

# **Robert Proud manuscripts, undated MC.950.152**

**Finding aid prepared by Kara Flynn**

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections

March 2016

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections
<b>Title</b>	Robert Proud manuscripts
<b>Date</b>	Undated
<b>Extent</b>	1.0 Folder
<b>Language</b>	English

### Preferred Citation

Robert Proud manuscripts (MC.950.152), Quaker & Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, PA.

## Biographical note

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Robert Proud (1728-1813) was born on May 10, 1728 in Yorkshire, England to William and Ann Proud. After his primary schooling, he was sent to a Quaker boarding school where he became immersed in classical studies. By 1750, he ended his schooling and became a Latin tutor for prominent Quaker families in London.

He moved to Philadelphia in 1759, and changed residence twelve times, living with people such as Anthony Benezet, Israel Morris, and Benjamin Morgan. He attempted to start his own Latin school, but by 1761, it closed, and he began a teaching position in the Friends School. He left his teaching job in 1770, and attempted a business enterprise with his brother John in England, which failed. While Proud was a strong Loyalist, during his time living with the liberal-leaning and anti-slavery advocate Anthony Benezet he started to soften his views on "the American cause," considered becoming involved in civic affairs, and wrote several documents regarding misuse of funds in the city. By 1774, and with the beginnings of uprisings of certain Patriot groups, Proud returned to his Loyalist roots.

From 1775 to 1780, Proud left his position at The Friends School and went into seclusion, where he began writing on various subjects, and working on his best-known work, *The History of Pennsylvania in North America*. During this time, he was under the watchful eye of the Patriot committees in the city, but avoided being formally addressed.

The full title of Proud's history is: "The history of Pennsylvania, in North America : from the original institution and settlement of that province, under the first proprietor and governor, William Penn, in 1681, till after the year 1742; with an introduction, respecting, the life of W. Penn, prior to the grant of the province, and the religious society of the people called Quakers: with the first rise of the neighbouring colonies, more particularly of West-New Jersey, and the settlement of the Dutch and Swedes on Delaware. To which is added, a brief description of the said province, and of the general state, in which it flourished, principally between the years 1760 and 1770. With an appendix written principally between the years 1776 and 1780, by Robert Proud."

*The History of Pennsylvania in North America* was actually Proud's attempt to continue the work begun by Samuel Smith, who focused on the history of New Jersey. Proud was believed that he would be compensated by members of his Quaker meeting for this project. He decided to change the focus of the book to Pennsylvania, focusing on what he considered the most prestigious years in Pennsylvania history. Proud mostly focused on William Penn and Quakerism, during the years 1681-1725 and 1760-1770, and avoided discussing The Revolutionary War, save for one paragraph in his two-volume work. In 1793, after leaving another position as a teacher at the Friends School, he began to look for a publisher, and worked with Zachariah Poulson, Jr. in Philadelphia. Though he had found a publisher, Proud was responsible for selling his book, and he had few subscribers. In desperation, he shipped books to his brothers hoping they could sell them in England. Proud attempted to have his Quaker meeting support him in the sales of the remaining copies, but none was given. The book was highly unsuccessful, due to its Loyalist leanings, and some very strong inaccuracies. Robert Proud died in 1813 at the age of 85.

Source: From the Finding Aid for the Robert Proud collection, col. 0529, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

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## Scope and Content note

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This collection is comprised of the single folder collection of Robert Proud's manuscripts. The majority of the collection is comprised of notes on Robert Proud's life, presumably written by a descendant. The most significant item is titled "Notes & memorandums by Robert Proud of Philadelphia respecting his early turn of mind, education etc., anno 1786." There is also information in another hand about other Proud family members, a Robert Proud signature and some fragments.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections March 2016

### Use Restrictions

Standard Federal Copyright Law Applies (U.S. Title 17).

### Acquisition

The Robert Proud manuscripts were donated to Quaker & Special Collections, Haverford College, in 1981 by the William Penn Charter School through Grace Wheeler.

### Processing Information

Processed by Kara Flynn; completed March 2016.

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## Related Materials

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## Related materials

- MC 850.5 Lantern slides (miscellaneous Quaker portraits and Henry J. Cadbury travels)
  - MC 900 John Jay smith papers
  - MC 966 Nicholas Waln family papers
  - MC 1115 William Penn Charter School archives
  - MC.975.01.085 Elizabeth Wilkinson journal
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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Geographic Name(s)

- Pennsylvania

### Personal Name(s)

- Proud, Robert, 1728-1813

### Subject(s)

- Manuscripts
- Pennsylvania--History.
- Quakers
- Quakers -- Pennsylvania -- Philadelphia
- Quakers--History

## Collection Inventory

Manuscripts Undated