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Spotswood Hunnicutt

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QUAKERISM IN COLONIAL VIRGINIA

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by

Spotswood Runicutt

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts, with concentration in the field of
American history, at the College of William and Mary in Virginia.

Williamsburg, Virginia
1957

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FOREWORD

Out of the religious ferment of Puritan England came a great leader, George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends in 1644. Fox's Quakers,¹ as they were commonly called, were the anarchists of the Protestant Reformation who denied the authority of Church and Bible and rested their faith on the word of God spoken to the human soul. As expressed by George Fox, this new theology was simply primitive Christianity revived. The Quakers required no church or priesthood; every man was his own priest, and all were equal, addressing one another as "thee" and "thou." Literally observing the divine command "thou shalt not commit murder" even under the guise of war, they opposed persecution with passive resistance and, like the early Christians, gathered strength from oppression and victory from defeat. Thousands of Quakers were imprisoned in England during the first two years of the Restoration, yet the sect spread rapidly. Puritans and Anglicans, tired of the austerities of the one denomination or the indifference of the other and seeking brotherhood and peace, were converted by George Fox and his missionaries. Quakerism was the dynamic force of English Protestantism from 1650 to 1700.

The New World presented a broad, open field for the expansion and growth of the Society of Friends; there the Quakers meant to try their faith and work out their ideas unmolested. By 1660 George Fox was planning a colony in English America where individual Quaker missionaries had been at work since 1652. The early Quakers met with an unexpected amount of opposition, and severe laws were passed against them in every colony but Rhode Island. Finally, through passive resistance, they were to wear down the authorities and win a grudging toleration by the end of the seventeenth century.

The establishment and spread of Quakerism in English America in the seventeenth century came about in two distinct periods: The first period was the work of crusading missionaries in Massachusetts, Maryland, and Virginia--men and women fanatical in their zeal and despised in their success. By 1700 there were some three thousand Quakers in southern Massachusetts and numerous others in the Piscataqua region of Maine and in New Hampshire; Maryland Quakers numbered about three thousand and in Virginia there were four or five thousand.² The second period was concerned with the establishment of the "Holy Experiment," William Penn's Pennsylvania, where Quakers were free to live their ideal of the New Testament life. By the middle of the eighteenth century there were approximately twenty-five thousand Quakers in Pennsylvania.³

A large part of the population in the English colonies in the latter part of the seventeenth century consisted of Dissenters from the Church of England, and Virginia, the most prominent of the colonies set up under the Established Church, had its share. By 1699 there were numerous Presbyterians, Baptists, and Quakers in the colony. The thousands of Scot immigrants who belonged to the Established Church of Scotland found little to object to in the worship of the Virginia Church and entered into it without difficulty or objections; but English and Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who began their emigration to Virginia after the Restoration, were determined to organize themselves as a separate denomination. The first Presbyterian congregations met in 1692 in the counties of Princess Anne and Norfolk and there was a Baptist minister in Yorktown during the decade 1690-1700, but little is known of his work, nor is it clear whether he preached to organized Baptist congregations.

The Quakers were the largest group of Dissenters at the century's

end. They were especially numerous in Henrico County, in the eastern section of Hanover County, on the James River, and on the Eastern Shore. It is the purpose of this essay to tell the story of the establishment, organization, and expansion of the Quakers in Anglican Virginia from 1656, the date of the arrival of the first missionaries, to 1700, which marked the end of the first period of Quakerism in the colony.

1. In 1646, Fox refers to members of his Society as "Friends," Journal of George Fox, ed., Wilson Armistead (London, 1803), I, 54. Rufus Jones, in his Autobiography of George Fox (Philadelphia, 1906), I, 76, says it is not possible to determine exactly when the name was adopted or why it was chosen but that probably the word was used in an untechnical sense for those who were friendly, and little by little hardened into a name. S. M. Janney in his History of the Religious Society of Friends, From Its Rise to the Year 1828 (Philadelphia, 1860), I, 85, says the name "Friends" was adopted in accordance with the language of Christ when he said to his disciples, "Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. . . . I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."

This point is not agreed upon by all but it is undisputed that at first all of the members of Fox's Society were called "Professors of the Light" or "Children of the Light."

The name "Quaker" was fixed upon the Society in 1650, when Justice Gervase Bennet, one of the persecuting justices against George Fox, named him such because Fox called upon the Justice to tremble at the word of the Lord.

2. Rufus Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies (London, 1911), xvi.
3. Ibid.

Chapter I

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF QUAKERISM IN VIRGINIA

The first Quaker missionaries to Virginia arrived during the Interregnum, a period of political and religious unrest both in England and in Virginia. During the civil war Dissenters in the mother country had lined up with Parliament against the King and the Church of England. In the colonies, Puritan New England was in hearty sympathy with the English Dissenters, but in Anglican Virginia, where there were only several hundred Puritans, the government and the great body of the people were lined up with King Charles and the Established Church. Few though they were, the Puritans in Virginia were a disturbance to the Established order as well as to the civil authority. Virginians made life so intolerable for them that the entire group in 1649 accepted an invitation from Maryland to settle there. While this forcing out was more a political move to protect the government than a religious persecution to secure uniformity, the heated atmosphere made things more difficult for the Quaker missionaries in the next decade. It was only through the perseverance, patience, and strong faith of the propagating Friends that Quakerism was established in Virginia. A stream of missionaries traveled, visited, and labored in the colony during the last half of the seventeenth century.

Elizabeth Harris of London has been credited by leading historians of Quakerism¹ with being the first missionary to bring the Quaker message to Virginia. According to their accounts, Mrs. Harris arrived in Virginia in the latter part of 1656, labored diligently and with some success, and left the colony in July, 1657. But Rufus Jones, the twentieth century

historian of Quakerism,² insists that Mrs. Harris did not come to Virginia at all, but rather carried on her work in Maryland. Certainly there is no record or account of her alleged visit to Virginia. In fact, very few particulars of Elizabeth Harris' stay in America have been preserved. The main source of information concerning her is a letter she received from Robert Clarkson, one of her converts in America, upon her arrival back in England.

Elizabeth Harris, Dear Heart-

I salute thee in the tender love of the Father, which moved thee towards us, and do own thee to have been a minister, by the good will of God, to bear outward testimony, to the inward word of truth in me and others; even as many as the Lord in tender love and mercy, did give an ear to hear. Praises be to his name forever. Of which word of life, God hath made my wife partaker with me, and hath established our hearts in his fear, and likewise Ann Dorey in a more large measure; her husband I hope abideth faithful; likewise John Baldwin and Henry Caplins—Charles Balye, the young man who was with us at our parting, abides convinced, and several others in those parts where he dwells. Elizabeth Seaseley abides as she was when thou was here [apparently convinced]. Thomas Cole and William Cole have both made open confession of the truth; likewise Henry Woolchurch; and many others suffer with us the reprehensible name [Quakers]. William Fuller abides unmoved: I know not but that William Durand doth the like: he frequents our meetings but seldom; indeed we have but a small company. Nicholas Wayte abides convinced. Thus I have been moved to write thee word, briefly concerning the work of the Lord amongst us, both in myself and others, since thy departure from hence, as the Lord hath given me to discern it. Though absent in body, yet being kept present in that love which did first move in thee towards us; I say, being kept abiding in that, we may rejoice together; . . .

The two messengers thou spoke of in thy letters, are not yet come to this place; we hear of two come to Virginia in the forepart of the winter, but we heard that they were soon put in prison, and not suffered to pass; we heard further that they desired liberty to pass to this place but it was denied them, where upon one of them answered, that though they might not be suffered, yet he must come another time. We have heard that they are to be kept in prison till the ship that brought them be ready to depart the country again, and then to be sent out of the country. We have disposed of the most part of the books which were sent, so that all parts are furnished, and every one that desire it, may have benefit by them; at Herring

Creek, Roade River, South River, all about Severn, the Brand Heck, and thereabout, the seven mountains, and Kent; all these parts are so furnished that every one may have also of them. . . .

With my dear love I salute thy husband and the rest of Friends (at London), and rest with thee, and the rest of the gathered ones in the Eternal Word, which abideth for ever.
Farewell.

Robert Clarkson

From Severn, the 14th of the Eleventh Month, 1657.
This is in Virginia.⁴

Whether Elizabeth Harris came to Virginia or not, the letter establishes one point beyond dispute. By late 1657, Quakers were already living and proselytizing in the Chesapeake area, and we know from other evidence that converts to Quakerism were found in the Eastern Shore area, as well as around Chuckatuck and Isle of Wight.⁵

There is no question about the next missionaries who traveled and labored in Virginia. They were Josiah Coale and Thomas Thurston, probably the men to whom Robert Clarkson was referring when he wrote of two messengers come to Virginia during the first part of the winter of 1657. Both Coale and Thurston were from Gloucester originally. Leaving Bristol, where Coale had been converted to Quakerism in 1654, they arrived in Virginia near the close of 1657.⁶ Their visit was brief and unhappy. There was at that time no special law in Virginia against the Quakers but it is apparent that they were imprisoned in accordance with the general English practice.⁷ Despite their imprisonment they made converts. Subsequently, in 1658, a law was passed providing for the banishment of Friends and making it an act of felony if they should venture to return.⁸ In accordance with this law, Thomas Thurston and Josiah Coale were ordered to leave the colony.

Coale and Thurston attempted to carry on their work in Maryland and then traveled to Massachusetts, where they met with similar treatment. Filled with that crusading spirit characteristic of all the early Quaker missionaries, they remained undaunted. Judging from Coale's letter to George Bishop,⁹ that notorious protagonist of Quakerism, the only happy note of reception came from the Indians encountered on this journey.

When we went from virginia 2. 6th month 1658 after about 100 miles travell wee cam amongst the Indians
[In the margin is the name Susquehanna] who Courteously Received us and Entertayned us in theyr huttie with much Respect. . . .

Thomas Thurston returned to Virginia on August 3, 1659,¹⁰ where he was again imprisoned, but only briefly, for Coale later wrote that Thurston had been shortly liberated and the governor had promised him liberty in the country.¹¹ There are no other details of Thurston's work in Virginia, and in 1665 John Burnyeat, a traveling minister from England, lamented in his journal the fall and defection of Thurston who had joined forces with John Ferret,¹² the leader of the first schism in the Society of Friends. Josiah Coale returned to Virginia for a short time in 1660. A year later he wrote George Fox from Barbadoes that Friends in Virginia were very well and fresh in the truth and that he expected to return there after leaving Barbadoes;¹³ but there is no record of a visit in 1662. The exact effect of the activities of Thurston and Coale can not be accurately determined, but despite acute opposition they were successful in winning converts during a period when there were no other missionaries traveling and proselytizing in

Virginia. Certainly, to have persisted as they did, they were men with an obsession for spreading their message.

The next messengers to travel and labor in Virginia were William Robinson, Christopher Holder, and Robert Hodgson.¹⁴ The activities of Holder and Hodgson are not so well known as those of Robinson, and it is only through the latter that we know of the progress of the Society in Virginia two years after its beginning. Robinson reported to George Fox in 1659: "There are many people convinced, and some in several parts are brought into the sense and feeling of truth."¹⁵ His success in planting the seed of Quakerism led to his imprisonment on the Eastern Shore and later banishment from that section. Apparently his progress with the people there worried the authorities, who feared this threat to the civil administration, because at the same time that Robinson¹⁶ was ordered taken across the Chesapeake, local Quaker leaders¹⁷ were arrested and imprisoned.

The next account we have of visiting Friends in Virginia is in 1661 when George Rofs, Elizabeth Hooten, Joan Brockesoppe, William Coale, and George Wilson arrived. George Rofs, who had come over from England and had spent some time traveling in America, contributed more to the spread of Quakerism than any other member of this group. Though an English Quaker of many imprisonments, he apparently was not persecuted in Virginia as he had been in England and was able to do much constructive work. In an optimistic letter to his friend, Stephen Crisp, he reported:

From George Rofs to Stephen Crisp
Barbadoes, 15th of Ninth Month, 1661

Dear S. C.— My life salutes thee in that which is pure and eternal; wherein the Lord hath prospered my soul according to my desire and blessed me and his work in my hands, and hath made me an instrument of good to

many through these countries; to the gathering many into the knowledge of the truth, and the settling of many in a good sense of the life and power of the Lord; whereby they bless the Lord for his visitation, knowing it is life unto them; and virtue to their souls of all who do not believe unto obedience. So that the gospel is a savour of life unto life, and a savour of death until death.

But to mention passages at large I cannot now; but this thou mayest understand, that the truth prevailleth through most of these parts, and many settled meetings there are in Maryland, and Virginia and New England and the islands thereabouts; and in the island of Bermuda; through all which places I have traveled in the power of the Spirit, and in the great dominion of truth, having a great and weighty service for the Soul, in which I praise him, he hath prospered me in all things to this day.

I remain, thy dear brother,
G. Rofe¹⁸

The work of Elizabeth Hooten and Joan Brocksoppe, the two women missionaries in the 1661 group, remains obscure. They came to Virginia directly from England,¹⁹ but nothing is known of their reception here. Most of the early women missionaries were fanatical in their zeal and by their example struck at the very roots of the social order -- the modesty and reserve of women. These two may well have been imprisoned in Virginia and subsequently banished. They were unwelcome in every colony, and the records²⁰ tell of their departure (or expulsion) from Virginia to Boston, from Boston to Rhode Island and Barbadoes, from Barbadoes back to Boston. On this second encounter with the wrath of the Puritan fathers they were immediately arrested and put on board a ship going to Virginia. Here the story abruptly ends. If they arrived again in Virginia, there is small chance that they remained long. Though obviously not by choice, Hooten and Brocksoppe covered quite a bit of territory in one year.

Of the five missionaries who came to Virginia in 1661, George

Wilson and William Coale had the most disastrous experiences. Wilson was a traveling minister from England and Coale was a citizen of Maryland. When they arrived in Virginia, they were immediately thrown into prison. The Assembly of 1661/62 had modified the laws against Quakers, but the English law against non-conformists was invoked against them. Prison hardships proved too much for Wilson, who died; and even though Coale survived, he never really recovered from the effects of his imprisonment. Whatever these two men accomplished as missionaries the chief significance of their visit lies in the fact that their persecution is the first case of such severity in Virginia.

In the spring of 1662, three more missionaries, Joseph Nicholson, John Liddal, and Jane Millard came to Virginia, but nothing is known of their work or their sufferings except that they had many hard travels and sufferings in the service of the Lord.²¹ And in the following year, 1663, Mary Tomkins and Alice Ambrose, English Quakers, visited Virginia. It is not clear how long they were engaged in gospel labors here and the only particulars we have of their work come from the letter they wrote to George Fox from "The Cliffe" in Maryland, on January 18, 1663.

Dear G. F. -- The remembrance of thee, and the precious words which thou spoke unto us when we were with thee, remaineth with us a seal on our spirits. Dear George we are well, and God is with us. We have been in Virginia, where we have had good service for the Lord. Our sufferings have been large amongst them. John Perrot is now amongst them; many there are leavened with his unclean spirit. He has done much hurt, which has made our travels hard and our labours sore; for which we know he will have his reward, if he repent not. What we have borne and suffered concerning him, have been more and harder than all we have received from our enemies; but the Lord was good, and was with us, and in his power kept us over him. We have not time to

acquaint thee of much more. We are now about to set sail for Virginia again. We are not clear of New England; if the Lord will, we may pass there in a little time, if he maketh way for us. Dear George, it is our desire, if it were the will of God, to go to England again as soon as we can see our way there, for we greatly desire to see thee and Friends again. Let thy prayers be to the Lord for us, that we may live unto him for ever.

Mary Tomkins
Alice Ambrose, 22

Just when they returned to Virginia is uncertain but they were expelled from the colony in June, 1664.

John Perrot, the "unclean spirit" mentioned by Mary Tomkins and Alice Ambrose, was responsible for the first discord in the Society of Friends. He had gained notoriety as a result of his sufferings while in prison in Rome, where he had gone to convert the Pops. His break with George Fox began in 1661 with his attempt to persuade people that uncovering the head in time of prayer was a mere form. Claiming to be more enlightened than Fox, he advocated other opposing practices, encouraging Friends to grow beards and discouraging attendance at meetings for worship.

When Perrot came to the New World to spread his teachings, he stopped first at Barbadoes, where he was warmly received, and then went on to Jamaica with his old friend John Browne. Leaving Jamaica, they set out for Virginia and Maryland, arriving in the autumn of 1663.²³ The journals and writings of other visiting Friends deplore the havoc he created with the work already begun by visiting missionaries. The people of Virginia were especially responsive to his teachings, particularly to his stand against regular meetings for worship. Perrot reasoned that holding meetings on certain specific days would offer to the persecutors of the Quakers

a better opportunity to sweep down upon them. At any rate, the success of Perrot's labors was considerable, to the great distress of the more orthodox Friends. Perrot came forth with his teachings at precisely the right time, when it was evident that many forms and ceremonies, not authorized by Scripture, had crept into all the churches. A great number of people therefore were ready and willing to listen to any suggestions against forms of every kind and in this manner Perrot found a substantial following in Virginia.²⁴

Perrot was the cause of his own decline and loss of popularity. After leaving Virginia, he returned to Barbadoes,²⁵ and from here he moved to Jamaica. While in Jamaica he manifested a degree of depravity, to Quakers' eyes, by his haughty manner, pride in dress, and gross sensuality. Shortly thereafter he discarded his Quaker tenets, became a lawyer, and practiced this profession until his death, to the obvious relief of the Quaker missionaries both in England and in Virginia. It was some time before his influence was entirely extinguished in Virginia, but the immorality of his later years contributed strongly to bringing many Friends back into the fold of George Fox.²⁶

The task of returning the strayed Virginia Quakers to the fold fell to John Burnyeat, whom George Fox called "A Pillar in the House of God." Upon his arrival in Virginia around 1665, Burnyeat found that because of the Perrot faction many Friends had neglected to hold meetings oftener than once a year. In a great measure they had even relinquished their religious tenets. With much difficulty Burnyeat succeeded in obtaining a meeting among them; then he declared, "the Lord's power was with us, and several were revived and refreshed, being through the Lord's

goodness and his renewed visitations, raised up into a service of life, and in time came to see over the wiles of the enemy."²⁷ Most of his labors here were in "reviving and refreshing" the old members rather than seeking new ones and by the time of his departure in June, 1666, he had restored a good deal of order and uniformity.

There is no record of Friends visiting in Virginia from 1666 until the return of Burnyeat in 1671. Again he traveled in Virginia--this time in the company of Daniel Gould of Rhode Island.²⁸ His labors were apparently even more successful on this second visit:

I went down to Virginia (in November, 1671) to visit Friends there, and found a freshness amongst them; and they were many of them restored, and grown up to a degree of their former zeal and tenderness; and I found a great openness in the country, and had several blessed meetings. I advised them to have a men's meeting, and so to meet together to settle things in good order amongst them, that they might be instrumental to the gathering of such as were yet scattered, and stirring up of such as were cold and careless; and so keep things in order, sweet and well amongst them.²⁹

The years 1671-72 mark the arrival in Virginia of the most important of all the Quaker missionaries--William Edmundson and George Fox. The first to arrive was Edmundson, only a few months after the departure of Burnyeat. He had come over from England in the company of George Fox by way of Barbadoes. The two had first set foot on American soil at Patuxent, Maryland, in April, 1671.³⁰ Here they met with Burnyeat, who had recently departed from Virginia. While Fox and Burnyeat set out for New England, Edmundson took a boat to Virginia "where [he found] things were much out of order,"³¹ in contrast to Burnyeat's report. Under instructions from Fox, Edmundson worked primarily to set up organized meetings for discipline. His journal indicates that he was successful and that he soon had several good meetings where the minds

of the people seemed better settled. He then proceeded to appoint a men's meeting for discipline³² and, apparently satisfied, he departed for North Carolina.³³

In a short time Edmundson was back in Virginia. The journal of this second visit is especially interesting because it is the first report of the exact location of a meeting held in Virginia. He recorded that he traveled to several places in the colony and that he especially remembered the place called Green Spring, near Jamestown. A meeting had been set up earlier, but had been soon afterwards abandoned because of the bad example of one Thomas Newhouse, a preacher among them. Edmundson brought a number of the converts back into meeting and "they were glad thereof and much comforted."³⁴ He was rewarded for his great efforts in spreading the Quaker gospel by the many convictions and confirmations. The fact that he was on good terms with many men of prominence in Virginia, several of whom attended his meetings, indicates something of the nature and quality of his teachings because heretofore Quakerism had its strongest appeal among the poor, uneducated people. Edmundson spent a night at the home of Justice Taverner, who was in sympathy with the Quakers and whose wife was a Quaker. The next day he held a meeting at the house of William Wright³⁵ and not only did Taverner and his wife attend but also Major-General Richard Bennet, the first governor sent out to Virginia by Cromwell, and a Colonel Dewee.³⁶ Other people of the region were quick to respond to his message and he observed with satisfaction: ". . . a blessed, heavenly meeting it was; many were tendered by the Lord's power, and the witness of God reached, which answered to the truth of the Lord's testimony, that was declared to them in his power."³⁷

After seven weeks of proselytizing in Virginia, Edmundson traveled to Maryland and then on into New England where at Shelter Island,³⁸ near Long Island, he met George Fox.³⁹ Fox left Edmundson at Shelter Island and set out himself for Virginia, reaching the colony around the eight^h of November, 1672. Part of the trip was made by water--from Patuxent, Maryland, down the Chesapeake Bay and up the Nansemond River. Fox recorded in his journal that the voyage was hampered by foul weather, storms and rain, and that at night they lay in the woods by a fire. On arriving at Nansemond he held a large meeting of Friends and others--apparently the only meeting held in this vicinity. From here he started for Carolina and held several meetings on the way, one about four miles from Nansemond River. At this meeting he established a men's and a women's meeting for taking care of the affairs of the church. A second meeting at William Yarrow's on Pagan Creek was so large that the house would not hold the gathering and the meeting was held out of doors. "A great openness there was, the sound of truth spread abroad, and a good savour in the hearts of people: the Lord have the glory for ever!"⁴⁰ he exulted.

Fox came back to Virginia after spending about eighteen days in North Carolina. Of this visit he reported:

We spent about three weeks traveling through Virginia, mostly among Friends, having many large and precious meetings in several parts of the country; as at the widow Wright's where a great many magistrates, officers and other high people came. A most heavenly meeting we had, wherein the power of the Lord was so great, that it struck a dread upon the assembly and chained all down, and brought a reverence upon the people's minds. . . . Another very good meeting was had at Orickatrough [Ohuskatuck?] at which many considerable people were, many of whom had never heard a Friend before; and they were greatly satisfied with the meeting, praised be the Lord! We had also a very good

and serviceable meeting at John Porter's, which consisted mostly of other people; in which the power of the Lord was gloriously seen and felt, and it brought the truth over all evil walkers and talkers; blessed be the Lord!⁴¹

The last week of his visit was spent in correcting the evils that had come into the Society, "sweeping away that which was to be swept out, and working down a bad spirit that was got up in some. . . ." ⁴² On October 30, 1672, he set out for Maryland. For this brief period of time only was the founder of the Society of Friends in Virginia.

After the visit of Edmundson and Fox, the Society began to revive in Virginia. To these two men and Burnysat go the credit for having greatly strengthened the position of Quakerism in Virginia. As a result of their teaching and labors the membership of Friends more than doubled. Their objective had been chiefly to extend the organization of the Society which had begun in England in 1669. With the departure of Fox, the Society was obviously prospering and 1672 is the date given for the establishment of meetings for discipline in Virginia.⁴³ Not only were Edmundson and Fox successful in organizing the Society in Virginia, but it was through their effort that the attitude changed within the colony toward Quakerism. Serious and earnest, yet not fanatical as the earlier missionaries had been, these men did much to alleviate the fear among Virginians that the Quakers were attempting to overthrow the established order of government and church. Their activities clearly proved that the primary concern of the Quakers was the establishment of a new field where the Society could grow and expand. A grudging toleration had been won and with the departure of Fox in 1672 the period of Quaker infancy ended in Virginia.

Chapter I

FOOTNOTES

1. James Bowden, The History of the Society of Friends in America (London, 1850), I, iv, 342-343, hereafter cited as Bowden, Friends in America; Samuel M. Janney, The History of the Religious Society of Friends, From Its Rise to the Year 1828 (Philadelphia, 1860), I, 432-433, hereafter cited as Janney, History of the Society of Friends; Stephen B. Weeks, Southern Quakers and Slavery (Baltimore, 1896), 13-14, hereafter cited as Weeks, Southern Quakers; H. R. Mollwaine, The Struggle of Protestant Dissenters for Religious Toleration in Virginia (Baltimore, 1894), 19-20, hereafter cited as Mollwaine, Protestant Dissenters in Virginia.
2. Rufus Jones, The Quakers in the American Colonies (London, 1911), 266-288, hereafter cited as Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies.
3. These Friends were most probably Josiah Coale and Thomas Thurston, who visited Virginia near the close of 1657. William Sewall, The History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers (New York, 1844), I, 351; Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 342-343; Janney, History of the Society of Friends, I, 432-433.
4. Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 340. The original is in the Swarthmore Collection, III, 7. It is this letter that brought about the controversy over the exact founding of Quakerism in the Virginia colony.
5. This evidence will be discussed in more detail in the chapter of this study entitled "The Organization and Expansion of the Society of Friends in Virginia."
6. Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 342.
7. The general English practice was persecution of all non-conformists, except in the days of the Protectorate when "an embryo bill of rights was instituted by the guarantee of religious liberty to all except Catholics and Episcopalians." W. E. Lunt, History of England (New York, 1947), 442.
8. W. V. Hening, The Statutes at Large . . . of Virginia (New York, 1823), II, 180-183, hereafter cited as Hening, Statutes.
9. This letter is from the Abram Rawlinson Barclay Collection of MSS. in Devonshire House. Quoted in Journal of the Friends Historical Society (London, n. d.), XXVII, 23.
10. Archives of Maryland, Proceedings of the Council, 1639-1669, III, 364.
11. Coale to Margaret Fell, quoted in Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 343.

12. John Perrot was the leader of the first schism among Friends. He differed in three points from the teachings of George Fox: 1) he maintained that the practice of uncovering the head in time of prayer was a mere form and one that ought to be abandoned; 2) he let his beard grow; 3) he discouraged attendance at meetings for worship on the grounds that this was also a mere form and one that invited persecution. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 27-28.
13. Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 346.
14. The Woodhouse, the ship which brought Horder, Hodgson, and Robinson to America, also brought the celebrated Humphrey Norton, author of The New England Ensign (London, 1659), which gave a vivid account of the sufferings and wrongs of the Quakers in America. Norton is believed to have been a visitor in Virginia in 1639, but the evidence is vague. Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 346; Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies, 273.
15. Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 346. An extant letter.
16. Susie Ames, Studies of the Virginia Eastern Shore in the Seventeenth Century (Richmond, 1940), 232, quoting from the Northampton County Order Book, VIII, 13, 21, hereafter cited as Ames, Studies of the Virginia Eastern Shore.
17. One of these leaders, Henry Vaux, was charged with having entertained Robinson and having refused to give security for good behavior. He was imprisoned by order of the General Court, from June 29 to July 30. Ames, Studies of the Virginia Eastern Shore, 12, 26.
18. This letter is quoted from Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 347, but he does not disclose where it can be found. Rufus Jones attributes it to the Crisp Collection of MSS., No. 102.
19. Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 347.
20. Jarney, History of the Society of Friends, II, 97.
21. George Bishop, New England Judged, By the Spirit of the Lord (London, 1703), 423, hereafter cited as Bishop, New England Judged.
22. Ibid. This letter is in the Swarthmore Collection, IV, 259.
23. Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 350.
24. W. O. Braithwaite, The Second Period of Quakerism (London, 1921), 232.
25. Barbadoes played an important part in the development of Quakerism on the American continent. Many Quakers visited this island on their way to and from America. George Rofe, in 1661, called the island "the nursery of the truth," (from a letter in the Stephen Crisp Collection, No. 102, as

quoted by Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies, 41). However, much persecution occurred here and Joseph Besse (Sufferings of the Quakers (London, 1753), II, 278-351) gives a list of two hundred and sixty Friends who suffered persecution in Barbadoes.

26. Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 351.

27. Janney, History of the Society of Friends, II, 103; Journal of John Burnyeat in Friends' Library, XI, 136.

28. Bowden, Friends in America, I, iv, 355.

29. Journal of John Burnyeat in Friends' Library, XI, 144.

30. Wilson Armistead, ed., Journal of George Fox (London, 1852), II, 106, hereafter cited as Armistead, Journal of George Fox.

31. William Edmundson, Journal (Dublin, 1820), 88, hereafter cited as Edmundson, Journal.

32. Ibid.

33. Edmundson's description of his journey leads us to believe that he encountered more perils and difficulties than any of the other Quaker travelers. Journal, 90.

34. Edmundson, Journal, 90-91.

35. Apparently Taverner and Wright both lived in Nansmond County.

36. In his account of this meeting (Journal, 91-92), Edmundson says: "I came that night to Justice Taverner's house. . .; the next day was the men's meeting at William Wright's house. . . there were several other persons of note came to the meeting, particularly Richard Bennet, alias Major-General Bennet, and Colonel Dewes, with others and a great many Friends; . . . Justice Taverner's wife came to me, and told me, that the Major General, Col. Dewes, and others were below, staying to speak with me; so I went down to them: They were courteous, and said they only staid to see me, and acknowledge what I had spoken in the meeting was truth. I told them the reason of our Friends drawing apart from them was, to lay down a method to provide for our poor widows and fatherless children; to take care that no disorders were committed in our society; and that all lived orderly, according to what they professed; also informed them that in England and other places we had such meetings settled for that service; the major general replied, he was glad to hear there was such care and order among us; and wished it had been so with others; he further said, he was a man of great estate, and many of our Friends were mean men, therefore he desired to contribute with them. He likewise asked me, how I was treated by the governor?⁽¹⁾ . . . They were tender and loving, so we parted, the major-general desiring to see me at his house, which I was willing to do, and accordingly went. He was a brave, solid, wise man, received the truth, and died in the same, leaving two Friends his executors."

36. (1) Edmundson's reply to Bennet's question concerning his treatment by the Governor is recorded in his journal (91) thus: "As I returned from North Carolina I had something upon me to visit the governor, Sir William Berkeley, and to speak with him about Friends' sufferings. So I went about six miles out of my way to speak with him, accompanied with William Garret, an honest ancient Friend. I told the governor, that I came from Ireland, where his brother was lord lieutenant, who was kind to our Friends; and if he had any service for me to his brother, I would willingly do it; and as his brother was kind to our Friends in Ireland, I hoped he would be so to our Friends in Virginia. He was very peevish and brittle, and I could fasten nothing upon him with all the soft arguments I could use; so when I had done my endeavors and was clear, I left him. . . ."

Bennet then asked if the governor had called Edmundson "dog or rogue" and when Edmundson replied in the negative, Bennet said, "You took him in his best humour, they being his usual terms when he is angry"

37. Edmundson, Journal, 91.

38. Shelter Island is near the east end of Long Island between Gardiner's Bay and Peconic Bay. Nathaniel Sylvester, a Quaker, bought the island in 1662, and made a real shelter for harried Friends.

39. Armstrong, Journal of George Fox, II, 113.

40. Ibid., II, 120.

41. Ibid., II, 122-123.

42. Ibid.

43. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 30.

Chapter II

PERSECUTION OF THE QUAKERS IN VIRGINIA

Persecution is the single factor which played the most significant part in the growth of the Society of Friends. In the face of brutal and fierce persecution in England and moderately severe persecution in Virginia, the Quaker movement spread and developed. The Society grew by the buffets it received, and as persecution increased so did the number of Quakers. So firmly were they imbued with their doctrines that neither persecution nor public ridicule caused them to veer from their tenets but served to make them stronger:

The reasons for this persecution were numerous, and its form varied from place to place and from time to time. The Quaker movement was sometimes taken as a serious threat to the already established religious order or to the civil authority itself; or again, as the New England colonies believed, it could be an assault upon souls, more formidable to the Puritans than powder and shot which only imperiled men's lives. Everywhere there was some fear of this religious group and persecution was almost inevitable.

There was no special law in the Virginia Colony against Quakers when the first missionaries arrived. The legal penalties imposed by the Virginia authorities were merely in imitation of the general practice against non-conformity in England. Uniformity in religion had been the pattern in the colony from its early beginnings, and the lot of the Virginia Quaker was hard. During the reign of Charles I, non-conformity in Virginia was punished by disfranchisement and exile. As the result of the coming of some adventurous Roman Catholics to Virginia,

the Assembly in 1642 brought forth a law which decreed that "no popish recusants shall at any time hereafter exercise the place or places of secret counsellors, register, or commiss~~ioners~~/: surveyors or sheriffs, or any other publique place, but be utterly disabled from the same."¹ The Act also provided that anyone holding office and refusing to take "the oath of allegiance and supremacy" would be fined 1000 pounds of tobacco and be dismissed from his office. The next year an Act of the Assembly was directed at the Puritans in Henric County. It stated that "all ministers whatsoever which shall reside in the colony are to be conformable to the orders and constitutions of the Church of England, and not otherwise to be permitted to teach or preach publicly or privately. And the Governor and Council do take care that all non conformists, upon notice of them, shall be compelled to depart the colony with all convenience."²

When the Quakers first began to disturb the religious uniformity of the colony in 1656/57, these laws had fallen into disuse but with the coming of the Quakers they were revived. The laws were soon found to be inadequate because they had been enacted first during the Commonwealth period and were considered to be too lenient when applied to Quakers. The Virginia Assembly immediately set out to provide new ones to protect the Church and government. In 1658, by a law directed at non-conformists, it was enacted that every Quaker should be banished from the colony because of the threat they presented to the Established Church and hence to the civil authorities.³ The first law in Virginia to be directed toward the Quakers eo nomine was one passed in March, 1660, entitled "An Act for Suppressing Quakers."⁴ It reads:

Whereas there is an unreasonable and turbulent sort of people, commonly called Quakers, who, contrary to the law, do dayly gather together unto their unlawfull Assemblies and congregations of people teaching and publishing lies, miracles, false visions, prophecies, and doctrines, which have influence upon the communities of men, both ecclesiastical and civil, endeavoring and attempting thereby to destroy religion, laws, communities, and all bonds of civil society, leaving it arbitrary to every vaine and vitious person whether men shall be safe, laws established, offenders punished, and Governours rule, hereby disturbing the publique peace and just interest: to prevent and restrain which mischiefes: it is enacted that no master or commander of any shippe or other vessel do bring into this collonie any person or persons called Quakers, under penalty of £ 100 to be levied upon him and his estate, etc. That all Quakers as have been questioned or shall hereafter arrive shall be apprehended wheresoever they shall be found, and they be imprisoned without baile or mainprize till they do adjure this country or put in security with all speed to depart the collonie and not to return again. And if any should dare to presume to return hither after such departure to be proceeded against as contemner of the laws and magistracy and punished accordingly, and caused again to depart the country. And if they should the third time be so audacious and impudent as to return hither to be proceeded against as Felons. That noe person shall entertain any of the Quakers, . . . nor permit in or near his house any Assemblies of Quakers in the like penalty of £ 100.

And that no person do presume on their peril to dispose or publish their booke, pamphlets, or libells, bearing the title of their tenets and opinions.

This bill was the first to be brought before the Virginia Assembly after the return of the Royalist party to power with Sir William Berkeley once more as governor. A staunch Loyalist and member of the Church of England, Berkeley was violently opposed to any dissent. He did all in his power to wipe out the Quakers, and the religious freedom which prevailed in the Commonwealth period, due to lax law enforcement,

was quickly ended. The wording of this act of 1660 implies that Quakers were not objected to primarily because of doctrine but because they were a menace to the stability of social life and civil government, which justified the severe restrictions and penalties put upon them.

That an act such as this was passed only four years after the first "planting of the seed" in Virginia indicates that the Society had grown sufficiently to cause concern to the government. For example, so many of the inhabitants of York County had been converted to Quakerism that the judges of the county court expressed great alarm lest they become a "disturbance of the country's peace and the country's government." The authorities in this region were ordered to do all in their power to prevent Quaker meetings or activities in the future.⁵

The laws of 1658 and 1660 mark the beginning of legislation intended to stamp out the new faith. In March, 1662, under the caption "Sundays not to be profaned," the legislators of Virginia brought from obscurity the statute 23d Elizabeth, which was aimed at Romish recusants, and applied it to the Quakers.⁶ By this law, a penalty of £ 20 a month was imposed for refusing to go to church "and if they forbear a twelve-month then to give good security for their good behavior besides their payment for their monthly absences, according to the tenor of the said statute. And that all Quakers for assembling in unlawful assemblies and conventicles be fined and pay each of them there taken, 200 pounds of tobacco for each time they shall be for such unlawful meeting taken or presented by the church-wardens to the country court."⁷ In addition, it provided that if any members were unable to pay the fine, the more able were to pay it for them. Along with this act, another was passed

which required churchwardens to present to the court twice a year all cases of offense under this law.⁸

In December of the same year, 1662, a law aimed at the Baptists as well as Quakers was passed. This act provided that "whereas many schismatical persons, out of their averseness to the orthodox established religion, or out of the new fangled conceits of their owne heretical inventions, refuse to have their children baptized," they should be fined 200 pounds of tobacco for every refusal—half to go to the informer.⁹ These laws were vigorously applied, but they proved to be ineffective, since Quaker missionaries continued to arrive and record conversions.

A revision of the laws of the Virginia Colony was made in 1662 but the law of 1659/60 was not included in the revision, probably because of its almost complete failure. In its stead an act was passed in September, 1663, prohibiting the unlawful assembling of Quakers.¹⁰ This law stated that the persons called Quakers who assembled in great numbers in the colony were maintaining a secret and strict correspondence among themselves and holding dangerous tenets and opinions. It provided that if the Quakers or any separatists over the age of sixteen should assemble to the number of five or more in a religious meeting not authorized by the laws of England or the colony, they should be fined. The fine for the first offense was 200 pounds of tobacco, for the second 500 pounds of tobacco (to be levied by distress and the sale of goods) and for the third offense, banishment from the colony. If any shipmaster brought Quakers into the colony after the first of July, 1664, except in accordance with the laws of England, he should

be fined 5,000 pounds of tobacco and be required to take the Quakers out of the colony again. If any person entertained a Quaker in or near his house, to preach or teach, he was to be fined 2,000 pounds of tobacco. However, the provision was added that if Quakers or others, after being convicted, should give their word not to violate the act again, they were to be discharged from other penalties. By this act the authorities left no escape for the Quakers, or any dissenters, except flight into the Establishment or flight out of Virginia. Literal adherence to the act meant that a minister or layman could not offer a prayer at the bedside of the dying if there were five adults present; dissenters could not entertain friends in their homes; and the whole of the dissenters would be held responsible for the acts of a few.

The life of the early Virginia Quakers was made difficult by the Virginia Assembly but these people remained steadfast in their determination to spread their doctrines far and wide. They were not a bashful people. They could, and did, speak out—"villifying the ministers, disobeying the laws, and blaspheming God," establishing for themselves the reputation of a bold and aggressive people. Legal persecution and suppression prevailed in the Virginia colony until 1689 when William and Mary's Act of Toleration was passed, bringing some relief to dissenters. Dr. Philip Alexander Bruce gives what seems to be the most unbiased analysis of the role of persecution in the establishment of Quakerism in Virginia. He points out that in light of the actions of this pestiferous group it is surprising that persecution was not pushed to a greater extreme, and adds:

And that it was not, was probably due to the fact that there was something in the Quakers' purely religious doctrines which made a strong appeal to the sympathies of many influential persons. The appeal to the lower section of the population was far stronger, certainly for a time. . . . It should be remembered that the great body of the people were widely dispersed; that family after family occupied a separate plantation. . . that the life they led. . . lonely and uneventful. . . . Loyal as the great mass of people were to the Church of England. . . there was nothing in the manner in which it imparted its religious consolations to vivify. . . the religious instincts of its congregations in the spirit of the modern religious revival. Now this was precisely what the early Quakers did. . . . The missionaries of the sect made a direct appeal at the very hearth. Religion dropped the formalities of the liturgy and spoke to the spirit in the language of every day. It became personal, urgent, irresistible.¹¹

Because of this response to Quakerism, it appears that only the less worldly features of this sect prevented it from gathering more converts than it did, i. e., their refusal to bear arms, to serve in the militia, to help build forts, to recognize authority, to pay tithes, or to take oaths.

The laws of the Virginia Assembly directed against the Quakers led to the persecution of many of the early missionaries. If Elizabeth Harris suffered in any way because of her work, there is no record of it and the first notice we have of general persecution is that which occurred on the Eastern Shore. Little is known of these Quakers except that they did exist there as early as 1656/57¹² in sufficient numbers to warrant the building of a meeting house at Massawadox, the first to be located in Virginia. In the first of the Eastern Shore persecutions, William Robinson, traveling missionary, was charged with blasphemy and heresy, and banished across the Chesapeake. Henry Vaux, Robinson's host

during his visit, was arrested for harboring a Quaker and was given a choice of breaking off his association with the Quakers or suffering the consequences. He chose the consequences, imprisonment for a month.¹⁵ By 1661 the persecution on the Eastern Shore had become so harsh and so extensive that many Quakers fled north to the Eastern Shore of Maryland. This action was taken in response to an invitation from Governor Calvert of Maryland, who had received a petition from "diverse persons from Northampton." He allowed them to settle below the Choptank River and gave to each fifty acres of land. This soon brought hard feelings between the governments of the two colonies because Virginia claimed that the settlers still belonged to Virginia and attempted to collect rents from them. One of the collectors, Colonel Edmund Scarborough, left the following account of his contact with these refugees:

We went to the house of Ambrose Dixon, a Quaker, where a boat and two men, belonging to Groome's Shipp, and two running Quakers were, also George Johnson, and Thomas Price, inhabitants and Quakers. He found there a certain Hollingsworth, merchant of a northern vessel, who presented his request for liberty to trade, which I doubted i. e. suspected was some plott of the Quakers.

Stephen Horsey, the ignorant yet insolent officer, a cooper by profession, who lived long in the lower parts of Accomack belonging to Virginia once elected a burgesse by the common crowd, and thrown out by the Assembly for a fractious and tumultuous person, a man repugnant to all gov't, of all sects, yet professed by none, constant in nothing, but opposing church gov't, his children at great ages yet unchristened. He left the lower parts i. e. Accomack to head rebellion at Annamessacks.

George Johnson, the protous of heresy. . . is notorious for shifting, schismatical pranks. . . .

Thomas Price, a creeping Quaker, by trade a leather dresser, whose conscience would not serve to

dwell amongst the wicked, and therefore he retired to Annamesecks where he hears much, and says nothing els but that hee would not obey gov^t for which he also stands arrested,

Ambrose Dixon, a caulker by profession, that lived long in the lower parts was often, in question, for his quaking profession, removed to Annamesecks where he is a prater of nonsense. . . . A receiver of many Quakers his house is the place of their resort /i. e. their meeting place/.

Henry Boston, an unmannerly fellow, stands condemned for slighting and condemning the laws of the country, a rebell to gover^t and disobedient to authority. . . hath not subscribed /i. e. to the oath/ . . . These are all, except two or three loose fellows who follow the Quakers for scrapps, whom a good whip is fittest to reform.¹⁴

The authorities' opinion of the Quakers on the Eastern Shore changed during the latter part of the seventeenth century when their conduct won for them not merely toleration but respect and honor. This attitude is best expressed in the words of a man who was not of the Society, John Custis, IV. Upon having a particular man recommended to him with a qualifying reference to his being a Quaker, Custis replied that would not in the least lessen his esteem of him, that he had always been "a friend to that persuasion" and considered them "a quiet, zealous, intelligent, good-natured, proper" sect.¹⁵

At the time of the persecution on the Eastern Shore, Josiah Coale and Thomas Thurston, traveling missionaries, were encountering the same difficulty in other parts of the colony. They had arrived in Virginia in 1657 and had pursued their work without too much difficulty until the passage of the law in 1658, which provided for the banishment of Friends. The two men were accordingly banished; but until

their departure were imprisoned, without access to pen, ink, or paper.¹⁶ Thurston returned to Virginia in 1659 and Coale in 1660. Thurston was again imprisoned and upon his release left the colony for good.

Shortly after the passage of the act of 1660 the visiting missionaries William Coale and George Wilson arrived in the colony. These two men were punished in accordance with the Act of 1660, more severely than any before. Prior to his death in the Jamestown prison, Wilson wrote of his faith and suffering.

From that dirty dungeon in Jamestown,
the 17th of the Third Month, 1662—

If they who visit not such in prison (as Christ speaks of) shall be punished with everlasting destruction, O what will ye do? Or what will become of you who put us into such nasty, stinking prisons, as this dirty dungeon, where we have not had the benefit to do what nature requireth, nor so much as air, to blow in, at a window, but close made up with brick and lime, so there is no air to take away the smell of our dung and _____ who for all their cruelty, I can truly say "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But thus saith the Lord unto me, "Tell them that because wilfully they are ignorant I will strike them with astonishment, and will bring upon them the filth of their own dung and drink their own _____, it shall so odiously stand before them, that it shall be an evil stink in succeeding generations. This you shall eternally witness, for I have spoken with you in the name of the Lord, in whose authority this is to go abroad."¹⁷

Norfolk County was the scene of severe persecution, the first involving native Virginians. The whipping of Isabell Spring, the only instance in Virginia official records of the whipping of a Virginia woman for her religious convictions, occurred on August 15, 1661, and is described in the records of the Court of Lower Norfolk County:

Whereas Mr. Thomas Browne hath Informed the Court that Isabell Spring hath abused him in calling him traitor & other abusive and threatening speeches coming to her house to suppress the Quakers. It is therefore ordered that she receive twenty lashes on her bare back & that her fact (sect?) bee set in writing on her & also that she remaine in the custody of the sherr untill shee acknowledge her fault on her knees in open Court, & also pay the Court Charges & thirty _____ to the Comrs by act. I say Isabell the Wife of Robert Spring.¹⁸

In December, 1662, a Colonel John Sidney, high sheriff of Norfolk County, summoned a number of people, his own daughter among them, to court for holding a Quaker meeting. Each was fined 200 pounds of tobacco in accordance with the recent laws of March, 1662, forbidding the assembling of Quakers.

Colonel Sidney's successor, John Hill, who became sheriff in April, 1663, began a systematic persecution of the Quakers, probably because under the law he received one-half of the fines. The year 1663 was indeed a profitable year for him with the fines against the Quakers amounting to £ 100 sterling and 20,750 pounds of tobacco.¹⁹ Hill made numerous arrests, on one occasion summoning twelve persons who were assembled at the home of Richard Russell, a prominent Quaker, on May 3, 1663. In court, Russell was fined £ 100 for entertaining and permitting the meeting and the others were fined 200 pounds of tobacco each.²⁰ On June 27, 1663, Governor Berkeley appointed a commission to see that "the abominate seed of the Quakers spread not."²¹ Mr. Hill, however, needed no prompting from the governor. His next step was to bring about the expulsion of John Porter, Sr. from the House of Burgesses. Hill reported to the House that Porter "was loving to the Quakers, and

and stood well affected towards them, and had been at their meetings, and was so far an ana-baptists as to be against the baptizing of children.²² On September 12, 1663, when he was tried, Porter admitted being friendly to the Quakers but he denied having attended their meetings. Unable to prove that he had attended, the Assembly administered to him the Oath of Supremacy. When he refused to swear, he was expelled from the House.²³ Hill later came across another meeting at Richard Russell's, where John Porter, Jr.²⁴ was speaking. The entire gathering was summoned to court and Porter was fined 500 pounds of tobacco, Russell 5000 pounds, and all others 200 pounds each.²⁵ Ten days later Hill discovered a Quaker meeting on board the ship Blissing, anchored in the Elizabeth River. The same John Porter, Jr. was again speaking and this time each of the Quakers present was fined 200 pounds of tobacco.

On December 15, of this same year, the grand jury of the Norfolk Court presented Benjamin Forby, Richard Yates, Richard Russell, Ann Godby, John Porter, Sr., and Mrs. Mary Emperor for not attending the Established Church. It appears that they were attending a Quaker meeting being held at the house of Mrs. Emperor, with John Porter, Jr. speaking. All the Quakers attending this meeting were summoned to court on February 14 and at this time John Porter, Jr. and Mrs. Emperor were ordered out of the colony, it being their third correction. This order was never carried out, possibly either because there was no profit to the informer in their transportation or because they were people of influence in the colony. The others were each fined 200 pounds of tobacco.²⁶

Fortunately for the Quakers, Hill's term of office expired in 1664 and from then Quakers were free from repression in this county until 1675 when John Edwards informed the authorities that John Biggs had not

had his children baptized. On being tried at the General Court at James City, Biggs was fined 1,000 pounds of tobacco for the use of the parish, 1,000 pounds for John Edwards, the informer, and 1,225 pounds for the costs of prosecution.²⁷

Intolerance and persecution was also the lot of the natives of the Nansemond area, another stronghold of Quakerism in Virginia. In 1663 William Parrott and Edward Jones were arrested for having a meeting at Parrott's house and were kept prisoners for some time in the home of the sheriff of Isle of Wight County. Thomas Jordan of Chuckatuck, in Nansemond County, was imprisoned in 1664 for conducting a meeting in his home. He was imprisoned for six months but was released by the King's proclamation. Taken a second time at a meeting at Robert Lawrence's, he was turned over to the court. When he refused to swear, he was sent up to Jamestown where he remained a prisoner for ten months. While Jordan was in prison the sheriff took three of his servants and kept them for nine weeks; in addition, the sheriff took by distress beds and other goods amounting to 3,907 pounds of tobacco, a serving man, and ten head of cattle valued at 5,507 pounds of tobacco.

The mistreatment of Mary Tomkine and Alice Ambrose,²⁸ the two ministers to visit Virginia in 1663, prompted them to state, "Our sufferings have been large amongst them,"²⁹ and indeed they were. On their second visit to the colony these women were treated in a most inhumane manner, if we are to believe George Bishop, the first Quaker propagandist, who wrote that these two servants of the Lord were punished with the lash and that they "had there [in Virginia] suffered thirty-two stripes apiece, with a nine corded whip, three knots in each cord, being drawn

up to the pillory, in such an uncivil manner as is not to be rehearsed, with a running knot about their hands, the very first lash of which drew blood and made it run down in abundance from their breasts." Reportedly, their goods were then seized and they were banished from the colony.³⁰ If this incident did occur, it must have been the work of a mob since no law warranted such treatment, nor is there any official record of the incident.

For the next few years after 1663 there are no accounts of any persecution of Quakers in Virginia. It is interesting to note that William Edmondson and George Fox suffered no mistreatment during their visit to the colony in 1671-72. Apparently some persecution did continue, though most probably not severe, since minutes of Friends on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, in December 1680, showed a concern for the Society in Virginia. To help the "sad estate and condition" of the Society in Virginia, the Maryland Friends sent William Berry and Stephen Kaddy to Virginia to advise, encourage, and help.³¹ Persecution was certainly part of the trouble since the few extant Court records of this period cite several orders made against the Quakers. There was an order in the General Court records of 1674 against conventicles in Nansemond County. Another order, dated June 15, 1675, reads:

The Hon^{ble} Governor being informed that there are Several conventicles in Nansemond County, it is ordered by this Court that if there be any meeting in this Country that they be proceeded against according to the laws in England and this Country. Col. Bridger is desired Strictly to command the Justices of Nansemond, Lower Norfolk, and the Isle of Wight counties to make Strict inquiry of the same. And if any person shall be found to meet, as aforesaid then they be proceeded as aforesaid.³²

The Minute Book of the Henrico County Court records that in 1678 persons were fined for entertaining Quakers, and the next year,

At a Court held 21st day 9ber 1679 Present His Majesties Dept Governor & Council Order that if John Pleasants does not pay 1500 pounds of Tobacco--to Mr. Tho Cooke Jr his Costs & Charges in prosecuting a suit agst him & if he do not at next Heno County Court give security that he will not suffer any meeting of Quakers at his house for the future then execution is to issue upon a former judgment obtained agst the sd Pleasants upon the act of Assembly about Quakers.³³

Various new church acts passed about this time affected the Quakers. The Virginia Assembly passed on such act in 1680, which prohibited unlawful disturbances of divine worship. Offenders were to be fined 200 pounds of tobacco and cask for the first offense and 500 pounds of tobacco and cask for every subsequent offense.³⁴ Perhaps the Maryland Friends were justified in believing that their fellow Friends in Virginia needed help. Whether the two Maryland Friends, Berry and Keddy, were able to help the Virginia Friends is not known. About the time these men appeared in Virginia, a new governor, Lord Culpeper, also arrived. Culpeper is said to have manifested a particular desire to help the Quakers and save them from persecution. He was in a position to do this to some extent because the status of the Quakers usually depended upon the will of the Governor and the Assembly, the only appeal from colonial law being to the King. Though Governor Berkeley had opposed the Society violently in the early days of its establishment in Virginia, and Governor Spotswood³⁵ did likewise in the early part of the eighteenth century, Governor Culpeper

was more tolerant and lenient. Persecution did not cease entirely during his administration but it was somewhat modified.³⁶

In 1689, the Toleration Act gave freedom of worship to Protestant dissenters in England, but it was not applied to Virginia by the General Assembly until 1699.³⁷ Strangely enough, the Virginia Assembly seemed to attempt to restrain the Quakers more than ever in 1692. By order of the Governor and Council they were to refrain from coming together in a general assembly unless they had complied with every requirement of Parliament. They were also ordered to send word to the nearest magistrate if any ". . . stranger from any other Government shall come among them. . . ." The magistrate in turn was to summon the stranger before his court immediately in order to subject him to a strict examination as to the place from which he came, the object of his mission, and his point of destination. It was also ordered that ". . . if any person [sic] whatever shall receive by letter, or hear any strange news which may tend to the disturbance of the peace of this Government that they doe presume to publish the same but wth the first Convenience repair to the next Justice of the peace & acquaint him there with. . . ."³⁸ It is apparent from this order that the law was in reality a military move, intended to protect Virginia from the spying of Frenchmen, with whom England was then at war, but it was not so interpreted by the Quakers.

The law passed by the Virginia Assembly of 1699 was toleration in name rather than in reality. It provided "for the more effectual suppressing of blasphemy, swearing, cursing, drunkenness and Sabbath breaking" and stated that all Protestant Dissenters, qualified according to the terms of the Act of Toleration, were to be exempted from

the penalty of 5s. or 50 pounds of tobacco inflicted by Virginia law on all persons twenty-one years of age who "neglect or refuse to resort to their parish church or chapel once in two months to hear divine service upon the Sabbath day."³⁹ Hening⁴⁰ points out that "nothing could be more intolerant than to impose the penalties, by this act prescribed, for not repairing to church, and then to hold out the idea of exemption by compliance with the provisions of such a law as the statute of 1 William and Mary, adopted by a mere general reference, when not one person in a thousand could possibly know its contents."

If the Quakers had expected the Act of Toleration to solve their difficulties, they were disappointed. Repression, if not active persecution, continued in Virginia for many years. There are numerous church and court records of fines being imposed upon the Quakers for not attending church, for not paying parish levies, not attending the militia musters, failing to help build forts, and for not taking oaths.⁴¹

A letter from the Virginia Yearly Meeting to the Society of Friends in England, written in 1702, summarized the situation which prevailed in Virginia around the turn of the century. "Friends doth here keep out of meetings peacefully and quietly, blessed be the Lord for it, but Friends are generally fined for not bearing arms and that Grand oppression of Priest's wages, though the magistrates are pretty moderate at present and truth gains ground. . . . Notwithstanding those wicked instruments that have sent for many lying books against Friends out of England, which the priests make part of their business to incense the Government against us and truth, but we do not find that they prevail much."⁴²

A few years later, in 1705, an incident occurred which describes the obvious change in attitude of some of the people of the colony toward the Quakers. In that year Thomas Story, one of the outstanding Quaker missionaries to travel in Virginia, visited Williamsburg where he met Governor Nicholson. In his journal,⁴³ Story stated that the Governor was kind beyond expectation and brought back a party of Friends who had just passed by and treated them "with various sorts of choice wines, and fruits, and much respect." Governor Nicholson also extended his kind treatment to include an order to the President of the College of William and Mary to show the Quakers the buildings. President Blair, wrote Story, was in "a pleasant natural temper" and treated the Quakers in a civil manner. Upon returning to the Governor to express his gratitude for the kindness shown him, Story was given "several sorts of portable fruits, as coconuts, lemons, etc." to take with him on his travels.⁴⁴

The Quakers in Virginia in the seventeenth century believed their life was a hard one, but it did not compare with the hardships of the Quakers of New England, that stronghold of Puritanism. Persecution by the Establishment in Virginia had been only severe enough to stimulate their growth; had it been more harsh, they would probably have gained no foothold in Virginia; and had it been mild, their doctrine perhaps would not have held so much appeal for so many people. Only moderately severe, such persecution as there was tended to maintain public interest in the Society and brought out what was really strong in its religious teachings.

The Quakers played a prominent part in the history of Virginia in the seventeenth century when strong efforts were made to suppress them,

but they began to sink into insignificance as these efforts relaxed. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when toleration of all dissenters enabled them to live quietly and in much the same way as their neighbors, their story is much less colorful and their role less dynamic. Once the frontier was free from Indian menace, Quakers migrated to the Piedmont and Mountain regions of Virginia after the economic institution of slavery made life for them in the older, settled Tidewater impractical. In numbers and organization, Quakerism reached its peak in these western regions, but its position in Virginia's history was less significant. In the end, it was not persecution but a combination of economic and social factors from without, and discord from within, that brought about the final decline of the Society of Friends in Virginia.

Chapter II

FOOTNOTES

1. W. W. Hening, Statutes at Large. . . of Virginia (New York, 1823), I, 266-269, hereafter cited as Hening, Statutes.
2. Ibid., I, 277.
3. Ibid., I, 552-553.
4. Ibid., I, 555.
5. Philip A. Bruce, Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century (New York, 1910), I, 223. Quoted from the York County Records, 1657-72, 163, Virginia State Library. Hereafter, this will be cited Bruce, Institutional History of Virginia.
6. Stephen B. Weeks, Southern Quakers and Slavery (Baltimore, 1896), 17, hereafter cited as Weeks, Southern Quakers.
7. Hening, Statutes, II, 48.
8. Ibid., II, 51.
9. Ibid., II, 165.
10. Ibid., II, 181-183.
11. Bruce, Institutional History of Virginia, I, 224-225.
12. Susie M. Ames, Stylees of the Virginia Eastern Shore in the Seventeenth Century (Richmond, Virginia, 1940), 236-237, hereafter cited as Ames, Virginia Eastern Shore.
13. Ibid., 232. Quoted from the Northampton County Record Book, VIII, 12, 26.
14. Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, XIX, 180.
15. Ames, Virginia Eastern Shore, 237. Quoted from the John Custis Letter Book, 1717-1741, Library of Congress.
16. It is of interest to compare similar precautions taken by the Puritans in Boston to prevent the "contagion" of Quakerism. When Mary Fisher and Ann Austin were imprisoned there in 1656, the Puritans took care to board up the windows of their cell to prevent them from preaching to the people.
17. Edward D. Neill, Virginia Carolorum: The Colony Under the Rule of

Charles the First and Second, 1625-1685 (Albany, N. Y., 1886), 289-286, hereafter cited as Neill, Virginia Carolorum.

18. Lower Norfolk County Antiquary, III, 103.

19. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 22.

20. Rufus Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies (London, 1911), 274, hereafter cited as Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies.

21. Lower Norfolk County Antiquary, III, 76.

22. Neill, Virginia Carolorum, 296.

23. Hening, Statutes, II, 198.

24. John Porter, Jr., was the brother of the John Porter, Sr. who was expelled from the House of Burgesses. In 1656 John Porter, Jr. held the office of high sheriff, but after his third conviction as a Quaker he ceased to hold office. He was married to the daughter of Colonel John Sidney. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 25.

25. Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies, 275.

26. W. W. Hinshaw, Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1950), VI, 12, quoting from Lower Norfolk County Records, 1656-66, 363, hereafter cited as Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy.

27. Ibid.

28. The Society of Friends was the first religious group in which women were allowed to take an active part. This action was closely associated, by the authorities of the day, with the revolutionary nature of the doctrines which the Quakers advocated. However, these women missionaries had a tremendous appeal to the people, especially the poor and ignorant class, and their sermons were often known to far surpass those of the men missionaries.

29. George Bishop, New England Judged by the Spirit of God (London, 1703), 423, hereafter cited as Bishop, New England Judged.

30. Ibid.

31. Samuel M. James, History of the Religious Society of Friends, From Its Rise to the Year 1828 (Philadelphia, 1860), II, 359, hereafter cited as James, History of the Society of Friends.

32. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 43-44.

33. Ibid., 44. John Pleasants, one of the leading Quakers in the colony, was particularly obnoxious to the authorities. He had come over to Virginia

from England in 1665 but it is not known just when he became a Quaker. Most probably he was a convert of Edmundson and Fox.

34. Hening, Statutes, II, 483.

35. As late as 1711 Governor Spotswood was "mightily embarrassed by . . . a sect of Quakers who breach doctrines so monstrous as their Brethren in England have never owned, nor, indeed, can be suffered in any government. They have not only refused to work themselves, or suffer any of their servants to be employ'd in the fortifications, but affirm that their consciences will not permit them to contribute in any manner or way to the defense of the country. . . . In view of this I have thought it necessary to put the Laws of this country in execution against that sect of People. . . ." R. A. Brock, ed., Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood (2 vols., Richmond, 1882), I, 120-121.

36. Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies, 290.

37. Hening, Statutes, III, 171.

38. Henrico County Records, 1688-97, 192-193. Quoted by Weeks, Southern Quakers, 143-146; Bruce, Institutional History of Virginia, I, 248-249.

39. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 149.

40. Hening, Statutes, III, 168; see, also, V, 226-260.

41. Bruce, Institutional History of Virginia, I, 246. Dr. Bruce, protesting strongly against considering these cases as persecution, argues that the Quakers were unreasonable in calling this persecution when in reality they were only civil duties incumbent on all citizens independent of creeds.

42. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 10.

43. Thomas Story, Journal, 1662-1742 (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1747), n. p.

44. The preceding year Governor Nicholson had been known to speak roughly to a clergyman, who asked for a Parish where the minister had died, saying, "What do you talk to me of this and the other minister being dead? I wish there were forty of you dead. The Quakers are in the right, you are all hirelings. . . ." W. S. Perry, ed., Papers Relating to the History of the Church in Virginia, 1650-1776. (Privately printed, 1870), 89.

Chapter III

THE ORGANIZATION AND EXPANSION OF THE SOCIETY IN VIRGINIA

In the first few years of the existence of the Society of Friends in Virginia there was doubtless no formal organization¹ at all beyond the single or particular meetings held wherever the Quakers had settled. The Society was perforce concerned chiefly with the problem of persecution in its early years, with perhaps some attention allotted to the needs of poor families, marriages, and the time and place of meetings, but the leaders of the Society in England and in Virginia felt a definite organization was needed to unite the single meetings within the colony if the Society was to succeed.

The earliest attempts to organize the Quakers in Virginia were made by Josiah Coale and George Rofe,² who labored diligently while traveling in the colony in 1657/58 and in 1660. Rofe wrote from Barbadoes in 1661: ". . . But this thou mayst understand, that the truth prevailleth through the most of these parts, and many settled meetings there are in Maryland and Virginia and New England and the islands thereabouts. . . ."³ Perhaps there were organized meetings at this early date, but it remained for John Burnyeat,⁴ William Edmondson, and George Fox to develop a systematic organization during their visits between the years 1671-1672.

William Edmondson brought together the first meeting for discipline that we can be certain about. In his journal he recorded: "The Lord's Power was with us in the Men's Meeting, and Friends received Truth's Discipline in the Love of it as formerly they had received the Doctrine of Truth. Before I left those Parts Friends desired another Men's Meeting;

so we appointed another."⁵ Edmundson described this meeting as "very large" and stated that it took up such matters as the care of widows and orphans, the prevention of disorders within the Society, and admonitions to all members to live orderly lives according to their beliefs. This was the only meeting of the entire colony that Edmundson mentioned. He attended other meetings, such as the one at Green Spring, but these were obviously such gatherings as were always held by visiting missionaries and there was no formal organization. Even though Edmundson took a definite step toward setting up meetings for discipline, the Society continued to be loosely organized. It was not until George Fox arrived in 1672 that the ultimate organization sought by Edmundson was achieved.

One of the first acts of George Fox was to set up rules for definite meetings. In the letter⁶ written to Friends in Hanscom, at Elizabeth River in December, 1672, he related:

Friend Wm Denson, Wm Garrett, John Porter, George Kemp, Thomas Jordan, Edward Perkin, Wm Pope, Robert Laur, Thomas Hollowell, Levm Buffkin, Friends the above mentioned to keep a mens meeting once a quarter accordg to the paper that Wm Denson hath whose paper declared Friends had appointed a mens meeting and if John Fowlers house be to farre off then ye may appoint it at Thos. Hollowells or other place as ye may see most convenient, Wm Garrett may send by to that little meeting above Jamestown if there be any man there that they may know who it is, and if there be any other faithful friends that ye know of, ye may make them acquainted with the meeting. . . .

In addition to ordering that meetings for discipline be held, Fox gave a brief and clear expression of the purpose of a Quaker meeting:

. . . once a quarter you & they may meet together in the power & wisdom of God and in it you may keep a mens meeting, and to see that all that proffesseth the

Lord and Glorious Gospel of Christ Jesus may walk in it and to stand by for Righteousness & holiness as becomes the house of God, and to stand by for Gods Glory & his name, so that all that doe professe His Name may not dishonor it nor cause his name to be blasphemed, nor his gracious truth evil spoken off, & to see that nothing be lacking amongst Friends meetings, then all is well, as the mans meeting was to doe and in this ye will see how meetings are, & Friends in them, & all so you will see one another in meetings be as one family together in the house of God. . . .

This same letter set up the first rules and admonitions for the Society here in Virginia:

. . . and if there happen any matter of difference betwixt friend and friend let it be layed before the mans meeting, and there let it be heard and put to two or three that a final end may be made of it, so that all may live in peaceable truth . . . if any walk slanderously, let them be admonished and exorted so they may clear the body by condemning the thing, and for all Friends the form of sound words, thou and thee to a single person and not you to a single person, such the world calle bastard Quakers, and Friends it is good that you have a book to register all children that are born and the month and year, if they go out of this land and return again, after your decease they may have them to prove where they are registered and so wrong your Children, therefore register all that is yet to come. also it is good for to gett forte burying places when you shall see meet nearest together. . . .

And if any young friendould doe should marrie, it is to be layd before the mans meeting and they are to see that he & she be cleare from all other men & women & then to waight their time, all things being sic cleare & a meeting being appointed for that purpose, they may take one another before the people of God. . . and then they are to have a Certificate & be recorded in a Book, for from Geniis to Revelations we never reade that ever any bishop or priest married any. . . and if any come out of any country to marrie amongst you, then they are to have a Certificate from the mans

meeting. . . . that he or she be clear from all other men and women. . . .

Though this letter dispels any doubt as to the true origin of systematic meetings for discipline in the colony, it is difficult to determine whether or not a Yearly Meeting was established.⁷ Monthly meetings were organized at Chuckatuck (Nansemond), Pagan Creek, Curles (Henrico), and Warwick-York. The oldest of these, Chuckatuck, was established prior to 1678.⁸ Curles was established in 1698,⁹ and by 1702 the other two had been established because the Yearly Meeting records indicate that delegates appeared from all of these meetings.¹⁰

The first meeting of any kind in the Nansemond-Chuckatuck region seems to have been in 1658.¹¹ Though there were no meeting houses¹² here, private houses were used by all meetings.¹³ The various accounts of persecution of Nansemond Quakers mention meetings in private houses but they obviously were either unorganized or simply visits. In private homes or elsewhere, the Quakers were so successful in assembling in the Chuckatuck-Nansemond region¹⁴ that the Court orders of 1674 and 1675 directed the authorities to proceed against the Quaker meetings in that area.¹⁵

George Fox, in speaking of his travels in Virginia, mentioned specifically his visit with Friends in Nansemond. He wrote that November 9 "we set sail for Virginia. . . . At Nansemond lived a Friend, called the widow Wright. Next day we had a great meeting there, of Friends and others. There came to it Colonel Dewes. . . . After this, we hastened towards Carolina; yet had several meetings by the way. . . one about four miles from Nansemond Water. . . and there was a men's and women's meeting settled. . . ."¹⁶ Fox evidently felt himself to be among many

of his followers at Chuckatuck and it is interesting to note that that the majority of the prominent people in the Nansemond region, at this time or immediately after Fox's departure, were Quakers or related to them by marriage. In this part of the colony where the people were in these years thoroughly disgusted with the ministers of the Established Church, dissenters were not a rarity; the Puritans here had antedated the Quakers by a number of years. That Fox was impressed with the work of the Friends in Nansemond is shown by the fact it was here he began his first efforts towards organization of the Society,¹⁷ and Chuckatuck became the Quaker stronghold in the early days of the Society in Virginia.

The Pagan Creek Meeting, while not officially an organized monthly meeting until 1737 when the Chuckatuck-Nansemond Monthly Meeting was divided, should be mentioned briefly here. It is assumed that Elizabeth Harris in 1656/57 visited Isle of Wight County, where the Pagan Creek meeting was located, and Josiah Coale, too, because of the converts to be found here. The first prominent Quaker known to have lived in Isle of Wight was Denson, one of the Quakers mentioned in Fox's letter to the "Friends at nansemond." Denson's home was on the Western Branch of the Nansemond River in that county,¹⁸ and there is reason to believe that the Pagan Creek meeting had its beginnings in Denson's house. The Edward Perkins and William Yarratt mentioned in Fox's letter were from Isle of Wight.¹⁹ George Fox, after recording in his journal that he was leaving Nansemond to go to North Carolina, mentions that "Another very good one [meeting] also we had at William Yarrow's, at Pagan Creek, which was so large, that we were fain to be abroad, the house not being

large enough to contain the people.²⁰ In 1678, John Bowater, a visiting missionary from England, traveled in Virginia and one of the places he spoke of was Pagan Creek.²¹ The same families which first settled in Isle of Wight later were to move into Nansemond and the infrequent mentionings of these families in the Chuckatuck Record constitute the only record of the Quakers in Isle of Wight.

The first surviving minutes of the Virginia Yearly Meeting, 1702, list a monthly meeting at Pagan Creek and apparently there had been one since 1672. In the period 1702-1706, all of the various monthly meetings of lower Virginia were organized into one and called the Chuckatuck Monthly Meeting. Then in 1737 the Chuckatuck Monthly Meeting was divided into two, and one part was to meet at the meeting house located at William Wigge's, evidently the Pagan Creek Meeting House.²²

The next monthly meeting known to have been in existence between 1702-1706 was that held at Henrico, or Curles.²³ In 1698 Henrico became an organized meeting for discipline, but contemporary records²⁴ prove that the Quakers were in this vicinity much earlier. The most accurate account of these early Quakers at Henrico can be obtained from a close examination of the personal history of John Pleasants of Curles Neck Plantation in Henrico County. It is believed that Pleasants was a convert of William Edmundson, and if this be true Pleasants most probably met with Edmundson at Green Spring in 1672. Many facts about Pleasants and the Henrico Quakers may be obtained from the court records²⁵ because Pleasants' relationship with the authorities of the day was a lively one; he was constantly in trouble.

In April, 1678, a witness appeared in the court and testified

that Mr. Pleasants and wife did not attend Church,²⁶ suggesting that Pleasants was not in harmony with the Established Church. In October, 1679, the Court Records have an entry which reads "that if John Pleasants does not pay 1500 pounds of tobacco. . . and if he does not. . . give security that he will not suffer any meeting of Quakers at his house for the future then execution is to issue upon a former judgment obtained ~~ag~~^{ain} of the sd Pleasants upon the act of Assembly about Quakers."²⁷ This indicates that the Curice Particular Meeting must have begun in or about 1677, but Pleasants' marriage to one Jane Tucker gives us the first definite account of a Quaker meeting at Henrico. In accordance with Quaker custom, the couple announced November 29, 1680, their intention to marry in a public company "in his ~~Pleasants~~ own storehouse and afterwards attended a meeting of Friends in York County where the marriage was solemnized."²⁸

In 1682, an entry found in the Court Records reads:

Information by Lt Col Thos Grendon & Wm Randolph that John Pleasants & Jane Tucker live ~~as~~^{sic} Larcome alias Pleasants ~~Quakers~~ that they unlawfully accompany themselves together in living as man & wife without legal marriage. That they have absented themselves from church for twelve months & upwards That they have refused to have their children baptised. That said John Plea did suffer a Convention at or near his house That they were present at said Convention.

Def'ts in open Court conf' sed the first & owned the breach of the peace laws

Judgment is granted said Lt Col Thos Grendon & Wm Randolph for £ 240 sterling that they give Security 2000 pds Tobacco for refusing to have their children baptised, 500 pounds Tob for being members of Convention & John Pleasants for suffering same 5000 pds of Tobacco

Appeal taken by pleasants.²⁹

The next we hear of the meeting at John Pleasants' is in the terms of his will, drawn up October 1, 1690, which stated:

I give, grant, and bequeath unto friends in these parts, called Quakers--(which now are or hereafter may be) that small parcell of land by me purchased of Benjamin Hatcher, joyning upon Thos. Holmes' land, for a meeting house and burying place--with the meeting house now upon it, and the land purchased aforesaid I do give, devise, and bequeathe unto friends abovesaid called Quakers, for the worship and service of God forever.³⁰

By 1692, there were other meetings at Henrico but apparently they were without such organization. Papers appearing in the county records pointed out that certain Quakers have "frequent meetings. . . in several places in this Colony of their own appointing without ever acquainting the Government with the same or doing what is required by the Toleration Act," that strangers may attend these meetings as well as the natives, and that unless the requirements of the law be met Quakers will be subject to the penalties and fines provided by the law.³¹ It seems that these Quakers did not intentionally violate the Act of Toleration because on October 12, 1692 "Mr. John Pleasants in behalf of himself and other Quakers, did this day, in open court p^rsent the following Acc^t of the Quaker places of public meeting in this county, viz: At our Public Meeting House, p^r [per] Thomas Holmes [presumed to be the minister]; Att Mary Maddox's, a monthly meeting; Att John Pleasants',³²

In 1699, Governor Francis Nicholson, in asking for information regarding various bodies of dissenters in Henrico, received the following answer:

That their is one publick meeting house in this Coty near the plantation of Thomas Holmes decd wch upon the motion of Mr. John Pleasants in behalf of himself and other Quakers was upon the 12th day of October 1692 entered upon the record of this Coty. To wch place Severall persons Deemed Quakers doe Resort upon Sunday and Thursday in every week under pretence of Religious worship but have no Constant preacher except Mrs. Jane Pleasants (widow) whose qualifications and Lycence we know not. We are also informed that of late there hath been monthly meetings kept at the house of William Porter, Jur in this County and that Severall wandering Strangers come here as Preachers and upon pretence of Religion Resort to the sd two meeting places.³³

John Pleasants and his wife were the chief instruments in setting up the old and ancient meeting of Henrico, or Curles, but obviously there were other meetings in Henrico, established after the one at Curles, which were active and vigorous in their work. The Henrico Monthly Meeting was officially organized in 1702 and at the same time became a member of the Yearly Meeting.

Of the Warwick-York Monthly Meeting, the last of the monthly meetings established before 1702, little can be said since practically nothing is known about it and there are no remaining records. Often referred to as one of the "lost meetings,"³⁴ it included the area around and below Williamsburg and within its bounds were found some of the oldest appointed Quaker meetings.³⁵ Thomas Story, one of the important English Quakers to travel in Virginia, left an interesting account of his travels in this area. He wrote:

On the 11th of 12th month [1698 (O.S.)] we set sail in the long boat for Queen's creek in York river, where we got with some difficulty,

and were made welcome at the house of our friend Edward Thomas; had a meeting with the family and a few of the neighborhood. . . . We went from hence to Warwick River, Martin's Hundred, and Bangor House, and had meetings to satisfaction. At Scissino in York county, at the house of John Bates, we had a meeting appointed, where no meeting had been before. The people were generally tendered and humbled, and we comforted in a sense of the love and visitation of God toward them. . . . Next day we had a meeting at the house of Daniel Alchurst, in which many were humbled and tendered by the word and power of truth. . . . The next morning we went down to Thomas Cary's towards the foot of the creek. He had been lately convinced. . . and his brother Niles Cary.³⁶

Leaving Virginia, Thomas Story traveled a while in North Carolina but on his return to Virginia he once more traveled in the area of the Warwick-York meetings. At Yorktown he held "the first meeting of Friends that had been there. . . the people were rude and senseless of good." At Pococson where also there had never been a meeting he reported that there was a "divine shining of the Light."³⁷ The first official mention of the Warwick-York meeting is found in the minutes of the Yearly Meeting for 1702,³⁸ which show that delegates appeared to represent it as late as 1721. It is believed that this monthly meeting was dissolved in 1705, according to an order from the Yearly Meeting, but that then it became a part of Henrico Monthly Meeting (Curles).

There is little information available relating to the Quarterly meetings set up by George Fox. We are certain that there was one, the Quarterly Meeting of Chuckatuck, and that it included most of the meetings then known to have been in existence. This Quarterly meeting had jurisdiction over the Chuckatuck Monthly Meet-

ing, Pagan Creek Monthly Meeting (Levy Neck), Hensemond Monthly Meeting and Surry Monthly Meeting, and must have served those Quakers on Elizabeth River, as well, since matters concerning them are found in the Chuckatuck Record.³⁹

With the setting up of these monthly meetings of Chuckatuck, Pagan Creek, Henrico, and Warwick-York, and the Quarterly Meeting of Chuckatuck, we have seen the organization of "the native element," or the Old Quaker stock, of the Society of Friends in Virginia. This native element was composed of all the early meetings that were settled in the eastern, or Tidewater, counties of Virginia, and its history is mainly concerned with the seventeenth and very early eighteenth centuries. Quakerism in the east reached its peak by the middle of the eighteenth century and then began to decline. Even as early as 1700,⁴⁰ the Quakers had disappeared from Norfolk County and no doubt had migrated to the inland counties. After 1700, the story of Quakerism in Virginia begins to shift to the west. The only suggested explanation for this migration links it to the struggle for superiority between the eastern and western sections of the state, a struggle in economic, social and political life, which was largely founded on the slavery question and was a source of considerable bitterness.

The period of greatest migration within the colony was roughly between 1725 and 1775 and we have not only the migration from the eastern regions but from the states to the north as well. Most of these new settlers were from Pennsylvania and New Jersey who delayed in Maryland for a few years, while some were from Nantucket. The movement began with the migration of Friends from New Jersey and Pennsylvania

to the country along the Monocacy River, in Maryland. Some of these new settlers were of English antecedents, but many were Pennsylvania Germans, and some were Welsh.⁴¹ The influence of these Quakers on the Virginia Quakers was great. In fact, it is a point of much speculation whether the Society would have survived without these new members.

The first of this migration into Virginia took place when the Friends who had established the meeting along the Monocacy River continued their journey into the Shenandoah Valley in 1732. The leader of this movement was Alexander Ross, who had secured 100,000 acres of land from the Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia, William Gooch, for a colony on Opequan Creek, now in the county of Frederick. It was here that the Hopewell Monthly Meeting, six miles from the present city of Winchester, was established in 1735.⁴²

In 1735, a number of Friends from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, settled at Fairfax, now in Loudoun County. The first meeting for worship in the Fairfax settlement was held in the house of Amos Janney,⁴³ the first Quaker settler there. A meeting house was built in 1741, and in 1744 the Fairfax Monthly Meeting was established.

These meetings, in Loudoun, Fairfax, and Frederick counties were never as clearly Virginian as those farther south. It was to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, not the Virginia Yearly Meeting, that they looked. This was probably due to the distance from the Native Element and to the inconvenience in traveling as well as to the fact that they had originally come from Pennsylvania.

From this beginning the movement (frequently increased by large migrations from Pennsylvania) spread southward until, in this section of

Virginia,⁴⁴ there were twenty meetings for worship, five monthly meetings, and one quarterly meeting. We can safely conclude that the meetings in Campbell and Bedford, Pittsylvania and Halifax counties were almost entirely a result of this movement, with the settling of Lynchburg one of the most interesting episodes of the migration.⁴⁵

The migration southward did not end with Virginia. It continued into North Carolina and South Carolina, but the Revolutionary War put an end to any further large waves of emigration to the south. During and after the war the expansion of the Society was to be to the West.

The history of the rise, expansion, and decline of the Virginia Monthly Meetings affords one of the best and clearest studies of migratory people to be found anywhere in American history. However, the details of these meetings and their particular meetings are much too extensive for this study. The main points of the establishment and decline of the thirteen monthly meetings⁴⁶ that were under the Virginia Yearly Meeting, established in 1702, are:

Chuckatuck-Nansemond	established prior to 1672:	discontinued 1757
Curles-Henrico	" " " 1699:	" 1640
Warwick-York (Denbigh)	" " " 1702:	" circa 1723
Pagan Creek	" " " 1702:	" 1752
Surry	" " " 1702:	" ?
Levy Neck	" " " 1702:	" ?
Western Branch-Lower	" 1757	- continues as Corinth Monthly Meeting
Black Water	" 1752	discontinued 1802
Upper (Gravelly Run-Burleigh) *	1800	" 1832
Ondar Creek	" 1757	- continues as Richmond Monthly Meeting
Camp Creek	" 1747	discontinued 1755
South River	" 1757	" 1847
Goose Creek (Bedford Co.) *	1794	" 1814

The Virginia Yearly Meeting included all of these at various periods and all of the particular meetings ever established within the

state with the exception of: 1) those particular meetings west of the Blue Ridge in the Valley of Virginia, as well as those in the counties immediately south of the Potomac which belonged to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and later Baltimore Yearly Meeting; and 2) the nine particular meetings in the extreme southwestern part of the colony which belonged to the North Carolina Yearly Meeting.

The exact number of Quakers in Virginia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries cannot be determined, but we can surmise from the number of local meetings and the extent of their monthly meetings that they were considerable in number.

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Chapter III

FOOTNOTES

1. According to the Quakers' principles, when two or more Quakers meet they may have a meeting. It was not at all unusual to see two Quakers meet on the road and stopping, fall into a period of silence. After a length of time each would resume his travels, refreshed by the "Spirit of the Lord" within him.

Organization within the Society consisted of a structure of meetings which grew and expanded as membership increased. At the base of the structure was the particular meeting, a small group of Quakers assembling regularly and frequently (usually weekly) for meeting. A number of particular meetings comprised the Monthly Meeting and in like manner the Quarterly Meetings were made up of a number of Monthly Meetings. At the top was the Yearly Meeting which concerned all Quakers in meetings in a large area. In English America each colony had its Yearly Meeting.

2. Rufus Jones, The Quakers in the American Colonies (London, 1911), 302, hereafter cited as Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies.

3. Refe to Stephen Crisp, quoted in James Bowden, The History of the Society of Friends in America (London, 1850), I, iv, 347, hereafter cited as Bowden, Friends in America.

4. John Burnysat was in the colony as early as 1665, on his first visit, and then again in 1671/72 on his second visit. He arrived at the time the Society was at a low ebb, due to the teachings of John Perrot, and he found that the greater part of the Friends had almost entirely neglected to hold meetings. He even had difficulty in obtaining a meeting among them and his first visit was therefore more concerned with reviving the Society than with organization. Not until his second visit was he able to make any definite steps toward organization and it was at that time he advised them to have a men's meeting. Whether such a meeting was ever held is not known, most likely not, since William Edmondson, arriving a few months later, stated that "things were much out of order." William Edmondson, Journal (Dublin, 1820), 88, hereafter cited as Edmondson, Journal.

5. Edmondson, Journal, 60.

6. This letter is found in a copy of the Minute Book of the Lower Virginia (sometimes called Chuskatuck) Monthly Meeting, 1673-1709, 1-3, now in the vaults of the Baltimore Homewood Meeting House (Orthodox Friends). This book was begun in the year 1673 by the motion and order of George Fox.

7. Dr. Stephen S. Weeks states that the Virginia Yearly Meeting seemed

to have been organized not later than 1698. (G. B. Weeks, Southern Quakers and Slavery (Baltimore, 1896), 46, hereafter cited as Weeks, Southern Quakers). Bowden only makes mention of a half-yearly meeting (Friends in America, I, iv, 425), while Jones says that "the General Meeting for the entire colony was begun at the suggestion of George Fox in 1673" (Quakers in the American Colonies, 306). W. W. Hinshaw, the Quaker genealogist, attributes the confusion over this point to the interpretation of the word "General Meeting," which he said usually consisted of a men's meeting and a women's meeting. Referring to George Fox's letter he points out that in its entirety the term general meeting, or men's meeting, is used nine times and is obviously used to apply to quarterly meetings and to monthly meetings "but it is also certain that it means a meeting in the sense that the term yearly meeting is now used. As proof of his statements, Hinshaw gives two quotations from the Minute Book of the Lower Virginia Monthly Meeting (80) which read: 1) A generall rule to be observed in all meetings and hath been unanimously [*sic*] received by all friends at a men's meeting to walk by. . . . 2) It is ordered that the list of Friends' suffering is to be "gathered Up & putt together & sent to the general meeting, and so to London to Elize Hookes."

Hinshaw's research as a genealogist enables him to make more accurate inferences to certain phases of the Yearly Meeting in Virginia than other historians of Quakerism. He goes on to point out that the identity of the men named in Fox's letter throws much light on the Yearly Meeting, since these men were representatives from every meeting now known to have been in existence in Virginia in 1672. Further evidence is stated that this was a general meeting by the entry in the Lower Virginia Monthly Meeting Minute Book which reads: "Henry Wigg & Katherine Garrett tooke each other in Marriage in the General meeting at Chuckatuck the 3rd day of the 12 month 1674 amongst a general meeting of Friends." (80). The same record contains an entry that "Cornelius Outland and Hannah Copeland at a Generall Meeting and in the Generall meeting house at Chuckatuck Upon the 5th day of the 3rd month 1675" took each other in marriage.

It is not until 1696 that the exact term "yearly meeting" appears in the record when the marriage entry in the Chuckatuck Record of Joseph Kemnerly and Sarah Ratcliff read, "and on the eleventh day of this instant (7th month 1696) they did publish their marriage the 3rd time before all friends & people at the yearly meeting in Friends meeting house in the Isle of Weight [*sic*] County."

Hinshaw concludes that 1702, the date heretofore accepted, was not the year of the organization of the Virginia Yearly Meeting and that while many of the earlier records of the Chuckatuck Meeting were lost by fire or carelessness, the fragments saved and passed down to succeeding generations are enough to prove that 1672 was the date. Considering his study of the original sources, it seems that his conclusion is correct in this battle of semantics which so far has managed to keep the true facts obscure. W. W. Hinshaw, Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1950), VI, 7-8, hereafter cited as Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy.

8. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 8.
9. Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies, 306; Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 8; Weeks, Southern Quakers, 46.
10. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 8.
11. Ibid., VI, 40. It is believed that the early missionaries, Elizabeth Harrie and Josiah Coale, visited Nansmond in 1656/57 for there are records of converts made soon after their visits. Margaret Brashers, who was to become the wife of Thomas Jordan of Chuckatuck, was among these converts and the date of her conversion is given as 1658.
12. The first meeting house in Nansmond County was the meeting house referred to in 1674, when Henry Wigga and Katherine Garrett were married in it. It was located at Chuckatuck.
13. Some of these houses were: Thomas Jordan's, 1678; Elizabeth Outland's, 1678; Alice Hollowell's, 1679; Thomas Hollowell's, 1680; John Copeland's, 1680; William Sander's, 1682; Elizabeth Belsan's, 1683; Robert Jordan's, 1683; and Henry Hollowell's, 1693. (Chuckatuck Record).
14. The Chuckatuck Monthly Meeting was composed of the following counties: Nansmond, Isle of Wight, Upper and Lower Norfolk, Norfolk, Southampton, Surry, Princess Anne, Prince George, Sussex and Dinwiddie. The Quakers used the term "Friends at Nansmond" to include all of Southside Virginia.
15. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 42-44.
16. Wilson Armistead, ed., Journal of George Fox (London, 1852), II, 122, hereafter referred to as Armistead, Journal of George Fox.
17. Fox's letter in the Chuckatuck Record, written to "Friends in nansmond" did not mean that all the Friends mentioned by him were of the Chuckatuck Meeting. Only Thomas Jordan, Robert Lawrence and William Pope lived in Nansmond County and belonged to Chuckatuck meeting.

Particular meetings established under the Chuckatuck Monthly Meeting are as follows: Chuckatuck, Nansmond Co.; Pagan Creek (or Levy Neck), Isle of Wight Co.; Lyon's (Lawns) Creek, Isle of Wight Co.; Somerton (Stamerton), Nansmond Co.; Merchant's Hope, Prince George Co.; Terasco (Derascos) Neck, Isle of Wight Co.; Murdaugh's, Nansmond Co.; Surry, Surry Co.; Butler's, Dinwiddie Co.; Black Water, Surry Co.; Stanton's, Sussex Co.; Burleigh (Burley), Prince George Co. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 22.

18. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 40.
19. Ibid., VI, 22.
20. Armistead, Journal of George Fox, II, 120. The Justice Thomas Taverner, whom William Edmondson mentioned as his host for an evening while he

was in the Nansemond region, was a native of Isle of Wight County but Taverner was not a Quaker, although his wife apparently was. We find accounts which state that in 1672 William Bressie, a Quaker, acquired some 1500 acres of land in Isle of Wight and that in 1679 "William Bressie of the Upper Parish, planter, with consent of his wife Susanne" deeded to "William Yarrot, John Groves, Francis Wrenn, Edward Jones, Thomas Tooke and Henry Wigge, Quakers, one house built by the people in a place called 'Levy Beck Ould Field' near the creek side, to worship and serve the living God in spirit and in truth, with ground sufficient for a graveyard bounded by four corner trees to be planted. . . ." Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 41.

21. Bowden, Friends in America, I, 359.

22. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 42. Particular meetings in this division were Pagan Creek, Isle of Wight Co.; Surry, Surry Co.; Surleigh, Prince George Co.; Butler's, Dinwiddie Co.; Black Water, Surry Co.; Stanton's, Sussex Co.

The only record in existence relating to the Pagan Creek Monthly Meeting is the minute book of its meetings dating from November, 1758 to September, 1763. It lists deaths, marriages, and disownments of the Quakers of this region but has been of little value in this study because the book is hardly readable and the information in it does not mention particular meetings or pertinent facts about the meetings. This dilapidated little volume is now in the vaults of the Homewood (Orthodox) Friends' Meeting House, Baltimore, Maryland.

23. Henrico, or Curles, was also called New Kent, Upper, Upland, White Oak Swamp and Weyanoke Monthly Meeting. Particular meetings within its bounds were: Curles, Henrico Co.; Howards (Old Man's Neck), Charles City Co.; John Crow's, Charles City Co.; William Ladd's, Charles City Co.; Weyanoke, Charles City Co.; Whipanock (Appomattox), Dinwiddie Co.; Gravelly Run, Dinwiddie Co.; Patteson's (Amelia), Amelia Co.; Beaver Dam, Hanover Co.; Hanover (The Swamp), Hanover Co.; Burleigh (Hunnicutts), Prince George Co.; Cedar Creek, Hanover Co.; Widdow Buller's, Appomattox Co.; White Oak Swamp, Henrico Co.; Dover, Goochland Co.; Seimino, York Co.; Langley's (Burlington), Dinwiddie Co.; Picquinesque, Henrico Co.; Richmond, City of Richmond.

24. The Henrico Minute Book was not available for this study since this valuable record is now in the Huntington Library in California. Therefore, much of the information here is drawn from Weeks, who used the Minute Book when it was in the possession of R. A. Brock.

25. Records of the General Court, Orders, . . . of Virginia, 1657-76. These records are preserved only in the extracts and notes made from the originals by Conway Robinson.

26. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 145.

27. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 44. Quoted from the Minute Book, Henrico County Court, 116.
28. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 145.
29. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 146.
Southern Quakers, 147
30. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 147. Quoted from Henrico County Records, 1688-1699, 154.
31. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 146.
32. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 147. Quoted from Henrico County Records, 1688-1699, 154.
33. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 146. This is the first mention we have of Jane Pleasant's activities in the Society of Friends and it is significant to note that she was one of the first Virginia women to serve as a minister. Apparently she was quite serious in her work and brought many converts into the Society. A woman of great courage and stamina, she persisted in carrying on her husband's work and rode, alone and on horseback, into the wilderness country to spread the Quaker message or to attend meetings. It is said that when she became too aged and feeble to ride alone she would ride behind one of her servants. She survived her husband some nine or ten years and was buried in 1708 in the burying ground at Curles Meeting House.
34. There are three "lost meetings" in the history of the Virginia Quakers; the Warwick-York Monthly Meeting, the meetings on the Eastern Shore of Virginia and the meetings in Lower Norfolk County. The Warwick-York Meeting is the only one known to have been a monthly meeting. There are no records of monthly meetings in the other two regions but there were meetings for worship. It is doubtful if they were ever affiliated with the Virginia Yearly Meeting.
35. Some of these meetings were: Scimino, Queen's Creek, Green Spring, Denbigh (from which the monthly meeting sometimes took its name), Elizabeth City, Kecoughtan, Pocoson, Martin's Hundred, and "Bangor House." Most of these meetings were in Warwick or York counties but their records are lost and we know no particulars of them. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 12.
36. Thomas Story, Journal, 1662-1742 (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1747), 153-155, hereafter cited as Story, Journal.
37. Ibid. Story throws some light upon the location of the various meetings held in the bounds of the Warwick-York Monthly Meeting and mentions some of the outstanding Quaker leaders found there. He wrote in his journal that he held meetings at the following places: Edward Thomas' at "Bangor House" on Queen's Creek; Daniel Akhurst's at Warwick River; Robert Perkin's at Martin's Hundred, James City County; John Bates' at Scimino, York County;

George Wilson's at "upper part of River Mattapony"; Thomas Nichols at Kecoughtan; John Knight at Remuncock; James Howard's below Curles on James River; Ann Acres near Williamsburg; George Walker near Kecoughtan; Anne Airey, twenty-five miles from Kecoughtan; William Trotter "over the neck"; and the widow Elizabeth Wilson's.

There is no record of any meeting house anywhere in the area and it is doubtful if there ever was one.

Story also lists several missionaries who traveled in this area before 1698. They were Daniel Akehurst, William Edmundson, Joseph Glaister, Elizabeth Webb, Henry Child, William Ellis and Aaron Atkinson. None of these left any record of their travels here and of their work in Virginia we have only Thomas Story's slim account.

38. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 12.

39. Ibid., VI, 23.

40. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 85-86. The first evidence we have of the obvious decadence of the "native element" is found in the account that John Fothergill, traveling minister from England, gave when he was in the colony in September and October, 1736. He had come down to the Eastern Shore of Virginia to--

. . . a Friend near Muddy Creek, where formerly a meeting had been settled; but by gradually mixing with the spirit of the world, and so into marriages with others out of the way of truth, the elders being dead, the youth turned their backs on truth, and the meeting was quite dropped. I had no freedom to appoint a meeting there, and so set out the next day toward Neswaddacks Massawadox where notice had been given of our intention to have a meeting the next day, which was the first of the week. The meeting was held in the meeting house where formerly there had been a pretty number of Friends, but now they are nearly gone, through the love of the world, with its enjoyments and liberties; so that a meeting is hardly kept there; but a pretty many of the neighbors gathered and we had a meeting which was comfortable to me, in my faithfulness to the Lord; though they seemed to have little sense of God, or the operation of truth; for indeed a cloud of carnal indifference appeared to me to have overspread almost all that part of the country in an uncommon manner.

This was the last to be heard of the Quakers on the Eastern Shore. Of the remaining meetings of the "native element" the account which Daniel Stanton, traveling minister, gives in 1761 reports that these early meetings, too, were in a decided decline. Of the meeting at Chuckatuck he writes:

. . . I was informed [this] had been one of the largest in Virginia, but is now reduced to two or three families; things were at a low ebb among them. . . another meeting was somewhat open and attended by several who did not profess with Friends. . . . [There was a] large meeting at the burial of an ancient Friend near Wainoak; it was held in an orchard, was an awful solid time, and of brokenness of heart among the people. . . . [At Ourlice] there was a large meeting, though not many Friends.

Stanton also remarked that the meetings at Surry and Burleigh were attended by mostly people who were not Friends. (Journal in Friends' Library, XII, 168-172).

41. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 96.

42. A complete history of this one meeting has been written by a Joint Committee of Hopewell Friends and is entitled Hopewell Friends History, 1734-1934, Frederick County, Virginia (Strasburg, Virginia: Shenandoah Publishing House, Inc., 1936), 1-671.

43. The Janneys became a large and influential family, and one member, Samuel McPherson Janney, was one of the outstanding Quaker historians of the nineteenth century. It is his work, A History of the Religious Society of Friends, From Its Rise to the Year 1829, in four volumes, which has been used in this study of the Quakers in Virginia.

44. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 100.

45. The Lynch family, for whom the city of Lynchburg is named, and who have given us the "lynch law," became Quakers around 1752. The Quaker center at Lynchburg was due to the pioneer work of Charles Lynch and his wife, Anne Terrell of the Cedar Creek Meeting in Campbell County. Soon after their marriage in 1755 they settled on a large tract of land about the present city of Lynchburg. When the Indians broke up the little meeting Lynch started, the meeting was then held in his own home and immediately Lynch and his wife went to work to change the attitude of the Indians from hostility to peace and fellowship. Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies, 296-297.

Chapter IV

THE DECLINE OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS IN VIRGINIA

The Society of Friends was organized and thriving in Virginia by the end of the seventeenth century. There was even a promise of a stronger position in the colony for the Society when, at that time, it became apparent that fear of the group had abated; but Quakerism in the eighteenth century was of an entirely different nature. The Society which had grown under intolerance slowed down and declined in relation to the older native element of the colony, and the work of the early Quakers was revived only in a move to the western areas of the colony. Here Quakerism reached its peak in the years just prior to the American Revolution, to be followed shortly afterward by a second decline. This decline resulted in another move westward--this time to the Ohio region. The migration extended over into the nineteenth century and it was not until the end of the century that the Quakers ceased to be a fairly substantial body in Virginia. The Society which had begun as a strong and powerful force in Virginia had not been able to cope with the problems which arose in a fast moving and rapidly progressing America. In seeking a specific answer to why Quakers were unable to succeed in Virginia, the student must look to the nature of the Society itself.

A better understanding of the nature of the Society can be reached through a study of Quaker social history, but unfortunately this is a neglected part of their story. The Quaker missionaries who traveled in the colony, and who were in the best position to take note of the moral, intellectual, political, and economic conditions of the people among whom

they moved, did not do so. Thus is lost to us a rich store of information for the social historian. The main, and sometimes only, feature of the journals of these ministers is the itinerary, the bare mention of the different meetings visited. Thomas Story, one of the prominent missionaries who traveled in Virginia, left a journal that is in a way an exception, for he gives a larger setting to his labors, thus affording us a better glimpse into the Society as a whole. His journal, though valuable, also fails to give a clear and full picture of the Quakers. The minutes of the various Quaker meetings are no better. The historian must rely almost entirely upon the accounts written by people not of the Society for descriptions of Quaker life.

The Virginia Quakers apparently had little social life in the conventional sense. The Friends in Virginia were very intent upon their religion, more serious perhaps than many of their brethren in the other colonies. In Virginia, where the constant threat from the Established Church and the government, the severity of their persecution, as well as the problems arising out of slavery plagued them, the Quakers were hard put to spread their doctrine and to build up the Society, and even to survive. Gravity and a seriousness of purpose was characteristic of them and they frowned upon all frivolity. Such amusements or habits as dancing, drinking, smoking, letteries, and parties had no place in their lives.

The Quakers' mode of dress was one of their distinctive features, although it was much the same as worn by other sects of the seventeenth century. They had adopted this type of dress to show their opposition and strong feeling against the worldliness of the period. The costume

which these grave and serious groups adopted was a simple one. The men generally wore plain round hats, and drab, gray, or black simply-cut suits, the most inexpensive clothes of the time. The buttons on the suits were usually of the same color as their clothes and all frills and ribbons were discarded. In keeping with the men's dress, the women wore caps and black hoods or severe hats and bonnets, while appropriately, their hair was styled quite plainly. These women fashioned their clothes out of a coarse material usually dyed gray or drab or buff, and they wore around their necks simple handkerchiefs. To the Quakers this plainness of dress and apparel was the surest way to avoid "those gaieties which tend to divert and alienate the mind from the simplicity and gravity of Truth."

The attention drawn to the Quakers by their dress is explained not so much by its actual appearance or its somberness as by the fact that through the years the style remained the same, not conforming in any way to the dictates of fashion. The Quakers of the nineteenth century wore the identically same type of clothes as their fellow members had worn in the seventeenth century, adopting only such changes as comfort or utility required. It was not until the twentieth century that the Society in America discarded their traditional apparel, and conformed to modern dress.

The Quaker's refusal to remove his hat to honor man or to make use of flattering titles, and his insistence on the use of the familiar pronoun in addressing a single person were other features which contributed to his being labeled "peculiar" outside of the Society. Within the Society he was expected to maintain such conduct from a religious sense of duty which corresponded with the practices of the prophets of old.

This same sense of duty carried over into the field of education.

The Quakers did believe in education even though the members of the Society at its founding were not of the educated group. In the present day their schools are listed as among the best, but in the first two centuries of the Society's existence in America and in Virginia their attempts to establish a system of education failed. This failure was due in the most part to the nature of the Society itself which tended to stifle the very essence of education.¹ The first change in their viewpoint on education came in the period just after the Revolutionary War, but the change came too late to enable the Quakers to take a prominent place in the educational system of Colonial America.²

No analysis of the Quaker people would be complete without a description of their institution of marriage. The matter of marriage was one of great concern to the Society and it was conducted with such seriousness and gravity that it was the dominant feature of Quaker life. Indeed, by the act of marriage the Quakers were bound to the Society and any dalliance invited disownment. From the very first, marriage was kept strictly within the Society and parents were held responsible for seeing that their children did not "keep company" with uncuttable persons (non-Quakers). A couple was expected to gain parental consent, and in some cases the approval of the meeting, before they made or accepted final proposals. When all had been satisfied, the couple stood up in the meeting and each separately announced his and her intention. This had to be done at least twice, at intervals of a month, and then committees were set up, one in the woman's meeting and one in the men's meeting, to inquire into the "clearness from similar engagements" of each. If all went well, the consent of the parents was then publicly given and the marriage was

allowed to proceed, with an "overseer" appointed by the meeting to see that the marriage and the marriage feast were managed in good order and to bring a report back to the meeting.

The couple then stood up in the meeting, and flanked by their parents, each openly declared, "Friends, you are my witnesses that in the presence of you I take this my friend _____ to be my wife (husband), promising to be a loving and true husband (wife) to her (him), and to live in the good order of truth so long as it shall please the Lord that we live together or until death." After this declaration, a certificate was signed by the contracting parties and a number of witnesses from the meeting.

At the wedding feast much emphasis was placed upon simplicity and there was no over abundance of refreshment. The Society was constantly warning its members to refrain from excessive drinking³ and over eating at "maredges and bueriels." At funerals no provision was made either for food and drink, except for those who came a great distance.

A second marriage was always of serious concern for Quakers and at times a source of considerable trouble. The Virginia Quakers placed a time limit of twelve months⁴ before a second marriage could take place, and they were always solicitous of the offspring of a first marriage. It was agreed also that no marriage could take place between persons nearer akin than second cousins.

The Quaker marriage is unique in that no ring or symbol of unity is used. The couple was united by love and friendship in the eyes of the Lord; nothing more was necessary. Unfortunately, the Virginia Quakers suffered under the Virginia law because their matrimonial rites were not

recognized. It was not until 1780 that Quaker marriages were legalized,⁵ but from the beginning the Quakers married according to their own fashion irrogardless of the official view.⁶ Marriage was part of the Quaker faith and the decline of the Society in Virginia was caused in large part by many Quakers "practicing worldliness" and marrying out of the Society.

The trait which characterized the Quakers in almost everything they did was the feeling of great unity and love within the Society.⁷ If any differences, disputes, or controversies occurred between Friends it was not taken into court but was settled in meeting. For instance, when two Friends in the White Oak Swamp Monthly Meeting in 1749 had a financial difference, it was taken before the meeting, referred to three Friends for settlement, and settled satisfactorily, "brotherhood between them was preserved, and scandal was prevented."⁸ There are many such cases in the Virginia Quaker records. When one Quaker suffered all suffered, the feeling of unity being so great, and all were ready to share in any trouble of a Friend if it could be shared. This fraternalism in both the outer and inner life of the membership, or what the Quakers termed "the walk and conversation" of the Friends, apparently fitted their needs and produced the results they desired--social morality and individual character.

The Quaker character of simplicity and gravity was responsible for their limited social life, for their odd appearance and dress, and for their peculiar customs, but the people of the day were not impressed with this simplicity and gravity. They could not forget that the people of this faith were radicals of the day, in that they abominated the forms, ceremonies and rituals of the English Church and developed forms and

ceremonies of their own. The authorities considered their seriousness to be melancholy fanaticism; their steadfastness, self-will; their frugality, covetousness; their independence, infidelity; their conscience, rebellion.⁹

All through the Quaker records we find traces of worldliness, or a falling away from the "way of truth," but there were certain periods when this worldliness took on epidemic proportions. There are many admonitions recorded when Friends were warned against costly attire, "new fashions" and "superfluity of apparel." We find a testimony against excessive smoking in Virginia as early as 1701,¹⁰ and the Virginia stand on the use of alcoholic beverages has already been stated. There are other testimonies against such "vain and vicious Proceedings as Frolicking Fiddling and Danceings" yet some Friends were interested in plays of diversion or gaming and lotteries. Complaints were often made of Friends who chewed tobacco, took snuff, or slept in meetings.

These offenses, combined with marrying out of the Society, acceptance of a political office (and taking the required oath), participating in war-like activities, and using the word "you" to an individual were considered the epitome of worldliness. The minutes of Quaker meetings are filled with such incidents and we find that the Society worked hard to bring these offenders back into the way of truth. But the Society had only itself to blame for the worldliness which grew as time passed. In their earnest attempts to avoid the ways of the world the Quakers set up standards which were difficult to maintain and the Society could not hope to hold its members under the paternal hand for long. Yet this is just what the Society tried to do, with disastrous results. In

their efforts to keep members pure and simple they were forced to disown the offenders and with the decrease in numbers came the breakdown of the Society. As the youth of the Society grew up they came more into contact with the rest of the world and the changing times and found they could not conform to Quakerism in the manner of their fathers and grandfathers. And this unworldliness made it more difficult for the Society to adapt itself to and cope with a changing America.

While worldliness hastened the decline of the Society within, the slavery issue contributed the major cause of decline without. The practice of slavery was directly opposed to the Quaker belief that no man could be the master of another. The Quakers began a crusade against slavery long before others thought of it. As early as 1675, William Edmondson wrote to Friends in Virginia and in other parts of America denouncing the holding of slaves.¹¹ The first mention of slavery in the Virginia Yearly Meeting was recorded in 1722 when this question was asked:

Are all Friends clear of being concerned in the importation of slaves or purchasing them for sale, do they use those well they are possessed of, and do they endeavor to restrain from Vice, and to instruct them in the principles of the Christian religion?¹²

Then in 1739, the Yearly Meeting sent a note to Friends in North Carolina inquiring if they used their Negroes well and made provision for their education. The Yearly Meeting of 1740 recommended to those who held slaves "to use them as fellow creatures" and not to make "too rigorous an exaction of all their labour." Friends were

admonished not to go patrolling to keep blacks¹³ in subjection. In 1759 there was presented to the Virginia Yearly Meeting a long list of complaints about the neglect of the education of the Negroes.¹⁴

An entry in the minutes of the Virginia Yearly Meeting of 1764 reads:

It having been weightily recommended in this meeting to Friends who are possessed of negroes, impartially to consider their situation; and as the reports from the quarterly meeting state there is a general deficiency in most places in instructing them in the principles of the christian Religion, it is the weighty concern of this meeting earnestly to recommend to the quarterly and monthly meetings, to have that unhappy people more immediately under their care and notice; and that they not only advise their masters and mistresses to use some endeavors towards their education, but also make a diligent inspection into their usage clothing and feeding, earnestly desiring that their state and station may more and more become the particular care and concern of each individual.¹⁵

In 1765, Benjamin Ferris, one of the traveling Friends who visited Virginia, wrote, "He came to Ourlas, and lodged at a Friend's house, where riches, negroes and grandeur abound, which makes very poor fare for a christian mind. . . Had a meeting at Black Creek. . . Here I had an opportunity of very close conversation on the subject of slave keeping with a Friend who at times appeared in public by way of ministry. . . I have been at times much oppressed on account of Friends. . . in Virginia, so far countenancing the slave trade, as to hold those excused who purchase them; and have endeavored. . . to impress on the minds of Friends the necessity of shutting the door against the increase of slaves among them by purchase."¹⁶

John Griffith, another anti-slavery Friend, visited Virginia in the same year. It is believed that it was his work that hastened the Virginia Quakers toward actual emancipation. The progress he made while in Virginia was not rapid, nor instantaneous, and we have accounts which show much discouragement on his part. He remarked:

Alas, great deadness, insensibility, and darkness were felt to prevail amongst them; close labor, in great plainness, was used, showing the cause thereof; amongst other things, that which appeared none of the least was their keeping negroes in perpetual slavery. I was often concerned to use plainness in families where I went in respect to this matter, and an satisfied truth will never prosper amongst them, nor any others, who are in the practice of keeping this race of mankind in bondage. It is too manifest to be denied, that the life of religion is almost lost where slaves are very numerous; and it is impossible it should be otherwise, the practice being as contrary to the spirit of christianity as light is to darkness.¹⁷

The Virginia meetings took action immediately on the emancipation issue with the Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting (Hanover County) taking the lead. This meeting appointed a committee in December, 1766 to investigate the position of Friends in regards to the Negroes, and in its report, given in May 1767, the committee stated that most of the Friends in that meeting were "desirous that some steps be taken to relieve those people from that perpetual slavery which they are now involved in." In this same year, 1767, Western Branch Monthly Meeting in Virginia took this position:

It is the Judgment of this meeting that no Friends for the future doe purchase any slaves without first applying and have the consent of the Monthly Meeting, except it be for securing of such debts as cannot otherwise be got.¹⁸

When the matter came up before the Virginia Yearly Meeting of 1767, it

appeared that the Quakers were divided in their sentiments and the matter was left for further consideration at the next Yearly Meeting. It was specified though that Friends not make any more purchases of Negroes and attempts were made to encourage all to treat their slaves well and to allow them to hire their time and to pay them as servants.

Feeling ran high and advanced so rapidly that the Virginia Yearly Meeting of 1768 adopted this position:

The subject of negroes, being brought before the Meeting and duly and weightily considered, it appears to be the sense of the Meeting, and accordingly is agreed to, that in order to prevent an increase of them in our Society, none of our members for the time to come shall be permitted to purchase a negro, or any other slave, without being guilty of a breach of our Discipline, and accountable for the same to their Monthly Meeting.¹⁹

The Isle of Wight Monthly Meeting was ahead of this decree in that they ruled in 1767 to prohibit Quakers from purchasing a slave without leave of the monthly meeting. Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting²⁰ followed the action of the Yearly Meeting when in 1769 they passed a similar ruling. When the subject came up again in the Yearly Meeting of 1772 it was treated in much the same manner:

The sense of this Meeting being requested upon the minute of 1768, prohibiting the purchase of Negroes, whether or not the Monthly Meetings ought to disown such as do purchase Negroes which matter having been duly and weightily considered, it is the unanimous sense of this Meeting, that if any professing themselves members of our Society, shall purchase a Negro, or other slave with no other view but their own benefit or convenience, and knowing it to be contrary to the rules of Discipline, the Monthly Meeting to which they belong ought to testify their disunion with such persons, until they condemn their disunion with such persons, until they condemn their conduct to the ratification of the Meeting.²¹

At the same time this agitation was occurring in the Quaker meetings, efforts were being made also to improve the economic and intellectual condition of the Negroes and to encourage masters who were not Friends to emancipate their slaves. Most of the action taken by the Virginia Quakers against slavery occurred in the latter part of the eighteenth century and with the end of the Revolutionary War there were few Quakers in Virginia who continued to be slave holders. By the nineteenth century the slavery issue did not attract Friends' attention. The Society had cleared its conscience of the institution and their interest in it had declined.

The seriousness of the effect of slavery upon the Society is clearly seen in the economic life of the Quakers. In Virginia where the main livelihood depended upon agriculture and where slavery was essential to its success, it was nothing short of disastrous to liberate the slaves, especially since non-Quakers had no intention of liberating theirs. Knowing they could not live in peace with their consciences in a place where slavery was an economic cornerstone, and recognizing the difficulty of making a living in Virginia without slaves, the Quakers took the only promising course--they migrated westward. Many freed their slaves and then moved to the Northwest Territory where slavery was prohibited by law.

This migration into the northwest, or more specifically, into Ohio (where most of the Virginia Quakers settled), Indiana, and Illinois, was similar to that move from the Tidewater section of Virginia into the Piedmont region, only this time the migration was on a much grander scale. It not only involved Virginia Quakers but included Quakers from the other southern colonies.²² But slavery was not the only cause of the migration.

The Revolutionary War played an important role in this movement. We have accounts of many of the young men from the best Quaker families becoming "Fighting Quakers." They were promptly disowned by their meetings but after the war a large number of them were reinstated. With the close of the conflict, the Virginia legislature granted to the veterans, and the descendants of those killed in the war, land bounties in the Virginia Military District of Ohio. This was inducement enough to these fighting Quakers because there was that economic spirit in the majority of them which encouraged a search for better and richer lands. The minutes of the South River Monthly Meeting, for example, record many certificates of removal given to the "Fighting Quakers" who moved to Ohio.²³ And of course the Quakers shared in the general movement to the west which is a part of the American story.

With the beginning of the nineteenth century following this mass exodus west, the tone of the minutes of the Virginia meetings changed decidedly. Nearly all record "no new meeting-houses built or meetings settled." Black Creek meeting in New Kent County suspended its meeting in 1807 and when the meeting house was offered for sale no buyers could be found. Black Water Monthly Meeting was discontinued in 1806 and Bennett's Creek meeting in 1821. The Gravelly Run Monthly Meeting²⁴ was discontinued in 1832 after four of its particular meetings had suspended operations earlier. In 1814 the Goose Creek Monthly Meeting²⁵ was discontinued but it is believed that this was due to the spirit of migration engendered by the group rather than the slavery question.

In 1817 the Western Quarterly Meeting²⁶ was laid down, and in 1840 the monthly meeting at Curles (Henrico)²⁷ was discontinued. With

most of its monthly meetings deteriorating, the Virginia Yearly Meeting was reduced to a Half Yearly Meeting in 1843 under the Baltimore Yearly Meeting. The last of the Virginia Monthly Meetings to disappear because of the westward migration was South River Monthly Meeting²⁸ which was laid down in 1847.²⁹

Slavery and westward migration were not the only causes for the dissolution of the Virginia Yearly Meeting. In 1828, the famous Hicksite faction developed within the Society of Friends in America under the leadership of Elias Hicks and split the Society into two distinct groups: Hicksite (new), and Orthodox (old) Friends.³⁰ The several meetings³¹ in Virginia that were under the Baltimore Yearly Meeting joined the Hicksite movement.³² The Virginia Quakers never really became involved in this controversy, but it posed an ever present threat to the greatest strength of the Society—its spirit of unity—and may have influenced later actions and dissensions which resulted in discontinuing the Virginia Yearly Meeting.

In all, the migration west, dissension within the Society, the large number of disownments, the extreme spirituality of Quakers, and their radical political principles were the major factors in the decline of Quakerism in Virginia. In their efforts to get away from the worldliness of the day, the Quakers withdrew into their Society; they looked backward instead of forward, losing their ability to adjust to a changing world. Having lost much of their earlier crusading zeal they lowered their level of thought and power. The movement lost momentum and nearly faded away.

For a century and a half the Society of Friends was an integral part of Virginia life, but there were too many obstacles to be hurdled for

survival. There are still Quakers in Virginia today, but in numbers and strength relative to the rest of the Society they do not begin to compare with the earlier organization.

Chapter IV

FOOTNOTES

1. Rufus Jones describes quite aptly the Quakers and education when he says, "The Quaker ideal of ministry. . . calls for a broad and expansive education. . . . If the particular sermon is not to be definitely prepared, then the person who is to minister must himself be prepared. . . . George Fox had moments of insight into the importance of this objective element. . . and he urged the founding of educational institutions for teaching 'everything civil and useful in creation,' but institutions of such scope unfortunately did not get founded. . . . They soon found themselves largely out of from the great currents of culture, and they thus missed the personal enlargement which comes when one is forced to make his own ideals fit into large systems of thought, and is compelled to reshape them in the light of facts. The absence of constructive leaders, the later tendency to withdraw from civic tasks, the relaxing of the idea of reshaping the world. . . were due, in main, to the lack of expansive education. The beautiful old-fashioned home passed on to the child who came into it the stock of truth and the definite ideals which its people had produced, and the Meetings furnished a spiritual climate that was sweet and wholesome to breathe, but there was nothing to lift the youth up to a sight of new horizons. He was more or less doomed to the level of the past." Rufus Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies (London, 1911), xxvi-xxvii, hereafter cited as Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies.

2. There is little mention of schools in the records of the Virginia Friends. It is known that Robert Pleasants was involved in a scheme to promote education in Virginia in 1759, but nothing came of it. (Stephen B. Weeks, Southern Quakers and Slavery (Baltimore, 1896), 143, hereafter cited as Weeks, Southern Quakers).

The South River Monthly Meeting reported in 1788 that schools were set up as far as circumstances would allow and in 1784 the Virginia Yearly Meeting made provisions "that Friends endeavor to have suitable schools, kept by Friends under the inspection of fit persons chosen for the purpose." (Weeks, Southern Quakers, 143). The first school to be set up under this plan was that of the Cedar Creek Meeting in 1791, which apparently flourished for a number of years. Then in 1799 the school was discontinued because of the difficulty in securing a proper teacher and in collecting subscriptions. There was another school, founded in 1805, at Gravelly Hill under the care of White Oak Swamp Meeting but little is known of its progress or success. In general the Quaker history in Virginia touches only lightly upon the field of education.

3. It is of interest to note that in regard to alcoholic beverages the Virginia Quakers were more broadminded than some of their sister states. Virginia Quakers took the stand that liquor-drinking, if it

must be done, should be taken in moderation. It was not until 1762 that the Virginia Yearly Meeting took action to prohibit the distillation of liquor by their members. Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies, 511.

4. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 127.

5. W. W. Hening, The Statutes at Large . . . of Virginia (New York, 1825), I, 361, hereafter cited as Hening, Statutes.

6. The case of John Pleasants and his wife being arraigned in the Henrico County Court for "living as man and wife without legal marriage" has been cited in a previous chapter.

7. Weeks sums up this trait when he writes, ". . . there was in the Society, along with a vigilant care of political interests, for which their thorough organization made them better prepared, a deep and genuine piety, a tender love for souls, a deep sympathy with the erring, a watchful regard for the morals of the Society, and strict determination to bring all misdemeanors to account. . . ."

8. Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies, 516. Quoted from the Minutes of White Oak Swamp Monthly Meeting, 1749.

9. George Bancroft, History of the Colonization of the United States (Boston, 1859), II, 354.

10. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 128.

11. Samuel M. Janney, History of the Religious Society of Friends, From Its Rise to the Year 1826 (Philadelphia, 1860), III, 178, hereafter cited as Janney, History of the Society of Friends.

12. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 201.

13. The term "blacks" is the term used most often in the minutes of the Quakers. However, it was not until 1801 that the Virginia Yearly Meeting decided to call them blacks.

14. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 201.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., 203.

17. Ibid., as quoted from Journal in Friends' Miscellany, XII, 379-360.

18. Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies, 325.

19. Ibid.

20. It was this meeting that disowned James Grew in 1770 for buying

several slaves. In 1772 Shadrack Stanley was also disowned for the same offense. W. W. Hinshaw, Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1930), VI, 239, hereafter cited as Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy.

21. Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies, 526. Jones stated that owing to the fact that the Virginia law made it unlawful to free a slave, the Quakers found it difficult to free their slaves and they endeavored in vain in 1770 to have this law repealed.

Stephen Weeks, the foremost authority on the Quakers and slavery, divides the history of slavery agitation among the Virginia Quakers into three distinct periods: The first, a period of amelioration which ended in 1765. It took the form of a greater attention to bodily comforts and was probably inspired as much by economic as philanthropic motives. It did not stress too closely the liberation of slaves. The second, a period of emancipation which closed almost with the century. The third, a second period of amelioration with the attention of the Friends being drawn to the condition of the liberated Negroes. Weeks, Southern Quakers, 201.

22. Some estimates indicate that nearly 18,000 Quakers left the Southern states for the Northwest territory during the fifty years that followed the beginning of the migration. David Hinshaw, Rufus Jones, Master Quaker (New York, 1951), 27.

23. Hinshaw, American Quaker Genealogy, VI, 293.

24. Also called Upper Monthly Meeting and Burleigh Monthly Meeting, it was established in 1808 when Black Water-Surry Monthly Meeting was divided. It included the following counties: Mecklenburg, Brunswick, Chesterfield, Prince George and Dinwiddie, Surry and Sussex, and there were nine particular meetings within its bounds.

25. Goose Creek Monthly Meeting in Bedford County, established in 1794, in the prosperous years of the Society. Particular meetings within its bounds included Upper Goose Creek, Bedford Co.; Lower Goose Creek (also called Bedford), Bedford Co.

26. Its particular meetings were: Chuskatuck, Western Branch, Terascoe Neck, Somerton and Murdaugh's.

27. Also called New Kent, Upper, Upland, White Oak Swamp and Weyanoke Monthly Meeting. Counties within bounds of this Monthly Meeting: Henrico, New Kent, Hanover, Caroline, Louisa, Goochland, Prince George, Dinwiddie, Amelia, Chesterfield, York, James City, Charles City, and Mecklenburg.

28. Infrequently called Bedford Monthly Meeting. Established in 1757 from the Cedar Creek Monthly Meeting but divided in 1794 into South River Monthly Meeting and Goose Creek Monthly Meeting. Included the counties of Bedford, Campbell, Albemarle, Amherst, Halifax, Pittsylvania, Henry, Franklin and Patrick.

29. The Cedar Creek Meeting is now called the Richmond Monthly Meeting. Counties within its bounds are Hanover, New Kent, Caroline, Louisa, Orange, Bedford, Campbell, Albemarle, Halifax, parts of Charles City, Amelia, Goochland and Henrico.

The only surviving Monthly Meetings in Virginia still in existence today are the Cedar Creek Meeting, the Western Branch Meeting, and the Hopewell Meeting.

30. Basically, the Hicckite separation was brought about by the rise of a difference in theological beliefs, where each party claimed to represent the original views of Fox and his followers. The separation began in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and was later to extend to New York, Ohio, Indiana and Baltimore. Aside from theological differences, the distinction between the two groups today is the Hicckite faction is more modern and progressive in its thinking and actions.

31. Hopewell Monthly Meeting; Fairfax Monthly Meeting; Goose Creek Monthly Meeting and Alexandria Monthly Meeting.

32. The name is not recognized by the Society of Friends but is used here to distinguish between the two.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

The original manuscripts of the Quakers in Virginia are limited and consist solely of the minute books which in most cases are in poor condition and not readily accessible. With the exception of the Henrico Minute Book all of the Virginia Quaker records now belong to the Baltimore Yearly Meeting, none remaining in Virginia. The most valuable is the Lower Virginia Monthly Meeting Minute Book (also known as the Chuskatuck Record), 1673-1756. This book, begun by a motion of George Fox, deals with marriages, births, and deaths. The Pagan Creek Monthly Meeting Minute Book, 1738-1763, contains similar information but is in such a dilapidated condition as to be unusable. Both books are now in the possession of the Homewood (Orthodox) Meeting House in Baltimore and are presided over by a Quaker lady with an unfortunate attitude toward the non-Quaker student.

The manuscripts of the Virginia Quakers in the best condition are the Fairfax Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1746-1776; Black Water Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1765-1776; and the manuscript letters from the Virginia Yearly Meeting to the Baltimore Yearly Meeting, 1769-1796. Unfortunately, the letters and minutes in this collection are of a late date for my purposes. This collection is now in the Stony Run Meeting (Hicksite) House in Baltimore and the librarian in charge is an erudite, expansive and thoroughly charming lady whose forthright analysis of the Society proved of immeasurable worth to me.

The Henrico Minute Book, 1699-1840 was not available, since this valuable record is now part of the Brock Collection in the Huntington

Library. Much of the information used in this study was drawn from Southern Quakers and Slavery (Baltimore, 1896) by Stephen B. Weeks, who used the minute book when it was in the possession of R. A. Brock.

Although the printed source material for the Society of Friends in America is comparatively abundant, that for the Society in Virginia is meager. Of first importance is W. W. Hening's Statutes at Large. . . of Virginia (13 vols. Richmond and Philadelphia, 1809-1823), which publishes the early laws affecting the Quakers in Virginia. The William and Mary College Quarterly, 1st. and 2nd. Series, and the Lower Norfolk County Antiquary also provide documents and articles which serve as good background information relative to the status of the Quakers. The Legislative Journals of the Council, 1680-1775 (3 vols. Richmond, 1918-1919), ed. H. R. McIlwaine, and the Journals of the House of Burgesses, 1659-1692 (13 vols. Richmond, 1905-1915), eds. H. R. McIlwaine and J. P. Kennedy, provide small pieces of information but Hening's Statutes serve better as the source of acts and laws. All county records before 1861 are on microfilm in the Virginia State Library, and Dr. Susie Amee, in her Studies of the Virginia Eastern Shore in the Seventeenth Century (Richmond, 1940), had skillfully gleaned the essential data concerning the Quakers from the Northampton County Records. The Records of the General Court, Orders. . . of Virginia, 1657/78 are preserved by the Virginia Historical Society only in the extracts and notes made by Conway Robinson from the originals, which were destroyed by fire. Dr. Weeks used these in his Southern Quakers and Slavery when they were in the possession of Conway Robinson and I have relied upon him for this information. The Proceedings and Acts of the Assembly, 1637/38-1664 (Baltimore, 1883) and the Proceedings of the

Council, 1636-1667 (Baltimore, 1883), edited by W. H. Browne, proved quite helpful in clearing up or defining the controversy of the first establishment of Quakerism in Virginia and in giving accounts of the persecution of the early missionaries. Papers Relating to the History of the Church in Virginia, 1650-1776 (Privately printed, 1870), edited by W. S. Perry, was useful for information of contemporary attitudes toward the Quakers, as was the Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood (Richmond, 1882), edited by R. A. Brock. The Calendar of Virginia State Papers and Other MSS, 1652-1781 (Richmond, 1875) proved useless for my purpose.

The celebrated letter of Robert Clarkson, which created the controversy among historians as to the origin of Quakerism in Virginia, is now in the Swarthmore Collection, III, 7, and was quoted here from Rufus Jones who had access to this collection. Josiah Coale's letter to George Bishop is from the Abram Rawlinson Barclay Collection in Devonshire House, England, but has been reprinted in Journal of the Friends Historical Society, XXVII (London and Philadelphia, 1950), 25. Coale's letter to George Fox in 1661 is also in the Swarthmore Collection and was reprinted by Bowden. The letter William Robinson wrote to George Fox in 1659 is still in existence according to Bowden, but he does not state where it can be found. George Wilson's "suffering" letter from Jamestown in 1662 is probably in the Barclay Collection in Devonshire House, if it is still in existence. It is used here as quoted by Bowden, The History of the Society of Friends in America, who in turn was quoting from William Sewel's The History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers (New York, 1844), but Sewel obtained his copy from George Bishop's New England Judged by the Spirit of God (London, 1703). Bishop, who was notorious for his gross exaggeration

of Friends' sufferings, apparently served as public relations officer, or a clearing house, for the Society in England for it was his task to collect accounts from all missionaries in the New World and use them to best advantage of the Society. He brought out his book in 1703; and his work was carried on in a similar fashion in 1753 by Joseph Besse in Collection of the Sufferings of the People Called Quakers, who describes in vivid and startling fashion what the title suggests.

The journals of the Quaker missionaries contain the best printed source material, revealing the progress of the Society in its first beginning in Virginia. William Edmundson, George Fox, and Thomas Story were painstaking in keeping their journals, which are informative and interesting. Of the three, Story's is by far the most valuable for a study of this nature because he gives a broader picture of life in the Virginia colony—not of just the world of the Quakers in Virginia. George Fox's journal, cited by Wilson Armitstead, has been indexed and pagination has been provided thereby making its material readily accessible to the student, but not so with the journals of Edmundson (who does not trouble to give dates) and Story. Of the numerous other journals studied here, and it seems that every Quaker missionary traveling in the colony left some type of journal, only a few clearly refer to Virginia: Thomas Chalkley, Elizabeth Collins, Stephen Grellet, John Burnyeat, Mary Peasley Neale, Barnaby Nixon, and Jesse Kersey.

Invaluable to students of Quakerism in Virginia is, of course, the Virginia Historical Index, by E. G. Swan, of the Virginia Magazine of History, 1893-1930; William and Mary College Quarterly, 1892-1930; Tyler's Magazine, 1919-1929; Virginia Historical Register, 1846-1855; Lower Norfolk

County Antiquary, 1895-1906; Hening's Statutes at Large, 1619-1792; Calendar of Virginia State Papers, 1652-1869. Dr. Swen's Bibliography of Virginia was also helpful in this study. The Index to the Virginia Gazette, by Cappon and Duff, did not produce the information hoped for but Beverley Fleet's Virginia Colonial Abstracts gave valuable data pertaining to the Henrico Minute Book.

Secondary sources are to be divided into two groups: 1) those written by Quaker historians and 2) those by non-Quaker historians. In the first group the most valuable are James Bowden, The History of the Society of Friends in America (London, 1850); Samuel M. Janney, The History of the Religious Society of Friends, From Its Rise to the Year 1828 (Philadelphia, 1860); Stephen B. Weeks, Southern Quakers and Slavery (Baltimore, 1896); Rufus Jones, Quakers in the American Colonies (London, 1911); and W. W. Hinshaw, Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1950). Bowden and Janney are nineteenth century historians of Quakerism, earnest in their attempts to promote the Society of Friends, and writing at the period when the greatest amount of source material was available and/or in existence. Weeks, at the turn of the century, marks the beginning of an attempt to be objective in the presentation of Quaker history but it is not until Rufus Jones, in the twentieth century, that a truly scientific approach is achieved. Hinshaw is a genealogist who does not profess to be an historian.

Of the non-Quaker historians who treat of the Quakers in Virginia as they relate to broader studies, the most outstanding are: Philip Alexander Bruce, Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century (New York, 1910); H. R. McIlwaine, The Struggle of the Protestant Dissenters

for Religious Toleration in Virginia (Baltimore, 1894); George Brydon, Virginia's Mother Church and the Political Conditions Under Which It Grew (Richmond, 1947); and William Meade, Old Churches, Ministers, and Families in Virginia (Philadelphia, 1906). Of these, Dr. Bruce's work is of more value to this study because of his unbiased analysis and thorough interpretation.

In the broad field of Quaker history, the numerous secondary sources which have been used for background material are: Robert Barclay, A Gatschism and Confession of Faith (Philadelphia, 1673); James P. Bell, Our Quaker Friends of Olden Times (Lynchburg, Virginia, 1905); William Breithwaite, The Beginnings of Quakerism (London, 1925); W. M. Gewehr, The Great Awakening in Virginia; John Gough, A History of the People Called Quakers, From Their First Rise to the Present Time; (Dublin, 1789/90); Edward D. Neill, Virginia Carolorum: The Colony Under the Rule of Charles the First and Second, 1625-1685 (Albany, N. Y., 1886); Elbert Russell, The History of Quakerism (New York, 1943); Mary Newton Stanard, The Story of Virginia's First Century (Philadelphia and London, 1928); Frederick S. Tolles, Meeting Houses and Counting Houses (Chapel Hill, 1948); Alice N. Townshend, Chronology of the Society of Friends, 1644-1828 (Philadelphia, 1895); Frederick S. Turner, The Quakers, A Study Historical and Critical (London, 1889).

In addition to these, David Kinshaw's Rufus Jones, Master Quaker (New York, 1951) and George Fox, An Autobiography (Philadelphia, 1906) edited by Rufus Jones, aided greatly in gaining a better perspective of these two outstanding Quakers. The Hopewell Friends History, 1754-1934, Frederick County, Virginia (Strasburg, Virginia, 1936); Nell Marion Nugent, Cavaliers

and Pioneers, Abstracts of Virginia Land Patents and Grants, 1623-1800
(Richmond, 1934); and William H. Foote, Sketches of Virginia (Philadelphia,
1850) were disappointing in that they yielded scant information for this
study.