

## Recent Publications

*William Penn's "Holy Experiment": the Founding of Pennsylvania, 1681-1701.* By Edwin B. Bronner. (Temple University Publications.) New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1962. 48s.

In *William Penn's "Holy Experiment,"* Edwin Bronner, who this year succeeded Thomas Drake at Haverford and is now Professor of History and Curator of the Quaker Collection there, has written an up-to-date history of seventeenth-century Pennsylvania. He has set out to give a "chronological narrative, primarily political, written to clarify and explain" the colony's history. Clarify it he does, and to some purpose. This book is going to come as a cold shock to those of us on this side of the Atlantic who have ignorantly believed in a roseate dawn lasting nearly a century among the friendly Indians of Shackamaxon on the banks of the Delaware.

The author concludes that the "holy experiment" of 1681 (the words are those of Penn himself) did not long survive into the period after 1684, when (with Penn an absentee proprietor) differences of opinion emerged from below the surface, and the conflicting political and economic interests among the colonists made themselves felt. It is perhaps significant that even among the Quakers the Keithian separation took place—"a schism which had political overtones."

Although the "holy experiment" failed, Penn's second visit to Pennsylvania, in 1699-1701, was to a successful colony, on its feet economically, and steadily developing—"one of the most successful colonizing ventures which the English attempted in the seventeenth century."

Edwin Bronner finds that Friends developed a dualism—following Quaker beliefs and practice among themselves, but adhering otherwise to normal business and political practices. The colonists honoured Penn as Quaker leader and Founder, but they searched for reasons to excuse themselves from paying him their quitrents. The book fills out our picture of Penn himself. He is seen fighting back against the half-truths and denunciation of the persons who wished to overthrow Quaker rule in the colony, and who complained of anything amiss, or which could be made to appear amiss in relation to their attitude to the home government. It was not difficult to find things amiss, for mud slinging in politics did not end when emigrants landed on the farther shore of the Atlantic.

Edwin Bronner is to be congratulated on presenting a picture of early Pennsylvania the general rightness of which one can confidently affirm.

R.S.M.

*Joseph John Gurney: Banker, Reformer, and Quaker.* By David E. Swift. Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut, 1962. Pp. xx, 304; 4 plates. \$6.50.

In 1959 there appeared in the *Journal* a long article by David Swift entitled "J. J. Gurney and Norwich Politics," and we were pleased to learn then that the material in this might eventually form part of a full-scale biography. This has now been completed, and published in America by the Press of the University of which David Swift is Professor of Religion ; and though it has not proved possible to arrange publication in England, it is hoped that sufficient copies will find their way across the Atlantic to enable English Friends to read and enjoy what is a most interesting and valuable book.

David Swift is not himself a Friend, but he has worked for the American Friends' Service Committee, and at Pendle Hill, and knows Friends well. He is therefore well qualified to deal objectively with his subject, one of the most able and devoted men ever produced by the Society, yet the centre of intense controversy, both during his life and since. Joseph John Gurney was convinced that it was possible to be both an Evangelical Christian and a Quaker, and the story of how he sought persistently to be both is a fascinating one. To many of his contemporaries, and perhaps especially to the Friends of the succeeding generation, who were inspired by him, he appeared to have been successful. Yet probably most Friends today, at least in England, would agree with the judgment of T. Edmund Harvey in his article on Thomas Shillitoe, in the *Journal* for 1950 (quoted by David Swift): that it was Gurney's opponents who "with all their limitations held fast to the very heart of the religious experience through which the Society of Friends originated, and without which it would not be able to continue its distinctive service."

As its title indicates, the biography deals fully also with Gurney's business interests and his indefatigable labours for social reform, especially in the fields of slavery and the prison system. But it is his "boundary existence," as David Swift calls it, "between exclusive Quakerism and inclusive Christianity," which is still of the greatest interest to the present-day reader.

The book draws freely on journal and letter material, and is the product of extensive original research both in America and England.  
A.W.B.

The *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* for March 1962 (Vol. 33, part 5), records in its editorial the loss which the Society has suffered through the death of the Rev. Wesley F. Swift at the end of 1961, who had served as editor since 1948 and whose wide interests made each number of the *Proceedings* as varied and full of interest as one could expect. Short obituary notices are contributed by others connected with his work in the Methodist Church and working in the field of Methodist history. The number includes an article by D. Dunn Wilson on "Hanoverian government and Methodist persecution."