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Aller au sommaire du numéro

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Documents

The Narrative of Lieutenant James Moody

The *Narrative* of Lieutenant James Moody was first printed in London in 1783. In consequence of a general incredulity, he issued a second edition, supporting it from letters of senior officers under whom he had served. It is the account of one who was described by General James Robertson, civil governor of New York, as "the best partizan" who served the royal cause during the American Revolution. Lorenzo Sabine in his volume of Loyalist biographies allowed Moody but six inches of space in his first edition of 1847. The second edition of 1864 yielded seven pages. "The very name of Moody," he admitted "became a terror" to supporters of the Rebellion. This candid and highly literate narrative is the story of a great guerilla fighter who finished his life as a Nova Scotian.

Loyalists whose names are remembered in Atlantic history are those who became prominent in colonial politics after 1783. During the actual conflict the fame, or notoriety, of Moody equalled that of any of the future administrators who sat at our council tables. A recent American work, *Turncoats, Traitors and Heroes* by John Bakeless (Philadelphia and New York, 1959), acknowledges with grudging admiration that he was the most remarkable individual serving either side in the capacities of spy and saboteur. To Washington, who was mortified because he could not hang him, he was "that villain Moody" (John J. Fitzpatrick, *The Writings of George Washington*, vol. 23, p. 444). It is rather astonishing that, having lived in Nova Scotia for twenty-five years, he enjoys no place in provincial historical writing.

The *Narrative* was presented as a statement of service to the Parliamentary Commission examining Loyalist claims for compensation in 1783. It yielded little, if any, return. The Commission was probably more influenced by Sir Henry Clinton's letter which declared that Moody had already been adequately compensated. This opinion was in clear contradiction to that of many supporting letters and is quite in line with the well known jaundiced attitudes of the British general to his Loyalist adherents (P.R.O., A.O. 13/110. Moody's memorial is also here but adds nothing to the *Narrative*. Allowed half-pay and a tract of land, he was treated as were most Loyalist officers).

Following a brief residence in Halifax, Moody moved to the Sissiboo River in 1786 as the Loyalist town of Weymouth was rising. His land lay on the south side of Cosman's Cove where, with James Cosman, he erected mills. His son, John, was one of the first merchants of Weymouth (Isaiah W. Wilson, *A Geography and History of the County of Digby* (Halifax, 1900), p. 118). The elder Moody served Annapolis County as a lieutenant-colonel of militia, magistrate, and member of the house of assembly (1793-1806). He died at Weymouth, aged 65, on April 3, 1809 (*A Directory of the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia, 1758-1958* with an introduction by C. B. Fergusson [Halifax, 1958]). Miss Gilroy's list of Loyalist grantees (P.A.N.S. Publication No. 4, 1937) shows that in 1801 he was granted lands of 2,258 acres in Digby Township (p. 18). His place in provincial politics was minor and it is probable that, like many members of the house of assembly during the period, he seldom attended sessions. This may have been owing to impairment of health following his sufferings in the Revolutionary War of which he gives such graphic description.

Charles I. Bushnel of New York republished the *Narrative*, with an introduction and notes, in 1865, but this reproduction is drawn from the first edition issued in 1783. The supporting letters, published in the second edition, which corroborate his assertions in a most emphatic way, are, for purposes of brevity, omitted. Only the more important footnotes are included.

W. S. MacNUTT

Narrative

Choice and plan, it would seem, have seldom much influence in determining either men's characters, or their conditions. These are usually the result of circumstances utterly without our controul. Of the truth of this position, the Writer's own recent history affords abundant proofs.

Seven years ago, few human events seemed more improbable, than that he, a plain, contented farmer, settled on a large, fertile, pleasant, and well-improved farm of his own, in the best climate and happiest country in the world, should ever beat his plough-share into a sword, and commence a *soldier*. Nor was it less improbable, that he should ever become a *writer*, and be called upon to print a *narrative* of his own adventures. Yet necessity and a sense of duty, contrary to his natural inclination, soon forced him to appear in the former of these characters: and the importunity of friends has now prevailed with him to assume the latter.

When the present ill-fated Rebellion first broke out, he was, as has already been hinted, a happy farmer, without a wish or an idea of any other enjoyment, than that of making happy and being happy with, a beloved wife, and three promising children. He loved his neighbours, and hopes they were not wholly without regard for him. Clear of debt, and at ease in possessions, he had seldom thought much of political or state questions: but he felt and knew he had every possible reason to be grateful for, and attached to, that glorious Constitution to which he owed his security. The first great uneasiness he ever felt, on account of the Public, was when, after the proceedings of the first Congress were known, he foresaw the imminent danger to which this Constitution was exposed; but he was completely miserable when, not long after, he saw it totally overturned.

The situation of a man who, in such a dilemma, wishes to do right, is trying and difficult. In following the multitude, he was sure of popular applause; this is always pleasing; and it is too dearly bought only when a man gives up for it the approbation of his own conscience. He foresaw, in its fullest force, that torrent of reproach, insult, and injury which he was sure to draw down on himself, and his family, by a contrary conduct: nor does he wish to deny, that, for some time, these overawed and staggered him. For himself he felt but little; but he had either too much or too little of the man about him, to bear the seeing of his nearest and dearest relatives disgraced and ruined. Of the points in debate between the parent-state and his native country, he pretended not to be a competent judge: they were studiously so puzzled and perplexed, that he could come to no other conclusion, than that, however real or great the grievances of the Americans *might* be, rebellion was not the way to redress them. It required moreover but little skill to know, that rebellion is the foulest of all crimes; and that what was begun in wickedness must end in ruin. With this conviction strong upon his mind, he resolved, that there was no difficulty, danger, or distress, which, as an honest man, he ought not to undergo, rather than see his country thus disgraced and undone. In spite therefore of incapacity, in spite of disinclination—nay, in spite of concern for his family—with the most ardent love for his country, and the warmest attachment to his countrymen, he resolved to do anything, and to be anything, not inconsistent with integrity—to fight, to bleed, to die,—rather than live to see the venerable Constitution of his country totally lost, and his countrymen enslaved. What the consequences of this resolution have been, it is the intention of the following pages to describe.

The facts now to be related have many of them been occasionally published in the New York papers, but in a state so mutilated and imperfect, as rather to excite than gratify curosity. They are here brought together under one view, in a connected narrative; and set down just as they happened. It is not pretended that all his adventures are here related, or that all the circumstances of those related are fully enumerated. It would be impolitic and dangerous for him to recount, at large, all his various stratagems; it would be barbarous and base, to divulge all the means by which he has sometimes effected his almost miraculous escapes. But were it otherwise, nothing can be farther from his aim, than to make a pompous display of any supposed merit of his own. As to the truth of his principal facts, he appeals to sundry certificates and affidavits now in his possession; nay, he farther appeals to every officer of every rank, who has either lately served, or is still serving, in America. Yet, after all, from the nature of the case, the credit of some parts

of this Narrative must rest upon his own authority, which, he believes, will not be questioned by those who are acquainted with his character.

Of the true causes that gave birth to this unhappy quarrel, Mr. Moody is unwilling to give any opinion. He is no politician; and, therefore, by no means qualified to reconcile the contradictory assertions and arguments of the contending parties. This only, as an individual of that description of people of whom the greatest part of every community must consist, he thinks it incumbent on him to declare, that it did not originate with the *people* of America, properly so called. They felt no real grievances, and therefore could have no inducement to risk substantial advantages in the pursuit of such as were only imaginary. In making this declaration, he is confident he speaks the sentiments of a great majority of the peasantry of America. But, in every country there are multitudes who, with little property, and perhaps still less principle, are always disposed, and always eager for a change. Such persons are easily wrought upon, and easily persuaded to enlist under the banners of pretended patriots and forward demagogues; of whom also every country is sufficiently prolific.

In America, these popular leaders had a set of men to assist them, who inherited, from their ancestors, the most rooted dislike and antipathy to the constitution of the parent-state; and, by means of *their* friendly co-operation, they were able to throw the whole continent into a ferment in the year 1774, and maddened almost every part of the country with *Associations, Committees,* and *Liberty-poles,* and all the preliminary apparatus necessary to a *Revolt.* The general cry was, *Join or die!* Mr. Moody relished neither of these alternatives, and therefore remained on his farm a silent, but not unconcerned, spectator of the black cloud that had been gathering, and was now ready to burst on his devoted head. It was in vain that he took every possible precaution, consistent with a good conscience, not to give offence. Some infatuated associations were very near consigning him to the latter of these alternatives, only because neither his judgment, nor his conscience, would suffer him to adopt the former. He was perpetually harassed by these Committees; and a party employed by them once actually assaulted his person, having first flourished their *tomahawks* over his head in a most insulting manner. Finding it impossible either to convince these associators, or to be convinced by them, any longer stay among them was useless; and an attempt made upon him soon after, rendered it impossible. On Sunday 28th March 1777, while he was walking in his grounds with his neighbour Mr. Hutcheson, he saw a number of armed men marching towards his house. He could have no doubt of their intention; and endeavoured to avoid them. They fired three different shots at him, but happily missed him, and he escaped. From this time, therefore, he sought the earliest opportunity to take shelter behind the British lines; and set out for this purpose in April 1777. Seventy-three of his neighbours, all honest men, of the fairest and most respectable characters, accompanied him in this retreat. The march was long and dangerous. They were repeatedly annoyed and assaulted; and once they were under the necessity of coming to an engagement with a rebel party considerably superior in number. Men, circumstanced as he and his friends were, could want no arguments to animate their exertions. The attack was sharp, but the Loyalists were successful; the enemy gave way, leaving them at liberty to pursue their route unmolested. The whole company, four only excepted, arrived safe at Bergen, where they joined Lieutenant-colonel Barton's battalion, in General Skinner's brigade. A few, whose professions were calculated to render them useful in that department, joined the engineers.

In June following, Mr. Moody and Mr. *Hutcheson,* went privately, about 70 miles into the country, to enlist the friends of Government. They enlisted upwards of 500 men. The British army, then at Brunswick, was expected immediately to march through New Jersey. Mr. Moody and his friends had their agents properly placed, to give them the earliest information of the army's moving; when their plan was, to disarm the disaffected, and generally arm the Loyal. Let the Reader then judge of their mortification, when, whilst their adherents were high in spirits, and confident of their ability, at one blow, as it were, to have crushed the Rebellion in New Jersey, they were informed, that General Howe had evacuated the province, and was gone to the southward. Notwithstanding this discouragement, Mr. Moody and his party still continued in the country agreeably to their

instructions, in the hope that some opportunity would still present itself to annoy the rebellious, and to assist the loyal. But no such opportunity offering immediately, they soon received orders to join the army with the men they had enlisted, or could enlist.

In consequence of these instructions, they set forwards with about 100 Loyalists (not more than that number, from the change of prospects, were then to be prevailed upon to leave their own country; or, if it had been otherwise, the time was too scanty, being not more than 48 hours, to collect them together, which, it must be obvious, was to be done only with great caution and secrecy), on a march of upwards of 70 miles, through a well inhabited part of the province. The rebels pursued them: and, after several skirmishes, at length came upon them in such force, near Perth-Amboy, that they were obliged to give way and disperse. More than sixty of the party were taken prisoners; eight only, besides Mr. Moody, got within the British lines. These prisoners, after being confined in Morristown jail, were tried for what was called *high treason*;* and above one half of them were sentenced to die. Two, whose names were *Iliff* and *Mee*, were actually executed; the rest having been reprieved on condition of their serving in the rebel army. The love of life prevailed. They enlisted; but so strong was their love of loyalty at the same time, that, three or four excepted, who died under the hands of their captors, they all, very soon after, made their escape to the British army.

On comparing the numbers who had first set out with him, with those who, after being taken, had returned to him, Mr. Moody found, that, on the alarm, some had escaped; and some also, who had been taken and released, being still missing, he concluded that they had gone back to their respective homes. This induced him to return, without delay, into the country: and he came back with nineteen men. Convinced that there were still many more, on whom good advice and a good example might have their proper influence, he again went out, and brought back with him forty two young men, as fine soldiers as are in the world: some of whom had but just escaped from jails, where they had been confined for their loyalty. All these he was happy enough to conduct safe to the King's army. From this time, he continued with his battalion till 1778, having just before been made an Ensign.

In the beginning of May 1778, he was again sent into the interior parts of the Rebel country, with orders to remain there as long as he could, to render such service to Government, and its friends, as he should have an opportunity for; and more especially, to obtain precise intelligence from Colonel *Butler*, then supposed to be at Niagara. He employed a trusty Loyalist to go out to Colonel Butler, who fell in with him between Niagara and Wyoming, and was with him at the reduction of this last mentioned fortress; and afterwards, along with another of Mr. Moody's men, (who, having been driven from him, in the disaster just related, had gone back, and staid with Colonel Butler, all the winter, as the only place of safety he could find), he returned with the necessary informations; with which they all went back and reported them at head-quarters. In this interval, Mr. Moody took prisoner a Mr. Martin, chief Commissioner in that district, for the selling of confiscated estates, a man remarkable for his spite and cruelty to the Friends of Government. It was very mortifying to Mr. Moody to have this man rescued from him by a large body of the Militia, after having had him in his custody about forty-eight hours. But he relates with pleasure, that the incident had a good effect on this furious oppressor, inasmuch as his behaviour to his loyal neighbours was ever after much more mild and humane.

On the 10th of June 1779, an opportunity of rendering some service to his country now offering, having first requested Mr. Hutcheson and six men, and some guides, to be of the party, he marched, with sixteen of his own men, from Sandy Hook to Shrewsbury. They eluded the vigilance of a Rebel Guard, and gained a place called *The Falls*. Here they surprised and took prisoners, one

*Was not the taking arms against the King, at least as high Treason as the fighting against their new formed self created states? Yet our generals suffered these Executions of the Loyalists to go on: without ever attempting to put a stop to them by threatening to Retaliate, nay they would not permit the Associated Loyalists to save their Friends, by threatening to Execute any of those Rebels, whom these Loyalists had taken prisoners, and whom they then held in their own Custody.

Colonel, one Lieutenant Colonel, one Major, and two Captains with several other prisoners of inferior note; and without injuring any private property, destroyed a considerable magazine of powder and arms. With these prisoners, and such public stores as they were able to bring off, Mr. Hutcheson was charged, whilst Mr. Moody brought up the rear, with his sixteen men, to defend them. They were, as they had expected, soon pursued by double their number, and overtaken. Mr. Moody kept up a smart fire on his assailants, checking and retarding them, till Mr. Hutcheson, with their booty, had got a head to a considerable distance. He then also advanced, making for the next advantageous station; and thus proceeded, from one good spot to another, still covering the prisoners, till they had gained a situation on the shore at Black Point, where the enemy could not flank them. But, just at this time, the pursuers were reinforced with ten men: so that they were now forty strong. Mr. Hutcheson, with one man, crossed the inlet, behind which he had taken shelter, and came to Mr. Moody's assistance: and now a warm engagement ensued, that lasted for three quarters of an hour. By this time all their ammunition, amounting to upwards of eighty rounds of cartridges, was expended: and ten men only, three of whom were wounded, were in any capacity to follow their leader to the charge. The bayonet was their only resource: but this the enemy could not withstand: they fled, leaving eleven of their number killed or wounded. Unfortunately, Mr. Moody's small, but gallant party could not follow up their blow: being, in a manner, utterly exhausted by a long harassed march, in weather intensely hot. They found the Rebel Captain dead, and their Lieutenant also expiring on the field. There was something peculiarly shocking and awful in the death of the former. He was shot by Mr. Moody, whilst with the most bitter oaths and threats of vengeance, after having missed once, he was again levelling his piece at him. Soon after the engagement, one of the party came forwards, with an handkerchief flying from a stick, and demanded a parley. His signal was returned, signifying the willingness of the Loyalists to treat with him; and a truce was speedily agreed on: the conditions of which were, That they should have leave to take care of their dead and wounded; whilst Mr. Moody's party was permitted, unmolested, to return to the British lines. Happily none of the wounds, which any of his men received in this expedition, proved mortal. The publick stores which they brought away with them, besides those which they had destroyed, sold for upwards of five hundred pounds sterling; and every shilling of this money was given by Mr. Moody to the men, as a small reward for their very meritorious conduct.

About the middle of the October following, Mr. Moody was again sent into the interior parts of the Rebel Country, to obtain intelligence respecting Washington's army. He succeeded: and his intelligence was communicated to General Pattison. Again, about the middle of November, he was desired to find out the situation and circumstances of an army under the Rebel General Sullivan, which had lately been on an expedition to the westward against the Indians. Accordingly he went eighty miles into Pennsylvania, close by Sullivan's camp; and obtained an exact account of the number of men and horses with which he went out from Easton, on this Indian expedition; and the number also that he returned with.

From thence, he went to Morris County, where Washington then lay with his army. And here he had the good fortune to obtain, from their own books, an account of the rations which were drawn for them. He next went to Pumpton, where General Gates then was, on his march to the southward; and here also he gained the exactest information, not only of the amount of the force then with him, but of the numbers that were expected to join him. And now, having pretty well gone through the business entrusted to him, he returned to New York, and continued there till next year.

In May 1780, he took with him four trusty men, and went into the Rebel Country, with the intention of surprising Governor Livingston, a man whose conduct had been, in the most abandoned degree, cruel and oppressive to the loyal inhabitants of New Jersey. When, with all necessary secrecy, Mr. Moody had got into his immediate neighbourhood, information was received, that Mr. Livingston was gone to Trenton to meet the assembly; and that, on his return, he was to see some persons on business at an appointed place. This made it necessary for the Ensign to alter his

measures, as he did immediately. He led his party into Sussex County, and there left them: himself only retiring to a proper situation, till his plan should be ripe for execution. Being under a necessity of again returning into Sussex, before anything could be done, he had the mortification to find, that one of his men had been taken prisoner by a Rebel Major of the name of *Hoops*, who extorted a confession from him that Moody was in the country, and, as he imagined, in quest of some person of note, who lived near Morris Town. This blasted the whole project; the intelligence was instantly sent to Livingston, who, too justly, concluded himself to be the person aimed at; and, of course, took every precaution to prevent a surprise.

Still, however, Mr. Moody flattered himself he should yet be more fortunate, and do something, notwithstanding the alarm that was now spread through the country. The first plausible thing that offered was, a plan to blow up the magazine at Suckasunna, about sixteen miles back of Morris Town; but this also proved abortive: for, notwithstanding his having prevailed on some British prisoners, taken with General Burgoyne, to join him in the enterprise, the alarm was now become so general, and the terror so great, that they had increased their guard around this magazine, to the number of an hundred and upwards; so that he was under the necessity of abandoning his project.

Returning again into Sussex County, he now heard that several prisoners were confined, on various suspicions and charges of loyalty, in the jail of that county; and that one of them was actually under the sentence of death. This poor fellow was one of Burgoyne's soldiers, charged with crimes of a civil nature, of which, however, he was generally believed to be innocent. But when a clergyman of the Church of England interposed with his unrelenting prosecutor, and warmly urged this plea of innocence, he was sharply told, that, though he might not perhaps deserve to die, for the crime for which he had been committed, there could be no doubt of his deserving to die, as an enemy to America. There was something so piteous, as well as shameful, in the case of this ill-fated victim to republican resentment, that it was determined if possible, to release both him and his fellow-prisoners. For this purpose, Mr. Moody took with him six men, and, late at night entered the country town about seventy miles from New York. The inhabitants of the town were but too generally disaffected. This suggested the necessity of stratagem. Coming to the jail, the keeper called out from the window of an upper room, and demanded what their business was? The Ensign immediately replied, "He had a prisoner to deliver into his custody." "What! One of *Moody's* fellows?" said the Jailor. "Yes," said the Ensign. On his enquiring what the name of this supposed prisoner was, one of the party, who was well known, by the inhabitants of that place, to be with Mr. Moody, personated the character of a prisoner, and spoke for himself The jailor gave him a little ill language; but, notwithstanding, seemed highly pleased with the idea of his having so notorious a Tory in his custody. On the Ensign's urging him to come down, and take charge of the man, he peremtorily refused; alleging, that, in consequence of Moody's being out, he had received strict orders to open his doors to no man after sun-set; and that therefore he must wait till morning. Finding that this tale would not take, the Ensign now changed his note; and, in a stern tone, told him, "Sirrah, the man who now speaks to you is Moody: I have a strong party with me; and if you do not this moment deliver up your keys, I will instantly pull down your house about your ears." The jailor vanished in a moment. On this, Mr. Moody's men, who were well skilled in the Indian war-whoop, made the air resound with such a variety of hideous yells, as soon left them nothing to fear from the inhabitants of New Town, which, though the county town, consists only of twenty or thirty houses. "The Indians, the Indians are come!"—said the panic-struck people; and happy were they who could soonest escape into the woods. While these things were thus going on, the Ensign had made his way through a casement, and was met by a prisoner, whom he immediately employed to procure him a light. The vanished jailor was now again produced; and most obsequiously conducted Mr. Moody to the dungeon of the poor wretch under sentence of death.

It may seem incredible, but it is an undoubted fact, that, notwithstanding all the horrors and awfulness of his situation, this poor, forlorn, condemned British soldier was found fast asleep; and

had slept so sound, as to have heard nothing of the uproar or alarm. There is no possibility of describing the agony of this man, when, on being thus suddenly aroused, he saw before him a man in arms, attended by persons, whom, though they were familiarly known to him, so agitated were his spirits, he was utterly at a loss then to recognize. The first, and the only idea that occured to him was, that, as many of the friends of the Government had been privately executed in prison, the person he saw was his executioner. On Mr. Moody's repeatedly informing him of his mistake, and that he was come to release him in the name of *King George*, the transition, from such an abyss of wretchedness to so extravagant a pitch of joy, had well nigh overcome him. Never before had the Writer been present at so affecting a scene. The image of the poor soldier, alternately agitated with the extremes of despair and rapture, is, at this moment, present to his imagination, as strong almost as if the object were still before him: and he has often thought, there are few subjects on which a painter of taste and sensibility could more happily employ his pencil. The man looked wild: and undoubtedly was wild, and hardly in his senses: and yet he laboured, and was big with some of the noblest sentiments, and most powerful passions by which the human mind is ever actuated. In such circumstances, it was with some difficulty that the Ensign got him away. At length, however, his clothes were got on: and he, with all the rest who chose to avail themselves of the opportunity, were conducted into safety, notwithstanding a warm pursuit of several days.

The humane reader, Mr. Moody persuades himself, will not be less affected than he himself was, at the mournful sequel of this poor soldier's tale. In the course of the war he was again taken, and again conducted to the dungeon; and afterwards actually executed on the same sentence on which he had been before convicted; though he left the world with the most solemn asseverations of his innocence, as to any crime of which he had been accused, excepting only an unshaken allegiance to his sovereign.

A few other particulars respecting this poor man, who, though but a common soldier in a marching regiment, was, in all the essential and best parts of the character, an hero, the Writer cannot excuse himself from the relation of. His situation and circumstances in the Rebel Country being peculiar, Mr. Moody, not thinking it proper himself to return thither so soon, took the earliest means he could to have him conveyed safe to New York. But no arguments, no entreaties, could prevail with him to leave his deliverer. "To you," said he, "I owe my life: to you, and in your service, let me devote it. You have found me in circumstances of ignominy: I wish for an opportunity to convince you, that you have not been mistaken in thinking me innocent. I am, and you shall find me, a good soldier." It was to this fatal but fixed determination, that he soon after owed the loss of his life.

When he was brought to the place of execution, the persons, who had charge of him, told him, they had authority to promise him a reprieve: and they did most solemnly promise it to him, on condition only that he would tell them, who the Loyalists in the country were who had assisted Moody. His reply was most manly and noble; and proves, that real nobility and dignity of sentiment are appropriated to no particular rank or condition of life. "I love life," he said, "and there is nothing which a man of honour can do, that I would not do to save it; but I cannot pay this price for it. The men you wish me to betray must be good men, because they have assisted a good man in a good cause. Innocent, as I am, I feel this an awful moment: how far it becomes you to tempt me to make it terrible, by overwhelming me in the basest guilt, yourselves must judge. My life is in your power; my conscience, I thank God, is still my own."

Another extraordinary circumstance is said to have befallen him; which, as well as the preceding, Mr. Moody relates on the testimony of an eye-witness yet living. Though he was a small and light man; yet the rope, with which he was suspended, broke. Even still this poor man's admirable presence of mind and dignity of conscious innocence, did not forsake him. He instantly addressed himself to the surrounding multitude, in the following words: "Gentlemen, I cannot but hope that this very extraordinary event will convince you, of what I again solemnly protest to you, that I am innocent of the crime for which you have adjudged me to die." But he still protested in vain.

The supposed crime for which he suffered was, the plundering and robbing the house of a certain furious and powerful Rebel. But it would be unjust to his memory not to certify, as Mr. Moody does, that he has since learned, from the voluntary confession of a less conscientious loyalist, that this honest man was charged wrongfully; inasmuch as he himself, without the knowledge of the other, on the principles of retaliation and revenge, had committed the crime. The name of the above-mentioned honest soldier and martyr, was *Robert Maxwell*, a Scotsman, who had had a good education.

Not long after, obtaining information of the British army's moving towards Springfield, Mr. Moody concluded, that the campaign was open. There appeared no way in which, with his small party of seven men, he could be more useful, than by securing as many as he could of the Rebel Militia. Accordingly, it was not long before he contrived to take prisoners, a Major, a Captain, two Lieutenants, and sundry Committee Men; in all to the amount of eighteen. Some requested to be parolled; and the Ensign complied with their request; because it was not only reasonable and humane, but because also it left him at liberty to pursue fresh objects. Some requested to take the oath of neutrality; and it was not less willingly administered to them.

The Rebel part of the country was now again in an alarm, and the Ensign was again pursued and fought, according to the strong expression of Scripture, "as a partridge in the mountains." But "wandering in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth," by the blessing of God, he still eluded all their researches. At length, however, being under a necessity of returning to New York, he collected a few more of Burgoyne's men; and having now augmented his party to thirteen, he set out for that capital. But his former good fortune now forsook him; and he himself was soon doomed to feel all those bitter calamities, from which it had been the object of his exertions to extricate others.

On the 21st of July 1780, it was his ill hap to fall in with an army, which the Rebel General *Wayne* was conducting to the siege of *The Blockhouse*, commanded by Captain *Ward*. Resistance was vain, and retreat impracticable. Mr. Moody, and the greater part of his men, were now obliged to submit to captivity.

He, and two of his men, were immediately sent to a place called *The Slote*; where they were confined, with their hands tied behind their backs. On the 22d they were removed to *Stony-point*; and on the 23d to Colonel Robertson's house, at *West Point*. The Rebel General *Howe*, who commanded at this post, treated Mr. Moody with great civility; and permitted his servant to attend him. From thence, he was sent to *Fish-kill*, to the Rebel Commissary of prisoners, who passed him on to *AEsopus*. At *AEsopus*, he remained till the 2d of August; when, in the night, he was put into a strong room guarded by four soldiers, two within the door, and two without. The Serjeant, in the hearing of the Ensign, gave orders to the sentinels who were in the room with him, to insist on his lying down on a bed, and instantly to shoot him if he attempted to rise from it. On this, he requested and insisted to see the Commissary. The Commissary came; and was asked, if these orders were from him? His answer was, "The Serjeant had done his duty; and he hoped the men would obey their orders." Mr. Moody remonstrated, and urged, that it was no uncommon thing with him to rise from his bed in his sleep; he requested therefore only, that, if he should happen now to be overtaken with such an infirmity, the men might be ordered to call him by his name, and at least to awake him before they fired. All the answer he could obtain, from this tyrant — minion of tyrant masters, was a cool and most cutting repetition of his former words.

After having twice more changed the place of his confinement, on the 10th of August he was carried back to *West-point*. And here his sufferings seemed to be but beginning; for the cruelties he experienced, under the immediate eye of General *Arnold*, who then commanded there, infinitely exceeded all that he has ever met with before or since.

Nothing can be further from Mr. Moody's wishes than to become any man's accuser; but no man should be afraid either to hear, or to tell the truth, which is of no party, and should be observed by all. Humanity, moreover, is so lovely and necessary a virtue, and especially in times of civil war, that Mr. Moody owns he is proud, and loves, to acknowledge and praise it, even in an

enemy; of course, he must lament and reprobate the want of it, though in his best friend. Under new masters, it is hoped, General Arnold has learned new maxims. Compelled by truth, however, Mr. Moody must bear him testimony, that he was *then* faithful to his employers, and abated not an iota in fulfilling both the letter and the spirit of their general orders and instructions.

Mr. Moody feels this to be an unpleasant part of his Narrative. It is with pain he pursues it. May it be permitted him then to give the subsequent part of it in the words of an affidavit, taken in the Judge-Advocate's Office at New York, from the mouth of William Buirtis, who was confined for his loyalty in the same prison with Mr. Moody.

"JUDGE-ADVOCATE'S OFFICE.

New York, May 11, 1782.

"This day personally appeared William Buirtis, a Refugee from the county of West Chester, in the province of New York, but now residing on York Island, in the province aforesaid; and being duly sworn on the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposeth and saith:

"That some time in the month of August 1780, he (the deponent) was confined in a dungeon at West-Point Fort, under sentence of death, having been charged with giving certain intelligence and information to General Mathew, one of his Britannic Majesty's Generals serving at the time in America; that, about the middle of the month of August aforesaid, Lieutenant *James Moody*, of Brigadier General Skinner's first batallion, was brought under guard, and confined in the same dungeon with him (the deponent); that, the day following, he *(Lieutenant* Moody) was put in irons and hand-cuffed; that the hand-cuffs were of a particular sort and construction, *ragged on the* inside next the wrist, which raggedness caused his wrists to be much cut and scarified; that soon after he (Lieutenant Moody) was ironed and hand-cuffed, an officer came and demanded his money, saying, *"he was ordered to take what money he had, and should obey his orders punctually;"* that the money was not delivered, as he *(Lieutenant* Moody) was resolute in refusing, and determined not to give it up. He (Lieutenant Moody) then petitioned General Benedict Arnold, at that time in the Rebel service, and Commanding Officer at West Point, to grant him relief; in which petition he set forth the miserable situation he was in, as also the torment he suffered, occasioned by the hand-cuffs; to which petition he received no answer, though he was told, by two officers in the Rebel service, his petition had been delivered to General Arnold.

"That about a week after his first petition had been sent, he petitioned a second time for relief from his suffering, requesting moreover to be brought to a trial, observing, that if he should be found guilty of death he should desire to suffer, as death was much preferable to torment, and being murdered by inches. Some little time after the delivery of the second petition, one of General Arnold's Aids de Camps, whose name he (the deponent) cannot recollect, came to the dungeon; and, on seeing him, (Lieutenant Moody,) asked, if that was the *Moody* whose name was a terror to every good man? On his replying that his name was Moody, he (the Aid de Camp) replied in a scoffing manner, *"You have got yourself into a pretty situation;"* on his (Lieutenant Moody's) saying the situation was disagreeable, but he hoped it would not be of long continuance; he answered, he believed not, as he would soon meet with justice (pointing at the same time to a gallows that was erected in the sight and view of the dungeon); and also added, *there* is the gallows ready erected which he (meaning Moody) had long merited. Lieutenant Moody answered, he made no doubt he (the Aid de Camp) wished to see every Loyal Subject hanged, but he thanked God, the power was not in *him*; but if he (Lieutenant Moody) was hanged, it could be for no other reason than being a Loyal Subject to one of the best of Kings, and under one of the best of Governments; and added, if he had *ten* lives to lose, he would sooner forfeit the ten as a Loyal Subject than *one* as a Rebel; and also said, he hoped to live to see him (the Aid de Camp), and a thousand such other villains hanged for being Rebels. The officer then said he was sent to examine his irons, as he (Lieutenant Moody) had been frequently troubling General Arnold with his petitions. On examining the irons, he said *they were too bad;* and asked who put them on? —saying, *'Irons were intended for security, not for torment: but if any one merited such irons, he* (Lieutenant Moody)

did in his opinion. Lieutenant Moody, however, was not relieved at that time from his irons: but, about a week or ten days afterwards, an officer came from General Washington, ordered the irons to be taken off, and Lieutenant Moody to be better treated. In consequence of General Washington's order, he was better used: that he, (the deponent) knows nothing farther that happened, as he (Lieutenant Moody,) in a few days afterwards, was removed from that place.

"WILLIAM BUIRTIS.

"Sworn before me at the time and place above mentioned,

"RICHARD PORTER,

As. Dy. Judge-Advocate."

The above-mentioned dungeon was dug out of a rock, and covered with a platform of planks badly jointed, without any roof to it: and all the rain which fell upon it immediately passed through, and lodged in the bottom of this dismal mansion. It had no floor but the natural rock: and the water, with the mud and filth collected, was commonly ankle-deep in every part of it. Mr. Moody's bed was an old door, supported by four stones, so as just to raise it above the surface of the water. Here he continued near four weeks: and, during most of the time, while he was tormented with irons in the manner mentioned above, no food was allowed him but stinking beef, and rotten flour, made up into balls or dumplins, which were thrown into a kettle and boiled with the meat, and then brought into him in a wooden bowl which was never washed, and which contracted a thick crust of dough, grease, and dirt. It is a wonder that such air, and such food, to say nothing of the wounds upon his legs and wrists, were not fatal to him, especially as the clothes on his back were seldom dry, and at one time were continually wet for more than a week together. After Mr. Washington interfered he was served with wholesome provisions, and he was allowed to purchase for himself some milk and vegetables.

The ways of Providence are often mysterious, frequently bringing about its ends by the most unlikely means. To this inhuman treatment in General Arnold's camp, Mr. Moody owed his future safety. On the 1st of September he was carried to Washington's camp, and there confined near their Liberty-pole. Colonel *Skammel*, the Adjutant General, came to see him put in irons. When they had hand-cuffed him, he remonstrated with the Colonel, desiring that his legs, which were indeed in a worse situation than even his wrists, might be examined: farther adding only, that death would be infinitely preferable to a repetition of the torments he had just undergone. The Colonel did examine his legs; and, on seeing them, he also acknowledged, that his treatment had indeed been too bad: and asked, if General Arnold had been made acquainted with his situation. Mr. Moody feels a sincere pleasure in thus publicly acknowledging his obligations and his gratitude to Colonel Skammel, who humanely gave orders to the Provost Marshal to take good care of him, and by no means to suffer any irons to be put on his legs, till they were likely to prove less distressing.

Mr. Moody attended the rebel army in its march over the *New Bridge;* and had an opportunity of observing their whole line, and counting their artillery. Everything seemed smooth and fair, and he felt himself much at ease, in the prospect of being soon exchanged; when, very unexpectedly, he was visited by an old acquaintance, one of their Colonels, who informed him, that he was in two days time to be brought to trial; that *Livingston* was to be his prosecutor, and that the Court Martial was *carefully picked* for the purpose. He subjoined that he would do well to prepare for Eternity, since, from the evidence which he knew would be produced, there was but one issue of the business to be expected. Mr. Moody requested to be informed, what it was the purpose of this evidence to prove? it was, his well wisher told him, that he had assassinated a Captain Shaddock, and a Lieutenant Hendrickson. These were the two officers who had fallen fairly in battle near Black Point, as has been already related. The Ensign replied, that he felt himself much at ease on that account, as it could be sufficiently cleared up by their own people, who had been in, and had survived, the *action*, as well as by some of their officers, who were at the time prisoners to him, and spectators of the whole affair. "All this," said his friend, "will be of little avail: you are so

obnoxious; you have been, and are likely to be, so *mischievous* to us, that, be assured, we are resolved to get rid of you at any rate. Besides, you cannot deny, and it can be proved by incontestible evidence, that you have enlisted men, in this *State*, for the King's service, and this, by our laws, is *death*."

Ensign Moody affected an air of unconcern at this information; but it was too serious and important to him to be really disregarded; he resolved, therefore, from that moment, to effect his escape, or to perish in the attempt.

Every precaution had been taken to secure the place in which he was confined. It was nearly in the centre of the rebel camp. A sentinel was placed within the door of his prison, and another without, besides four others close round, and within a few yards of the place. The time now came on when he must either make his attempt, or lose the opportunity for ever. On the night, therefore of the 17th of September, busy in ruminating on his project, he had, on the pretence of being cold, got a watch-coat thrown across his shoulders, that he might better conceal, from his unpleasant companion, the operations which he meditated against his hand-cuffs. While he was racking his invention, to find some possible means of extricating himself from his fetters, he providentially cast his eye on a post fastened in the ground, through which an hole had been bored with an auger; and it occured to him that it might be possible, with the aid of this hole, to break the bolt of his hand-cuffs. Watching the opportunity, therefore, from time to time, of the sentinel's looking another way, he thrust the point of the bolt into the above-mentioned hole, and by cautiously exerting his strength, and gradually bending the iron backwards and forwards, he at length broke it. Let the reader imagine what his sensations were, when he found the manacles drop from his hands! He sprung instantly past the interior sentinel, and rushing on the next, with one hand he seized his musquet, and with the other struck him to the ground. The sentinel within, and the four others who were placed by the fence surrounding the place of his confinement, immediately gave the alarm; and, in a moment, the cry was general,—"*Moody* is escaped from the Provost." It is impossible to describe the uproar which now took place throughout the whole camp. In a few minutes every man was in a bustle; every man was looking for Moody, and multitudes passed him on all sides—little suspecting, that a man whom they saw deliberately marching along, with a musket on his shoulder, could be the fugitive they were in quest of. The darkness of the night, which was also blustering and drizzly, prevented any discrimination of his person, and was indeed the great circumstance that rendered his escape possible.

But no small difficulty still remained to be surmounted. To prevent desertion, which at that time, was very frequent, Washington had surrounded his camp with a chain of sentinels, posted at about forty or fifty yards distance from each other; he was unacquainted with their stations; to pass them undiscovered was next to impossible; and to be discovered would certainly be fatal. In this dilemma Providence again befriended him. He had gained their station without knowing it, when luckily he heard the watch-word passed from one to another—"Look sharp to the chain——Moody is escaped from the Provost." From the sound of the voices he ascertained the respective situations of these sentinels; and, throwing himself on his hands and knees, he was happy enough to crawl through the vacant space between two of them, unseen by either. Judging that their line of pursuit would naturally be towards the British army, he made a detour into the woods on the opposite side. Through these woods he made as much speed as the darkness of the night would permit, steering his course, after the Indian manner, by occasionally groping and feeling the *white-oak*. On the south side the bark of this tree is rough and unpleasant to the touch, but on the north side it is smooth; hence it serves the sagacious traverser of the desart, by night as well as by day, for his compass. Through the most distant woods and swamps he continued to wander till the night of the 21st, a space of more than fifty-six hours, during which time, he had no other sustenance than a few *beach* leaves (which, of all that the woods afforded, were the least unpleasant to the taste, and least pernicious to health,) which he chewed and swallowed, to abate the intolerable cravings of his hunger.

In every inhabited district he knew there were friends of Government, and he had now learned also where and how to find them out, without endangering *their* safety, which was always the first object of his concern. From some of those good men he received minute information how the pursuit after him was directed, and where every guard was posted. Thus assisted, he eluded their keenest vigilance; and, at length, by God's blessing, to his unspeakable joy, he arrived safe at *Paulus-Hook.*

On the 6th of March 1781, Colonel Delancey, the Adjutant General, requested Mr. Moody to make an expedition into rebel country, for the purpose of intercepting Mr. Washington's dispatches. He readily consented; and set out on the expedition the very next night, and travelled about twenty-five miles. The following day he and his party kept concealed in a swamp. The next night, for it was only by night that they could venture to stir, they had not gone far, when the man who had undertaken to be their guide, refused to advance a step farther. No arguments, no promises, no threats, could prevail with him to proceed, though it was at his own express desire that he was one of the party. Incensed at his being so perverse and wrong-headed, Mr. Moody, in the first transports of indignation, had actually cocked his gun in order to shoot him; but happily he instantly recollected, that the poor devil had a wife and family who depended on him for bread. This restrained him; and ordering his arms to be taken from him, he was under the painful necessity of returning with him to New-York.

This man was remarkably earnest and vehement in his resentment against the Rebels. He had been much injured by them in his property; and they had also put both his father and his brother to an ignominious death. It was natural to suppose, therefore, that such a man would be true and firm. But he was loyal only through resentment and interest, not from conviction and principle. These Loyalists, from principle, were the men on whom he relied; and no one of these ever failed him.

The Adjutant General seemed to be much disappointed on seeing the party return, supposing the hope of obtaining the dispatches to be now vain. Mr. Moody informed him of what had happened; but added, that he had ever since kept his eye on the renegado, and had not suffered a soul to speak to him; and requested that this caution should be still continued, and that even the sentry, who was to guard him, should not be permitted to have any intercourse with him. *On this condition* he promised again to make the attempt, and hoped not without success. Accordingly, he set out a second time, and, on the night of the 10th he reached Haverstraw mountains. On his march he was informed, that the post had gone by that day. On the 11th the weather became very inclement, and he, with his party, suffered exceedingly from a heavy fall of snow; notwithstanding, they pushed forward, hoping, by rapid marches, to get a-head of the rider. These efforts, though excessively fatiguing, were as yet all in vain; but on the 15th they were successful, and got possession of their prize; and, after some equally difficult and distressing marches on their return, they at length arrived safe with it in New York. The inexpressible hardships which the party underwent in this adventure, both from hunger and cold, were fatal to the health of most of them. Soon after Mr. Moody was made a Lieutenant, having first served more than a year as a volunteer without any pay, and almost three years as an Ensign.

About the middle of May the Adjutant General again complained of the want of intelligence, and told Lieutenant Moody, that he could not render the King's cause a more essential piece of service than by bringing in, if it were possible, another rebel mail. There was no declining such a solicitation. Therefore, on the night of the 15th, taking four men with him, Mr. Moody set out, and travelled twenty-five miles. Hitherto he and associates met with no molestation; but they had not gone far the next night, when they perceived a considerable party of men approaching them as secretly as possible. Mr. Moody tried to get off by the left, but he found himself and his party inclosed on three sides. On the right was a high cliff of rocks, so rugged and steep that the enemy thought it impossible for them to escape on that side. It was obvious, from these circumstances, that an ambush was laid, and that this spot, so peculiarly convenient, was chosen for the purpose; in short, that Mr. Moody and his party had been betrayed by intelligence sent forward from New

York. The only alternative left was to surrender and perish, or to leap down from the top of these rocks, without knowing, with any certainty, either how high they were, or what sort of ground was at the bottom. The Lieutenant bade his men follow him, and sprang forward. Providentially the ground at the bottom was soft, and everything else just as they could have wished it: they escaped unhurt, and proceeded for some time unmolested. But, at no great distance, crossing a swamp, just beyond it they fell in with another party, of much the same number as the former. Luckily they saw, and were not seen. A little hillock was at hand, to which the Lieutenant ordered his men quietly to retreat, and fall on their faces; judging that, in case they were discovered, there would be some advantage in having to charge from higher ground, by which means, if at all, they might cut their way through the party. What he and his men felt, when they beheld so superior a force marching directly towards them, till at last they were within fifty yards; or, when, in this awful moment, they had the happiness to see them, without being discovered, take another course; no person of sensibility will need be told. A little council of war was now held, and it was determined to return whither only the way seemed clear. To advance was impracticable, as there now could remain not a doubt but that intelligence of the intended route had been sent from within the British lines, and that the enemy had made a proper use of it. They began, therefore, with all possible caution, to measure back their steps; for they were still apprehensive of other plots and other ambushes.

And now, having gained the North River, and being within four miles of New York, they flattered themselves they were once more out of danger. But, being within a hundred yards of a certain house, how were they alarmed when they saw seventy men come out of it, and advance directly towards them! Lieutenant Moody was convinced they were Rebels; but the guide insisted that they were Loyalists, and that he *knew* several of them. On this, the latter, with another man, went forward to meet them, notwithstanding that the former still persisted in his opinion. A very unpleasant salute soon convinced this unfortunate *duumvirate* of their mistaken confidence. The main body made for the Lieutenant, who had no other means of escape than to climb a steep hill; but, long before he had reached the summit, they had so gained on him as to be within fifty yards. He received one general discharge, and thought it little short of a miracle that he escaped unwounded. The bullets flew like a storm of hail all around him; his clothes were shot through in several places; one ball went through his hat, and another grazed his arm. Without at all slackening his pace he turned round, and discharged his musquet, and by this shot killed one of his pursuers: still they kept up their fire, each man discharging his piece as fast as he could load; but, gaining an opportunity of soon doubling upon them, he gave them the slip, and in due time arrived, once more, safe in New York. One of the two men who had escaped, and got in first, mistaking the screams of the poor fellow who was shot, for those of Lieutenant Moody himself, had given out that the Lieutenant was killed, for that he had heard his cries; but the friends of the latter were soon happy to see so unequivocal a proof that the man was mistaken.

The very first night after his return to New York, as above related, *viz.*, on the 18th of May, Lieutenant Moody set out again on the business of the expedition. The Rebels knew that he had been driven back, and he thought it the properest time to proceed inmediately in pursuit of his object. On that night, with his small party of four men, he got as far as Secaucas. The next night they crossed the Hackinsack river, by means of a canoe which Lieutenant Moody always kept there for such purposes, and which, after crossing, he concealed till his return. He then proceeded on, till, coming to the end of a marsh, he fell in with a party of Rebels, who were patrolling in that quarter, with a view only, it is probable, of intercepting the country people who might be carrying provisions to New York. This party discovered the Lieutenant first, without being seen, and suffered him to pass their van, not hailing him till some of them were in his rear, as well as some in his front. He was ordered instantly to *stand*, or he and all with him were dead men. This summons the Lieutenant answered by an immediate discharge, which they returned. He then calling on his rear to advance, as if he had a large body in reserve, and giving a second fire, they soon dispersed. He was informed the next day, that this rebel party consisted of twelve men.

Marching on about four miles farther, he came to Saddle River, which it was necessary to cross; but apprehensive that there might be a guard stationed at the bridge, though the night was dismally dark and rainy, and the river had greatly overflowed its banks, he waded, for several yards, through a considerable depth of water, till he got close to the bridge, where he saw, as he had feared, a regular guard. On this he retreated with all possible speed and caution; and was obliged to wade through the river, about half a mile farther up, not without much difficulty and danger.

The country being now much alarmed with rumors of Moody's being out, occasioned by this little rencontre, the *mail*, instead of being sent by Pompton, as it usually had been, and where it was expected to be met with, was now sent by the back road, with a guard to secure it. On discovering this, the Lieutenant dispatched a trusty Loyalist to a distant part of the province, with letters to his friends; and particularly directing one of them, whose person, figure and voice most resembled his own, to pass for him but a single hour: which he readily did. In this friend's neighbourhood lived a pompous and important Justice of a Peace, who was a cowardly fellow, and of course had been cruel. At this man's house, early in the evening, the person employed raised an alarm. The Justice came out, and espying, as it was intended he should, a *tall man*, his fears convinced him it was Moody; and he instantly betook himself to the woods. The next day the rumour was general, that Moody was in that part of the country; and the militia was brought down from the part where he really was ,to pursue him where he was not. This facilitated the capture of the *mail*, which he waylaid for five days before the opportunity presented. This mail contained all the dispatches that were sent in consequence of the interview between General Washington and the count Rochambeau in Connecticut.

Lieutenant Moody caused two other mails to be taken by the people under his direction. In one of these little expeditions his brother commanded, a young man, whose fearless courage, in the very teeth of danger, he had repeatedly witnessed. The younger Moody succeeded in his attempt, so far as to intercept the mail; but, after seizing it, he was attacked by a superior party, and two of his men were taken: yet he himself had the good fortune to escape, with that part of the papers which was in his own custody. Pennsylvania was the scene of this enterprise.

A tale far more melancholy than any yet related comes now to be told; the recollection of which (and it is impossible he should ever forget it) will forever wring with anguish the heart of the Writer of this Narrative. In the end of October 1781, Major Beckwith, Aid de Camp to General Kniphausen, came and informed Lieutenant Moody, that one *Addison* had been with him, on a project of high moment. It was nothing less than to bring off the most important books and papers of Congress. This Addison was an Englishman, and had been employed in some inferior department, under Mr. Thompson, the Secretary to the Congress. He was then a prisoner; and the plan was, that he should be immediately exchanged, return in the usual manner to Philadelphia, and there resume his old employment. The Lieutenant was abundantly careful, and even scrupulous, in his inquiries concerning the man's character; on which head Major Beckwith expressed the most entire confidence; and observed, that Addison was equally cautious respecting the characters of those who were to attend him.

The matter was of importance; and Lieutenant Moody was confident that, though it might be difficult to perform his part of the business, yet it was not impracticable. He resolved, however, as Addison might think *him* an object worth betraying, that he should not be informed of his consenting to be of the party. If any other person did inform him of it, he was, to say the least, very imprudent. The Lieutenant pitched upon his only brother, of whom some mention has already been made, and another faithful American soldier, for this arduous enterprise. Their first instructions were to wait on Addison, and to bind him, as they themselves had just been bound, to mutual secrecy and fidelity, by an *oath*, which the Lieutenant had always administered to his followers in all his expeditions, when the importance of the object rendered such an additional tie necessary; and which, as it clearly shews the principles of honour and humanity on which it was his uniform pride and purpose to act, he begs leave here to subjoin, and it is as follows; viz.

"I, the undersigned A.B. do solemnly swear, on the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, that I will stand by and be true to the persons joined with me in this expedition, and do every thing in my power to accomplish the purposes of it: and I do farther swear, that, in case of our taking any prisoners, I will do my endeavour to treat them as well as our situation will admit of: and I do farther swear, that, in case any accident should happen to me, and that I should be taken, I will not, even to save life, discover or betray any person joined with me, or any Loyalist who may befriend us with any information, advice, or other assistance: and I do farther swear, that I will not injure nor destroy any proprety even of a rebel, unless it be arms or ammunition, but faithfully pay the full price of anything we take from them, if they refuse to sell it: and I do farther swear, that I will not wound nor take away the life of any person whatever, unless they should attempt an escape when in our custody, or it shall otherwise be absolutely necessary for our own defence. *So help me God.*"

After taking this oath, a certain number of nights was agreed on in which Addison was to expect them; and a certain place also appointed, where he was to meet them. In such an adventure, it was impossible to be exact to any time; but it was agreed, that if they failed of being at the place in any of the specified nights, he should no longer expect them; and they farther promised, by proper means, to apprise him, if possible, if any accident should befal them, so as to either delay, or wholly put an end to their project.

Things being thus settled, Addison left New York in due form and manner, as was generally supposed, in order to return to his former friends and employment; and, at the proper time, Lieutenant Moody and his friends followed him. The manner and circumstances of their march, it is not material nor proper here to relate: suffice it to say, that, on the night of the 7th of November, the first in the order of those that had been appointed, they arrived in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, but on the opposite side of the river. They found Addison already on the spot, waiting for them, according to appointment. Lieutenant Moody kept a little back, at such a distance as not to have his person distinguished, yet so as to be within hearing of the conversation that passed. His brother and *Marr* his associate, on going up to Addison, found him apparently full of confidence, and in high spirits; and everything seemed to promise success. He told them, that their plot was perfectly ripe for execution; that he had secured the means of admission into the most private recesses of the State-house, so that he should be able the next evening to deliver to them the papers they were in quest of. They, on their parts, assured him, that every necessary precaution had been taken to secure and expedite their retreat; and that they had with them a *sure friend*, who would wait for them on that side of the river, who, as well as themselves, would die by his side, rather than desert him, should any disaster befal them. He replied that, they should find *him* as true and faithful to them and their cause, as they themselves could possibly be. Soon after they crossed the river together to Philadelphia; and it is probable that, on the passage, Addison was for the first time informed, that this friend was Lieutenant Moody. Whether it was this discovery that put it first into his head, or whether he had along intended it, and had already taken the necessary previous steps, the Lieutenant cannot certainly say; but he assures himself, that every generous-minded man will be shocked when he reads, that this perfidious wretch had either sold, or was about to sell them to the Congress.

As the precise time in which they should be able to execute their plan could not be ascertained, it was agreed that Lieutenant Moody should remain at the Ferry-house, opposite to Philadelphia, till they returned. On going into the house, he told the mistress of it, by a convenient equivocation, that he was an officer of the *Jersey Brigade*, as he really was, though of that Jersey Brigade which was in the King's service. The woman understood him as speaking of a rebel corps, which was also called the Jersey Brigade. To avoid notice, he pretended to be indisposed; and, going up stairs, he threw himself upon a bed, and here continued to keep his room, but always awake, and always on the watch. Next morning, about 11 o'clock, he saw a man walk hastily up to the house, and overheard him telling some person he met at the door, that "there was the devil to pay in Phila-

delphia: that there had been a plot to break into the State-house, but that one of the party had betrayed the others; that two were already taken; and that a party of soldiers had just crossed the river with him, to seize their leader, who was said to be thereabouts." The Lieutenant felt himself to be too nearly interested in this intelligence, any longer to keep up the appearance of a sick man; and, seizing his pistols, he instantly ran down stairs, and made his escape.

He had not got a hundred yards from the house when he saw the soldiers enter it. A small piece of wood lay before him, in which he hoped at least to be out of sight; and he had sprung the fence in order to enter it. But it was already lined by a party of horse, with a view of cutting off his retreat. Thus surrounded, all hopes of flight were in vain; and to seek for a hiding place, in a clear, open field, seemed equally useless. Drowning persons are said to catch at straws; with hardly a hope of escaping so much as a moment longer undiscovered, he threw himself flat on his face in a ditch, which yet seemed of all places the least calculated for concealment, for it was without weeds or shrubs, and so shallow, that a quail might be seen in it. Once more he had reason to moralize on the vanity of all human contrivance and confidence; yet, as Providence ordered it, the improbability of the place proved the means of his security. He had lain there but a few minutes, when six of his pursuers passed within ten feet of him, and very diligently examined a thickety part of the ditch that was but a few paces from him. With his pistols cocked, he kept his eye constantly on them, determining, that, as soon as he saw himself to be discovered by any one of them, he would instantly spring up, and sell his life as dearly as might be; and, refusing to be taken alive, provoke, and, if possible, force them to kill him. Once or twice he thought he saw one of the soldiers look at him, and he was on the point of shooting the man; but reflecting that possibly though the soldier did *see*, yet he might have the humanity not to *discover* him, as he would fain hope was really the case, his heart smote him for his rash resolution; and he thanks God that he was restrained from putting it in execution.

From the ditch they went all round the adjacent field; and, as Lieutenant Moody sometimes a little raised up his head, he saw them frequently running their bayonets into some small stacks of Indian corn-fodder. This suggested to him an idea, that if he could escape till night, a place they had already explored would be the securest shelter for him. When night came, he got into one of those stacks. The wind was high, which prevented the rustling of the leaves of the fodder, as he entered, from being heard by the people who were at that time passing close by him into the country, in quest of him. His position in this retreat was very uncomfortable, for he could neither sit nor lie down. In this erect posture, however, he remained two nights and two days, without a morsel of food, for there was no corn on the stacks, and, which was infinitely more intolerable, without drink. He must not relate, for reasons which may be easily imagined, what became of him immediately after his coming out of this uneasy prison; but he will venture to inform the reader, that, on the fifth night after his elopement from the Ferry-house, he searched the banks of the Delaware till he had the good fortune to meet with a small boat. Into this he jumped; and having waited a little for the tide of flood, which was near, he pushed off, and rowed a considerable way up the river. During this voyage he was several times accosted by people on the water; but, having often found the benefit of putting on a fearless air, he endeavoured to answer them in their own way; and recollecting some of the less polished phrases of the gentlemen of the oar, he used them pretty liberally; and thus was suffered to pass on unsuspected. In due time, he left his boat; and relying on the aid of Loyalists, some of whom he knew were everywhere to be found, he went into a part of the country least known to him, and the least likely for him to have thought of; and at length, after many circuitous marches, all in the night, and through pathless courses, in about five days, he once more arrived safe in New York.

All these efforts for life were dictated, it would seem, rather by instinct than reason: for, occupied as his mind had been with his own danger, and his own sufferings, he can truly say, his greatest uneasiness was on account of his brother. There was not a ray of hope that he could escape, and less, if possible, that he would be pardoned. He was the son of his old age to a most worthy and beloved father, who had himself been a soldier, and who loved and honoured the profession.

Indeed he was a most amiable young man, as remarkable for the sweetness of his disposition as for his undaunted intrepidity. Excellent youth! Every feeling heart will forgive the tear which is now dropped to thy memory, by thy sorrowing brother! He perished by an ignominious death, in the 23rd year of his age; the news of which, as may naturally be supposed, well nigh brought the grey hairs of a venerable father with sorrow to the grave. It did not indeed immediately cost him his life, but it cost him, what is more valuable – his reason!

His fellow-prisoner was also sentenced to death; but, on making some pretended discoveries, of no considerable moment, he was reprieved. Lieutenant Moody is sensible it contains no information that can interest the reader; yet, as he preserves it as a precious *relic*, he persuades himself every man who is a brother will forgive his inserting an extract or two from his brother's last letter, dated November 12, 1781, from the *New Gaol Dungeon, Philadelphia.*

"Dear brother,

Let me entreat you not to grieve at my fate, and the fate of my brother-soldier. Betrayed by the man on whom we depended to execute the plan proposed by Captain Beckwith, we were taken up as *spies;* and have been tried and condemned, and are to die to morrow. I pray you to forgive him, as I do, and Laurence Marr also, as freely as we hope to be forgiven by our Maker. – One more request I have to make to you is, that, taking warning by my fate, you will not hereafter so often venture yourself out of the British lines. I am in irons; but, thanks to the Almighty, I still have the liberty of thought and speech. O! may I make a good use of them, and be prepared, as I ought to be, for eternity! Sentence has not been passed on us above two hours, all which time I have employed in prayer, as I will continue to do to the last moment; and, I bless God, I feel quite cheerful!"

Lieutenant Moody cannot in justice close this plain and artless narrative, already spun out to too great a length, without bearing his public testimony, feeble as it might be, in favour of, and returning his thanks, as he now most cordially does, to those brave, loyal Americans, whom, though in the ranks only, he shall always think it the greatest honour of his life to have commanded in these expeditions. They were, in general, men of some property; and, without a single exception, men of principle. They fought for what appeared to be the true interest of their country, as well as to regain their little plantations, and to live in peace under a constitution, which they knew by experience to be auspicious to their happiness. Their conduct in their new profession, as soldiers, verifies their character; they have been brave and they have been humane. Their honesty and honour have been uniformly conspicuous. It was a first principle, in all their excursions, never to make war against private property; and this has been religiously observed. Some striking instances of their forbearance might be given, if necessary, even when they have been provoked to retaliate by private wrongs and personal insults.

And here it ought to be mentioned, with the utmost gratitude and pleasure, that, though Mr. Moody, in the course of his adventures, was often obliged to put his life into the hands of the Loyalists, in different parts of the country, he never was disappointed or deceived by any of them. In the year 1777, he continued among them more than three months at a time, and near as long in 1778. He knew their characters, and could safely confide in them. They were men of such inflexible attachment to Government, that no temptations could induce them to betray their trust. Though many of them were reduced to indigence and distress, and they knew that almost any price might be obtained for giving up so obnoxious a person, yet they were so far from betraying him, that they often ran great hazards in giving him assistance. Surely such merit as this is worthy of esteem and admiration; and it is humbly hoped, that the many thousands in the colonies who possess it, will not be deserted by Government, and consigned over to ruin and wretchedness, without an *absolute necessity.*

It is with the utmost concern Mr. Moody has heard of the doubts and debates that have been agitated in England concerning the number and the zeal of the Loyalists in America. It might be uncharitable, and possibly unjust, to say, that every man who has entertained such doubts, has

some sinister purposes to serve by them: but it would be blindness in the extreme not to see, that they were first raised by men who had other objects at heart than the interests of their country. Men who have performed their own duty feebly or falsely, naturally seek to excuse themselves by throwing the blame upon others. It would ill become an obscure individual to obtrude his opinion upon others; but any honest man *may*, and when he thinks it would serve his country, *should* relate what he has seen. The writer of this narrative has already disclaimed all pretensions to any extraordinary share of political sagacity; but he has common sense — he can see, and he can hear. He has had more opportunities than most men of seeing, and hearing the true state of loyalty in the *middle* colonies; and he most solemnly declares it to be his opinion, that a very great majority of the people there are at this time loyal, and would still do and suffer almost anything, rather than remain under the tyranny of their present rulers. Let but the war be undertaken and conducted on some *plan*, and with some spirit: let but commanders be employed who will encourage their services, and leave them under no apprehensions of being deserted and betrayed; and *then*, if they do not exert themselves, and very effectually, let every advocate they have had, or may have, be reprobated as a fool or a knave, or both together — and let the Americans continue to feel the worst punishment their worst enemies can wish them — nominal independency, but real slavery.

Perhaps the honest indignation of the Writer may have carried him too far; but on such a subject, who in *his* circumstances, could speak coolly, and with any temper? That he speaks only what he really thinks, no man, who is acquainted with him, will doubt: and if, after all, he is mistaken, he errs with more and better opportunities of being right, than almost any other person has ever had. He has given the strongest proofs of his sincerity; he has sacrificed his all, and, little as it may be thought by others, it was enough for him, and he was contented with it. He made this sacrifice, because he sincerely believed what he declares and professes. If the same were to do over again, he would again as cheerfully make the same sacrifice. He trusts, therefore, it will not be deemed presumptuous in him to say, that he cannot decently be contradicted in these matters by any man, who has neither had such opportunities of informing his judgment, nor given such unequivocal proofs of his sincerity. The Writer has certainly no bye-ends to serve; he is not an ambitious man, nor avaricious. The profession of arms is foreign from the habits of one who has lived, and wishes only to live, in quiet, under his own vine and his own fig-tree; and he can truly say that, if his Sovereign should be graciously pleased to confer on him the highest military honours, he would most gladly forego them all to be once more re-instated in his own farm, with his wife and children around him, as he was seven years ago.

He has hitherto received but a very trifling compensation for his services and sufferings; and he looks for no more than will free him from indigence, and enable him more effectually to serve his country. In enlisting and paying men for public services, he has expended what was saved from the wreck of his own fortune to a considerable amount, and he was reduced to the necessity of borrowing from those, whose better circumstances enabled them, and whose generous spirits disposed them, to hazard something in the cause of their country. This may be called *enthusiasm;* be it so. — Mr. Moody will not conceal his wish, that the world abounded with such enthusiasts. Not his fortune only, but his constitution, has been greatly impaired by the exertions he has made. His physicians recommended a sea-voyage, a change of air, and a respite of his fatigues and anxiety of mind, as the only remedies left him; and the late Commander in Chief, Sir Henry Clinton, was pleased to second their recommendation, by politely inviting him to England. He acknowledges, with gratitude, that their kind intentions with regard to his *health* have not been wholly frustrated. He trusts he shall soon be able, and he would rejoice to be called *by the service*, to return to America. He would go with recruited spirits, and unabated ardour; for, rather than outlive the freedom of his country, it is his resolution, with King William of glorious memory, even *to die in the last ditch.*

JAMES MOODY.

Wardour-street, No. 97. *Nov.* 1782.