



The Armor Portrait of William Penn in the Pennsylvania Historical Society Collection.

FOREWORD.

THIS, then, is the Golden Book of the Wanamaker Stores.

Wherein shall be set down the faithful record of fifty years in business.

Not penned by the Founder himself, but chronicled from the deeds and services of the stores, as public prints and contemporary memories disclose the story.

It is the history of a business that has distributed into the homes of the civilized world more than half a billion dollars' worth of merchandise.

Nearly a hundred million more than half a billion.

A business that has given remunerative employment to over 150,000 individual workers.

Whose census today reaches a maximum of over 15,000.

Whose stocks total over fourteen millions of dollars.

Whose customers are beyond computation.

Taking the average value of a store's separate sales-schedules at \$2, the business of which this is written has made at least three hundred million individual sales.

Assuming that each schedule covered an average of a little over three articles, it has sold over the counter close to a thousand million, or one billion, separate pieces of merchandise.

Yet the magnitude and bulk of these transactions are but the wash of the seas.

They would have left no mark on the sands of time were it not for the new and unusual methods of this gigantic distribution, the new principles of trading it established, the new business manners and morals it imparted, the leaven it has been to the whole business world, and the benefit it is to mankind.

Mind is greater than matter, but mind and matter harnessed together are dynamic.

Carrying most of this merchandise direct from the hands of the maker to the home of the consumer without intermediate waste, it is fair to say this business, by removing obstructions in the channel, has made navigable the shortest route between the Port of Supply and the Port of Demand.

By right, not merely of discovery, but of service, it has grown to be the largest vessel that traffics between these ports of human activity.

Yet its first cargo, consigned, sold and delivered to the public on April 8, 1861, when the Wanamaker store first opened its doors, was of the value of just \$24.67.

How this world-wide business, born so tiny, grew so large and strong and helpful, on what it was nurtured, what it has accomplished, and what more it still hopes to accomplish as it stands now at the very beginning of its new and greater life of power and service, may be read in the following pages, as well as human pen can interpret and record the human mind.

Let the reader not be misled, however, into thinking that this is a Golden Book only of finance and commerce, of money making and of money spending, of technical and tiresome trade. Due attention is given in the narrative to the history of Philadelphia, whose child the busi-

ness is; to the romance of trade and merchandise, where fact is more interesting than fiction; and to the truths, principles and laws of commercial economics in the discovery and codifying of which the Wanamaker Stores have played a conspicuous part.

Beyond being the bare record of fifty years in business, the Golden Book thus becomes—

A partial history of Philadelphia.

A chronicle of the evolution of retail commerce in America.

A record of the revolution which freed retail business from old-time traditions and errors, making it generally today a public utility of mutual benefit to the public, to the maker and to the merchant.

A text-book on scientific merchandising and advertising.

For Philadelphians and other kindly interested friends are reproduced some pictures of old Philadelphia and the old Grand Depot.

For the special attention of engineers, architects and lovers of art generally are presented some pictures and descriptions of the largest store in the world, which now houses the Philadelphia Wanamaker business, and of the two Wanamaker buildings in New York City.

With confidence, then, in its variety of interest, in its carefulness of statement, and with a sincere desire to tell the story of the Wanamaker Stores as they grew before the eyes of the people, this volume is presented for the kind consideration of a public which has never ceased to extend its generous and loyal support for half a century.



LANDING OF PENN AT BLUE ANCHOR INN, DOCK CREEK, NOW DOCK STREET, IN PHILADELPHIA.



SEAL OF PHILADELPHIA, 1683

BOOK ONE.

HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

TWO hundred and thirty-eight years before the founding of the Wanamaker business in Philadelphia, a Dutch sea-captain named May steered his small wooden ship up the Delaware to what is now Gloucester, and there helped to build Fort Nassau.

Then he sailed away, leaving his name on one of the capes—now Cape May.

The year was 1623, and William Penn was not yet born.

Indians had long tenanted the shores of the Delaware, which broad river they called the Lenape Wihittuck. But this did not keep European kings from laying claim to the region, whose richness was praised by returning adventurers. The Dutch were first to pioneer. Swift on their heels came sunny-headed Swedes, who planted colonies down the Delaware and founded trade in the