

[O'Byrne's Naval Biog. Dict. 1849, p. 460; Gent. Mag. October 1863, pp. 507-8; Leeds Mercury, 17 Aug. 1863, p. 3.] G. C. B.

HARCOURT, ROBERT (1574?-1631), traveller, born about 1574 at Ellenhall, Staffordshire, was the eldest son of Sir Walter Harcourt of that place and Stanton Harcourt, Oxfordshire, by Dorothy, daughter of William Robinson of Drayton-Bassett, Staffordshire (COLLINS, *Peerage*, ed. Brydges, iv. 440). He matriculated at Oxford as a gentleman-commoner of St. Alban Hall on 10 April 1590 (*Oxf. Univ. Reg.*, *Oxf. Hist. Soc.*, II. ii. 176), and continued there about three years. On 23 March 1609, accompanied by his brother Michael and a company of adventurers, he sailed for Guiana. On 11 May he arrived in the river Oyapoco (formerly Wiapoco). The natives came on board and were much disappointed at the absence of Sir Walter Raleigh. Harcourt received them courteously and gave them aquavita. He took possession in the king's name of a tract of land between the rivers Amazon and Dessequebe (i.e. the Essequibo) on 14 Aug., left his brother and most of his company to colonise it, and four days later embarked reluctantly for England. At this time he was involved in a dispute with his brother-in-law, Anthony Fitzherbert, about his claim to the manor of Norbury, Derbyshire (*Cal. State Papers*, Dom. 1603-10, p. 514). He also appears to have been subjected to persecution on account of his religion. On 8 Nov. 1609 one Robert Campbell obtained a grant of the benefit of his (Harcourt's) recusancy (*ib.* 1603-10, p. 557). He ultimately obtained letters patent empowering him to plant and inhabit the land at Guiana, but was prevented by a series of misfortunes from visiting it again (dedications of first and second editions of *Voyage*). The king renewed the grant on 28 Aug. 1613 in favour of Harcourt and his heirs, Sir Thomas Challoner and John Rovenson (*Cal. State Papers*, Dom. 1611-18, p. 198). To promote the success of the scheme, Harcourt wrote a delightful account of his adventures, entitled 'A Relation of a Voyage to Gviana. Describing the climat, scituation, fertilitie, prouisions, and commodities of that Country. . . . Together with the manners, customes, behaviors, and dispositions of the people,' 4to, London, 1613. A 'corporation of lords and gentlemen' was formed and entrusted the conduct of the enterprise to Roger North. North, notwithstanding the opposition of Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, transported to Guiana a hundred English settlers. He then obtained on 30 Jan. 1626 a grant for incorporating his own and Harcourt's company with all cus-

tomary privileges (*ib.* 1625-6, p. 240). In the following April Harcourt issued a 'Proposal for the formation of a Company of Adventurers to the river Amazon' (*ib.* 1625-6, p. 302), and an enlarged edition of his book, with the conditions laid down by him for settlers in Guiana. The 'Voyage' is reprinted in pt. iv. of Purchas's 'Pilgrimes,' 1625, and in vol. vi. of the 'Harleian Miscellany,' ed. Park. Latin and German versions appeared in T. de Bry's collection, and a Dutch version in the series edited by P. Vander Aa. Harcourt lost heavily over the speculation, and had to sell Ellenhall as well as his property at Wytham in Berkshire. It is related that when forced to part with more of his domains after the sale of Ellenhall, he let loose a pigeon, saying he would sell the land over which the bird flew. The pigeon circled round the Wytham estate (*Harcourt Papers*, ed. E. W. Harcourt, i. 103). Harcourt died on 20 May 1631, aged 57, and was buried at Stanton Harcourt. He married, first, Elizabeth, daughter of John Fitzherbert of Norbury, Derbyshire, by whom he had no issue; and secondly, Frances, daughter of Geoffrey Vere, third son of John, earl of Oxford, who brought him a family of seven children. Sir Simon Harcourt (1603?-1642) [q. v.] was his eldest son.

[Wood's *Athenae Oxon.* (Bliss), ii. 143-4; Collins's *Peerage* (Brydges), iv. 440-3; Raleigh's *Discovery of Guiana* (Hakluyt Soc.); *Harcourt Papers*, ed. by E. W. Harcourt, vol. i.] G. G.

HARCOURT, SIR SIMON (1603?-1642), soldier of fortune and governor of the city of Dublin, was the eldest son of Robert Harcourt [q. v.] and Frances, daughter of Geoffrey Vere, third son of John, earl of Oxford. Succeeding to a somewhat embarrassed estate, he endeavoured to mend his fortunes by a military career abroad. At the age of sixteen he served under his uncle, Sir Horace Vere, baron of Tilbury, against the Spaniards in the Low Countries, and was knighted at Whitehall on 26 June 1627. The greater part of his life was spent in Holland in the service of the Prince of Orange, by whom he was highly esteemed. He was also in great favour with Elizabeth of Bohemia, who warmly commended him to Archbishop Laud, when business of a domestic nature (connected probably with the recovery of Stanton Harcourt) obliged him to repair to England in 1636 (*Cal. State Papers*, Dom. 1635-6, pp. 266, 338). Though holding a commission as sergeant-major from the Prince of Orange, he took an active part in the operations against Scotland in 1639-40, as commander of a regiment of foot (*ib.* 1639 pp. 56, 127,