

# Landmark 98: William Penn, Quaker Hero

## Things to Talk About

### QUICKIES

1. In what city was William Penn born? A. London.
2. Where was Penn living when he first learned about Quakers? A. Ireland.
3. What did members of the religious group, whom others referred to as Quakers, call themselves in Penn's day? A. Friends of the Truth.
4. Who was the founder of the Quaker movement? A. George Fox.
5. Why was Penn expelled from Oxford? A. For not attending chapel.
6. What colony of the original thirteen, did Penn help to succeed before he founded Pennsylvania? A. New Jersey.
7. In what year did King Charles II give William Penn a charter deeding his land in America? A. In 1681.
8. How much land in America did the King of England grant to Penn? A. 45,000 square miles.
9. What did Penn have to pay the King of England for the Pennsylvania grant. A. Two beaver skins a year.
10. What does the name Philadelphia mean? A. City of brotherly love.
11. What caused so many deaths on Penn's ship *Welcome* enroute to America? A. Smallpox.
12. What was the name of Penn's home in America? A. Pennsbury Manor.

### THINKING QUESTIONS

1. What points in the narration show Penn came from a wealthy and important family in England?  
A. His father was admiral of the English fleet and knighted by the king; the family owned property in London, in the English countryside, and in Ireland; there was money for a good education for William and travel in Europe as a young man; the king owed Penn's father so much money it took the whole Pennsylvania grant to wipe out the debt! (Of course the king would consider this a cheap way to pay; nevertheless the monarch did not use this means of settling debts often.)
2. What customs of the Quakers would make them stand out from other people in the daily life of Penn's time?  
A. They wore very plain clothes, used "Thee" and "thou" in conversation, and refused to remove their hats as men normally did.
3. Why did government and church officials consider the Quakers as troublemakers in Penn's day?  
A. 1) Quakers believed in freedom of conscience – to decide for themselves matters concerning their conduct.  
2) They said God was in everyone as an inner light so the church and clergymen were not needed to help people contact God.

4. Why did Penn want to found a colony in the New World?
  - A. Persecutions of Quakers in England were increasing and he thought America might be a place where liberty of conscience would be possible and Quakers could worship freely.
5. What did Penn do to insure the success of his colony before he went to Pennsylvania?
  - A. 1) He sent word to the Indians, Dutch and Swedish on his land that they would be treated fairly.
  - 2) He drew up a street plan for Philadelphia and sent a surveyor to lay out the town.
  - 3) He sent out agents to find land buyers who would be sympathetic to freedom of religion.
  - 4) He drew up a plan of government.
6. What democratic features did Penn include in his governmental plans for Pennsylvania?
  - A. The council and general assembly were to be elected by the freemen; freedom of worship and speech, as well as trial by jury, were provided by law.
7. Why did the Indians love and trust William Penn?
  - A. He respected their rights and treated them fairly. He honored them by learning their language and by sharing their games.
8. What developments showed that the young Pennsylvania colony was a success?
  - A. Colonists poured in; ships came to trade from all over the world; yearly fairs in Philadelphia helped farmers sell their produce and livestock.
9. What colonial problem took Penn back to England the first time?
  - A. The boundary dispute with Maryland.
10. What happened in Pennsylvania to divide the colonists in the years between Penn's two trips to America?
  - A. Colonists came who were not Quakers and they grumbled about the way the government was managed.
11. How many years altogether did Penn spend in America?
  - A. Less than 5; 1682-1684 = 2 years plus, and 1699-1701.

#### **IDEAS TO DISCUSS**

1. In what ways was William Penn's life in extreme contrast to that of a courtier to the King of England that Penn's father had hoped his son's to be?
2. In what ways might the fact that William Penn was born within sight of the Tower of London be an omen for his life?
3. When the jury in Penn's trial rendered a verdict of "not guilty", the judge jailed the members. Why was the later court decision resulting from this case, to the effect that a jury must be allowed to render a free verdict, important in the history of freedom?
4. What did Penn mean when he referred to Pennsylvania as his "Holy Experiment"?