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Special Issue

“WHAT A GLORIOUS DAY!”

The East Jersey Proprietors’ Minutes (1682–1684),
Documentation of New Jersey History and a
Tribute to Richard P. McCormick

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PREFACE

BY ROBERT G. SEWELL, EDITOR

This special issue of the journal is devoted to some remarkable historical documents in New Jersey colonial history and is dedicated to Richard P. McCormick, the preeminent scholar of New Jersey history. The documents and the historian are connected in numerous ways—most concretely, McCormick's role in the acquisition of the documents by the New Jersey State Archives in June 2005, but more broadly in McCormick's lifelong devotion to New Jersey history and his seminal role in developing New Jersey historical documentation.

The title of this special issue, "What a Glorious Day!" comes from the opening words in Richard P. McCormick's remarks at the celebration of the exhibit opening of the documents at Morven Museum and Gardens in Princeton. These words embody the excitement about the purchase of these documents and their significance to New Jersey history. They also capture the great enthusiasm McCormick held for his lifelong passions: the history of New Jersey and its documentation.

The documents we are highlighting are related to the Proprietors of the Province of East New Jersey, including minutes of their London meetings from 1682 to 1684 and maps. Three articles place these documents in their historical context.

The first article, which I wrote, illuminates McCormick's role in the acquisition and celebration of these documents. It also gives a description of McCormick's long association with the *Journal of the Rutgers University Libraries*.

In the second article, Maxine Lurie, a history professor at Seton Hall University, places the minutes in their historical context and carefully identifies how they fit into previous known documents from colonial New Jersey. She also assesses the new information these minutes provide and suggest how it "opens new opportunities for research in early New Jersey history."

Finally, Joseph R. Klett, Chief Archivist in the Division of Archives and Records Management at the New Jersey Department of State, offers further insights into Richard P. McCormick's involvement with the acquisition by the State Archives of key documents from the colonial period. He also describes some of the characteristics of the minutes which he has transcribed in full at the end of this volume.