

## **William Penn, The Plan of Government for Pennsylvania, 1682**

*In 1682, Penn was granted land in Pennsylvania as a favor to his father for service to the King.*

Let there be here in this land of Pennsylvania men of wisdom and virtue. Let men of good conscience, to the best of their skills, create laws of this government to benefit all.

Be it known to all. I, William Penn, do declare that all Freemen, Planters, and Adventurers in this territory have the following liberties and privileges:

Freedom of conscience to practice their religious beliefs is guaranteed provided that they believe in one almighty God. They will not be made to do anything against their religious beliefs.

All persons who are Christians may serve in the government.

An Assembly chosen yearly by the freemen in the colony.

All criminals shall have the right to call witnesses to testify at trials.

When a servant is brought over to work the land at the end of his years of service he shall be given 50 acres of his master's land.

Planters are to trade fairly with the natives of this country.

No person shall harm or mistreat an Indian in any way.

I William Penn, Proprietor and Governor of Pennsylvania, declare for myself and my heirs that these liberties will be held by the people forever.

## **Thomas Dognan, “Governor’s Report on NY,” 1687**

*Dognan wrote this official report for the English government about the New York colony and its progress.*

The buildings in New York are generally of stone & brick. In the country the houses are mostly new built, having two or three rooms on a floor. The Dutch are great improvers of land. New York and Albany live wholly upon trade with the Indians, England, and the West Indies. The returns for England are generally Beaver, Peltry, Oil & Tobacco when we can have it. To the West Indies we send Flour, Bread, Peas, Pork & sometimes horses; the return from thence for the most part is rum which pays the King a considerable excise & some molasses which serves the people to make drink & pays no custom [tax]. . . .

Here be not many of the Church of England; few Roman Catholics; abundance of Quakers, preachers, men & Women especially...

Every Town and County must maintain their own poor, which makes them careful so that no Beggars, nor Idle Persons live here.

## **Gottlieb Mittelberger, Pennsylvania, 1750, German immigrant**

Coming to speak of Pennsylvania again, that colony possesses great liberties above all other English colonies, inasmuch as all religious sects are tolerated there. We find there Lutherans, Reformed, Catholics, Quakers, Mennonists or Anabaptists, Herrnhuters or Moravian Brethren, Pietists, Seventh Day Baptists, Dunkers, Presbyterians, Newborn, Freemasons, Separatists, Freethinkers, Jews, Mohammedans, Pagans, Negroes and Indians. The Evangelicals and Reformed, however, are in the majority.

## **Gabriel Thomas, Pennsylvania, 1698, Quaker immigrant from England**

. . . the Place is free for all Persuasions [religious sects], in a Sober and Civil way; for the Church of England and the Quakers bear equal Share in the Government. They live Friendly and Well together; there is no Persecution for Religion, nor ever like to be; . . .

## **A Dialogue on New Netherland (New York), Adriaen van der Donck, 1655**

We must look to commerce [trade]...which at present is carried on in the New-Netherlands, consists mostly in grain, as wheat, rye, peas, barley, &, and in pork, beef, fish, beer and wine, and what is necessary for families...with the commerce of navigable streams, of which we will treat, quantities are sent to the islands in the West Indies [Caribbean], . . . The country is well calculated and possesses the necessaries for a profitable trade. First, it is a fine fruitful country. Secondly, it has fine navigable rivers extending far inland, by which the productions of the country can be brought to places of traffic. The Indians, without our labor or trouble, bring to us their fur trade, worth tons of gold...

