his expulsion, Penn was sent on his own grand tour until 1664 when he returned to England. Penn’s tour included a stay at the French Protestant Academy at Saumur.³⁶ Penn’s excursions to Paris certainly influenced his actions, as he adopted the attire and mannerisms of gentlemen. As his father hoped, Penn became a frequent visitor at Court, where his contemporary, Samuel Pepys, observed his actions. Pepys, who was not a friend of the Penn family, having a particularly sour opinion of Admiral Penn, observed the younger Penn’s “vanity of French garbe and affected manner of speech and gait.” Pepys also noted that Penn had a tendency to make social visits to Pepys’ wife, something Pepys found quite irksome.³⁷ Such irritation was not without merit, as Pepys’ wife observed how Penn was “a most

³⁵ Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity*, 52-3. It is again worth noting that Admiral Penn attributed many of his son’s less “desirable” attributes to the influence of his mother. Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 7-8.

³⁶ Melvin Endy, *William Penn and Early Quakerism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 97-100.

³⁷ Quoted in *PWP*, 1:33. Also quoted in Peare, *William Penn*, 43.

[modest] person, grown a fine gentleman.”³⁸ By 1665, Penn attempted to return to school, enrolling in a program in legal studies at Lincoln’s Inn, but the arrival of the Plague in London halted his studies.³⁹ Instead of returning to Lincoln’s Inn, Penn finally followed the guidance of the Admiral and began engaging with the court, where he often “hastened to Whitehall where not finding the King upp, I presented my selfe to My Lord [of] Arlington, and Coll. Ashbournham.”⁴⁰

An important part of the seventeenth-century man was his ability to manage the family. Part of this meant carrying on a successful business that provided the financial necessities for the family to continue living the life to which they were accustomed. For Penn, this meant taking on the family business of estate management. More specifically, it meant relocating to Ireland. The Penn family first forged ties to Ireland after Admiral Penn’s brief stay in the Tower of London. Distraught over his failed efforts in the Western Design, the Admiral chose self-exile to Macroom, his recently acquired manor twenty miles west of Cork.⁴¹ Penn moved to Ireland in January 1666, where he learned “how to manage an estate, delegate work graciously to those of lower caste, and become skilled with a sword so that he could defend himself in a quarrel or against highwaymen.”

³⁸ Quoted in Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 26.

³⁹ Endy, *William Penn and Early Quakerism*, 100-1.

⁴⁰ William Penn to William Penn Sr., May 6, 1665, *PWP*, 1:34-5. Lord Arlington refers to Henry Bennet, who created the first Earl of Arlington in 1663 and was principal Secretary of State at the time of Penn’s letter. “Coll Ashbournham” was John Ashburnham, the Groom of the Bedchamber to Charles II.

⁴¹ Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 10-13. Penn was arrested alongside General Robert Venables, though the justification is debatable. Despite the boon England received in capturing Jamaica, Penn and Venables were both arrested. Penn later petitioned the Lord Protector and his Council for restitution for damages done to Margaret’s estate in Ireland during the 1641 rebellion. His wife’s land was returned to him, along with 300 additional acres and a castle garrison. Such gains were part of Cromwell’s 1652 Act of Settlement, passed in part to reward Penn and others for their services to the Commonwealth. See also, Peare, *William Penn*, 18-19.

It was clear to Penn what “kind of man his father wanted him to be,” and his experiences in Ireland were meant to cultivate these values.⁴² Penn received frequent instructions from his father pertaining to account or estate management. It was not uncommon for the Admiral to write Penn concerning the account of one of their tenants, thus imparting to Penn the importance of caring for the welfare of dependents. Penn, for example, was responsible for accounts, like that of William Toringham, who required of Penn “valuation thereof [his estate] and what allso tends to his information.” Penn was expected to “give him an account thereof as speedily as you can.”⁴³ His management of the family property in Ireland was part of an English legacy of colonialism in Ireland. Penn’s experience there would prove very useful for shaping his views on colonization, his conception of his patriarchal responsibilities overseeing his tenants, and his belief in the need for a strong and moral ruling elite.⁴⁴

Penn converted to Quakerism while managing his father’s estate in Ireland. Once again captivated by Loe’s preaching, Penn felt drawn to a religion that “questioned not,

⁴² Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 13; Mary Maples Dunn, “The Personality of William Penn,” in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Mary Maples and Richard Dunn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 5.

⁴³ Sir William Penn to William Penn Jr., January 8, 1666, Forbes Collection Volume I circa 1666-1772, NB-007, Penn Family Papers (Collection 0485A), HSP.

⁴⁴ Settlement of Ireland was part of the “Westward Enterprise” and began in the middle of the sixteenth century and proceeded for nearly a century before Irish uprisings shifted the English focus across the Atlantic. Many English elites saw Ireland as a place that “relieved the colonial regime of encumbering social forms unsuited to its purposes.” Additionally, elites saw it as a place where they “could exploit the wealth and the labor of the country with a minimum of interference or embarrassment.” See Theodore Allen, *The Invention of the White Race Volume One: Racial Oppression and Social Control* (New York: Verso, 1994), 52; Andrew Hadfield, “Irish Colonies and the Americas,” in *Envisioning an English Empire: Jamestown and the Making of the North Atlantic World*, ed. Robert Appelbaum and John Wood Sweet (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 174.

judged not, and asked for itself no degree or rank.”⁴⁵ In many ways, Penn’s conversion to Quakerism reinforced his conceptions of proper male comportment. His father had long urged Penn to embrace self-mastery and modesty, telling his son “I can say nothing but advise to sobriety, and all those things that will speak you a Christian and a gentleman, which prudence may make to have the best consistency.”⁴⁶ Such advice was essential to Penn as both the manager of his family’s Irish estates and as a man living in seventeenth-century England. Self-control was one of the most important parts of a man’s reputation—his credit—and without the mastery of their impulses a man’s claim to authority was not taken seriously. Without the ability to speak honestly in business dealings or maintain control, “The Master’s Vices seldome miss to be taken up by the whole House.”⁴⁷ For men in the seventeenth century, allowing one’s vices to corrupt their family represented a significant failure. Penn struggled to make this transition towards a self-regulated man. He questioned his future in private notes and personal writings during his time at Oxford and while abroad. The poem “Ah Tyrant Lust” reveals how Penn “manifested signs of a deep uncertainty over the proper course for his life.” In the poem, which he wrote in 1664, Penn reflects on the external threats that hindered a man’s attempts to calm his heart and conquer his impulses. He writes, “Heavens power is the Souls Coate of male. And feed midst [Christs Dear] sheep on mountains high, above the

⁴⁵ Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 33; Hugh Barbour, “The Young Controversialist,” in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Dunn and Dunn, 23; Endy, *William Penn and Early Quakerism*, 101.

⁴⁶ Sir William Penn to William Penn Jr., July 17, 1666, *PWP*, 1:42.

⁴⁷ Richard Allestree, *The Gentleman’s Calling* (London, 1660), 124.

world & all its vanity.”⁴⁸ “Ah Tyrant Lust” revealed Penn’s growing concerns over his abilities as a provider and an economically self-sufficient individual. It reflected a meandering lifestyle born from a lack of purpose. Such anxieties lessened with his religious awakening. Penn found the answers to his queries’ in the Quaker faith, as well as a system that reinforced his core convictions about gender and the way a godly patriarch should act. Specifically, Quakerism reinforced Penn’s beliefs on the importance of self-mastery, the inextricable links between manhood, industriousness, and profit, and the powerful way these gendered social constructs could be used to order a society.

The Origins of Quakerism

Quakerism emerged during the 1650s in the East Midlands of England during the tumults of the English Revolution. One of the most notable byproducts of the Revolution was an outpouring of religious dissent. Several groups of religious nonconformists were borne out of the Revolution, including the Levellers, Ranters, Diggers, and Fifth Monarchists. These groups openly challenged longstanding religious authority in England. The Revolution also loosened controls on speech, printing, and the ways of worship, allowing dissenters to spread their religious beliefs and attract new followers. The opening of free speech allowed for “speculation about the end of the present age of the world and the coming reign of Christ, and the practical political consequences of this, for theology and politics were not separate in most people’s minds.” This preoccupation with the end times coincided with a sectarian belief in social equality.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ William Penn, “Ah Tyrant Lust,” *PWP*, 1:32-3.

⁴⁹ Rosemary Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences: Early Quakers in Britain, 1646-1666* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 3-4; See also, Richard Bailey, *New Light on*

Quakerism grew out of the nonconformist sects born from the Revolution.

Many of the foundational tenets of Quakerism were borrowed and adapted from other religious groups. Early Quakers adopted some of the ideas of radical Puritans in terms of how they viewed religious authority, the roles of sacraments and clergy, and the power of the Spirit. Baptists and Anabaptists influenced Quaker rejection of predestination and infant baptism, as well as the embrace of simple dress. Groups like the Seekers, who separated from parish ministries, instead opting for “do-it-yourself bodies led by local men, or even women,” preceded the Quakers’ own reliance on individual worship. While no exact records exist, the origins of Quakerism are attributed to George Fox; whose *Short Journal* first indicates organized meetings of “Friends.” Between 1647 and 1649, the East Midlands saw a growing number of Friends, who like the Seekers, eschewed ordained ministers or prescribed rituals. By 1652, Fox had settled at Swarthmoor and was joined by Margaret Fell, James Nayler, George Whitehead, and others.⁵⁰

George Fox and Early Quakerism: The Making and Unmaking of a God (San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992), 2.; Sarah Crabtree, *Holy Nation: The Transatlantic Quaker Ministry in an Age of Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 11; Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 17-19. For a longer discussion of the religious radicalism of the Revolution, see Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution* (New York: Penguin Books, 1975).

⁵⁰ Hugh Barbour and J. William Frost, *The Quakers* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 4-5; Moore, *The Light in The Consciences*, 4-5, 60-1; Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 19-20. Although Quakers did look for the coming of the Kingdom of the Lord, they were not millenarian. I will follow Rosemary Moore’s argument that “It is not possible to draw a clear line between the early Quaker and Fifth Monarchist teaching, for both emphasized the part that the saints would play in the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ upon earth, and shared many common radical ideas... Quakers were not, technically, millenarian, if that word is used in its exact sense, waiting for a thousand-year reign of Christ before the final judgment. Quakers generally describe the coming end of the age in the language of Old Testament prophets combined with the less specific texts from the Book of Revelation, and they showed no great interest in the exact fulfillment of obscure prophecies.” While the Fifth Monarchists were not technically millenarians, either, if we define millenarianism as waiting for the thousand-year reign of Christ, the Fifth Monarchists, differed from the Quakers in that they actively produced political blueprints for Christ’s reign. Christopher Hill notes, for example, that the Fifth Monarchists “expected the direct intervention of King Jesus in English politics to bring about the effects which democratic political methods had failed to achieve.” See Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 72. For a longer discussion of the Fifth

Quaker theology was rooted in a rejection of hierarchy. They spurned vanity, spoke out against vice, and tried to avoid war and conflict. Like the Baptists or Independents, Quakers believed the Bible could only be understood by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Central to this was the belief that all individuals held a fraction of Christ's essence within themselves, thus rendering unnecessary the religious authorities central to Catholic or Anglican churches. All individuals had the ability to communicate with God through their own internal reflections. In this regard, the Quaker movement was "both universalist (all could be saved) and individualist (each person could arrive at truth independently)." The absence of a formalized church structure, formal prayer books, or set liturgy resonated with many who were left unsettled by the tumults of civil wars, regicide, and religious upheaval. Some Quakers even saw these turbulent times as signs of the end of the world.⁵¹

The Quaker's break from the Anglican tradition also included the treatment of women. Unlike Anglicanism, which barred women from positions of authority within the church, Quakers embraced "the shared aspect of God contained within each human." Fox and other Quakers noted how men and women were both created in the image of God, and the subjugation of women did not reflect God's vision for an ordered world.⁵² This attitude afforded women greater opportunities to play active roles in developing and

Monarchists, see John Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes: An Atlantic History of the English Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

⁵¹ Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution, 1640-1661* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 130-1. See Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences*, 52; Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 20-1.

⁵² Rebecca Larson, *Daughters of Light: Quaker Women Preaching and Prophesying in the Colonies and Abroad, 1700-1775* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 20-1.

spreading Quakerism. While women were still expected to “look into their own selves and families, and to look to the training up of their children,” they were not limited to domestic roles.⁵³ They organized separate women’s meetings, cared for orphans, and managed poor relief. Quaker women challenged longstanding prejudices against women speaking publicly. They were active participants in a transatlantic network of itinerant preachers, and their contributions were essential in helping spread Quakerism throughout the colonies.

While on the surface this appears to be a rejection of contemporary gender constructs, tensions existed between the theology of Quakerism and the practice of beliefs. Despite the autonomy granted to women, egalitarianism between the sexes ended outside the meetinghouse. Quakers still adhered to a strict patriarchal structure within the family and frequently followed hierarchies based on wealth and status. Additionally, Quaker doctrine reflected expectations of men and women found in seventeenth-century literature. This was particularly problematic for men who frequently struggled to remain plain in their lifestyles while still pursuing their goals of wealth and success in business.

Central to Quaker efforts at self-moderation and the organization of their regular meetings was the idea behind gospel order. In the case of this dissertation, Gospel order is defined as a discourse that regulates and shapes Quaker identity. Gospel order clarified specific points in Quaker theology, addressed theological practices, and promoted piety and discipline. Gospel order was also a method of discipline for Quaker individuals and households. As Michael Goode notes, gospel order “began as a response to a need to impose order and coherence in the Quaker movement” and took shape as a distinctly

⁵³ George Fox, *Epistle 320*, quoted in Larson, *Daughters of Light*, 31.

gendered notion of government “rooted in family and household harmony.” The regulation of meetings, organized around monthly, quarterly, and yearly meetings, was part of gospel order. In these meetings, Quakers addressed issues of discipline, marriage, and sexuality. Gospel order also offered a means of punishment for Quakers deemed troublesome while providing a template for “disowning,” or expelling, those who were found guilty of violating Quaker discipline and failing to follow the path toward reconciliation laid out by the monthly meeting. Above all, gospel order provided Quakers a template for moral behavior and a means of avoiding the external pressures of day-to-day life in England that threatened to undo everything the Quakers worked to establish.⁵⁴

While Quakers viewed men and women as religiously equal, Gospel Order and the specific practices within the faith still reflected contemporary notions of patriarchy. Despite women playing active roles within the Quaker church, leaders like Fox still invoked the language of the family and the idea of the patriarch. Fox saw Quakers as part of an extended household, calling for Quakers to be “as one family, building up one another, and helping one another.”⁵⁵ Men still controlled the movement and exerted most authority within the meetings. In fact, Fox warned against situations where women might “usurp Authority over the man.” He explained that women were expected to “keep

⁵⁴ The concept of gospel order as used in this dissertation is still a relatively new concept. I am drawing heavily from the work of Michael Goode and John Smolenski. See Goode, “Gospel Order among Friends,” 14-17; Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 29-33. See also, Crabtree, *Holy Nation*, 13; Jordan Landes, *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World: The Creation of an Early Modern Community* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), chapter 1. Both Crabtree and Jordan Landes note that gospel order was used largely to tie together Quakers throughout the British Atlantic.

⁵⁵ George Fox, “To Friends, to take care of such, who suffer for owning truth,” in *A Collection of Many Select and Christian Epistles* (Philadelphia, 1831), 1:117; Goode, “Gospel Order among Friends,” 17.

silence in the Church.”⁵⁶ In other instances, Quakers used the notion of womanhood as an insult. Priscilla Cotton and Mary Cole, two early Quakers, echoed Fox’s assertion that “Women must not speak in a Church.” Those who incorrectly interpreted scripture or used the Bible misleadingly were accused of being women. Cole and Cotton argued that in these cases, “you yourselves are the women, that are forbidden to speak in the Church.” In interpreting 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, the topic of their tract, *The Woman Learning in Silence*, Cole and Cotton posit that Saint Paul was not instructing *women* to be silent. Rather, he was advocating for spiritually weak individuals to remain quiet, which Cole and Cotton use to contend that effeminacy and womanhood were more about strength of spirit than any anatomical issues.⁵⁷

The discourse of effeminacy was also linked to a religious discourse deriding unrestrained passions and a lack of mastery. To be called effeminate was to be accused of “vanity, decadence, and luxury, all of which might be seen as self-centered, in contrast with true manliness, which involved consideration for others.”⁵⁸ Fears of vanity and decadence were particularly important for Quakers. Early Quakers like Edward Burrough denounced the effeminacy of “covetous men” by criticizing the way they “live in pride, in lust, & in vanity & their own wills.” William Penn also spoke out against effeminacy

⁵⁶ George Fox, *The Woman Learning in Silence: Or, the Myserie of the Woman’s Subjection to her Husband* (London, 1655), 1; Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 265-304.

⁵⁷ Mary Cole and Priscilla Cotton, *To the Priests and People of England, We Discharge our Consciences, and Given them Warning* (London, 1655), 7-8; Moore, *The Light in their Consciences*, 57.

⁵⁸ Jeremy Gregory, “Homo Religiosus: Masculinity and Religion in the Long Eighteenth Century,” in *English Masculinities*, 94. Gregory explains the use of effeminacy by noting that it “should not be confused with present-day connotations. The ‘effeminate male’ in this literature was not associated overtly with homosexuality so much as with vanity, decadence and luxury, all of which might be seen as self-centered, in contrast with true manliness which involved consideration for others.”

and vanity. Penn frequently urged Quakers to ensure their work had worth and value, that by shunning decadence “you shall enjoy Eternal Rest after all your Labours.” He denigrated those who “adore Images, consume many thousands and millions in building, carving, and painting outward Temples, whilst thousands of poor Families languished through extream poverty.” In letters to his family, Penn warned against “vain acts & Inventions of a Luxurious World.” Ultimately, like the Romans, Penn worried that England had “addicted themselves to Pleasure and Effeminacy,” and as a result had “debas’d their Spirits and debauch’d their Morals, from whence Ruine did never fail to follow any People.” Penn noted that “Vanity abuses the Reason of Just Respect; for True Quality, if plain, is not to be known among Fine Cloths,” and those who become too obsessed with vain attire, “[beget] Pride: They think themselves some Body, if they are Fine; Plain Cloths must give them the Way and the Wall, and keep due Distance too. It introduces Effeminacy, and excites to Wantonness.”⁵⁹ Concerns about the negative impact of effeminacy remained a persistent issue throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth century.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Edward Burrough, *The Truth Defended, Or Certain Accusations Answered* (London, 1656), 6-8; William Penn, *The Harmony of the Divine and Heavenly Doctrine*, 3rd ed. (London, 1795), 78-9; *The Truth Exalted in a Short, but Sure Testimony Against all those Religions, Faiths, and Worshipps that have been formed and followed in the Darkness of Apostacy* (London, 1668), 5; William Penn to his Wife and Children, June 4, 1682, Miscellaneous Franklin Materials, Part 13, Benjamin Franklin Papers (Mss.B.F85), American Philosophical Society (Hereafter cited as APS); William Penn, *A Brief Account of the Province of Pennsylvania Lately Granted by the King, Under the Great Seal of England* (London, 1681), 2; *An Address to Protestants of all Perswasions: More Especially the Magistacy and Clergy, For the Promotion of Virtue and Charity*, 2nd ed. (London, 1692), 10-11.

⁶⁰ For an example, see John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*, 7th ed. (London, 1758), 66-7. Brown writes, “we may with truth and Candour conclude, that the ruling Character of the present times is that of a vain, luxurious, and selfish EFFEMINACY.” Brown’s writings echo many of the concerns voiced by Penn. Brown is quoted in Gregory, “Homo Religiousus,” in *English Masculinities*, 94.

The Problems of Quakerism, Manhood, and Business

The emphasis on self-moderation and master of the impulses were reflected in Quaker views on fair business practices. For Quakers, their desire to be good, upstanding men reflected a gendered approach to profit seeking and industriousness. Part of this intimate link is due to the ways in which Quakerism addressed economic growth and profit. Fox, the son of a weaver and former shoemaker's apprentice, spent four years as a poor itinerant preacher wandering England. As he was reliant on the charity of others, Fox was acutely aware of the importance of supporting the burgeoning religious sect financially.⁶¹ When the Quakers relocated to Swarthmoor, they quickly built a strong financial network. Local residents and friends made donations to help the Quakers remain financially stable during their early years. Many of the first converts to Quakerism were drawn from the middling classes. Few were extremely poor and few were of the gentry. Most were literate individuals with skills as artisans, traders, yeomen, and husbandmen.⁶² Quakers knew economic self-sufficiency was essential to the success of their faith. By amassing wealth, Quakers would be laying the foundation for a long-lasting and viable religious body that would survive any challenges they might face. Yet, as time progressed, Quakers encountered challenges in balancing their notion of how well regulated men should act when engaging in business transactions. The insistence on making money complicated their Universalist and gospel order discourse, as would become evident as

⁶¹ Bailey, *New Light on George Fox and Early Quakerism*, xiv; My account of the links between Quakerism and money is borrow from James Walvin, *The Quakers: Money and Morals* (London: John Murray, 1997). For other accounts of the connection between Quakers and the pursuit of profits, see Douglas Gwyn, *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the Rise of Capitalism* (Wallingford: Pendle Hill Publications, 1995); Frederick Tolles, *The Meeting House and the Counting House: the Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682-1763* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1963).

⁶² Walvin, *The Quakers*, 12-13.

Penn moved towards the founding of Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania was founded at the exact moment when England's capitalist transformation was becoming Atlantic in its scope, making it difficult to achieve self-mastery while simultaneously attempting to maximize profits.

Fox and his associates mirrored society's calls for self-mastery and regulation as they expanded their business ventures. From an early age, Quakers emphasized the importance of achieving self-regulation and modesty when pursuing a career. As James Walvin notes, "apprenticeships in shopkeeping and commerce allowed boys from rural yeoman backgrounds to settle into urban mercantile trades and professions." These boys were worked hard and their masters stressed the importance of mastering the self at an age far younger than the rest of English society. Frequent warnings were issued against the temptation of vice, gambling, or other worldly pursuits, as these would lead to effeminacy and undermine their maturation into young men capable of mastering their impulses.⁶³ In particular, young men were taught that honorable men earned a good reputation and reinforced positive notions of male credit by engaging in honorable business practices. Friends were encouraged to "take care to keep to truth and plainness, in language, habit, deportment, and heaviour... and to avoid pride and immodesty in apparel."⁶⁴ Any Quaker entering into a business venture was instructed not to "launch into trading and worldly business beyond what they can manage honourably and with reputation; so that they may keep their words with all men."⁶⁵

⁶³ Ibid., 49-51.

⁶⁴ *Quaker Faith and Practice*, 20.28, quoted in Wavlin, *The Quakers*, 31.

Quaker piety often fit hand in glove with the ambitious pursuit of capital. Yet, it was a complicated relationship as many of the more radical Quakers criticized the widespread acceptance of capitalistic pursuits. Despite these criticisms, the majority of Quakers embraced the importance of maintaining an industrious and hardworking lifestyle. What they did concern themselves with was the dangers of pursuing exploitative business practices driven by excessive greed or the pressure of mounting debt. Shortly before his death, Fox warned Quakers of those “who embrace the present world and encumber themselves with their own businesses and neglect the Lord’s and so are good for nothing,” while Stephen Crisp complained of the “too eager and greedy pursuit after the things of this world.”⁶⁶ This was a real and present concern, one that posed a dangerous balancing act for Quakers. They frequently faced attacks from outsiders who made the claim that Quakers abandoned their beliefs in plain dealing, credit, and a rejection of excess in the name of profit. One anti-Quaker writer contended that “Quakers at first left their Houses and Families, to run about and Preach: and cry’d down Riches when they had none; yet since that time, they have Grip’d Mammon as hard as any of their Neighbours; and now call Riches a Gift and Blessing from God.”⁶⁷ Avoiding the temptation of excessive wealth was complicated as Quakers became increasingly linked to British overseas trade. The more goods available to Quakers, the harder they had to work to avoid falling victim to temptation and luxury. The temptation of luxury was a

⁶⁵ *Extracts from the Minutes and Advices of the Yearly Meeting of Friends held in London* (London, 1802), 195.

⁶⁶ Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 327, 437.

⁶⁷ Charles Leslie, *The Snake in the Grass, or, Satan Transform’d into an Angel of Light* 3rd ed. (London, 1698), xvi.

contentious point for early Quakers. Both George Fox and Robert Barclay spoke out against the threat posed by luxury. In fact, it was through these debates over the proper role of material goods that the Quaker embrace of plain dress emerged. By embracing simplicity, Quakers hoped to ward off “unlawful violations of superfluity.”⁶⁸ Quakers would come to wrestle with their views on luxury and their relationship to the material world well throughout the eighteenth century, but in the context of their formative years, efforts at avoiding unnecessary luxury often failed.

William Penn’s experience as a Quaker best personifies the confluence of theological, gendered, and practical realities young Quakers faced when engaging in economic pursuits. Penn’s own conversion to Quakerism in 1667 placed him between two realms.⁶⁹ On one hand, he was a man of power and privilege; a well-traveled member of the gentry class with a reputation for charming women. On the other hand, Penn was a religious dissenter dating back even to his days at Oxford, when his protest against the prayer book and Catholic ritual resulted in his expulsion from the university. Penn’s conversion to Quakerism was not well received by his father, leading to a strained relationship between the two.⁷⁰ Penn was cognizant of how his conversion would be received. In a letter to his father shortly after his conversion, he wrote that he feared “that Words may create Wrath, & that Reasons or Citations, though most true in themselves

⁶⁸ Ross E. Martinie Eiler, “Luxury, Capitalism, and the Quaker Reformation, 1737-1798,” *Quaker History* 97, no. 1 (2008): 12-16.

⁶⁹ For information on Penn’s conversion, see *PWP*, 1:59; Endy, *William Penn and Early Quakerism*, 93-108; Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 33; Peare, *William Penn*, 52-66.

⁷⁰ Mary Maples Dunn, “The Personality of William Penn,” in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Dunn and Dunn; See also, Mary Maples Dunn, *William Penn: Politics and Conscience* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967); Endy, *William Penn and Early Quakerism*.

may lose much of their native force, & usual success.”⁷¹ While traveling in Holland, Penn described his family’s reactions in his journal, noting “the displeasure of my parents.”⁷² The tension between father and son grew so great that Admiral Penn asked his son to “pack his clothes and remove them and himself from the house,” and accounts from men like Sir John Robinson, Lieutenant of the Tower of London, describe “much shouting” from the younger Penn’s room in the Tower when the Admiral came to visit.⁷³

Penn’s conversion to Quakerism was to the fiscal benefit of Quakers thanks to his wealth, connections, and talent as an intellectual and a writer. From the outset, Penn immersed himself in the world of the Quakers and quickly became an outspoken advocate for Quaker rights and a leading Quaker theologian. Penn saw Quakerism as standing on the precipice of a millenarian moment.⁷⁴ In advocating for Quakerism he frequently invoked gendered language, particularly the idea of self-mastery, industriousness, and credit. Self-mastery, in particular, became a staple of his writings, as he frequently warned against the dangers of excess, which would invite in the “Sin, Pomp, & vain Fashions of this World... which stains, & brings down the Pride of all Flesh.”⁷⁵ Penn did not shy away from casting this theological battle in extreme terms, as followers

⁷¹ William Penn Jr. to William Penn Sr., 1668, *PWP*, 1:60.

⁷² William Penn, *An Account of my Journey into Holland & Germany*, September 13, 1677, *PWP*, 1:477.

⁷³ Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 51; Peare, *William Penn*, 65.

⁷⁴ Please refer to footnote 50 for a discussion of Quakerism and millenarian thought.

⁷⁵ William Penn, *The Two Kingdoms of Darkness and Light* (London, 1668), *PWP*, 1:67.

of Catholicism were associating with individuals who represented a “Cruel, Persecuting, Whipping, Racking, Inquisition, Murdering Spirit.”⁷⁶

Like other Quakers, Penn saw the lust for money as one of the greatest dangers he and his brethren faced. “Gold is the God, the wife, the friend, of the money-monger of the world,” he argued, for it swayed man’s gaze away from honoring God and put him in a position where he would engage in dishonorable business practices in pursuit of money.⁷⁷ Greed was broadly defined and included “desiring of unlawful things, unlawfully desiring of lawful things, and hoarding up or unprofitably withholding the benefit of something from the relief of private persons or the public.”⁷⁸ Quakers placed such an emphasis on the importance of honesty and plain dealing that to unlawfully seek out personal gain was to violate the core tenets of their faith. The unbridled pursuit of financial gain contradicted the dictates laid out by the London meeting and ignored the warnings articulated by Fox and others. Penn cautioned Quakers to remain fixed on their own lives, believing they should be focused on “pursuing our own Business, with Moderation, instead of meddling with other People’s Unnecessarily.”⁷⁹ Such an action would not only be unmanly because it represented an inability to exhibit self-mastery, but it harmed a

⁷⁶ William Penn, *The Truth Exalted: In a Short, but Sure Testimony Against All Those Religions, Faiths, and Worships That Have Been Formed and Followed in the Darkness of Apostacy* (London, 1668), 6.

⁷⁷ William Penn, *Fruits of Solitude: Reflections and Maxims Relating to the Conduct of Human Life*, 11th ed. (Chicago: The Lakeside Press, 1906), 34.

⁷⁸ William Penn, *No Cross, No Crown: A Discourse Shewing the Nature and Discipline of the Holy Cross of Christ* (Philadelphia: T.K. and P.G. Collins, 1853), 170–172.

⁷⁹ William Penn, *A Brief Account of the Rise and Progress of the People Called Quakers*, 5th ed. (London, 1748), 108.

man's reputation. Credit was drawn not just from one's ability to earn a profit, but also through public perception that one did so honestly.

Penn also followed a long tradition of conduct literature for how men (and women) should live. While always framed in a religious context, these documents reinforce the notion that Quakers, despite an egalitarian approach to church practice, embraced many of the gendered notions of patriarchy found throughout the rest of England. Penn believed that God granted all individuals a talent. That talent might differ from person to person, but every man or woman would possess some skill. But in order for that talent to be realized, that skill "like sheep and goats, depends upon their improving." Penn believed "a man will be better rewarded if he does more with fewer talents than if he is granted many talents by God but only improves them slightly."⁸⁰ He stressed the idea that hard work and good credit carried a reward in the afterlife as well as a tangible, financial reward, averring that "Be not deceived, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap."⁸¹ In order to mature physically and spiritually men needed to commit themselves to labor. He described how it would be beneficial not just for the food it would reap, but "for physic," it would be "good for any mind" and protect men from "the fruits of idleness." According to Penn, idleness shortened a man's lifespan; it left him malnourished and unfit for physical exertion. Idleness was a plague that infected the body

⁸⁰ *The Christian-Quaker, and his Divine Testimony, Stated and Vindicated, from Scripture, Reason, and Authority*, in William Penn, *A Collection of the Works of William Penn* (London, 1726), 1:537 (Hereafter cited as *Works*).

⁸¹ William Penn, *The Sandy Foundation Shaken: Or, Those so Generally Believed and Applauded Doctrines* (London, 1668), 27.

leaving it “rank and foul, lazy and scurbutic.” Without honest labor, a man became corrupted; he became less of a man.⁸²

Penn saw the independence of Quakers as their greatest strength and completely consistent with the gendered emphasis on a man controlling his own personal autonomy. He lauded George Fox for being “a Discerner of other’s Spirit, and very much a *Master* of his own.” Fox both controlled his own, personal fate and acted as a steward for other Quakers. It is unsurprising that Penn would laud such personal independence and Fox’s strong stewardship of the Quakers, as this was consistent with early modern conceptions of manhood that stressed personal autonomy and control over one’s fate. Penn was explicit in praising Fox’s manhood. He lauded Fox for the way he carried himself “like a Man, yea, a Strong Man, a new and Heavenly-minded Man.”⁸³ It was in this admiration of Fox and his commitment to his Quaker beliefs that brought Penn to the forefront of an intense struggle between the English government and the Quakers. Beginning in 1660, the Restoration government took an active role in suppressing religious nonconformity. The Clarendon Code, which included the 1662 Quaker Act, the Conventicle Acts, and the Test Act (all of which will be discussed to a greater length in chapter two) targeted Quakers and persecuted them for their religious practices.⁸⁴

Penn became a leading voice denouncing the persecution of Quakers. In writing countless letters and treatises protesting an intrusive government, Penn often invoked the

⁸² Penn, *Fruits of Solitude: Reflections and Maxims Relating to the Conduct of Human Life*, 28; *No Cross, No Crown: A Discourse Shewing the Nature and Discipline of the Holy Cross of Christ*, 194–5.

⁸³ Penn, *A Brief Account of the Rise and Progress of the People Called Quakers*, 90, 100–102.

⁸⁴ The passing of the Clarendon Code and other restrictive legislation targeting nonconformists came in the aftermath of the failed revolt led by the Fifth Monarchist. See Braithwaite, *Second Period of Quakerism*, 9; Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 241–2.

gendered language of male credit. Specifically, he illustrated how the persecution of the Crown impeded the ability for Quakers to earn a profit and—more importantly for the matter of male honor—provide for their families. The fact that the Quakers were religious dissenters was irrelevant, because even religious nonconformists were just as entitled to the protections guaranteed to freeborn Englishmen as were members of the Anglican Church. According to Penn, one of the most important aspects of their rights as freeborn Englishmen was “trading & commercing together.”⁸⁵ Here Penn clearly links freeborn rights with economic freedom and the opportunity for all men to engage in such practices. The fact that the Crown was willing to strip Quakers of their freeborn rights was of great concern to Penn. Quakers were held “in Fetters and irons” and beaten by “the cruel Gaolers” to the extent that some “dyed in Prison.”⁸⁶ Imprisonment without just cause presented many problems for Penn beyond the fact that such actions infringed on freeborn rights. In addition to what Penn saw as a flagrant disregard for the ancient constitution, imprisoning and abusing Quakers stripped them of their personal autonomy without just cause. Such proscription rendered a man unable to do his duty as a family patriarch by limiting his agency and ability to protect his family. To their enemies, Quakers were seen as “Rogues, Raskalls, inhuman Rogues, Whelps deserving to be lasht out of Town & sent to Barbadoes.”⁸⁷ Penn saw the forced indenture of Quakers on

⁸⁵ *Narrative of the Sufferings of Quakers in the Isle of Ely* (London, 1671), *PWP*, 1:224.

⁸⁶ *An Account of Some Grounds and Reasons of the Innocent Sufferings of the people of God called QUAKERS, and why they Testifie Against the vain customs and practices of the World* (London, 1659), 41; see also, *England's Present Interests Considered, with Honour to the Prince and Safety to the People*, *Works*, 1:673.

⁸⁷ William Penn to Mayor Lewis Desmynieres; J. Cor; Mayor of Dublin, November 5, 1669, *PWP*, 1:147-8. It is likely that Penn was exaggerating when he lamented the deportation of Quakers to Barbados.

colonial plantations as the ultimate assault not only on their rights as Englishmen, but on their rights as men. By being sent away to labor under the Barbadian sun, Quaker men lost their economic independence and any credit they may have accrued as a result of years of hard work to support their families.

Protecting the economic interests and reputation of his religious brethren became a pressing concern for Penn and a frequent tactic in his various missives on Quaker civil liberties. Elizabeth Bowman, a fellow Quaker who frequented Penn's social circle, wrote him to describe the persecution Quakers faced under the second Conventicle Act: "this nashon they torne hole [families] out of thar houses & imployments."⁸⁸ Penn and his fellow Quakers faced what they perceived as a systematic attack on the economic livelihood of their religious group. They were forced to pay high fines, had their homes broken into, their livestock confiscated, and their tools destroyed. While undoubtedly devastating, when framed through the lens of seventeenth-century notions of masculinity, these assaults directly impeded a man's sense of self-worth. By taking away his tools, animals, and money, they threatened the ability for a Quaker to serve as family patriarch - to protect his family and provide them with a sense of financial security.

The attack on male Quaker credit was a pressing concern that Penn sought to address by appealing directly to parliament and the King. One such tactic was to draw

Evidence tracking the deportation of Quakers to Barbados is limited. Historians know that many Quakers were arrested holding illegal meetings during the 1660s. A 1664 Grand Jury at Hertford Assizes did find Quakers guilty for meeting in violation of the Conventicle Act. The Judge, Sir Orlando Bridgeman, ruled that eight of the nine Quakers sentenced for banishment would be sent to the West Indies. Four were destined for Barbados and four to Jamaica. This is perhaps the case Penn is referencing, but it is too suspect to state with conviction. See Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 43-6.

⁸⁸ Elizabeth Bowman to William Penn, July 16, 1670, *PWP*, 1:158. For a description of the persecution of the Second Conventicle Act, see Braithwaite, *Second Period of Quakerism*, 75-81.

attention to those most injured by Parliamentary actions; specifically, he attempted to gain sympathy for those marginalized Quakers. In an address to Parliament in 1671, Penn tried to champion the rights of “the Poor, the Widdow, & the Fatherless” who all suffered from “the ungodly Liberty of Plundering, Pillaging, and breaking into Houses to the ruin & Detriment of whole Families.”⁸⁹ By appealing to Parliament’s need for order and the notion that the family was a small commonwealth akin to the state, Penn hoped to find common ground between the religious dissenters and the government. Appeals to the King echoed these concerns, as Penn sought out a way for Quakers to practice their faith, and provide for their families. He recognized that the primary responsibility for a man was to secure the safety and future of his family. He wanted to “Let Men be *Men*,” and without enacting some form of religious toleration Quakers would not be able to enjoy “*Quiet Living, Honest Commerce, and an Exemplary Life.*”⁹⁰ As the leaders of the household, Quaker men held the responsibility of caring for their family’s spiritual and physical health. To do so, it required “good and wise Men, and Elders too” who “shew yourselves Workman indeed, and carry your Business before you.” Being a man for Quakers meant being “faithful Labourers in the Vineyard of the Lord” and in the day-to-day lives of their families.⁹¹

⁸⁹ *Petition to Parliament*, April 1671, *PWP*, 1:206.

⁹⁰ William Penn to Justice Flemming, a Justice of Quorum, and Deputy-Lieutenant in Westmoreland, *Works*, 1:157.

⁹¹ Penn, Penn, *A Brief Account of the Rise and Progress of the People Called Quakers*, 119-20.

Manhood and Colonial Expansion

The effort by Penn and other Quakers to gain protection under the law was met with some success. In March 1672 Charles II passed the Declaration of Indulgence, which suspended the execution of penal laws against dissenters. Additionally, it allowed for the licensing of nonconformist ministers while allowing Protestant dissenters to assemble in public. As part of the declaration, Charles II pardoned 491 Quakers held in English jails for their nonconformity. This victory was short lived. Less than a year later, Parliament forced Charles II to pass the Test Act. Penn made one last attempt at convincing Charles II to ease restrictions on Quakers, imploring him to take action against the “extrajudicial Proceedings” of English justices of the peace.⁹² It was during these failed efforts that Fenwick and Byllynge contacted Penn for his help with their dispute over West New Jersey.

Despite his reluctant involvement in the colonial project, Penn quickly became an asset for the fledgling venture. Not only did he produce much in the way of literature and correspondence promoting West New Jersey, but he also traveled extensively throughout the continent in an effort to gain support and potential colonists. Penn’s journey to the European continent was largely an effort to heal divisions among Dutch Quakers strained from conflicting views on religious discipline. But he also sought to spread the message of Quakerism in Germany, which was experiencing significant unrest during the late-seventeenth century.⁹³ In each case, Penn approached the task from the perspective of one

⁹² William Penn to Charles II, 1674, *PWP*, 1:283.

⁹³ Richard and Mary Dunn note that Penn’s trip to the continent was a significant one for Quaker efforts at recruiting converts, as George Fox, Robert Barclay, Thomas Rudyard, and George Keith

attempting to sell the colony on its merits as a place of economic opportunity. While visiting Holland in 1677, Penn described the new colony as a place that “encourageth Arts, Parts, and Industry.” In keeping with the theme of his theological writings, he stressed the importance of individual industry and the importance of improving the “Strength, and Wealth of a Country.” Unlike England, where Quakers lost their land and their tools, New Jersey afforded them the possibility of moving to a “Land of Liberty where the Sweat of the Brow is not made the Forfeit of the Conscience.”⁹⁴

As Penn continued traveling on behalf of Quakers he started warming to the idea of colonization. In part, he began to realize that an escape from the watchful eye of the English government would afford Quakers the opportunity to worship and work in peace. The open land of New Jersey served a dual purpose of allowing “Virtuous and Industrious Families” a place to work and grow economically, while also avoiding the “Taxes, Oathes, [and] Arms” that plagued them in England.⁹⁵ Penn still sought to secure legal and political toleration for Quakers and continued to petition the government for new rights. Despite traveling throughout Europe recruiting travelers to his cause, Penn was disheartened by the fact that “many whole Families of the industrious & trading

accompanied Penn. According to Dunn and Dunn, Penn “sought out people with whom he had something in common: Protestants with some leaning toward pietism, or Quakers. He mainly travelled in areas where he could find such kindred spirits.” See *PWP*, 1:425-6. See also, Braithwaite, *Second Period of Quakerism*, 430-2. Regarding the turmoil in Germany, the region was still recovering from the devastation of the Thirty Years’ War. Many regions in Germany were susceptible to religious groups looking to win converts. As Dunn and Dunn note, “some, like the electors of the Palatine and of Brandenburg, had been rather tolerant, and [William Penn] spent a good deal of time in their territories.”

⁹⁴ William Penn to the Prince Elector Palatine of Heydelberg, 1677, *Works*, 1:75.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

subjects of this Kingdom... have been induced to forsake this Kingdom.”⁹⁶ But years of being rebuffed had worn on Penn and he grew tired of watching his friends lose their homes, their jobs, and their sense of self as heads of household.

Shortly before June 1, 1680 William Penn petitioned Charles II requesting a grant of land in British North America. No explicit motivation is given as to why Penn would seek a proprietorship, though his close relationship to the Stuart family certainly influenced his willingness to petition the King.⁹⁷ His interest did grow as he worked alongside Fenwick, Byllynge, and other Quakers in New Jersey, but so too did he retain his interest in toleration and Quaker civil liberties. There are explanations that can be offered as a way to illuminate Penn’s mindset when he contacted Charles II. One such option is to focus on the issue of religious freedom and civil liberties. Penn would come to view Pennsylvania as a haven for the religiously oppressed.

Religious freedom was not the only factor motivating Penn’s settlement in North America. Economic practicalities also factored into Penn’s decision, and the gendered language Penn used to market the colony became a way for him to blend the economic and religious motivations into a common and accessible language for all potential colonists. Penn was facing significant financial restraints by the early 1680s. He had invested a considerable amount of his money into the Quaker cause. His trips to Ireland, Holland, and Germany, while productive, were costly not only in terms of money but

⁹⁶ “Two Toleration Bills,” *PWP*, 1:537.

⁹⁷ Penn’s political relationship with Charles II and James II is complicated, particularly because of Penn’s role as a religious dissenter. He shared, for example, a close friendship with James II that often drew the ire of other Quakers. William Braithwaite seems to attribute this to Penn’s long training as a gentleman and frequent visitor to court. See Braithwaite, *Second Period of Quakerism*, 175-6.

time as well. His attempts to secure civil liberties for Quakers added to this burden, as he spent money in lobbying efforts as well. Additionally, he had penned approximately fifty texts, pamphlets, and books by 1680, all of which were printed at full cost to Penn. Such a financial burden also motivated Penn to seek a colonial charter to recoup some of his losses.⁹⁸

The land grant Penn received from Charles II in 1681 gave him access to 45,000 square miles of territory in the Delaware River Valley. Penn argued that the Crown owed such a gift to Penn thanks to the efforts of his father, who spent much of his own money to keep the Royal Navy provisioned. In Penn's estimation, this debt amounted to at least £11,000, £16,000 if the interest was taken into account.⁹⁹ The challenge facing Penn was balancing his financial goals with the theology of the Quakers, a group that struggled with its own tenuous relationship with money and morals. Penn needed to find a way to promote his colony as both "a haven for the oppressed but also a sound and perhaps astute investment."¹⁰⁰

Penn idealized his role in Pennsylvania beyond that of a mere proprietor. In a letter to Jasper Batt, Penn described his complete commitment to the cause of providing Quakers with a safe haven where they could free themselves from persecution and

⁹⁸ Richard Dunn, "Penn as a Businessman," in Dunn, ed. *The World of William Penn*, 41. Financial concerns influenced Penn's approach as proprietor throughout his life, and colonists were quick to view him not as a proprietor, but as a landlord. See Gary Nash, *Quakers and Politics: Pennsylvania, 1681-1726* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), chap. 2. Many of Penn's contemporaries in court urged him to colonize Pennsylvania in the interests of expanding England's "territorial empire" and to "carry on Atlantic commerce." See Stephen Saunders Webb, "'The Peaceable Kingdom': Quaker Pennsylvania in the Stuart Empire," in Dunn, ed., *The World of William Penn*, 178-9.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Gary Nash, "The Framing of Government in Pennsylvania: Ideas in Contact with Reality," *William and Mary Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (1966): 185.

limited economic options. He wrote Batt, “I am day & night spending my Life, my Time my Money” for the good of Pennsylvania. So long as settlers kept God in their minds, “in the justice, mercy, equity, & fear of the lord their enemys will be their foot stool.” On the other hand, if this holy experiment were to stray from God’s path, “their heirs & my heirs will loos all & desolation will follow.”¹⁰¹ He saw himself as being tasked with freeing Quakers from the shackles of the English government. He had observed “mischeifs in Government” and now saw it “in my power to settle one.”¹⁰² This was a sacrifice that Penn would need to endure for the greater good of Quakers and society at large. Such commitment was necessary when Penn wanted his colony to act as a paragon of European settlement. Penn noted how “I hope an example to the nations” and how “some wil[I] see [Pennsylvania] & rejoice.”¹⁰³ In these instances, it is clear that Penn did take seriously his claim that he was trying to establish a holy experiment founded on religious tolerance.

As his correspondence with Batt indicates, the financial situation in Pennsylvania was of great importance to its proprietor. Religious toleration was undoubtedly important, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters, but so, too, was the economic situation in the colony. Penn endeavored to grant himself an array of privileges that would allow him to reap great rewards alongside his fellow Quaker settlers. Many of the early settlers to Pennsylvania were yeomen, but the most influential were upper-class Quakers who

¹⁰¹ William Penn to Jasper Batt, February 5, 1683, *PWP*, 2:348.

¹⁰² William Penn to Robert Turner, Anthony Sharp, and Roger Parks, April 12, 1681, *PWP*, 2:88-9.

¹⁰³ William Penn to John Blaykling, Thomas Camm, Thomas Langhorne, and Robert Barrow, April 16, 1683, *PWP*, 2:376-7.

purchased the largest tracts of land and wielded the most influence in the colony's legislature.¹⁰⁴ Pennsylvania's founder believed those with the largest financial stake in the colony should have the greatest say in its governing. In essence, Penn wanted to protect those with the most economic interest in the colony while also assuring investors that they would profit from this venture. He also saw the as the most competent individuals best suited to take part in local politics and decision-making. While poor and middling workers and farmers constituted the bulk of colonial migrants, his colony would need to be run by the wealthy merchants and elites who invested heavily in the territory.¹⁰⁵

Promotional Literature and the Rhetoric of Manhood

With a cadre of influential Quakers supporting his colony Penn and his colleagues began disseminating promotional literature to attract settlers. They developed a powerful recruiting tool by painting Penn's Woods in the language of manly credit. Penn used the language of gender to bring together his religious and economic imperatives, engage with a common language accessible to all potential English colonists, and provide a framework for social order in a new land. Specifically, Pennsylvania was cast as a land of masculine opportunity, profit, and advancement ideal for those in England and on the continent who felt constrained by their lack of economic options. In doing so, Penn was building on his own personal bibliography, which had been decrying the ills of Europe for years. In *No Cross, No Crown*, first published in 1668, Penn articulates the myriad ways in which Londoners had fallen into ill repute. They were guilty of "highmindedness,

¹⁰⁴ Nash, "The Framing of Government in Pennsylvania," 187.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

lasciviousness, uncleanness, drunkenness, swearing, lying, envy, backbiting, cruelty, treachery, covetousness, injustice, and oppression.”¹⁰⁶ For a society of men that performed their masculinity through exercising control, Penn saw much of England falling short. He denigrated them in more explicit terms, explaining how “the great Work and Business of the Cross in Man is SELF-DENIAL.” He notes how “The Son of God is gone before us, and by the bitter cup he drank, and baptism he suffered, has left us an Example, that we should follow in his steps.” “Christ,” according to Penn, “conquered the SELF,” and set an example for all men to follow both in terms of their religious pursuits and in their attempts to live as well-respected men capable of achieving self-mastery.¹⁰⁷

Penn saw this rampant vice as eroding the qualities of English men. He even saw the very future of English men and women in jeopardy as a result of problems in England. Much of this fell on the heads of English parents, especially fathers who were not doing their duty and properly educating their sons and aiding them as they traveled along the path to manhood. Englishmen, especially the gentry living in the countryside, had strayed down a dangerous path. Penn observed “*Country-people* are so extremely addicted to put their Children into Gentlemens Service, or send them to Towne to learn Trades, that *Husbandry is neglected*; and after a soft and delicate Usage there, they are for ever unfitted for the Labour of a *Farming Life*.”¹⁰⁸ Men were expected to produce for their

¹⁰⁶ Penn, *No Cross, No Crown*, 5. Penn first wrote *No Cross, No Crown* while in the Tower of London. An enlarged and revised second edition was published in 1682. See Braithwaite, *Second Period of Quakerism*, 60-3.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 46, 48.

¹⁰⁸ William Penn, *Some Account of the Province of Pennsylvania in America* (London, 1681), 4.

families. Quakers, especially, prided themselves on their ability to improve the earth and to reap goods and profits from their own industrious efforts. Education was an important focus for Quaker men. The effeminacy of England was producing too many scholars, when instead it should be creating men who loved to make things, to shape, draw, frame, or build things. Penn believed men “should raise gardeners, husbandmen, and artificers.”¹⁰⁹ Education and the ability to produce with one’s hands was a large part of determining a man’s credit and Penn saw English fathers as letting their sons stray from this path.

The failures of English fathers reflected a larger shortcoming throughout the entire country. Penn saw England following the same path as previous empires. Penn believed these failures were not the result of “their *Plantations*, but their *Luxury and corruption of Manners*.” Men had lost their ability to self-regulate and damaged their reputation by neglecting “their ancient Discipline, that maintained and rewarded Virtue and Industry.”¹¹⁰ English men had strayed from their proper path. Rather than invest themselves in improving their lives through honest labor and plain dealing, Penn saw a world in which deceit, excess, and luxury threatened the stability and order of society. He saw effeminacy becoming endemic.

Penn’s solution to the corruption of self-modesty in England lay across the Atlantic in Pennsylvania, a new land that would allow colonists to reassert their manhood by stripping away the vice and luxury of England while finding new economic

¹⁰⁹ Penn, *Fruits of Solitude*, 18; Braithwaite, *Second Period of Quakerism*, 529-30.

¹¹⁰ William Penn, *A Brief Account of the Province of Pennsylvania Lately Granted by the King, Under the Great Seal of England, to William Penn, and His Heirs and Assigns* (London, 1681), 2.

opportunity. Despite his initial reticence in settling West New Jersey, Penn came to see colonies as “the Seeds of Nations begun and nourished by the care of wise and populous Countries; as conceiving them best for the increase of Human Stock, and beneficial for Commerce.”¹¹¹ The reason other colonial ventures failed, he contended, was because settlers strayed from their intended purpose. They were meant to be a place for men to increase their wealth and to uplift their reputation through their industrious efforts. In doing so, men cast off the effeminate influences of England, freed themselves from vice, and took meaningful steps towards rebuilding their masculine credit in the eyes of their families and their peers.

Penn’s other approach to enticing potential immigrants was to once again tap into longstanding gender norms by offering indigent and struggling Europeans visions of upward mobility and economic security. Penn knew his colony needed manual laborers and he crafted his promotional literature in such a way as to make this point explicitly. Pennsylvania was “a fit place for those Ingenious Spirits that being low in the World, are much clogg’d and oppress’d about a Livelyhood, for the means of subsisting being easie there, they may have little time and opportunity to gratify their inclinations.” Pennsylvania would be an ideal colony for “younger Brothers of small inheritances” or people who, “if married, their Children are often too numerous for their Estate.” Penn wanted “Men of universal Spirits, that have an eye to the Good of Posterity, and that both understand and delight to promote good Discipline and just Government among a plain

¹¹¹ Penn, *Some Account of the Province of Pennsylvania in America*, 2.

and well intending people.”¹¹² This quote is illustrative for many reasons, each of which makes clear Penn’s motivations behind his colonization project. By emphasizing the idea that Penn wanted men “of universal spirit,” he reinforced the notion that Pennsylvania was intended for individuals striving to live by an appropriate code of male conduct predicated on self-mastery. In selling the land as a place for even those “low in the world,” Penn appealed to all classes of individuals, despite his efforts to favor the wealthy first purchasers that would populate the region. Finally, he used men’s fears of a poor reputation due to insufficient financial stability as a means of enticing settlers to migrate to Pennsylvania in hopes of securing greater fortunes.

Penn and his associates spoke not only in the abstract, but they also found more specific ways to arouse interest in their holy experiment. Penn frequently stressed the quality of land available in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania was more than simply a place to exchange one type of hard labor for another. Instead, it was a place where every man, no matter the quality of their soil, could find their land values increasing if they were willing to work hard and commit to improving the plot. Penn claimed that even the worst lot in town “without any Improvement upon it, is worth four times more than it was when it was lay’d out.”¹¹³ He continually praised how “here families get in many barrels [of fish] in a week for winter store very good they are. Here is enough both for rich & poor, not

¹¹² Penn, *A Brief Account of the Province of Pennsylvania*, 6. Hope Kane purports that Penn’s reference to “ingenious spirits” is “characteristic of Penn’s altruism,” though I am hesitant to accept such an interpretation without other documentation supporting this point. See Hope Frances Kane, “Notes on Early Pennsylvania Promotion Literature,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 63, no. 2 (1939): 161-2.

¹¹³ William Penn, *A Further Account of the Province of Pennsylvania and Its Improvements: For the Satisfaction of Those That Are Adventurers, and Enclined to Be So* (London, 1685), 5.

only for necessity but for pleasure.”¹¹⁴ This quote taps into two important issues for potential settlers: the appeal for individuals of all classes and the possibility to provide for a family and fulfill one’s duty as the head of household. For someone struggling to make ends meet toiling in London, the prospect of purchasing land in Pennsylvania at such a fair price was extremely enticing.

The vision of Pennsylvania articulated in promotional literature and correspondence promised hope and opportunity for many. In promising religious tolerance, Penn gave hope to depressed Englishmen living in fear that religious persecution would affect their livelihood and the ability to provide for their family. Penn and his compatriots stressed the fact that this was an avenue for upward mobility. They tapped into longstanding tropes of male credit. Thomas Budd made this extremely clear when he offered this harsh contrast between life in England and the possibilities found in Pennsylvania:

Families set at liberty from that extream Slavery that attended them, by reason of great Poverty that they endured in *England*, and must have so continued, had not they been thus redeemed by coming into *America*. It may be thought that this is too great an undertaking for one man, which if it be, then I propose that ten joyn together in this community, and each man send over five Servants, of which let one of them be an honest man that understands Country business.¹¹⁵

Budd promised the downtrodden a chance to escape “extream Slavery” should they come to Pennsylvania. For a man to do so would be to take a step towards reclaiming agency

¹¹⁴ William Penn to John Blaykling, Thomas Camm, Thomas Langhorne, and Robert Barrow, April 16, 1683, *PWP*, 2:376-7

¹¹⁵ Thomas Budd, *Good Order Established in Pennsylvania and New-Jersey in America*, ed. Edward Armstrong (New York: William Gowans, 1865), 61.

over his economic life and grant himself some degree of opportunity to provide for his family.

Many people did answer Penn's call for colonists. Over 580 individuals bought enough land to make up the first purchasers. From approximately 1681 to 1700, nearly 18,000 individuals migrated to Pennsylvania. People came from England, Ireland, Scotland, and Germany to populate Penn's Woods.¹¹⁶ The speed with which Pennsylvania expanded dwarfed the previous Quaker experience in West New Jersey. But the idyllic image portrayed in Penn's promotional literature masked a darker truth. Penn saw the colony as a business. He endeavored to follow Quaker principles and walk the fine line between excessive lust for profits and a moderate approach to business, but increasing debt and an expanding colony made that increasingly difficult.

Penn's marketing of his colony reflected the gendered nature of the early modern world. Penn came of age as the son of a wealthy Admiral, and he was pushed to master his impulses, engage in politicking at English courts, and run the family's Irish estate. The early modern English society in which Penn matured, as a student at Oxford and, later, as a religious nonconformist, emphasized a notion of masculinity rooted in self-mastery. A man's credit, his reputation, was derived from his ability to earn a profit, maintain personal agency, and provide for his family. Among Quakers, these aspects of manhood were tied together through the idea of self-mastery. Men performed their gender by conquering their impulses. Quaker debates about self-modesty often played out

¹¹⁶ Dunn, "Penn as Businessman," in *The World of William Penn*, 49; Goode, "Gospel Order among Friends," 35-6.

in discussions about plain dealing and modest business practices, the avoidance of excessive greed, and the problems of effeminacy.

It was in these Quaker discussions of self-mastery that Penn found a common language that would appeal to all potential colonists. In portraying his colony as a haven for struggling English men looking for new opportunities and new ways to provide for their families, Penn's rhetoric stretched across religious groups and economic status. The gendered language of his correspondence and Pennsylvania's promotional literature brought together the religious and economic motives of potential settlers through the language of patriarchy and the patriarchal household. This idyllic portrayal of Penn's Woods, however, was more complicated than it appears at first glance. As Thomas Budd noted, the colony would require colonists to "send over... Servants, of which let one of them be an honest man." In order to establish the colony he envisioned, Penn needed his Quaker colleagues to "hasten over some servant, together, or else the comers will thrust you backwards."¹¹⁷ Quakers, despite their internal debates over the morality of profits, endeavored to make money. This was the case with Penn's colonization of the Delaware. He used gendered language as a way to meld the growing profit maximization and burgeoning capitalistic impulses driving Pennsylvania with the religious imperatives motivating Quakers to escape religious persecution. Yet as both Budd and Penn illustrate, it was the poor who bore the burden of unfettered capitalism in the Quaker colony. The gendered social order Penn described for his colony would be reflected in the nature of its

¹¹⁷ William Penn to John Blaykling, Thomas Camm, Thomas Langhorne, and Robert Barrow, April 16, 1683, *PWP*, 2:376-7

government. As we will see in chapter two, the religiously tolerant colony Penn founded to “let men be men” would be structured in a way to privilege Quaker elites.

CHAPTER TWO

“A FREE COLONY FOR ALL MANKIND”¹: THE ANCIENT CONSTITUTION, NATURAL LAW, AND PENNSYLVANIA LAW IN THE IMPERIAL NETWORK

In an effort to attract settlers to Pennsylvania, William Penn used explicitly gendered language in promotional literature. In particular, it drew on a notion of manhood rooted in the patriarchal need to provide for a family by achieving economic success. This was not the only gendered rhetoric Penn used, however, as he also drew on a notion of manhood rooted in personal and political autonomy. Indeed, his desire to build a safe haven for the religiously persecuted was an important aspect of his colonizing efforts in Pennsylvania. In the 1675 treatise, *England's Present Interests Discover'd*, Penn lambasted the English government for their willful denial of the rights of freeborn Englishmen. In particular, he stressed the fact that the government encroached on Quaker businesses and properties. Quakers “had been flung into Gaols, Gates, and Trunks broak open, Goods distrained, till a Stool hath not been left to sit down on.” Quakers saw this as unjustified persecution meant to target Quakers in the wake of the Fifth Monarchy rebellion. Penn saw as an infringement on the basic rights guaranteed to all Englishmen. At the center of these rights was liberty of conscience. To Penn, nothing was more abhorrent than the violation of a Quaker's liberty of conscience, as his right to freely practice his religion cut to the heart of his rights as a man. It violated his

¹ William Penn to James Logan, February 17, 1705, Penn Family to James Logan Volumes I and II circa 1700 to 1715, NB-006, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485A), HSP.

personal autonomy and the subsequent persecution or imprisonment impeded his ability to provide for his family as a good patriarch. For Penn and other Quakers, men could not perform their duties as patriarchs if the English Crown was “making men to suffer for Religion, even those that cannot suffer for their Religion, if yet they have any Religion to suffer for.”²

Penn found many allies willing to challenge English precedent among his Quaker brethren. Robert Barclay, perhaps the Quakers’ main theologian, also defended “those Rights and Priviledges, which I call English, and which are the proper Birth right of English men.”³ Like his reliance on the language of early modern manhood, Penn and his friends also engaged with a linguistic tradition increasingly common among religious nonconformists traveling throughout the Atlantic. The language of the ancient constitution and natural law were integral parts of Penn’s worldview. This rhetorical approach afforded him a well-known language of political and religious dissent connecting Quakers to a legacy of nonconformity emerging from the English Revolution. The Quakers’ use of fundamental law and the ancient constitution was not limited to England; it also became an important device for framing Quaker colonization. As illustrated both in West New Jersey and also Pennsylvania, Quakers used the ancient constitution and its rhetoric to shape their government and as a template for ordering the relationship between government officials and colonists. In a letter to James Logan, Penn expressed his desire to “lay the foundation of a free colony for all Mankind” where he

² William Penn, *England’s Present Interests Discover’d with Honour to the Prince and Safety to the People* (London, 1675), 2-3.

³ *Ibid.*, 6.

could defend “especially those of my own profession.” He was careful to note, however, that he would not unfairly privilege Quakers. Instead, Penn would not “lessen the Civil Liberties of others, because of their perswasion,” but “Defend our [liberties] from any Infringement.” Penn wanted this free colony to be supported by a charter “intended to shelter them against a Violent or Arbitrary Government imposed upon us.”⁴

This notion of a free colony became an important aspect of Penn’s colonial vision. In providing a framework for colonial governance, Penn paired this rhetoric with the promise of economic opportunity to appeal to potential colonists. Chapter one illustrated the important role of economic independence on shaping Penn’s worldview and reinforcing his conception of manliness. Political rights and personal autonomy also contributed to the early modern man’s gendered worldview. Without these, Penn and his fellow Quakers would be denied their manhood just as if they had no economic rights. But the language of the ancient constitution and natural law were a larger part of Penn’s mental world than simply luring dissatisfied Quakers to Pennsylvania. Despite the centrality of this rhetoric to early Pennsylvania, scholars have been hesitant to engage with this discursive tradition directly. Scholarship has made clear the intimate links between religious beliefs and political development. This has been clear in places like New England, where the political principles of the church were seen as commensurate with those of the state, and in Pennsylvania, where, as Alan Tully avers, “More than anything, the establishment of Pennsylvania as a proprietary colony determined the character of provincial politics.” The linkage between politics and religion articulated by

⁴ William Penn to James Logan, February 17, 1705, Penn Family to James Logan, Volumes I and II circa 1700-1715, NB-006, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485A), HSP.

Tully has been echoed by Jane Calvert, who contends that, “the only sense in which religion preceded politics occurred when [Quakers] looked for the ultimate justification for their political theory.”⁵

Despite the extant literature exploring the intersection of Quakerism and political theory, scholars have yet to fully interrogate the Quaker involvement in this discursive political tradition. Part of this is due to the fact that some historians—W.C. Braithwaite and Christopher Hill, in particular—adopt a notion of Quaker quietism that overestimates the extent to which Quakers had an “indifference to public life which persecution and nonconformity with the practices of the world gradually fostered.” In the case of Hill, his view of political apathy is due to the fact that he focuses solely on Quaker political activity in England. Part of Hill’s problematic characterization of Quakerism is due to the fact that he does not expand his focus beyond the 1660s or within an Atlantic context. But Hill also discounts the fact that English Quakers were very politically active during the Restoration, particularly in organizing against religious persecution.⁶ Other historians, like Craig Horle, downplay the role of the ancient constitution in Quaker rhetoric by arguing that Quakers were guilty of “taking these out of context and giving them

⁵ Jane Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism and the Political Thought of John Dickinson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 2; Alan Tully, *Forming American Politics: Ideals, Interests, and Institutions in Colonial New York and Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 257. See also, J.S. Maloy, *The Colonial American Origins of Modern Democratic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 89.

⁶ William C. Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 55; see also, Christopher Hill, *Experience of Defeat: Milton and Some Contemporaries* (New York: Viking, 1984); Daniel Boorstin, *The Americans: The Colonial Experience* (New York: Vintage Books, 1958); Blanche Weison Cook, et. al., eds., *Peace Projects of the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1972); Caroline Robbins, *The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman: Studies in the Transmission, Development and Circumstance of English Liberal Thought from the Restoration of Charles II until the War with the Thirteen Colonies* (New York: Atheneum, 1968). Calvert’s critique of Hill’s work is particularly informative. See Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 3-4.

undeserved status.” Horle also contends that judges and justices of the peace dismissed arguments rooted in the ancient constitution.⁷ Judges and JPs may very well have dismissed these arguments, but that does not dismiss the extent to which Quakers genuinely engaged with, and employed these tropes as a means of combatting persecution.

Recent scholarship has placed a greater emphasis on the political rhetoric Quakers used to challenge religious and political oppression. Jane Calvert and John Smolenski both have provided new insights into the relationship between Quakerism and political thought by drawing out the evolution in Quaker political thought, particularly William Penn’s engagement with seventeenth-century political theory. This chapter builds on that analysis while making more explicit connections between Quaker thought and the wider political discourse of dissenters throughout the Atlantic world. More specifically, room remains to explore the extent to which the rhetoric of the ancient constitution and natural law infused Quaker writings in England and as part of a larger Atlantic network of dissenters. Taking this rhetoric seriously reveals how Quakers used this language to meet their political opponents on their own grounds while formulating their own political conviction.⁸ In relying on this rhetoric, Penn and the Quakers join other religious radicals throughout the Atlantic by building on discursive political traditions to contest the English government. Penn employed the language of natural law and the ancient

⁷ Craig Horle, *Quakers and the English Legal System, 1660-1688* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 171. Horle focuses in particular on the Quaker use of the Magna Carta or Petition of Right to contest political abuses.

⁸ Jane Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism and the Political Thought of John Dickinson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); John Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers: The Making of a Creole Culture in Colonial Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010).

constitution to ensure liberty of conscience and political freedom for Pennsylvania colonists. Penn also used this rhetoric to reinforce his role as proprietor, as Penn attempted to position himself as the rightful patriarch of his colonial commonwealth. At the same time that Penn used this rhetoric to structure his colony, however, colonists themselves began using the same language to push back against decisions made by the proprietor. Ultimately, the language of the ancient constitution and natural law was not sufficient to create a free colony of all mankind, as Pennsylvania politics descended into factionalism and exclusion as the colony's government became overly centered on conflicts between its governors and assembly.

Chapter two explores the Quaker relationship with the ancient constitution and natural law in three specific sections. Section I will articulate the origins of the ancient constitution and natural law as applied to issues of religious nonconformity. It will then frame Quaker uses of these linguistic devices within the context of an Atlantic network of militant Protestantism combatting persecution. Section two will focus specifically on William Penn. It will trace his involvement in the constitution of West New Jersey, his relationship with Algernon Sidney, and the origins of Pennsylvania's government. It will end by illustrating how Penn embraced patriarchal attitudes by attempting to secure increasingly absolutist power as proprietor. Section three will examine several case studies wherein colonists coopted the language of the ancient constitution and natural law to contest the actions of the proprietor and other Pennsylvania leaders.

Understanding the Ancient Constitution

Early modern political theorists relied on several tools to craft their arguments, particularly the rhetoric of the ancient constitution and natural law. The myth of the ancient constitution dated its origins during the Saxon period and the time of St. Edward the Confessor, whom many considered the father of common law. Many English subjects contended that England had only one law that dated back as far as their history, and that was common law.⁹ The early modern articulation of the ancient constitution is attributed to Sir Edward Coke; first in his decision in *Calvin's Case* and later in *The Institutes of the Laws of England*. In *Calvin's Case*, Coke explored the legal status of a Scotsman born after James I took the throne. Coke's ruling was centered on the idea that "the bond of allegiance between subject and sovereign transcended national or municipal legal systems like the common law." He argued that the law of nature took precedence over judicial or municipal law and was part of the laws of England.¹⁰ Alongside this ancient constitutionalist argument, English political thinkers frequently invoked the Magna Carta and the common rights entitled to all freeborn Englishmen. Notions of these common rights were shaped by particular ecologies or labor processes. By the seventeenth century, the Magna Carta had become synonymous with the Freeborn Englishman's right to "commerce, property, and individualism." Armed with the ancient constitution and

⁹ Janelle Greenberg, *The Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution: St. Edward's "Laws" in Early Modern Political Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); "The Confessor's Laws and the Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution," *English Historical Review* 104, no. 412 (1989): 611-637; J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: A Study of English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957; reissued with additional material 1987), 30-1.

¹⁰ Craig Yirush, *Settlers, Liberty, and Empire: The Roots of Early American Political Theory, 1675-1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2011), 35; John Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes: An Atlantic History of the English Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 60.

Magna Carta, early modern had a wealth of tools at their disposal to defend the rights of freeborn Englishman.¹¹

The ancient constitution quickly became a device for political activists on both sides of the Atlantic to stake their claims and ground them with arguments hearkening back to England's long past. But the concept of the ancient constitution, especially the one articulated by Coke, was a very recent and inchoate idea. This made it a particularly malleable idea for those looking to engage with England's politics, whether Royalist or dissenter. As Janelle Greenberg shows, the radicalization of the ancient constitution was a common occurrence during the years of the English Revolution, and nonconformists were quick to use it to justify removing "a despotic ruler" as was done with Charles I. But at the same time, Charles I drew heavily on the concept of fundamental law at his own capital trial.¹²

While activists in England were engaging with this rhetoric, so, too, were colonists across the Atlantic. Coke often wrote about trust and accountability as they pertained to the relationship between the Crown and its subjects. Throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, colonists in Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island also wrestled with these issues. Many colonists radicalized these ideas, shifting the locus of responsibility from king and parliament to representatives and the represented.

¹¹ Peter Linebaugh, *The Magna Carta Manifesto: Liberties and Commons for All* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 44-5, 78. English subjects derived their notion of rights from the two legal systems prevalent in early modern England: *lex non scripta* and *lex scripta*. *Lex non scripta*, or unwritten law, stemmed from English custom and practice and judicial decisions throughout English history. *Lex scripta*, or written law, referred to the statutes enacted since 1189 by mutual consent of the Crown and Parliament. See Craig Horle, *The Quakers and the English Legal System, 1660-1688* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 26.

¹² Greenberg, *The Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution*, 8; Richard Cust, *Charles I: A Political Life* (New York: Pearson, 2007), 454-6

These colonists traveled eastward across the Atlantic during the Civil Wars, carrying these ideas with them. Religious dissenters, for example, invoked the language of natural law and the ancient constitution to try to avoid prison or execution. Henry Vane invoked the language of the freeborn Englishman before his trial in 1662.¹³ The flexibility of its concepts allowed Quakers to tap into the legacy of what it meant to be an English man with certain rights and privileges. At the same time, it gave Quakers the chance to shape and mold the concepts to fit what was politically and socially expedient. In doing so, Quakers were able to join an increasingly common discursive tradition while injecting themselves into the political mainstream. This was an important step for a group that was seen as seditious and heretical by much of English society.

As the previous chapter illustrated, seventeenth-century England was fraught with tumults and uproars. The crisis over the nature of arbitrary government that swept the nation during the middle of the century produced great upheaval in the form of the English Revolution. Not only did this period witness the remaking of government in England, but the execution of Charles I brought with it a shift in how individuals viewed what they perceived to be their rights as guaranteed by a monarch. This period of warfare also witnessed disruption in terms of the religious makeup of England.¹⁴ In many ways, the war did not end with the execution of Charles I; rather, it merely foregrounded a

¹³ For the best explanation of the evolution of democratic thought, conceptions of trust, and models of accountability, see Maloy, *The Colonial American Origins of Modern Democratic Thought*. For an extended discussion of Vane and the eastward movement of radical ideas, see Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes*.

¹⁴ While a listing of all the works addressing the religious implications of the English Civil War would be exhaustive, special attention must be given to one book in particular. For the best example of a bottom-up study of the English civil war, see Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution* (New York: Penguin Books, 1975).

series of struggles over the resurgence of absolutism, an emerging capitalist faction seeking continued economic growth in the fertile grounds of the Americas, and a genuine social revolution seeking the “enfranchising [of] a political nation of male small producers.” Groups like the Levellers, Diggers, Ranters, Fifth Monarchists, and Quakers would engage in this struggle through books, pamphlets, and the press. This revolution in thought was not limited to England or the Houses of Parliament; the struggle over notions of the freeborn Englishman spanned the Atlantic and touched a number of colonies in the British imperial network. Central to this attempted social revolution was the rhetoric of the ancient constitution and natural law. Both rhetorical traditions were deliberately employed during this period as part of an effort by Quakers to build on the growing political heritage of religious dissenters across the British Atlantic.¹⁵

In 1631, James Doddridge argued, “A Rule or Principle of the Law of England, is a Conclusion either of the law of Nature, or derived from some generall custome used within the Realme, containing in a short summe the reason and direction of many particular and speciall occurrences.”¹⁶ Doddridge was not alone in making such claims. In discussing the English Parliament and common law, Sir John Davies averred that common law “doth far excell our *written* Laws, namely our Statutes or Acts of

¹⁵ For a study of the class dimensions of the English Revolution see James Holstun, *Ehud's Dagger: Class Struggle in the English Revolution* (New York: Verso, 2000), 89. Regarding the radicalism of the ancient constitution and natural law, Janelle Greenberg notes that the extant literature on “anti-court theorizing” tends to view ancient constitutionalist arguments as more conservative and natural law arguments as more radical. She disagrees with this assessment, arguing for an interpretation of the ancient constitution that appreciates its radical dimensions. I adopt her interpretation, and in the case of the Quakers see them using both arguments to build on the legacy of preceding nonconformists in arguing for political and religious freedoms. See Greenberg, *The Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution*, 7-8, 27-8.

¹⁶ John Doddridge, *The English Lawyer* (London, 1631), 153-4.

Parliament.”¹⁷ In engaging with the historic roots of English law, both authors are relying on the notion of the ancient constitution. And in discussing the ancient constitution, Davies and Doddridge stress its central role in guaranteeing certain rights and privileges for English citizens that trump statutes or acts put in place by monarchs.

The ancient constitution played an important role in shaping early modern English thought. J.G.A. Pocock, defined the ancient constitution as follows:

The relations of government and governed in England were assumed to be regulated by law; the law in force in England was assumed to be the common law; all common law was assumed to be custom, elaborated, summarized and enforced by statute; and all custom was assumed to be immemorial, in the sense that any declaration or even change of custom—uttered by a judge from his bench, recorded by a court in a precedent, or registered by king-in-parliament as a statute—presupposed a custom already ancient and not necessarily recorded at the time of writing.¹⁸

As such, contemporaries saw the ancient constitution of England as the long-standing common law that regulated the relationship between the government and the governed. English common law had three components: custom, continuity, and balance.¹⁹ The common law was custom in that it was unwritten. Not only was it unwritten, contemporaries perceived it as immemorial, dating back to the laws of St. Edward the Confessor.²⁰ If the common law, and thus the ancient constitution, was immemorial and

¹⁷ Sir John Davies, *A Report of Cases...* (Dublin, 1762), quoted in Glenn Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution: An Introduction to English Political Thought, 1603-1642* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 21

¹⁸ J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: A Study of English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957; reissued with additional material 1987), 261.

¹⁹ The basic idea that the common law was constituted through custom, continuity, and balance is taken from Burgess, *The Politics of the Ancient Constitution*, 4-6.

unwritten, this provided a sense of continuity. The fact that such a doctrine still existed in the seventeenth century informed contemporaries that English legal and constitutional history was continuous. The contentious nature of these debates was also due to the fact that the ancient constitution was an historical invention, but one that proved useful to myriad groups trying to legitimize their positions.

Such a long-lasting custom provided the country with a sense of balance. The ancient constitution and common law offered the king a set of prerogatives to assert, while also providing subjects security in their liberties and properties. More importantly, common law was thought to predate monarchy; therefore the King did not make the law and could not be above the law. This was an integral part of the early modern belief that an arbitrary monarch could be challenged for overstepping his or her authority.

Ultimately, radicals and the crown clashed over whether or not the King acted beyond his powers, whether those be the longstanding rights upheld by the ancient constitution and common law or the natural law arguments emphasizing the contract between the governed and their ruler. Such debates, particularly between 1627-1641, drew into question whether or not the King ruled through the arbitrary exploitation of his rights and the extent to which he was held accountable by Parliament. More importantly for nonconformists, English citizens wrestled with whether or not passive resistance existed as the only non-seditious response to perceived injustices, or if more dramatic action could be taken.

²⁰ Janelle Greenberg, "The Confessor's Laws and the Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution," *English Historical Review* 104, no. 412 (1989); 611. See also, Greenberg, *The Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution*.

The custom, continuity, and balance of the ancient constitution provided, in theory, a degree of protection from those seeking radical change to English governance. Common law was, in the words of one, “nothing else but the *Common Custome* of the Realm... for it cannot be made or created either by Charter, or by Parliament.”²¹ Yet, seventeenth-century England was a complex mix of theories and approaches to government.²² Many still clung to absolutist beliefs, arguing that kings were only subject to God above, and that this justified operating outside the bounds of law.²³ Such contestations over government coincided with a violent revolution that was both constitutional and religious in its origins, progress, and legacy. This tumultuous period ushered in a new period of political consciousness, not just for those afforded the luxury of participating in Parliamentary or local politics, but for men and women across the Atlantic world. As chapter one noted, the weakening of censorship and a proliferation of political and religious tracts allowed for a growth of religious dissenters. In fact, it was through the efforts of sectarians in England and the colonies engendered this change during the Revolutionary period.²⁴ This had important implications at home and abroad, and became an important template for Quakers during the 1660s and 1670s.

²¹ Quoted in Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution*, 32-3.

²² J.P. Sommerville argues this point effectively. He contends that Englishmen did not share one outlook on the politics of good governance. There were principles endorsed by many, but this rarely translated to political unity or unity of belief in all things. See J.P. Sommerville, *Politics and Ideology in England, 1603-1640* (London: Longman, 1986), 3-4.

²³ *Ibid.*, 46, 50.

²⁴ As John Donoghue notes, the circulation of radicals like Samuel Gorton between New and Old England had a profound impact on the course of the English Revolution. In particular, the “Trans-Atlantic remigration” and “the published chronicles of the godly’s trials” were shaped by New England’s own constitutional revolution and helped radicalize the events in the imperial center. See Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes*, chapter 4.

The Radical Legacy of the Quakers

The Quakers' decision to draw on the rhetoric of the ancient constitution and natural law was not made in isolation. Quakers consciously built on the legacy of their predecessors. In doing so, Quakers joined a growing network of sectarian activists who paved the way for Quakers to fight for liberty of conscience and political representation. In many ways, the radicalization of political discourse began on the shores of North America, in places like Massachusetts and Rhode Island. It was in places like New England that colonists wrestled with notions of authority, trust, popular sovereignty, and the relationship between religion and government. It was in places like Boston that, as J.S. Maloy notes, colonists employed new means of "accountability, audit and impeachment... invoked to resist the formation of a permanent ruling clique."²⁵ Much of this dissension was wrapped up in the Free Grace controversy, what Michael Winship calls the greatest internal dispute of puritanism prior to the English Civil War. One central reason the Antinomian Controversy had such an impact was because many participants moved throughout the Atlantic in the subsequent years and established themselves in new places like Rhode Island or back across the Atlantic in England. In debating meanings of liberty and the relationship between the government and the governed, colonists joined a growing cohort of religious radicals pushing back against what they perceived to be an arbitrary or intrusive government.²⁶

²⁵ Maloy, *The Colonial American Origins of Modern Democratic Thought*, 115.

²⁶ Michael Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636-1641* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 1. This dissertation will refer to this as both the "Free Grace Controversy" and "Antinomian Controversy." See also, Maloy, *The American Origins of Modern Democratic Thought*, chapter 5; Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes*, chapter 2.

In England, the tensions that led to the English Revolution reached a boiling point after beginning as early as the 1620s. Leading the cause were men like John Lilburne, the founder of the Levellers, who “took up his sword” and joined others like Henry Vane to fight against Charles I and his intrusive government and seemingly Catholic leanings.²⁷ One of the many issues Lilburne championed was the importance of liberty of conscience, and the language used to demand religious freedom invoked the language of natural law and the ancient constitution in opposition to a tyrannical monarch. In a letter to William Prynne, Lilburne stated that “First... I am not against the Parliaments setting up a State-Government for such a Church as they shall think fit, to make the generality of the Land members of, for I for my part leave them to themselves, to doe what they shall thinke good, so that they leave my Conscience free to the Law and Will of my Lord and King.”²⁸ Lilburne believed that all Englishmen deserved the right to worship in whatever manner they desired. Many of the arguments Lilburne established would be representative of the larger efforts of radical sectarians populating England and the Atlantic during the 1640s and 1650s. As such, it is unsurprising that Quakers adopted the same rhetorical approach. This is due, in large part, to the overlap between religious radicals. Lilburne himself opted to “be a user of a temporall sword no more, nor a joyner

²⁷ Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes*, 83.

²⁸ *Copie of a Letter... to William Prynne*, quoted in Pauline Gregg, *Free-Born John: A Biography of John Lilburne* (London: George G. Harrp & Co., 1961), 115. Lilburne voiced his feelings on religious freedom on many occasion, believing that “He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience, and you for the liberty he fights for,” quoted in Gregg, *Free-Born John*, 118.

with those that do so.” Having read the works of James Nayler and other Quakers, Lilburne converted in 1655.²⁹

Religious radicals concerned themselves with myriad issues during the Revolutionary period and their dissent was linked together through common language. Religious liberty, political rights, and economic democracy were united together through the language of natural law, the ancient constitution, and the “Norman Yoke,” another myth that reaching back to the ancient past that was used to legitimize authority. In challenging an overarching government, Lilburne protested the government had no right to persecute those who refused to blindly support the crown. He claimed, “They have by the Law, no authority at all to make me dance attendance upon them... or to Try me a Commoner, in any Criminall cause whatsoever.”³⁰ Unjustly persecuting those who did not walk in lockstep with the government was not the role of Parliament. For Lilburne, “the welfare and safety of the People is the supream Law... People by the Law of Nature have power to preserve and secure themselves.”³¹

Natural law and the ancient constitution were deployed to defend myriad aspects of the early modern man’s world, in particular the freeborn right to economic opportunity. Gerrard Winstanley, the acknowledge founder of the Diggers, employed the language of the ancient constitution when he referenced the “Norman Yoke.” The “Norman Yoke” was intimately linked to the notion of the ancient constitution and

²⁹ John Lilburne, *The Resurrection of John Lilburne* (London, 1656), quoted in Gregg, *Free-Born John*, 344.

³⁰ John Lilburne, *The Free-mans Freedom Vindicated* (London, 1646), 3.

³¹ Quoted in Gregg, *Free-Born John*, 158.

generally referred to the belief that, as Christopher Hill shows, “Before 1066 the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of [England] lived as free and equal citizens, governing themselves through representative institutions. The Norman Conquest deprived them of this liberty, and established the tyranny of an alien King and landlords.”³² Winstanley believed England needed to return to the roots of Anglo-Saxon law, proclaiming, “The best laws that England hath are yokes and manacles, tying one sort of people to another.” In calling for economic opportunity, a cause that would be later taken up by Quakers, Winstanley posited, “The poorest man hath as true a title and just right to the land as the richest man.”³³ Like Winstanley, Richard Overton called for economic and political equality, using natural law to contend “all men are equally and alike born to propriety, liberty, and freedom... from this fountain or root, all just humain powers take their original, not immediately from God... but mediately by the hand of nature.”³⁴

This political discourse generally centered on religious, economic, and political rights. In extreme cases, however, it was used to justify deposing and executing the King. Opinions on regicide were complicated. Many, particularly the Levellers, questioned the lawfulness of regicide. Additionally, executing a king under questionable circumstances

³² Christopher Hill, *Puritanism and Revolution: Studies in Interpretation of the English Revolution of the 17th Century* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1958), 57. Sir John Heyward described the influence of Norman Law on Englishmen as “laid upon the English as fetters upon their feet [and] a ponderous yoke upon their necks.” Quote in Greenberg, *Radical Face of the Ancient Constitution*, 154. References to the Norman Yoke can also be found in Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 55, 66, 133, 271; Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes*, 165, 169.

³³ Quoted in Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 133. The Quakers did share much with men like Winstanley, yet they did not advocate for reform so radical that it would turn over the nature of society. They did not oppose ownership of wealth, rather the existence of extreme poverty alongside wealth used to obtain unnecessary luxuries or political influence. Similarly, they opposed the tithe, but this was not an opposition to the principle of private property. See Moore, *The Light in their Conscience*, 65-6.

³⁴ Richard Overton, *An Arrow against All Tyrants and Tyranny* (London, 1646), 3.

was a poor way to usher in a godly commonwealth. Yet the Levellers faced opposition. John Milton averred, “since the customs have full right to judge a king, and did in fact execute a king who had deserved so ill of church and state and shown no signs of improvement, they acted rightly and regularly and were faithful to their state and to themselves.”³⁵ In once again invoking the “Norman Yoke,” Winstanley spoke on the role of regicide. Winstanley argued “All laws that are not grounded upon equity and reason, not giving a universal freedom to all but respecting persons, ought... to be cut off with the King’s head.” Executing the King was not meant “to remove the Norman Yoke only,” but to restore “the pure law of righteousness before the Fall.”³⁶ Winstanley, Lilburne, and others employed many rhetorical devices, including the ancient constitution and natural law. Inflamed in part by those traveling eastward across the Atlantic, sectarians used this language to defend religious freedoms, economic opportunity, and political rights. This was the legacy on which the Quakers built their own arguments.

An important part of early Quaker efforts at reform was the notion that politics and religion were not separate entities. Rather, individuals like Fox believed them to be two sides of the same coin. For example, Fox lambasted the Nominated Parliament for their inability to foster real, genuine change. It was his belief that corrupt rulers would suffer at the hands of God, averring “But God is coming to plague you, and pour forth all his plagues upon the earth where justice hath not reigned.”³⁷ Edward Burrough, Fox’s

³⁵ John Milton, *A Defence of the People of England*, quoted in Janelle Greenberg, “The Confessor’s Laws,” 629-30. Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes*, 195.

³⁶ Quoted in Hill, *World Turned Upside Down*, 133-4.

³⁷ George Fox, *Newes Coming up out of the North, Sounding Towards the South* (London, 1655), 19.

contemporary and fellow Quaker, made similar arguments about the right of the people to cast aside unjust laws. Burrough believed that “we cannot be subject, but choose rather (than to transgress the law of God which is written into our hearts, by submitting to such mens wills and laws) to suffer by the corrupt wills of men, under corrupt laws.” In doing so, he was invoking the language of sectarian dissenters and joining the larger, transatlantic antinomian discourse of political agitation. Burrough believed, “for it is the Lord alone, and under his Government shall people finde perfect rest, and freedom from all oppression.” He asked, “What is a King? and what is a Parliament? what is a Protector, and what is a Councell? or any other sort of men, while the preference of the Lord is not with them.”³⁸ Both Fox and Burrough appealed to a power higher than the unjust and corrupt laws created by parliament. Quakers, like the sectarians that preceded them, saw that as the government grew more polluted, those in leadership positions forgot the ancient and sacred roots of liberty all English men shared. “Your true interests liest in the broken, poor, despised people of God dissenting from the worlds worships and ways,” Thomas Zachary argued, “while you were true to them and their liberty, you did abide in your first principles of faithfulness, but in as much as you have quit that interest, you have forgotten yourselves and your own original.”³⁹ By invoking the Royal Law, as labeled by the antinomians, Zachary emphasized a commonality between various sectarians. He was calling for a moral philosophy encouraging individuals to “love thy neighbor as thyself.”

³⁸ Edward Burrough, *Truth Defended, or, Certain Accusations Answered* (London, 1656), 13-14; *A Declaration from the People called Quakers, to the Present Distracted Nations of England* (London, 1659), 11.

³⁹ Thomas Zachary, *A Word to the Officers of the Army* (London, 1657), 1-2.

The struggle against an arbitrary government was a pressing concern for Quakers in the wake of the Restoration. Government intrusion took many forms. One such problem was tithes. Quakers objected to the fact that tithes were impropriated and the right to collect them had been sold to lay persons. Quakers also protested the notion that ministers should be paid for their services. In doing so, Quakers engaged with the notion of property. In their eyes, impropriated tithes were lay property and Quakers held property rights in high esteem. Like other antinomians, Quakers believed tithing violated their liberty of conscience by compelling them to support an established church not of their choosing. Additionally, tithing allowed for the Crown to raise up a corrupt ministry serving the state rather than God. As chapter one illustrates, economic concerns were of great importance to Quakers, not only because of the need for Quakerism to be economically viable, but because economic success was linked to conceptions of manhood. Tithes disproportionately affected individuals of small means, limiting their ability to provide for their families, particularly because of how Quakers were punished for their refusals. Prosecuted Quakers frequently faced legal subterfuge and imprisonment for nonappearance to a tithe suit. An imprisoned Quaker might also be subpoenaed to appear at the Exchequer, and when they failed to appear faced a writ of rebellion. This happened to Richard Tregennow, who was imprisoned at Bodmin in October 1660 for refusing to pay tithes. He was allowed to return home for the harvest, but was retaken and sent to the Fleet prison in London. Legal trickery saw Tregennow's estate undervalued, and local officials seized sheep, horses, and oxen. As Tregennow's

case reveals, Quakers faced significant economic and legal pressure thanks to their resistance to tithing.⁴⁰

The tension over tithes was not simply a refusal by Quakers to pay the church. They viewed the debate over tithes in larger terms. Specifically, they believed this was an issue immediately relevant to their rights as freeborn Englishmen, and in combating these acts hearkened back to the radical language of the ancient constitution. In *To the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England*, Fox makes a cogent argument against church tithes. He pleads “let no man be prisoned for Tithes, which have been set up by the Apostates... since the dayes of the Apostles. Let no mans goods be spoiled, and made Havock on Treble, by the Priests and their company.” Using biblical arguments, Fox laments those “put to death for cattel, for money or any outward thing,” or those “whipped, or stocked, or imprisoned” unjustly.⁴¹ Not only were tithes unjust, but the laws seeking to punish Quakers for their objections were unjust as well. Some Quakers even went so far as to proclaim the clergy to be oppressive tools of the government. Many sectarians, Quakers included, saw many government officials—lawyers were particularly seen in this light—as “the Norman army of Antichrist’s laity.” One reason Quakers refused to pay lawyers’ fees was because they did not want to support the oppressive and intrusive system imposed since the arrival of William the Conqueror.⁴² One such tract

⁴⁰ Moore, *The Light in their Conscience*, 118, 129-30. Horle, *The Quakers and the English Legal System*, 144-5. At one point, Quaker even attempted to present a petition against tithing to the Rump Parliament. The petition included nearly 15,000 signatures. Parliament did end up discussing a bill to correct abuses by legal officers and the pruning of lawyer’s fees, but the reform amounted to nothing. See Reay, *The Quakers and the English Revolution* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1985), 85-6.

⁴¹ George Fox, *To the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England: Fifty-nine Particulars laid down for the Regulating of Things* (London, 1659), 1-4.

suggested “The professed ministers... are oppressors... they are the kings of pride in the towns where they are; and the wives... in their hoods, veils, and rings, which are odious to the Lord... Woe to the idle shepherds.”⁴³ If Quakers were mistrustful of ministers, then who could they turn to in order to receive protection for their beliefs, their property, and their rights? For many Quakers, they defended their right to protection by pointing to the foundational beliefs and documents of England. Religion was undoubtedly central, but the ancient constitution provided a language common not just among religious radicals. For others, as we will see later in this chapter, the answer lay across the Atlantic, where Quakers could establish their own colonies grounded in natural law and the liberties afforded by the ancient constitution.

Tithes only represented a fraction of the persecution faced by Quakers during the Interregnum and Restoration period. A series of statutes and laws also disproportionately affected the Quakers. One such example was the Oath of Abjuration, passed in April 1654, which required individuals to take an anti-Catholic oath to be administered as and when local justices saw fit. As Quakers refused to take oaths, this meant many found themselves locked in jails. Quakers like Thomas Zachary lambasted military officials for enforcing such oppressive policies, asking them to “seriously consider what you are doing, whose interest you serve, and you will then see your work ended... that the God of

⁴² Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 271.

⁴³ Thomas Aldam, Elizabeth Hooton, William Pears, Benjamin Nicholson, Jane Holmes, and Mary Fisher, *False Prophets and False Teachers Described*, quoted in Moore, *The Light in their Conscience*, 130.

this world hath bribed you, and hired you to his service; that you are posting back against to serve him under Kings, princes, Nobles, and Bishops.”⁴⁴

Three years later, in 1657, the Protector approved the Petition and Advice, which narrowed the limits of toleration in England. One month later, Parliament extended the Elizabethan Vagrancy Act, harsh legislation aimed at confining the itinerant poor, which granted justices and officers a great deal of authority when it came to apprehending and imprisoning those deemed vagrants, a group that included itinerant Quakers moving throughout the country spreading their gospel.⁴⁵ By the 1660s, Parliament was passing even more restrictive legislation. The Quaker Act (1662), which was part of the Clarendon Code, and the Conventicle Act (1664), offered provisions for fining, imprisoning, and transporting Quakers taken during meetings.⁴⁶ Quakers viewed these statutes as infringements on their rights as “free-born” Englishmen. Anthony Mellidge, a Quaker naval captain, attacked these policies with a fervor more commonly found among the Levellers:

We are not only free-born of England, but we have also purchased our freedome in the Nation, and the continuation thereof with many years hard service, the losse of the lives of many hundreds, the spoyling of much goods, and the shedding of much blood in the late war, by which at last the Lord overturned them, who then fought to enslave our persons, and infringe our liberty in the Nation, in the which liberty now, we do expect to worship God in spirit, and in truth.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Zachary, *A Word to the Officers of the Army*, 8. For a discussion of the Oath of Abjuration, see Moore, *The Light in their Conscience*, 70.

⁴⁵ Barry Reay, *Quakers and the English Revolution*, 56.

⁴⁶ Moore, *The Light in their Conscience*, 182; Reay, *Quakers and the English Revolution*, 106. A discussion of the Quaker engagement with the Clarendon Code can also be found in Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 36.

⁴⁷ Humphry Smith, *The Fruits of Unrighteousness* (London, 1658), 13.

Mellidge engaged with many common themes found throughout other common law and ancient constitutionalist rhetoric. In the same pamphlet, Mellidge's fellow author, James Potter, argued "Thus I who am free-born of the Nation, am not onely deprived of my right and libertys in the Nation... but also kept in long and cruell bondage (contrary to any law either of God or man) by most unjust and unreasonable men."⁴⁸ Mellidge and Potter use the language of the ancient constitution and natural law interchangeably to denounce the government and demand rights and representation. They decried the treatment of Quakers who won such common law rights with "many years hard service" and the actions of "unjust and unreasonable men."

By the 1660s and 1670s Quakers still faced persecution for their religious beliefs, persecution the Quakers viewed as tyranny. Samuel Duncon argued that "I remember I have read that King Charles I, in his sufferings, expressed that he was sensible that there was nothing worse than legal tyranny, that is oppression under the pretence of the execution of a law, for you know tyranny is not legal."⁴⁹ Such oppression was a real factor for Restoration-era Quakers. Reports to the king, Privy Council, and Parliament reveal the staggering number imprisoned for the open practice of Quakerism. After the Fifth Monarchy plot in 1661, Quakers posited that 4,230 of their brethren were imprisoned, and more than 5,000 had already faced other forms of oppression from the government. The Middlesex sessions records show that approximately 834 out of 909 convictions from July 1664 to December 1664 were Quakers. In 1666, Friends publicized

⁴⁸ Ibid., 32.

⁴⁹ Samuel Duncon to the Norwich Magistrates, 1671, in Horle, *The Quakers and the English Legal System*, 101.

that 400 were imprisoned, and 200 had perished in gaols. In 1675, more than 8,000 had been imprisoned. When James II ascended the throne, there were nearly 1,460 Friends in prison and 100 that had died since 1680.⁵⁰

No concrete number can be found for tracking the number of Quakers kept “in Fetters and Irons” and beaten by “the cruel Gaolers.”⁵¹ In *A Collection of Sufferings of the People Called Quakers*, Joseph Besse reported that over 20,000 Quakers on both sides of the Atlantic had encounters with the law between 1650 and 1689. Most of these resulted in short periods of imprisonment, but oftentimes the situations resulted in far more dire results. Across the Atlantic, Mary Dyer, Marmaduke Stephenson, and William Robinson fell victim to the violent persecution of Quakers. Once a trusted ally of Anne Hutchinson and staunch antinomian, Dyer converted to Quakerism during a mid-1650s voyage to England. Stephenson had been preaching Quakerism in Barbados. Robinson had been doing the same in Rhode Island. The three converged on Massachusetts in the summer and fall of 1659 to spread Quaker beliefs only to quickly run afoul of magistrates. Robinson and Stephenson were hanged in October 1659, though Dyer’s executed was stayed and she was given the chance to repent. Refusing to retract her

⁵⁰ Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers: For the Testimony of a Good Conscience* (London, 1753). For evidence of these figures, see Horle, *The Quakers and the English Legal System*, 102. Horle’s information is drawn from the MS Original Records of Sufferings and the Great Book of Sufferings. These figures are elaborated upon in Appendix I. Jane Calvert paints a similarly bleak picture describing the sufferings of Quakers. She posits that between 1650 and 1689, there were 20,721 Quakers in England and America who had some encounter with the law. Of those 20,721, she notes that 450 who died as a result, most of whom were in prison at the time of their death. See Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 52.

⁵¹ Edward Burrough, *An Account of Some Grounds and Reasons of the Innocent Sufferings of the people of God called QUAKERS, and why they Testifie Against the vain customs and practices of the World* (London, 1659), 41; see also, William Penn, *England’s Present Interests Considered, with Honour to the Prince and Safety to the People,*” in *Works*, 1:673.

beliefs, Dyer was hanged in June 1660.⁵² Many faced the same dangers in England, where several of the most visible Quakers perished while in jail. Richard Hubberthorne was a devoted follower of Fox and Margaret Fell who helped fill the void created by the death of James Nayler. Hubberthorne was arrested in the summer of 1662 only to die in prison that August. Edward Burrough suffered the same fate. Burrough traveled to London in 1662 to join the Quakers there in protest only to face arrest. Many of the Quakers were released from prison in August, and again in January 1663. Burrough, however, was kept in jail, having been deemed “too dangerous.” Burrough died in February 1663.⁵³

Not only were Quakers imprisoned for practicing their rights, but trials were often nothing more than a farce. Common-law judges presided with little concern for Quaker defendants, and Quakers themselves embellished their cases by openly challenging the “unjust” laws bringing them to court.⁵⁴ The infringement on Quaker liberties and the rights rooted in the ancient constitution and common law were real and present, even after the tumultuous Interregnum. And it would fall on a new group of leaders to take up the standard of Quaker freedoms.

⁵² Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes*, 288-289. Puritans in Massachusetts were particularly harsh to Quaker women. Phyllis Mack notes how Puritans feared the freedom of Quaker women as they struggled to maintain “a balance between the spiritual importance of the egalitarian marriage partnership on the one hand and the need for a rigid church and family structure on the other. Puritans were, for example, “the only ones to actually examine Quaker women for witches’ marks.” See Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 258-60.

⁵³ Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 52; Moore, *The Light in their Consciences*, 183-4.

⁵⁴ Horle, *The Quakers and the English Legal System*, 105.

Penn, Barclay, and the Second Generation of Quakers

By the 1660s the first generation of Quaker leadership was waning. In its place, a second wave of Quaker theologians and politicians stepped up to carry on the standard of Quaker leadership. William Penn Richard Barclay, and George Keith, among others, accepted the mantle of leadership from Fox. While many of their approaches to spreading their faith shifted, what remained was their commitment to defending Quakers from the persecution of the Restoration government.⁵⁵ Barclay, for example, argues that “forasmuch as all are not called in the same Station, some rich, some poor, some servants, some Masters,” all were entitled to liberty of conscience. Like their predecessors, Barclay and Penn struggled against “Breach[es] of Liberty, Oppression, Persecution!” They claimed they “will have none of your Order and Government; we are taught to follow the Light in our Consciences, and not the Orders of Men.” Instead, Barclay implores the government to function in a godly manner reminiscent of the household. In invoking the language of godly patriarchy, Barclay references the “Household of Faith,” that would tend to “the Care of the Poor, of Widdows and Orphans.” In doing so, he strikes at the intrusive policies aimed at controlling the ability for nonconformists to provide for their families as godly men. Instead, he puts the onus on the Crown to provide stability for its subjects like a Christian man would provide stability for his family, “Who will be so unchristian, as to reprove this good Order and Government, and to say, it is needless?” This stance was echoed by Penn, who urged

⁵⁵ Not only did Penn inherit the mantle of leadership for the Quakers, he also adopted many of the argumentative approaches used by the first Quakers. In particular, he embraced the “debate tracts,” which date back to Puritan dissenters. See Hugh Barbour, “The Young Conversialist,” in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Dunn and Dunn, 15-37.

“you that are the Poor” to trust in God, who would “reward you in your Bosoms.”⁵⁶

Barclay and Penn’s call to support *all* members of England reflected the Quaker emphasis on godly patriarchy, not only within the family, but a notion of godly patriarchy for the leaders of a government.

The new generation of Quaker leaders saw themselves as the inheritors of the radical sectarians that preceded them. Penn, in particular, championed longstanding arguments for liberty of conscience and the freedom of Quakers to worship in the manner to which they were accustomed. Like Lilburne and the Levellers, Penn saw the infringement on religious freedom as a black mark upon the good governance of the Crown. Penn noted that liberty of conscience “seem to me irrefutable.”⁵⁷ Imprisoned Quakers suffered more than a loss of dignity, but a real and practical loss, as Penn observed that “your proceedings against me to the Loss of my Liberty & Propriety for Assembling after our accustomed manner to worship God” were an affront on the long-held liberties for Englishmen. Arresting Quakers for practicing their religion was “destructive contrary to the fundamental Laws of England, which I claim as my birth-right & Inheritance & as the Immutable Foundation of the English Constitution in point of Government.”⁵⁸ He believed that the ancient constitution, natural law, and the English

⁵⁶ Robert Barclay, *The Anrachy of the Ranters and other Libertines* (London, 1676), 13, 34, 37; William Penn, *To the Churches of Jesus throughout the World* (1677), *Works*, 1:67.

⁵⁷ William Penn to Justice Fleming, A Justice of Quorum, and Deputy-Lieutenant in Westmoreland (1673), *Works*, 1:157; William Penn, *Exceptions against the Procedure of the Court*, *PWP*, 1:175.

⁵⁸ Penn, *Exceptions Against the Procedure of the Court*, September 5, 1670, *PWP* 1:175. Penn goes on to argue that the imprisonment of Quakers for “any Act of Religious worship” is “destructive of the Great Charter” and prevented Quakers from “obtaining of our antient Rights & Priviledges: but as English men.”

legal tradition ensured that all Englishmen were entitled to liberty and property. Along with those rights, Penn believed Englishmen should be free from arbitrary violence and oppression. It was the responsibility of the government; specifically Parliament and juries, to ensure such rights were protected.⁵⁹ By invoking this language, Penn positioned Quakers within a larger sectarian movement spanning the Atlantic world and British Empire.

Penn and his colleagues defended their right to liberty of conscience so vociferously because the persecution they faced directly affected their ability to do their duty as men. The imprisonment of Quakers was a denial of their rights and their ability to perform their duties as men. In some cases, jail time kept Quakers “from their Wives and Families, some Four, some Five, and some Six Years till they have spent most of what they had, and have had little left to help themselves and Families; A Punishment not much inferior to Death it self!”⁶⁰ While undoubtedly devastating, when framed through the lens of seventeenth-century notions of masculinity, these assaults directly impeded a man’s sense of self-worth. By taking away his tools, animals, and money, they threatened the ability for a Quaker to serve as family patriarch - to protect his family and provide them with a sense of financial security.

The Quakers frequently argued for their right to practice their religion in their “accustomed manner.” But by the time Penn was writing, Quakers were still determining what exactly that “accustomed manner” entailed. As such, the Quaker’s often invoked

⁵⁹ Yirush, *Settlers, Liberty, and Empire*, 30.

⁶⁰ William Mead, *A Particular Account of the Late and Present Great Sufferings and Oppressions of the People called Quakers* (London, 1680), 2.

their “ancient testimonies” to legitimize their religious practices much like they invoked the “ancient” rights of Englishmen. Despite the relative youthfulness of Quakerism, Penn and other Quaker leaders used the language and myth of the ancient testimonies, ancient constitution, natural law to fight for their religious freedoms. It became a common set of values, beliefs, and assumptions that Penn and others used to bring Quakers together for a common good. These were also tropes well known to those familiar with England’s recent history of religious dissent. Whether or not their right to religious freedom was *actually* supported by the ancient constitution is irrelevant when considering the fact that the language and rhetoric still played an important role in shaping Quaker policy both in England and abroad.

Quakers saw liberty of conscience as the central aspect of their freeborn rights and also used the ancient constitution to defend their right to their specific religious practices. The ability to practice religion in their accustomed manner connected with their political rights, their economic opportunities, and their beliefs in a stable society. As such, they believed that there “is not a Law extant that legally can invalidate the great Charter of England, so is there not the least mention made therein of the necessitie of our conforming to any kind of Religion, in order to enjoy the benefit thereby confirmed.” For Penn, the ancient constitution and England’s legal tradition preserved the right for Quakers to worship freely; as Penn argued that “the Ancient Constitution of the Lands doth not regard this or that profession of Religion (much less allow a Forfeiture of those Civil rights & Priviledges upon a bare Non-Confirmity in those matters).” He goes on to state that the ancient constitution “considers us as English Men, & as a Civil Body &

Society of People, trading & commercing together in such things as are of a Civil, external Nature & importance.”⁶¹ By jailing Quakers, the government was turning its back on the longstanding tradition of English liberties. By doing so, they not only rendered the Quakers an “other,” somehow outside the dominion of freeborn rights, but they also hampered their ability to preserve their own livelihoods, thus further rendering their liberties invalid.

Penn’s commitment to championing the rights of Quakers stemmed from many sources. On one hand, he was motivated by his own commitment to the tenets of Quakerism. His was not a half-hearted conversion, as he quickly became one of the more vocal and visible Quakers in England during the 1670s. On the other hand, his motivation came from his own experience in prison. While in Newgate, Penn observed how the imprisonment of Quakers tended “to the ruin & Detriment of whole Families, not regarding the Poor, the Widdow, & the Fatherless, beyond all President or excuse.”⁶² He petitioned Charles II to take action against officials guilty of “breaking open of Locks & Bolts, & tak[ing] sometimes double, what the Fine itself amounts to; & such as are not able to answer them send to Prison as Rioters.”⁶³ With men placing such importance on their ability to provide for their families as part of their gendered identity, the denial of rights for English men was something Penn saw as a serious grievance.

⁶¹ William Penn, *Narrative of the Sufferings of Quakers in the Isle of Ely*, 1671, in *PWP* 1:224. As this document shows, Penn argued that the Great Charter guaranteed liberty of conscience. It is possible that he’s drawing this from the first chapter of the Magna Carta, which, as Peter Linebaugh notes, “concerned the freedom of the Christian Church from the secular authority of the king.” See Linebaugh, *Magna Carta Manifesto*, 27-8.

⁶² *Petition to Parliament*, 1671, *PWP*, 1:206.

⁶³ William Penn to Charles II, 1674, *PWP*, 1:283.

Penn felt the success of civil government in England was dependent upon the law being grounded in the eternal law underpinning English society dating back to the medieval period. Penn feared that a monarch seeking to rule by might and power rather than law and right would usurp the ancient constitution. In writing John Hawtrey, a barrister, Penn posited, “Some [laws] are Fundamental; & those are durable, & indissolveable... I mean all those Laws, that Constitute the Antient Civil Government of England, & which make up these two words, English men.” Penn did agree that some laws “be Atlerable,” such as those “suited to State, or national Emergencies.” But laws that impede upon one’s religion, for example, “increase animosities, disturb the peace, & lay waste [to] honest & industrious Families.” When it came to religious freedom, “This or that sort of religion was not specified in the Antient Civil Governmt; though the Clergy twisted into the Great Charter: Yet let it be considered, that it was not intended to deny others their Liberty of Conscience; but to secure their Church, Properties, & Revenues from the Kings Seisure.”⁶⁴ Penn’s insistence on defending Quakers’ rights to the ancient liberties guaranteed to English *men* was entirely consistent with the sectarian rhetoric of the ancient constitution and natural law and early modern notions of manhood and patriarchy. Violations of Quaker rights were seen as monstrous acts that deprived them of “our Lives and Liberties.” In particular, they contested when “Property is made subservient to the Will and Interest” of corrupt judges. Penn asked, “who can truly esteem himself a free-man when all Pleas for Liberty are esteem’d Sedition”⁶⁵ These

⁶⁴ William Penn to J[ohn] H[awtrey] and Companion, March 31, 1674, *PWP*, 2:280.

⁶⁵ William Penn, *The Peoples Antient and Just Liberties Asserted*, in *The Tryal of William Penn and William Mead*, 3, 61.

were concerns common among religious dissenters and those who conformed to the Anglican Church, because all English men saw personal autonomy and the right to protect their properties as part of their identity as subjects and as men.

When Byllynge and Fenwick approached Penn to mediate the dispute over West New Jersey in 1674 and 1675, a new opportunity arose for the Quakers to put their ancient constitutional ideals in the service of liberty of conscience in America, where they could join an emerging Atlantic network of colonies where religious tolerance thrived as a fundamental liberty under the law. The Quakers already had experience wrestling with issues of governance and representation by the time they turned their attention to British North America. Fox's idea of Gospel Order (discussed in chapter one) was further developed into a federal system with, as Jane Calvert notes, "governing bodies organized hierarchically and geographically." This federal system took some power out of the hands of individuals into centralized governments. In a sense, Quakers developed a system of internal governance rooted in representative democracy where "God hath ordinarily... employed such whom he hath made Use of in gathering of his Church, and in feeding and watching over them, though not excluding others."⁶⁶

This system of government was one of popular sovereignty where a spiritual aristocracy managed the organization of the government. It was also the practical realization of the system Quakers and other sectarians thought the British government should represent. This notion of government was further reified in 1669, when the Quakers put their laws and beliefs into a written document. Heavily based on English common law, the document established a formal set of disciplines for Quakers. It also

⁶⁶ Barclay, *Anarchy of the Ranters*, 87; Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 41-3.

invoked language very reminiscent of the ancient constitution, contending, “It may be safely asserted, that there was never a period in the Society when... that order and subjection which may be said to constitute a *discipline* did not exist. But as the number of members increased, those mutual helps and guards... were found to require some regular arrangements for the preserving of order in the church.” This formalized structure would also provide a template for West New Jersey and Pennsylvania, where weighty friends would act as “Good Men” and oversee regional governments of Quakers. Quakers also had experience crafting their own constitutions, implementing at least seven different constitutions—both ecclesiastical and civil—between 1669 and 1701.⁶⁷ These constitutions brought together the fundamental and common law into a written document. Much like the Magna Carta was “not the Original Establishment, but a Declaration and Confirmation of the Establishment,” a Quaker constitution would be a written record of the work between God and man to order society.⁶⁸ This belief that a constitution was a joint venture between God and man was an important one for Penn. In theory, he endeavored for the constitutions of West New Jersey and Pennsylvania to embody these ideals. He wanted to codify the Quaker concepts of the inner light, something shared by *all* men and women. The logical extension of this belief was the idea that the power of a government rested in *all* people, since God was in all people. This would help create the foundation of a system of popular sovereignty in the colonies.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ The Book of Extracts from the London Yearly Meeting, quoted in Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 43-6; Offutt Jr., *Of “Good Laws” and “Good Men,”* 2-3.

⁶⁸ Penn, *England’s Present Interests Discover’d*, 29.

⁶⁹ Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 81.

The West Jersey Concessions

The first attempt at a Quaker government came in West New Jersey. Signed on March 3, 1677, the West Jersey Concessions and Agreements was one of the more forward-thinking documents of its time. John Smolenski posits that it is “one of, if not *the* most radical colonial constitutions ever enacted” and represented the embodiment of Quaker beliefs about the intersection of Quakerism, moral law, and the ancient constitution. The Concessions and Agreements addressed “the main problems that preoccupied [Byllynge], Penn, and other Quaker authors in the 1650s.”⁷⁰ The document had forty-four chapters and articulated a plan for the distribution of property and the organization of legislature. Breaking from the tradition in England and elsewhere throughout the British Empire, New Jersey’s political system placed most of the authority in the hands of a single legislative body, rather than the executive. In doing so, West Jersey departed from the English precedent in which Parliament had little recourse to check Royal power beyond petitions pleading for restraint. The legislature was elected annually by the province’s residents and was responsible for erecting and enacting laws “agreeable to the primitive antient and Fundamentall Laws of the nation of England.” In

⁷⁰ Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 53-5. My analysis of the West Jersey Concessions and Agreements is borrowed heavily from Smolenski’s work. See also, Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 91-2; Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 31-2; I agree with Smolenski’s claim that New Jersey’s constitution was *one* of the most forward-thinking documents of its time. However, Smolenski does not appreciate the legacy of sectarian innovation the Quakers were building on, particularly the case of Rhode Island’s 1641 and 1647 constitutions. The 1641 constitution put popular sovereignty into law while clearly defining democracy and its place in the government. It also drastically reduced the power of magistrates. It also defined liberty of conscience. The 1647 constitution, known as the Acts and Orders of Rhode Island, saw the entire body of freemen participate in its drafting and deliberation. The Acts and Orders required a jury of peers for trials, one-year term limits for governors, and made representatives accountable to the people. While the West Jersey Concessions are important, when framed in the context of the radical Atlantic network of religious dissenters, it emerges as part of a legacy dating back to Rhode Island radicals nearly three decades prior to West Jersey. See Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes*, 132-134, 263-4.

addition, the concessions protected property rights, placed the right to levy taxes in the hands of a general assembly, eliminated debtor's prison, and facilitated greater political participation. The concessions endeavored to create a civil government in which "no Laws formerly made, contrary to the Principle of... righteousness in man, may remain in force; nor no new ones be made, but what are manifestly agreeable thereunto." For the government to function properly, "all just Laws... have their foundation in the right reason, and must agree with, and proceed from it, if they be properly good for and rightly serviceable to Mankind."⁷¹

The West Jersey Concessions outlined a system of popular government rooted in the ancient constitution and natural law not seen since the constitutions of Rhode Island in the 1640s. Central to West Jersey's government was a general assembly "impartially elected" by freemen in West Jersey. Members of the Assembly had "Liberty of speech" and the right to debate amendments and the ability to "enact and make all such Laws, Acts, and Constitutions as shall be necessary for the well Government" of West Jersey. These laws, however, could not contradict the fundamental laws of England. In an attempt to curb the power of the courts, the West Jersey Concessions stated that a person could not "susteyn or beare two offices in the said Proince at one and at the same time." Like in Rhode Island, there "shall be in every Court three Justices or Commissioners who shall sitt with the twelve men of the Neighbourhood" to "heare all causes and to assist the said twelve men." In doing so, West Jersey hoped to elevate the jury to judicial

⁷¹ *The Concessions and Agreements of the Proprietors Freeholders and Inhabitants of the Province of West New Jersey in America*, PWP, 1:405; Isaac Pennington, "A Brief Account of What the People Called Quakers Desire in Reference to Civil Government," in *Somewhat Spoken to a Weighty Question concerning Magistrates Protection of the Innocent* (London, 1680), 14.

supremacy and sidestep the persecuting judges and corrupt juries they encountered in England. Justices and Constables were selected by the inhabitants, while the colony followed the Quaker precedent of dividing authority regionally, as the Concessions would “subdivide the said Province into Hundreds proprieties or other such divisions and distinctions.”⁷²

While developing a feasible system of government that supported Quaker interests was central to the West Jersey Concessions, the centerpiece to this colony was liberty of conscience. The Concessions posited that “no Men, nor number of Men upon Earth, hath power or Authority to rule over men’s consciences in religious matters, therefore it is consented agreed and ordained that no person or persons whatsoever within the said Province at any time or times hereafter shall be any waies upon any pretence whatsoever called in question or in the least punished or hurt either in Person, Estate, or Priveledge for the sake of his opinion.” Moreover, “no proprietor, Freeholder, or Inhabitant of the said Province... shall be deprived or condemned of Life, limb, Liberty, estate, Property, or any ways hurt in his or their Priviledges, Freedoms, or Franchises upon any account whatsoever without a due tryall.”⁷³ New Jersey’s embrace of liberty of conscience was not new in the British Atlantic. Dutch settlers in New York were allowed the ability to “enjoy the liberty of their Consciences in divine worship and Church” after the English took control of New York.⁷⁴ More notably, in 1663, John Clarke, a political

⁷² *The Concessions and Agreements of the Proprietors Freeholders and Inhabitants of the Province of West New Jersey in America, PWP*, 1:398, 404-6.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 1:396-7; Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 54.

⁷⁴ Samuel Hazard, ed. *Pennsylvania Archives*, Series I (Philadelphia: Joseph Severns & Co., 1852), 1:25 (Hereafter cited as *Pennsylvania Archives*).

ally of Samuel Gorton, secured a charter from Charles II that guaranteed liberty of conscience for Rhode Island.⁷⁵ When viewed in the context of the political change in the British Atlantic, the West Jersey Concessions emerge as a logical extension of sectarian views on political governance borne from the tensions of the English Revolution.

The West Jersey Concessions were a genuine attempt to put Quaker beliefs into practice while upholding notions of the ancient constitution and the rights of freeborn Englishmen. The concessions reflected interest of Quakers to keep with the Quaker ideal that “the body of the meeting should have the responsibility of discerning and creating the law.” The fundamental laws of West Jersey also attempted to eliminate some of the hierarchy and corruption present in England by created a “generall free and supream Assembly.” Many hoped that West New Jersey would “lay a foundation for after ages to understand their liberty as men and Christians, that they may not be brought in bondage but by their own consent; for we put the power in the people.”⁷⁶ Yet, the first Quaker colony faced challenges in terms of practical application. The colony included a headright system in which “for every Able man servant that he shall carry with him and arriveing there the like Quantity of seaventy Acres of land English Measure and whoever shall send Servants before that time shall have for every able man servant he or they so send as aforesaid and arriveing there the like Quantity of Seavanty Acres.” Such a system encouraged the commofidication of servants as financial instruments. Additionally, Edward Byllynge attempted to assert his authority as an executive over the inhabitants of

⁷⁵ Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes*, 289.

⁷⁶ Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 101-3; 1:403; Gawen Lawrie, William Penn, Nicholas Lucas, Edward Byllynge, John Edridge, and Edmond Warner to Richard Hartshorne, August 26, 1676, *PWP*, 1:416

the colony. Such actions reveal the ways in which economic concerns and the realities of settlement conflicted with the ideal envisioned by Quakers.⁷⁷

Penn's Woods and the Ancient Constitution

West New Jersey proved a useful training ground for Penn to reify beliefs about the relationship between patriarchy, the ancient constitution and natural law, and just governance. His rhetoric remained committed to freeing Quakers from being “stript, Imprisoned, and banished.” By infusing his language with the tropes of the ancient constitution and natural law, Penn emphasized how early settlers of Pennsylvania were “English men, a Title full of Liberty and Property.” His colony would be a place where Quakers would be able to fairly value “the Lives, Liberties, and Properties of so many thousand free-born English Families.”⁷⁸ In making such a connection, he explicitly connected Quaker migrants to the freeborn Englishman’s long past and the rights and privileges they deserved. Moreover, Penn’s rhetoric stressed that “true and faithful Trustees” would help keep “their Country free from Bondage and Slavery; and avoiding such Ill Methods as may render Themselves and Posterity liable thereto.”⁷⁹

Penn often put the onus on his fellow Quakers to help shoulder the burden of preserving liberties. He knew that many of the first settlers experienced the same discriminations while in England, and by reaching out to his friends and colleagues, Penn sought to build a coalition of like-minded individuals endeavoring to uphold common

⁷⁷ *The Concessions and Agreements of the Proprietors Freeholders and Inhabitants of the Province of West New Jersey in America*, PWP, 1:391; Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 102.

⁷⁸ William Penn to the King, Lords, and Commons, November 1680[?], PWP, 2:52; William Penn, *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience once more Briefly Debated and Defended* (London, 1670), 6.

⁷⁹ William Penn to the Representatives of the Free-Men of this Province of Pennsylvania and Counties Annexed, May 10, 1692, HSP.

rights and ancient values. Penn implored the inhabitants of Pennsylvania to be respectable, sober men who “can reasonably desire for the security & improvement of their own happiness.”⁸⁰ Penn even saw this as an opportunity to recruit new colonists. In *The Excellent Priviledge of Liberty & Property* a 1687 piece of promotional literature, Penn outlined some of his ideas and beliefs about fundamental law. The document included a copy of England’s Magna Carta alongside several of the foundational documents for Pennsylvania, including its frame of government and charter of liberties. In addition to these reproductions, the text included Penn’s own thoughts about the ancient constitution and common law.⁸¹ This was unsurprising considering the importance Penn placed on the Great Charter. For Penn, the Magna Carta was not only the foundational document ordering English law, but an expression of God’s law, contending that the Magna Carta was “not the *Original* Establishment, but a *Declaration and Confirmation* of that Establishment.”⁸² The Magna Carta was an ideal rhetorical device for Penn, as it allowed him to tap into well-known rhetoric that spoke to English legal thinkers, sectarian protestors, and simple English subjects who identified through their ability to maintain personal autonomy as patriarchs of their families. Thus, he sought to publicize his colony while at the same time making clear to potential colonists how he would frame his government.

⁸⁰ William Penn to the Inhabitants of Pennsylvania, April 8, 1681, *PWP*, 2:84; *To the King Lords and Commons*, *PWP*, 2:52.

⁸¹ William Penn, *The Excellent Priviledge of Liberty & Property being the Birth-Right of the Free-Born Subjects of England* (Philadelphia, 1687); Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 87. Smolenski views the publishing of the Magna Carta as part of Penn’s efforts to provide a civic education for colonists while also bringing them in line with Quaker thought.

⁸² Quoted in Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 77. Also quoted in Isaac Sharpless, *Quakerism and Politics* (Philadelphia: Ferris & Leach, 1905), 79.

While Penn frequently invoked the political rhetoric of Atlantic sectarians his relationship with the ancient constitution and just governance was a complicated one. As Penn began developing his framework for fair governance, it became increasingly clear that Penn's gendered worldview affected his beliefs about his role as proprietor. Like many men in early modern England, Penn saw himself as a godly patriarch who was uniquely suited to govern his family and his colony. This manifested itself in his correspondence, where Penn expressed concerns over his fitness to rule and sought validation and approval from his subjects. In discussing the naming of the colony, Penn observed how "I chose New Wales, being, as this is a pretty hilly country." Yet it would go "by the name of Pennsylvania, a name the King would give it, in honor to my father." Penn was "wary the name, for I feared lest it should be lookt on as a wanting in me, & not as a respect in the King, as it truly was, to my father, whom he often mentions with praise."⁸³

Penn's role as an absentee proprietor would become a recurring issue for both Pennsylvania's colonists and its proprietor. Penn frequently demanded "letters from your government recounting the affairs of it," because it had to be known "that they may be authoratative to me."⁸⁴ Such anxiety was unfounded. The grant from Charles II clearly established Penn as "the true and absolute Proprietaries of all the Lands and Dominions aforesaid," and Charles did "grant free, full and absolute Power... to [Penn] and his Heirs,

⁸³ William Penn to Robert Turner, March 5 1681. William Penn Miscellaneous Letters and Documents, 1665-1801 (Mss.B.P.38), APS.

⁸⁴ William Penn to Thomas Lloyd, Robert Turner, et. al., December 27, 1689. William Penn Miscellaneous Letters and Documents, 1665-1801 (MssB.P38), APS.

their Deputies and Lieutenants, for the good and happy Government of [Pennsylvania].”⁸⁵ Although Penn’s fears were misplaced, his concerns established an important precedent for his involvement in the colony’s constitutional framework. Penn envisioned his colony and its constitution acting as the centerpiece for a colony in which the civic virtue of Quaker elites would provide a template for moral living that would provide uplift to other settlers to the colony.⁸⁶ This vision was complicated. Penn feared the loss of authority that might come with colonization. As he and his colleagues wrote and rewrote the foundational documents of Pennsylvania, many of Penn’s desires would come to light; desires that often contradicted the Quaker values embodied in his rhetoric.

By the mid-1680s Penn had established himself as a champion of Quaker liberties quick to invoke radical sectarian language to protest what he perceived as arbitrary and intrusive government acts. Yet, as he came to formulate his government for Pennsylvania, Penn’s attitudes towards the ancient constitution, natural law, and government began to favor a more Royalist conception of government than the version common among radical republicans. For much of the 1670s, Penn embraced a Whiggish political stance, in large part because of his attitudes towards liberty of conscience.⁸⁷ Yet

⁸⁵ The Royal Charter granted by King Charles the Second to William Penn, Esq., Acts of Parliament, Orders in Council, etc., 1637-1700, NV-177, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485A), HSP.

⁸⁶ John Smolenski argues that Penn hoped the constitution would be “administered by a virtuous civic elite” and would help colonists live moral, virtuous lives. See Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 65. William Offutt Jr. also makes this argument, contending that Penn established a system of governance in the Delaware that was manipulative in its purpose. Offutt Jr. contends that Pennsylvania’s government was geared towards putting in power “good men, specifically Quakers, who would use their good reputations to put in place laws beneficial to Quaker beliefs and values. See Offutt Jr., *Of “Good Laws” and “Good Men,”* 11.

⁸⁷ Penn’s attitudes in 1679 under the spectre of a Popish plot and anti-Catholic sentiment reflects his Whig beliefs. For an explanation of his political approach, see Mary Maples Dunn, *William Penn: Politics and Conscience* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), 27-32. Dunn notes, for example,

he was friends with James, the Duke of York, and generally had no problems with the values of monarchy. As Mary Maples Dunn notes, Penn believed “monarchy must be limited by law, balanced by the powers of the people through their fundamental right to exercise legislative and judicial control.”⁸⁸ With this in mind, Penn’s Royalist approach to the ancient constitution was well-suited for his vision of Pennsylvania’s government. And this view was further reinforced by Penn’s gendered conception of the world. While the process of writing a constitution for Pennsylvania proceeded haltingly and with many challenges, Penn’s continued insistence on asserting his authority as proprietor was entirely consistent with his conception of government and his belief in the importance of a strong patriarch to guide a family.⁸⁹

Pennsylvania would not achieve a stable frame of government until the Charter of Privileges (1701). In the process, Penn would collaborate with a number of well-known political thinkers, face political setback when William and Mary claimed the English throne, and face opposition from colonists opposed to proprietary rule. In 1681 and 1682, Penn authored two texts: the Fundamental Constitution and the Frame of Government. The 1682 Frame of Government would ultimately be the first governing document in Pennsylvania. Penn’s first frame met resistance among the colonists, who came together to reform the document. Instead of actually revising the 1682 Frame, a new Frame of

that Penn’s calls for Parliament to protect subjects from Popery and slavery reflected a Whig demand for a Protestant succession.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 32.

⁸⁹ John Smolenski emphasizes the novelty of Pennsylvania governments in the way they stress government as a social institution, the idea that good government was contextual, and that laws mattered less than good people. Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 65-70. I contend that Smolenski’s third point, the idea that good people trumped good laws, reflects the relationship between Quaker religious values and Penn’s emphasis on patriarchal authority.

Government was put in place in 1683. General unrest and suspicion of Penn and his loyalties to James II led William and Mary to deprive Penn of his government in 1692. In 1693, Pennsylvania was annexed to New York and placed under the authority of Benjamin Fletcher. Penn managed to regain control of his colony in 1694, and by 1696 a new Frame of Government was put in place. This time, William Markham, the lieutenant governor, managed the new frame. Finally, by 1701, the Charter of Privileges was enacted despite resistance from Penn.⁹⁰

A closer examination of the early drafts of the Frame of Government and the Fundamental Constitution reveals Penn's gendered and royalist interpretation of the ancient constitution. While working alongside John Darnall, a lawyer, Pennsylvania's early documents included the Bishop of Durham clause, a clause that would have cast Penn as a feudal lord. The Bishop of Durham clause would grant the proprietor regal power within his province. The Bishop of Durham had *jura regalia*, i.e., within the county of Durham, which is located in northern England, the Bishop essentially held the same rights as the king. He could pardon treason or murders, appoint judges, and issue writs. In the case of Pennsylvania, this would give Penn powers over church and state, the right to confer honorary titles, erect churches and chapels, and retain royalties from hunting and fishing. Darnall's initial outline stated that Penn would "have exercise use & & enjoy as large & ample Royaltys prorogatives Jurisdictions priviledges librtys & franchises as well upon the water as the land within the limits aforesaid & every of them as any Bishop of within his bishoprick or county Palatin of Durham in our Kindom of

⁹⁰ I draw my account of various iterations of Pennsylvania's Frame of Government from several sources. See Gary Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 31-45, 67-72, 200, 237; Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 103-121, 126-135; Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 65-70.

England ever had held used or enjod or ought or of right might have had held used or enjoyed.”⁹¹

The desire for such authority reflected Penn’s beliefs that a strong leader would oversee a colony the way a strong patriarch would manage his family. In a letter to Robert Turner, Anthony Sharp, and Roger Roberts, Penn wrote how “for the matters of liberty & priviledge, I purpose that which is extraordinary,” a system of government that would prevent against the “mischeifs in Government” hampering the expansion of Quakerism in England. This system would rely on a political order reliant on a powerful proprietor and a social order based on property. Penn would be able to prevent these “mischeifs in Government” because, while he did not have a Bishop of Durhan clause, the charter granted by Charles II gave Penn significant authority. Though he never received the power and authority he so desired, the charter granted to Penn by Charles II did bestow him with the right to “remit, release, pardon, and abolish (whether before Judgment or after) all Crimes and Offences whatsoever committed within the said Country against the Said Laws,” provided he not do so in cases of treason or murder and that the laws of Pennsylvania be “agreeable to the Laws and Statutes, and Rights of this Our Kingdom of *England*.”⁹²

⁹¹ John Darnall’s Outline for the Charter of Pennsylvania, July[?] 1680, in *PWP*, 2:41.

⁹² William Penn to Robert Turner, Anthony Sharp, and Roger Roberts, April 12, 1681, *PWP*, 2:88-9; Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 29-30. Nash goes so far as to cast a degree of doubt on the willingness of Penn to adopt a frame of government. He references statements by William Markham, in which Markham posits “I knew very well [the Frame of Government] was forced upon him by friends who unless they received all that they demanded would not settle the country.”; *The Charter of Charles the Second, of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland... unto William Penn, Proprietary and Governor of the Province of Pensilvania*, in *A Collection of Charters and other Publick Acts Relating to the Province of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia, 1740), 3. It is worth noting that Penn’s desire for control over his land is not unsurprising. When granted the charter in April 1681, no other proprietor had control over such a large tract of land.

Penn had to submit his Frame of Government to more than just lawyers.

Members of government reviewed the document as well. An early revision by Lord North proposed that “all and singular the Powers and Authorities hereby given unto the said William Penn... for and concerning matters both Ecclesiasticall Civill and military within the said Province... shall be subordinate and Subject to the Power and regulation of the Lords of the Privy Council.”⁹³ Such a policy stood in opposition to Penn’s purposed Bishop of Durham clause. Instead of granting Penn power equivalent to royal prerogative, North’s inclusion would make Penn a puppet of the Crown and its dictates. Moreover, North proposed several additional restrictions on Penn’s charter, including a clause to “enable the King... to repeal the laws of Ordinances... to controul the Ordinances of Mr. Pen for government” and “the Clause to compell a Compensation upon any breach of the Act of Navigation.”⁹⁴ These were not unexpected, as clearly Charles II did not desire to relinquish too much control to Penn. Yet, they impeded Penn’s ability to exert authority as patriarch of the colony and hindered his prerogative as proprietor of the colony. Considering how much Penn’s conception of his proprietorship

According to John Moretta, “No private citizen in English history had ever possessed as much land.” See Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 103.

⁹³ Chief Justice North’s Memorandum on William Penn’s Draft Charter, January 1681, *PWP*, 2:59. Lord North refers to Sir Francis North, first Baron of Guilford. North, a politician and judge, was a member of the Privy Council during his dealings with Penn in 1681. The following year, North was appointed Lord Keeper, a post he held until 1685. Paul D. Halliday, “North, Francis, first Baron Guilford (1637-1685),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20301>, accessed March 8, 2016]. For more on North’s involvement in Penn’s charter, see Stephen Saunders Webb, “‘The Peaceable Kingdom:’ Quaker Pennsylvania in the Stuart Empire,” in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Richard S. Dunn and Mary Maples Dunn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 173-194.

⁹⁴ Chief Justice North’s Proposed Restrictions on William Penn’s Patent, January 1681, *PWP*, 2:61.

and the ancient constitution was based on a Royalist conception of a good leader properly ruling his colony, North's concessions were a blow to Penn's vision.

Throughout the process of writing the charter, Penn remained cognizant of other colonies throughout the British Empire. In particular, he endeavored to model his charter—specifically the inclusion of a clause protecting religious liberty—on the charter of Rhode Island drawn up in 1663. In fact, in a draft of the charter drawn up by William Blathwayt, someone—historians suspect this individual was Penn himself—inserted Rhode Island's clause on religious freedom almost verbatim.⁹⁵ Blathwayt ultimately struck this clause from the charter. The reasons for this omission are unclear, but it does suggest that crown officials were hesitant to offer Penn the authority he so strongly desired. Additionally, Blathwayt's charter restricted the rights not only of Penn, but also of the inhabitants of Pennsylvania. The charter, which passed the great seal on March 4, 1681, did not permit Penn to build forts, confer honors or titles, or pardon those accused of treason or murder. He could grant manor lords limited powers, but he was required to enforce the Acts of Navigation and admit customs inspectors to Pennsylvania. This was in contrast to imperial policy towards other colonies in the Atlantic. Such restrictions were not placed on Lord Baltimore in Maryland. With regards to the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, they, too, felt the weight of imperial control. Pennsylvanians were not granted English citizenship automatically, nor could they trade with Ireland. Laws were

⁹⁵ Blathwayt served as the secretary of the Lords of Trade during his dealings with Penn. Editors' Note, *PWP*, 2:22; Barbara C. Murison, "Blathwayt, William (*bap.* 1650, *d.* 1717)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2626>, accessed March 8, 2016].

subject to review by the king, and Parliament could impose customs duties without their consent.⁹⁶

Despite facing opposition from theorists and Parliamentary officials, Penn's 1682 Frame of Government was an attempt to grant himself a significant amount of power as proprietor while buttressing an elite class of Quaker colonists. The initial structure of Penn's first Frame of Government was a three-part government. Penn, as proprietor, acted as the executive, though it was also possible for a governor to fill this role. Two elected branches stood alongside the executive. The Provincial Council acted as the legislative branch and was primarily filled with elites. This house would act as a self-perpetuating aristocracy. Seats would be awarded to the first 50 purchasers of 5,000 acres or more. By making such a steep property requirement, Penn sought to fill the more influential legislative body with like-minded Quakers intent on securing their status within the fledgling society. The second branch, an Assembly, would act as the representative element. Together, these branches formed a unified body known as the General Assembly.⁹⁷

The 1682 Frame of Government was born out of an arduous revision process that saw Penn gradually turn away from Quaker values and embrace a more centralized government and royalist conception of the ancient constitution. During the process of writing the Frame of Government, a process that featured at least twenty different drafts,

⁹⁶ Editors' note, *PWP*, 2:61-3.

⁹⁷ Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 33; Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 107-110. Penn's attempts to secure rights and privileges for Quakers in Pennsylvania reflected his desire to blend "consensualism with hierarchical social and even political patterns," resulting in a colony "was to be governed by a combination of democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy precisely as England was ruled." See Melvin Endy, *William Penn and Early Quakerism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 350.

Penn worked with Algernon Sidney. Sidney was a radical Whig politician and close colleague to Penn. The two collaborated when Sidney ran for Parliament in 1679 and 1680. In many regards, the two had similar views on the relationship between the Crown and its subjects. Both valued the rights of freeborn Englishmen and attributed them to England's Saxon heritage. They also agreed that unjust government often stepped from poor rulers with corrupt morals. Sidney and Penn disagreed, however, on the appropriateness of monarchy,—as noted earlier, Penn saw value in monarchy—and the role of violent insurrections against corrupt government. Sidney believed such acts were not only permissible, but also desirable. In revising the Frame, Penn sought to restrict the popular element, placing most of the power with the Provincial Council. The representative Assembly, seen as the most important branch by Quakers, was mostly powerless. Such a decision reflects Penn's royalist perception of the ancient constitution, his interest in creating a "working aristocracy," and his belief that good governance stemmed from godly patriarchy.⁹⁸

The tensions between aristocratic, democratic, and egalitarian principles in Pennsylvania's constitutional framework would be a running theme throughout the colony's early history. The "Fundamental Constitutions" of Pennsylvania, written concurrently with the 1682 Frame of Government, was far more in line with the innovative nature of Rhode Island's constitution and the West Jersey Concessions. In the "Fundamental Constitutions," Penn granted the people the authority to elect and instruct

⁹⁸ Dunn, *William Penn: Politics and Conscience*, 33-4; Gary Nash, "The Framing of Government in Pennsylvania: Ideas in Conflict with Reality," *William and Mary Quarterly* 23, no. 3 (1966), 197; Offutt Jr., *Of "Good Laws" and "Good Men,"* 11. Offutt argues that fair and just "good laws" would provide Pennsylvania's citizens with enough motivation to elect "good men." These good men were Quakers that somehow "deserved" to rule the colony by virtue of their wealth, piety, and influence.

their representatives, who would then choose a Council from their own members.

This model was more attuned to Quaker theory, in which a popular assembly was the main branch of government. The “Fundamental Constitutions” also included a lengthy preamble that summarized much of his constitutional theory. He averred that God would provide “an inward uprightness” that would render unnecessary any “Externall precepts to direct or terrify him.” Unlike in England, there would be no laws that would “awe and terrify,” only “the righteous law within themselves.” Penn’s preamble reads as a harangue against the persecution Quakers faced in England. It attacks the impartial execution of the law and the need for a good government rooted in “a Constitution of Just Laws, wisely Sett together for the well ordering of men in Society, to prevent all Corruption or Justly to Correct it.”⁹⁹ Penn hearkens back to many of the tensions erupting during the English Revolution, stressing the need for a government in the interests of its subjects, not only serving the ambition of a select group of influential men. Yet at the same time, much of Penn’s *Frame of Government* seeks to provide uplift for colonists. Penn writes, “Any government is free to the People under it (whatever be the Frame) where the Laws rule, and the People are a Party to those Laws.” He goes on to argue, “though good Laws do well, good Men do better.” Such a statement encapsulates Penn’s attitudes about government, the ancient constitution, the route to a fair government, and Penn’s insistence that a just commonwealth depended on fair laws and moral individuals.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ *The Fundamentall Constitutions of Pennsylvania*, PWP, 2:141-2; Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 106-7.

¹⁰⁰ *The Frame of Government of the Province of Pensilvania in America*, in *A Collection of Charters and other Publick Acts* (Philadelphia, 1740), 10-12.

Penn’s “Fundamental Constitutions” attempted to protect Pennsylvania from the ills of England. The same social ills Penn perceived in England—vanity, greed, and vice—would be prevented by a system allowing “Magistrates to punish well [Evil] doers, by which means v[ir]tue often falls in the Streetes.” Moreover, it would promote the “impartial Execution of Justice” and the “prevention of Correction of vice and injustice.”¹⁰¹ Penn’s Fundamental Constitution stated that “the People of any Country should be Consenting to the laws they are to be Governed by,” and it was through this that Penn established his framework for government.¹⁰² Penn later references the ancient constitution, noting “And that we may in what ever we can, resemble the Ancien Constitution of England... declare and establish... that all tryalls and Determinations of Causes and Concerning life, Liberty, good name or estate shall by the verdict and Judgement of twelve of the neighbourhood to the Party or Partys Concerned... that they may be equals.”¹⁰³

Penn’s Frame of Government underwent three revisions between 1682 and 1701, each time stripping authority from Penn and increasing tensions between the proprietor and colonists. In 1683, colonists banded together to revise the Frame so that they might “tend to the Benefit of the Province.”¹⁰⁴ What resulted was a new Frame of Government that expanded the law-making powers of the Assembly against the wishes of the proprietor. One of the laws passed by the Assembly stated that no one could interfere

¹⁰¹ *The Fundamentall Constitutions of Pennsylvania*, PWP, 2:143.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 2:144.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 2:149-50.

¹⁰⁴ *Votes and Proceedings*, 1:14.

with their duties. They also abolished Penn's vote, contending that the proprietor had to act "with the Advice and Consent of the Provincial Council."¹⁰⁵ The Frame would be revised again in 1696, this time by William Markham, after Penn regained control of the colony from William and Mary. This time, the Assembly took even more power away from Penn. This was largely driven by the fact that many elite councilmen had found their way into the ranks of the Assembly and feared leaving Penn with too much authority. Finally, by 1701, Pennsylvania enacted the Charter of Privileges, which abolished the Provincial Council as part of the legislative branch, instead making them an advisory body to the governor. By 1701, Penn and the interests of the proprietor were "looked upon as ill here [Pennsylvania] as the Court party [in England]."¹⁰⁶ As part of this transition, the people of Pennsylvania began using the same language used by Penn and his fellow Quakers as a means of pushing back against what *colonists* perceived to be arbitrary and unfair rule by the proprietor.

Co-opting the Language of Dissent

One major problem plaguing Pennsylvania was the absence of a visible government. Penn remained an absentee proprietor from the founding of the colony. Such absenteeism is surprising given Penn's emphasis on the rule of just and moral men and his emphasis on godly patriarchy as an essential part of good government. This situation was made worse by the infrequency with which the General Assembly convened. The General Assembly met only a handful of days a year, with months in between meetings.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted in Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 111.

¹⁰⁶ James Logan to William Penn, October 3, 1704, quoted in Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*, 132.

For example, from October 1684 to March 1685, the Council did not meet once. The situation with the courts was no better. While Quakers had much experience in English courts as defendants, they had little experience as magistrates due to the Clarendon Code and Test Acts. In many regards they were learning how to manage judicial matters for the first time in 1682. Not only were courts irregular in their sessions, but also judicial appointees often lost composure and belied any sense of decorum in the courts.¹⁰⁷

Many of Penn's closest advisors openly denounced some of the decisions he made with regard to the balance of power in his colony. Sidney criticized the Frame of Government as "the basest laws in the world, and not to be endured or lived under." Moreover, Sidney posited that even "the Turk was not more absolute" than the Proprietor. Benjamin Furley also decried the Frame and the Fundamental Constitutions. He believed the lower house had too much power, noting that "I wonder who should put thee upon altering them for these, And as much how thou couldst ever yield to such a thing... Who has turned you aside from these good beginnings to establish things unsavory and unjust." Furly feared that "divesting of the peoples representatives of the greatest right they have... will lay morally a certain foundation for dissention amongst our successors."¹⁰⁸

Penn expressed his discontent at the poor managing of his colony. In 1687, he complained about the infrequent meetings of the General Assembly, arguing, "I will no more endure their most slothful and dishonorable attendance." No action was taken to rectify this problem. When discussing outbreaks of violence in the courts, Penn lamented

¹⁰⁷ Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 166.

¹⁰⁸ Quotes from Sidney and Furly can be found in Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 42-5.

“if Magistrates draw themselves into Contempt by a mean Behaviour, they can never exercise Power honourably nor successfully.”¹⁰⁹ Penn’s complaints fell on deaf ears. This was unsurprising, given the fact that he was trying—and failing—to oversee a colony from the comforts of England. His lack of a visible presence led many to view him as a “great oppressor,” exacerbating tensions between Penn and the General Assembly and Council.¹¹⁰ One of the fundamental tenets of Penn’s vision for colonial success and a just and fair government was the notion that the specific laws and structure of government were inconsequential. What truly mattered were just and fair individuals in place to properly manage a colony. Penn’s adherence to long-standing social hierarchies and notions of status and rank reflected the importance of “weighty Friends” who would help govern the colony. By placing just and moral men in positions of power, Penn believed their influence would trickle down throughout society.¹¹¹

With such an emphasis on the language of natural law and the ancient constitution, it is unsurprising that colonists would co-opt this rhetoric from the hands of the proprietor to protest what *they* perceived to be slights carried out by the government. This was frequently seen when colonists used this language to contest the appointment of allegedly corrupt, intolerant officials, and cronyism. One of the earliest examples was the case of Nicholas More. More, whose role in Pennsylvania’s economy will be discussed in greater length in the next chapter, was one Penn’s closest supporters in the first years of

¹⁰⁹ Both quotations are cited in Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 166-7.

¹¹⁰ Calvert, *Quaker Constitutionalism*.

¹¹¹ For a discussion of Penn’s conception of “weighty Friends” and their influence on a successful government, see Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 65-70.

settlement. He was a wealthy physician who married Mary Hedge, the daughter of a wealthy Quaker merchant from London. More migrated to Pennsylvania in hopes of establishing himself as a country gentleman, and as a staunch supporter of the proprietor immediately found himself in positions of power. More was the president of the Free Society of Traders. In addition, he was a presiding judge on the Provincial Council, the Provincial Secretary and the clerk. The Provincial Council was, as Gary Nash notes, a stronghold of proprietary support. When Penn returned to England in 1684, he sought many ways to exert his authority from afar, including reorganizing the executive branch of the colony's government. In its place, Penn created a Commission of Five Deputies, who would enact, annul, or vary laws. More was a member of the commission, whose four other deputies were also staunch supporters of the proprietor.¹¹²

The privileging of gentlemen in positions of government fit Penn's vision for his colony. If the Bishop of Dunham clause was untenable, then at least upright men of good reputation would guide Pennsylvania. Yet, cracks began forming almost immediately, as an anti-proprietary faction began forming to protest the stranglehold the elites had on the government. This coalition featured smaller merchants and artisans. They were suffering a growing unhappiness with Penn's decisions, such as his land policy, and the perceived arbitrary rule of those in power throughout government. It was More who was one of the first targets, as he had impeachment proceedings brought against him. More was accused of uttering "words against the Proceedings of the Governor, Provincial Council &

¹¹² The other four members of the Commission were James Claypoole, Thomas Lloyd, John Eckley, and Robert Turner. More's background is taken from Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 17, 62-6, 105-6.

Assembly.”¹¹³ In particular, he was accused of “Assumeing to himself an unlimited & Arbitrary Power beyond the Prescription or Laws of this Government.”¹¹⁴ More was called to appear before the House of Representatives to answer for being a “Person of Seditious Spirit,” but refused to appear. In return, was voted out of the House for “his Contempt of Authority” and “in not appearing at the Desire of this House.” He was eventually impeached for “divers high crimes and Misdemeanours,” though Penn sought to protect him by ignoring the decision and appointing him as one of his five deputies.¹¹⁵

More was not the only government official to draw the ire of the colonists, as John Blackwell also upset many colonists with his political decisions. Blackwell was appointed Deputy Governor of Pennsylvania in 1688. Penn had offered the position to Thomas Lloyd in hopes of quelling some of the tensions between the proprietor and his detractors, but Lloyd declined the position. Blackwell was a transplanted Massachusetts Puritan who had a record of government involvement and administration.¹¹⁶ He was tasked with quelling the unrest in Pennsylvania. Suspicious of Penn’s association with the Catholic monarch, James II, many in Penn’s colony were pushing back against

¹¹³ Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 110-1, 166; *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, From the Organization to the Termination of the Proprietary Government* (Harrisburg: State Printer of Pennsylvania, 1838), 1:2-3 (Hereafter cited as *MPCP*).

¹¹⁴ *MPCP*, 1:135-7.

¹¹⁵ *Votes and Proceedings*, 1:65-71.

¹¹⁶ His strong record as an administrator largely influenced Blackwell’s appointment. He had experience serving in government, dealing with finances, and in administration. Most notably, Blackwell served as Oliver Cromwell’s Treasurer at War and Receiver General in Ireland during the 1650s. Despite this record, his appointment was done with much suspicion among Pennsylvania Quakers, as Puritans were not well received among the Quaker community. Much of this anger stemmed from the treatment Quakers received at the hands of Puritans, particularly in places like Massachusetts, where Quakers were “beaten, mutilated, or even executed.” See Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy*, 174-5; Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, 114-126.

proprietary rule. In addition, Blackwell was tasked to “collect the laws that are in being” and “send them over to [Penn].” He was instructed to collect “fines... so they may be paid,” prevent “fewds between persuasions, or Nations, or Countys,” and care for the “Widow, orphant, and absent.”¹¹⁷ Many Quakers, however, perceived his rule as militant. Attempts by Blackwell to assert his influence were met with harsh resistance, in particular by Thomas Lloyd. Lloyd and other anti-proprietary colonists contested Blackwell’s efforts to make judicial appointments. Lloyd claimed these appointments were not affixed with the Great Seal, something he controlled, and thus were invalid. Citizens united against Blackwell and pledged to express “our unanimous resoluteness as men & Christians not to suffer an invasion upon our Charter & laws wherein wee hope wee have discharge as good Conscience to God & thee & to the people that have intrusted us notwithstanding.” They continued, positing that Blackwell “would not admitt then though most of the members declared them to be Legally chosen, and that it was agst our Charter & Laws to deprive us of any of our members against the consent of the Board.” Blackwell denied them “true representation of things in debate” and “questions the Charter & Laws and of thy power in granting away any Royall powers in it as he calls.”¹¹⁸ Blackwell began so frustrated that he attempted to impeach Lloyd. Such attempts eventually failed, and Blackwell, frustrated with the staunch resistance he faced, returned to Boston in 1689.

¹¹⁷ Instructions for Lieutenant Governor Blackwell, or whom else it may Concerne, Forbes Collection Volume I circa 1666-1772, NB-007, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485A), HSP.

¹¹⁸ Complaint against Governor Blackwell, April 9, 1689, Official Correspondence I, 1683-1717, NV-024, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485A), HSP.

The impeachment of More and criticisms of Blackwell reveal the extent to which colonists defended their interpretation of good governance and fair rule. Aggressive stances taken against the charter or the rights and privileges of Pennsylvania's citizens were subject to great scrutiny. Yet, Penn's colonial vision faced challenges from the outset. Penn fashioned his colony and its government as one in which good men would provide strong leadership. Their religious values and upright nature would allow them to be good men and good patriarchs overseeing their flock of colonists. The success of the colony was reliant on men of "Honor & truth" who will "Stand firmly & truly for the peoples Just Rights." Without "honest & good [men]" there would be no "respect of Government."¹¹⁹ Yet, the perceived corruption in government was not limited to anti-proprietary colonists. Many Quakers in Pennsylvania also turned their gaze towards "corrupt" Quakers who allowed themselves to fall prey to carnal desires and negatively influence the government.

The Keithian Schism

The turn inward by Quakers to question their own faith and relationship with the government is best exemplified by the Keithian Schism. The Keithian Schism centered on the Scottish Quaker, George Keith. Keith had grown up as a Calvinist, but from an early age had a penchant for engaging in theological disputes. Keith was known to argue frequently with Baptists, Congregationalists, and Anglicans. The first generation of Quaker leaders, which included Robert Hubberthorne and Edward Burrough, had passed by the mid-1660s. By this time, a new cadre of Quakers took up the mantle of leadership. This group included William Penn, Robert Barclay, and the rabble rousing George Keith,

¹¹⁹ Isaac Norris, *Friendly Advice to the Inhabitants of Pensilvania* (Philadelphia, 1710), 2-3.

who had converted to Quakerism in 1663. His involvement in the Quaker movement was instrumental in helping transition towards new leadership.¹²⁰

Keith moved to North America in the mid-1680s where he quickly established a reputation as an outspoken Quaker quick to engage in debates about religion. He landed in West New Jersey in 1686 and moved to Philadelphia around 1689. Once in Pennsylvania, he rose quickly to become the head of the Philadelphia Latin School. In this position, Keith immersed himself in the world of education. He was also named to a committee tasked with supervising the publication of Quaker books. Between 1688 and 1691, Keith traveled throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Rhode Island before briefly returning to England. During these travels, Keith met with other Quakers and debated Congregational ministers. He also clashed frequently with other Quakers over theological issues.¹²¹

Keith's religious travels and theological conversations led him to think deeply about the nature of Quakerism and would, in part, help spark the Keithian Schism in 1691. As Michael Goode notes, the Schism began as a theological contestation over "the question of whether Friends needed confessions of faith and the doctrinal importance of Christ's atonement and bodily resurrection for salvation." The debate also included differences over disciplinary practices and the need to maintain a "pure" church. In order to do so, the Quaker church needed to expel those unfit for membership.¹²² The situation

¹²⁰ The biographical information about Keith is taken from J. William Frost and John Smolenski. See "Introduction," in *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, ed. by J. William Frost (Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions, 198); Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, chapter 4.

¹²¹ Jon Butler, "'Gospel Order Improved': The Keithian Schism and the Exercise of Quaker Ministerial Authority in Pennsylvania," *William and Mary Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (1974): 433-4.

escalated quickly. In mid-1691, Keith was accused of preaching two Christs, an historical one and a spiritual one. In January 1692, Thomas Fitzwater, a minister of the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, charged Keith with denying a core tenet of Quakerism. It was reported that individuals “heard G[eorge] K[Keith] deny the sufficiency of the Light.”¹²³ What followed was a series of print wars, in which Keith and his followers leveled attacks on influential Philadelphians like Thomas Lloyd and Samuel Jennings. Quaker elites responded in August 1692 with a condemnation of Keith read by the Philadelphia town crier at the center of the city’s market.¹²⁴ One month later, in September, Keith was disowned from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. He was then arrested and tried alongside four of his colleagues. In February 1693, Keith traveled to London to plead his case. The London Yearly Meeting attempted to intervene and broker a peace between the two sides, but negotiations failed. In 1694, Keith was disowned from the London Yearly Meeting as well. He eventually attempted to start his own branch of Quakerism while continuing to travel between England and the colonies. In 1700, Keith joined the Anglican Church.

Although the Keithian Schism began as a theological debate, it had significant implications for notions of government in Pennsylvania. As the Keithian Schism

¹²² Michael Goode, “Gospel Order among Friends: Colonial Violence and the Peace Testimony in Quaker Pennsylvania, 1681-1720,” (PhD diss., University of Illinois-Chicago, 2012), 69. My account of the Schism is taken largely from Frost and Smolenski. See Frost, ed. *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*; Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, chapter 4. See also, Goode, “Gospel Order among Friends,” chapter 2.

¹²³ Samuel Jennings, *The State of the Case, Briefly but Impartially given betwixt the People called Quakers*, in *The Keithian Controversy*, ed. Frost, 226

¹²⁴ Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 149-50. Smolenski notes that the use of a town crier was surprising given the fact that most of the Schism had occurred, to this point, solely in print. He asserts that this represented an attempt by mainstream Quakers to maintain public legitimacy and control over the public discourse on the matter.

unfolded, Keith and his associates took on the role of the Quakers from the 1660s, building on the Antinomian legacy to challenge what they perceived as an unjust and corrupt government. In doing so, the Keithians co-opted the language Penn and other Quakers used to challenge the English Crown while also calling into question the abilities of Pennsylvania's government and their reputation as patriarchs of the colony.¹²⁵ Keith rooted much of his argument in the legacy of the Quakers. At his trial in 1693, he referenced the lofty aspirations of the colony; its desire to resemble "a Beacon set on a Hill, and the Eye of God, Angels and Men are upon us." By invoking the language of Penn's "Holy Experiment," he positioned himself as morally and theologically superior to the corrupt Philadelphia Ministers who were guilty of "gross Ignorance, Unbelief and Blasphemy."¹²⁶ As the efforts of the Keithians shifted from a strictly theological argument to one more focused on politics and the relationship between Quakers and government, Keithians saw Quaker ministers as "the literal embodiment of disorder in Pennsylvania, having succumbed to the same degeneration that plagued all those living in the New World."¹²⁷

Keith and his followers viewed the growing links between Quaker ministers and Pennsylvania government with trepidation and fear. The opposition against Keith was, in

¹²⁵ The comparison to the Antinomians has been made by J. William Frost, who claims that the style and tone of Keith's pamphlets "resemble the polemics accompanying the Antinomian controversy in Massachusetts in 1636 or the witchcraft delusion in Salem which also began in 1691." See, "Introduction," in *The Keithian Controversy*, ed. Frost, ii.

¹²⁶ *The Tryals of Peter Boss, George Keith, and William Bradford, Quakers, for Several Great Misdemeanors*, in *The Keithian Controversy*, ed. Frost, 186; George Keith, *An Account of the Great Divisions, Amongst Quakers, in Pensilvania* (London, 1692), 5.

¹²⁷ Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers*, 157. This argument illustrates the intimate links between religion and politics in Pennsylvania. Keithians lambasted the Ministers heavily involved in government because they gave in to spiritual decay and this translated to poor leadership.

many ways, an “emerging Quaker oligarchy” made up of the most influential members of the religious group—both in terms of the Philadelphia Meeting and the Pennsylvania government.¹²⁸ Keith believed that by “medling with Worldly Government,” Quakers were suffering “a great loss and decay” to their morals and religious values. By “pass[ing] Sentence of Corporal Punishment on some” or raising up “1000 men with Clubs, Swords, and Guns,” Quakers were threatening “other mens Properties and Liberties.” The only way to rectify the situation, in the eyes of the Keithians, was to “leave the Worldly Government and follow Christ.”¹²⁹ For Keith, the practicalities of governing a colony were incompatible with the tenets of Quakerism and this disconnect inevitably led to unjust government just as Quakers faced in England.

The arbitrary government Keithians feared was evident when they were called to trial in 1693. It was here that Keithians drew on the heritage of sectarian dissent. When William Bradford, a printer, was put to trial for “Publishing, Uttering, and Spreading a Malicious and Seditious Paper,” he couched his defense in well-known terms. After being committed to the “goal,” local officials “took away a good quantity of W. Bradford’s Letters, tending to the disabling of him to work for his Wife and Children; and upon pretence of another Warrant granted without any Conviction.” Such proceedings were considered “a cruel Spirit of Persecution” simply because mainstream Quakers and the Keithians had “a Religious Difference among themselves.” By exceeding the limits of their authority and acting upon a warrant granted “without any conviction,” Philadelphia

¹²⁸ J. William Frost, “Introduction,” *The Keithian Controversy*, ed. Frost, xiii. Keith’s supporters were primarily artisans with a few lesser merchants.

¹²⁹ *A Testimony and Caution to such as do Make a Profession of Truth, who are in scorn called Quakers*, in *The Keithian Controversy*, ed. Frost, 201-10.

Justices were carrying out the same arbitrary and unjust actions that Quakers faced during the Restoration in England. In challenging what Keithians perceived as a farcical trial, Bradford invoked well-known language throughout the sectarian Atlantic world. He demanded “the right of every free-born English Subject, which is Speedy Justice.” Bradford’s opposition attempted to invoke English law as well, positing “If thou hadst been in England, thou wouldst have had thy Back slasht before now.”¹³⁰

The Keithians went so far as to make allusions to the trial of Penn and Mead occurring in England. The Keithians played the role of the persecuted Quakers who had been “in Old England when they had been unjustly dealt by.” Keith and Budd went on to argue that “That it was no Verdict, not being found to be a Breach of any Law, any more than the Verdict of the Jury at *Old Bayly*, which was; *That they found W Penn guilty of speaking in Grace Churcch-Street*, which the Court took to be a clearing of him.” Keith was careful to use similar imagery as Restoration-era Quakers. Bradford was being tried for putting his name on the pamphlets he printed and “slandering” Pennsylvania justices. By taking the Keithians to court and raiding their homes, the justices were depriving these men of their economic security and preventing them from fulfilling their duties as patriarchs and providing for their families. Keith argued that “these Justices, called Quakers, who will pick out a Statute made in Old England, and prosecute a man upon it here, which might Ruin him and his Family, tho’ it’s not certain whether that Act be in

¹³⁰ *The Tryals of Peter Boss, George Keith, and William Bradford*, in *The Keithian Controversy*, ed. Frost, 168-9; 174-5

force; when as most of W. Penn's and the Quakers Books were printed without the Printers Name to them, when that Act was in force."¹³¹

Finally, the Keithian Schism and the arguments used by dissenters engaged with Penn's vision for governance and the notion that good men of upstanding reputation would make the best justices and magistrates. The debate over the Keithian Schism was, in part, a public debate over reputation and the fitness for rule. Part of why mainstream Quakers reacted so strongly was because they believed Keith and his colleagues were assaulting their honor and reputation as Quakers, as leaders, and as men. In *Gospel Order and Discipline*, Keith's reimagining of Quakerism's Gospel Order, he asked "did not we separate from other Societye, not only because of bad doctrine... but allso, and that especially, because of the vicious life and evill conversation and practices which were to be found among many of them." Keith saw Quakerism becoming increasingly corrupt by godless followers too concerned with carnal pursuits. Such accusations were levied against Samuel Jennings, a Quaker and prominent magistrate. Jennings was attacked for his "Pride and Insolency," and for "being an unjust Judge, and of his being Drunk, and of laying a Wager."¹³² In a society where rooted on good men being good leaders, attacking Jennings for being a drunk and a gambler was to cast aspersions on his public reputation. Jennings' fitness as a family patriarch was even called into question, when accusations were leveled that he carried out "Inhumane Whipping of his Servant Maid naked in her

¹³¹ Ibid., 187, 191, 196. Keith went on to note that he had never heard of "any Printer in England [that] was prosecuted" for printing sectarian literature, and that the actions of Pennsylvania justices "manifests their Malice and revengeful Spirit."

¹³² George Keith, *Gospel Order and Discipline*, in *The Keithian Controversy*, ed. Frost, 26; *The Tryals of Peter Boss, George Keith, and William Bradford*, in *The Keithian Controversy*, ed. Frost, 178, 192.

Bed.”¹³³ While the Schism was ultimately resolved, its impact was felt in multiple ways throughout the Quaker colony.

Factionalism

One significant threat to William Penn’s vision was the emergence of conflicting political interests and factionalism in the Quaker Colony. Most of these tensions resolved around issues of wealth—land, taxes, and quitrents. Tensions first began emerging in earnest when the crown revoked Penn’s proprietary rule. Although Penn eventually regained control of his colony, the power vacuum allowed for men like David Lloyd to gain influence, who had the support of a growing middle class in Philadelphia. Lloyd led a concentrated campaign against proprietary influence in the colony.¹³⁴ Factional tensions were exacerbated by the fact that Penn failed to leave clear instructions before his death. For example, between 1720-1730 the population of Pennsylvania grew from approximately 35,000 to 50,000. James Logan, faced with the problem of running the land office and selling land to new immigrants, developed a system favoring those “who made the best appearance.” Excluded from this settlement were poorer settlers and represented expanded influence of elites in the Quaker colony.¹³⁵ The period following Penn’s death also became increasingly factionalized, as men used vacillations in the emerging capitalist economy for their own interest. William Keith attempted to seize power in 1717 by pushing for things like paper money, a divisive issue in Pennsylvania at

¹³³ *The Tryals of Peter Boss, George Keith, and William Bradford, in The Keithian Controversy*, ed. Frost, 183-4.

¹³⁴ David Lloyd arrived in Pennsylvania in 1687 as Penn’s Attorney General. Lloyd eventually formed his own party in the colony that controlled much of the government’s affairs. This would eventually mature into an anti-proprietary party. See Gary Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, chapter 6.

¹³⁵ Quoted in Tully, *William Penn’s Legacy*, 5.

the time. The factional tensions persisted into the 1740s. In the face of proprietor-backed executives seeking increased authority, a large Quaker coalition arose to try to win the hearts of the voters. Such action was important as the colony became increasingly diversified. As the proportion of Quakers in the colony began shrinking relative to the overall population, Quakers tried to hearken back to the founding mythos of the colony. They spoke of Restoration-era persecution “which in those Days prevailed against Protestant Dissenters in England, [and] was the principal Motive and Reason why the first Settlers of this Country removed their Estates and Families hither.” Through this hardship, Quakers deserved the respect and trust of the Crown as “an Industrious and quiet People, most heartily attached unto your Majesty’s royal Person and Government.”¹³⁶

As wealthy colonists pandered to voters in order to win elections and defeat opposite factions, the system of governance in Pennsylvania became a far more rigid, unyielding structure. Indeed, as this chapter has shown, Penn embraced a notion of the ancient constitution that supported his royalist leanings and allowed for Penn to cast himself as the benevolent patriarch over his colony. He supported an aristocracy, arguing “Tho’ [God] has made of one blood all nations, he has not ranged or dignified them upon the Level, but in a sort of subordination or dependency.”¹³⁷ But as the colony developed throughout the eighteenth century, conflicting interests and the influences of non-Quakers in government complicated the control Penn sought when founding the colony. During

¹³⁶ Tully, *William Penn’s Legacy*, 23; *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania*, 2:1260-2.

¹³⁷ William Penn, *Some Fruits of Solitude* (London, 1693); quoted in Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 426. Also quoted in Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House*, 110.

this period, deference became a prominent part of social relations, particularly towards those serving in provincial office. Those with access to the provincial offices were an increasingly small group of people; members of the colony's elite held a monopoly on such posts. Alan Tully notes how politics came to be dominated by a "well-insulated, relatively closed political body. The informal network of influence that underlay election procedures served to winnow out all but a handful of political aspirants, and these were certain to have been born, or have won their way, into the upper social strata." In many cases, political interests and familial ties united these "well-insulated" networks. Between 1727 and 1750, eighty-five percent of the Philadelphia Corporation—an oligarchy that ran the city—had familial ties. Though by the 1750s, many of these influential families had turned their back on Quakerism and returned to the Anglican Church. This included the Penn family. Eventually, these rifts forged a "Quaker" party and a "Proprietary" party.¹³⁸

The promise of Penn's foundational documents was further stripped away under the pressures of growing immigration. While Penn claimed his colony would be "a free colony for all mankind," tensions over immigration make clear that this vision was one meant for English migrants, not necessarily those from the Rhine Valley. Indeed, early settlement of Pennsylvania previewed the pluralistic society that would emerge by the end of the eighteenth century. Penn stationed colonial agents throughout Europe—London, Dublin, Edinburgh, and Rotterdam—to spread promotional literature and attract

¹³⁸ Tully, *William Penn's Legacy*, 98; Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 462-7. According to David Fischer, the Philadelphia Corporation was "a closed corporation" that controlled the city from 1701 to 1776.

colonists.¹³⁹ This immigration would intensify in the years following William Penn's death. The factionalism growing after 1718 also played out in contests over Palatine immigration from Germany. Against the wishes of many colonial elites, William Keith, who was Pennsylvania's governor at the time, reached out to Palatines, both in Germany and in other colonies, inviting them to settle in Penn's woods. Hoping to capitalize on the unrest in Germany following the Thirty Years' War and subsequent conflicts, Keith suggested they settle in the Tulpehocken region of Pennsylvania, an area of contested land that was privately owned and settled by Indians. Many Germans took up Keith's invitation, first arriving in 1723 and later in 1728.¹⁴⁰

Keith drew criticism for his immigration policy from several fronts. Some accused him of trying to curry favor from Germans in order to increase his authority and power in the midst of a conflict with the proprietary family. James Logan, on the other hand, vehemently opposed Keith's immigration policy for its implications for Pennsylvania's demographics.¹⁴¹ In 1727, Logan wrote the Penn family that "A large Number of Palatines that were expected here this Summer, Just now one large Ship has brought above 400 of them & we are assured there are no less than three more at sea." Logan extrapolated further: "At this rate you will soon have a German Colony here &

¹³⁹ Sally Schwartz, *"A Mixed Multitude": The Struggle for Toleration in Colonial Pennsylvania* (New York: New York University Press, 1987), 24-6, chapter 4. See also, Sally Schwartz, "William Penn and Toleration: Foundations of Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History* 50, no. 4 (1983): 284-312. Schwartz connects Penn's interests in a diverse colony to his economic motives. He attributed some of the poverty in England to the fallout of the Civil Wars and unjust targeting of dissenters.

¹⁴⁰ Schwartz, *"A Mixed Multitude,"* 97.

¹⁴¹ David Hackett Fischer argues "Quakers by and large welcomed German settlers and lived comfortably beside them." He draws attention to Benjamin Franklin's derogatory comments about "Palatine boors," but attributes these to prejudices born from Franklin's time in New England. Fischer's contention appears to overlook considerable anxieties many Pennsylvanians had over the number of German immigrants. See Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, 432.

perhaps such an one as Britain may recd. From Saxony in the 5th Century.”¹⁴²

Logan’s fear intensified only a month later, stating that “Instead of 3 ships of Palatines... there are five more arrived, that is six in the whole with above 1200 of those foreigners.”¹⁴³ The House of Representatives addressed concerns over the “great Number of Palatines.” It was observed how “without any Authority or Pretence of Right, [Palatines] settled themselves upon the Proprietary’s Lands, as well as those of private Persons, to the great Prejudice and Disquiet of the Inhabitants of this Province, and especially of the first Adventures.” The debate about Palatines having “settled on the Proprietary’s Lands without License,” was eventually “read and laid aside,” but it still represented a real and pressing concern among many in Pennsylvania’s government and illustrated a clear source of conflict between Keith and others.¹⁴⁴

Palatines were not the only immigrants to draw Logan’s ire. Irish settlers also blighted Logan’s ideal community. He lamented how immigrants came “from the North of Ireland, great numbers yearly... Both these sorts sitt frequently down on any spott of vacant Land they can find, without asking questions.”¹⁴⁵ Such a harsh opposition to immigration stands in contrast to the ideal vision embraced by Penn when he set out to found his holy experiment. Logan’s harsh criticism of Irish settlers and persistent fear of being overrun by German Palatines reveals his desire to mold Pennsylvania in an image

¹⁴² James Logan to the Proprietors, Philadelphia, September 27, 1727, James Logan Letterbook, Vol. 4, Logan Family Papers (Collection 379), HSP.

¹⁴³ James Logan to John Penn, October 22, 1727, James Logan Letterbook, Vol. 4, Logan Family Papers (Collection 379), HSP.

¹⁴⁴ *Votes and Proceedings*, 3:1869, 1929.

¹⁴⁵ James Logan to John Penn, November 25, 1727, in *Pennsylvania Archives*, Series 2, 7:96-7.

he viewed as appropriate, not necessarily one laid out by Penn when he founded the colony. The exclusion of “these sorts” represents Logan’s concerns that poor, impoverished immigrants would overrun the well-to-do Quaker merchants who by this time have firmly established themselves as colonial elites.

William Penn wrote about his vision for a holy experiment in which colonists would achieve a greater degree of freedom than they enjoyed in England. The language shaping the foundational documents for Pennsylvania was largely influenced by Quaker accounts invoking the ancient constitution and English common law. Penn borrowed from examples elsewhere throughout the Atlantic, such as the inclusion of Rhode Island's statement supporting religious authority. In using this language to frame Pennsylvania’s government, Penn aspired to grant his colonists a degree of religious and political freedom denied to them in England. In doing so, Quaker men would escape the persecution and imprisonment that prevented them from doing their duty as patriachs. Now free to practice their religion without fear of jail, colonists began co-opting the language of religious dissenters throughout the Atlantic to defend their own rights against Penn and his proprietary policies. With politics and religious rights secured, colonists were now free to seek financial gain, and they were situated in an ideal geographic region to take advantage of the burgeoning Atlantic trade to build their wealth. As the framework for the colony stabilized, attention turned towards planting the fields, building the ships, and trading the goods throughout the Atlantic World that would make Pennsylvania one of the most important economic hubs in the British Empire.

CHAPTER THREE

“THE PROSPEROUS BEGINNINGS OF THIS PROVINCE”¹: PENNSYLVANIA AND THE ATLANTIC ECONOMY

Despite the revisions to the Frame of Government, rise of an anti-proprietary faction, and challenges from the Keithians, Penn’s “holy experiment” began taking root and expanding. With religious freedom secured and a relatively stable government formed, Penn and the early colonists were now able to turn their attention to the economic opportunity promised in promotional literature. And once again, fundamental to Penn’s plans was the early modern ideal of an economically successful and political active man governing his family and state. While Pennsylvania was an experiment in religious freedom, it was also an attempt at building a colony privileging Penn and his fellow Quakers. Many Quakers had been denied economic opportunity at the hands of the English crown. By forcing them into prisons, they were “kept in a Lingring Imprisonment from their Wives and Families... till they have spent most of what they had, and have had little left to help themselves and Families.” Fulfilling one’s duty as patriarch of his family meant providing for the family. As a result, imprisoned Quakers felt they were suffering “A Punishment not much inferior to Death it self!”² Achieving economic self-sufficiency

¹ *A Letter from William Penn, Proprietary and Governour of Pennsylvania in America, to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders of that Province* (London, 1683), HSP.

² William Mead, *A Particular Account of the Late and Present Great Sufferings and Oppressions of the People called Quakers* (London, 1680), 2.

was an important part of Penn's colonial vision for himself, his fellow Quakers, and their sense of manhood.

Planting a profitable colony was an important part of Penn's vision of a holy experiment. Not only was it a personal goal born from his desire to promote Quaker migration, but also for the benefit of the growing British Empire. Many hoped Pennsylvania would grow and expand so that "British Planters" could continue "experienc[ing] the benefit of American commerce." After all, Pennsylvania was founded during a period of intense imperial competition throughout the Atlantic world. The British had to be mindful of their wealth and status, and officials were cognizant of the fact that "it is well known that the Power of which Britain has the most reason to be apprehensive is France."³ Profit also factored heavily into Quaker discourse, as the Society cared deeply about establishing profitable outer plantations that would help provide for a long-lasting Quaker haven and refuge from the persecution of England.⁴ Penn's desire to build a profitable economy was made clear once he and his fellow first purchasers began erecting the infrastructure for Pennsylvania's economy. Within a matter of decades, settlers helped build "a Noble and Beautiful city" they called Philadelphia while Penn's Woods would hold a place of prominence in the Atlantic economy thanks to its rich soil and bustling overseas trade.⁵

³ *Thoughts on the West India Trade*, Correspondence of and Works by Others, Part 12, Benjamin Franklin Papers (Mss.B.F85), APS; *On the State of the British Plantations in America, Ca. 1732*, Box 2A, HSP Miscellaneous Collection (Collection 425), Box 2A, HSP.

⁴ My use of inner and outer plantations is taken directly from Kristen Block, "Cultivating Inner and Outer Plantations: Property, Industry, and Slavery in Early Quaker Migration to the New World," *Early American Studies* 8, no. 3 (2010): 518-548.

⁵ Gabriel Thomas, *An Historical and Geographical Account of Pensilvania and West-New-Jersey*, in *Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, West New Jersey, and Delaware, 1630-1707*, ed. Albert Cook Myers

In 1683, Penn authored a letter to the committee of the Free Society of Traders, a joint-stock company formed with the intent of promoting the economic growth and development of Pennsylvania. Penn lauded his colony's "soyl, air, season, and produce." The rich soil, in Penn's eyes, would provide for the "prosperous Beginnings of this Province." In particular, Pennsylvania farmers thrived by producing several crops in great quantities, including wheat, barley, oats, and rye. These staple crops not only sustained the internal economy, but also became important commodities in Pennsylvania's burgeoning Atlantic trade, one which Penn fully supported. He frequently noted how he was "in hopes of Shipping to add to our number."⁶ Indeed, Pennsylvania's economic growth was impressive, particularly its maritime trade. By the early 1720s, Penn's Woods exported goods to England, the southern colonies, and the West Indies in great amounts. In 1724 alone, 103 vessels departed from the port of Philadelphia carrying over 4,000 tons of goods. Wheat, flour, and bread were shipped throughout the British Empire as important foodstuffs to secure the continued growth of the British Empire. By the 1760, Philadelphia was the largest and most vibrant port in America and the financial, political and intellectual center of America.⁷

Pennsylvania played an important role in the Atlantic economy, and the Quaker colony's economic development has received considerable scholarly attention. Such

(New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), 326. See also, Block, "Cultivating Inner and Outer Plantations,"; *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean: Religion, Colonial Competition, and the Politics of Profit* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012).

⁶ *A Letter from William Penn, Proprietary and Governour of Pennsylvania in America, to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders* (London, 1683), HSP.

⁷ Specific information about shipping during the eighteenth century is taken from James G. Lydon, "Philadelphia's Commercial Expansion, 1720-1738," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 91, no. 4 (1967): 402-404; Thomas M. Doerflinger, *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise: Merchants and Economic Development in Revolutionary Philadelphia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1986), 5.

attention, however, is disproportionately focused on the Revolution and early republic, which means the colonial period, critical for the development of the region's economic infrastructure, is overlooked. Much of this attention on the late-eighteenth century is due to the availability of sources—mercantile records improved during the early Republic—but also thanks to the transformative nature of the American Revolution. Historians have emphasized the culture emerging around Philadelphia's merchant community, expanding markets, or the emergence of a more refined capitalist economy rooted in the free market.⁸

While economic scholars are preoccupied with the early republic, Quaker historians have long made the connection between religion and capitalism. One fruitful avenue for study has been the relationship between Quakers and business. Scholars like Frederick Tolles and James Walvin, among others, have examined the relationship between Quakerism and the emerging capitalist economy. In particular, these works engage with written records exploring expected norms for Quaker comportment during business transactions. More recent scholarship has seen an increased emphasis on religion's role in forging economic networks, the behavior of merchants, and the

⁸ On Pennsylvania merchants, see Toby L. Ditz, "Shipwrecked; or, Masculinity Imperiled: Mercantile Representations of Failure and the Gendered Self in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *Journal of American History* 81, no. 1 (1994): 51-80; Doerflinger, *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise*; Cathy Matson, "Accounting for War and Revolution: Philadelphia Merchants and Commercial Risk, 1774-1811," in *The Self Perception of Early Modern Capitalists*, ed. Margaret Jacobs (New York: Palgrave, 2008), chapter 8; Andrew Schocket, "Corporations and the Coalescence of an Elite Class in Philadelphia," in *Class Matters: Early North America and the Atlantic World*, eds. Simon Middleton and Billy Smith (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008): 123-137; on Pennsylvania's changing economy, see Michelle L. Craig, "Grounds for Debate? The Place of the Caribbean Provisions Trade in Philadelphia's Prerevolutionary Economy," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 128, no. 2 (2004): 149-177; Sheryllyne Haggerty, "The Structure of the Philadelphia Trading Community on the Transition from Colony to State," *Business History* 48, no. 2 (2006): 171-192; Cathy Matson, "A Port in the Storm: Philadelphia's Commerce During the Atlantic Revolutionary Era," in *Revolution: The Atlantic World Reborn*, eds. Thomas Bender et al (New York: New-York Historical Society, 2011): 65-90; Diane Wegner, "Delivering the Goods: The Country Storekeeper and Inland Commerce in the Mid-Atlantic," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 129, no. 1 (2005): 45-72.

relationship between reputation and trade. This scholarship tends to approach the seventeenth and eighteenth century economy from the perspective of the Atlantic world or regionally, such as the mid-Atlantic. However, the methodological approaches are useful lenses for a more refined examination of Pennsylvania.⁹

No work has done more to shape the Quaker colony's reputation as a land of opportunity for all European settlers than James Lemon's *The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania*. Published in 1972, Lemon posits that early settlers in Pennsylvania helped create a new type of individual; that of a classically liberal middle class. Lemon's vision of early Pennsylvania is one in which colonists opted to pursue individual freedom and material gain. Early Pennsylvanians chose to emphasize personal success and profit over the good of the community and group. Lemon attributes much of this to the environment of early southeastern Pennsylvania. The land was open and many settlers felt there was an abundance of unconquered wilderness to tame.¹⁰ Penn promoted his colony as one where settlers could

⁹ On Quakerism and business, see Ross E. Martinie Eiler, "Luxury, Capitalism, and the Quaker Reformation, 1737-1798," *Quaker History* 97, no. 1 (2008): 11-31; Douglas Dwyne, *The Covenant Crucified: Quakers and the Rise of Capitalism* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1995); Frederick Tolles, *The Meeting House and the Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682-1763* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1963); James Walvin, *The Quakers: Money and Morals* (London: John Murray, 1997). On economic networks and mercantile behavior, see Jordan Landes, *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World: The Creation of an Early Modern Community* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), chapter 4; Jane Merritt, "Tea Trade, Consumption, and the Republican Paradox in Prerevolutionary Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 128, no. 2 (2004): 117-148; Nuala Zahedieh, "Credit, Risk, and Reputation in Late Seventeenth-Century Colonial Trade," in *Merchant Organization and Maritime Trade in the North Atlantic, 1660-1815*, ed. Olaf Uwe Janzen (St. John's, Newfoundland: International Maritime Economic History Association, 1998): 53-74; Nuala Zahedieh, *The Capital and the Colonies: London and the Atlantic Economy, 1660-1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

¹⁰ James Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country: A Geographical Study of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), xv. Lemon is certainly not alone in his sentiments. Allan Kulikoff has noted how Quaker theology "linked prosperity to bourgeois values of domesticity, self-sufficiency, and self-denial" and Quakers hoped a profitable Pennsylvania would help reinforce "a flowering of prosperity, radical faith, and bourgeois social mores." See Allan Kulikoff, *From*

find a “peaceable life” on a “Virgin Elysiam shore” free from the “outward bares, vexations, and turmoils, which before we were always subject unto.”¹¹ The untapped wilderness would offer plentiful natural resources “for Food and Profit, and some for Profit only.”¹²

William Penn founded his colony with the intent of planting an economically profitable colony that would benefit he and his Quaker brethren. As has been shown, Quakers living in seventeenth-century England faced fines, persecution, and jail time for practicing religion in their accustomed manner. By forcing them away from their families, the English government impeded the ability of Quaker men to provide for their families. In doing so, they were unable to perform their duties as men. Pennsylvania was founded, in part, as a place where colonists would have the opportunity to realize their economic dreams. Between its founded in 1682 and the Seven Years’ War, Pennsylvania’s economy expanded as it became an increasingly important port for Atlantic trade. The economic opportunities for settlers allowed for men to escape the economic restrictions of England and provide for their families as godly patriarchs. For Quakers, economic dealings were centered on religious notions of plain dealing and early modern notions of manhood rooted in good reputations and honest transactions. In building an economy rooted in an expansive network of trade throughout the Atlantic, Penn laid the foundation for a socio-economic system that privileged Quaker merchants

British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 60-1.

¹¹ *The Planter’s Speech to His Neighbors & Country-men of Pennsylvania, East & West Jersey*, NV-131, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485A), HSP.

¹² *A Letter from William Penn, Proprietary and Governour of Pennsylvania in America, to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders of that Province* (London, 1683), HSP.

who profited from trade while ensconcing themselves in positions of power and authority.

This chapter begins with an outline of Pennsylvania's place within an emerging merchant capitalist economy throughout the seventeenth-century Atlantic. The chapter will then provide an overview of Penn's attempts to build a working Quaker aristocracy through the First Purchasers and the use of a joint-stock company. It will then explore in greater detail Pennsylvania's economy—its agriculture and manufacturing—that helped it become one of the leading economies of British North America. From there, the chapter will examine Pennsylvania's networks of trade throughout the Atlantic world. It will close by examining the role of Quakerism in Pennsylvania's economy, from the emphasis on fair business practices to the ways in which influential Quakers used the economy to establish positions of power and authority.

Seventeenth Century Capitalism and Pennsylvania

The mid-1660s were a period of great economic expansion for the British Empire. It was during this period of capitalistic growth that migrated west to settle in Pennsylvania. While not yet in the throes of the Industrial Revolution, English manufacturers utilized new techniques to produce consumer goods in great quantities. This translated into expanded networks of trade with the colonies. London's imports more than doubled between the 1660 and 1700. England had embraced merchant capitalism and those traveling to and from the colonies "swam in a capitalist sea."¹³ With

¹³ Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 2. Kulikoff strictly defines capitalism as "a society dominated by two classes: capitalists who owned the means of production (banks, factories, tools, and productive land) and workers who have only their labor to sell." Using this definition, Kulikoff contends that capitalism would not reach American shores until the Revolution. I choose to stress Kulikoff's subsequent point that, because England had embraced capitalism, colonists and merchants involved in Atlantic trade were participating in this capitalist economy through buying goods made by

so many new goods emerging as part of a burgeoning consumer society, trade with the colonies was, as Nuala Zahedieh notes, “about twenty percent of London’s overseas trade,” with trade “particularly buoyant in the peace years between 1674 and 1689 with a reported peak in 1686.” These networks created a system of interdependence among the colonies. At the same time that these economic networks were expanding, the British Empire was benefitting from the stability brought about by the Glorious Revolution of 1688-9.¹⁴

Pennsylvania was ideally positioned to benefit from the epoch of prosperity beginning in the 1680s and 1690s. As will be shown, mid-Atlantic colonies like Pennsylvania produced flour, southern colonies provided tobacco and other cash crops, the West Indies generated massive amounts of sugar, and England contributed its manufactured goods. For merchants living in Philadelphia, their geography functioned as a great boon. Because of its central location alongside the Delaware and with easy access to the Atlantic Ocean, Philadelphia was not just the main port for Pennsylvania, but many other colonial locations. Philadelphia received ship after ship loaded with British goods. Cargoes were broken down, and goods were either sold in Philadelphia or shipped to

wage workers and seeking financial support from capitalists in financing colonies. I am less concerned with pinpointing a specific time in which American economies matched Kulikoff’s definition of capitalism.

¹⁴ Dan Richter, *Before the Revolution: America’s Ancient Pasts* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2011), 327. Richter contends the Glorious Revolution sparked a new period of exchange between the imperial center and the colonies located throughout the Atlantic basin that would last through the middle years of the eighteenth century. Perry Gauci, who also views the years following the Glorious Revolution as ones of notable economic growth and opportunity for English merchants, echoes this argument. See Perry Gauci, *The Politics of Trade: The Overseas Merchant in State and Society, 1660-1720* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

smaller ports throughout the colonies. Such an arrangement was to the benefit of Pennsylvania's economy.¹⁵

Concurrent with the emergence of merchant capitalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth century was the evolution of notions of class. Both transformations were due, in large part, to the nature of the Atlantic world. This world's size grew, new networks were formed, and new skills were required to allow for widespread overseas trade. These processes were linked. As merchant capitalism took root in England, population growth, displacement, migration, and increased wealth all worked in concert to create the foundations for massive overseas expansion. The rise of new modes of work allowed for the creation of distinct classes—seafaring workers, slaves, urban workers, and yeomen farmers—who began forging new economic, social, and political relationships.¹⁶ This emerging capitalist economy provided several new tools Penn used to build and finance his burgeoning colony.

The first method Penn used to try and plant a profitable colony was to reach out to wealthy Quakers to help finance his venture by purchasing large swathes of land. This had a twofold purpose. First, it provided Penn with a reasonably large set of land purchasers. Second, by specifically targeting wealthy Quakers, Penn was able to provide them with an outlet to escape the persecution of England that disproportionately affected their economic capabilities. The proliferation of economic opportunities was very

¹⁵ T.H. Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776," *Journal of British Studies* 25, no. 4, Re-Viewing the Eighteenth Century (1986): 475-6, 490; Haggerty, "The Structure of the Philadelphia Trading Community," 172; Zahedieh, "Credit, Risk, and Reputation," 54.

¹⁶ Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 40. For a discussion of how the seventeenth and eighteenth century Atlantic World helped create new notions of class, see Simon Newman, "Theorizing Class in Glasgow and the Atlantic World," in *Class Matters*, ed. Middleton and Smith, 16-34.

important to a group of individuals who conceived of their manhood, in part, through economic terms. By promoting Pennsylvania as a haven for economic opportunity, Penn offered fellow Quakers a place where they could achieve economic competency and provide for their families.¹⁷

The notion of Pennsylvania as an open area ripe for the settlement was integral to how Penn marketed his colony. Chapter one illustrated how Penn used the gendered rhetoric of economic opportunity to appeal to the economically marginalized in an effort to “thereby improve Science and help Nurseries of people.”¹⁸ This marketing was undoubtedly important, as the colony needed middling men and women to provide the bulk of the labor force. They would also be essential in providing Penn with income to help offset the significant amounts of money he invested in his colonial venture. Because Penn spent so much on his colony, he wanted to maximize the likelihood that he would make a good return on his investment. To do so, he spent most of his time catering to an elite class of wealthy Quakers and Londoners in an effort to gain their financial support.

In targeting wealthy Quakers, Penn attempted to take advantage of the increased capital available thanks to economic expansion. This was, to a great extent, a successful strategy. Penn attracted these wealthy elites by offering them very favorable terms on their land purchase. There were 589 individuals classified as the “first purchasers” of large tracts of land in the Delaware. Had these 589 men paid Penn in full for their land,

¹⁷ Daniel Vickers, “Competency and Competition: Economic Culture in Early America,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (1990): 3. Vickers defines competency as the possession of sufficient property to absorb the labors of a given family while providing it with something more than a mere subsistence. It meant, in brief, a degree of comfortable independence. In this dissertation, “competency” is being used in the same manner as “credit”; to denote a gendered notion of manhood firmly rooted in economic independence and patriarchal authority

¹⁸ William Penn, *A Brief Account of the Province of Pennsylvania* (London, 1681), 6.

Penn would have made a profit of roughly £14,300, a sum far larger than the debt owed to Penn's father. But many of these first purchasers were Penn's friends and family. Others were owed money by Penn who instead opted to be repaid in territory rather than cash.¹⁹ Most of these first purchasers and weighty friends had earned their wealth through the newfound Atlantic economy. Samuel Carpenter, for example, had earned his capital "from trade in the Caribbean commercial metropolis." A number of other first purchasers and settlers in Pennsylvania came from the West Indies, where they had earned their fortunes as merchants or planters. The experiences these settlers would bring to Pennsylvania would prove invaluable, particularly when the colony's Atlantic trade began expanding.²⁰

As was illustrated in chapter two, Penn initially conceived of himself as a godly patriarch who would receive quitrents as a way of recognizing his authority as proprietor. The Bishop of Durham clause would grant him authority in government. He wanted to build an ideal agricultural "village" that would be profitable both for himself and his religion. Wealth from this settlement would alleviate Penn's debt, help finance Quakerism, and lead humanity towards its redemptive destiny. Such a vision was untenable, however, and instead of building his ideal agricultural villages, he settled for large-scale land purchases for the benefit of his fellow coreligionists. To attract the settlement of weighty friends, Penn offered a series of concessions and favors to the first

¹⁹ Richard Dunn, "Penn as Businessman," in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Mary Maples and Richard Dunn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), 49.

²⁰ Catharine Christie Dann Roeber, "Building and Planting: The Material World, Memory, and Making of William Penn's Pennsylvania, 1681-1726," (Ph.D. diss., College of William and Mary, 2011), 69. See also, Richard Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 336. In particular, Dunn notes that the Carpenter, Norris, and Dickinson families came to Philadelphia from Bridgetown and Port Royal.

purchasers. In this instance, Penn's need for finances and a desire to impose a hierarchy on Pennsylvania overrode his interests in organizing fair deals with the first purchasers. Not only were weighty friends given favorable land deals, but they also parlayed these landholdings into positions of authority. Weighty friends, for example, were instrumental in maintaining order and responsibility within Quaker monthly meetings.²¹

For weighty friends and first purchasers, Penn's land policies were an excellent way to engage in emerging economic practices while carrying out their duties as men. Significant portions of land purchases were made by men looking to carry out their roles as fathers by providing for their children. The large tracts of land bought up by Penn's friends were often bequeathed to their children. This helped guarantee the financial security of the next generation. Many, especially Penn, hoped that this would engender a sense of hard work among children who were being weakened thanks to the privileging of "Gentleman's service" over agricultural work of husbandry. In doing so, Quakers were ensuring the reputations of their children, particularly their sons, by giving them the tools to be industrious and well-respected men who would also be able to provide for their own families. These large land purchases also gave the first purchasers the opportunity to engage in land speculating, serving as middlemen between Penn and other colonists, thus accumulating wealth and influence in the colony.²²

²¹ Christopher Ryan Pearl, "'For Good Order of Government': The American Revolution and the Creation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1740-1790," (Ph.D. Diss., Binghamton State University of New York, 2013), 35-40; John Smolenski, *Friends and Strangers: The Making of a Creole Culture in Colonial Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 69.

²² Barry Levy, "'Tender Plants': Quaker Families and Children in the Delaware Valley, 1681-1735," *Journal of Family History* 3, no. 2 (1978), 121-2.

In addition to targeting a wealthy cadre of Friends to purchase land and settle Pennsylvania, the colony's proprietor also relied on the financial backing from influential London merchants. Many of these individuals had no intentions of migrating to Pennsylvania, but instead remained in England to capitalize on their myriad economic connections throughout the entire British Empire. Some of these merchants did engage in land speculation. But, as Mary K. Geiter shows, London merchants exercised their influence "by becoming involved in new companies launched to exploit [Pennsylvania's] potential."²³ These corporations were another important development in early modern capitalism and most often took the form of joint-stock companies. England began organizing joint-stock companies under the reign of Queen Elizabeth in Ireland. There, the English gained experience with colonialism, the use of the military to maintain order, and as a grounds for experimentation with regards to economic exploitation. Many of these ideas were then mapped onto other British colonies, with the first companies forming in 1606 with the Virginia Company of London. The company grants, issues by King James I, are similar to the dictates Charles II gave William Penn in his colony charter. The Virginia Company was meant to "tend to the glory of his divine Majesty" by creating "a settled and quiet government." In addition, company was promoted, as Edmund Morgan notes, "to stress the country's future promise, the great multitude of good things it was going to yield."²⁴

²³ Mary K. Geiter, "London Merchants and the Launching of Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 121, no.1/2 (1997): 102. Geiter attributes this interest to Pennsylvania's potential for commercial growth.

²⁴ Andrew Hadfield, "Irish Colonies and the Americas," in *Envisioning an English Empire: Jamestown and the Making of the North Atlantic World*, ed. Robert Appelbaum and John Wood Sweet (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 189-90; Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1975), 44-5.

Joint-stock companies were early modern capitalist innovations that helped to facilitate England's colonizing ventures in North America. Their purpose was clear; joint-stock companies were, as Wesley Frank Craven, the chronicler of the Virginia Company averred, "primarily a business organization with large sums of capital invested by adventurers whose chief interest lay in the returns expected from their investment." The pooling of capital helped finance overseas ventures, established trade routes, and helped England emerge as the preeminent maritime force in the Atlantic World all while minimizing financial risk for investors.²⁵ Colonial joint-stock companies drew investments from a wide range of individuals; though influential men often took on predominate roles. The genius of the joint-stock company was in its accessibility. For an investment of just £10 or £15, gentlemen or merchants could become investors in the company. Members sacrificed a small degree of profits by joining a group of investors, but they also minimized their financial risk should a colonial venture fail. There was still a risk when investing, however, because management of joint-stock companies was often questionable and investors were impatient and wanted their profits immediately. This happened to the Virginia Company, opening the way for private investors who spent £100,000 trading tobacco, transporting servants, and building plantations. It would happen with Pennsylvania, too.²⁶

The quotes from the Virginia Company grants are taken from Richter, *Before the Revolution*, 112. 1606 saw two companies form under the title of Virginia Company—one stationed in Plymouth, the other in London/ The Plymouth Company had a short-lived colony on the Sagadahoc River in Maine and was abandoned after a year. The London Company's venture along the Chesapeake was far more successful.

²⁵ Quoted in Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), 15-7.

²⁶ Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 45.

Penn's reliance on joint-stock companies came at a time when England's expanding market economy was tied to the growth of its Atlantic economy. Chartered by Penn on March 25, 1682, the Free Society of Traders was an extension of Penn's efforts to recruit weighty friends as early settlers of Pennsylvania. The Free Society differed from earlier joint-stock companies in that it did not dominate all aspects of Pennsylvania's economy and society. It did, however, rely on many of the same mechanisms as its counterparts. Its charter and organization allowed the Free Society to develop into a distinct corporate entity with far-reaching authority. Penn launched a campaign in the 1680s to gain investors during a period when economic conditions in England were rising. With more opportunities at home, Penn needed to find new ways to gain interest in Pennsylvania, and the Free Society of Traders was one of his solutions.²⁷

The Free Society had a clear mission statement. The joint-stock company was tasked with the responsibility of "import[ing] the growth and manufactory of that province." The Society, like other joint-stock companies of the time, hoped to establish new trading routes and expand commerce during a time when England's restrictive monopolies stifled entrepreneurial innovation.²⁸ He stressed his colony's potential for economic expansion and exploitation as a means of appealing to possible investors, he turned to his network of wealthy Quakers—Robert Turner from Dublin, James Claypoole and his connections to the West Indies, Benjamin Furly's ties to Rotterdam, the Scottish connections of Robert Barclay, as well as men such as Edward Pierce, John Symcock,

²⁷ Christopher Tomlins, *Freedom Bound: Law, Labor, and Civic Identity in Colonizing English America, 1580-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 287; Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 49-50.

²⁸ Free Society of Traders: Charter of Incorporation and Grant of the Manor, Box 6B, HSP Miscellaneous Collection (Collection 425), HSP; Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House*, 91.

and Thomas Brassey—in an attempt to cultivate a group of First Purchasers that would provide the foundation for a class of wealthy merchant settlers.²⁹

The membership of the Free Society consisted largely of influential individuals with ties to the Penn family and England's political and economic infrastructure. The leading figures in the Free Society were Nicholas More, Philip Ford, and Claypoole, all of whom invested heavily in the venture. With a goal of £20,000 in investments, Penn and the Free Society sold shares for £25 with half of that sum due upon subscription. Between Claypoole and Moore, the two invested £700 in Pennsylvania. All told, the Free Society generated capital in excess of £10,000 for their venture. While More and Claypoole settled in Pennsylvania, many remained in England because they needed to maintain their preexisting economic and political ties. Many members of the Free Society had previous experience with the Levant Company. Penn, himself, had ties through his father and grandfather. The investors in the Free Society worked alongside members of parliament, individuals on the Privy Council, and influential members of London's city commerce.³⁰

As aforementioned, the Free Society was part of a concerted effort to construct an ideal colony rooted in merchant power, agricultural dominance, and overseas trade. In addition, the Society intended to provide an avenue for Quakers to expand their influence

²⁹ The names of these members of the Free Society are drawn from Free Society of Traders: Charter of Incorporation and Grant of the Manor, Box 6B, HSP Miscellaneous Collection (Collection 425), HSP.

³⁰ Arthur Jensen, *The Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 3-4; Gary Nash, "The Free Society of Traders and the Early Politics of Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 89, no. 2 (1965): 154-5. Nash attributes the total number of shares sold as £12,500. See also, Geiter, "London Merchants," 103-6. Geiter notes that Giles Penn's work as consul in the Mediterranean drew him into the web of the Levant Company. For William Penn Sr., much of his naval training occurred on Levant Company ships. Penn's father-in-law, Isaac Pennington, was the son of a Levant Company governor.

and cement their role in Pennsylvania. Members deployed a number of strategies in an attempt to fulfill their purpose. To help them establish a viable foundation in Pennsylvania, the Free Society was granted, “twenty thousand acres of land, parcel of the said Province of Pennsylvania in Trust.” The land, which was named the Manor of Franke, was granted for “the better improvement of Trade.” As noted, the Free Society constituted a corporation, so they were able to sue and be sued, as the charter granted them the right to “forever hold a Court Barron... Courts leet & view of Franke pleadge.”³¹

Along with their legal rights as a corporation, the Free Society’s charter outlined several ways in which Penn and the Society planned to exert economic authority. The Free Society was granted the right to “trade, build, and plant, and to appoint fairs and markets, at such convenient times as they shall think fit, within the corporation and manor aforesaid.”³² The Manor of Franke was the locus of economic activity for the Free Society. The Free Society set up a glass factory, built a gristmill, initiated projects to develop brick kilns and tanneries, and supported the development of artisans and workshops to build and produce supplies for the maritime agriculture. The Free Society was also involved in developing other aspects of Philadelphia’s maritime culture. As per their charter, the Free Society was responsible for monitoring the “free fishing of whales, sturgeon, and all royal and other fishes in the main sea and bays of the said province and in the inlet waters & rivers within or adjoining to the said twenty thousand acres or any part thereof.” The Free Society organizing fishing expeditions and voyages along the

³¹ Charter of Incorporation and Grant of the Manor, HSP Miscellaneous Collection (Collection 425), HSP; Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 287.

³² Samuel Hazard, *Annals of Pennsylvania, from the Discovery of the Delaware* (Philadelphia: Hazard and Mitchell, 1850), 550.

coast to great success. Sturgeon, in particular, was available in large quantities for Pennsylvania fisherman.³³

The Free Society also put in place a plan to supply the colony with a labor force. Claypoole, the Free Society's treasurer, explained how "We are to send over 100 servants to build houses, to plant and improve land, and for cattle, and to set up a glass house for bottles, drinking glass, and window glass, to supply the Islands and continent of America." The first shipment of servants, which amount to sixty in total, arrived in September 1682. The servants sent over to Pennsylvania were indentured by the Society itself. For example, Joseph Martin was an agent of the Free Society operating in London. In 1683 and 1684, Martin bound Joseph Brooke, James Harris, John Joverell, and John Moore to serve four years in Pennsylvania as glass bottle makers. Others, like Richard Townsend, a carpenter, were bound in a similar manner. The experience was not universal, though, as the Free Society's servants were bound in a number of locations, including London, Bristol, or Pennsylvania.³⁴ The goods and crops produced on land owned by the Free Society were used to build Pennsylvania's overseas economy. Most commodities were shipped to places like the West Indies. Profits were also generated from the leasing of land to future settlers.

³³ Charter of Incorporation and Grant of the Manor, Box 6B, HSP Miscellaneous Collection (Collection 425), HSP; Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 4; Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 49-50; Nash, "The Free Society of Traders and the Early Politics of Pennsylvania," 162. For a discussion of sturgeon fishing and the Free Society's ownership of these waters, see chapter three of Roeber, "Building and Planting".

³⁴ James Claypoole to Norton Claypoole, July 14, 1682, James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP; Gray Nash notes that the original charter for the Free Society of Traders indicated that they intended to send over an additional 100 indentured servants on top of what Claypoole indicated. See Nash, "The Free Society of Traders," 154, 161; Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 289-90; Landes, *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World*, 141-2.

Of the many members of the Free Society of Traders, none worked harder for its success than James Claypoole. Born in 1634 at Northborough Manor, Northamptonshire, Claypoole was the ninth of fourteen children. His father, John, was a yeomen farmer with little influence. His mother, Mary Angell, was the daughter of a London merchant.³⁵ The family's fortunes began to change when his brother John married Elizabeth Cromwell, the favorite daughter of Oliver Cromwell. John had served as an officer in the Parliamentary Army in 1645 and held the title of Lord Claypoole, bestowed upon him by Cromwell, until the Restoration in 1660.³⁶ Using his family's newfound influence as an entry point into a career in Atlantic commerce, James worked as a merchant in Bremen before setting up a business in London and finishing an apprenticeship in 1658. As a London merchant, Claypoole bought and sold "minks" and "catts" from the Hudson Bay, sugar from the West Indies, linen and beer from Germany, and wine from Bordeaux.³⁷ It was a common occurrence for Claypoole to report how he would receive "a great parcell of Barbados sugar."³⁸ As a well-connected businessman and friend of Penn, Claypoole became an important asset in helping build Pennsylvania's

³⁵ Nuala Zahedieh, "Claypoole, James (1634-1687)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/50425>, accessed January 15, 2016].

³⁶ C.H. Firth, "Claypole, John, appointed Lord Cleypole under the protectorate (1625-1688)," rev. Ivan Roots, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5567>, accessed December 30, 2015]. John Claypoole was the eldest son of the Claypoole family and served as an army officer and courtier. He is first reported as serving at the siege of Newark in 1645-6. In addition to marrying his daughter, Claypoole served as one of Cromwell's lords of the bedchamber, master of horse, and ranger of Whittlewood and Salset forests in Northamptonshire.

³⁷ Information on the early life of James Claypoole is taken from Marion Balderston, ed., *James Claypoole's Letter Book: London and Philadelphia, 1681-1684* (California: Huntington Library, 1967), 8.

³⁸ James Claypoole to Robert Rogers May 21, 1681, James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP

commercial network. As aforementioned, he invested heavily in Pennsylvania. In a letter to his brother, Norman, he wrote, “I have purchased of William Penn 5,000 Acres in his Country... I propose to send over my attorney with some servants, to build and plant, etc., and to provide cattle and other necessaries, that if I ever come there, my land may be still improving.”³⁹

Claypoole also worked for Penn to develop the infrastructure of the holy experiment. Eager to help prove Penn’s worth, Claypoole praised his friend as “a fit man as any is in Europe to plant a country. When he comes to towne, I shall treat with him for 5,000 acres for thee. I know £100 is the purchase thereof, and if thou dost not conclude soon it may be too late.”⁴⁰ Claypoole attempted to build support for the Free Society. He lauded the Society, writing, “We have erected a society for trade in Pennsylvania... We have already subscribed £10 mil stock, of which we receive at present ½ part, which is about £500.” He believed that if the Society continued to gain support, “we hope to have wine and oil for merchandise and some linen; however, hemp for cordage. And for iron, lead and other minerals we have no doubt of.”⁴¹ Even after the Free Society became ancillary to the overall growth of the colony, Claypoole remained an integral piece of the burgeoning economy.

³⁹ James Claypoole to Norman Claypoole, October 28 1681, James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP. Claypoole appeared as a land-purchasing agent in several lists. See *A List of Warrants Issued for the Taking up Lots within Philadelphia City*, Miscellaneous Manuscript Collection, 1668-1983 (Mss.Ms.Coll.200), APS.

⁴⁰ James Claypoole to Samuel Claridge, July 12 1681, James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP

⁴¹ James Claypoole to Norman Claypoole July 14, 1682, James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP.

Despite a clear plan of development and a generous charter for land, the Free Society of Traders was largely a failure. For starters, the Free Society fell victim, ironically, to the appeal of Pennsylvania as a new settlement. The colony witnessed an influx of settlers in the first year who had already established themselves as notable merchants. From the West Indies came Samuel Carpenter, Henry Jones, Jasper Yeates, and John Jones. William Clarke, Joshua Barkstead, and Anthony Morris arrived from New Jersey. All these individuals found Penn's promotional literature and vision for colonial settlement appealing. However, they had already established themselves as influential merchants and had no desire to work within the confines of the Free Society. Thus, competition from other entrepreneurs hindered the Free Society's ability to generate subscriptions. Not only did these merchants want to work independently, they capitalized on the slow formation and deployment of the Free Society. By the time the Free Society formed and arrived at the Quaker Colony, independent merchants had already assumed much of the responsibility for trading and provisioning the settlers.

The Free Society of Traders also suffered from erratic leadership. Nicholas More, despite investing heavily, suffered from inconsistent behavior. As was shown in chapter two, the Provincial Council chastised More for what they perceived as slanderous words and intrusive actions More took while in positions of authority. Several of the freemen in the Assembly petitioned that Moore "should be removed from all his Offices of Trust and Power in this Province & Territories."⁴² More also had conflicts over the reimbursement of his investment. In 1685 the Free Society was apparently forced to pay More the "whole summe of two hundred and three pounds two shillings and six pence of good and

⁴² *MPCP*, 1:2-3; 1:135.

lawfull mony.”⁴³ As a result of this behavior, and actions of other important members of the Free Society, stockholders became increasingly reluctant when it came time to invest additional funds. This led to a shortage of disposable income for the Free Society. They were unable to pay their debts or their employees. By 1686, these problems had become too much to endure and they essentially disbanded, leaving the economic future of Pennsylvania up to those independent entrepreneurs who first rejected the joint-stock company.⁴⁴

The collapse of the Free Society of Traders did not deter Penn from using the structures of merchant capitalism to support his colonial venture. Two joint-stock companies arose out of the ashes of the Free Society of Traders. First, the New Mediterranean Sea Company was formed in 1686. This company developed through correspondence between David Lloyd and Daniel Coxe, the governor of West New Jersey. Authorized by Penn to take advantage of the economic benefits of a colony “uppon the great lake,” the New Mediterranean Sea Company sought to exploit fur trading in the Great Lakes region. Many of the members of this joint stock company had political ties in London and experience with the Levant Company. A company largely driven by religious dissenters, the New Mediterranean Sea Company was derailed through conflicts with New York over trade and revenue, as well as the political consequences of the Glorious Revolution in 1688.⁴⁵

⁴³ *Free Society of Traders in Pennsylvania: Obligation to Nicholas More* (1685), HSP.

⁴⁴ Gary Nash has expertly laid out the reasons why the Free Society of Traders ultimately failed in their efforts in Pennsylvania. I have adopted his interpretation of their failings. See Nash, “Free Society of Traders,” 158-173.

⁴⁵ Daniel Coxe to David Lloyd, April 23, 30, 1686, quoted in Geiter, “London Merchants,” 106. Members of the New Mediterranean Sea Company included Henry and William Ashurst, Charles

The failures of the Free Society of Traders and New Mediterranean Sea Company did not deter Penn from his continued pursuit of financial investment in his colony. Following the collapse of the New Mediterranean Sea Company, the New Pennsylvania Company was formed in 1693. While the New Mediterranean Sea Company was meant to capitalize on the fur trade, the New Pennsylvania Company emphasized maritime trade during a period of conflict with France (1689-97). This company was also, in many ways, a product of Penn's desire to appease the new monarchs in England amidst rumors of his continuing loyalty to James II. Many of the members of the New Pennsylvania Company had previously invested in the Free Society or held positions of influence in East New Jersey. Though by the 1690s, Penn had done enough to peak interest in his colony that he was able to secure the necessary foreign investment to make his colony's economy thrive.

The Economy of Pennsylvania

"Pennsylvania is heaven for farmers, paradise for artisans, and hell for officials and preachers," Gottlieb Mittelberger wrote about Pennsylvania's mid-eighteenth century economy.⁴⁶ This description of the colony's vibrant agriculture and economy in the 1750s makes clear that Penn's halting progress of joint-stock companies did not hinder the growth of Pennsylvania's economy. By relying on capitalist innovations like the Free Society and the wealth of the First Purchasers, Penn was able to generate enough capital to give his colony a successful start and help make its economy the "Center for all the

Montague, Lord Vaughan, and Mathias Vincent. William Ashurst was on the London Council. Montague served as a privy councilor twice (1672-9, 1689) and was master of the great wardrobe until he lost his position in 1686. Vaughan served as Jamaica's governor (1674-8) and in Parliament, while Vincent held a post as London's alderman.

⁴⁶ Gottlieb Mittelberger, *Journey to Pennsylvania*, trans. and ed. John Clive and Oscar Handlin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 48; Richter, *Before the Revolution*, 358.

English Colonies upon the Continent of America, as they lie from the North-East parts of New-England to the most Southernly parts of Carolina.”⁴⁷ The Quaker colony’s economy stretched from the hinterlands of central Pennsylvania to the docks at Philadelphia. From there, the tendrils of exchange touched other mainland British colonies, exported goods to England, and sustained the plantation complex in the West Indies. In creating such a far-reaching economy, Penn and others helped build a capitalist economy in Pennsylvania far more concerned with the maximization of profit than adherence to Quaker values of plain dealing and modesty in economic practices.

Weighty friends and London investors constituted a significant part of Pennsylvania’s early population. But as chapter one noted, the colony was also marketed to less affluent individuals. In particular, it was cast as an ideal settlement for the indigent who toiled in England with little opportunity to achieve competency and provide for their families.⁴⁸ Penn noted that his colony was ideal for those “clogg’d and oppress’d about a Livelyhood, for the means of subsisting being easie there, they may have time and opportunity to gratify their inclinations, and thereby improve Science and help Nurseries of people.”⁴⁹ Marketing the colony in such a manner proved to be a wise decision for Penn, who saw a varied group of individuals migrate to his colony. In striking a “due balance between trade and husbandry,” Penn’s targeted recruitment of artisans with “laborious handicrafts” was met with great success.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ William Penn, *Some Proposals for a Second Settlement* (London, 1690), Vol. 2, William Penn Miscellaneous Papers and Documents, 1665-1801 (Mss.B.P38), APS.

⁴⁸ Vickers, “Competency and Competition,” 3.

⁴⁹ William Penn, *A Brief Account of the Province of Pennsylvania* (London, 1681), 6.

Pennsylvania's diverse population proved to be an important part of its flourishing economy during the late-seventeenth and eighteenth century. Between the colony's founding in 1682 and 1700, nearly 21,000 people were living in Pennsylvania. By 1717, that number had grown to 30,000.⁵¹ In addition to the First Purchasers, early settlers to Pennsylvania came from a diverse population base interested in the "opportunity to gratify their inclinations." Many of the first colonists in Pennsylvania were craft workers or farmers. They were yeomen from Wiltshire, artisans from Bristol, and tradesmen from London.⁵² Penn's colony benefitted from these immigrants, many of whom were "carpenters, joiners, bricklayers, masons, plasterers... shoemakers, butchers, bakers, brewers, glovers... saylmakers, blockmakers, turners, etc." Despite not fulfilling his goal of populating the colony with a mass of wealthy Quakers, Penn saw the benefits of bringing in a diverse base of laborers. After all, he agreed, "the Poor are the Hands and Feet of the Rich. It is their labour that improves Countries; and to encourage them, is to promote the real benefits of the publick. Now as there are abundance of these people in many parts of Europe, extremely desirous of going to America; so the way of helping them tither, or when there, and the return thereof to the Disbursers, will prove what I say to be true."⁵³

⁵⁰ David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 461.

⁵¹ Sally Schwartz, "A Mixed Multitude": *The Struggle for Toleration in Colonial Pennsylvania* (New York: New York University Press, 1987), 36. Beginning in 1717, Pennsylvania began witnessing a spike in the number of migrants from northern Ireland and Germany, which added to the ethnic and religious diversity of the colony.

⁵² John Moretta, *William Penn and the Quaker Legacy* (New York: Pearson, 2007), 119-20; 126.

⁵³ William Penn, *A Further Account of the Province of Pennsylvania and its Improvements* (London, 1685), 4, 15.

The mass of laborers and artisans arriving in Pennsylvania made a noticeable impact on the colony. By 1690, Philadelphia alone had over twenty shopkeepers and 119 craftsmen. These artisans practiced over thirty-five different trades. This trend was mirrored in other towns like Lancaster. By 1758 and 1759, about twenty percent of taxpayers in Lancaster county were craftsmen.⁵⁴ These craftsmen and artisans were integral to the emerging maritime economy. As Thomas Doerflinger notes, “[artisans] had direct, tangible financial power that reverberated through the ranks of the city’s middling classes. A big shipping firm like Willing and Morris dispatched over twenty vessels a year, and nearly every one of them needed the services of blacksmiths, sailmakers, caulkers, carpenters, and the like.”⁵⁵ Many manufacturers were supported by investments from wealthy Quakers like Samuel Carpenter or Isaac Norris. Quakers invested in lumbering, flour milling, and other manufacturers closely linked to maritime industries. Quaker capital was particularly important for Pennsylvania’s iron industry, which became incredibly important in overseas trade.⁵⁶ When viewed as part of a chain linking the hinterlands to the port, the interconnectedness and reliance of Pennsylvania’s economy on each step becomes clear.

The rise of an artisan class relied heavily on the diverse range of immigrants to Pennsylvania capitalizing on favorable land prices. Between 1719 and 1731, an acre of land in Pennsylvania cost only 1.4 shillings sterling. Between 1732 and 1764, the price

⁵⁴ Daniel Johnson, “‘What Must Poor People Do?’: Economic Protest and Plebeian Culture in Philadelphia, 1682-1754,” *Pennsylvania History* 79, no. 2 (2012): 121; Lemon, *The Best Poor Man’s Country*, 96.

⁵⁵ Doerflinger, *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise*, 28.

⁵⁶ Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House*, 97-9.

remained fairly constant, at 1.9 shillings per acre. By 1765, however, land cost a mere .6 shillings per acre.⁵⁷ Settlers to Pennsylvania generally desired moderately sized farms of 100 to 500 acres. More important to colonists was access to important markets, especially in the urban region. It was rare for any significant number of settlers to live outside a fifty-mile radius of Philadelphia.⁵⁸ Roughly 15,000 immigrants between 1670 and 1700 took advantage of the cheap land and moved to the Delaware Valley. 8,000 arrived alone between 1681 and 1685. Many came from Quaker strongholds in the English Midlands and more than a quarter came from other parts of England. Half of the first purchasers were from London and Bristol. Additionally, Pennsylvania welcomed around 800 Dutch and Scandinavian residents, Germans, Irish, Welsh, and more. Many of these settlers, almost two-thirds, were adult men. Many were householders of modest fortunes, working as artisans and husbandmen.⁵⁹ This varied migration played an integral role in providing Pennsylvania with a diverse population adept at many types of farming and agricultural work.

Agriculture and farm labor were the lifeblood of Pennsylvania's economy. The crops produced on Pennsylvania's farms helped sustain local economies and individual families, while surplus goods were shipped throughout the Atlantic. What began as a "far-distant portion of the world consist[ing] of nothing but wilderness," as Francis Daniel Pastorius noted, "advances, and from day to day grows perceptibly" to the point

⁵⁷ Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 153. James Lemon presents a similar portrait for the cost of land. Land prices for Lancaster and Chester county cost approximately £1 10 shillings. Lemon does break from Kulikoff in discussing land prices in the 1760s, vaguely asserting that they ranged from £1 10 shillings to £3 10 shillings. See Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country*, 68-9.

⁵⁸ Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country*, 65.

⁵⁹ Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 60; Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country*, 2-3.

that Pennsylvania's agricultural production rivaled any competing colony. As William Moraley averred, "This Country produces not only almost every Fruit, Herb, and Root as grows in *Great Britain*, but divers Sorts unknown to us."⁶⁰ Pennsylvania farmers employed a system of mixed farming. They produced a wide range of crops, including potatoes and turnips, wheat, rye, and Indian corn. Rye was an important crop, though, as James Logan noted, "wheat [was] the farmer's dependence."⁶¹ Farmers relied on arable fields, meadows, gardens, and orchards to produce crops for home use, to feed animals, and to sell. Wood lots supplied wood for fuel and construction, while some farmers built their homes near rock outcrops in order to collect them and use them for construction. Livestock played a key role in sustaining Pennsylvania's yeomen population. James Lemon notes how "more families owned cattle than owned other animals. Even many town dwellers, widows, and laborers kept one or two cows." Others would keep horses, sheep, or pigs.⁶²

The large quantities of food produced by Pennsylvania farmers became important in helping build the colony's networks of trade. Before ships began traveling to and fro across the Atlantic, however, Pennsylvania farmers capitalized on mainland trade. Food trade was an important aspect of Pennsylvania's economy, particularly the food trade between colonists and Native Americans. Indians were particularly active in the Delaware Valley's trade in fish, particularly sturgeon. The trade in fish flowed both ways

⁶⁰ Francis Daniel Pastorius, "Circumstantial Geographical Description of Pennsylvania," in *Narratives of Early Pennsylvania*, ed. Myers, 383; William Moraley, *The Infortunate: The Voyage and Adventures of William Moraley, an Indentured Servant*, ed. Susan Klepp and Billy Smith, 2nd ed. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 52-3.

⁶¹ Quoted in Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country*, 154.

⁶² Lemon, *The Best Poor Man's Country*, 160.

between Indians and colonists. Colonists frequently sold their fish to Indians, and it was not uncommon for a colonist to report that he “had bought a fish of an Indian cally Nummy.” Pennsylvania traders also exchanged “strouds,” or textiles, with Indians. Penn even went so far as to hire Lasse Cock, an agent of the Lenape, in hopes of facilitating internal trade.⁶³ But while internal trade in the Quaker colony was undoubtedly important, it was the external trade across the waters of the Atlantic that fully allowed Pennsylvania to reach its full potential.

Trade in an Atlantic Economy

Although joint-stock companies never succeeded to the extent Penn envisioned, having worked to establish networks of merchant investors favorably benefited the colony’s economy through the growth of a brisk Atlantic trade. As integral as the farmers and artisans who first settled the colony were to its success, Penn knew the strength of his colony’s economy would be made on the seas. Relying on the connections with merchants in London, southern colonies, and the West Indies, Pennsylvania merchants carried out their business via partnerships or sole proprietorships.⁶⁴ One of the first structures erected in Philadelphia was a wharf “to which a ship of five hundred Tuns may lay her broadside.”⁶⁵ The docks would facilitate a vibrant commercial center carefully planned by city planners. If Philadelphia were to become a “well-designed commercial center,” then it would need a port that would take advantage of its location.⁶⁶

⁶³ Quoted in Roeber, “Building and Planting,” 106; Landes, *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World*, 93.

⁶⁴ Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House*, 92.

⁶⁵ Quoted in Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 2.

Pennsylvania's merchant population knew that "the intention of trade was to make a profit & where that end is not answer'd it's no purpose to trade."⁶⁷ And indeed, Pennsylvania did rapidly expand as a commercial port. As early as 1687, Pennsylvania's economy drew the ire of administrators in New York. Governor Thomas Dongan complained how "the three lower counties of Pennsylvania used to be dependent on New York," but "Mr. Penn has been of great detriment to us herein, by preventing the tobacco from coming here as heretofore." Dongan goes on to complain about how "if Pennsylvania be continued as by charter, it will take in most of the five nations to westward of Albany and the whole peltry trade of that place."⁶⁸ By 1696, the governor of New York was reporting that Philadelphia had "become nearly equal to the city of New York in trade and riches."⁶⁹

One reason Pennsylvania developed such a vibrant economy was because of the strong relationship between agricultural production and overseas trade. Exports from Pennsylvania included wine, linen, hemp, whale oil, tobacco, furs, and skins. Merchants

⁶⁶ As early as 1683, Penn outlined his vision of city planning in *A Letter from William Penn, Proprietary and Governor of Pennsylvania in America, to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders*, where he intended to work in concert with city planners to model Philadelphia after the Moore Fields of London. Penn's vision for Philadelphia would facilitate trade, while also working towards a political and moral meaning. See Elizabeth Milroy, "'For the like Uses, as the Moore-Fields': The Politics of Penn's Squares," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 130, no. 3 (2006): 257-282.

⁶⁷ John Reynell to Samuel Mellor & Son, March 28, 1753, quoted in Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 3.

⁶⁸ Governor Dongan to Lords of Trade and Plantations, March 2, 1687, Calendar of State Papers, Colonial, American, and West Indies, Vol 12. Thomas Dongan, the second earl of Limerick, was appointed governor of New York in 1683 and served five years in the position. See Piers Wauchope, "Dongan, Thomas, second earl of Limerick (1634-1715)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/66561>, accessed January 4, 2016].

⁶⁹ Quoted in Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 5; Johnson, "What Must Poor People Do," 121. Johnson attributes this to the fact that New York was suffering from high taxes for frontier defense. When paired with low wages, many New Yorkers found themselves short on cash and fled New York for a more favorable economy and better working conditions in Pennsylvania.

also moved goods from the southern colonies like cotton, sugar, indigo, and ginger. Between 1698-1704, for example, Pennsylvania exported 1,482,488 pounds of tobacco. Most importantly, the arable fields in Pennsylvania's hinterlands produced massive quantities of wheat, which allowed for the exportation of wheat, flour, and bread. This accounted for more than half of the total value of exports of Philadelphia. The mid-1700s were particularly profitable for farmers looking to sell wheat and the merchants who shipped it throughout the Atlantic. In 1729, Pennsylvania exported 74,809 bushels of wheat. By 1734-1735, this increased to 195,028 bushels. Flour and bread was exported in similarly large quantities. From 1729 to 1735, Pennsylvania exported anywhere from 35,000 to 56,000 barrels of flour and 9,000 to 12,000 casks of bread.⁷⁰

The sheer volume of trade going to and from Philadelphia during the 1700s is staggering. In 1724, 104 vessels entered Philadelphia carrying 3,870 tons of goods. Outgoing vessels, of which there were 103, carried 4,130 tons of goods. These numbers steadily increased for the next fifteen years. By 1730, 157 ships arrived in Philadelphia, while 171 vessels left the port. The tonnage of the outgoing ships had increased by over 3,000 tons. By 1739, incoming and outgoing ships had both exceeded two hundred vessels with the outgoing tonnage nearly 11,000 tons. Most of these ships went to the West Indies or the British Isles. Some, however, set sail for Southern and Coastal Europe. The majority of ships coming into Pennsylvania were from England.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Jensen, *Maritime Commerce in Colonial Philadelphia*, 7; Lydon, "Philadelphia's Commercial Expansion," 402. Lydon notes that Pennsylvania's prosperity, unsurprisingly, was dependent on foreign demand, though the period from 1728 to 1738 appears to be particularly bountiful. Wheat crops were lauded as the "best ever" or the "greatest crop that was ever raised in Pennsylvania."

⁷¹ The specific information about incoming and outgoing trade in Philadelphia is taken from Lydon, "Philadelphia's Commercial Expansion," 402-5.

Laws and policies, both at the colonial and the imperial level, also shaped Pennsylvania trade. Foremost among these policies was the Navigation Acts. The Navigation Acts were first passed in 1651 by the Rump Parliament, and were intended for “the Increase of the Shipping and the Encouragement of the Navigation of This Nation.” The Act restricted trade between England and its colonies holdings so that all trade must be imported into England on ships owned by people of England or its colonies. European goods could only be imported in English ships. These acts effectively banned Dutch merchants from trading with England or its colonies. Framed more precisely, the Navigation Acts were instituted to create protected markets, regularize transatlantic trade routes, and capitalize on emerging financial mechanisms in England to maximize trade and profits. In the case of Pennsylvania, the colony’s charter made clear that colonists “shall be bound to pay, and do observe the Acts of Navigation and other Laws in that Behalf made.” Any actions “against the Laws of Trade and Navigation” would result in the offending party having “to answer for any Misdemeanor that shall be committed,” which usually resulted in forfeitures or penalties.⁷²

As proprietor, Penn asserted his right to shape provincial government policies concerning trade. It was his responsibility to “Levy, Muster, and Train all Sorts of Men” to protect against “Barbarous Nations” and “Enemies, Pirates and Robbers.” He had the authority to “Grant, Demise, or Enscoff... such Parts and Parcels” of land. He had the power to “set or make, or cause to be set or made, any Imposition, Custom, or other

⁷² Richter, *Before the Revolution*, 232, 331; *A Collection of Charters and other Publick Acts* (Philadelphia, 1740), 5-7. See also, Gertrude MacKinney, ed., *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: State Printer of Pennsylvania, 1931-1935), I:X-XI. Pennsylvania was expected all follow all “Acts of Parliament, concerning Trade and Navigation, and his Majesty’s Customs.”; “America and the West Indies: April 1697, 454-73,” in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies, Volume 15, 1689-1692; Great Britain Board of Trade Records, 1675-1782*, HSP, 3:249-50.

Taxation, Rate, or Contribution whatsoever” in his Province for “Lands, Tenements, Goods, or Chattels... or in and upon any Goods and Merchandizes within the Province” that were set “within the Ports or Harbours” of Pennsylvania so long as it did not conflict with a previously established law or act of Parliament.⁷³ The crown did, on occasion, interfere in matters of colonial trade. It was generally to issue laws or government subsidies to prop up things like hemp or silk production, which often worked to the detriment of the industry England was attempting to support.⁷⁴

The freedom to sell land, set taxes, and oversee the financial health of his colony led Penn to adopt a flexible approach to governing economic actions. This was to the benefit of Pennsylvania’s economy. Laws and statutes were generally more concerned with protecting the rights of individuals, like the “Act Concerning Feme Sole Traders,” than limiting the economic freedom of any traders. The aforementioned act sought to protect wives whose husbands were involved in maritime work and whose circumstances took them out to sea and “leave their wives in a way of shopkeeping.”⁷⁵ Many of the statutes addressed day-to-day details for colonial management, but rarely did they do much to constrain trade. An “Act for Raising of County Rates and Levies,” for example, addressed the responsibilities of assessors and the handling of land and tenements in the Pennsylvania townships.⁷⁶ In instances where the Pennsylvania government did enact greater oversight through legislation, it was usually done in an effort to prevent abuses of

⁷³ *A Collection of Charters and other Publick Acts*, 8-9.

⁷⁴ Lemon, *The Best Poor Man’s Country*, 30.

⁷⁵ James T. Mitchell, ed, *The Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania from 1682 to 1801* (Harrisburg: State Printer of Pennsylvania, 1896), 3:157 (Hereafter cited as *Statutes at Large*).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 4:13-4.

trade. Passed in 1695, the “Act for Preventing Frauds” sought to work for “the encouragement of the Navigation of this Kingdom” by regulating and extending aspects of the Navigation Acts.⁷⁷ Some laws regulated the handling of bills of exchange and provided a system that protected merchants whose business partners reneged on deals. Others sought to protect merchants from dubious maritime laborers, by issuing a statute stating, “that no person, Ordinary Keeper or other... shall trust any Mariner without the master of the Ship or Vessell.”⁷⁸

Other Pennsylvania laws pertaining to the economy imposed regulations insofar as they sought to provide a standard of care and treatment for overseas exchanges. The “Law about Caskes and Packing Meat for Transportation,” for example, required any merchant who presumed “shipp any Beef or Pork” have each piece of cargo “be markt with the s[aid] officer’s mark” after a registered packing inspector looked over the goods. In some cases, certain economic transactions were banned, as was the case with horses. Pennsylvania statute dictated that “no person shall export or Cause to be exported any horse gelding or Mare out of this Province or territories thereof.” The latter was of great concern to some merchants. James Logan protested that if “the exportation of Lumber & horses from the Northern colonies to these Plantations be prohibited,” it would “thither enrich” rivals like the French or Dutch.⁷⁹

A paper money policy also helped the burgeoning trade. William Penn first proposed a paper money policy when he suggested the establishment of a land bank to

⁷⁷ An Act for Preventing Frauds, and Regulating Abuses in the Plantation Trade, November 22, 1695, Acts of Parliament, Orders in Council, etc., NV-177, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485A), HSP.

⁷⁸ *Statutes at Large*, 2:240.

⁷⁹ *The Statutes at Large*, 1:190, 206; James Logan, *Trade between Britain and the Colonies*, Miscellaneous Manuscript Collection, 1668-1983 (Mss.Ms.Coll.200), APS.

provide paper credit. The policy helped regulate exchanges and provide a strong basis for means of exchange. The issue of paper money was, at times, a contentious one. It was sparked, most notably, in the wake of widespread economic depression following the South Sea Bubble. Advocates of a more regulated money policy noted how colonists “Laboured under many Difficulties & Inconveniences in their Commerce and Trade through the Scarcity of money & uncertainty in the valuation thereof.” By standardizing and regulating the value of monies in Pennsylvania, Penn and members of the General Assembly endeavored to foster “the Encouragement of Importation of money to promote trade and Ease the people.”⁸⁰

Colonists throughout British North America were debating the merits of paper money during the seventeenth and eighteenth century, and Pennsylvania was no different. William Penn’s son, Thomas, was an opponent to paper money. Thomas Penn believed that Pennsylvania “ought to have no money but Gold & Silver.” In some cases, Penn’s opposition to paper money brought him in conflict with the Crown, as it was supported by “the Board of Trade M^r Walpole and Baker.” Penn went so far in his opposition as to lament “the stupidity of the Merchants both in Philadelphia and this place that they do not represent against an encrease of Paper Money.”⁸¹ Ultimately, the pro-paper money colonists won the debates and the Pennsylvania loan bank was developed. As Frederick Tolles notes, “Pennsylvania’s paper money never depreciated materially, owing to the wise provisions for its redemption and to the restraint exercised in its emission.”⁸² Penn’s

⁸⁰ *Statutes at Large*, 1:205-6.

⁸¹ Thomas Penn to James Hamilton, June 6, 1749, July 31, 1749, June 6, 1760, Thomas Penn Correspondence, 1747-1771, with James Hamilton (Mss.974.8.P36c), APS.

⁸² Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House*, 100-108.

charter also afforded the proprietor the ability to incorporate towns and regulate commerce and markets. Finally, it allowed for the regulation of standards of subsistence and provided for the rise of an oligarchy of merchants reaping great profits through their trade with the West Indies and the British Isles.⁸³

The West Indies

One of the most important links in Pennsylvania's Atlantic network of trade was the West Indies. As noted earlier, Pennsylvania had several pre-existing links to the West Indies thanks to the merchants and Quakers who left places like Jamaica and Barbados for the Quaker colony. For example, Lewis Morris, a sugar planter from Barbados, expressed early interest in Penn's project. Writing to the Quaker Proprietor in 1681, Morris offered his support for Penn's efforts to "perfect the Work of settling there."⁸⁴ As will be shown, Barbados had been a hotbed of Quaker settlement in the decades preceding 1681 and proved to be an important colony where Quakers first started wrestling with the moral, ethical, and religious implications of the colonizing project. And, as Kristen Block so masterfully illustrates, "colonial proprietors—including Quakers like William Penn and Robert Barclay—put great stock" in the opinions of these Barbadian Quakers.⁸⁵ The ensuing trade not only brought great profit to Pennsylvania merchants, but it also linked Pennsylvania to another capitalist innovation: the slave

⁸³ Johnson, "What Must Poor People Do?," 121.

⁸⁴ William Loddington, *Plantation Work the Work of this Generation* (London, 1682), 17. Morris first landed on the Honduran coast as an indentured servant, engaged in privateering against the Spanish, and later became a sugar planter in Barbados during the 1640s. For a brief description of Morris and his letter to Penn, see Kristen Block, "Cultivating Inner and Outer Plantations: Property, Industry, and Slavery in Early Quaker Migration to the New World," *Early American Studies* 8, no. 3 (2010): 516.

⁸⁵ Block, "Cultivating Inner and Outer Plantations," 519. For a longer discussion of the influence of religion on West Indian colonization, see Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean*.

trade. This was a reciprocal relationship. Many of the slaves imported to Pennsylvania first labored on West Indian plantations, while the rye, wheat, barley, and oats produced in Pennsylvania were shipped to the West Indies to provide sustenance for the slave population there.⁸⁶ By taking part in sustaining the lives of slaves through their agricultural produce, Penn's Woods was linked to slavery throughout the British Empire.

The goods and crops sent to sustain the West Indian economy went to several different ports in the region. Philadelphia merchants struck a vigorous trade with Barbados, Jamaica, Antigua, St Christopher, St. Kitts, and Curacao, among other locations.⁸⁷ It was in Philadelphia's second year of existence that the first ships departed for the West Indies. Headed for Barbados, these vessels carried horses and pipe staves. Within just seven years, ten vessels were departing for the West Indies each year. It was only a matter of time before shipments to the West Indies became the mainstay of Pennsylvania's economy.⁸⁸ In a letter to Joseph Grove, James Claypoole wrote that "when I come to Pennsylvania... wee have a prospect of a considerable trade between Barbadoes and Pennsylvania." Most of this early was limited to the importation of goods for sale in Philadelphia and the countryside.⁸⁹ Claypoole, whose brother Edward was in Barbados, kept up a brisk trade with the region, not just for goods, but often trading in "good stout negroe men, such as are like to be plyable and good."⁹⁰ By the 1690s,

⁸⁶ Richter, *Before the Revolution*, 348-9, 358.

⁸⁷ Lydon, "Philadelphia's Commercial Expansion," 411; Tolles, *The Meeting House and the Counting House*, 86.

⁸⁸ Tolles, *The Meeting House and the Counting House*, 86-7.

⁸⁹ James Claypoole to Joseph Grove, April 19, 1682, James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP; Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 42.

Pennsylvania began exporting goods to the West Indies to supplement the commodities they brought into port.

Once the trade between Pennsylvania and the West Indies started moving both ways, Pennsylvania began profiting significantly. Observes noted how “Pensilvania within Forty Years has... by Way of Jamaica beat out a very great Trade for their Corn and Provisions to the Spanish West-Indies; and if this Trade be properly nurs’d up, it may draw the Spanish Coast very much to depend on us for a Supply of Flower, Brisket, etc., which may be of great Advantage to us.”⁹¹ By the mid-1720s, Philadelphia was witnessing approximately 150 vessels coming and going in the brisk trade with the Caribbean. The peak year for exports was 1733, when 106 ships left for the West Indies, constituted sixty-seven percent of total trade. Onboard these ships were over 5,000 tons of goods, an enormous amount that represented a serious investment in the region. Some shipments could be considerably large. The *Elizabeth*, which set sail for Kingston, Jamaica in 1764, carried over 900 barrels of flour and 3,000 staves.⁹²

Trade followed a predictable pattern. The primary goods shipped to the West Indies were pork, flour, bread, and lumber. Lumber was particularly profitable. Philadelphia was the leading supplier of lumber to the West Indies.⁹³ Pennsylvania

⁹⁰ James Claypoole to Edward Claypoole, September 23, 1682, James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP.

⁹¹ Joshua Gee, *The Trade and Navigation of Great-Britain Considered* (London, 1729), 23-4.

⁹² On average, Philadelphia saw 77 ships per year exiting the port of Philadelphia bound for the West Indies. The highest number, as mentioned, was 106 ships, with the lowest occurring in 1723 when only 51 left Penn’s Woods. Figures are averaged from Lydon, “Philadelphia’s Commercial Expansion,” 410. Figures are also drawn from Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 43-5; For information on the ship, *Elizabeth*, see Jensen, *Maritime Commerce in Colonial Philadelphia*, 45.

⁹³ Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 46. Lumber staves shipped to the West Indies were worth up to £25,000 each year.

traders also shipped grain, beef, barrel staves, hoops, and shingles. Merchants frequently relied on a captain to handle transactions, though they also employed agents that resided on the islands who used warehouses to store goods until they could be sold and distributed. Merchants generally hoped to make gains on the outward cargo before loading up their ship with goods for a return voyage to Pennsylvania. These goods frequently included rum, molasses, or sugar.⁹⁴

Of the possible ports in the West Indies, Barbados received the highest number of ships from Pennsylvania. During the 1730s, Barbados, Jamaica, Antigua, and St. Kitts all received a notable number of shipments. Each of these ports offered opportunities for merchants, and it was not unusual for “Upwards of forty sails of vessels sailed from hence within these thirty days for Dominicio, Antigua, St. Kitts & your Island, all of which were loaded with bread & flour the major part of which I dare say is more or will be in a few days safely moved at Barbadoes.”⁹⁵ James Logan, for example, “shipped 2 tuns of flourr, 1 tunn of Bread to Barbados with 5 tuns of Beer.” Logan went on to note how, upon arrival to Barbados, he “bought & secured as near as I can judge 100 hogshead of Tobacco more to be sure as Opportunities offer & shall not be wanting in any thing that is possible to be done for the carrying on.”⁹⁶ Logan’s ships often carried shipment on both ends of the voyage, as he noted that “We then could not conclude which way to direct thy ship, there were more sett up for Jamaica then would gett loading to

⁹⁴ Doerflinger, *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise*, 108; Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 45; Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House*, 87.

⁹⁵ Wharton to John Langford, October 13, 1766, Wharton Letterbook, 1766-1769, Box 2, Sarah A.G. Smith Collection on Eighteenth Century Philadelphia Merchants, 1716-1816 (Collection 1864), HSP.

⁹⁶ James Logan to Andrew Hamilton, May 7, 1702, Letterbook I, 1701-1726, Vol. 4, Logan Family Papers (Collection 379), HSP.

Barbados... we sett her up for Engl[an]d and hope she will sail in 3 weeks or a month at farthest.”⁹⁷

While generally reliable, the market for prime commodities in the West Indies did fluctuate from time to time. Demand for goods was sporadic, and merchants had trouble predicting when prices would fall and they would suffer a loss. The fact that there were several islands merchants could ship goods did help with flexibility; but it remained somewhat of a risk. Edward Shippen observed these fluctuating markets, observing how “I have sent pork to Barbadoes...Flour and Pork and most of this Country commodities are at high rates here, which is some discouragement... tobacco is low.”⁹⁸ This flexibility was important to merchants who constantly sought to maximize their profits.

The West Indies also played an important role in Pennsylvania’s import business. The value of goods imported to Pennsylvania from the West Indies was second only to the British Isles. Between 1720-1739, entrances to Philadelphia from the West Indies constituted anywhere from 33 to 65 percent of total entrances. Rum, sugar, and molasses were shipped to Philadelphia in large quantities. Philadelphia imported 500,000 to 700,000 gallons of rum each year during the late colonial period, and the value of these imports were nearly £100,000. Molasses imports exceeded 450,000 gallons per year. In

⁹⁷ James Logan to John Askew, April 1, 1712, Letterbook, 1712-1715, Vol. 9, Logan Family Papers (Collection 379), HSP.

⁹⁸ Edward Shippen to John Crouch, March 17, 1701, Miscellaneous Manuscripts Vol. 1, Box 46, Frank M. Etting Collection, 1588-1917 (Collection 193), HSP. A discussion of the varying rates in the Caribbean in the mid-eighteenth century can be found in Doerflinger, *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise*, 137-8.

addition to these major goods, trade with the West Indies also brought in mahogany, logwood, and other products that were often turned around and shipped to England.⁹⁹

The British Isles

The other major focus of Pennsylvania's Atlantic trade was British and Ireland. Trade with the British Isles was two-fold, as Pennsylvanians traded with England and Ireland.¹⁰⁰ In the case of the Irish trade, which was not covered by the Navigation Acts, Pennsylvanians found a primary market for their produce. England, on the other hand, was the main market for Pennsylvania's manufactured goods. The trade with the British Isles was central to maintaining Pennsylvania's economy. The British Isles became an important port to receive Pennsylvania goods. And in return, the Quaker colony maintained a strong number of yearly imports from England, especially. These imports were central to sustaining Pennsylvania. As Gottlieb Mittelberger observed, ships from England "bring all kinds of goods" including spices, sugar, tea, coffee, and rum. As Mittelberger noted, "it is really possible to obtain all the things one can get in Europe in Pennsylvania."¹⁰¹

While still one of the main locations Pennsylvania ships traveled to, the trade between the Quaker colony and Ireland paled in comparison to the trade with the West Indies or England. Approximately ten to twelve ships left Philadelphia for Ireland during the 1730s, which made it one of Pennsylvania's smaller markets. Trade reached a peak

⁹⁹ For year-by-year breakdowns of entrances to Philadelphia from the West Indies, see Lydon, "Philadelphia Commercial Expansion," 410; Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 46-7.

¹⁰⁰ "British Isles" is not a neutral term, but this dissertation uses the term as shorthand for "England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales." "Britain" refers to England and Scotland under the Act of Union of 1707. Ireland remained a subordinate colony not part of the union.

¹⁰¹ Mittelberger, *Journey to Pennsylvania*, ed. Clive and Handlin, 37; Richter, *Before the Revolution*, 342.

from 1750-1754, when eight percent of all ships leaving Philadelphia arrived in Ireland.¹⁰² The main export to Ireland was flaxseed, which had, by the 1730s, “grown a very considerable branch of trade here.”¹⁰³ For example, 1,785 bushels of flaxseed were exported in 1731. In addition, Philadelphia also exported substantial amounts of lumber. Ireland trailed only the West Indies in terms of the volume of lumber arriving in the ports. Philadelphians occasionally traded in wheat, flour, and rum with Ireland, as well. These generally tended to be in lower quantities. The trade in rum amounted to “only a few thousand gallons a year at most,” as Ireland tended to instead import rum from England or the West Indies.¹⁰⁴

Pennsylvania also brought in goods from Ireland. Beginning in early 1686, imports included beef, pork, soap, tallow, and candles. Thanks to Pennsylvania’s fast-growing economy, this provisioning trade was not necessary as a long-term source network of exchange. But small amounts of consumable goods were still brought in from England. One explanation for the persisting trade was the fact that many goods, especially beef, were of higher quality in Ireland than what could be produced in Pennsylvania. It is important to note that another aspect of the trade with Ireland was the human trade. Irish servants were frequently shipped to Philadelphia to buttress the labor force in Penn’s Woods. The trade in servants will be discussed at length in later chapters.

While the trade with Ireland often lagged, the same cannot be said for England. The trade with England, in the words of Arthur Jensen, was “the aristocrat of all of

¹⁰² Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 85.

¹⁰³ John Reynell to Michael Dicker, November 1, 1737 quoted in Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 86.

¹⁰⁴ Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 86.

Philadelphia's trades." In fact, most Pennsylvania merchants equated the general health of business with the state of the market for English goods in Philadelphia. In terms of the actual volume of trade, the connections between Pennsylvania and England were unremarkable. Trade between these two regions did not outstrip that of Pennsylvania and the West Indies. During the 1730s, for example, the average annual entrances from England were twenty-two or twenty-three ships a year. Fewer than twenty ships left for England yearly during the same period. Yet, as Jensen wisely notes, "this numerical analysis of Philadelphia's trade with Great Britain does not do full justice to its true importance. Tonnage statistics, for those periods when they were available, do much to place the trade in a better perspective; for the ships used in voyages across the Atlantic were considerably larger, on the average, than those used in any other trade." To this point, nearly 4,000 tons per year were leaving Pennsylvania bound for England in the early years, with that number nearly doubling by the late colonial period.¹⁰⁵

Two prominent factors elevated Great Britain to a place of prominence in the Quaker colony's networks of trade. First, England was the imperial metropole. Second, Quaker merchant networks also made London the metropolitan center for trade and commerce. This is why, unlike the trade with the West Indies or Ireland, where Pennsylvania often exported more than was imported to the economic boon of its merchants, the trade with Great Britain was primarily an import trade. England supplied Penn's Woods with most luxuries and manufactured goods, goods with a high value in proportion to their bulk. This contrasted with the commodities exported to England, which were mostly farming or forest products having a low value in proportion to their

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 87-8.

bulk. Pennsylvanians imported a variety of goods from England. Dry goods and cloth products made up the bulk of the imports British woolens were the most valuable item brought in from England. Hardware—nails, wire, etc.—also made up a substantial portion of importations. Luxury goods like wines from Spain and Portugal were added to an array of manufactured goods, spices, and drugs, to round out the import trade with England. In fact, this import trade was vital to Pennsylvania’s internal trade networks, as well. Goods shipped from England supported the trade between Pennsylvania colonists and the region’s Indians. Colonists traded “the Woollen manufactures of Great Britain, Gun Powder, shott, fire arms and Trinketts for which we receive in barter Furrs and Skins.”¹⁰⁶

Pennsylvania did have goods to export to England but often had to wade through restrictions. The most important product sent from the Philadelphia docks was iron: exports of Iron to England averaged nearly 1,100 tons a year by the 1760s.¹⁰⁷ Most of the iron was pig iron and England was virtually the only market for Pennsylvania’s iron. Crops like grain and flour were exported infrequently. The volume of trade in these goods was dependent on the success of England’s annual harvest. Years when harvests were poor, unsurprisingly, saw a higher volume of trade leaving Philadelphia for England. This imbalance in trade pushed those in authority to look for ways to strengthen the position for Pennsylvania’s merchants. Thomas Penn voiced his concern, hoping that “a commodity should be raised in the Country, that is very necessary to the well being of this Kingdom, and that will make returns for merchandise exported from hence to a very

¹⁰⁶ Papers Respecting Sir William Keith’s Report to the Board of Trade, 1718, Indian Affairs (Volume XI), 1701-1802, Box 11, Logan Family Papers (Collection 379), HSP.

¹⁰⁷ Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 90.

great amount, and which is much wanted to keep down the prices of exchange.”¹⁰⁸

Penn’s hopes rested on hemp, in this case, and it proved to be a notable failure.¹⁰⁹

The imbalanced trade between England and Pennsylvania was a matter of great concern to local merchants. Like Penn, they sought new products that might favorably benefit their side of the network. One such example was ginseng root. The idea to trade in ginseng root began in the early 1750s. Merchants thought its use as in medicine might make it a desired commodity. While successful for a brief period, ginseng root was no more successful than hemp at acting as a major commodity to export to England in any sizeable quantity. Merchants despaired at this failing, in large part because they were beginning to owe increasingly large amounts to English merchants and the poor balance of trade was doing nothing to help them settle their debts. To make their payments, merchants tapped into their profits from the West Indies trade and other Atlantic networks. According to one historian, profits gained in other areas of trade were remitted to England by the purchase of cargos of goods, by accepting payment for a cargo in bills of exchange, and by the direct shipment of gold and silver coin from Philadelphia to England.¹¹⁰ The most common method of these three was to send bills of exchange from Philadelphia to England. This was also due to the fact that the English preferred this method of payment, deeming it safer and less tedious. Shipments of gold, for example,

¹⁰⁸ Thomas Penn to Rev. Barton, February 11 1762, quoted in Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 93.

¹⁰⁹ This was not the first time Pennsylvania attempted to make hemp a viable export. It was noted as early as 1691 that Pennsylvania would be well suited to “produce an abundance of good hemp.” See “America and the West Indies: September 1691, 1-15,” in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies*, Volume 13, 1689-1692. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth century, Pennsylvania made several attempts to promote the growth and exportation of hemp with limited success. See *Votes and Proceedings*, 1:23, 50, 2:1394-5; 3:2045-7, 1789-90; *Statutes at Large*, 3:314-5, 4:30-1, 68-72.

¹¹⁰ Jensen, *Maritime Commerce of Colonial Philadelphia*, 95.

were much harder to make due to the scarcity of gold. Simple trade was not the only way merchants turned a profit, especially when one of the major endpoints for a shipment was England. Merchants profited from “invisible items”: insurance premiums, freight charges, and other small fees. When taking these smaller and more inconspicuous forms of trade into consideration, many savvy Philadelphia merchants were able to make small profit margins despite having many impediments stacked against them when trading with England. And indeed, profits were a central concern for merchants, and there were steps merchants could take to maximize their potential for economic gain.

Manhood and Morals in Atlantic Trade

The burgeoning and successful trade in Pennsylvania was integral to Quakerism. Quakers knew that nurturing their “outer plantations” was every bit as important as supporting their internal faith. And during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Quakers were remarkably successful in supporting their outer plantations. In 1686, just five years after settlers first planted the Quaker Colony, ten of the 60 wealthiest merchants in England were Quakers.¹¹¹ Yet, such success was problematic for Quakers, who, as has been shown, struggled to balance the realities of economic growth with the desire to engage in honest business practices consistent with their faith. While Quakers may have opposed an overly ambitious attempt to acquire wealth at the expense of personal morals or fair business practices, the desire to capitalize on a growing Atlantic economy pushed many to seek ways to maximize their wealth.

¹¹¹ Landes, *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World*, 85-6; Nuala Zahedieh, “Making Mercantilism Work: London Merchants and Atlantic Trade in the Seventeenth Century,” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 9 (1999): 155-6.

Quakers did their utmost to regulate their business practices in an effort to control and monitor the integrity of exchanges. Quaker meetings also disciplined Friends who fell into debt as a way to ensure meeting members kept their obligations. Many detractors chided Quakers for “keeping their Trade within themselves and maintaining a strict Correspondence and Intelligence over all parts where they are.”¹¹² To an extent, this was true; Quakers relied on their religious networks to sustain colonial trade. These networks were purposefully separated from other religious groups or secular trade, which allowed Quakers to better emphasize “their beliefs and code of conduct.”¹¹³ As Quakers expanded their networks of trade, it became increasingly difficult to balance between plain dealing and profit. “You that are Poor, murmur not; but be Patient, and trust in the Lord,” Penn cautioned, “and submit to his Providence and he will provide for you.” The rhetoric of Pennsylvania, as has been shown in the promotional literature, offered an escape for oppressed Quakers struggling to achieve competency and credit and provide for their families. Quaker faith urged those downtrodden individuals to trust in God for economic uplift. Penn’s words were not reserved for the poor, though, as he offered caution for the rich, too. He urged, “And you that are Rich, keep in the Moderation, and strive not to multiply Earthly Treasure, nor to heap up uncertain Riches to your selves; but what God hath given you more than what is convenient for your own Use.”¹¹⁴

This conception of Quakers as honest businessmen seeking moderation in economic pursuit was rooted in the patriarchal ideal of a good father to his household.

¹¹² George Keith, et al, “An Account of the State of the Church in North America,” quoted in Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House*, 89.

¹¹³ Zahedieh, “Making Mercantilism Work,” 155-6.

¹¹⁴ *To the Churches of Jesus throughout the World, Gathered and Settled in his Eternal Light, Power, and Spirit, to be One Holy Flock, Family, and Household to the Lord* (1677), *Works*, 1:69.

After all, Penn and other Quakers believed they functioned as “One Holy Flock, Family, and Household.” And it was in this household that men were expected to “be faithful Stewards of this World’s Mannon.”¹¹⁵ Quakers did so by building good credit, or reputation. James Claypoole exemplified how this gendered notion worked in practice. Claypoole’s economic interactions were shaped by his reputation as a fair, reputable man worthy of his role as a trader. Seventeenth-century traders ran the risk of problems occurring during the trading process, but Claypoole was always careful to protect his own reputation when this happened. When business deals went wrong and Claypoole bore the brunt of the blame, he acknowledged his faults in an effort to maintain his reputation. When he made “a very bad bargain” he knew his commission would be “for nothing.” But when the fault lay with others, Claypoole was careful to protect his credit as a businessman. After an accident in December 1682, some linen fell into the Thames. Claypoole was indignant that one of his trading partners was “blaming my man,” something he said “is like the rest of his lies.” By defending his reputation, Claypoole was protecting his future business interests. If he developed a reputation for poor goods, accidents, or late shipments, his reputation as a man and a participant in the growing Atlantic trade would be harmed.¹¹⁶

As Claypoole’s own reputation was important to the ways in which he entered business transactions, so, too, was the reputation of his potential trading partners. As has been shown, early modern notions of gender saw young men as needing to go through a

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ James Claypoole to Edward Haistwell, July 29 1684; James Claypoole to William Chare, December 29, 1682, *James Claypoole’s Letter Book*, ed. Balderston, 173, 241; Merritt, “Tea Trade, Consumption, and the Republican Paradox,” 118.

maturation process, curbing their excess and passions, in order to become young men. This was reflected in establishing a merchant's reputation. In writing a colleague, Claypoole lambasted Charles Turner, another merchant, for being "a young man of little experience, and has too many sorts of trades to thrive." On the other hand, Claypoole praised John Bawden, a neighbor and fellow trader, using the gendered language of credit and reputation. Bawden, Claypoole noted, was "a very correct man." Not only did Claypoole praise Bawden for being precise in his business dealings, but he also felt more comfortable dealing with Bawden because of his neighbor's wealth and status. Bawden, he observed, was a merchant "of great eminence in this city, both for estate, honesty, and experience in Trade."¹¹⁷

Claypoole was not the only trader to stress the importance of a man's reputation and honor. Samuel Carpenter preferred to deal only with merchants willing "pay now as fast as he can."¹¹⁸ When Elias Bland began outfitting his vessels with greater weaponry in hopes of protecting against piracy, Israel Pemberton was quick to chide him for rejecting his Quaker values and turning away from a faith-based sense of moderation and peace. "I have often reflected with much Concern," he wrote Bland, "that thou should so far disregard the wholesome advice... of Friends." By outfitting his ship in such a "Warlike manner," Bland was in a manner "inconsistent with the Precepts of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ" and in a manner contrary to good, moderated Quaker men. The Pemberton family, in particular, was attuned to the risks and challenges of dishonest business

¹¹⁷ James Claypoole to William Chare, June 4, 1682; December 29, 1682, *James Claypoole's Letter Book*, ed. Balderston, 127, 173.

¹¹⁸ Samuel Carpenter to Phineas Pemberton, April 16, 1691, Pemberton Papers Vol. 1, Box 42, Frank M. Etting Collection (Collection 193), HSP.

practices. In a letter to James Pemberton, Samuel Emlen Jr. described how two Dutchmen “have prov’d themselves to be Naughty Fellows” who were trying to let goods “lay a year in Shore, without paying Storage.”¹¹⁹

In addition to his reputation as a trader, a Quaker man’s sense of manhood was also influenced by his ability to provide for his family and engage in reputable business practices. This was a charge Quakers took very seriously, and those who failed to live up to Quaker values of godly patriarchy were chided in front of the Quaker meeting. Like Elias Bland, Joseph House, a Pennsylvania Merchant, was “a part Owner of a private Vessell or Vessells of War,” and as such, was violating the Quaker belief “against Wars & fightings.” William Cundall was forced to testify to the monthly meeting when his business associate, Adam Rhodes was “in debt to him & neglects to pay.” Such an act was counter to expectations for Quaker men.¹²⁰ While falling into debt was bad enough, to do so while consciously practicing poor business was even worse. In June 1747, Ralph Loftus, “not regarding wholesome advice... incumbent on every honest man” found himself in debt after refusing to understand the various business he practiced. By using poor judgment and neglecting Quaker advices on how to conduct business, Ralph “involved himself in Debt, to the prejudice of his Creditors & his own disreputation.”¹²¹ Disreputation stemming from poor business practices ran contrary to Quaker values and Quaker conceptions of manhood.

¹¹⁹ Israel Pemberton to Elias Bland, November 21, 1748; Samuel Emlen Jr. to James Pemberton, November 23, 1748, Vol. 4, Pemberton Family Papers (Collection 484A), HSP.

¹²⁰ Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Philadelphia, 1745-1755, Quaker and Special Collections Library, Haverford College, 9, 24 (Hereafter cited as QSCL).

¹²¹ Ibid., 36-7. For other examples of Quaker meetings censuring members for disreputable practices, see Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Philadelphia, 1745-1755, 109, 173, 239, 281; Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Philadelphia, 1751-1756, QSCL, 31, 144

Quakers undoubtedly stressed plain dealing and honesty in business transactions, but this was also a larger emphasis among seventeenth and eighteenth century conduct authors. In *The Character and Qualifications of an Honest, Loyal Merchant*, the anonymous author wrote, “The Loyal Honest Merchant is an Universal Tradesman, and all the World is his Shop; a diligent Bee, ever busie in bringing Honey to the *Publick Hive*; The Nations *Purveyor*, that improves its Superfluities, and supplies its Necessities.” A good merchant had a responsibility to be sensible and aware of the fact that “not only his own private Reputation” was at stake in his financial dealings, “but the Honour of his Religion and Nation, in some measure depends thereon. His Faith is firmer than the Needle of his Compass.”¹²² Such sentiments were echoed by Richard Steele, who felt it was even more pressing for merchants to be honorable men than those in other professions. Steele felt that “the Tradesman hath more Exercises for these Graces, than most other Men: he hath the same Corruption of Nature to bias him, and the same Devil to tempt him, with others; but then he hath more variety of Trials from the World, than the studious Scholar, or the plain Husbandman.”¹²³ For Quakers as well as other merchants throughout the British Empire, successful trade was predicated on a gendered notion of honesty and reputation. For Quakers, this was consistent with their religious values and emphasis on simplicity. Though as the economy expanded and Pennsylvania’s society began more heterogeneous, it became increasingly difficult to maintain this attitude.

¹²² *The Character and Qualifications of an Honest, Loyal Merchant* (London, 1686), 4.

¹²³ Richard Steele, *The Tradesman’s Calling being a Discourse Concerning the Nature, Necessity, Choice, &c., of a Calling in General* (London, 1684). Similar arguments about the necessity of masculine honor can be found in Daniel Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman, in Familiar Letters* (London, 1726).

The Quaker Aristocracy

Penn's desire to fill his colony with great men was not limited to his belief that they would positively affect the colony's governance. He also recruited wealthy and influential merchants to help develop the colony's burgeoning economy. The success of the region's economy allowed Quakers like George Mifflin, a shopkeeper, and Samuel Powel, a carpenter, to accumulate enough wealth to transition from artisans to merchants.¹²⁴ Or take the case of John Bringhurst, the son of a London printer who traveled to Philadelphia as an apprentice to a cooper. After completing his apprenticeship and working as a journeyman, he decided to eschew this career and take up shipping. While working in trade, Bringhurst learned navigation and traveled to Barbados and Surinam, among other locales. His success on trade ships gained him recognition among other Quakers. He parlayed that recognition into a position as Overseer of the Poor in 1728, and then Overseer of the Friends School.¹²⁵

Bringhurst's elevation to Overseer of the Poor reflected a larger trend among Quaker merchants during the period prior to the Seven Years' War. The development of a Quaker aristocracy was tied not only to economic success, but those particularly successful merchants using their influence to gain positions of power in the government. James Claypoole, as this chapter has shown, established himself as an important Quaker merchant integral to Pennsylvania's growth. He was also influential in the colony's government. When organizing the Free Society of Traders, Claypoole noted, "I am chosen Treasurer," a position that granted Claypoole an annual salary of £100. In

¹²⁴ Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House*, 115.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 115.

addition to his role with the Free Society, Claypoole served as the interpreter in Pennsylvania's sole witchcraft trial. In 1685, he was commissioned Justice of the Peace. A year later, Claypoole served in the Pennsylvania Assembly and as a judge of the provincial court.¹²⁶ Such political advancements were due in part to Claypoole's good standing as a man of honest dealing, but also the influence he was able to wield as a Quaker living in a colony designed, in large part, to provide these opportunities to the Friends.

Like Claypoole and Bringhurst, James Logan used his talents as a merchant and his influence as a Quaker to ascend the ranks of Pennsylvania's government. Logan arrived in Philadelphia in 1699, traveling across the Atlantic with William Penn and in his service as secretary. Upon arrival at the Quaker colony, Logan established himself as a leading merchant both at sea and on land. As a participant in the Atlantic trade, Logan trafficked a number of goods. For example, Logan was eager to trade in tobacco as frequently "as Opportunities offer."¹²⁷ He frequently shipped flour, pork, or bread to the West Indies even if the trade was often "exceedingly dull" and liable to suffer from "exceedingly high" costs.¹²⁸ To supplement this trade, Logan was also one of the chief traders with Pennsylvania's Indian population. Rum, furs, guns, and tobacco featured prominently in this trade. Logan was so successful that he operated like a "one-man

¹²⁶ James Claypoole to Norman Claypoole, July 14, 1682, *James Claypoole's Letter Book*, ed. Balderston, 132-3; Zahedieh, "Claypoole, James (1634-1687)."

¹²⁷ James Logan to Andrew Hamilton, May 7, 1702, Letterbook I, 1701-1726, Vol. 4, Logan Family Papers (Collection 379), HSP.

¹²⁸ James Logan to Honorable Governor, June 4, 1703, Letterbook I, 1701-1726, Vol. 4, Logan Family Papers (Collection 379), HSP.

company store” and accumulating enough profits that Pennsylvania’s fur exports to London exceeded £1,000 per annum.¹²⁹

Born to a family of little influence Logan parlayed his service as Penn’s secretary into a position as one of the most influential men in Pennsylvania. Born to a Scotch Quaker schoolmaster, the Logan family had few friends. Having moved throughout Scotland and England in search of employment, James educated himself and began his own career as a teacher, eventually landing in Ireland. Once there, Penn, who was seeking a secretary, contacted him. The two were familiar with each other through Quaker meetings.¹³⁰ Upon arrival at Pennsylvania, Logan helped Penn negotiate the charter of privileges and made his start as the clerk of the council, secretary of the province, and one of the three commissioners of property. Logan served on the council from 1702 to 1747. He was also Penn’s chief Indian negotiator. He first participated in such negotiations when Penn signed the famous treaty with the Indians at Pensbury in 1701. He later would be the main colonial negotiator involved in the 1737 Walking Purchase. Logan continued to serve the Penn family after William’s death and was involved in many of the most central and heated debates.¹³¹

The impact of the Quaker aristocracy affected the nature of Pennsylvania. By the mid-eighteenth century, Quakers were, as Alexander Hamilton noted, “the richest and the

¹²⁹ Goode, “Gospel Order among Friends,” 172. For records of Logan’s internal economy with Native Americans, see Account Book, 1712-1720, Vol. 1, Logan Family Papers (Collection 379), HSP.

¹³⁰ Frederick B. Tolles, *James Logan and the Culture of Provincial America*, ed. Oscar Handlin (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1957), 6-12.

¹³¹ J. William Frost, “Logan, James (1674-1751),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16939>, accessed January 17, 2016]; Goode, “Gospel Order among Friends,” 171

people of greatest interest in the government.” Reverend Robert Jenney, Rector of Christ Church, made a similar observation, positing “the Members of [Christ] Church are not the richest in the place, the Richest generally centering in the Quakers and high Dutch, who... carry all before them.”¹³² As the colony’s politics evolved, a Quaker party centralized around Israel and James Pemberton, Anthony Morris, and other influential Quaker merchants.¹³³ The rise of influence of Quaker merchants also sowed the seeds for the erosion of Quaker power. Many Quakers intermarried with other influential merchants from other religious groups. As the accumulation of wealth became an increasingly pressing concern, Pennsylvania Friends were experiencing the intrusion of the “mundane spirit,” as “wealth and prestige grew, material comforts and luxuries might justifiably increase in proportion.”¹³⁴

Economic development played an important role in Penn’s worldview. The persecution of Quakers in England landed many Friends in prison. While they, they were unable to provide for their families and fulfill their roles as men and as godly patriarchs. By fining Quakers, throwing them in prison, and confiscating their goods, the Crown was interfering with Quaker men. In painting Pennsylvania as a colony where men and women of all walks of life could “Build, plant, & prosper,” Penn linked his colony’s identity with the plight of oppressed Quakers.¹³⁵ Yet making such a clear connection posed problems. Quakers had a certain set of expectations for how they conducted their

¹³² Quoted in Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House*, 117.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 118.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹³⁵ William Loddington, *To the City of Philadelphia* (1685), Poem to Philadelphia, Box 1, Logan Papers, 1670-1749 (Collection 2011), HSP.

financial practices. The pursuit of profit through an economy increasingly linked to Atlantic trade made it difficult for Quakers to maintain their plain dealing and honesty in business transactions.

Complicating the balance between Quaker mores and the realities of economic expansion was the encroachment of capitalism on Pennsylvania merchants. The capitalist innovation of joint stock companies proved to be a precursor for things to come. The Free Society of Traders, among others, drew together a cadre of wealthy merchants and investors to finance the colony's development. At the same time that this group began building the colony's economic infrastructure, the tendrils of trade formed with places like Barbados, Jamaica, and the British Isles. Maritime trade brought great wealth and prestige to Quaker planters. This increased wealth saw Quakers develop an aristocracy in Pennsylvania, linking their success at sea with influence in government. Yet despite the change, Pennsylvania merchants could not escape the influence of gender. The success of merchants was intimately linked to their reputation as men. Drawing on the gendered notion of male credit, a man's honesty and integrity in business dealings affected his reputation and his success. Undoubtedly, joint-stock companies, investors, and the trade in agricultural goods helped build the colony. But so, too, did another capitalist innovation: the rise of unfree labor.

CHAPTER FOUR

“THY MASTER’S CHILDREN”¹: LABOR, RESISTANCE, AND INDENTURED SERVITUDE IN THE BEST POOR MAN’S COUNTRY

Pennsylvania’s emerging merchant capitalist society, predicated on economic expansion throughout the Atlantic, represented one significant aspect of Quakerism. The elite class of Quaker merchants who built their wealth on Atlantic trade used their economic power to reassert themselves as strong, independent men. Yet many colonists arrived to Pennsylvania as unfree laborers, and for them, achieving economic stability through overseas trade was impossible. Despite his reliance on Quaker merchants, Penn understood the economic realities inherent to the colonization. Accordingly, he opened his colony to settlers from all economic classes. Many heeded his call, including a significant number of men and women who migrated as indentured servants. Some, like William Moraley, called Pennsylvania “the best poor man’s country in the world,” a phrase that has become part of the scholarly literature on Pennsylvania exceptionality.²

At first glance, Moraley represents the exact individual Penn hoped to attract with his promotional literature. Moraley was a downtrodden Englishman looking to better his

¹ William Penn, *Fruits of Solitude: Reflections and Maxims Relating to the Conduct of Human Life* (London, 1693), 59-60.

² William Moraley, *The Infortunate: The Voyage and Adventures of William Moraley, an Indentured Servant*, ed. Susan Klepp and Billy Smith, 2nd ed. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), 43. The best example is James Lemon, *The Best Poor Man’s Country: A Geographical Study of Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972). David Hackett Fisher also adopts this acceptance of Moraley’s words, lauding Pennsylvania for accepting individuals of all social ranks thanks to a “flexible community structure.” See David Hackett Fisher, *Albion’s Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 432-4.

lot in life. Born into a family of comfortable economic circumstances, Moraley studied law until the South Sea Bubble ruined his family's fortunes. Moraley then began a watchmaking apprenticeship with his father, but tensions between the two led to Moraley being disowned from his father's will. After a stay in debtor's prison and a subsequent arrest for stealing food, Moraley agreed to an indenture and set sail for Pennsylvania.³ Upon arrival to the Quaker colony, Moraley had a range of experiences that culminated in his authorship of a pamphlet describing the province, in part, as the "best poor man's country."

Yet, a closer examination of Moraley's life, situated the wider experience of Pennsylvania's servants, throws into question the notion that Pennsylvania was the "best poor man's country." As Billy Smith notes, historians who have interpreted Moraley in this way, "have ignored the context of [his] description, [and] the ambivalence he expressed about opportunities for less affluent people." More importantly, he posits that the infatuation with Moraley's phrase is symptomatic of a larger issue, the tendency to accept the "shibboleth that because the New World contained a great deal of available land... and relatively few laborers" working people would enjoy high wages and a decent standard of living.⁴

Understanding the lived experience of Pennsylvania's servant population is integral to gaining a clearer picture of the centrality of gender norms and the process by which Quaker values of godly patriarchy and household regulated eroded in favor of an

³ Moraley, *The Infortunate* xvii. See also, Susan Klepp, "A 'Louse Rampant': A Satire on Newcastle upon Tyne Politics, by William Moraley, Once an Indentured Servant in the Colonies," *Early American Studies* 5, no. 1 (2007), 165.

⁴ Billy Smith, "Introduction," in *Down and Out in Early America*, ed. Billy Smith (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), xii. Smith contends that this "shibboleth" is largely a product of an easy acceptance of Adam Smith and the myth of colonial prosperity for all.

increasingly capitalist market. The historiography on servitude has traditionally been slow to embrace lived experience. Recent scholarship from John Donoghue, Simon Newman, and Christopher Tomlins, however, has reexamined indentured servitude throughout the British Atlantic. In doing so, these scholars have invigorated the study of servitude by challenging scholars to move beyond a rigid economic analysis of servitude to better appreciate the complexity of early modern bound labor. Tomlins' legal analysis underscores the importance of comparative analysis as he explores unfree labor in British North America. His argument, however, that servitude was not as prevalent or as central to the "performance of work" in the colonies is vague and does not appreciate the lived experiences of servants.⁵ Donoghue and Newman, building on the work of Hilary Beckles and Theodore Allen, call for a better investigation of the ways in which servants were rendered chattel in the plantation colonies, especially during the earlier decades of the seventeenth century.⁶ Newman's theoretical concepts are more easily mapped onto myriad geographic regions. In particular, Newman encourages scholars to appreciate the fact that "free labor, bound labor, and enslaved labor have often been regarded by

⁵ Christopher Tomlins, *Freedom Bound: Law, Labor, and Civic Identity in Colonizing English America, 1580-1865* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010). See also, Tomlins, "Early British America, 1585-1830: Freedom Bound," in *Masters, Servants, and Magistrates in Britain and the Empire, 1562-1955*, ed. Paul Craven and Douglas Hay (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004): 117-152.

⁶ Theodore Allen, *The Invention of the White Race Volume I: Racial Oppression and Social Control* (New York: Verso, 1994); *The Invention of the White Race Volume II: The Origin of Racial Oppression in Anglo-America* (New York: Verso, 1997); see also, Hilary McD. Beckles, "'A Riotous and Unruly Lot': Irish Indentured Servants and Freeman in the English West Indies, 1624-1713," *William and Mary Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (1990): 503-522; "Plantation Production and White 'Proto-Slavery': White Indentured Servants and the Colonisation of the English West Indies, 1624-1645," *The Americas* 41, no. 3 (1985): 21-45; "Rebels and Reactionaries: The Political Responses of White Labourers to Planter-Class Hegemony in Seventeenth-Century Barbados," *Journal of Caribbean History* 15 (1981): 1-19; "The Concept of 'White Slavery' in the West Indies During the 17th Century," in *Concepts of Property* ed. John Brewer and Susan Staves (London: Routledge, 1994); *White Servitude and Black Slavery in Barbados, 1627-1715* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989).

historians as relatively static categories, with the result that slavery is cast at one end of a continuum as an absolute denial of freedom, which renders it a unique and ‘peculiar’ form of labor.” Newman finds this problematic, instead calling for slavery and servitude to be “understood within a spectrum of coerced, and often violent labor.”⁷ This is an essential corrective to the rational choice theory perpetuated by economic historians intent on reducing the human experience of servants to the confines of their own assumptions.⁸

Pennsylvania’s servant population has not received the same level of attention from scholars as other regions, particularly the Chesapeake and Caribbean. The one book-length treatment of the topic published in the past thirty years, Sharon Salinger’s *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, limits the role of servants to passive actors participating in an evolving economic structure. Salinger does not frame the lives of servants within the

⁷ Simon Newman, *A New World of Labor: The Development of Plantations Slavery in the British Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 3, 6. Ira Berlin has also addressed the problems of viewing types of labor as static. See Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 4. John Donoghue’s work is also important to this dissertation, particularly in helping tease out the ways in which scholars view the notion of chattel. See John Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes: An Atlantic History of the English Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 245-7. Donoghue first articulated the notion of servants as chattel in a 2010 article. See Donoghue, “‘Out of the Land of Bondage’: The English Revolution and the Atlantic Origins of Abolition,” *American Historical Review* 115, no. 4 (2010): 943-974. Donoghue’s recent historiographical review of indentured servitude also contains important insights. See Donoghue, “Indentured Servitude in the 17th Century English Atlantic: A Brief Survey of the Literature,” *History Compass* 11, no. 10 (2013): 893-902.

⁸ Farley Grubb, “Babes in Bondage: Debt Shifting by German Immigrants in Early America,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 37, no. 1 (2006): 1-34; “Fatherless and Friendless: Factors Influencing the Flow of English Emigrant Servants,” *Journal of Economic History* 52, no. 1 (1992): 85-108; “The End of European Immigrant Servitude in the United States: An Economic Analysis of Market Collapse, 1772-1835,” *Journal of Economic History* 54, no. 4 (1994): 794-824; “The Market for Indentured Immigrants: Evidence on the Efficiency of Forward-Labor Contracting in Philadelphia, 1745-1773,” *Journal of Economic History* 45, no. 4 (1985): 855-868; “The Transatlantic Market for British Convict Labor,” *Journal of Economic History* 60, no. 1 (2000): 94-122. See also, David Galenson, “Labor Market Behavior in Colonial America,” in David Galenson ed., *Markets in History: Economic Studies of the Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989): 52-96; “The Rise and Fall of Indentured Servitude in the Americas: An Economic Analysis,” *Journal of Economic History* 44, no. 1 (1984): 1-26; *White Servitude in Colonial America: An Economic Analysis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

context of Penn's founding ideology, nor the ways in which servants shaped and were shaped by emerging cultural norms.⁹ The relationship between masters and servants was shaped by Quaker conceptions of the family rooted in patriarchal ideas about masculinity and godly patriarchy in the British Atlantic. The nature of bound labor in Pennsylvania was gendered, from the unequal punishments meted out on men and women to the ways in which masters invoked the language of patriarchy and household regulation. The gendered discourse dictating the proper treatment of bound labor was insufficient to address the grim realities of Pennsylvania's economy. With Pennsylvania's need to exploit unfree labor to take advantage of an expanding Atlantic economy, the traditional Quaker values of godly patriarchy became less relevant. While Pennsylvania's masters only loosely adhered to cultural expectations for the fair treatment of servants, the colony's indentured population faced a harsh legal system, courts that frequently favored their masters, and violence and the threat of violence as a means of extracting labor. As servants became increasingly commodified and exploited, they had few options to contest their status in the colony, each with their own repercussions.¹⁰

⁹ Sharon Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully: Labor and Indentured Servitude in Pennsylvania, 1682-1800* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1987). See also, Sharon Salinger, "Colonial Labor in Transition: The Decline of Indentured Servitude in Late Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *Labor History* 22, no. 2 (1981): 165-191; "'Send No More Women': Female Servants in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 107, no. 1 (1983): 29-48.

¹⁰ This chapter is influenced by the work of Stephanie Smallwood. In particular, her contention that "the imperatives of a market that valued people as commodities interposed a nearly impassable gulf between captives and any community that might claim them as new members. Captives learned that when they reached the littoral, their exchangeability on the Atlantic market outweighed any social value they might have. The price put on their persons pushed most captives beyond the possibility of eventual reintegration as members in any community. The crisis of captivity on that coast in other words, was that only with great difficulty or great luck could the prisoners' 'commodity potential' be masked or converted back into social currency." While Smallwood is writing specifically about African slaves, I believe her argument helps explain the shift away from the familial nature of servitude rooted in godly patriarchy and towards the more exploitative system found in the mid-eighteenth century. See Stephanie Smallwood,

This chapter begins by briefly tracing the development of indentured servitude in the British Atlantic and, more specifically, the mid-Atlantic. It then examines early servitude in Pennsylvania through the lens of Quakerism and godly patriarchy, a distinctly gendered frame of references in which a patriarch's masculinity and reputation was judged based on the control and order he imposed on the family. Chapter four will then examine how market imperatives subsumed godly patriarchy by articulating and exploring the treatment of colony's servant population. The chapter will conclude with an examination of the servants' attempts to combat their status as unfree laborers, specifically running away, enlisting in the army, or committing suicide.

The Capitalist Origins of Indentured Servitude

The development of an exploitative system of indentured servitude in colonies like Pennsylvania grew out of the emergence and expansion of capitalism throughout the Atlantic. The English practiced several forms of servitude during the early modern period. Most common was servants-in-husbandry, who were unmarried youths hired by husbandmen, yeomen, or craftsmen on one-year contracts. Making up almost three-fifths of rural English youths, most servants-in-husbandry were boys. Some girls did enter agricultural work, but this was less common. Servitude-in-husbandry was a familial system of labor. As Allan Kulikoff notes, "servants moved a few miles from home, choosing masters who lived nearby, but sometimes returned home after serving a stint."¹¹

Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 52.

¹¹ Allan Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 23. Kulikoff notes that most servants-in-husbandry received wages that they were able to save, and that their wages were largely dependent on population changes and the availability of labor. Robert Shoemaker makes a similar argument, contending that the early modern family was considered almost all encompassing and included family, servants, apprentices, kin, and lodgers. See

Alongside servitude-in-husbandry was a thorough and regulated system of apprenticeship, which featured seven-year terms of service. Apprenticeship was requisite for entry into any “craft, mastery, or occupation” common in sixteenth-century England.¹²

On balance, servants and apprentices received relatively fair treatment during the sixteenth century. Conduct literature, religious sermons, and cultural attitudes stressed the importance of discipline and the responsibilities for masters to be just and fair within the context of early modern patriarchal norms. Apprenticeship was regulated in several ways. The Statute of Artificers of 1563 codified accepted practice and extant legislation into one act. Petty constables and the local Justice of the Peace monitored the relationship between masters and apprentices. Families also helped in maintaining and organizing the apprenticeship system. Families were also integral to regulating servitude. There was a fear that if left unchecked, servants would become, as the Puritan cleric Richard Sibbes noted, “wild creatures, ruffians, vagabonds, Cains.” Because contracts for servitude-in-husbandry were annual, when populations were high and laborers bountiful, many were left unemployed and free to roam as “sturdy beggars and vagrant rogues.” The responsibility of patriarchs for maintaining an orderly and disciplined household was born out of a desire to prevent unemployed servants from wandering as masterless men and becoming a “Wilde Rogue.”¹³

Robert Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (New York: Addison Wesley Longman Inc., 1998), 88

¹² Margaret Gay Davies, *The Enforcement of English Apprenticeship: A Study in Applied Mercantilism, 1563-1642* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), 1.

¹³ Davies, *The Enforcement of English Apprenticeship*, 1, 12, 192-210, 225; Sibbes is quoted in Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 34; Richard Young, *The Poore's Advocate*

The acquisition of colonial holdings throughout the Atlantic facilitated a transition in the nature of servitude for the English. Such a shift started with the Westward Expansion into Ireland, where English colonists attempted to tame the “wild” Irish. Under a system of burgeoning capitalism, the English began exploiting Irish land and labor through a plantation system. According to Theodore Allen, some English colonists even suggested, “that the Irish be enslaved *en masse*.” The experience in Ireland helped the English establish a hierarchical system of classes predicated on the exploitation of wealth-producing laboring classes. As the English acquired more and more colonies in North America and the Caribbean, a system of labor was required to make the economy thrive. The solution was the importation of servants. But indentured servants were not treated the same as servants-in-husbandry or apprentices. Servants came to be seen as “Rogues and whores.” The system of indentured labor developing in the Atlantic destroyed the constraints binding masters and servants. Servants-in-husbandry served one-year terms to masters of their choosing. Indentured servants did not have the same luxury.¹⁴

in Eight Parts (London, 1654), 10; Thomas Dekker, *The Belman of London: Bringing to Light the Most Notorious Villaines that are now Practised in the Kingdome* (London, 1608). The literature on vagrancy in England is vast. See John Pound, *Poverty and Vagrancy in Tudor England* (Harlow: Longman, 1971); A.L. Beier, *Masterless Men: The Vagrancy Problem in England, 1560-1640* (London: Methuen, 1985); Peter Clark and David Sounden, eds., *Migration and Society in Early Modern England* (New Jersey: Barnes and Noble Books, 1988); Tim Hitchcock, “Begging on the Streets of Eighteenth-Century London,” *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 3 (2005): 478-498; Paul Fidler, *Social Welfare in Pre-Industrial England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Patricia Fumerton, *Unsettled: The Culture of Mobility and the Working Poor in Early Modern England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

¹⁴ Andrew Hadfield, “Irish Colonies and the Americas,” in Robert Appelbaum and John Wood Sweet, *Envisioning an English Empire: Jamestown and the Making of the North Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 178; Allen, *The Invention of the White Race Volume One*, 59, 69; T.H. Breen, “A Changing Labor Force and Race Relations in Virginia, 1660-1710,” *Journal of Social History* 7, no. 1 (1973), 5; The observation of servants as “rogues and whores” is quoted in Betty Wood, *The Origins of American Slavery: Freedom and Bondage in the English Colonies* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997), 15; Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 51.

The Roots of Servitude in Penn's Woods

Servitude in Pennsylvania predated Penn's charter. The Dutch and Swedes had populated the region after migrating north from the Chesapeake. Peter Stuyvesant, the last Dutch Director-General of the New Netherlands, commented on the presence of servants in the Delaware prior to the Quakers' arrival. Both groups had their own governments, courts, and laws, but after James II was granted New Netherlands in 1664, he stripped away this local power and put in place the Laws of the Duke of York. Several of the laws applied to servants in the Delaware, though it is unlikely there was any real change in status for servants already residing in the region.¹⁵ Once Penn began his work of settling the Delaware, the need for laborers became central to Quaker concerns. And as has been shown, Penn sought to rectify this labor shortage, in part, by drawing on the rhetoric of early modern manhood and the importance of economic opportunity. The valuable work of building and supporting a colonial economy was not only depicted in gendered terms, but also in religious ones. William Loddington averred, "Plantations are a Principal part of our Generation Work," and he echoed Penn's call for colonists of all walks of life. Loddington stated that Pennsylvania was suitable for "not only the Poor, but many that have considerable Estates, Trade, or Employments here."¹⁶

¹⁵ Herrick, *White Servitude in Pennsylvania: Indentured and Redemption Labor in Colony and Commonwealth* (New York: Negro University Press, 1969), 28; Lawrence Henry Gipson, "The Criminal Codes of Pennsylvania. The Laws of the Duke of York; The Laws of Chester (1682); The Code of 1701; The Law of 1718," *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology* 6, no. 3 (1915): 323; Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 286; Staughton George, Benjamin N. Nead, and Thomas McCamant, eds., *Charter to William Penn, and Laws of the Province of Pennsylvania, passed between the Years 1682 and 1700 preceded by Duke of York's Laws in Force from the Year 1676 to the Year 1682* (Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, 1879), 10, 13, 15, 2-1, 29, 37-44.

¹⁶ William Loddington, *Plantation Work the Work of this Generation* (London, 1682), 7.

The dearth of laborers forced Penn to recruit help to lure servants to Pennsylvania. Answering his call was the Free Society of Traders, which intended to “send over 100 servants to build houses, to plant and improve land, and for cattle, and to set up a glass house for bottles, drinking glass, and window glass, to supply the Islands and continent of America.” The first shipment of servants, which amounted to sixty in total, arrived in September 1682.¹⁷ To further entice colonists to bring servants with them, Penn instituted a reward for those emigrating with laborers. Families bringing servants with them were granted fifty acres per servant. Additionally, “Fifty acres... shall be allotted, to a servant, at the end of his service.”¹⁸

Early servant migration to Pennsylvania was relatively organized and rooted in networks of kinship. Between 1670 and 1700, approximately 15,000 men and women arrived in the Delaware Valley. In this regard, Pennsylvania was a blend of migratory patterns to New England and the Chesapeake. Migration to Pennsylvania took the family-based emigration to New England and combined it with the servant-dominated migration of the Chesapeake. Between 1681 and 1685, three out of every five migrants to the Delaware came with kin. Two-thirds of adult migrants were men and close to three-fifths

¹⁷ James Claypoole to Norton Claypoole, July 14, 1682, in James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP; Gary Nash notes that the original charter for the Free Society of Traders indicated that they intended to send over an additional 100 indentured servants on top of what Claypool indicated. See Nash, “The Free Society of Traders and the Early Politics of Pennsylvania,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 89, no. 2 (1965): 154, 161; Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 18-20; Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 286.

¹⁸ *MPCP*, 1:xix; Herrick, *White Servitude in Pennsylvania*, 32.

were indentured servants. Many of these early servants had similar experiences in England, working as servants-in-husbandry before venturing across the Atlantic.¹⁹

Despite the close familial ties Pennsylvania suffered from an acute shortage of labor in the initial years. One prime reason servants were so hard to acquire was the fact that Pennsylvania had an abundance of land available for settlers. Gabriel Thomas, a settler to West Jersey and Pennsylvania in the late-seventeenth century, authored an account of the region in which he noted “the chief reason why Wages of Servants of all sorts is much higher here than there arises from the great Fertility and Produce of this Place.” In the first two decades of settlement, Pennsylvania only imported approximately 4,300 servants. These figures increased during the eighteenth century, but during the hardest years labor was difficult to acquire.²⁰

For those that did arrive in Pennsylvania they faced several different types of labor. Despite the desires of the Free Society of Traders to establish plantations in the Delaware Valley, the labor of servants in Pennsylvania followed a different path from that of the Chesapeake. In the early years of settlement, servants were used for agricultural labor worked alongside the nuclear family. Servants were used for “cutting down trees, building, plowing or any sort of above that is required in the planting of a

¹⁹ Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 69; Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 42-3, table 1.6.

²⁰ Gabriel Thomas, *An Historical and Geographical Account of Pensilvania, and of West New-Jersey*, in *Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, West New Jersey, and Delaware, 1630-1707*, ed. Albert Cook Myers (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1912), 328. See also, Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 18. Population numbers are taken from several sources, though they are difficult to calculate for the seventeenth century. See Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 172-84, tables A.1-A.3; Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 42-46, tables 1.6-1.9.

country.”²¹ As the agricultural landscape developed, the need for unfree labor decreased. Labor was highly intensive, but only required during specific periods throughout the year. James Lemon notes how “tillage by hired laborers is cheap” during profitable periods, making unfree labor unnecessary.²² This pushed many servants to the city, where labor on the docks and throughout Philadelphia was more plentiful. Daniel Pastorius observed how “together with our servant [we] put up a little house one-half under the earth and half above.” Construction work was a common task well suited for menial, unfree labor.²³ This was particularly true in the case of artisans. Many of Philadelphia’s artisans relied on the labor of servants to keep their businesses running. This included the work of construction workers; shipbuilders who needed carpenters, sawyers, caulkers, riggers, coopers, joiners, and carters; shoemakers and hatters; butchers and bakers; and scores of other artisans. Nearly sixty percent of the servants bound in 1745 were indentured to residents of Philadelphia.²⁴

Early indentured laborers were often closely related to kinship networks of the first settlers. As Sharon Salinger observes, “indentured servitude was a means of helping poorer relatives and friends make the journey to Pennsylvania.” They were occasionally related to early settlers or closely acquainted to them. Sometimes they traveled onboard the same ship across the Atlantic. In other instances, they worked alongside their friends

²¹ James Claypoole to Edward Claypoole, April 20, 1682, James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP; Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 289-90.

²² James Lemon, *The Best Poor Man’s Country: A Geographical Analysis of Early Southeastern Pennsylvania* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), 179-80; Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 22-23.

²³ Quoted in Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 28.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 67-9.

on fields.²⁵ The close relationship between servants and their masters had important implications for early Pennsylvania. The relationship between master and servant had a long history in England. The expectations for how masters treated their servants were steeped in religious language. Not only were masters expected to treat their servants well because of Christian values, but also the proper treatment of servants was an integral part of early modern manhood. Notions of credit and a man's reputation were intimately linked to his role as a patriarch. Being a godly patriarch meant caring for your flock; both those of your blood and those acquired as laborers. As Cotton Mather noted, masters "must avoid all Cruelty, both in words and blows." It was essential that a godly patriarch "be not a tyrant," but instead act as a shepherd for his wife, children, and servants.²⁶ This was even more pressing for Quakers particularly due to the internal meeting system and Gospel Family Order.

Gospel Order, Servants, and the Family

Gospel Order provided an explicitly gendered framework for the organization and treatment of members of the household. As Michael Goode has shown, "Gospel order... intersected with a much broader Protestant discourse on family order and household governance."²⁷ Quaker meetings regularly concerned themselves with a man's reputation and its impact on the family. In 1745, when William Saunders fell "into a disreputable practice of drinking to Excess," he was brought before the Quaker meeting and chastised for failing to "support his Wife & Family." Similarly, Ralph Loftus "engaged in various

²⁵ Ibid., 2-3.

²⁶ Cotton Mather, *A Good Master Well Served* (Boston, 1696), 11-12; Lawrence Towner, **Fix me**

²⁷ Michael Goode, "Gospel Order among Friends: Colonial Violence and the Peace Testimony in Quaker Pennsylvania, 1681-1720," (PhD diss., University of Illinois-Chicago, 2012), 121.

kinds of business” that led to “the prejudice of his Creditors.” In doing so, he brought about “his own disreputation” and that of his wife, Jane. Anthony Siddons was cast out from the Philadelphia meeting for living “in an irregular & disreputable manner and neglect[ing] the due care of his Wife.”²⁸ In each of these instances, a man’s damaged reputation was a reflection on his family, underscoring the importance of a man’s reputation and as a means of assessing his capabilities as a godly patriarch.

Not only were the responsibilities of a Quaker patriarch discussed in meetings, they were also a frequent topic outside its walls. Quaker theorists penned tracts addressing the issue of servitude explicitly. Specifically, Quaker authors wrote about the proper way to treat servants within the context of Quaker theology. One explanation for Quakers’ concerns with the treatment of servants was the patriarchal nature of the family and the expectation that the father act as a shepherd, guiding his family along the path of God as dictated by Quaker beliefs. Edward Burrough wrote “we believe that obedience and subjection in the Lord belongs to superiors... and that children ought to obey their parents, and wives their husbands, and servants their masters in all things, which is according to God.”²⁹ Each member of the family fulfilled a specified role, all of which worked in concert to glorify God and help maintain a path of modesty and plain dealing.

Of the many topics William Penn wrote about, the organization of the family and the expectations for behavior played a prominent role. Particularly, he explored the expectations for masters in terms of their treatment of servants. Penn laid out a series of

²⁸ Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Philadelphia, 1745-1755, QSCL, 6-7, 36-7. 172.

²⁹ Edward Burrough, *A Delcaration to the World of our Faith*, quote in Moore, *The Light in their Conscience*, 120.

guidelines for servants and masters to follow in hopes of maintaining a harmonious and productive home. For masters, Penn encouraged them to “Mix Kindness with Authority; and rule more by Discretion than Rigour.” If a servant misbehaved, he urged masters to “strive rather to convince him of his Error, than discover thy Passion: And when he is sensible, forgive him.” Underlying this belief was the notion that a servant was “thy Fellow-Creature, and that God’s goodness, not thy Merit, has made the Difference betwixt Thee and Him.”³⁰ Excessive punishments was frowned upon, for “whipping out of Passion, is like eating only to gratifie the Pallate,” and failed to provide any uplift for servants under the care of the master.³¹ Penn also expressed a series of behavioral norms for servants. They needed to “indulge not unseemly things in thy Master’s Children; nor refuse them what is fitting.” Moreover, Penn believed servants should “do thine own Work honestly and chearfully: And when that is done, help thy Fellow; that so another time he may help thee.”³² In these cases, ethical norms were put in place to preserve harmony within the household. These guidelines were meant to help men act as proper, manly patriarchs who educated their families and cared for their flock. Overly harsh treatment of servants would run counter to these values and the values of Gospel Family Order, and in doing so would, in theory, be an act of “disreputation” against a man’s honor and his credit.

A godly patriarch was expected to care for their servants, but they were also responsible for protecting their children. In particular, they placed great importance on

³⁰ William Penn, *Fruits of Solitude: Reflections and Maxims Relating to the Conduct of Human Life* (London, 1693), 58.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 73.

³² *Ibid.*, 59-60.

protecting their children when they entered into contracts of apprenticeship or indenture. Parents wanted their children to find themselves in safe, productive situations in which their new families provided them with food, clothing, security, and moral uplift. They generally sought out apprenticeships for their children in other Quaker households. Friends often found themselves victims of persecution at the hands of families and masters outside the Quaker faith. Even throughout the eighteenth century, Quaker meetings helped manage apprentices both during and after their terms expired. For example, Seymour Hood, an orphan “descended from Friends,” was of an appropriate age to begin an apprenticeship. He was “lame,” however, which meant “a suitable Master cannot be persuaded to take him.” The overseers of the meeting stepped in to help secure him an apprenticeship, in large part because of his close association with the Quakers. Above all, parents attempted to guard against exploitative situations.³³ In addition, Quakers parents wanted their children to be well trained for productive work like plowing, gardening, shepherding, and other worthwhile skills. Apprenticeship and indenture became two of the more common routes for their children to learn these skills.

The abandonment of godly patriarchy coincided with a shift in the nature of servitude in Pennsylvania. Beginning in the eighteenth century, migration to Pennsylvania came to be dominated by German immigrants. While only 140 or so immigrants arrived by 1700, by 1760 nearly 31,000 Germans came to Penn’s Woods. Many of these immigrants were Palatines fleeing the war-torn Rhineland. Germans were

³³ Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends, 1745-1755, QSCL, 119, 122, 143, 147. For other examples, See Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends, 1745-1755, QSCL, 223, 230, 247; Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends, 1757-1762, QSCL, 39, 136, 216; Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends, 1751-1756, QSCL, 84. J. William Frost, *The Quaker Family in Colonial America: A Portrait of the Society of Friends* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1973), 139; Rosemary Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences: Early Quakers in Britain, 1646-1666* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 117.

faced with the countryside devastated by the Thirty Years' War and an invasion by Louis XIV, heavy taxes, poor weather, and widespread poverty. The lure of jobs and land in Pennsylvania proved a powerful recruitment tool.³⁴ The shift towards German laborers reflected the influences of the Atlantic market coming to bear on Pennsylvanians. Unlike the kinship networks of early servitude, German immigrants to Pennsylvania had few family ties. This made it easier for masters to eschew their responsibilities as patriarchs in favor of greater exploitation in the name of profit. The very switch to the redemptioner system underscores this point. Farley Grubb, who has done extensive work on indentured and redemptioner labor, has noted the difference between the two groups of unfree workers. Grubb contends that the indentured servant system was “a barter transaction whereby shippers traded freight space and provisions for forward-labor contracts.” Servants had their contracts established before undertaking the voyage across the Atlantic, which speaks to the fact that so many early servants worked for and alongside family and friends. Redemptioner labor, however, was “a loan transaction secured by human-capital collateral,” where immigrants “borrowed the price of passage along with money for extra provisions and port expenses from shippers before leaving Europe.” Labor contracts were then negotiated after the arrival in America.³⁵

³⁴ Herrick, *White Servitude in Pennsylvania*, 170; Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 197; Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 42-47, tables 1.6-1.9.

³⁵ Farley Grubb, “Redemptioner Immigration to Pennsylvania: Evidence on Contract Choice and Profitability,” *Journal of Economic History* 46, no. 2 (1986): 407-418; Kulikoff, *From British Peasants to Colonial American Farmers*, 194-5. See also, Frank Diffenderffer, *The German Immigration into Pennsylvania: Through the Port of Philadelphia from 1700-1775 and the Redemptioners* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1979); Cheesman Herrick, *White Servitude in Pennsylvania: Indentured and Redemption Labor in Colony and Commonwealth* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969).

The poor conditions in Germany made Palatines and other German immigrants particularly susceptible to the exploitative market in Pennsylvania. Christopher Sauer, a German-born printer who migrated to Pennsylvania in the 1720s, initially encouraged fellow Germans to seek out redemptioner contracts rather than those of indenture. He urged Germans that “No one should indenture himself to the captain, but rather promise to repay on this side [of the Atlantic] if he has no money or little money.”³⁶ However, over the course of Sauer’s life in Pennsylvania, he came to terms with the realities of the redemptioner system and the truth that its nature was equally as exploitative as was that of indentured labor. By 1755, Sauer began spreading word of the plight of redemptioners. He wrote to Robert Morris, then Governor of Pennsylvania, to comment on how redemptioners “are anxious to come on shore to satisfy hunger — they pay what is demanded — some sighing, some cursing; some believe their case differs little from such as fall into the hands of a highwayman, who presents a pistol and demands according to his own terms.”³⁷ In many cases, Germans did not even enter into their redemptioner contracts voluntarily. They were often coerced into servitude by the actions of Newlanders.³⁸

³⁶ Donald Durnbaugh, John George Käsebier, and Christopher Sauer, “Two Early Letters from Germantown,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 84, no. 2 (1960), 231. For a brief overview of Sauer’s life, see Durnbaugh, “Christopher Sauer Pennsylvania-German Printer: His Youth in Germany and Later Relationship with Europe,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 82, no. 3 (1958), 316-340.

³⁷ Quoted in Farley Grubb, “The Auction of Redemptioner Servants, Philadelphia, 1771-1804: An Economic Analysis,” *Journal of Economic History* 48, no. 3 (1988), 586.

³⁸ Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 78.

Atlantic Passages

Servants were first exposed to the brutalities of the market when they boarded ships to cross the Atlantic. Ship captains allocated virtually no space to servants below decks. Mittelberger notes “the bedstead of one person is hardly two feet across and six feet long, since many of the boats carry from four to six hundred passengers.” Not only did servants face excessively cramped conditions, but they also endured a long voyage onboard a ship devoid of sufficient provisions. As the eighteenth century progressed, Pennsylvania merchants realized the profitability of the servant trade. In an effort to maximize profits, merchants stocked no more than twelve weeks of foodstuffs. Unforeseen delays and dishonest agents often prolonged the journey. The longer voyage often meant ships ran short on food because of the reluctance by merchants to spend the extra money to stock their ships.³⁹ When food ran out passengers turned to rats and mice in order to survive. The want of food and drink led to “smells, fumes, horrors, vomiting, various kinds of sea sickness, fever, dysentery, headaches.” One ship had such a shortage of food that seven travelers perished from dehydration and starvation in one evening.⁴⁰ The paucity of food stemmed from a desire among ship captains and merchants to fit as many human bodies onboard as possible. Rather than properly stock their ships, captains minimized provisions in favor of human cargo. Indentured servants became commodities subsumed beneath a desire by merchants to maximize profits.⁴¹

³⁹ Gottlieb Mittelberger, *Journey to Pennsylvania*, trans. and ed. John Clive and Oscar Handlin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 9; Smith, *Colonists in Bondage*, 207-8; Jordan Landes, *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World: The Creation of an Early Modern Community* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 142.

⁴⁰ Mittelberger, *Journey to Pennsylvania*, 11-12; *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 1, 1732.

The realities of ship life for servants underscored how their value as commodities took precedence over their value as individuals in the eyes of colonial merchants. Not only did ship captains deprive their human cargo of food and drink, but also the fate of these passengers mattered little to the individuals overseeing the transactions. Servants were viewed in strictly economic terms. Loss of life was discussed in the same manner as the loss of rum, wheat, or lumber. Such experiences with death were seen as risks merchants begrudgingly accepted when they decided to ship cargo along such an arduous journey. John Eleydesten noted how “we had Tidings of Capt. Arthurs arrival at Charles Town the 6th October, having lost only one palatine by death, and one washed overboard in a violent storm.” Eleydesten did not fret, however, that the ship “had suffered a great Loss,” because “luckily we are insured.”⁴²

In some cases, mortality onboard ships carrying German redemptioners exceeded that of slave ships. In 1738, for example, the death rate reached as high as thirty-five percent. This was significantly higher than the average fifteen percent mortality rates on slave ships for the same year. Because of the limited space onboard ship, diseases wreaked havoc on the passengers. In 1738, only two ships arrived with passengers in good conditions. During the year, approximately 1,600 passengers died. Others estimated

⁴¹ Frank Diffenderffer, *The German Immigration into Pennsylvania: Through the Port of Philadelphia from 1700 to 1775 and the Redemptioners* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1979), 57.

⁴² John and Abraham Eleydesten to James Pemberton, February 14, 1749, Vol. 6. Pemberton Family Papers, 1641-1800 (Collection 484A), HSP. For a discussion of the trade in Germany migrants, see Marianne S. Wokeck, *Trade in Strangers: The Beginnings of Mass Migration to North America* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999). Although the narratives of John Frederick Whitehead and Johann Carl Büttner are outside the scope of this study, there is important background information on German migration in Susan Klepp, Farley Grupp, and Anne Pfaelzer de Ortiz, eds., *Souls for Sale: Two German Redemptioners Come to Revolutionary America* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006).

that nearly two thousand Germans died at sea in 1749. The high death rates led, in part, to the passage of an act in 1750 trying to limit the overcrowding of servants onboard ships. These fatalities speak to the risks involved in the trade in servants and redemptioners. For merchants, the loss of life carried a financial risk, while for servants that risk came at the expense of their lives.⁴³

German settlers often commented on the harsh traveling conditions migrants were forced to endure. Writing from Roxborough, a town four hours from Philadelphia, in 1724, John George Käsebier chronicled his journey from Germany to Pennsylvania. He noted how “of the 170 people aboard, only a few were not violently sick.” Moreover, “two small children from the Palatine group and an unmarried man died.” Several others perished during the journey, all of which were disposed of with little concern on the part of the ship’s crew. One young, unmarried woman with seasickness died. Käsebier averred “She had been bled by an English doctor who opened such a large hole in her vein that it burst during the second night.” Once she passed, “she was wrapped in a cloth, stones were tied to her feet, and she was cast overboard from a plank in the morning.” Being “sent to the bottom” was the typical means of dealing with dead passengers on these voyages.⁴⁴

Merchants placed such an importance on the health and well-being of servants because of their value as commodities. By the middle of the eighteenth century, bound laborers were caught up in the Atlantic market in humans. Servants (and slaves, as will be

⁴³ Wokeck, *Trade in Strangers*, 53-4; Smith, *Colonists in Bondage*, 215-216; Landes, *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World*, 142; *Votes and Proceedings*, 5:3780, 3803.

⁴⁴ Durnbaugh, Käsebier, and Sauer, “Two Early Letters,” 220-223. Being “sent to the bottom” was likely the treatment for all who died onboard ships crossing the Atlantic, and it speaks to the grim realities of eighteenth-century maritime life.

discussed in the following chapter) were important because “the investment is guaranteed, which seemingly limited turnover cost—the expense of replacing workers.” Servants were caught up in a mid-Atlantic labor market driven by innovative and “quintessentially capitalist” masters.⁴⁵ Philadelphia merchants made important connections to individuals in England, Ireland, and the Netherlands. This resulted in the formation of networks in which prospective buyers, ship captains, and recruiters preyed on indigent Europeans eager to find hope in Pennsylvania. These networks were part of the emergence of Philadelphia’s economy discussed in chapter three. The 1720s and 1730s in particular saw great growth in Pennsylvania’s economy, and “enterprising shippers look for any commodity that would bring a good price.”⁴⁶ The trade in unfree labor became increasingly professionalized. While shippers financed voyages in exchange for pledges from migrants to enter servitude at the end of their voyage, merchants began manipulating these agreements to reap greater profits. By the mid-eighteenth century, shippers charged migrants far more than the actual cost of passage. Even convicts became part of the professionalized maritime exchange in humans. In fact, convicts offered merchants greater profits than did indentured or redemptioner labor. According to Grubb, convict prices “averaged 26 to 29 percent above servant prices, and convict contract lengths averaged 101 to 122 percent above servant contract lengths.”⁴⁷ For those connected to the trade in European servant labor, the desire for profits trumped the desire to ensure safe conditions for those traveling across the Atlantic.

⁴⁵ Waldstreicher, *Runaway America*, 21-20.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁴⁷ Farley Grubb, “The Transatlantic Market for British Convict Labor,” *Journal of Economic History* 60, no. 1 (2000), 107. See also, Grubb, “Redemption Immigration”; Wokeck, *Trade in Strangers*.

Acquiring Unfree Laborers

One of the first sights greeting servants upon their arrival in Pennsylvania was the auction block. Here prospective laborers stood on display like animals for sale. With no autonomy and control over their working conditions, servants were at the mercy of prospective buyers. Merchants judged servants based on health, fitness, age, and skill. Because of the risk involved, buyers carefully selected the best servants. A poor choice could potentially end in a financial loss, so buyers purchased servants most likely to survive the harsh conditions.

One aspect of the auction process that captivated the attention of authors was the way it negatively affected children. Gottlieb Mittelberger, a German immigrant to Pennsylvania, wrote a pamphlet describing the “sad and miserable condition of those traveling from Germany to the New World.”⁴⁸ Mittelberger’s account depicted the colony as a place where German parents sold their children to predatory men and women “as if they were cattle.” Selling their children into servitude came at a steep price for these immigrants as most “[did] not see each other for years on end, or even for the rest of their lives.”⁴⁹ In doing so, these parents condemned their children to years of arduous labor, difficult living situations, and limited options for independence. Mittelberger’s account is problematic. He left Pennsylvania in disgrace and wrote his harangue against the colony in hopes of currying favor from German elites. However, Mittelberger was not the only eighteenth-century writer to paint such a grim picture of life upon arrival to Philadelphia.

⁴⁸ Mittelberger, *Journey to Pennsylvania*, 9.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

In 1733, Johannes Naas authored a letter to his son. In the letter, Naas noted how what he “heard concerning the people who do not have money for the passage, surprised me greatly... the child takes two freights upon itself, its own and that of the father or of the mother... Small children often pay one freight and a half until they are twenty-one years old.”⁵⁰ In this case, Naas illustrates how parents manipulated the redemptioner system to exploit the labor of their children in order to free themselves of the debt they incurred traveling across the Atlantic. At the same time that Mittelberger made his observation of the servant auction, so, too did Benjamin Franklin. In a letter to Sir Edward Fawkener, Franklin commented how “Many of our Servants are purchased young of their Parents, who, coming with large Families, bind some of their Children to Tradesmen and Farmers, in order to raise a Sum to pay the Freights of the whole, and keep themselves Free.”⁵¹ Finally, Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, the head of the Lutheran Church in Pennsylvania, echoed the distressing claims in Mittelberger’s account when he described how the children sold into chattel labor “not infrequently separated forever from their parents.”⁵² Economic historians have questioned the extent to which these sources reflect the reality of the situation. While I agree that Mittelberger’s polemic must be read with a degree of skepticism, the fact that three other accounts corroborate Mittelberger’s claims must be taken into consideration. Taking these accounts seriously helps undue the contrived categories and statistical analysis of economic history that often silences the voices of unfree laborers. By selling their children into unfree labor,

⁵⁰ Diffenderfer, “German Immigration,” 300-303.

⁵¹ Benjamin Franklin to Sir Edward Fawkener, July 27, 1756, in *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, ed., Leonard W. Labaree (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 6:474.

⁵² Diffenderfer, “German Immigrants,” 191-3.

parents achieved their own freedom, and this became a system merchants were all too willing to exploit for their own pliable and affordable labor force.⁵³

Servants represented a significant investment for merchants, and these investors kept meticulous records to make sure they were maximizing their profits. Merchants who acquired a “parcell of Strong Bodied young men Servants” would see a strong return on their money spent. And merchants tracked fluctuations in the price of servants. Bigger merchants like the Pemberton family knew when “Servants would sell Readily at good Prices.”⁵⁴ One of the best examples of the meticulous bookkeeping employed in the servant trade can be found in the Philadelphia docks. Beginning in 1745, James Hamilton, the mayor of Philadelphia, started tracking the ships that arrived in port loaded with servants, redemptioners, and apprentices. Hamilton kept meticulous records. He and his scribe recorded the name of the ship, the ship’s captain, the overseer who organized the servant auction and exchange, the nation of origin of the servant, the man or woman who bought the servant, the cost, and the terms of contract. For example, between October 2 and October 9, 1745, 49 men and women were bound before the mayor. Merchants paid on average approximately £14 for a servant. Contracts ranged from three to nine years, with the majority during this period drawn up for four. Most of the servants indentured during this one-week period hailed from Ireland. This was due, in large part, to the fact that Ireland was still reeling from the 1740 famine, which killed a greater percentage of Irish than the Potato Famine that would occur nearly a century later. To willingly sign a

⁵³ Farley Grubb, “Babes in Bondage?: Debt Shifting by German Immigrants in Early America,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 37, no. 1 (2006). 6-8.

⁵⁴ Israel Pemberton to Captain Dowers, May 5, 1745, Israel Pemberton Letterbook D, 1744-1749, APS, 46-7; James Pemberton to John Pemberton, February 10, 1749, Vol. 5, Pemberton Family Papers (Collection 484A), HSP.

contract of indenture in order to escape such desperate conditions shows how

“voluntary” servant migration was not always clearly voluntary.⁵⁵

These records hold valuable information, particularly for economic historians who rely on quantitative evidence. First, the same men handled most of the transactions between buyers and ship captains. Robert Wakely, John Erwin, and Edward Dowers were three of the most frequent visitors to the ports and their influence can be seen throughout the auction records. These men made a business out of overseeing the buying and selling of human beings.⁵⁶ Second, many of the men who purchased servants bought more than one. William Lawrence made several visits to Philadelphia to buy immigrants for his labor. The information excluded from merchant ledgers is almost as important, however, as what is included. While the ship, its captain, and the place of origin are undoubtedly useful pieces of information both for contemporaries and historians, they tell us virtually nothing about the men and women sold into chattel labor. Nothing is written about the health of prospective servants, their physical appearance, or their temperament. They were, for all intents and purposes, reduced to agentless commodities displayed for the sole purpose of being purchased as unfree laborers. Focusing on the lived experiences of

⁵⁵ All empirical data for the week of October 2-October 9, 1745 is drawn from *Records of James Hamilton and John Gibson, Servants and Apprentices, 1745-1773* (Collection 1074), HSP. For a discussion of servant auctions in the Delaware Valley, see Farley Grubb, “Servant Auction Records and Immigration into the Delaware Valley, 1745-1831,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 133, no. 2, Symposium on the Demographic History of the Philadelphia Region, 1600-1800 (1989): 154-169. Grubb notes that the Philadelphia servant records are unique in terms of “number and variety of contracts, comprehensiveness of coverage, attention to contract details, and ethnic mixture.” Irish migration was frequently due to harsh conditions in Ireland. For example, ruined crops encouraged migration from 1715-1720. Beginning in 1729, famine drove many poor Irish to the New World. See Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 52-5; R.J. Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial Pennsylvania* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

⁵⁶ *Records of James Hamilton and John Gibson*, 7-8. Erwin and Wakely handled over three-fourths of the transactions between October 12 and October 14, 1745. This was a common occurrence.

servants and looking for ways to uncover these hidden histories reveals a more complete human portrait of servant life.

The Utility of the Servant Contract and the Legal Code

Once servants stepped off the auction block and forged contracts with masters, their commodification began in earnest. Yet, both contemporaries and modern economic historians obfuscate the process of commodification by focusing on the servants' contracts rather than the individuals and their lived experiences. The emphasis on contracts and terms are presented as an empirical precision that ignores the ways in which the specific treatment of servants stripped them of their personal autonomy and rendered them as goods and chattel. Merchants stressed these contracts when commodifying their laborers. For example, a young man was not bought at the auction block; rather, it was his seven years of indentured labor. By framing the transaction in this way, those involved in the process dehumanized the exchange. Such attempts at disguising the nature of servitude can be seen in *The Pennsylvania Gazette*. The newspaper proclaimed "a likely Maid-Servant's Time to be disposed of at a reasonable Price," or "The Man having four Years to Serve, the Woman five and a quarter."⁵⁷ So long as servants had time remaining on their contract, they were bought and sold without having any input. Edward Houton, for example, experienced this plight as a commodified body. Arriving in Pennsylvania from England in 1743, Houton was set to serve a seven-year term. During this period, he was sold to Norton Grimes, Richard Deaver, Michael Webster, and James Giles, who continued to advertise him for sale even as late as 1750.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 29, 1729; February 25, 1729.

⁵⁸ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 8, 1740; Sharon Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 104.

Reducing servant into quantitative data points for economic purposes obfuscates the harsh reality of servant life, a topic that was addressed by Quaker writers. As Pennsylvanians became increasingly linked to the emerging Atlantic market, the influences of godly patriarchy and the responsibilities of the head of the household waned. Penn's propaganda literature (*Some Account of the Province of Pennsylvania, A Brief Account of the Province of Pennsylvania, Good Order Established in Pennsylvania*) championed opportunity for all economic classes of settlers, yet it proved more fiction than fact. From the beginning, Pennsylvania's founders constructed a legal code limiting the personal autonomy of servants. Many of these laws became means for masters to ignore the spirit of the contract they entered in with their servant. Virtually any wrongdoing carried the punishment of an extension of one's terms of service. For example, in 1690 the Pennsylvania Assembly averred "if any servant shall assault or menace his master or mistress... at the expiration of their time shall make such satisfaction for the master's or mistress' loss of the said six months."⁵⁹

By crafting a set of laws with heavy penalties levied on servants, the contractual limits became virtually meaningless. Thus the legal system became focused not on providing moral or spiritual uplift, as were the dictates of a godly patriarch, but on protecting the interests of masters vis-à-vis their economic their financial stake in servants. Similar punitive measures were enacted towards servants who absconded from their masters. For each day they went missing, five were added onto the end of their contract.⁶⁰ Masters took such precaution against potential runaways, that they even

⁵⁹ *Statutes at Large*, 2:13.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:54-6.

persecuted those who sought to “[inveigle] servants to goe from their Master.” As early as September 1683, a unanimous vote by the Provincial Council put such an act into law, placing punitive measures on those aiding and abetting runaway servants.⁶¹ Those unable to pay fines and debts faced imprisonment. But if that failed to produce the necessary funds debtors “shall satisfy the debt by servitude as the county court shall order.”⁶² Such a law not only guarded the economic interests of the elites, but also preyed on a vulnerable class of individuals by forcing them into bound service. Time in prison was a common method for punishing servants who overstepped their bounds. John Noyes spent time in prison and faced five lashes upon his back on the grounds of theft. After Noyes appealed the punishment, the courts dismissed the case. They stated that they were “favourably pleased to Order that the said Punishment of five Lashes... be inflicted.”⁶³ If chattel service is marked by the buying and selling of individuals whose will is subject to a master’s authority, the Quaker legal code reflected a conscious effort to capitalize on immigrants fallen into debt.

Pennsylvania’s legal code constructed a system in which masters held almost complete authority over their servants. Servants could not make many of the most basic, day-to-day decisions without the consent of their masters. Similarly, masters also controlled larger changes. Marriage to a fellow servant, for example, required the approval of the master. If a servant sought marriage with a free person, they were

⁶¹ *MPCP*, 1:23-4. See also, *Votes and Proceedings*, 1:45-6; *Statutes at Large*, 2:189-90; Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 79-80.

⁶² *Statutes at Large*, 2:129-30, 249-50.

⁶³ *MPCP*, 2:103.

required to serve out a year's time before becoming free.⁶⁴ Some tried to resist these laws. James Hall and Margaret Ryan absconded from their masters in Chester County in order to get married without the consent of their masters. They were eventually captured and brought before the local courts. Hall and Ryan were forced to serve an extra thirty days for their runaway time, five months as a result of the loss of funds their masters incurred, and one year as a penalty for the marriage.⁶⁵ By stripping away such basic personal rights, servants were seen as less of a person. This was particularly damaging to a servant's efforts at achieving competency, a gendered notion predicated in large part on forming families. Some servants did not even possess the ability to migrate freely.⁶⁶ "Alien Irish servants" like Margaret Ryan, and servants of questionable character were taxed an additional duty "from all persons importing, landing, or bringing" servants into Philadelphia. Sometimes these "questionable" individuals were servants who, before even being "imported and sold," were accused of "heinous crimes."⁶⁷ By crafting the law in this manner, Penn and his cohort further reified the legal divide between indentured laborers and free settlers.

The strict set of laws controlling Pennsylvania's unfree laboring population reflected the populace's fear of unruly servants. The legal code (and the harsh labor discipline) grew from a belief that if left unchecked, servants would "grow idle, neglectful, insolent, and mutinous, and occasion many Disorders in the Families they

⁶⁴ *Statutes at Large*, 2:22.

⁶⁵ Smith, *Colonists in Bondage*, 271-272.

⁶⁶ For more on competency, see Daniel Vickers, "Competency and Competition: Economic Culture in Early America," *William and Mary Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (1990): 3-29.

⁶⁷ *Statutes at Large*, 3:264, 4:136, 4:164; *Votes and Proceedings*, 3:1959.

belong to.”⁶⁸ Many colonists feared servants and slaves banding together and terrorizing free citizens. In 1735, William Atwood authored a petition on behalf of the citizens of Philadelphia about the perceived threat of uncontrolled servants and slaves.

They feared the:

numerous & tumultuous Assemblies of Negroes, & by the Notorious Licence of Servants and others, who in Time of divine service, are to be seen at utmost every Corner of the Streets of this City: or are to be found in helping houses, whose doors are at all Times open to those who are inclined to frequent them; all in which we beg leave to observe is in Distance of all Laws human, & divine, to the great Annoyance of well disposed persons, & Scandal of Religion in General. And as this is a growing Evil whose consequences are so obvious unto all, it cannot but particularly effect us their greatest concern.⁶⁹

While Atwood and his associates wrapped this complaint in the guise of religious language and the need to defend “the Laws of God,” his purpose was clear. Wealthy and influential Philadelphians wanted to be “Fathers & Guardians of this City” through “the Regulation of whatever is disorderly.”⁷⁰ Petitioning the provincial council and the Mayor became a tool for influential elites to control their unfree laboring force. Petitions such as Atwood’s prevented servants from exercising their autonomy and controlling their own time. Whether or not servants wanted to engage in frivolities or simply enjoy time free from onerous labor, masters took steps to punish the idle, neglectful, and insolent. Quakers, specifically, shared this concern. They believed that “Indulgence is given to Children & Servants to go to Fairs without any necessary Business, by which

⁶⁸ Address to the Governor, February 11, 1756, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Labaree, 396-400.

⁶⁹ William Atwood, “To the Worshipful, the Mayor Recorder & Alderman of the City of Philadelphia,” January 1735, Box 1, Philadelphia County (Pa.) Records (Collection 1014), HSP.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

they are in great Danger of being corrupted by Evil.”⁷¹ Perhaps for Moraley, the freedom to move about in Pennsylvania and enjoy the goodwill of others meant it was the best poor man’s country. For many servants, however, the steps taken by colonial leaders to impose social control meant criminalizing and demonizing the actions of servants, the masterless, and the poor.

While the *Statutes at Large* used coded language and restrictive laws to limit servants’ rights, local courts were more direct. In theory, servants could challenge their masters in court, reflecting the fact that they had greater legal standing than did African slaves. In reality, the ability to take a master to court proved difficult at best and the application of fair treatment by courts was inconsistent. One responsibility of the courts was to settle disputes over the details of servant contracts. In 1683, a court case was heard in Chester County between Jeremiah Collett and John Barnes, a merchant in Bristol, over negotiations for the service of a young boy named Robert Williams. Collett and Barnes argued over the length of William’s service due to a debilitating leg injury Williams had sustained. In an effort to mediate this disagreement, the courts “Judg it reasonable [that] the sayd Boy shall serve 4 years,” arguing that this would be a fair length of time for a contract of indenture given the boy’s injury.⁷² The courts operated in concert with merchants to reaffirm the notion that servitude was temporary yet at the same time reinforcing the notion that the servants had no control in the process.

⁷¹ Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends at Philadelphia, 1757-1762, QSCL, 159.

⁷² *Records of the Courts of Chester County Pennsylvania, 1681-1608* (Philadelphia: Colonial Society of Pennsylvania, 1910), 1:27-8.

During the seventeenth-century, while servitude was more familial and bound by patriarchal dictates, courts did rule in favor of servants on occasion. In November 1685, Eleazer Cossett, an indentured servant, petitioned his master against selling him to “foreign parts.” Cossett had been loaded on a ship bound for Virginia. Unwilling to travel to the South, Cossett absconded. The County Court of Philadelphia granted Cossett’s petition.⁷³ When a shipment of servants arrived from England in 1685, the Provincial Council ruled against the desires of the master to send the servants to Virginia. Citing that it was “Contrary to the Laws of the Province,” the master was forced to appear before the court. A similar case occurred the following year, when servants bound for Pennsylvania were “forced by the said Conoway to Bermudas.”⁷⁴

Often overlooked in the rush to lionize Pennsylvania as the best poor man’s country is Moraley’s own criticisms of the treatment of servants by Pennsylvania courts, which became more inconsistent as time progressed. The system of indenture was predicated largely on the notion of an exchange of goods and services. Servants forfeited time and labor in exchange for passage to Pennsylvania. In return, masters had to provide clothes, food, and drink. Yet, concerns existed among servants that masters would shirk their responsibilities and fail to provide their former servants with their freedom dues. Servants had the option of contesting this in court, but evidence suggests courts favored the masters in these cases. Moraley states that “yet upon Complaint made to a Magistrate against the Master for Nonperformance, the Master is generally heard before the Servant,

⁷³ *Records of the County Court of Philadelphia* (Collection 3492), HSP.

⁷⁴ *MPCP*, 1:111-2, 126. The “Laws of the Province” most likely refers to the statute passed in 1690 stating “That no Master or Mistress or freeman of this Province or Territories thereunto shall presume to Sell or Dispose of any servant or servants into any other province, that is or are bound to serve his or their time in the Province of Pennsylvania or territories thereof.” See *Statutes at Large*, 1:189.

and it is ten to one if he does not get his Licks for his Pains, as I have experienced upon the like Occasion, to my Cost.”⁷⁵ In another instance, this one in 1699, one servant brought to Pennsylvania by Isaac Norris tried to protest his servitude by contending that he was “Bought away against his will.” Norris successfully challenged the accusation, though he was “forst to use all my Interest.”⁷⁶ Not only did courts privilege the voices of the masters by hearing those first, masters enact retribution on their servants by getting their “Licks for [their] Pains.” By privileging masters, Pennsylvania courts sought to prioritize profits over the lives of their unfree laborers.

Gendered Labor among Indentured Servants

Another way Pennsylvania masters privileged profits was through the specific commodification of female servants and their bodies. The gendered nature of servitude was evident in the terms of acquisition, labor, and treatment of servants. As early as 1699, merchants involved in the trade in humans warned against importing too many women. In a letter to Jeffrey Pinnell, Isaac Norris instructed his fellow merchant to “send few women unless youngly & fitt for housewifery either in town or country.” Israel Pemberton, another influential Quaker merchant, echoed similar sentiments, instructing his connection to “bring no women Servants.” This refrain was echoed by Thomas

⁷⁵ Klepp and Smith, eds., *The Infortunate*, 60. Farley Grubb has written at length about the role of freedom dues in moderating the master-servant relationship, see “The Statutory Regulation of Colonial Servitude: An Incomplete-Contract Approach,” *Explorations in Economic History* 37, no. 1 (2000): 42-75. Grubb attempts to disprove two explanations for freedom dues. The first, the runaway-deterrence hypothesis, which suggests freedom dues sought to discourage servants from absconding, and the second, the forced-savings hypothesis, which offered the notion that freedom dues were put in place to try and prevent former servants from relying on poor relief. Grubb contends that both points, instead contending that “the purpose of statutory freedom dues was to prevent masters from shirking the durable goods portion of the provisions contractually designated to be paid to the servant,” and that it was a means of enhancing the efficiency of the labor contract.

⁷⁶ Isaac Norris to Jeffrey Pennell, June 12, 1699, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1699-1702, Vol. 5, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), HSP. Thanks to Michael Goode for bringing this source to my attention.

Willing, in Benjamin Marshall's warning to his agent that "the less women the better," and in the request by merchants James and Drinker that "if servants are dealt in avoid women altogether."⁷⁷ In selectively importing women, merchants engaged in a business calculus reflective of emerging capitalism. The labor of men was more valuable than that of women to many eighteenth-century colonists, and as such they were preferred. Similarly, importing women posed challenges to merchants, as many were, in the words of Thomas Clifford, hard to place "without a character reference."⁷⁸

The punishment of servants also reflected the gendered nature of eighteenth century servitude. One of the ways courts targeted women was through their prosecution of illicit sex. Courts worked to prevent fornication, not only because it undermined the authority of the master, but also because of the loss of labor that occurred if the woman became pregnant. In late 1689, Mary Tuberfield was brought before the Chester County Court having been accused of fornication with John Eldridge. Tuberfield, who was pregnant, faced a steep penalty for her actions. While Eldridge received nothing more than a fine of three pounds, the courts ruled that Tuberfield "serve one year and a halfe with her said master to make good his Damage and Charge and absence by running away after the Expiration of her Indenture." In addition, "Tuberfield was Called to the Barr and Judgment awarded to receive 10 Strips upon her bear backe well laid on att the Comon

⁷⁷ Isaac Norris to Jeffrey Pinnell, October 16, 1699, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1699-1702, Vol. 5, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), HSP; Israel Pemberton to Edward Dowers, May 5, 1745, Israel Pemberton Letterbook D, 1744-1749, APS, 46-7. The references to Willing, Marshall, and James and Drinker are quoted in Salinger, "Send No More Women," 32-3. See also, Sharon Salinger, "Colonial Labor in Transition: The Decline of Indentured Servitude in Late Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *Labor History* 22, no. 2 (1981): 169-70.

⁷⁸ Quoted in Salinger, "Send No More Women," 33. See also, Salinger, "Colonial Labor in Transition," 170.

Whipping Post att Chester.”⁷⁹ That women faced their own challenges as servants is not surprising. Women made up a smaller percentage of the workforce in Pennsylvania. Their work as servants was unstable and more isolating. As such, they were susceptible to greater exploitation at the hands of their masters.⁸⁰

The whipping of a servant for sex sent a strong message regarding the legal status of bond laborers and the disproportionate blame faced by female servants. Courts had little sympathy even for women who claimed to be victims of coerced sex if they violated the terms of their contracts. In 1695, Elizabeth Rutter appeared before the courts in Chester alongside Edward Downing. The court convened to hear “the Complaint of Elizabeth Rutter... that [Baldwin] did lye with her” against her will. Baldwin denied the claim and the courts ruled that “wee of the petty Jury Doe find the prisoner Edward Downing not guilty.” Rutter was not so lucky. Having absconded from her master following the traumatic event, the courts felt it necessary to make an example of her. The court ordered “that shee shall serve her said master or his assigns the full time of one yeare and a halfe after the expiration of her Indentures.”⁸¹ These rulings operated within a larger context in which women servants faced a disproportional amount of punishment in cases of sexual abuse. Nicholas More called for stricter punishments against servants in cases of illicit fornication because masters received little compensation. Such lobbying

⁷⁹ *Records of the Court at Chester County*, 1:176, 180.

⁸⁰ Salinger compares the experience of indentured servants to free laborers who worked as domestic servants. Domestic servants bound by indenture faced greater exploitation and more ill usage because they lacked the ability to take their work elsewhere. See Salinger, “Send No More Women,” 34-6. The smaller percentage of female servants in Pennsylvania mirrors trends elsewhere in the Atlantic. See Terri Snyder, “‘To Seeke for Justice’: Gender, Servitude, and Household Governance in the Early Modern Chesapeake,” in *Early Modern Virginia: Reconsidering the Old Dominion*, ed. Douglas Bradburn and John Coombs (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 128-157.

⁸¹ *Records of the Courts of Chester County Pennsylvania*, 1:357.

was successful, and in 1700 the law was amended so that women servants convicted of bearing a bastard was required to “serve one whole year after her time by indenture or covenant expired.” In 1706, the law was made worse for servants, as women were required to “serve such further time beyond that term of her indenture... as the justices of the peace... shall think fit.”⁸²

Quaker mechanisms of oversight were no less biased towards women engaged in illicit sex. Quaker monthly meetings were meant to serve as the guardians of Gospel Order, where the overseers of the meetings would impose order and discipline troublesome Friends. These meetings were also meant to uphold Quaker masculinity by reinforcing good, godly patriarchy. Yet when Joshua Crosby was accused of impregnating his servant, an investigation spanning several months yielded no tangible results. The servant, “as its said with Child,” reacted in the same manner as Elizabeth Rutter, and “left his House and for some time remain’d conceal’d in a disreputable manner.” This woman was never mentioned by name in the meeting minutes. The men responsible for investigating the case— Anthony Morris, Samuel Preston Moore, Samuel Powerll and Isaac Lane—did not appear to have interviewed her to hear her side of the story. The Meeting ruled that “we cannot Esteem the said Joshua Crosby a member,” but no mention was made of any appearances before courts beyond the walls of the Monthly Meeting.⁸³

⁸² Salinger, “Colonial Labor in Transition,” 171-2; *Minutes of the Provincial Council*, 1:61; *Statutes at Large*, 2:181-2.

⁸³ Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Philadelphia, 1751-1756, QSCL, 131-2, 164. See also, Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Philadelphia, 1745-1755, QSCL, 294, 321.

One of the reasons illicit relationships were so dangerous for women was because of the penalties they faced should they become pregnant. Pregnant women like Margaret Adamson faced harsh reprisal for costing their masters labor lost during their pregnancy. Adamson appeared before the Court of Quarter Sessions in Chester County in 1698 for “having a bastard child” with James Canadee, another servant. In these cases, courts ordered women like Adamson to serve additional time to account for the months of lost labor while she lay pregnant. Adamson was ordered to “sarve [her master] the full terme of four years... for all the trouble and charges and loss of her time.” In addition, Adamson received twenty-one lashes for her perceived transgressions.⁸⁴ Far more insidious was the decision courts levied regarding the fate of children born from these affairs. By the early-1700s, it became customary for illegitimate children to become wards of the state or specific Pennsylvania merchants. Jane Thorley’s child was taken from her when her terms of service were extended. It fell to Chester County to maintain the child. Joyce Knapp’s child was also taken from her, given to the father for care.⁸⁵ While the loss of one’s child was harsh enough, the courts often forced the child into indenture. Such an act represents the commodification of the servant woman’s body, as the woman lost control over her body and her reproductive power. The children borne of “illicit” relationships became part of the labor force as a means of punishing the woman for perceived transgressions. In most cases, the child was indentured until they reached the age of twenty-one.⁸⁶ Thus, masters reduced women to chattel on multiple fronts. They

⁸⁴ *Records of the Courts of Chester County Pennsylvania*, 2:29.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 2:110, 122,

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:140, 147-8.

received harsh punishments for exercising their sexual autonomy outside the limits approved by their masters and had no control over the future of their offspring.

The treatment of orphans by Pennsylvania courts underscores the insidious nature of servitude in early Pennsylvania. Orphans were deemed an ideal source of unfree labor because of the fact that orphans had no voice when brought before courts. Juries convened with surprising frequency to address cases of orphaned children. On September 14, 1697, for example, the courts addressed twenty-six separate cases of orphaned children. In each of these instances, the courts wielded arbitrary power to assign these children to the care of reputable residents of Chester. An additional twenty-three cases appeared before the courts by year's end. These children, ranging from ages ten to seventeen, faced the prospects of indenture until they reached the age of twenty-one. Not once did the courts offer to hear the opinions of these young men and women, instead choosing their fates for them as part of an effort to secure labor for wealthier, prosperous merchants and artisans. Juries and magistrates were essentially taking control of the fate of these children without their consent. Some servants, like James Davidson, absconded from their masters to protest their belief that masters "had at sea made an Indenture" against their will. Others, like these orphans, were bound out by the court and left to "the county to maintain the child." In both cases, young children were bound to indenture against their will. When economic analysis of servitude so often stress the voluntary and contractual nature of servitude, examples like James Davidson draw into question these

accounts and reveal the ways in which profit-seeking masters circumvented many of the legal structures meant to provide oversight to the system of indenture.⁸⁷

Coercion, Violence, and Resistance

A defining feature of eighteenth century servitude in Pennsylvania was the ability for masters to use violence and the threat of violence as a means of control. Coercive violence was a defining feature of unfree labor. On the one hand, violence was meant to inspire work. But the use of corrective violence within the household was an accepted practice throughout much of early modern England. It was seen as a way for the patriarch to assert his authority so long as the violence did not become excessive. As long as the superior individual was the one carrying out the violence and enacting it on an inferior within the household, the violence was deemed legitimate. It was a way of enforcing discipline and exerting power.⁸⁸ For example, in the middle of the Keithian Schism, Samuel Jennings, one of the men trying the Keithians for their actions, was accused of “Severity towards both Servants and Creatures,” specifically “knocking one down and breaking his Cane upon him, and over-loading and beating both Servants and Cattle.” The man testifying, James Silver, was one of Jennings’ servants. Silver also recounted his own experience with his master’s violence, describing how Jennings dealt “very hardly

⁸⁷ Isaac Norris to Jeffrey Pennell, June 12, 1699, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1699-1702, Vol. 5, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), HSP; *Records of the Courts of Chester County*, 2:110.

⁸⁸ Susan Amussen, “‘Being Stirred to Much Unquietness’: Violence and Domestic Violence in Early Modern England,” *Journal of Women’s History* 6, no. 2 (1994): 82-4; “Punishment, Discipline, and Power: The Social Meanings of Violence in Early Modern England,” *Journal of British Studies* 34, no. 1 (1995): 1-34. Robert Steinfeld and Stanley Engerman have made compelling arguments about the coercive power of unfree labor and the relationship between coercion and violence. The authors argue that both free and unfree labor feature coercion. Free labor is characterized by coercion through “economic compulsion” based on the market. Unfree labor’s coercive power comes from the threat or actuality of physical violence. See Robert Steinfeld and Stanley Engerman, “Labor – Free or Coerced? A Historical Reassessment of Differences and Similarities,” in Brass and van der Linden, eds., *Free and Unfree Labor*, 119.

with me, and he let me go almost naked; and when Winter grew... I complained... he threatened to make me creep... or break my Bones.” This was apparently common, as Jennings treated all his servants in such a manner. Jennings disciplined his domestic servant with the “Inhumane Whipping of his Servant Maid naked in her Bed.”⁸⁹

Jennings was not the only Quaker who used violence or the threat of violence to extract labor and ensure discipline. Notable merchant Isaac Norris is another such example. Norris knew of a servant named Edward Mainstone, who had been indentured to a tailor named Philip Howel. Mainstone had been “Vexatious and Extreemly troublesome.” In particular, Mainstone “would not work. But Run away and kept at Towne lurking in holes vagabond like.” Mainstone participated in “frequent thefts & Extreem idelenss.” To try to coerce better behavior from the “most Incourigible piece of flesh that I have mett with,” Norris “forewarn’d him... threatened him with the whipping Post &c And at other time have us’d Endeavours to shame him.”⁹⁰ Not only did Mainstone refuse to work for his master, but he also attempted to abscond and commit theft. Norris’ reaction is unsurprising considering the investment required to purchase a servant. Masters did not tolerate such “vexatious” behavior, and the threat of the whipping post was a means of limiting such poor behavior.

Masters justified their use of violence by claiming it was meant solely to motivate lazy servants who tried to shirk their responsibilities and work. The Chester County Meetinghouse recorded an incident in 1693 when John Worrai, a master, whipped one of

⁸⁹ J. William Frost, ed., *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania* (Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions, 1980), 180-5.

⁹⁰ Isaac Norris to Jeffrey Pinnel, December 2, 1701, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1699-1702, Vol. 5, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), HSP. Thanks again to Michael Goode for directing me to this source.

his male servants for being “worthless.” The lazy servant, Worrai contended, “deserved to be beaten.” In 1700, the Welsh Tract Monthly Meeting met in an attempt to establish a “committee to maintain good order,” but this did not stop abusive treatment of servants in the name of profit and labor. In 1740, Thomas Smedley used similarly harsh measures to deal with his servant. The “lazy woman” was placed in a “noxious hold” in lieu of the more common whipping or flogging. In both cases, Worrai and Smedley thought to use force or the threat of force as a means of extracting labor from servants judged as lazy.⁹¹

Servants could, in some cases, protest their abuse. In 1684, Thomas Withers was brought before the courts on account of his treatment of his servant. According to the court records, “Withers did Abuse his servant.” Despite having legal action taken against him, Withers faced no serious punishment for his actions.⁹² By threatening servants with violence, masters created a climate that reduced servants supposedly bound by a legal contract to a status of non-citizens, forced to obey their masters or face corporal punishment. Despite all claims that Pennsylvania was a haven for the economically oppressed or a “free colony for all mankind,” Quaker leaders did not lobby for citizenship rights for servants. They were denied the same rights as their masters, per English precedent, to help masters maintain their authority.

Servants had few options to contest the treatment they received from their masters. The most common response was to abscond. Between 1728 and 1750, for example, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* ran 1,312 ads for escaped servants. The numbers of runaways

⁹¹ Barry Levy, “‘Tender Plants:’ Quaker Families and Children in the Delaware Valley, 1681-1735,” *Journal of Family History* 3, no. 2 (1978), 124.

⁹² *Record of the Courts of Chester County Pennsylvania*, 1:41–2.

drastically increased in the years following 1750. This increase is largely due to the fact that “Indentured servants became cheaper in the 1750s” until the Seven Years’ War disrupted shipping and drew manpower from labor to war.⁹³ With a greater number of servants in Pennsylvania, more were willing to abscond. From 1728 to 1731, approximately fifteen percent of servants in Pennsylvania ran away from their masters.⁹⁴ In many cases, servants ran away due to conflicts with their masters in a desperate attempt to escape the explicit imbalance of power between master and servant. Oftentimes, servants attempted to escape the same master time and time again. Such repeated cases of escape reflect the fact that “these masters were at the very least difficult to work for.” Servants from the countryside absconded more frequently than those in the city. This was due to the fact that rural labor saw fewer support networks. Servants in urban regions were less isolated and less likely to succumb to depression and other problems related to isolation.⁹⁵

Attempting to escape from a master meant undertaking a great risk. First, it meant leaving a familiar setting and embracing unfamiliar social or physical landscapes.

⁹³ Waldstreicher, *Runaway America*, 20.

⁹⁴ Farley Grubb, *Runaway Servants, Convicts, and Apprentices Advertised in the Pennsylvania Gazette, 1728-1796* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1992). An immense debt is also owed to David Waldstreicher’s wonderful work on runaways. See David Waldstreicher, *Runaway America: Benjamin Franklin, Slavery, and the American Revolution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004). I find Waldstreicher’s argument that “African Americans fought for one kind of freedom, while diverse white colonists fought for a rather different kind” to be particularly useful. Indentured servants migrated to Pennsylvania in hopes of achieving one type of freedom and economic mobility under the guise of the Best Poor Man’s Country, while wealthy Quakers envisioned a different, more hierarchical type of colonial arrangement.

⁹⁵ Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 104-5. Salinger notes that between 1744 and 1751, over twenty-five percent of all urban runaways traveled with servants or slaves from different masters. During the same period, rural servants ran away with companions only seventeen percent of the time. Over the course of the eighteenth century, barely one-fifth of rural runaways were individuals running away together from different masters. Conversely, more than twenty-five percent of urban runaways joined others in their escape.

Servants rarely had opportunities for assistance from those they might encounter during their flight. More importantly, much like Africans attempting to escape slavers, “escape did not, in itself, alter [servant’s] status as a market commodity.”⁹⁶ Pennsylvania masters clearly valued their servants as commodities and made great efforts to reclaim them. Efforts to reclaim servants bore financial costs, as well, while linking masters into a network of wealthy merchants through newspapers. While running the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Benjamin Franklin was intimately involved in efforts to capture absconded servants. Between one-fifth and one-quarter of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* advertisements concerned runaway servants or slaves. When paired alongside the cost of advertising servants for sale, Franklin made a tidy profit. Even as runaways, servant bodies were monetized for enterprising Pennsylvania residents willing to capitalize on the harsh labor system. The men appearing in Franklin’s ledgers read like a list of the most influential men in Pennsylvania. Isaac Norris, a notable Quaker, Robert Ellis, a wealthy merchant, and Thomas Penn, son of William Penn and proprietor of Pennsylvania, all paid Franklin to advertise for servants and servant runaways.⁹⁷

Masters made their runaway ads as detailed as possible in hopes of reclaiming their lost property. They noted the servant’s name, country of origin, their fluency in English, height, and any other distinguishing notes. Servants with particular talents had

⁹⁶ Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*, 55. Although Smallwood is talking about escaped African slaves, her analysis has value for understanding escaped servants. Masters valued their servants as commodities and running away did not change that fact.

⁹⁷ Waldstreicher, *Runaway America*, 24-5. Waldstreicher notes that many of the servant advertisements were placed next to, if not directly inside an advertisement for retail goods like soap, sugar, or coffee. This underscores the fact that eighteenth-century servitude in Pennsylvania placed servants in the same category as other goods and chattels. For examples of Franklin’s Ledger, see Ledger A and B, 1730-1740 and Ledger D, 1739-1748, Miscellaneous Benjamin Franklin Collections, 1710-1822 (Mss.B.F85.misc), APS.

their skills articulated in print. Will Minneman, for example, was noted for being “a Butcher by Trade” in a runaway ad posted in the *American Weekly Mercury*.⁹⁸ Ads frequently emphasized physical characteristics, such as how a servant had a “dent” or “a Mole upon his right Cheek,” a distinguishing scar, or a particular way of walking as a result of an injury.⁹⁹ Runaway ads used defining features and noticeable characteristics to draw attention to their absconded servants. An add might describ a “Pock-fretten” servant or a woman that disappeared into the wilderness “with a long scar on her arm.”¹⁰⁰ Masters noted the attire and accouterments servants had upon their escape. Servants frequently left carrying coats, trousers, breeches, jackets, shoes, counterfeit forms of identification, and items of value stolen from their masters’ homes. Newspapers might draw attention to an escaped servant’s “new Felt Hat, dark brown home-spun Coat, [and] Old Leather Breeches.”¹⁰¹ The detail of these ads made it easy for alert colonists to spot escaped servants and help fellow Pennsylvanians track them down. As print media spread it became increasingly difficult for runaway servants to remain anonymous, and those recaptured faced extended terms of service or harsh punishments.

While absconding from a master was certainly an option, it carried enough risk that many looked for other options. For some servants, rather than risk an extension of the indenture and the dangers of running away, they turned their attention to the army.

⁹⁸ *American Weekly Mercury*, March 8, 1720. See also, *American Weekly Mercury*, June 15, 1721; October 18, 1722; May 23, 1723.

⁹⁹ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 29, 1728; March 1, 1729; July 11, 1729; December 23, 1729; May 21, 1730; *American Weekly Mercury*, April 21, 1720; May 5, 1720; January 31, 1721; March 23, 1721.

¹⁰⁰ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 11, 1729; April 27, 1731.

¹⁰¹ *American Weekly Mercury*, October 18, 1722; April 21, 1720; September 22, 1720; October 13, 1720; December 27, 1720; July 6, 1721; February 20, 1722; July 5, 1722; May 23, 1723.

Enlistment in the armed forces offered servants a chance to achieve a modicum of freedom from the drudgery of bound labor. This carried an awful risk, however, that few servants saw when they first seized the opportunity. John Rutherford, a major in a British infantry rifle regiment known as the Royal Americans, observed how many were “glad to go into the Army to get rid of their Slavery.” While this was undoubtedly true, servants often exchanged one form of servitude for another, equally regimented life as a soldier. And more pressingly, enlistment sparked a harsh response from Pennsylvania masters, as these individuals protested the loss of labor and investment, as they had “a great part of their Property vested in servants.”¹⁰² What ensued was a tenuous balance between servants seeking wages and autonomy at war, the disappointment they faced when confronted with a similarly strict lifestyle, and the desires of masters seeking to protect their commodities while caught up in imperial conflicts.

Tensions over enlistment were primarily a mid-eighteenth century phenomenon. This is due, in large part, to the increase in European conflicts over territories and trade throughout the Atlantic. As shipping, trade, and the printed word became increasingly connected throughout the Atlantic world, national aspirations sparked conflicts that grew more and more global in scope. Two are particularly relevant for Pennsylvania: The War of Jenkins’s Ear (1739-1742) and the French and Indian War (1754-1763). The War of Jenkins’s Ear, which was part of the larger War of the Austrian Succession, was waged primarily between Britain and Spain and was sparked by the testimony of Robert Jenkins, a British sea captain who accused the Spanish of pillaging his ship and cutting off his ear.

¹⁰² Rutherford’s observation was made in 1756. The second quote is from Horatio Sharp in a letter to William Shirley. Both are taken from Peter Way, “Class and the Common Soldier in the Seven Years’ War,” *Labor History*, 44, no. 4 (2003): 464.

The war was a product of “War fever, fueled by Protestant bigotry and commercial greed” and quickly drew interest on both sides of the Atlantic. The war is notable, as well, because it drew a high number of North American volunteers. It was during this war that Britons first claimed that “Britons never, never, never shall be slaves,” an ironic refrain given the fact that Britain relied so heavily on coerced labor.¹⁰³ The French and Indian War, labeled the Seven Years’ War internationally, saw British and French armies clashing, in particular, in Pennsylvania. The war is notable for the involvement of various Indian tribes, especially in the Ohio River Valley. The French and Indian war saw unprecedented racial violence that “ripped apart the mixture of peoples who had defined the Atlantean world, and left ‘red’ and ‘white’ facing each other across a deep cultural divide.”¹⁰⁴

This period of heightened warfare had a tangible impact on the nature of British armed forces. With Britain’s increasing commercialization, its military became more professionalized. Historian Peter Way notes how “the military industry required a specialist ‘class’ of workers to make it and reorganization of their labor to maintain

¹⁰³ The War of Jenkins’s Ear was largely a military disaster. It was politically crucial, however because it helped secure the loyalty of British Americans to the imperial center. The British armed forces received military and financial support from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and New York. See Daniel K. Richter, *Before the Revolution: America’s Ancient Pasts* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 345-6, 379-80.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 394. The best treatment of the Seven Years’ War is Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Knopf, 2000). This war also has a vast literature taking a more precise view on the conflict between Europeans and Native Americans. For examples, see Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years War in America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988); Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008); Ian K. Steele, *Setting all the Captives Free: Capture, Adjustment, and Recollection in Allegheny County* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2013).

efficiency and competitiveness with martial competitors of the nation state.”¹⁰⁵ But while the men serving in the British forces were professionals, the army still relied on the enlistment of men from all walks of life. Almost all came from the laboring classes (those who did not were usually debtors), choosing to serve in the military for steady wages and provisions. Soldiers were drawn from the ranks of weavers, tailors, shoemakers, and other artisan fields. In some cases, vagrants and other convicted criminals were given the option of military service.¹⁰⁶

The recruitment of Pennsylvania servants witnessed an increase thanks to Parliamentary legislation. In 1756, Parliament passed *An Act for the Better Recruiting of His Majesty's Forces on the Continent of America*. The act allowed for the “great number of indented Servants, who may be willing to enlist as Soldiers, in such of His Majesty's Forces as now are or hereafter may be, employed in the said Provinces or Colonies.”¹⁰⁷ Although the army offered the promise of steady wages and the camaraderie between soldiers, military life did not guarantee improved living conditions. In some ways, servants who joined the army exchanged one form of servitude for another. A soldier was free insofar as he was not bound by a contract of indenture or as a redemptioner. Soldiers received a wage for their service. Yet they were unfree in that many of same ways that servitude stifled personal autonomy. A servant who enlisted saw his rights stripped away

¹⁰⁵ Way, “Class and the Common Soldier in the Seven Years’ War,” 455.

¹⁰⁶ Peter Way, “Rebellion of the Regulars: Working Soldiers and the Mutiny of 1763-1764,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 57, no. 4 (2000), 763; Way, “Class and the Common Soldier,” 461. See also, Fred Anderson, *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984); Sylvia Frey, *The British Soldier in America: A Social History of Military Life in the Revolutionary Period* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).

¹⁰⁷ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 2, 1756.

as a result of his military contract. The army was a highly paternalistic system that employed a strict hierarchy in which officers exerted brutal authority over their subordinates.¹⁰⁸

Despite exchanging one form of servitude for another, enlistment offered some respite for abused servants caught up in the current of the market. Namely, servants often sought to take advantage of emergent colonial policies for servant enlistment. Many used enlistment as a chance to escape the clutches of their masters, acquire some funds, and abscond to freedom. Petitions were brought before the colonial assembly, as colonists protested servants that would “leave their Masters on Pretence of going to inlist and not being pursued, as their Masters are discouraged by the Difficulty of recovering them, they often go quite off without inlisting, so that the Master is injured.”¹⁰⁹ In a report from George Thomas, then Deputy Governor of Pennsylvania, he explained this issue, noting “I doubt not, before the Troops embark, most people will be better satisfied than if the Officers had denied to receive them; as they would have run away, and enlisted themselves in other Governments, on account of the Bounty given, or better Provision made there for them.” Many were drawn to the opportunity for “better Cloaths, and Money in his Pockets,” particularly because servants were assured that enlisting meant

¹⁰⁸ Frey, *The British Soldier*, 53; Way, “Class and the Common Soldier,” 458. Jan Lucassen argues that soldiers and sailors represent “Large-scale unfree labour” in the service of the state. Jan Lucassen, “Free and Unfree Labour Before the Twentieth Century: A Brief Overview,” in *Free and Unfree Labor*, ed. Brass and van der Linden, 47-8.

¹⁰⁹ Address to the Governor, February 11, 1756, *Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Labaree, 396-400.

“they were freed from their former Matters, and were obliged to serve none but the King.”¹¹⁰

The loss of servant labor posed a threat to Pennsylvania masters. Colonial masters bemoaned the loss of workers. James Logan observed:

They have indeed in my judgement acted weakly and too inconsistently but the Govr on his part is never to be justified by a Zeal that can be alleged for it in raising 8 Companies when there were no more than four order'd nor armies or commissions sent for more and among others these (or 100 men each) no less than between 2 and 300 servants (t'is affirm'd full 300) to the very great loss of many of their masters divers of whom being poor Country men mean in debt to purchase them and now are ruined by that debt standing good against them while they are depriv'd of their servants expected help to discharge it.¹¹¹

This posed a twofold problem. Firstly, the enlistment of servants negatively affected Pennsylvania's labor force. Skilled and unskilled labor was a scarce commodity. Pennsylvania was in competition with other colonies for men and women to work the fields and docks. Pennsylvania became increasingly linked to an Atlantic economy that, by the time of the War of Jenkins's Ear, was developed and reliant on unfree labor. To lose the labor of servants to the army meant a man's business would suffer. Benjamin Franklin observed how “when a Man's Servants are taken from him, he knows not where to find Hands to assist him in cultivating his Land, or carrying on his Business, hired Labourers or Journeymen not being so readily obtain'd here... Thus many Masters are reduced to the greatest Distress in their Affairs, by a total Stop put to their Business.”

¹¹⁰ *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives*, 3:2605-11; 3:2619-20.

¹¹¹ James Logan to John Penn, November 10, 1740. James Logan Letter Book, Vol. 4, Logan Family Papers (Collection 379), HSP. Also quoted in Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 58. See also, *Votes and Proceedings*, 3:2617-27. Quakers were particularly vocal in protesting the enlistment of servants, calling these enlistments a violation of contracts, property rights, and the constitutional and political autonomy of Pennsylvania. See Jack Marietta and G.S. Rowe, *Troubled Experiment: Crime and Justice in Pennsylvania, 1682-1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 149.

Similar complaints were brought before the Quaker Monthly Meetings, as one man noted his preference for slave labor because “I have been unsuccessful (as well as many others) in white Servants several having enlisted & prov’d bad & I found it difficult to hire Persons suitable to my Occasion.”¹¹² In some cases, the Assembly moved to compensate masters for their lost labor. In January 1742, for example, an allowance of nine pounds, four shillings, and two pence was made for Jane Hatton, “in Consideration for the Loss of a Servant, who inlisted in the last Expedition.”¹¹³

While the threat to the economy affected masters, the second problem servant enlistment posed was that it threatened a master’s belief in their own liberty and right to protect their property. They did not express concern for the safety of their servants, rather they saw these enlistments, done out of the “Caprice of the Servant and Will of an Officer” to infringe on their liberties and rights. Colonists saw this as evidence that the King had no regard for their property, that “The Regard of our King has ever shewn to the Liberties and Properties of his Subjects... sufficiently demonstrate to us, that no Thought so injurious ever entered his Royal breast.” In discussing the varied treatment of felons and servants, the Assembly noted that felons “are bound to serve by Justice where they are

¹¹² Benjamin Franklin to Sir Edward Fawkener, July 27, 1756 in *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* ed. Labaree, 6:474-5; Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Philadelphia, 1757-1762, QSCL, 43-5. Efforts by Pennsylvanians to receive recompense for lost servants began as early as 1711, when Quakers petitioned the government for financial assistance when their servants enlisted. The Pennsylvania assembly set aside funds to reimburse masters, but these payments were rarely carried out. See Smith, *Colonists in Bondage*, 280-1. The debate over the lost labor power due to servant enlistment was also discussed extensively in the provincial council. Colonists averred that “great Numbers of bought Servants belonging to the Inhabitants of this Province, encouraged to that Purpose, had inlisted in the King’s Service and were detained from their Masters, to their great Loss and to the injury of the Publick.” See *MPCP*, 4:435-8.

¹¹³ *Votes and Proceedings*, 4:2722. The granting of such petitions was rare. Martin Reardon, for example, petitioned the assembly for recompense after his servant “was carried away among the soldiers to the West-Indies.” The petition was passed to the Committee of Grievances but it does not appear to have been granted. See *Votes and Proceedings*, 4:2915.

convicted” while servants “are obliged to serve for no longer Time than they contract.”

In both cases the enlistment of servants and felons in the army infringed on the rights of masters. Regardless of the nature of the contract, “both are equally the Property of their Masters during the Time they have to serve.”¹¹⁴ By referring to them as “the Property of their Masters,” the Assembly made clear their opinion of servants. Masters were not concerned with servant enlistment out of concern for the wellbeing of family members. Nor were they fearful of how military life might interrupt their role as godly patriarchs responsible for the spiritual growth of their family. Instead, masters feared the crown taking away their property.

Suicide among Servants

Running away offered servants a chance to find freedom and a new life outside the confines of their servitude in Pennsylvania. Joining the army promised steady wages and a chance to form important bonds with their fellow soldiers. But both options had significant drawbacks and did little to offer servants real freedom or genuine opportunity. In desperate cases, servants looked for a third option: suicide. Suicide was not taken lightly in the eighteenth century. Under Christian thought, “self-destruction was understood to be the vilest of sins: it violated the sixth commandment’s prohibition against killing” and those who opted for suicide “surrendered to the Devil’s instigation.” To turn to self-destruction was to reject the fate assigned by God. Yet, many individuals—particularly slaves—did, in fact, chose self-destruction over unfree labor.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ *Votes and Proceedings*, 3:2601-3, 2623.

¹¹⁵ Terri L. Snyder, *The Power to Die: Slavery and Suicide in British North America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 8. Snyder’s is one of the best treatments of suicide that engages with the Atlantic dimensions of self-destruction. While her work focuses primarily on slavery, her notion of the

In early November 1729, a master gave his indentured servant a simple task. He instructed the servant to take the chickens to their roost to protect them from foxes roaming the countryside. As the sun waned that evening, the master heard one of his fowls squawking. Rather than investigate the source of the noise, the owner sprang from his seat and took “his Gun, charg’d with Swan Shot, and fir’d at him.” After discharging his weapon the master stalked out to view what he surely believed to be the carnage of felled foxes “when to his Surprise it prov’d to be the Servant’s Arm” that he had shot.¹¹⁶ During his recovery the servant acquired a knife. Then, “the Young Man who some time since being disorder’d in his Senses cut open his Belly in a miserable manner in order to destroy himself.”¹¹⁷ Just one year later another servant was forced into what he deemed an untenable situation by his master. Michael Hoyle had been instructed to cut down a large tree on his own. Rather than risk injury from the tree and abuse from his master, Hoyle “despair’d of accomplishing it, and cut his Throat with a Razor.” Hoyle survived for twenty-one days, but on March 24 the *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported that Hoyle “is since dead.”¹¹⁸

The decision to commit suicide was a profound one, and a powerful signifier of how dire life was as a chattel servant. In June 1731, a young servant boy went missing from Richard Everson. For over three weeks Everson and others looked for the missing

ecology of suicide is particularly helpful. Snyder defines slave suicide ecology as the emotional, physical, and material conditions that fostered slave suicide. See Terri L. Snyder, “Suicide, Slavery, and Memory in North America,” *Journal of American History* 97, no. 1 (2010): 39-62. Evidence of suicide in Pennsylvania is difficult to find, however my research indicates that cases of suicide or attempted suicide exceed the estimates made by Salinger. See Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, fn. 112.

¹¹⁶ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, November 6, 1729.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, March 4, 1731; March 24, 1731.

boy. Eventually, Everson noticed a powerful odor wafting towards his home. As it turns out, the smell was that of the decomposing servant. The boy had hanged himself and when they located the boy “they found his Head still hanging but his body had dropp’d off, and was lying on the Ground.”¹¹⁹

Many more servants attempted suicide than succeeded. On the night of August 20, 1730, a servant awoke at midnight and walked toward the forest near his master’s home. He then tied a rope around a tree branch and attempted to hang himself. The branch snapped and the servant hid until midmorning. While his owners searched the premises for the servant, he attempted to hang himself again by the barn only to be found by the maid. While he did not successfully end his life, here was a man willing to go to great lengths to accomplish this task.¹²⁰ Several months later, Abraham Gutting placed an ad for his runaway servant, John Fryer. Gutting’s servant had one powerfully distinguishable trait, “a Scar under his Chin having once attempted to cut his Throat.”¹²¹

Pennsylvania was supposedly a place where people from all walks of life could come and make a living for themselves and their families. But this servant had experienced enough to know that ending his life would be a better fate than attempting to survive until his indenture expired. Denied all sense of personal dignity, this man attempted to end his own life rather than suffer the misery and indignities inflicted by the harsh hand of his owners. Suicide and attempted suicide represented a powerful act by a group of individuals facing overwhelming adversity.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., June 10, 1731.

¹²⁰ Ibid., August 20, 1730.

¹²¹ Ibid., December 29, 1730.

The system of indentured servitude forming in the British colonies was a stark contrast to the system prevalent in early modern England. Predatory Newlanders tricked some servants, like those described by Mittelberger, into servitude. Others, like Moraley, indentured themselves because of poor economic circumstances. But rather than face the economic haven purported by Penn, servants endured a harsh voyage with little food. After being auctioned off to their masters, servants labored under the threat of the lash. An unforgiving legal code and cruel owners bore little resemblance to the godly patriarchy Quakers discussed in their literature. Faced with few options, servants absconded, hoping to escape to a new colony or enlist in the army. In the direst of circumstances, servants claimed their own lives instead of continuing their work. Rather than Moraley's vision of Pennsylvania as "the best poor man's country," the experience for servants was often one of exploitation and violence. And it was an experience they often shared with slaves. Though as will be shown, the experience of slaves was often far worse.

CHAPTER FIVE

“THOUSANDS OF POOR DARK SOULS”¹: GODLY PATRIARCHY, RACE, AND SLAVERY IN PENNSYLVANIA

In 1721, James Logan sat down to write a letter to Hannah Penn, the second wife and then-widow of Pennsylvania’s founder and proprietor. Logan reflected on a will that Penn drew up. The will, which Penn “left with [Logan] at his departure hence,” covered all manner of goods and items Penn left for disposal upon his death. In the letter, Logan noted the fact that Penn’s will “gave all his Negroes their freedom.”² For a group generally associated with the earliest antislavery efforts, Penn’s ownership of slaves may be surprising. As was shown, as Pennsylvania’s economy matured and became increasingly linked to an Atlantic market, merchants, artisans, and other colonists turned to cheap labor to support this economic growth. Indentured servants and redemptioners from throughout Europe came to Pennsylvania—willingly and unwillingly—to work as unfree laborers. Yet servants were not alone in populating the colony’s labor force. Slaves of African descent had their labor extracted through force and defined racially in practice and through the legal code. The prominent role slaves played in helping build the colony was undoubtedly important for the Quaker settlers looking to build their fortunes.

¹ *The Planter’s Speech to His Neighbors & Country-men of Pennsylvania, East & West Jersey*, NV-131, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485A), HSP. Penn

² James Logan to Hannah Penn, May 11, 1721, Official Correspondence (1683-1727), Vol. 1, NV-024, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485A), HSP.

Yet at the same time, the harsh treatment of slaves and increasing racialization of Pennsylvania society was a novel form of unfree labor that did not fit easily within the Quaker conception of godly patriarchy. While some would speak out against this moral conundrum, a far larger number put aside their concerns in favor of profit.

Pennsylvania was not a slave society like the Chesapeake, but the colony's economic fortunes were dependent on provisioning the Caribbean sugar islands. The province's legal framework for defining slavery both racially and in practice was taken from slave societies like Virginia and especially Barbados, where many Quaker merchants resided before arriving in Philadelphia.³ Nor would the presence of African laborers have surprised anyone in the seventeenth or eighteenth century. It was impossible to deny the integral role slaves played in building Pennsylvania's economic infrastructure. In fact, many of the most influential and connected Quakers involved themselves in the acquisition and trading of slaves. James Claypoole, for example, worked out an agreement with his brother, Edward, over the trade in slaves. Edward was stationed as a merchant in Barbados, a hotbed of Quakerism and important port in Pennsylvania's trade network. James sought the assistance of his brother in helping him procure "2 good stout negroe men, such as are like to be plyable and good." Claypoole hoped to acquire these slaves in the spring to work alongside "a Carpenter, a

³ For the best explanation of the difference between slave societies and societies with slaves, see Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998). For a discussion of the legal nature of slavery throughout mainland British North America, see Christopher Tomlins, *Freedom Bound: Law, Labor, and Civic Identity in Colonizing English America, 1580-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

husbandman, & some other servants.”⁴ These laborers were brought to work alongside Claypoole in building his life in a new colony.

The fact that Quakers were the leading abolitionists in eighteenth-century British North America is well established in both academic literature and popular memory, and scholars have oft repeated the narrative of the Quakers’ role in shaping antislavery Pennsylvania in the Delaware. More recently, however, scholars have begun to mien more deeply the complicated relationship between Quakers and slavery from the beginning of the movement’s first exposure to African slave labor in the Caribbean, decades before the 1688 Germantown petition in Philadelphia spoke out “the traffik of men-body.”⁵ In order to understand Quakers and slavery in Pennsylvania, one has to examine the wider Atlantic and Caribbean context.⁶

The extant literature examining slavery in Pennsylvania has been skewed towards two approaches. Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, scholars began plumbing empirical data such as mortality rates and burial records to write quantitative narratives of slavery in the Quaker colony. At the forefront of this body of scholarship is the work of Gary Nash and Jean Soderlund. Their work, however, focuses more on the 1750s and the later period, when abolitionism began to play a more prominent role in Quaker meetings in the

⁴ James Claypoole to John Gordon, September 21, 1682; James Claypoole to Edward Claypoole, September 23, 1682, James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP.

⁵ “The traffik of men-body” refers to the famous 1688 Germantown petition. See Katherine Gerbner, “‘We are Against the Traffik of Men-Body’: The Germantown Quaker Protest of 1688 and the Origins of American Abolitionism,” *Pennsylvania History* 74, no. 2 (2007): 149-172.

⁶ This dissertation is particularly indebted to the recent work of Brycchan Carey and Geoffrey Plank. Their work has invigorated the study of slavery in Pennsylvania. Carey’s methodological approach and his textual analysis of antislavery tracts is particularly useful. See Brycchan Carey, *From Peace to Freedom: Quaker Rhetoric and the Birth of American Antislavery, 1657-1761* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012); Brycchan Carey and Geoffrey Plank, eds., *Quakers and Abolition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014).

Delaware Valley. Their interest in the slavery from the mid-eighteenth century to the Early Republic is in large part because of the availability and selection of sources, which include tax returns, probate records, and church records. Still, this scholarship has laid important groundwork for understanding the empirical data surrounding eighteenth-century slavery in Pennsylvania.⁷

The second strand of literature tends to engage with the Quakers' heritage as antislavery activists. This scholarship tends to examine memoirs, pamphlets, and others texts to trace the evolution of antislavery arguments and the ways in which Quaker beliefs shaped their views on unfree labor.⁸ This body of scholarship has made an important contribution to the post-1980s literature, now viewing Quaker antislavery movements as complex, interconnected, and oftentimes contradictory. Recent scholarship focuses less on the way that the social history of slavery connected to antislavery and more on how Quakers have influenced broader abolitionist networks. This dissertation seeks to intervene in these two historiographical strands by exploring the influences of slavery and the Caribbean on Quakerism, slavery, and antislavery in Pennsylvania.

⁷ Gary Nash, "Slaves and Slaveowners in Colonial Philadelphia," *William and Mary Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1973): 223-256; Jean R. Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery: A Divided Spirit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985). Darold Wax also contributed several works at the same time as Nash and Soderlund that follows the quantitative approach to Pennsylvania slavery. See Darold Wax, "Quaker Merchants and the Slave Trade in Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 86, no. 2 (1962): 143-159; "Negro Import Duties in Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 97, no. 1 (1973): 22-44. For a more recent example of this scholarship, see Charles R. Foy, "Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom: How Slaves Used Northern Seaports' Maritime Industry to Escape and Create Trans-Atlantic Identities," (Ph.D. Diss., Rutgers University, 2008); Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*.

⁸ Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*; Carey and Plank, eds., *Quakers and Abolition*; Gary Nash and Jean Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees: Emancipation in Pennsylvania and its Aftermath* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Geoffrey Plank, *John Woolman's Path to the Peaceable Kingdom: A Quaker in the British Empire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

This chapter seeks to wed quantitative data on the daily lives and contributions of Pennsylvania's slave population with a textual analysis of literature engaging with the morality of slavery and the slave trade. By framing this within the wider context of the Quaker relationship with slavery, it will provide a fuller portrait of slavery in Penn's Woods. Like the reliance on indentured servitude, the Quaker use of slave labor was a "logical" step for Quakers thanks to their formative experiences in Barbados and growing reliance on exploitative labor practices in the name of profits.

Beginning with their settlement of Barbados in the West Indies, Quakers acquired slaves as part of a concerted effort to develop their "outer plantations." In doing so, Quakers began developing labor management techniques while first engaging with the ethical quandary the practice presented. With so many Barbadian Quakers settling in Pennsylvania, adopting this practice was a way of acquiring an affordable and pliable labor force to build the colony. The reliance on slaves, however, subtly undermined traditional Quaker notions of godly patriarchy and worked at odds with the Quaker impetus to Christianize their slaves and locate them as part of the extended family.⁹ In place of these Quaker values, slaveholders instead turned towards exploitation and racialization. In the midst of the growing profit thanks to the trade in, and labor of slaves, a small number of Quakers did begin agitating for an abandonment of these practices. In doing so, Quaker antislavery activists invoked the gendered language of the family while

⁹ This argument owes a debt to the important contributions of Michael Goode. See Michael Goode, "Gospel Order among Friends: Colonial Violence and the Peace Testimony in Quaker Pennsylvania, 1681-1720" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Illinois-Chicago, 2013), in particular his argument in chapter three.

drawing on the same language of political and personal autonomy used by William Penn to demand the rights of individuals living in Pennsylvania.

This chapter begins with a brief history of Quakers and slavery in the West Indies. Focusing on Barbados, it will illustrate how Friends first turned to slave labor as a means of supporting their colonial endeavors while also sowing the seeds for antislavery activity through the notion of godly patriarchy. The chapter will then address the network of slave trading between the West Indies and Pennsylvania, while highlighting the role of influential Quakers who engaged in human trafficking. In particular, it will examine how men like Isaac Norris and Jonathan Dickinson eschewed their moral concerns in favor of profit. From there, the chapter will shift to a discussion of the role of slaves in Pennsylvania's economy and a discussion of the evolving legal code. This will pay particular attention to the way it codified race. The chapter will close with a prolonged exploration of Quaker writings about slavery. It will begin with Fox's *Gospel Family-Order*, written after a visit to Barbados, and conclude with the efforts of men like John Woolman and Anthony Benezet to build an antislavery coalition. This discussion will pay attention to the language used in antislavery tracts, particularly the commonalities between antislavery discourse and the rhetoric of liberty of conscience as well as the gendered language of the family.

Early Quaker Slaveholdings in the West Indies

The relationship between Pennsylvania Quakers and African slaves began decades prior to Penn becoming a colonial proprietor. It began in the West Indies, on the island of Barbados, where planters reaped great profits through the exploitation of unfree

labor toiling on the sugar plantations. There, Quakers gained firsthand experience with the economic opportunities presented by the plantation economy, the methods of controlling the unfree laborers, and the moral and ethical challenges these situations presented. The English settled Barbados in 1627 amid a flurry of European activity in the West Indies. The colony's real growth, however, came in the 1640s when the English transitioned from tobacco to sugar as their primary crop. The transition to sugar saw small farms consolidated into large landholdings and the distinct rise of an English plantocracy on the island.¹⁰

The rise of an elite class of men reaping the rewards of plantation agriculture required not only capital and technology, but also large numbers of laborers. European indentured labor made up the bulk of the labor force in the colony's early years. In particular, Irish, English, Scottish, and Welsh migrants went willingly, and unwillingly, to toil on Barbadian plantations. Until the 1660s, these European servants worked side-by-side with African slaves. In fact, fears over a coalition of servants and slaves rebelling against the planters were a real and pressing concern for masters. Over time, masters took steps to "divide the servants and slaves and to split the servant class racially" as a means of controlling unfree laborers.¹¹ As sugar production came to dominate the Barbadian agriculture, the island saw a noticeable increase in the number of African slaves. This

¹⁰ Richard Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 18-20.

¹¹ Hilary McD. Beckles, "Rebels and Reactionaries: The Political Responses of White Labourers to Planter-Class Hegemony in Seventeenth-Century Barbados," *Journal of Caribbean History* 15 (1981), 4.

translated to increased investment in the African slave trade. Between 1640 and 1660, planters spent nearly £1 million on the purchase of slave laborers.¹²

The transition from indentured servitude to slave labor coincided with the rise of an increasingly violent and exploitative labor system. Maintaining the sugar plantations was backbreaking and dangerous. As Larry Gragg notes, ten-hour days “were the norm for clearing the land; planting, cultivating, harvesting, and processing sugar cane into the sweet commodity.”¹³ The conditions for unfree laborers on the island were well known, particularly for the enslaved. Richard Ligon, for example, kept a record of his observations of life on Barbados, including the experiences of slaves. This account provides important insight into the brutal labor regime, such as his detached discussion of “an excellent” slave who died after bringing a candle too close to a barrel of rum.¹⁴

Another example of the brutal labor regime can be found in the instructions of Henry Drax. One of the largest landholders in Barbados, Drax wrote out his instructions for slaves in a document spanning twenty-four pages. Not only did the document articulate the specific duties and responsibilities of the enslaved, but it also reflected the attitude of

¹² For more on the transition from indentured to slave labor in Barbados, see Hilary McD. Beckles, “Plantation Production and White ‘Proto-Slavery’: White Indentured Servants and the Colonisation of the English West Indies, 1624-1645,” *The Americas* 41, no. 3 (1985): 21-45; “A ‘riotous and unruly lot’: Irish Indentured Servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644-1713,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (1990): 503-522; “The Colours of Property: Brown, White, and Black Chattels and their Responses on the Caribbean Frontier,” *Slavery and Abolition* 15, no. 2, Unfree Labour in the Development of the Atlantic World (1994): 36-51.

¹³ Larry Gragg, *The Quaker Community on Barbados* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2009), 31.

¹⁴ Richard Ligon, *A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbados* (London, 1657), 93. Simon Newman makes an important observations about Ligon’s account of this slave’s death, particularly the fact that Ligon seemed more concerned with the fact that the master “lost the whole vessell of Spirits” than the fact that the slave died. See Simon Newman, *A New World of Labor: The Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 214.

Drax and his fellow planters. According to Drax “All Negroes [were] naturally thieves” and steps were required to prevent them from robbing their masters. His instructions underscore how, as Hilary Beckles has observed, plantation owners were primarily concerned with “the overriding task of keeping the thousands of slaves in subjection.”¹⁵ Most of the residents of Barbados were aware of that the life for slaves was to be bought and sold, bartered and traded, and reduced to chattel.¹⁶

It was in this climate of brutality and exploitation that Quakers first arrived to Barbados. Friends arrived to the colony with complicated goals. On one hand, they were intent on spreading their religious message. At the same time, they saw in Barbados an opportunity for achieving the economic success that would bolster and legitimize their following. Quakers first arrived in the West Indian Island in 1655, when Anne Austin and Mary Fisher settled there in hopes of bringing Quakerism to a new land. As Quakerism was still a new phenomenon in 1655, most of the early Quaker settlers to Barbados were recent converts.¹⁷

¹⁵ Peter Thompson, “Henry Drax’s Instructions on the Management of a Seventeenth-Century Barbadian Sugar Plantation,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 66, no. 3 (2009): 594; Beckles, “a riotous and unruly lot,” 522. For more on Drax’s instructions, see Newman, *A New World of Labor*, 210-4. Hilary Beckles, in particular, has contributed extensively to the literature depicting the brutal labor regime in Barbados. See Hilary McD Beckles, *Natural Rebels: A Social History of Enslaved Black Women in Barbados, 1680-1838* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989); *White Servitude and Black Slavery in Barbados, 1627-1715* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989).

¹⁶ Kristen Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean: Religion, Colonial Competition, and the Politics of Profit* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 151.

¹⁷ Block, “Cultivating Inner and Outer Plantations: Property, Industry, and Slavery in Early Quaker Migration to the New World,” *Early American Studies* 8, no. 3 (2010): 521. See also, Katherine Gerbner, “The Ultimate Sin: Christianising Slaves in Barbados in the Seventeenth Century,” *Slavery and Abolition* 31, no. 1 (2010), 61. Gragg, *The Quaker Community on Barbados*.

In an effort to live out their religious mission, Quakers took up itinerant preaching. Early Quaker missionaries found mixed success spreading their vision of Christianity in Barbados. Mary Fisher believed that she was “very Serviceable here,” and that many opportunities existed for the work of converting others to Quakerism. Henry Fell, on the other hand, found Barbados “a very filthy place” where colonists “are very hard to be brought... to take up the Crosse.”¹⁸ As the evangelical impulse spread, however, it clashed with the system of slavery. Some Quakers found it difficult to resolve the treatment of enslaved peoples with the Quaker vision of a godly household. It became increasingly challenging to continue evangelizing while simultaneously participating in, as Brycchan Carey describes, a “commercial enterprise” where profit relied on “a subservient, brutalized, and emphatically nonevangelized labor force”¹⁹

One approach to resolving the tensions between faith and the practicalities of life in colonial Barbados was to focus the evangelical efforts on the enslaved. According to official policy clarified in the wake of the Restoration by Charles II in 1660, all slave masters were instructed to convert their slaves. By bringing religion into the lives of enslaved peoples, Quakers hoped to provide spiritual relief to enslaved peoples toiling under the lash. Unfortunately, their efforts were not only misguided, but they were also met with resistance by Barbadian elites. Quakers appealed to whites and blacks by explicitly denouncing the ills of the plantation culture. Quaker preachers criticized the rampant “Pride, Drunkenesse, Covetousnesse, Oppression, and Deceitful-Dealings”

¹⁸ Quoted in Gragg, *Quaker Community on Barbados*, 38-9.

¹⁹ Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 45.

prevalent on the island.²⁰ Concerted efforts to convert the enslaved to Christianity began almost a decade after Quakers settled in Barbados. In 1661, Lord Willoughby, the governor of Barbados, was instructed to “[win] such as are purchased... as slaves to the Christian faith and [make] them capable of being baptised thereinto.”²¹ Willoughby expanded this policy in 1663, when he began urging for a law allowing for the christening of black children and the religious education of adults.²²

Quakers believed these actions would not only improve the lives of the enslaved, but bring greater protection and safety to British planters. William Edmundson, a “zealous Preacher” from Ireland, landed in Barbados in 1675 to “visit the Meetings of his Friends there, and to publish the Doctrines of Truth among the Inhabitants.” Upon his arrival to Barbados, Edmundson met with several influential Barbadians, including “Priest Ramsey.” Ramsey educated Edmundson about the prevailing fear that the enslaved would become “Rebels, and rise and cut their [masters’] Throats.” Edmundson countered this fear by suggesting the benefits of missionary work. Edmundson contended, “it was a good Work to bring them to the Knowledge of God and Christ Jesus, and to believe in him that died for them, and for all Men, and that would keep them from rebelling or cutting any Man’s Throat.” So not only would Christianity provide uplift for the enslaved, but also it would protect the masters by helping the slaves shed their rebellious and violent tendencies.²³

²⁰ Quoted in Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean*, 157.

²¹ Quoted in Gerbner, “The Ultimate Sin,” 61.

²² Gragg, *Quaker Community on Barbados*, 123.

While Edmundson presented a compelling argument, efforts to Christianize slaves as part of a moral opposition to slavery were met with limited success. He pointed to the harsh and exploitative conditions slaves faced in Barbados. Should missionary efforts fail and the enslaved “rebel and cut their Throats,” Edmundson argued, “it would be through their own Doings, in keeping them in Ignorance, and under Oppression.” He pointed to the chattel nature of Barbadian slaves, such as how women were treated “like Beasts” and how masters would “starve them for want of Meat and Clothes convenient.”²⁴ In doing so, he tried to put the onus on masters to ensure the safety of their families and provide for their slaves. The responsibility to prevent slave uprisings, Edmundson suggested, rested on the shoulders of those wielded power.

Quaker efforts to improve the conditions surrounding slavery through proselytizing met immediate resistance due to pejorative views of slaves and a resistance to change among elites. Because Quaker interests in Barbados were focused primarily on building their outer plantations, much of the effort to convert slaves was halfhearted. Friends who migrated to Barbados to spread the gospel were concerned with *their* interpretation of faith. This specific emphasis on English Quakerism led to apathetic attempts to convert slaves.²⁵ In particular, their conversion attempts were hindered by Quaker racism towards slaves and their desire to exploit an unfree labor force. Quaker

²³ Joseph Besse, *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers: for the Testimony of a Good Conscience* (London, 1753), 305-6; Edmundson was a visitor to several different West Indian Islands, including trips to Antigua and Nevis with Colonel Morris. See Block, *Ordinary Lives*, 178-9; Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 58-62; Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 11.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 305-6. See also, William Edmundson, “To the Governour and Council, and all in Authority, in this Island of Barbados,” in Besse, *A Collection of Sufferings*, 307. Edmundson roots much of his moral argument in the universalist belief that “Christ Jesus died for Blacks as well as for Whites.”

²⁵ Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 69

racism towards slaves was particularly evident when examining African social mores, particularly those pertaining to marriage.

Quakers had little interest in learning about African beliefs or practices. When discussing the proper role of the family, Quakers were quick to denounce African beliefs like polygamy and the preference among slaves for casual sexual relationships rather than a strictly familial relationship. Quakers tried to stress the idea that “For every Man, whether White or Black, ought to have but one Wife; and every Woman, White or Black, ought to have but one Husband.” This strict, Eurocentric approach was necessary to “stop the Current of Wickedness and Uncleaness (which is run over this Island and cries for Vengeance).”²⁶ Quakers also hesitated to acknowledge relationships that *did* form among men and women within their labor force. Plantation owners balked at formalizing these bonds because the realities of the economic and labor market might necessitate the buying or selling of husbands, wives, or children. Similarly, the separation of a family was a powerful threat planters used to prevent unruly slaves from rebelling too frequently or explicitly. Quaker planters were also widely dismissive of African religious beliefs. In particular, they mocked the African assertion that slaves would return to their country and their people upon their deaths. Finally, in times of dire economic straights, slaves were the first to feel the effects. Plantation owners like Colonel Morris were quick to cut down on provisions for slaves, work slave gangs even harder, or find other means of cutting

²⁶ Edmundson, “To the Governour and Council,” in Besse, *A Collection of Sufferings*, 307. Edmundson’s discussion of slave marriages is particularly jarring because of the change in tone from his earlier writings. Unlike his statements attributing slave rebellions to the harsh actions of plantation owners, he blames the enslaved for the degradation of morals. Edmundson compares plantation life to Sodom, as “those Negroes are to be restrained this filthy Liberty in the Lust of the Flesh, which fills your Island with Confusion... for they have their Liberty in wicked Practices.”

down on unnecessary costs. This often left slaves cursing their masters and their Christianity.²⁷

Finally, Quaker missionary efforts were severely hampered by resistance from Barbadian elites within the government. As aforementioned, Barbados masters had a fear that slaves would rise up and rebel against their masters. Such a fear was realized in 1675, when three years of planning came together in a slave revolt aimed at crowning Cuffy, a Gold Coast slave, king of Barbados. Anna, one of Gyles Hall's slaves, alerted her superiors to the rebellion, however, and the planter class took action swiftly. The result saw 107 slaves accused of involvement and 42 found guilty and executed. Planters were shaken by the threat of slave rebellion, and attempted to quash the potential for future revolts through excessive force and violence.²⁸

Executions and the increasingly harsh treatment of remaining slaves was only part of the plantocracy's response. They also turned their attention towards the Quakers. In 1676, the government passed "An Act to Prevent the People called Quakers from bringing Negroes to their Meetings." Much like the concerns voiced to Edmundson that slaves would rebel against masters, this act was motivated by a fear that "the Safety of this Island may be much hazarded" by black attendance at Quaker meetings. The act

²⁷ Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean*, 173-77. The notion that slaves would go "back to Africa" at the time of their death was a common belief among slaves. It led to acts of resistance both on ships and on plantations. See Michael Gomez, *Exchanging our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Viking, 2007).

²⁸ Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 255-6; Gerbner, "The Ultimate Sin," 65-7. Accounts of the 1675 attempted slave revolt have used both Anna and Fortuna for the name of Gyles Hall's slave.

stated “if at any Time or Times after Publication hereof, any Negro or Negroes be found with the said People called Quakers at any of their Meetings, and as Hearers of their Preaching, that such Negro or Negroes shall be forfeited, that is to say, one Half to the Party or Parties that shall seize or sue for such Negro or Negroes.” While the efforts to limit the mobility of blacks were undoubtedly strict, it was not the only step the act took to protect the authority of the plantocracy.

Quaker preachers were also targeted in this legislation. The act stated “That no Person or Persons whatsoever, that is not an Inhabitant and Resident of this Island, and hath been so for the Space of twelve Months together, shall hereafter publicly discourse or preach at the Meetings of the Quakers, upon the Penalty of suffering six Months Imprisonment without Bail or Mainprize.” Despite Edmundson’s belief that Christianizing slaves would benefit plantation life, this act reinforced the racist and exploitative system on Barbados. This act also disproportionately targeted Quaker heads of household, who were fined ten pounds sterling per slave brought to a gathering. Rather than reward Quaker men for tending to their extended families, the Barbadian plantocracy attacked their finances and sought to limit their mobility.²⁹

While Quaker evangelical efforts on Barbados were only partially realized, their desire to develop a financially viable plan of settlement saw much more success. In many regards, this was widely successful. As the number of Quakers on Barbados grew and

²⁹ “An Act to prevent the People called Quakers from bringing Negroes to their Meetings,” in Besse, *A Collection of Sufferings*, 308-9; This act was clearly designed as an attack on Quakers as much as an attack on the ability for slaves to concert. In addition to the above quoted requirements, the act required Barbadian teachers to take the Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy before a Justice of the Peace. As such, it was directly aimed at Quakers, who would not consent to taking the oath. Block, *Ordinary Lives*, 179; Gerbner, “The Ultimate Sin,” 66.

their emphasis shifted from missionary work to the day-to-day regularities of building a viable colony, the Quaker population thrived. Quakers flocked to work as planters, merchants, artisans, and doctors. The growth of the Quaker population was due, in large part, to influential men like Colonel Lewis Morris.³⁰ As the wealth of Quakers grew they turned towards the acquisition of slaves. Nearly eighty percent of Quaker settlers to Barbados owned at least one slave, many owned quite a few more. Close to a quarter (23%) of the 175 largest planters on Barbados—those who owned 60 or more slaves—were Quakers, who averaged over 110 slaves each. Of the 190 “middling planters,” those with between twenty and fifty-nine slaves, twenty-one were Quakers who averaged thirty-five slaves.³¹

The decision to purchase slaves was a serious one for Friends. At the time they first arrived to Barbados, purchasing slaves was a logical part of the Quaker desire to establish strong “outer plantations.” Building a strong “outer plantation” meant the cultivation of property and profit as a means of protecting Quakerism. Friends knew that their greatest imperative was “to build a strong foundation for future generations.”³²

³⁰ Gragg, *Quaker Community on Barbados*, 71; Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean*, 151.

³¹ The contention that eighty percent of Quakers on Barbados were slaveowners is taken from Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean*, 151. Statistics on Quaker slave owners are taken from Gragg, *Quaker Community on Barbados*, 63-4. “Big planters” and “middling planters” are taken from Richard Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 92. Dunn chooses to use slave holding rather than acreage as the method for differentiating between classes of planters. Big planters were defined as those with sixty or more slaves because “the ownership of a labor force of sixty Negroes represents a concrete investment of £1,000, whereas the land of Barbados is of variable quality.” Though it should be noted that most big planters also owned substantial tracts of land.

³² Kristen Block, “Cultivating Inner and Outer Plantations,” 517, 520. Block attributes the notion of “outer plantations” to George Fox, who used similar language in one of his exhortation to American Friends. Fox wrote, “My friends... going over to plant, and make outward plantations in America...” See

Slaves provided such a profitable labor force to help build those “outer plantations” that Quakers—at least the majority—were able to overlook the tensions between Quaker evangelicalism and the realities of life for Barbadian slaves. George Fox, William Edmundson, and others, as will be shown, worked to ameliorate conditions for unfree laborers and present neophyte antislavery arguments. Yet these pamphlets and epistles were not enough to convince Quakers to eschew slavery.

The Slave Trade in Pennsylvania

As has been shown, Pennsylvania was established in a fortuitous location that allowed the colony to flourish as an economic port. The Delaware region’s “excellent soil” allowed for “agricultural productivity, which was among the highest in the English North American colonies.” As Darold Wax notes, the vibrant economy generated “a demand not only for seamen to man the ships, but for laborers, skilled and unskilled, to work in the shipbuilding industry.” Servants helped fill the role of skilled and unskilled laborers, but they were not alone toiling on the farms and docks, as slaves proved to have the fundamental advantage of “apparent permanence.”³³ With the availability of servants fluctuating thanks to changing conditions in Europe, slavery became an increasingly important labor source in Pennsylvania that persisted through the late-eighteenth century.

Much as with servants, the presence of African slaves in the Delaware predated the arrival of English Quakers. The Dutch West India Company relied on the labor of

also, Frederick Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House: The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1948), 3.

³³ Darold Wax, “The Demand for Slave Labor in Colonial Pennsylvania,” *Pennsylvania History* 34, no. 4 (1967), 331-2.

black slaves during the 1660s. The early English, Irish, and Welsh settlers who arrived in the region prior to formal migration in 1682 also used slave labor. Over the course of the first eighty years of settlement, between 1682 and 1760, nearly twenty to thirty percent of Philadelphia's work force was enslaved.³⁴ The first shipment of slaves to arrive in Quaker Pennsylvania came in December 1684. That month, the ship, *Isabella*, arrived bearing 150 slaves. Purchased by a Bristol merchant, these slaves were not from Africa. Rather, they had come from the West Indies where they had already spent some time working on plantations. Bringing in already-seasoned slaves meant they would integrate into Pennsylvania's system much quicker and profit purchasers with a faster return on their investment.³⁵

Unlike Barbados, Pennsylvania was a society with slaves, where Pennsylvanians did, supposedly, "much more mildly treat their slaves." Despite the apparent improvement in treatment for servants, it was still a system of chattel labor predicated on exploiting labor through harsh means.³⁶ The plan to import slaves, officially beginning with the arrival of the *Isabella* in 1684, predated that vessel's voyage. The Free Society of Traders intended to send a shipment of slaves alongside the 200 indentured servants

³⁴ Edward Raymond Turner, "Slavery in Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 35, no. 2 (1911): 141-151; Susan Klepp, "Seasoning and Society: Racial Differences in Morality in Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia," *William and Mary Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (1994): 474.

³⁵ Gary Nash, "Slaves and Slaveowners in Colonial Philadelphia," *William and Mary Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1973): 225.

³⁶ *On the State of British Plantations in America Ca. 1732*, Box 2A, Historical Society of Pennsylvania Miscellaneous Collection (Collection 425), HSP.

originally outlined in their first plan for business.³⁷ The place of African slave labor was an ambiguous one in the early years of Pennsylvania's settlement. The Free Society initially stipulated "if the *Society* should receive *Blacks* for *servants*, they shall make them *free* at *fourteen years* end." In return for their freedom, these freed blacks would receive "a *parcel* of *Land* as shall be allotted them by the *Society*" in exchange for "two *thirds* of what they are Capable of producing" given to the society.³⁸ This distinction runs counter, however, to the perspective of the colony's proprietor. Penn, in a letter to James Harrison, wrote "know that I have sent a Gardiner by this ship or he soon follows." The gardener was a man "of recommended great skill." Penn lamented the fact that he was an Englishman, however, noting "It were better they were black, for then a man has them while they live."³⁹ As early as 1685, the proprietor of Pennsylvania was drawing distinctions between unfree laborers on the basis of race. While Penn's need for labor was so great that he was willing to accept an English servant, he much preferred the perpetual unfree labor that came with African slaves. In stating this belief so explicitly, Penn's letter foreshadowed the more direct racialization that would occur in Pennsylvania beginning in 1700.

Pennsylvania may not have rivaled the Chesapeake or West Indies in terms of the sheer number of slaves imported, but slavery played an integral role in the colony's

³⁷ Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 19; Gary Nash, "The Free Society of Traders and the Early Politics of Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 89, no. 2 (1965): 154.

³⁸ Nicholas More and James Claypoole, "The Articles, Settlement, and Offices of the Free Society of Traders in Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 5, no. 1 (1881): 45; Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 20-1; Edward Raymond Turner, "Slavery in Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 35, no. 2 (1911): 141.

³⁹ William Penn to James Harrison, October 25, 1685, *PWP*, 3:66.

economy. Between the colony's founding and 1760s, over 140 individual merchants were involved in this trade.⁴⁰ The actual rate of slave importation to Pennsylvania was dependent on conditions throughout the British Empire and Western Europe. Between 1684 and 1720, Philadelphia's slave population was approximately three percent of the city's overall population.⁴¹ These numbers were influenced by several different factors. First, conditions in exporting regions could slow the movement of human cargo into Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania's central location along the Delaware meant slaves were often shipped to the colony to escape poor conditions elsewhere. In 1737, when provisions for slaves in South Carolina were "very scarce," Robert Ellis, one of Pennsylvania's leading slave traders, brought the slaves to the Quaker colony onboard his ship, *Martha*.⁴² Wars between England and France, such as the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1713) and the epidemic of black flag piracy (1716-1726) disrupted the slave trade. Second, tariffs and other duties also limited initial importations of slaves. Concerns over "divers plots and insurrections" led Pennsylvanians to pass duties on slaves brought into Pennsylvania. The availability of servants was the third contributing factor slowing or speeding up the shipment of African slave labor.⁴³

⁴⁰ Darold Wax, "Robert Ellis, Philadelphia Merchant and Slave Trader," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 88, no. 1 (1964): 52.

⁴¹ Foy, "Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom," 41.

⁴² *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 7, 1737; July 28, 1737; Foy, "Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom," 41-2.

⁴³ Foy, "Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom," 42; Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 57. Regulations on the slave trade were virtually non-existing until the 1700s. The first import duty, which will be discussed later, was not passed until 1700 and it was not until the 1710s that the Privy Council took any interest in overseeing the Pennsylvania slave trade. See Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 22.

Prior to the 1720s, limited importation meant merchants had to scramble to acquire their labor force. *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, which would become one of the primary means of advertising slave auctions, only rarely advertised slave packets prior to 1729. Beginning in 1728, migration accelerated rapidly, and within just one year, there were nearly 700 slaves in Philadelphia. From March 1727 to May 1729, approximately 414 slaves were imported into Pennsylvania.⁴⁴ The slave trade in Pennsylvania would peak during the Seven Years' War. The spike in slave imports reached its height in 1763, when more than 500 slaves were brought to Philadelphia in a single year. Evidence for these rates of importation can be gleaned from birth and burial rates in Philadelphia. The Seven Years' War saw this increase in large part because the importation of indentured servants and redemptioners dried up due to improving conditions in England and Germany.⁴⁵

Pennsylvania imported very few slaves from Africa itself. In fact, Philadelphia received only one known parcel of slaves directly from Africa prior to the Seven Years' War. This was in contrast to places like New York, which received more ships directly from Africa. Slaves were instead brought in from the West Indies or southern colonies. Pennsylvanians generally found themselves buying slaves who, like those brought on the *Isabella*, had already gone through the seasoning process and worked elsewhere. While

⁴⁴ Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 57; see also, Darold Wax, "Negro Slave Trade" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington); Alan Tully, "Patterns of Slaveholding in Colonial Pennsylvania: Chester and Lancaster Counties, 1729-1758," *Journal of Social History* 6, no. 3 (1973): 293-4.

⁴⁵ Gary Nash, "Slaves and Slaveowners in Colonial Philadelphia," *William and Mary Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1973): 229-30; Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 60; Foy, "Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom," 353-4. Tables 1-1 and 2-1 are particularly useful. This dissertation owes a debt of gratitude to Foy for tabulating these figures and charting the points of origin for Pennsylvania's slave population.

some found this beneficial—they preferred having slaves already acclimated to the hard labor found in the colonies—many were unsatisfied with their choices. These undesirable slaves were called “refuse” or “waste” slaves to refer to their weathered and worn appearance. This was seen as a particularly powerful slight to Pennsylvania merchants as refuse slaves still fetched a costly price.⁴⁶ According to Charles Foy, from 1720 to 1749, eighty-five percent of advertisements for slaves listed in Pennsylvania newspapers listed a point of origin as Bermuda or Barbados. Other likely ports for slave voyages to emanate from included St. Christopher’s, South Carolina, Jamaica, and Antigua.⁴⁷

Advertisements in newspapers have allowed historians the opportunity to track where slaves originated from. Data from the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, *Universal Advertiser*, and the *American Weekly Mercury* have helped in reconstructing these transatlantic voyages. Because these newspapers started advertising slave auctions so late, information is only readily available beginning in 1720. The 1720s saw a majority of slaves arrive in Pennsylvania from unknown origins, though between 1729 and 1730, 40 slaves arrived from West Indian islands. The number of slaves from the West Indies increased significantly between 1731 and 1740. Nearly 150 slaves originated from these islands. A significant number also came from coastal North America. 157 slaves arrived from other coastal regions between 1736 and 1740. Some slaves did come from Africa, such as the 57 imported in 1757 and the 74 brought to

⁴⁶ Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 75; Foy, “Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom,” 43.

⁴⁷ Foy, “Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom,” 43.

Philadelphia in 1760, but instances where historians can definitively say slaves came from Africa are rare.⁴⁸

Quakers played an active role in the slave trade in the early years of Pennsylvania's colonization. Many prominent Quakers were linked together in this trade. Isaac Norris, Jonathan Dickinson, James Logan, the Pembertons, and the Penn family were all active traders.⁴⁹ Pennsylvania merchants engaged in the slave trade in one of two ways: they acted as sellers for slaves brought to Philadelphia or they provided financial backing and logistical support for voyages leaving Pennsylvania to acquire bound laborers. James Claypoole wrote his brother, Edward, frequently about his desire to obtain slaves. James asked his brother for assistance to "Advise in thy next what I might have 2 Negroes for." James was particular about the types of slaves he wanted, too, as he believed it would "be very prejudicial to me to have bad Negroes."⁵⁰ The Penn family was also involved in the slave trade. Thomas Penn, for example, relied on his friends and contacts to purchase slaves for him. Richard Hockley wrote Penn in 1740, informing him "I have purchas'd three young Slaves for you, the best that has been allowed by proper judges."⁵¹

⁴⁸ Ibid., 354.

⁴⁹ Isaac Norris and Israel Pemberton, for example, both engaged in the buying and selling of slaves with James Logan, who kept a detailed account of his financial transactions with the Pennsylvania merchant community. See Account Book, 1712-1720, Vol. 1, Logan Family Papers, 1638-1964, (Collection 379), HSP.

⁵⁰ James Claypoole to Edward Claypoole, April 20, 1682; September 23, 1682, in James Claypoole Letter Book, 1681-1683, HSP; Darold Wax, "Negro Import Duties in Colonial Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 97, no. 1 (1973): 22.

⁵¹ Richard Hockley to Thomas Penn, April 10, 1740, Official Correspondence III, 1736-1743, NV-026, Penn Family Papers (Collection 485A), HSP.

Quaker misgivings towards their participation in the slave trade were limited during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. Some Quakers did express their concerns, though they often did so while continuing to play active and important roles in the trade. In a letter to Jonathan Dickinson, Isaac Norris began formulating his opposition to the slave trade. He told Dickinson to “send me no more nor Recommend me no more Negroes for sale. I don’t like that Sort of Business, any thing Else the Least Considerable is much more Exceptable.” Dickinson also voiced his concerns about participating in the slave trade, noting “I must entreat ye not to send any more [slaves] to me for our people don’t care to buy... & ye generality of our people are against any coming into this Country.”⁵² Yet, despite their misgivings, both Norris and Dickinson remained active participants in the slave trade throughout their entire lives. Dickinson bought and sold slaves until his death in 1722, and Norris did so until 1732, only three years before his death.⁵³

Like others participating in the Atlantic slave trade, Norris and Dickinson’s anxieties towards the morality of slavery were muted and complicated. Like their fellow Pennsylvania merchants, both individuals were concerned with their reputation as men and as slave traders, and were careful to avoid “Vulgar reports” about “Rebellious

⁵² Isaac Norris to Jonathan Dickinson, November 12, 1703, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), Vol. 5.5, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1702-1704, HSP. Jonathan Dickinson to Jonathan Gale, April 30, 1715, Jonathan Dickinson Letterbook, 1714-1722, HSP. While Norris’ correspondence illustrates some degree of opposition to the slave trade, other records indicate that he resisted efforts by radical Quakers to end the practice within the walls of Quaker meetings. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 26. See also, Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 73; Darold Wax, “Quaker Merchants and the Slave Trade,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 86, no. 2 (1962): 143-159; Nash, “Slaves and Slaveowners,” 256.

⁵³ Wax, “Quaker Merchants and the Slave Trade,” 151.

Negroes” and slaves who caused “a Great Deale of Trouble.”⁵⁴ With so much at stake, the two were careful to closely monitor the relationships they forged and the “quality” of the human cargo they shipped. Norris was reluctant to sell slaves, for example, that he deemed “not yet ready for sale” or that would go unsold because they were “very troublesome and noisom.” In these situations, the merchant tried to protect his own interests and reputation by cautioning his contacts that “they Neither Answer Expectations and should I charge the full trouble [with the] Negroes would be lost.”⁵⁵ Concerns over reputation worked both ways, however, as men like Norris and Dickinson expected honest dealing in return. Dickinson complained, “One of thy Negros I sold I have yett by mee a promisyary note for the payment of which I expect be made good.”⁵⁶

Both Quaker slave traders, as well as non-Quakers involved in the trade, followed the custom of the age by participating in a system whereby the market commodified slave bodies by keeping enslaved peoples in a “middle ground” between life and death.⁵⁷ After a hard and cold winter, Dickinson was calculated in reporting what this weather meant for his business as a slave trader. In a letter to Isaac Gale, Dickinson wrote, “[Jonathan]

⁵⁴ Isaac Norris to Jonathan Dickinson, November 8, 1702, Isaac Norris to Thomas Swann, March 17, 1704, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1702-1704, Vol. 5.5, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), HSP. Norris expressed similar sentiments in a letter to Hugh Totterdill. In a letter about the death of a slave woman, Norris complained “when dead I could not get any Negroes to Carry to the grave without something... and giving of them Drink this is the reason of Expencc.” See Isaac Norris to Hugh Totterdill, November 29, 1703, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1702-1704, Vol. 5.5, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), HSP.

⁵⁵ Isaac Norris to Richard Sleight, May 20, 1701, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1699-1702, Vol. 5; Isaac Norris to Richard Sleight, November 22, 1703, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1702-1704, Vol. 5.5, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), HSP.

⁵⁶ Jonathan Dickinson to Jacob Guttes, April 26, 1715, Jonathan Dickinson Letterbook, 1714-1722, HSP.

⁵⁷ Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery*, 34.

Lewis Sent us two Negro women tho proved but Indifferent and Both Dyed this Winter the Loss of them we Bear Without a further supply.” Norris offered similar sentiments several years earlier, informing Joseph Curtis, “The Negro continues very Ill I fear as the Cold weather comes on will kill her. I have paid her passage and believe must despond... I see no Likelihood of making anything of the Negro.”⁵⁸ Robert Ellis showed the same disregard for the lives of his human cargo. Ellis complained “the Negros Prov’d to be very weak” and that “two I left sick behind & two [died].” He later lamented how “One Negroe Woman Dyed of the small Pox... we shall make but a miserable hand of Our Ventures.”⁵⁹ In most cases, these losses were simply attributed to the expected risks inherent to the slave trade. Especially when it came to poor weather, merchants had few options for recourse beyond informing their contacts how “Your Poor Negroe Man is still in the Hospital” due to “the cool Weather.”⁶⁰

Life for Slaves in the Quaker Colony

Much like indentured servants, slaves faced a dehumanizing auction upon their arrival to Pennsylvania. Markets were located in high traffic locations, such as the one on Arch Street. Ralph Sandiford, a Quaker shopkeeper, worked in a building overlooking one of Philadelphia’s auction sites. “We have negroes flocking in upon us since the duty

⁵⁸ Jonathan Dickinson to Isaac Gale, June 1, 1719, Jonathan Dickinson Letterbook, 1714-1722, HSP. Isaac Norris to Joseph Curtis, May 15, 1709, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1709-1716, Vol. 7.5, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), HSP.

⁵⁹ Robert Ellis to Cleland and Wallace, July 2, 1738, Robert Ellis to Thomas Gadsden, July 2, 1738, Robert Ellis to Robert Pringle, October 30, 1738, Vol. 1, 1736-1740, Robert Ellis Letterbook, HSP. Ellis was one of the more active slave merchants in the Quaker colony. He began his involvement in the slave trade in 1719 and was most active from 1732 to 1741. See Wax, “Robert Ellis,” 52-3.

⁶⁰ Charles Willing to Coddington Carrington, July 22, 1754, Charles Willing and Son Letterbook, 1754-1761, HSP.

on them is reduced to 40s,” he wrote, “for we have frequently slaves sold twice a week in sight of my habitation which is in the center of this city, be vendue or auction.” Sandiford’s observation carried a sharp rebuke of the chattel nature of slavery, as he commented that slaves were sold “with the beasts, in sight of our Christian magistrates.”⁶¹ Sandiford, as will be discussed, was so shocked by the appalling conditions slaves experienced that he would eventually use his platform to challenge mainstream Quaker thought by calling for an end to the slave trade. It is worth noting that other Quakers complained about the “selling of Negroes at the public market place.” While they shared some of Sandiford’s concerns, they did not object to the actual buying and selling of slaves, however, merely the public nuisance posed by the auction.⁶²

In order to draw attention to these auctions, slave merchants took advantage of newspapers like the *American Weekly Mercury* and *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Newspapers posted advertisements for potential buyers to peruse at their leisure. Ads might list how a slave was to be sold “in Arch-Street, in Philadelphia, very cheap for ready Money, or on good Security; Two Negro Men and one Negro Boy... also a very good Negro Carpenter, to hire on reasonable terms.”⁶³ They included the name of a seller, urging potential buyers to “Enquire of John Hillborn” or “For the Title and Term of Sale, enquire of John

⁶¹ Ralph Sandiford, *The Mystery of Inquiry; In a Brief Examination of the Practice of the Times* (Philadelphia, 1730), 5. For more on the import duty Sandiford referenced, see Gertrude MacKinney, ed. *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives in the Province of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: State Printer of Pennsylvania, 1931-1935), 3:1959-60, 1976; James T. Mitchell, ed., *The Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania from 1682 to 1801* (Harrisburg: State Printer of Pennsylvania, 1896), 4:52-6, 59-64, 123-8, 135-40. See also, Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 16.

⁶² Minutes of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, 1682-1714, quoted in Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 26.

⁶³ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, January 13, 1742. See also, *American Weekly Mercury*, March 1, 1720, February 21, 1721, November 2, 1721, November 16, 1721, December 26, 1721, May 17, 1722.

and Jonathan Paschall.”⁶⁴ Like the men who frequently took to the docks to help in the buying and selling of indentured servants, certain men made repeated appearances in the newspaper advertisements.⁶⁵

Newspaper ads included additional information in an effort to market slaves. Masters and merchants might describe a “very talkative” slave or a “Boy about 14, speaking good English.”⁶⁶ Newspapers were another place where the chattel nature of slavery was reinforced. Slaves were often treated in newspapers in the same manner as other goods and products. For example, advertisements would list “a likely Negro Man, some Household Goods, a Wagon, Plow, and some Horse Kind” for sale. These newspapers might note the availability of “A Likely Negro Woman and her Daughter, both able, healthy Negroes, fit for Town or Country Services. Besides, choice of English or India Goods.”⁶⁷ By listing slaves alongside “English or India Goods,” the men who publicized these auctions drove home the idea that these slaves were chattel property seen in the same light as horses or plows.

The process of standing up for auction was as dehumanizing as the way in which the sales were promoted. Slaves were examined “like cattle,” and they were required to “walk up and down for [purchasers], move their limbs, and do everything they are asked

⁶⁴ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 3, 1742; March 3, 1742.

⁶⁵ John Copson, for example, was a frequent name appearing in the *American Weekly Mercury* as a “merchant on Market Street” responsible for selling slaves. See *American Weekly Mercury* March 1, 1720, December 20, 1720, October 18, 1721,

⁶⁶ *American Weekly Mercury*, June 20, 1723; David Waldstreicher, *Runaway America: Benjamin Franklin, Slavery, and the American Revolution* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2004), 9. Waldstreicher posits that newspaper advertisements purposefully stripped slaves of any skill or respectability they possessed.

⁶⁷ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 25, 1742; June 24, 1742.

to do, so [purchasers] can see if they are capable of work.” A wide range of potential buyers came to these auctions. In some cases, slaves were sold to middling men and women working in agricultural work. Many farmers, for example, preferred slaves, believing them to provide a better return on their investment than servants or redemptioners.⁶⁸ For some elites, purchasing slaves had very little to do with the actual work they provided. Instead, slaves were a status symbol meant to celebrate the accumulation of wealth. This is partly due to the cost of purchasing slaves relative to servants or redemptioners. The average cost of a male slave was £45, an exorbitant amount for many. This price exceeded the personal estates of 35-40% of residents living in Chester or Lancaster counties. To compare, redemptioner averaged only £14. As James Logan observed, “the whole clear Estate of some People consisting in Servants; while others, more wealthy, having no Servants but *Negroes*.” Prior to 1711, most slaveholders were wealthy merchants or professionals who owned five or more slaves. In Philadelphia, craftsmen, merchants, and shopkeepers owned some slaves, often laboring side-by-side, but for the majority of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, elites dominated the ranks of slaveowners. These elites were often Quakers. Between 1729-1758, for example, seventy percent of identifiable slave owners in Chester County were Friends.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Quote in Foy, “Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom,” 33.

⁶⁹ Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 16-21; Tully, “Patterns of Slaveholding in Colonial Pennsylvania,” 285; 293-5. The average prices of redemptioners and indentured servants can be gleaned from *Records of James Hamilton and John Gibson, Servants and Apprentices, 1745-1773*, Collection 1074, HSP. Sharon Salinger makes similar observations regarding the price of slaves relative to servants. Salinger also notes that additional costs were linked to slavery. Both servants and slaves were taxable property during the eighteenth century. Slaves, however, were most costly than servants. See also, Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 73-4.

Once purchased, the lives of Pennsylvania's slave population varied. Many lived in garrets, attics, small adjoining rooms, or "negro houses" located on many of the farms in southeastern Pennsylvania. Most slaves were widely dispersed throughout Pennsylvania and in various Philadelphia neighborhoods. Center City was home to many slaves who worked for masters involved in maritime trade.⁷⁰ Most slave owners in Pennsylvania owned only one or two slaves. Masters preferred adult slaves; young children were deemed not worth the trouble. They required extra care, more clothing to compensate for their rapid growth, and more food. This all translated to a higher cost of living and, thus, a lower profit. Unlike in the South, where pregnant slaves were still viewed as productive parts of the household or plantation, pregnant women in the North were deemed a burden.⁷¹ Women slaves, in general, were less desirable. Norris lamented how "I had sold the Girl... but she is timid." Other female slaves were "Lame and Sickley," making it difficult to find buyers.⁷²

Once they arrived home with their masters, slaves were put to work. For the most part they performed similar labor to indentured servants. This was by design, as the system "was predicated upon the continued flow of unfree labor" and the flexibility this granted colonial masters to switch between types of unfree laborers based on price and

⁷⁰ The term "negro houses" is taken from Foy, "Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom," 26-31.

⁷¹ Ibid., 62. Isaac Norris struggled with pregnant women. In 1701 he complained to Richard Sleigh about "ye Negro woman being bigg with child." Isaac Norris to Richard Sleigh, May 20, 1701, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1699-1702, Vol. 5, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), HSP.

⁷² Isaac Norris to Thomas Swann, November 22, 1703, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1702-1704, Vol. 5.5; Isaac Norris to Joseph Curtis, July 25, 1709, Isaac Norris Letterbook, 1709-1716, Vol. 7.5, Norris Family Papers (Collection 454), HSP.

availability.⁷³ Despite this, Pennsylvanians increasingly came to prefer slave labor to servant labor. Nearly a half-century after William Penn, Benjamin Franklin drew attention to the perpetual, racialized nature of slavery and how that set it apart from servitude. “Slaves may be kept as long as a Man pleases,” Franklin averred, “or has Occasion for their Labour while hired men are continually leaving their Master (often in the Midst of his Business) and setting up for themselves.” This was not without risk. Investors needed to be mindful of “the first purchase of a slave, the insurance or risque on his life, his cloathing and diet, expences in his sickness and loss of time, [and] loss by his neglect.” Nonetheless, such an investment meant slaves would be worked hard to turn a profit for the purchaser.⁷⁴ Yet slavery in the northern colonies was of a different nature. Slaves in Boston, for example, filled a number of varied roles. They worked in the maritime industry as sailors and dockworkers. Slaves assisted in mercantile works by toiling alongside bricklayers or carpenters. They were also hired out to other families who might need temporary work from a domestic servant or a skilled or semi-skilled slave.⁷⁵

Given Philadelphia’s location and its central role in maritime commerce, it was not surprise that many slaves found their work linked to Atlantic trade. Almost ten percent of Philadelphia slaves worked in the maritime industry. Many of these slaves

⁷³ Waldstreicher, *Runaway America*, 20.

⁷⁴ Benjamin Franklin, *Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind, People of Countries, Etc.*, (Philadelphia, 1757); Leonard Labaree, ed. *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 4:230.

⁷⁵ Jared Hardesty, “‘The Negro at the Gate’: Enslaved Labor in Colonial Boston,” *New England Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (2014): 72-98. While framed in Massachusetts, several comparisons can be made to the general quality of labor slaves performed in Pennsylvania.

were purchased with the intent to work onboard ships. Slaves from the West Indies were particularly well suited for this work. Most of the slaves coming from this region had already developed their maritime skill. Such skill was developed during their service in the Caribbean. But it was also a product of their heritage. Many West Africans had a history of fishing, and these talents translated to the maritime work they performed as slaves. Work in the maritime industry was varied. Philadelphia merchants used their slaves to work the docks and wharves, row barges, repair ships, make sails, or work as carpenters for ships. Maritime work was segregated by gender. Men steered vessels, labored as stevedores unloading goods at port, and were tasked to work as seamen. Slave women played the role of support. This included domestic duties, as well as occasional work as merchants selling fish or other foodstuffs.⁷⁶

In addition to their work on the docks and aboard merchant vessels, slaves fulfilled a number of other roles integral to the region's economy. One feature that drew many to purchase slaves was that they were seen as interchangeable with indentured labor. This was particularly true in the early years of the eighteenth century. Help wanted ads listed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* often articulated specific jobs required from laborers, but noted that "a servant man white or black" would suffice. Men and women worked as domestic slaves who cared for children, cooked meals, drove carriages, and delivered letters. Often representing their masters throughout the region, domestic slaves were often dressed in wigs, silk shirts, and silk stockings. Others were tasked with

⁷⁶ Foy, "Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom," 30; 83-4; Gary Nash, *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia's Black Community, 1720-1840* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988); Nash, "Slaves and Slaveowners in Colonial Philadelphia."

working as tradesmen. In these instances, technical skill was far more valuable than brawn. Slaves who worked as tradesmen labored with carpenters, shipwrights, etc. They were often hired out to others in the community.⁷⁷

Work in the countryside followed the same pattern as the city, though without the intimate relationship to the maritime economy. Many rural slaves aided their masters in building their homes. This meant cutting down and clearing out trees and helping build homes. This was the primary responsibility of the first shipment of slaves brought to Pennsylvania in 1684.⁷⁸ Farm labor was arduous. It proved to be difficult and required slaves to possess a degree of technical proficiency. Such work included plowing, digging ditches, and caring for cattle, sheep, and other livestock. With 90% of landowners in Chester and Lancaster counties relying primarily on agricultural and rural labor, this meant slaves were deeply involved in this type of work. Finally, many slaves found work in specific industries. The iron industry, for example, was one of the industries most populated by slave labor in the mid-Atlantic.⁷⁹

Racialization in Penn's Woods

Like with indentured servitude, the labor of African slaves was essential for the growth of Pennsylvania's economy. But unlike the circumstances with servants, slaves

⁷⁷ Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 47; Salinger, *To Serve Well and Faithfully*, 72; Foy, "Ports of Slavery, Ports of Freedom," 66-8. Waldstreicher argues that masters preferred for their slaves to have technical skills so they could put them into industrial jobs and drive down labor costs. Waldstreicher, *Runaway America*, 21. I contend that this is clearly part of emerging capitalism and the privileging of profit over any concern for the welfare of laborers.

⁷⁸ Nash, "Slaves an Slaveowners," 225.

⁷⁹ Tully, "Patterns of Slaveholding in Colonial Pennsylvania," 225; John Bezis-Selfa, "Slavery and the Disciplining of Free Labor in the Colonial Mid-Atlantic Iron Industry," *Pennsylvania History* 64, Empire, Society, and Labor: Essays in Honor of Richard S. Dunn (1997): 270-286.

also faced the added pressure that came with the racialization of Pennsylvania. The racialization of Pennsylvania was not just reflected in the writings of Penn or Franklin. It was also present in the legal code, the courts, and the day-to-day interactions of the colony's residents. The racialization of Pennsylvania was a gradual process. The emergence of a set of slave codes in the Quaker colony, beginning in earnest in 1700, was part of a piecemeal effort by Pennsylvania lawmakers to borrow and adapt other slave codes from throughout the West Indies, Chesapeake, and Mid Atlantic.⁸⁰ The process began, in some ways, in 1689, when "George the negro" was brought before the Courts of Quarter Sessions and Common Pleas for Bucks County. Having absconded from Virginia, George was charged with having stolen "1 ax, 1 Skellet Corn, pease, Stockings and other goods to the value of twenty five Shillings." George, who was ordered to "pay by Servitude" was also "whipt 11 strips on his bare back."⁸¹

The sentencing of George "the negro" was one of the first times race was explicitly mentioned in the colonial court records. Temporary servitude was a common punishment for theft or the inability to pay fines. In fact, a statute was passed in 1690 to stipulate how to handle outstanding debtors in the Quaker Colony. Individuals unable to pay debts would have the funds seized from their estate. However, if the individual lacked an estate capable of paying off the debts, "the Debtor shall satisfie the debt by servitude."⁸² It is important to note, however, only one year later, laws were becoming

⁸⁰ Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 494. Tomlins contends that, in many ways, Pennsylvania's slave codes were more influential in shaping those of neighboring colonies.

⁸¹ *Records of the Courts of Quarter Sessions and Common Pleas of Bucks County Pennsylvania, 1684-1700* (Philadelphia: Colonial Society of Pennsylvania, 1943), 97-9, 102-4, 198.

⁸² *Statutes at Large*, 2:129-30; Goode, "Gospel Order among Friends," 118-19.

increasingly racialized. In 1690, a law was passed to punish slaves congregating on Sundays without a “tickett from their Mr., or Mrs.” Those found congregating without their master’s permission would be “publicly whipt next morning, with 39 Lashes, well Laid on, on their bare backs.” This was quite a change from the Laws of the Duke of York, which prohibited masters from selling “at Liberty... Any Negroe or Indian Servant who shall turne Christian after he shall have been bought by any Person.”⁸³ In passing such an act, Pennsylvania began the slow process towards adopting the same racialized system of unfree labor as found elsewhere throughout the Atlantic. Yet this transition was not instantaneous. In 1703, a mulatto named Antonio Garcia was taken prisoner and sent to Barbados where he was enslaved. Garcia successfully petitioned for his freedom by claiming that he was “born free, of free parents.”⁸⁴

Garcia’s success in petitioning for his freedom, while certainly a celebratory moment for Garcia, was not a reflection of favorable attitudes towards race in the Quaker colony. From the late-1690s into 1700, Pennsylvania began implementing a series of statutes that would increasingly hamper, and outright limit, the rights of blacks, both free and unfree. In 1700, for example, the colony passed a law stating, “That if any negro or negroes within this government shall commit a rape or ravishment upon any white woman or maid, or shall commit murder, buggery or burglary, they shall be tried as aforesaid, and shall be punished by death.” The statute also noted that any black accused of “rape or ravishment on any white woman or maid... shall be punished by castration.”

⁸³ *MPCP*, 1:381; *Laws of the Duke of York*, Pennsylvania General Assembly Papers, (Mss.Film.454), APS; Goode, “Gospel Order among Friends,” 119.

⁸⁴ *MPCP*, 2:112, 120. See also, Goode, “Gospel Order among Friends,” 119.

This harsh punishment contrasted with a 1706 statute stipulating that a white man accused of rape “shall receive on his bare back, well laid on, at the common whipping-post, thirty-one lashes, and shall be imprisoned seven years at hard labor.”⁸⁵ By making a disproportionate punishment for blacks compared to the white colonists, Pennsylvania officials reinforced colonial assumptions about race and the racialized nature of Penn’s Woods.

Differing punishments for sexual assault were not the only ways the Quaker colony underscored its racialized nature. Several other laws, statutes, and discussions were put in place in 1700 that made up the colony’s black codes. The same statute that threatened blacks with castration also stipulated that any slave that “shall presume to carry any guns, swords, pistols, folwing-pieces, clubs or other arms or weapons whatsoever, without his master’s special license for the same, and be convicted thereof... shall be whipped with twenty-one lashes.”⁸⁶ Penn introduced a series of bills to the Pennsylvania Assembly for discussion, including one “for regulating Negroes in the Morals and Marriages,” and an extended discussion pertaining to trials involving blacks. The “Pennsylvania Trials Act” was particularly insidious, establishing separate courts for the “trial and punishment of negroes committing murder, manslaughter, buggery, burglary, rapes, attempts of rapes, and other high and heinous enormities and capital offenses.”⁸⁷ Pennsylvania also passed acts levying import duties on slaves.⁸⁸ The duty on

⁸⁵ *Statutes at Large*, 2:77-9, 178.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 2:77-9. The statutes are unclear as to whether or not some of these statutes refer to all blacks or only slaves. In the case of the law against the carrying of firearms, the inclusion of “his master’s special license” seems to indicate that, at least in this case, it referred to slaves.

⁸⁷ *Statutes at Large*, 2:233-6; Tomlins, *Freedom Bound*, 495-6.

slaves was treated in the same act alongside wine, rum, beer, ale, and cider. The act imposed a duty of twenty shillings for every “negro, male or female, imported, if above sixteen years of age,” and six shillings for “every negro under the age of sixteen.” The specific cost of the duties fluctuated until 1731, when Governor Patrick Gordon was instructed to “not give your Assent to or pass any Law imposing Duties upon Negroes imported into Our Province of Pennsylvania payable by the Importer.” Such a policy remained in place for thirty years until 1761, when an increase in the slave population forced Pennsylvania to resume imposing duties on slave brought into the colony.⁸⁹

Laws and regulations pertaining to import duties were only a small part of the restrictions placed on slaves in Penn’s Woods. The black codes passed in 1700 defined racialized slavery. They established separate courts for free and unfree blacks, articulated how attempted rape would result in castration, and by 1725 prohibited interracial marriage.⁹⁰ Even the language colonists used to talk about slaves had changed. Gone was the similarity between servants and slaves. Franklin, for example, had an evolving and conflicted view of slavery that, ultimately, reaffirmed both the racialized nature of Pennsylvania and the predominant view of slaves as commodified bodies bought and sold for profit. Franklin was a slaveholder who, for example, profitted from the labor of his slaves as well as through his role running the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Franklin ran

⁸⁸ *Pennsylvania Archives*, Series I, 1:159; Series VIII, 1:237-9; Wax, “Negro Import Duties,” 23.

⁸⁹ *Statutes at Large*, 2:105-9; 280-291; 328-388; 433-36; 3:117-20; 159-63; 238-39; 275; *Pennsylvania Archives*, Series I, 1:306; Wax, “Negro Import Duties,” 23-4. For another discussion of import duties and their impact on slave importation, see Nash, “Slaves and Slaveowners,” 226.

⁹⁰ Goode, “Gospel Order among Friends,” 119-20; Jack Marietta and G.S. Rowe, *Troubled Experiment: Crime and Justice in Pennsylvania, 1682-1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 17-20.

advertisements for slave auctions and reports on runaway slaves to men like James Hamilton, Robert Ellis, and Isaac Norris.⁹¹

Yet, Franklin also spoke out harshly against the continued importation of slave labor. In *Observations on Mankind*, Franklin begins by acknowledging that slave labor was so prevalent because of the perpetual nature of slavery. He notes, “slaves may be kept as long as a man pleases, or has occasion for their labour; while hired men are continually leaving their master.” Franklin, despite lining his own pockets through the labor of slaves, denigrated blacks by positing “the negroes brought into the English sugar islands have greatly diminished the whites there,” and that the owning of slaves “perjorate the families that use them.”⁹² To Franklin, the presence of blacks was to the detriment of white society, and it was only through the perpetual labor of slaves that they justified their cost. But while many certainly agreed with Franklin, his negative view on blacks in Pennsylvania was not unanimous. There were some, particularly Quakers, who challenged the status quo and return the colony to Penn’s free colony for all mankind.

Godly Patriarchy and Quaker Antislavery Efforts

Quakers began wrestling with the moral and religious implications of slavery well before they settled in Penn’s Woods. Concerted efforts to engage with the nature of slavery began with George Fox’s writings in the 1650s. The arguments Quakers used to critique slavery would evolve over the next century, but several aspects remained

⁹¹ Ledger A and B, 1730-1740, Ledger D, 1739-1748, Miscellaneous Benjamin Franklin Collections, 1710-1822 (Mss.B.F85.misc), APS. The best exploration of Franklin’s relationship to slavery is Waldstreicher, *Runaway America*.

⁹² Benjamin Franklin, *Observations Concerning the Inrease of Mankind, People of Countries, etc.* (Philadelphia, 1751).

constant throughout this period. At the heart of Quaker writings about slavery was a religious imperative stressing the importance of viewing slaves as family members. As will be discussed, while many Quakers and Pennsylvania colonists shunned godly patriarchy in favor of racialization and exploitation, it was these same values that antislavery activities used as the foundation of their arguments. Also common among antislavery authors were Penn's arguments against the persecution of Quakers and the infringement of their bodily liberties and right to provide for their families.

George Fox first expressed Quaker antislavery sentiments during the 1650s. Fox's arguments did not necessarily call for emancipation or the abolition of slavery. They did, however, push for a more just treatment of slave labor using gendered arguments about the Quaker household and the responsibilities of the patriarch. In "To Friends Beyond Sea," published in 1657, Fox considered the nature of families holding slaves. He observed how God "hath made all *Nations of one Blood* to dwell upon the Face of the Earth."⁹³ Fox's justification were drawn heavily from the Universalist message outlined in Acts 17:26, and he echoed this message in private meetings with Quakers on Barbados.⁹⁴ In addition to drawing on notions of universalism, Fox's approach to

⁹³ George Fox, "To Friends Beyond Sea, that have Blacks and Indian Slaves," in *A Collection of Many Select and Christian Epistles* (London, 1698), 117. This epistle was written during a period between 1657 and 1687 when Fox wrote more than 30 epistles to Quakers throughout the British Empire. Most of the epistles were directed to Quakers in Barbados, Pennsylvania, or New Jersey. See Landes, *London Quakers in the Trans-Atlantic World*, 49; see also, Gragg, *Quaker Community on Barbados*, 121-2; Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean*, 158; Goode, "Gospel Order among Friends," 125.

⁹⁴ The influence of Acts 17:26 is outlined in Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 41-3. Carey notes how Fox's message was consistent with the biblical notion that God "created only one human family, all members of which are equal both before God and within his creation—that is, both in Heaven and on Earth."

challenging slavery also invoked concepts of the family and the responsibility of the patriarch.

Fox's argument was rooted in the notion that a Quaker man had a responsibility for his entire family, not just his wife and children. The previous chapter illustrated how Quaker men were responsible for the wellbeing of their servants. The same attitudes applied, in theory, to slaves. Fox's growing interest in exploring notions of the family coincided with a hardening of his attitudes towards slavery in the 1670s. In the 1672 tract, "to the Ministers, Teachers, and Priests," Fox asked Quaker heads of household, "are you not Teachers of *Blacks* and *Tannies* (to wit, *Indians*) as well as of the Whites? For is it not the Gospel to be preached to all Creatures? And are not they Creatures? And did not Christ taste Death for every man? And are [they not] Men?"⁹⁵ Fox goes on to argue "Negars and Tawny Indians make up a very great part of Families here on the Island, from whom an Account will be required at the Great Day of Judgment." He feared that unrest among slaves, pleading for them "to be Sober, and to Fear God, and to love their Masters and Mistresses, and to be Faithful and Diligent in their Masters Service and Business; and that then their Masters and Overseers will Love them, and deal Kindly and Gently with them."⁹⁶

The responsibility of the male head of household to act as religious steward for his family was articulated most clearly in Fox's *Gospel Family-Order*. Written over two decades after Fox's first antislavery tract, he uses this pamphlet to articulate his belief

⁹⁵ George Fox, *To the Ministers, Teachers, and Priests (So Called and so Steiling your Selves) in Barbados* (London, 1672), 5. See also, Block, *Ordinary Lives in the Early Caribbean*, 164; Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 52.

⁹⁶ Fox, *To the Ministers, Teachers, and Priests*.

that the plantation was a stand-in for the family. Men were responsible not just to those born into the family, but those “that were bought with Money of Strangers.” The head of household was expected to care for his family and bring them into the light of God. Fox called upon Quaker heads of household to “take Care for your Families, and order your Families, as Joshua said he would order his Family.” To neglect this task was a serious failing because Christ “dyed for all, both *Turks, Barbarians, Tartarians* and *Ethyopians*; he dyed for all the *Tawnes* and for the *Blacks*, as well as for you that are called *Whites*.” Once brought into the light of Christianity, Fox even calls for the freeing of slaves. He wanted Quakers to consider “the Negroes and Blacks, whom [Masters] have bought with their Money, to let them go free after a considerable Term of Years, if they have served them faithfully; and when they go and are made free, let them not go away empty-handed.”⁹⁷ The importance of redeeming slaves was central to Fox’s approach to antislavery. Fox urged, “Mahomet saith, If slaves have recourse to you, ye shall redeem them,’ &c. Now, you are far from redeeming slaves, when you beat them for not giving you money according to your wills.”⁹⁸ Not only was a good, Quaker man instructed to offer moral uplift and redeem his slaves, but using excessive force was seen as a sign of a man’s inability to fulfill his duties as a godly patriarch.

Fox’s ideas did not find immediate popularity among Quakers. That does not mean, however, that Quakers shied away from talking about slavery. The rhetoric of

⁹⁷ George Fox, *Gospel-Family Order, Being a Short Discourse Concerning the Ordering of Families* (London, 1676), 4-5, 14, 17; Block, “Cultivating Inner and Outer Plantations,” 524-5; Goode, “Gospel Order among Friends”; Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 54-6.

⁹⁸ George Fox, “To the Great Turk and King at Algiers,” in George Fox, *Gospel Truth Demonstrated in a Collection of Doctrinal Books given forth by that Faithful Minister of Jesus Christ, George Fox* (Philadelphia, 1831), 6:81.

political slavery was co-opted by Quakers in the 1670s and early 1680s as a means of challenging the religious and political persecution discussed in Chapter Two. In the eyes of many Quakers, the absence of religious or political freedoms was equated to a state of unfreedom. In 1673, for example, Fox warned that the absence of liberty of conscience would leave Quakers susceptible to “captivity, thralldom, bondage, and slavery.”⁹⁹

Without the freedom to practice their religion, Quakers feared they would lose their way and, as Samuel Fisher noted, be held “still in slavery and servitude to your own Lusts and lawless Wills.” George Keith voice similar worries, observing how in the natural state, “the Wisdom of this Fleshy Devilish Birth, Rules in every Man... and brings into Slavery” thanks to all things “Devilish, Earthly, Carnal.”¹⁰⁰

No Quaker wrote more tracts invoking the rhetoric of political slavery than the Quaker Colony’s proprietor; William Penn. Penn’s arguments often tied together the absence of the longstanding rights of the freeborn Englishman with a state of political slavery. As early as 1670, Penn wrote about the rights of Englishmen in *The Antient and Just Liberties*, positing, “No one English-man is born Slave to another, neither has the one a right to inherit the sweat and benefit of the others labour (without consent) therefore the Liberty and Property of an English-man, cannot reasonably be at the will and beck of another, let his quality and rank be never so great.” The same year, Penn made similar comments in *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience*. Here he argued that

⁹⁹ George Fox, “To all the Professors in the Christian World,” in Fox, *Gospel Truth Demonstrated*, 4:414.

¹⁰⁰ Samuel Fisher, “Scorned Quaker’s True and Honest Account,” in *The Testimony of Truth Exalted by the Collected Labours of Samuel Fisher* (London, 1679), 8; George Keith, *Immediate Revelation, (or, Jesus Christ the Eternal Son of God revealed in Man revealing the Knowledge of God and the Things of His Kingdom immediately)* (London, 1676), 167.

a denial of one's natural rights would strip away their liberty, writing "Liberty of Conscience is every Man's natural Right, and he who is deprived of it, is a Slave in the midst of the greatest Liberty."¹⁰¹

Penn also couched his argument in the personal and bodily autonomy of freeborn Englishmen. Previous chapters have made clear the importance early modern men placed on their economic power and their personal autonomy. To try and strip these away was to claim someone's manhood. Like the first purchasers flocking to Pennsylvania to buy land to bequeath to their children and secure their family's future, these men prided themselves on controlling their labor and their property. Penn made this point clearly, stating, "No Man in these Parts is born Slave to another; neither hath one Right to inherit the Seat of the others Brow, or reap the Benefit of the others Labour, but by Consent; therefore no Man should be deprived of Property, unless he injure another Man's."¹⁰² When Quakers did relinquish control over labor, it was usually to apprentice their children. In these cases, they expressed the same concerns about the treatment their children would receive. Many feared that children would find themselves in unfavorable apprenticeships or indentures where they would be "accounted Slaves during their time of Service, and are put to the worst of Drudgery for the most part."¹⁰³ The concern that

¹⁰¹ William Penn, *The Peoples Antient and Just Liberties Asserted in the Tryal of William Penn and William Mead* (London, 1670), 40; *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience: Once More Briefly Debated & Defended* (London, 1670), 42. Penn repeated this in 1679, arguing that religious freedom meant Quakers would "be secur'd from Popery and Slavery." See William Penn, *England's Great Interest in the Choice of this New Parliament* (London, 1679), 1.

¹⁰² William Penn, *England's Present Interests Discover'd with Honour to the Prince, and Safety to the People* (London, 1675), 31. See also, William Penn, "A Perswasion to Moderation to Church Dissenters," in *Works*, 2:745.

children would be treated as slaves was driven by godly patriarchy, but it also represented a tacit admission that slaves were maltreated throughout the British Empire.

While Penn had no qualms engaging with the rhetoric of slavery, the first few years of settlement in Pennsylvania saw no challenges to the institution. Not until 1688 do records indicate anyone challenging the Quaker involvement in the slave trade and the reliance on unfree laborers brought to the Quaker colony against their will. On April 18 of that year, a group of Dutch-German Quakers from Germantown, led by Abraham and Derek op den Graeff, convened at the Monthly Meeting at Abington to address the gathered “Christians.” The Germantown Quakers made their purpose clear; they convened to express the “reasons why we are against the traffik of men-body.”¹⁰⁴ The protest reflected the confusion the Germantown Quakers felt at the fact that fellow Friends “doe here handel men as they handel there ye cattle.” In drawing attention to the chattel nature of slavery in the Quaker colony, the Germantown Friends referenced the rhetoric of the colony’s proprietor, contending, “Here is liberty of conscience, wch is right and reasonable; here ought to be likewise liberty of ye body.” Such an argument

¹⁰³ William Mather, *The Young Man’s Companion*, 12th ed. (London: 1723), in J. William Frost, *The Quaker Family in Colonial America: A Portrait of the Society of Friends* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1973), 138. Frost notes that *The Young Man’s Companion*, though a nonsectarian text in later editions, was first published as a Quaker guidebook.

¹⁰⁴ The text of this document is reprinted in full in Gerbner, “We are Against the Traffik of Men-Body,” 168. The Dutch-German Quakers first started arriving to Pennsylvania in 1683 and tended to live separately from the majority of predominately English colonists that arrived in the first decade of settlement. The Germantown antislavery tract differs from other Quaker pamphlets in tone and style, as evident by the fact that the protest was addressed to “Christians” rather than “Friends.”

was a blatant attack on the very principles upon which the colony was purportedly founded.¹⁰⁵

The Germantown Petition also invoked the rhetoric of godly patriarchy and the proper relationship between Quakers and slaves first articulated by Fox and Edmundson. Much in the way Fox used the Turks as a counterexample to expected Quaker comportment, the Germantown Quakers invoked a similar example. This time, however, casting the Quakers in the same light as the Turks, who would seize vessels and sell the captives “for slaves into Turkey.” They also referenced Quaker nonviolence, hearkening back to Edmundson’s engagement in Barbados over the potential threat posed by slaves. The protestors challenged the Quakers to explain how they would respond should slaves “fight for their freedom,—and handel their masters and mastrisses as they did handel them before.” Finally, the Germantown Quakers once again referenced the notions of the family and the responsibilities of the patriarch to protect and provide for his wife and children. They decried slavery for selling “slaves to strange countries; separating husbands from their wives and children.”¹⁰⁶

The Germantown Protest was met with little support. The Monthly Meeting at Dublin felt the matter was “so weighty that we think it not expedient for us to meddle

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 168-9. Written during a time when Quakers throughout the Atlantic were becoming increasingly involved in the slave trade, both as owners and traders, the Germantown Quakers attempted to invoke the language of commerce, accusing slave traders of acquiring slaves like they would stolen goods. See David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 126.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 168-9. As Gerbner notes, the assault on Quaker slavers for separating the family was drawing on one of the most important parts of Quaker rhetoric. Dating back to Fox’s *Gospel Family-Order*, the family was portrayed as one of the most sacred parts of Quakerism, so to separate families was to assault one of the most important Quaker institutions.

with it here.” The protest was then passed up the chain of command to the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, which also deferred comment and passed it to the Yearly Meeting. There, Quakers finally issued a definitive statement on the Protest, ruling that it “not to be so proper for this Meeting to give a Positive Judgment in the Case... and therefore at present they forbear it.”¹⁰⁷ Despite the fact that the Germantown Protest met such harsh resistance, the floodgates had opened and antislavery agitation in Pennsylvania began in earnest. Cadwalader Morgan, George Keith and his followers, and Robert Piles all contributed antislavery arguments in the decade following the Germantown Protest.

The antislavery advocates active in the 1690s, like the Germantown Quakers, used moral arguments to draw on the previous attacks on the institution of slavery and its role in corrupting Quaker values and destroying families. George Keith invoked the refrain that racism did not justify enslavement. Christ’s teachings were “freely to be preached unto all, without Exception, and that Negroes, Blacks and Tannies are a real part of Mankind, for whom Christ hath shed his precious Blood, and are capable of Salvation, as well as White Men.” Keith attacked Quakers for bringing “Mankind into outward Bondage, Slavery or Misery” rather than fulfilling their responsibility to bring individuals “into Liberty both inward and outward.”¹⁰⁸ Instead of following the golden

¹⁰⁷ “Response of the Monthly Meeting at Dublin to the Germantown Protest, April 30, 1688” and “Minutes of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Regarding the Germantown Protest, September 5, 1688,” in Gerbner, “We are against the Traffik of Men-Body,” 169-70. Despite seeing little immediate impact, the Germantown Protest of 1688 had a lasting impact on antislavery writings in the region throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 72-86.

¹⁰⁸ George Keith, *An Exhortation & Caution to Friends Concerning Buying or Keeping of Negroes* (New York: 1693), 1.

rule, Quakers were stealing “the Husband from the Wife, and the Children from the Parents; and many that buy them do exceedingly afflict them and oppress them, not only by continual hard Labour, but by cruel Whippings; and other cruel Punishments.”¹⁰⁹

It was during this time that Pennsylvania witnessed some of the first individual efforts to free slaves and combat the institution. Cadwalader Morgan freed his slaves in 1696 while simultaneously arguing against the slave trade. Morgan, a Quaker from Merion, Pennsylvania, saw the slave trade as antithetical to Quaker values, particularly those advocating nonviolence. Writing during a time when slavery in Pennsylvania, and among Quakers, was growing, he wrote, “I desired of the Lord, that he would make it known to me... That I should not be Concerned with [slaves], And afterwards I had no freedom to buy or take any of them upon any account.”¹¹⁰ Yet unlike the Germantown Protests, the Yearly Meeting responded more favorably to Morgan’s critique. The Meeting urged Friends, “be Careful not to Encourage the bringing in of any more Negroes... bring them to Meetings, or have Meetings with them in their Families, & Restrain them from Loose, & Lewd Living.”¹¹¹ Robert Piles pushed back against the

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 5. The impact of Keith’s antislavery exhortation is debated. Soderlund and Nash express a degree of skepticism about the tract, positing that perhaps this was simply part of Keith’s larger efforts to agitate and attack the state of Quakerism in Pennsylvania at the time. They express this concern, noting, “Several of Keith’s followers did take seriously the admonition to free slaves, however, for they were among the colony’s first manumitters.” Similarly, J. William Frost questions the impact of the tract as part of a larger reaction to Keith and his fellow detractors, noting how debates about slavery, along with other aspects of the Keithians complaints, were “now beyond the pale of discussion.” See J. William Frost, ed., *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania* (Norwood: Norwood Editions, 1980), xx; Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, 44.

¹¹⁰ Cadwalader Morgan to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, July 28, 1696, in J. William Frost, ed., *The Quakers and Antislavery* (Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions, 1980), 70.

¹¹¹ Quoted in Soderlund, *Quakers and Slavery*, 19. See also, Gerbner, *We are against the Traffik of Men-Body*,” 151.

slave trade in his own letter, once again using fear to advocate for an end to the slave trade. It is important to note that Piles was not calling for an end to slavery, merely an end to the *slave trade*. “I consider also,” he wrote, “that if all friends that are of ability should buy of them that is in this province.” Piles also invoked the emerging fear of slave rebellions, cautioning that “they might rise in rebellion & doe us much mischief; except wee keep a [militia]; which is against our principles.”¹¹²

After the fervor of the late seventeenth century, the first two decades of the eighteenth century were relatively tame. By the 1720s and 1730s, however, a new round of antislavery criticism emerged from Quakers in Pennsylvania. Among these voices was Ralph Sandiford, who published *A Brief Examination of the Practice of the Times* in 1729. Sandiford relied on many of the common rhetorical devices found in seventeenth-century antislavery literature, namely the idea that Quakers had a responsibility to care for their slaves the way Abraham tended to “all his House, which he come by them as we do by the Negroes and Indians Slaves.” In urging Quakers to do their patriarchal duty to “all his Household, both Children and Servants, whether born in his House, or bought with Money,” Sandiford also hearkened back to George Fox and the arguments established in *Gospel Family-Order*. “Our friend George Fox,” he wrote, “advised [Quakers] to use them well, and bring them up in Fear and Knowledge of God.”¹¹³ Like Fox and Edmundson, Sandiford saw religious enlightenment as an important part of the

¹¹² Robert Piles, “A Cobby of Robert Pile’s paper about Negroes,” Manuscripts A-Z, Box 3, Parrish Family Papers (Collection 1653), HSP, Box 3. Pile’s concerns were passed along to Barbadian Quakers, who were urged to end the slave trade. These concerns were disregarded. Gerbner, “We are Against the Traffik of Men-Body,” 156. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 21.

¹¹³ Sandiford, *A Brief Examination*, preface, 25-6.

Quaker relationship to slavery. He also invoked the political writings of Quaker agitators in the 1660s and 1670s, reminding readers that “what greater Unjustice can be acted, than to rob a Man of his Liberty, which is more valuable than Life; and especially after such a manner as this, to take a Man from his Native Country, his parents and Brethren.” Like the Quakers who protested the denial of their liberty, and thus their ability to provide for their families as good patriarchs, slavery claimed the “Husband from Wife, and Children from both, like Beasts.”¹¹⁴

In attacking the institution, Sandiford also engaged with one of the longstanding arguments used by pro-slavery advocates. In discussing the Curse of Ham, he posited, “Neither can these Negroes be proved, by any Genealogy, the Seed of Ham, whom Noah cursed not.” The curse “is thought a suitable original for the Negro Trade,” he agreed, “but the Curse is not so extensive as you would have it, but is thus expressed.” More importantly, Sandiford noted that the Curse purportedly called for Canaan to be “a Servant of Servants.” With that in mind, Sandiford asked “But if these Negroes are Slaves of Slaves according to the Curse; Whose Slaves then must their Masters be?”¹¹⁵ In doing so, he turned the situation back around the Christians who seized the liberty of these enslaved peoples and dislocated them from their homes for foreign lands.

Part of the effectiveness of the antislavery literature was the appeal to Quaker morality, particularly the golden rule. Fox and Keith were particularly effective in this

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 20-1.

¹¹⁵ Sandiford, *A Brief Examination*, 18-9. The Curse of Ham comes from the Biblical story about Ham either castrating or humiliating his naked father, leading to Noah cursing Canaan. The “Table of Nations” was then used to show Canaan’s descendants as settling in Africa. See Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 65-7.

regard. So, too, was Benjamin Lay, who reminded Quakers that there existed “No greater nor no better Law, say I, than to love God above all, and all our Fellow-Creatures as ourselves.”¹¹⁶ Lay, in attacking Quaker slavery, urged them to “quit yourselves of yourselves and Slaves.” Once again, a Quaker antislavery activist used the language of the family and the moral responsibility of caring for one’s family and christianizing slaves. “Is it not the way,” Lay asked, “rather to encourage and strengthen them in their Infidelity, and Atheism, and their Hellish Practice of Fighting, Murthering, killing and Robbing one another, to the end of the World?” Like the antislavery Quakers before him, Lay protested how Quakers ripped from their families, leading to lamentations among “Wives for their Husbands, Parents for their Children, Relations for their Friends.”¹¹⁷ Lay also drew on other aspects of the Quaker antislavery tradition. Like Fox and others, he compared the actions of Quakers and other British masters to those of Turkish slavers. He emphasized how Turkish slavers forced Europeans into perpetual bondage “for Term of Life, as Beasts in the Field,” once again drawing attention to the chattel nature of slavery. He also questioned the Quaker commitment to antislavery by contending that participation in the slave trade was “thereby justifying their selling of [slaves], and the

¹¹⁶ Benjamin Lay, *All Slave-Keepers that Keep the Innocent in Bondage, Apostates Pretending to Lay Claim to the Pure & Holy Christian Religion* (Philadelphia, 1737), 10; Carey, *From Peace to Freedom*, 168-171. Benjamin Lay’s role as an antislavery advocate will also be explored in the forthcoming work by Marcus Rediker. See Marcus Rediker, *Prophet against Slavery: Benjamin Lay, Atlantic Abolitionist* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2016).

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 11, 15. Lay’s reference to the “Hellish Practice” of slaves is reminiscent of Edmundson’s antislavery arguments. While clearly drawing on a moral argument steeped in Quaker notions of nonviolence and the family, both Lay and Edmundson still relied on racist conceptions of African bound labor.

War, by which they were or are obtained; nor doth this satisfy, but their Children also are kept in Slavery, ad infinitum.”¹¹⁸

Each antislavery advocate from the seventeenth century onward contributed to the growing discourse questioning the morality of Quaker participation in slavery. This fervor reached its peak in the 1750s and 1760s, when the upheaval of the Seven Years’ War and the growing seeds of dissention over notions of class, rights, and liberty among American colonists began spreading. Among the foremost leaders of the Quaker antislavery movement that would eventually become widespread were John Woolman and Anthony Benezet. Woolman challenged Quakers to consider their own struggles with liberty, particularly the infringement on their economic power. In urging Quakers to draw on their religious morals to reach out to their slaves, Woolman reminded his contemporaries, “When our Property is taken contrary to our Mind, by Means appearing to us unjust, it is only through divine Influence, and the Enlargement of Heart from thence proceeding, that we can love our reputed Oppressors.” Benezet also couched his argument in economic terms, warning how enslavement was “destructive of the Welfare of human Society, and inconsistent with the Peace and Prosperity of a Country.”¹¹⁹

Both Woolman and Benezet stressed Quaker responsibilities and the importance and sanctity of the family. Woolman, in echoing Penn’s arguments prior to settling Pennsylvania, suggested that a Quaker could never “purchase a Man who hath never forfeited his Liberty.” Moreover, he believed slave masters were failing to educate their

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 12, 15.

¹¹⁹ John Woolman, *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes* (Philadelphia, 1754), 7; Anthony Benezet, *Observations on the Inslaving, Importing and Purchasing of Negroes*, 2nd ed. (Germantown, PA, 1760), 9.

families, instead allowing slaves to be “educated in the Way of so great Temptation.”¹²⁰ Benezet is harsher in his indictment of Quakers, invoking the golden rule and directly blaming Quakers for their participation in an emerging capitalist economy. “To do unto all Men, as we would they should do unto us,” Benezet wrote, “Without Purchasers, there would be no Trade; and consequently every Purchaser as he encourages the Trade, becomes partaker in the Guilt of it; and that they may see what a deep dye the Guilt is.”¹²¹ Finally, Benezet joined the chorus of activists who decried the destructive nature of the slave trade, asking his brethren to “let any consider what it is to lose a Child, a Husband or any dear Relation.”¹²²

Beginning in the 1750s, Quaker meetings in Pennsylvania and abroad began looking more closely at the relationship between Quakers and slaves. The conversations, led by Benezet, were in direct response to an “Epistle of Advice & Caution against the buying of Negroes,” which attempted to “discourage that Practice” of importing slaves.¹²³ The challenges to the slave trade and slave ownership would persist into the 1760s, as Quakers continued “discouraging the purchasing negro Slaves.”¹²⁴ The incremental progress made by the 1760s represented over a century’s worth of effort at ameliorating the conditions of slavery and, ultimately, ending slavery in the Quaker colony.

¹²⁰ Woolman, *Some Considerations*, 11, 15.

¹²¹ Benezet, *Observations on the Inslaving*, 4.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 8.

¹²³ Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Philadelphia, 1745-1755, QSCL, 294; Nash and Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees*, xi.

¹²⁴ Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Friends held at Philadelphia, 1757-1762, QSCL, Haverford College, 216.

The slow march towards freeing slaves represented the efforts of Pennsylvania Quakers to put into practice the vision established by George Fox after his visit to Barbados. It was on the West Indian island that Quakers learned how to manage plantations and, perhaps more importantly, how to manage slaves. Fox, alongside William Edmundson, urged Quakers to carry out their duty of godly patriarchy by treating their slaves as part of their extended family members. In some cases, this meant bringing them to the Quaker faith, though such conversion attempts were met with resistance from the Barbadian elite.

The experiences in Barbados were formative for many of the early Quaker settlers to Pennsylvania. In need of a labor source to work the fields alongside indentured servants, merchants like Isaac Norris and Jonathan Dickinson accommodated the market to assuage any moral objections they held to slavery and reaped great profits through the Atlantic slave trade. The slaves brought to the colony toiled under harsh conditions and faced a racialized society that sought to oppress and constrict their actions. For those who found their objections too strong to push aside, they invoked the same language used by William Penn to contest the persecution of Quakers in England. Slaves, they posited, were torn from their husbands, wives, or children, denied the bodily liberty, and set to work on fields for the profit of others. Now, not only were Quakers eschewing their role as godly patriarchs, they were denying the same opportunity of their slaves. While Pennsylvania may have been the best poor man's country for some, for the slaves ripped from their families and denied the right to provide for their families, the colonial experience could not have been more different.

CONCLUSION

“LOOSE OUR GOVERNMENT”¹: THE END OF WILLIAM PENN’S HOLY EXPERIMENT

The history of the Quaker colony planted along the Delaware reveals a fascinating tension between rhetoric and reality. The rhetoric of Penn’s Woods, embraced by Penn’s contemporaries and modern historians, portrays a colony born amid great optimism and lofty aspirations. Penn and his fellow Quakers intended the colony to be populated by “good Habitations... who first came over to Settle” with the intention of “Promoting Religion for beyond any worldly gain or Profits.” And indeed, the Quaker colony developed a reputation for religious liberties, economic opportunity, and a demographic heterogeneity.² At the heart of this halcyon vision of colonial settlement was the proprietor’s worldview. Penn was shaped by a gendered world emphasizing a notion of manhood rooted in economic success, personal autonomy, and godly patriarchy. Central to godly patriarchy was male credit, a man’s reputation in the eyes of his peers.

Penn’s approach to colonization drew on Quaker ideas about peace and good government, which were framed in the language of masculinity. Yet, this vision of settlement gave way to the economic realities of the colony’s need for exploiting unfree

¹ William Penn to William Penn Jr., January 2, 1701, *PWP*, 4:28.

² William Fishbourn, *Some Remarks on the Settlement of the Province of Pennsylvania in the Year 1739*, Miscellaneous Manuscripts Vol. 1, Box 46, Frank M. Etting Collection (Collection 193), HSP; Jack Marietta and G.S. Rowe, *Troubled Experiment: Crime and Justice in Pennsylvania, 1682-1800* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 2.

labor. Early modern men were greatly concerned with their public reputation. A man's honor, or his credit, was impacted by several factors, including his standing in the eyes of his peers. More pressingly, a man's credit was derived from his economic self-sufficiency, ability to exert political and personal autonomy, and his duty as a godly patriarchal head of household. In each instance, these aspects shaped, and were shaped by the colonizing experiment. Penn painted his colony as one where religious dissenters and colonists from throughout Europe and the Atlantic World could migrate in search of land and economic profit. And in many ways, Pennsylvania would become that land, as a diverse group of men and women built Penn's Woods into one of the most vibrant and important economic ports in British North America.

More importantly, early Pennsylvania colonization was closely tied to Quaker notions about masculinity and patriarchy order. Pennsylvania represented an opportunity for persecuted Quakers and other potential colonists to achieve mastery in ways that were not possible across the Atlantic. William Penn's decision to promote the economic opportunity of the colony used the rhetoric of male credit to attract settlers. In the wake of the English Revolution, religious dissenters faced persecution at the hands of the Crown, which had a direct impact on a Quaker man's ability to provide for their family. Quakers who were "kept Prisoner in the common Gaol" were denied the "liberty as to send for work to work at [their] Trade."³ Not only did this persecution prevent Quakers from plying their trades, but it also stifled their ability to act as godly patriarchs and provide for their wives and children. The image of the Quaker colony thus became one

³ Humphrey Smith, et al, *The Fruits of Unrighteousness and Injustice Brought forth by John Bulkley, and Thomas Bowman, and the rest of the rulers in Hampshire, against the Innocent People of God called Quakers* (London, 1658), 19-20.

promising an escape from this persecution and an opportunity to perform one's manhood in a new land. Penn's rhetoric also struck a careful balance between the pursuit of profits and the Quaker approach to business, which stressed plain dealing and self-modesty.

The Quaker notion of political liberty was also tied to masculinity. Much of the language of dissent promulgated by Quakers revolved around liberty of conscience and the right to religious toleration. The language of religious dissent, steeped in notions of natural law, the ancient constitution, and the freeborn rights of Englishmen, also carried the influences of early modern gender. The persecution of male Quakers tore them away from their families, depriving them of the ability to act as godly patriarchs. Moreover, in protecting religious liberties, the Quakers aspired to "propagate the Growth of the Country" and fulfill their manly duty of economic success.⁴ The argument for liberty of conscience also connected Quakers to a larger network of religious dissenters spread throughout the Atlantic who invoked the rhetoric of natural rights and the ancient constitution in their own struggles for religious and political liberty. This political discourse provided a foundation for Pennsylvania's government and was found throughout the writings of Penn and other influential colonial founders. But as many colonists found their rights increasingly marginalized and their gendered political autonomy encroached upon, they co-opted the language of the ancient constitution to challenge the rule of Penn and other Quaker elites.

This idyllic vision of Pennsylvania rooted in economic liberty, political rights, and opportunities for men did not match the grim realities of colonial settlement. One

⁴ William Penn, *England's Great Interest in the Choice of this New Parliament* (London, 1679), 4.

major factor was the growing influence of capitalism in shaping Pennsylvania's economy. In an effort to "Extend their trade," Pennsylvania merchants relied on capitalist innovations.⁵ In particular, Penn secured the financial support of London merchants, Quakers who had established themselves in the West Indies, and investors willing to come together and form joint stock companies. Thanks to their investment in Pennsylvania's early infrastructure, these groups were instrumental in helping the colony's early economic growth. Pennsylvania merchants also operated under a gendered framework. Their success was widely dependent on their reputation as honest and reliable men. As the infrastructure for Atlantic trade grew, Pennsylvania's economy came to dominate the mid-Atlantic, rival and surpass New York, and assume an important place in the British Empire. This growth came at a price, however, as the building and sustaining of Pennsylvania's economy came on the backs of unfree laborers.

The notion of Pennsylvania as the "best poor man's country" cannot sustain the scrutiny of history concerned with the lived experiences of the colony's servants and slaves. As aforementioned, Penn's vision of colonial settlement was rooted in an intermingling of religion and gender. Nowhere was this clearer than in the idea of godly patriarchy. The Quaker family was at the center of colonial development, the organization of Quaker meeting structures, and the ways in which Quakers educated and trained their children.⁶ Quaker writers like George Fox articulated an inclusion vision of the Quaker family that extended to unfree laborers in religious pamphlets and in Quaker

⁵ Letter to James Burd, August 20, 1761, Box 1, Shippen Family Papers (Collection 595C), HSP.

⁶ J. William Frost, *The Quaker Family in Colonial America: A Portrait of the Society of Friends* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973); Barry Levy, *Quakers and the American Family: British Settlement in the Delaware Valley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

meetings. The actual treatment of servants and slaves, however, stands in opposition to these Quaker morals. Despite moral convictions, Quaker merchants like Isaac Norris participated in the trafficking of unfree laborers. Masters used coercion and violence to extract labor from their servants and slaves. And those unfree laborers had few options to contest their positions. Despite Moraley's claims, Pennsylvania was not the "best poor man's country," but rather a place in which masters, merchants, and elites used their influence to secure power and authority at the expense of those below them.

The tension between Quaker ethics and the lived experiences of unfree laborers underscores the fundamental problems working against the success of the holy experiment. Despite the powerful rhetoric of a gendered social order promising political rights, economic opportunities, and religious freedoms, the privileging of Quaker elites, influences of capitalism, and exploitation of laborers undermined this project. On a more practical level, the colony faced a number of specific challenges that weakened and eventually eroded Quaker authority. As early as 1692, disunity and factionalism ran amuck, leading William and Mary—new monarchs looking to exert control over their new empire—to revoke the colonial charter and place Pennsylvania under the control of Benjamin Fletcher, the royal governor of New York. While Penn managed to regain his charter in 1694, problems persisted. In 1701, Penn expressed concerns that despite the fact that the "Crown of England is deeply interested in our Prosperity," there was a possibility that he would "Loose our Government." yet again.⁷

Penn's concerns over "[losing] our Government" were not unfounded. It is well known that Penn accumulated substantial debt during his tenure as proprietor of

⁷ Gary Nash, *Quakers and Politics, Pennsylvania, 1681-1726* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 181-7; William Penn to William Penn Jr., January 2, 1701, *PWP*, 4:27-8.

Pennsylvania.⁸ During the 1710s, he seriously considered surrendering his colony to the crown as a means of ameliorating his debt. Ultimately, Penn decided not to surrender his colony and by 1725 the mortgage owed was almost entirely paid off. This was, in many ways, a sign of things to come. Upon Penn's death, proprietary control passed to his children and the colony would remain as such until the American Revolution. This proved detrimental to the colony's attempt at being a holy experiment. John, Thomas, and Richard Penn all involved themselves in running the colony, though they all did so as absentee landlords. Not only did the three choose not to live in Pennsylvania, but they also turned away from the Quaker values of their father. They also had increasingly frequent clashes with the colonial government. Thomas Penn, especially, found himself in "opposition to the Acts of Assembly of Assembly at the Board of Trade" and dealing with concerns that the Pennsylvania assembly "betrayed the Rights of the Crown."⁹

Two events occurring in the wake of William Penn's death illustrate the growing fractures between the Quaker government and non-Quaker colonists in the peaceable kingdom. In 1742, political factionalism reached a climax when a group of disaffected mariners approached Thomas Lloyd, a Quaker, and offered their services in helping defeat the Proprietary Party in return for "fifteen hundred acres of land." The mariners suffered from fluctuating wages, inconsistent employment, and a perceived lack of representation in Philadelphia's government. At the same time, a coalition was formed between Quakers and Palatine Germans, who were also disaffected with their status in the

⁸ Richard S. Dunn, "Penn Wise and Pound Foolish: Penn as a Businessman," in *The World of William Penn*, ed. Mary Maples and Richard S. Dunn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986): 37-54.

⁹ Editors' note, *PWP*, 4:734; Thomas Penn to James Hamilton, June 6, 1760, Thomas Penn Correspondence, 1747-1771, with James Hamilton (Mss.874.8.P36c), APS.

city. On October 1, a clash broke out between the Quakers and the rowdy sailors. The turmoil eventually settled and the Quaker party emerged victorious in the election. While they defeated the challenge mounted by the Anglicans, the protest reflected the growing challenges the Quakers faced from their political opponents as well as the dissatisfaction rampant among laborers and servants.

The election riot reaffirmed the Quaker belief in “good men” who needed to rule over the “lower sort” causing the riot on the 1st of October. Complicating this growing divide between elite Quakers and the motley crew was the fact that servants were taking advantage of proprietary policies encouraging servant enlistment in the army. In the eyes of Quakers, their religious and political values were being thwarted. They placed the blame on an increasingly mobilized class of unfree and indigent laborers. The Election Riot, described as “some Disturbance from a considerable Number of Sailors” reflected a growing radicalism among the laboring classes that would only intensify during the 1760s and 1770s.¹⁰

If the Election Riot revealed emerging class tensions weakening Quaker power and showing the instability of their gendered social order, racial tensions were eating away at the colony as well. While the laboring classes were radicalizing, racial tensions expanded during the 1750s and 1760s, as conflicts between colonists and Indians were exacerbated under the context of imperial warfare between England and France. Such tensions reached a peak when the Paxton Boys launched their attack on the Conestoga

¹⁰ Michael Bradley McCoy, “Absconding Servants, Anxious Germans, and Angry Sailors: Working People and the Making of the Philadelphia Election Riot of 1742,” *Pennsylvania History* 74, no. 4 (2007): 127; *Votes and Proceedings*, 4:2957.

Indians. As Kevin Kenny has noted, this conflict reflected a growing racial tensions that accompanied the erosion of Quaker control of Pennsylvania.¹¹

William Penn had lofty aspirations when he received his colonial charter in March 1681. He endeavored to plant “a flourishing Countrey blest with Liberty Ease & Plenty beyond what many of themselves cou’d expect.”¹² This image of the Quaker colony has had a profound impact on both contemporaries and modern historians. But the notion of Pennsylvania as “the best poor man’s country” rings false. The social order was predicated on a system of manhood privileging an elite class granted the luxury of exerting political and economic autonomy. The political system, while granting liberty of conscience, saw factionalism develop around a small class of influential Quakers. The economic system, while adhering to gendered notions of Quaker honesty in business, saw small group of merchants exert undue influence and authority on economic practices. Finally, the emphasis on a loving, supportive Quaker family was eschewed in the interests of exploiting unfree laborers. Pennsylvania’s Quaker government was founded under lofty ideals, but once the reality of colonial settlement set in the vision of a peaceable kingdom was proven to be nothing more than rhetoric.

¹¹ Kevin Kenny, *Peaceable Kingdom Lost: The Paxton Boys and the Destruction of William Penn’s Holy Experiment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). For a further discussion of racial tensions between colonists and Indians, see Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2008). See also, Ian K. Steele, *Setting All the Captives Free: Capture, Adjustment, and Recollection in Allegheny Country* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2013).

¹² William Penn to Friends in Pennsylvania, February 27, 1709, *PWP*, 4:675-6.

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VITA

Peter B. Kotowski was born in Peoria, Illinois and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Before arriving at Loyola University Chicago, he attended the University of Pittsburgh, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts, *summa cum laude*, in History (with honors) and Political Science in 2008.

While at Loyola, Dr. Kotowski was active in serving the needs of graduate students. He held positions as the President, Secretary, and Media Coordinator of the History Graduate Student Association, and the President and Secretary of the Graduate Student Advisory Council. While at Loyola, Dr. Kotowski was awarded the Advanced Doctoral Fellowship by the Graduate School for 2012-2013, and the Arthur J. Schmitt Dissertation Fellowship in Leadership and Service for 2015-2016. He was also awarded a dissertation fellowship from the McNeil Center for Early American Studies for 2013-2014 and a Jack Miller Center-American Philosophical Society Fellowship in 2015. He has organized and presented panels at conferences for the Omohundro Institute for Early American History and Culture, the British Group in Early American History, and the McNeil Center for Early American Studies.

Currently, Dr. Kotowski is an Adjunct Professor of History at Loyola University Chicago. He lives in Chicago, Illinois.