

**"Some Account of William Penn's  
Birth, Education, and Death," 1863  
MC.975.07.106**

**Finding aid prepared by Kara Flynn**

---

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

April 28, 2016

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections

October 2015

370 Lancaster Ave

Haverford, PA, 19041

610-896-1161

[hc-special@haverford.edu](mailto:hc-special@haverford.edu)

## Table of Contents

---

<u>Summary Information</u> .....	3
<u>Biographical note</u> .....	4
<u>Scope and Content note</u> .....	4
<u>Administrative Information</u> .....	5
<u>Related Materials</u> .....	5
<u>Controlled Access Headings</u> .....	5
<u>Collection Inventory</u> .....	7

## Summary Information

---

<b>Repository</b>	Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections
<b>Title</b>	"Some Account of William Penn's Birth, Education, and Death"
<b>Date</b>	1863
<b>Extent</b>	0.08 Linear feet
<b>Language</b>	English

### Preferred Citation

"Some Account of William Penn's Birth, Education, and Death" (MC.975.07.106), Quaker & Special Collections, Haverford College, Haverford, PA.

## Biographical note

---

William Penn (1644-1718), born in London, was the eldest son of Sir William Penn, an English Admiral, and Margaret Jasper. He was educated at The Free School, Chigwell and Christ Church, Oxford. Judged for his nonconformity, in 1661, his father sent him to Europe, from which he returned in 1664 a "modish person." He entered Lincoln's Inn to study law in 1665, but soon after went to Ireland where he was convinced by Thomas Loe to Quakerism, and was shortly arrested at a Quaker Meeting in Cork. By 1668, he published *The Sandy Foundation Shaken* for which he was again arrested. He continued to publish works on Quaker doctrinal issues. In 1671, he travelled to Holland and Germany encouraging Quaker communities, preaching and writing against religious persecution. He used his family influence to help Quaker friends, including George Fox and Isaac Pennington. Penn married Gulielma Springett in 1672 and Hannah Callowhill in 1696.

In 1676, Penn became a trustee of the Quaker colony of West New Jersey and in 1681, in exchange for a large debt owed by Charles II to his father, he was granted the province of Pennsylvania. William Penn's aim was to create a colony with the greatest possible civil and religious liberty for all Christians. In 1682, Penn sailed to America, but returned to England in 1684. He spent most of the 1690s writing, preaching and trying to resolve the political, military, imperial and constitutional problems of his colony. Almost all his political writings addressed issues of liberty and conscience. The exception was his utopian idea for securing permanent peace in Europe (*Essay Towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe*). In 1699, he returned to America and then again to England in 1701. In 1707, he spent nine months in debtors' prison, and on his release, he mortgaged his American properties and tried to sell them back to the Crown. He suffered a paralytic stroke in 1712 from which he never recovered. Penn's philosophy was a combination of religious idealism and political practicalities. His arguments for toleration are grounded in a secular and expansive version of interest theory. He believed that oppressed subjects were a threat to peace, stability and prosperity and that true religion was a matter for individual conscience, not legislation. There was never a question of tolerating non-Christians or atheists. He never advocated a separation of Church and State, nor for the secularization of civil affairs.

Biographical information from article by Martyn P. Thompson in *Dictionary of Seventeenth Century British Philosophers*. Sterling, Virginia: Thoemmes Press, 2000

---

## Scope and Content note

---

This collection is comprised of the single volume, handwritten manuscript entitled "Some Account of William Penn's Birth, Education, and Death, Also: Some Account of his travels in the work of the ministry in some parts of Germany and Holland, etc." There is an illegible author's name on the cover of the manuscript, and it has been dated 1863. The volume is organized chronologically, and after providing

initial biographical information about William Penn, the volume provides brief descriptions of important events in Penn's life, organized by year.

---

## **Administrative Information**

---

### **Publication Information**

Haverford College Quaker & Special Collections October 2015

### **Use Restrictions**

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

### **Acquisition**

Unknown.

### **Processing Information**

Processed by Kara Flynn; completed October 2015.

---

## **Related Materials**

---

### **Related Materials**

- MC 853 William Penn papers
  - MC 1167 Vaux of correspondence, documents and graphics
  - MC 1184 Families of Philadelphia collection
  - MC 1195 William Wistar Comfort papers
- 

## **Controlled Access Headings**

---

**Genre(s)**

- Manuscripts

**Personal Name(s)**

- Penn, William, 1644-1718

**Subject(s)**

- Quakers
- Quakers--History
- Quakers--Pennsylvania

## Collection Inventory

Manuscript 1863