

John Perrot in Virginia

Communicated by HENRY J. CADBURY

THERE is frequent reference in the history of American Quakerism to the influence of John Perrot and his schism, especially in Virginia, Maryland and New York. It is known that after leaving England about 1662 he went to Barbadoes and lived and died in Jamaica, and that he visited the mainland, but as Rufus Jones has said, "details of his visit in Virginia are lacking".¹ A few of these details I find in the following paper of testimony preserved in the Virginia Records, an old mutilated book in the safe at Homewood Meeting, Baltimore, initiated as it says "in the year 1673 by the motion & order of George Fox the seruant of God". Among records of many sorts, marriage certificates, lists of births, Epistles and testimonies, it includes several confessions of guilt in connection with the Perrot schism, mostly made many years after that schism began. Some of these are even entered from English participants like Isaac Penington (London, 29 of 3 mo. 1675) and John Crook, apparently of about the same date referring to "a paper writt by me about 12 years since".² Leading Virginia Friends some three years later make acknowledgment, as Thomas Jordan, Edmond Belson, Edward Perkins and William Garratt. It is the last alone that makes any real (though slight) addition to our knowledge of events. The author, whose name appears frequently in these records, is perhaps to be identified with "William Yarrat the elder" mentioned elsewhere in them, who in turn seems to be called in MSS. of Fox's Travels to Pagan Creek William "Yaroes" or "Pardoe".³

¹ *Quakers in the American Colonies*, 1911, p. 276. Cf. Bowden, i. 348ff. A. C. and R. H. Thomas, p. 78. N. Penney in sketching the career of John Perrot in the Cambridge *Journal of George Fox*, 1911, pp. 375f, omits to mention his visit to Virginia.

² Cf. Thomas, p. 49n.

³ For the spelling Yarratt see his signature in a letter of 1674, Bristol MSS. v. 110, printed in *Jnl. F.H.S.*, xi., 1914, 28ff. Cf. also *Camb. Journal*, ii., 233, 3.

WILLIAM GARRATT'S TESTIMONY CONCERNING JOHN PERROTT

Being one of y^e first y^t went one borde y^e ship y^t brought y^e s^d Perrott into James Riuer I did see y^e first John Browne & William fuller came into y^e Round howse whare I was & sometime after came in John Perrott in y^e habit outwardly as one of y^e seruants of y^e Lord, but y^e witness of God in me was not Refreshed at his company Neither by what I heard from him but Rather burthened, for Returning to my outward being soon after I & another ware taken Prisoners for hauing a meeting in my howse w^{ch} meeting was before y^e s^d Perrott came in & we were commited Prisoners to y^e Sheriffs howse of y^e Islle of Weight county soon after y^e s^d Perrott & John Browne hauing business to James Towne : & hearing y^t we ware in Prison, came into y^e prison & did declare som words in the prison & we hauing Liberty from y^e Shriff went to Edward Jones his howse w^{ch} was my fellow Prisoner and had more words declared their and y^e next morning Upon y^e sands againe the Lord was good Unto me & did shew me y^t it was one as Saull y^t forced himselfe to doe sacrificise when y^e profett was wanting it is y^e Lord y^t make y^e barren wilderness to becom a fruitfull field & Through disobedienc he can turn it to a barren Place, John being Receued Amongst most of frends heare & being A Reporte y^t he was Receued amongst frends in y^e barbadoes generally I did reson with y^e weake fleshy parte y^t it would be better for me to Receue two into my house y^t was not in y^e power of y^e Lord than to denigh one y^t was in y^e power of y^e Lord soe weakness came ouer me and I pleaded y^t ware an Indifferent thing^e to me whether y^e hatt ware put on or off in time of prayer but y^e Lord did shew me soone after y^t whare the Inward Reverant is y^e outward would follow.

. . .
The 12 month 1678

Will Garatt

John Perrot in Rome : A Jesuit Account

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Through the courtesy of the library of the University of Breslau and that of the Selly Oak Colleges I have had the opportunity of examining the Roman Catholic work against Friends, identified in *J.F.H.S.*, xxix, 84, written by Theodore Rhay, entitled *Confusa Confessio Tremantium seu Quackerorum*, etc., Köln, 1666. Most of its 538 pages contain theological discussion which is of little interest. In the narrative introduction, as in all continental Anti-Quaker literature, James Nayler's episode occupies the largest space. But the following translated and summarized section from Chapter V, pp. 31 ff, is of interest for comparison with the abundant early Quaker literature on Perrot at Rome (see W. C. Braithwaite, *Beginnings of Quakerism*, p. 420, note), and suggests the possibility of finding at Rome itself some record of the incidents from the Catholic viewpoint. The evident use, however, of John Perrot's own English writings (see below) suggests