

Col. John Connolly.

It was my intention to prepare an article for our Society on the Loyalists of the country during the Revolutionary era, singling out the more notable ones of Pennsylvania for notice in detail, but my researches resulted in such a mass of material as precluded all idea of dealing with the subject in a paper of reasonable length. I, therefore, decided to take up but a single one of these men, and have chosen one who was born in this county, and whose career was perhaps as notable as that of any other. He was not a politician, like Joseph Galloway, who is, perhaps, the best known of all the Loyalists whose histories are identified with that of Pennsylvania, but he was, nevertheless, a most conspicuous character in our annals, with a distinctly local flavor. I have, therefore, selected him as the subject of this paper, reserving for some future time a fuller discussion of the general subject of the Loyalist element in this State and country.

John Connolly was born in Manor township, this county, about the year 1742 or 1743, on the farm at present in the ownership of Mr. George Brene-man, formerly Jacob Shuman's place. It was located within half a mile of the line of the old Conestoga Manor. His mother's name was Susanna Howard, a sister of Gordon Howard, a prominent Indian trader. She was married early in the eighteenth century, probably about 1708, to James Patterson, in Ireland. Her husband died in 1735. Mrs. Patterson was married a second time in 1736, taking for her husband Captain Thomas Ewing, who was a staunch Presbyterian and a member of

the Donegal Church. Two sons were born of this marriage—the one, James, was a Captain in the French and Indian War, and later became a General in the Revolutionary struggle on the patriot side, and the other, John, was also an officer in the same struggle.

Birth and Early Education.

Mr. Ewing died in 1741, and a year later his widow married for the third time, taking for her husband an Irish officer in the British service, but who earlier had been a surgeon in the British army, named John Connolly. It was of this marriage that the subject of this sketch was born, at the homestead, in Manor township. By her various marriages Connolly's mother became quite wealthy. Soon after the birth of this son the family moved to Lancaster borough, occupying a house on South Prince street, where they lived and died—the mother in 1755, he earlier. Mr. Connolly was elected a vestryman of St. James' Episcopal Church October 3, 1744.

Upon the death of his mother, James Wright, of Columbia, was appointed the guardian of the young lad, who was given all the advantages in the way of education which Lancaster at that time afforded. Being naturally bright, he seems to have learned rapidly, and the sketch of his career, written and published by him in London in 1783, and upon which I have liberally drawn in the preparation of this paper, proves him to have been a man of vigorous mind and a very capable writer. He himself says: "I received as perfect an education as that country could afford."

He appears to have had an inclination to follow his father's early pursuit, that of medicine, and was, accordingly, apprenticed, as was the custom of that day, to Dr. Cadwalader Evans, of Philadelphia. Before the

conclusion of his period of apprenticeship he induced his guardian to buy out his unexpired time, which was done, the sum paid being £100.

On the Western Frontier.

Speaking of himself at this period, Mr. Connolly says: "My natural bent of mind, however, determined otherwise. It was my ambition to be a soldier, and this passion was so prevalent that, contrary to the wishes of my friends, I went as a volunteer, while yet a youth, to Martinico, where I endeavored to distinguish myself, as far as inexperience and an unimportant station would admit." It is stated in Evans & Ellis' History of Lancaster County that he had probably become addicted to a roving life in consequence of having accompanied the well-known trader and soldier, Colonel George Crogan, who, the same authority states, was his uncle, while on the latter's trading excursions into the regions beyond Ohio. On this subject, however, Colonel Connolly's own narrative is silent. He does say that "after the peace of 1762 the North American Indians formed a general confederacy to destroy our frontier settlements and demolish the garrisons. The British commander-in-chief was obliged to send an army to repel these invaders, in which, once more a volunteer, I served two campaigns, at my own private expense. I explored our newly-acquired territory, visited the various tribes of native Americans, studied their different manners and customs, undertook the most toilsome marches with them through the extensive wilds of Canada, and depended upon the precarious chase for my subsistence for months successively."

In Business in Illinois.

Recurring again to Evans & Ellis' history, I find that he was, as he says,

with the detachment of troops sent to the Illinois country to set up a form of civil government. Indian traders had established a large store at Kaskaskia, and the store accounts show that on the 8th of December, 1768, he purchased various articles at the store, and on the following day a number of household articles, such as knives, forks, tablecloths and a tea kettle. In February, 1769, he formed a partnership with one, Joseph Hollingshead, and these two purchased goods at the large trader's store to the amount of £4969.12.6, and also boats for an additional £1,000. Still other purchases were made soon after, which seems to show the new firm had plenty of cash, or else excellent credit. Doubtless, he had received money from his mother's estate. It is also noted that in the same year, 1769, his wife was charged with various purchases made at the traders' store, which would indicate that he must have been married at that time. Misfortune appears to have come upon the new firm, for, in 1771, Connolly suddenly left the neighborhood, and was greatly in debt. He went up the Ohio River to Pittsburg, where he met Lord Dunmore, the Governor of Virginia, who was later destined to exercise such an extraordinary influence over him.

Governor Dunmore, of Virginia.

I must here pause a little in the direct course of my narrative to speak of the cause that took the Governor of Virginia to Pittsburg. Lord Dunmore was a land and fee-grabber, if ever there was one on the American Continent. While Governor of New York he had acquired a tract of 50,000 acres of land, and himself acting as chancellor, was, according to Bancroft, preparing to decide in his own Court, in his own favor, a large and unfounded claim to more lands. When he came

to Virginia his passion for land seemed to increase. He secured two large tracts from the Indians, and in the name of the colony of Virginia attempted to extend his jurisdiction over the western part of Pennsylvania, including Pittsburg, then a little town of some thirty log huts, and all without notification to the proprietors of Pennsylvania.

Dunmore's Willing Henchman.

Connolly, doctor, land-grabber and subservient political intriguer, was a man after Lord Dunmore's own heart, and then and there made himself the pliant tool of Virginia's Governor. At this time, also, his Tory proclivities seem to have manifested themselves for the first time, so far as the records show, for the trouble with the mother country was beginning to be discussed on every hand. Connolly was given a commission by the Governor of Virginia to organize the militia, to appoint Justices of the Peace and do all other acts which seemed necessary under the circumstances. Accordingly, in the beginning of 1774, Connolly raised an armed force in West Augusta, a name given to that part of Virginia lying beyond the Blue Ridge, took possession of Fort Pitt, the name of which he changed to Fort Dunmore, and issued a proclamation asserting the right of Virginia to the territory embraced by Westmoreland, Fayette, Green and Washington counties, where many settlers had been induced to take up lands on Virginia warrants. He opposed the action of the Pennsylvania Magistrates, took private property from citizens and treated all who demurred with great insolence. His justices adopted stringent measures against those who held the rights of Pennsylvania, and for a time the country was virtually held as a part of Virginia. Arthur St. Clair, in the name of

Governor John Penn, kept a close watch on Connolly. The latter was finally arrested on January 24, 1774, and placed in jail, but he prevailed on the Sheriff to be allowed to visit some of his fellow-conspirators, and after hanging around a few days, instead of returning to jail, as he had promised the Sheriff, he went to the Red Stone settlement and raised about twenty armed men, who saw him safely to the Virginia frontier. He returned in March and again gathered a guard of armed men about him. He had two letters from Governor Dunmore, which he read to an assemblage of people, some of them Magistrates, in which he was congratulated for what he had done. Connolly and his party proved too strong for the Pennsylvanians. When the Sheriff of the district had a writ served on one of Dunmore's military Lieutenants, Connolly actually had the Sheriff arrested, and prevented the Pennsylvania Magistrates from exercising their offices.

Public Outcry Against Him.

Æneas Mackay, one of Governor Penn's Magistrates, in writing to the latter, said: "The Doctor is now in actual possession of the Fort (Pitt), with a Body Guard of Militia about him, Invested, we are told, with both Civil & Military power, to put the Virginia Law in Force in these parts..... It is most certain the Doctor is Determined to Carry his point or lose his life in the attempt, and it's equally certain that he has all the encouragement and promises of support that he can wish for.....Lord Dunmore has actually enclosed twelve Commissions to the Doctor to fill up for militia officers at his own Discretion." Connolly's acting Sheriff on April 8, 1774, arrested three Magistrates who were holding the usual Court. He insisted they should give bail for trial at Staun-

ton, Virginia, but, on refusing, were put into jail. On April 6, he, with about 200 armed men, surrounded the Court House of Westmoreland county and prevented Court being held there. In short, Connolly's conduct was so outrageous that on June 25, 1774, the Magistrates sent a petition and statement to Governor Penn, recounting some of his illegal acts and charging him with inciting the Indians to kill the Pennsylvania settlers. They enumerate nine distinct outrages, which include nearly all the crimes in the calendar except murder. He prohibited any furs to be sent east without paying an export duty to Virginia.

Governor Penn Complains.

Things went so far that Governor Penn at last complained to the home Government, and the Earl of Dartmouth sent a sharp letter to Governor Dunmore, winding up as follows: "My Intelligence through a variety of other Channels confirms these facts, and adds further that this Connolly, using your Lordship's Name, and pleading your Authority, has presumed to re-establish the Fort at Pittsburg, which was demolished by the King's express orders: That he has destroyed the King's boats, which were kept there for the purpose of a Communication with the Illinois Country, and that parties were sent out by his authority, or under his direction, for the purpose of building Forts lower down the River Ohio. The Duty I owe the King, and the Regard I entertain for your Lordship, induces me to take the earliest opportunity of acquainting your Lordship with this information, to the end that the facts asserted, if not true, may be contradicted by your Lordship's authority, but, if otherwise, which I cannot suppose to be the Case, such steps may be taken as the King's Dignity & Justice shall dictate."

The Revolutionary War Interferes.

Things meanwhile were shaping themselves in a way that put an end to Dunmore and Connolly's reign of lawlessness and terror in Western Pennsylvania. Connolly himself tells the story in his autobiography. 'The troubles between the Colonies and Britain kept growing more threatening. Then came the battle of Bunker Hill. He says: "The flames of rebellion began openly to blaze. I had written to Lord Dunmore for instructions respecting my conduct, who, I found, would be obliged to quit his government; and received for answer, that he advised me to disband the troops, at the time limited by the Act of Assembly, that they might have no cause of complaint on that head; that I should convene the Indians to a general treaty, restore the prisoners, and endeavor to incline them to espouse the royal cause.....I had most assiduously cultivated the friendship, and insinuated myself into the favor of the Indians; had convinced them of the advantages that might accrue to their nations, by adhering to the British Government.Thus I secretly frustrated the machinations of the Republicans, while I received their thanks and procured assurances from the Indian chiefs to support His Majesty.....As nothing great or good could be effected in times like these without risk, I considered only what plan was best at such conjuncture; and, having determined, resolved to act with vigor, as a temporizing neutrality was neither consistent with my principles nor my passions. My design briefly, was, first, to engage as many gentlemen of consequence as possible to join me in the defense of the government, and afterwards to make my way through the country, visit Lord Dunmore, who was now driven, for personal safety, on

board a ship lying at Norfolk; consult with him, and take his instructions concerning the most effectual mode I and my adherents could pursue to serve His Majesty."

Continues to Scheme—Is Arrested.

Connolly then proceeds to tell how he went to work. He invited his best and tried friends to an entertainment and endeavored to encourage them to express their sentiments freely. He gave tone to the conversation, and says he found them universally enraged against what he calls the arbitrary proceedings of the patriot party, and he told them that he felt assured that nothing but a revolution and independence was aimed at, no matter what they pretended. He took some of the most confidential aside, told them of his plans and urged their hearty co-operation. The result, he says, was a solemn compact by which it was agreed that if an accommodation was not reached and he could procure the necessary authority to raise men, that they would engage to restore the authority of the King.

But while he was intriguing and carrying on his treasonable plans, Mr. St. Clair, either acting under instructions from Philadelphia or upon his own volition, had Connolly arrested. This man St. Clair was Clerk of Westmoreland county, under Pennsylvania authority. He was a Scotchman, had been a subaltern officer in the British army during the French and Indian War, and was then a loyal Pennsylvanian. Later he became a General in the Revolutionary War and rendered able service to the cause of the Colonies. His unfortunate campaign against the Western Indians is well known. In a letter to Governor Penn, dated at Ligonier, February 2, 1774, he says: "Doctor Connolly was arrested previous to the meeting by my orders,

on his owning himself the author of the 'Advertisements' requiring the people to meet as a Militia, and committed on refusing to find sureties for his good Behaviour till next Court. The only result of the arrest was that he got away through a promise made to the Sheriff to be on hand when he should be wanted, but he left the country for a while to visit Lord Dunmore, and later returned to raise much more trouble."

His Second Arrest.

But his second arrest followed later. The only account we have of it is from his own pen. It followed the night after the already described conference he had with his Tory adherents, and when he was about to set out to secure the interview which he desired to have with Lord Dunmore. He writes: "The circumspection and art necessary to escape to Lord Dunmore occasioned some preparatory delay, and the following incident will give a lively picture of the anarchy of the times. Two nights before my intended departure, my servant entered my room at midnight to inform me that an express was just arrived, with despatches from Lord Dunmore, and desired admittance. I ordered him to be brought in, and immediately a man followed my servant in a traveling dress, with a packet in his hand. I drew my curtain, received it, and was breaking open the seal, when the villain seized me by the throat, presented a pistol at my breast, told me I was his prisoner, and, if I offered the least resistance, a dead man. I had been so long learning to despise danger and acquire fortitude that I was not easily to be intimidated. I rightly suspected he had accomplices, so leaping up, I drove the fellow back, seized him, and while struggling gave the door a kick, and shut it by the spring lock. I

called to my servant for my sword or pistols; but to his stupefaction, it is probable, I owe my present existence; for though I should have killed my antagonist in self-defense, I should have fallen the immediate martyr of revenge. My door was quickly burst open by his armed coadjutors, about twenty in number; the contest becoming unequal, I was scarcely allowed time to dress; my servants were secured; I was mounted on a horse and brought for the purpose, hurried away, and obliged to ride all night at the risk of my neck, till about ten o'clock in the morning, when I found myself at Ligonier, fifty miles from Pittsburg. I soon learned I was in the power of my inveterate enemy; the commander of the militia, and the principal man of the place (St. Clair), who had taken this opportunity of wreaking his malice, under pretense of seizing a dangerous person and a Tory, an appellation lately revived and given by the republicans to the loyalists; and which the common people were taught to hold in such abhorrence that Tory was, in their imaginations, synonymous to everything vile and wicked."

A Fortunate Release.

His narrative at this point is very precise and voluminous, and I can only give the main incidents in a greatly abbreviated form. He says he looked for a rescue by his Tory friends. He was informed he would be sent to Philadelphia to answer to Congress for his conduct. He looked for some means to escape. He magnified a slight ailment that he might be allowed to go to bed, where he remained all day and night. When about to set out on the following morning an express rider rode up, who told the guard having Connolly in charge that a rescuing party was awaiting them. After some conversation with the officer in charge he was released and returned home.

Once more he started out on his plan to visit Lord Dunmore, taking three Indian chiefs with him to disarm suspicion, as it was known he always had treaty relations with the Indian tribes. At Frederick, Md., he met a large gathering of men who differed with him in his political views, but although he kept a close guard on his tongue, he was told he was suspected. Before he could get away letters were received, assuring the patriots there of his Tory principles and expressing the belief he was on his way to join Lord Dunmore.

Reaches Lord Dunmore at Last.

Once more luck favored him. A Patriot convention had been held at Richmond, and a messenger with despatches from the President of that body arrived at Frederick, approving of his treaty with the Indians in behalf of Virginia and requesting him to proceed to Richmond with all despatch, with his Indian chiefs. All this served to dispel in some measure the fears the patriots at Frederick entertained, and he was once more allowed to depart. He had dined with General Mercer while at Frederick, and as he did not drink what he calls "the inflammatory toasts" proposed, a spy was set upon him at his departure. He had the address to shake him off, however, and finally reached Yorktown, and soon after joined Lord Dunmore on shipboard, where the growing patriotic sentiments of the people had driven him. He was happy. Twice a prisoner and twice rescued, he was now with a man whose loyal sentiments coincided with his own, and his heart beat high in the hope of helping along the royal cause.

Both he and Dunmore hoped General Howe, who was expected at Boston, would send troops into Virginia, and that the royal authority would be re-

stored. To further this prospect, Connolly was sent on a mission to General Gage, then the British Commander-in-Chief, at Boston, to lay this scheme before that officer. But it was necessary, meanwhile, to assure the Indians in league with Virginia, so Dunmore gave a letter for the Chiefs to Connolly, with instructions to give it to a mutual friend for transmission and interpretation, one, John Gibson. This man Gibson was the son of Lancaster's first inn keeper, "Hickory Tree" Gibson. He and Connolly had been school-mates at Lancaster, hence the latter's confidence in him. With that letter also went one from Connolly, who expressed his Tory sentiments very freely. Unfortunately for the latter, Gibson was a sincere patriot, and at once laid the letter before the nearest county committee, and that in the end proved Connolly's undoing. But I anticipate.

He Sails for Boston.

Armed with letters and instructions from Lord Dunmore, a small sloop was provided for him, and, after a ten-days' voyage, he landed at Boston, and laid the plans before General Gage, who, he says, approved of them. He returned to Virginia, stopping at New York, by the way, and reached Portsmouth in October. On November 5, 1775, he received a commission as Lieutenant Colonel Commandant in His Majesty King George's service, with full power and authority to raise a battalion of men, and as many independent companies as he could. The design was to march with these men and regulars from the British army to Pittsburg and Detroit, cut off communication between the Northern and Southern colonies, and give a favorable turn to the King's affairs in the Southern Provinces. As a preliminary to all this, it was deemed expedient that he should

go to Detroit. He took the shortest route, through Maryland. His instructions and his commission were carefully concealed in the sticks of his servant's pillion, artfully contrived for the purpose.

Returns and Again Arrested.

He, with several other staunch Loyalists, took up his journey on November 13, 1775. They proceeded safely until the 19th, when they were on the Virginia frontier, and almost out of danger. They stopped to pass the night at Hagerstown. Before reaching that place, however, a man who had served under him in the old Pittsburg times passed them and called him by name. This man also stopped for the night at Hagerstown, and, while in a saloon, was asked who the strangers were who had just left town. He at once said one was Major Connolly, of Pittsburg fame. Unfortunately, a copy of his letter to Mr. Gibson had been sent to the Colonel of the local Minute Men. That officer was at once notified that the prominent Tory Connolly had left the town, and he promptly sent out a squad, who arrested the entire party, and brought them back to Hagerstown. Here he was quickly recognized by an officer whom he knew, and who had been in Boston at the same time as Connolly. He told the latter that General Washington knew the time of his arrival and the very day he left, and that it was suspected he would try to enter Canada. Attempts at denial would have been of no avail, so none were made.

Leaves for Philadelphia.

This time he was a prisoner for keeps, and so he remained for many a long day. Of course, it was supposed he carried convicting documents, but every search made proved unavailing, and his baggage was returned to him.

His servant, who was hitherto in ignorance of what was concealed in his pillow, made an examination of the same, found the papers, and burned them all save Connolly's commission as Colonel, which was secretly conveyed to Connolly by the hands of a negro servant girl. On the following day, December 29, 1775, he was started on his journey to Philadelphia, escorted by a squad of dragoons. His spurs were removed, and the horses of himself and several friends who were with him were placed abreast, their heads tied together to prevent any attempt to escape. Two days later they reached York, where they were put into the county jail for security over night, where, Connolly says, there was a dirty straw bed and little covering. On the next day, January 1, 1776, they were conducted to the tavern where their horses were by a guard of soldiers, a drum beating the rogues' march. The town people ironically and most vociferously wished them all the compliments of the season!

The cavalcade was accompanied by a large concourse of people to Wright's Ferry (Wrightsville). Here he met his half-brother, which one he does not say, but it was no doubt James Ewing. By request, he was allowed to walk across the Susquehanna then frozen over, in company with his brother. That night he slept in Lancaster, and two days later reached Philadelphia, where a uniformed militia association took charge of him. He had an interview with the Council of Safety that same evening, and then again went to prison.

Complains of Ill Treatment.

He complains bitterly of his treatment. I will quote his own words. He says: "My servant, too, was now involved in the severity practiced upon me, and we were all three shut up in a

dirty room, in which we could obtain nothing but an old pair of blankets, and that only in consideration of a considerable premium to the gaoler. In this state we continued in the depth of winter for ten days, without a change of linen, before we could get our clothes out of the hands of the Council of Safety; at length they were restored, and, by virtue of pecuniary influence, we obtained something that the keeper called a bed. Here we remained until the latter end of January, when we were removed to a new and elegant prison, then lately erected, whither we were escorted with great formality, and again honored with a rogues' march. Thus Congress was determined not only to hold me up as a public example of political vengeance to the Loyalists, but to take every means possible to degrade and render me contemptible."

He also found fault because he was accorded no military recognition. It was well known he was a Major in the service of Virginia, and held a Lieutenant Colonel's commission in the English service, but as often as he was officially mentioned it was as plain John Connolly, or, facetiously, "Doctor," all of which greatly worried our hero, as he regarded himself. Even while in jail he was intriguing. A Highlander who had taken the oath of allegiance came daily to make his fires. He procured paper and ink and wrote a letter to a friend in Ohio, and his new-found Scotch ally found means to forward the letter. "By this means," he says, "I endeavoured to preserve His Majesty's garrison, stores and ordnance; but as the transaction became ultimately known to Congress, it did not tend to lessen their severities."

Writes to President Wharton.

Another letter which I find from him was addressed to President Whar-

ton, and bears date of February 25, 1776, written at the Ship tavern, while on his way from York to Philadelphia, part of which I quote:

"Immediately upon the order of the Council of Safety being communicated to me, I should have set out without loss of time for Philadelphia, but my continual indisposition and the lameness of one of my Horses, together with the extreme bad Weather, rendered it impossible for me to manifest a readier obedience than by setting out upon the 23d. Fully acquainted with the violent prejudices which prevail against me; as well as sensible of many malicious and groundless reports equally disadvantageous, I have thought proper to dispatch my servant before me, in order to acquaint you, that I am so far advanced upon my journey; apprehensive that a day or two longer might give rise to some unfavorable impressions, tho' more expedition in my present state of health I am really incapable to make.".....

Through the interest of his brother, James Ewing, who was now a general officer in the Continental service, he was enlarged on his parole. This was owing to his continual complaints concerning his health, which, if he is to be believed, was growing worse all the time, and even threatened his life. How seriously it was impaired—if at all—it is, of course, impossible to tell, but, as he was a chronic growler and kicker, there is abundant reason to believe that he was shamming to a large extent, and always with the hope and purpose of escaping in mind.

Arrives in Philadelphia.

One day later, on the evening of February 26, he reached Philadelphia, and at once wrote a letter, saying he had waited on the Council of Safety, but it had adjourned. He states he lodges at Mrs. Papley's, and places himself at the disposal of the Council.

After Connolly reached Philadelphia, the following action was taken by the Council of Safety, as appears by an order sent to the keeper of the city jail: "You are required to receive into your custody John Connolly and Allen Cameron, and their servants, charged with treasonable Practices against America, and keep them safely, without Pen, Ink or paper and from all intercourse with other persons until discharged by this Board or the orders of the Continental Congress." Four weeks later the Council, by direction of Congress, "went into an examination of Doct'r Connolly, and find him to be a person inimical to the Liberties and dangerous to these Colonies."

Mrs. Connolly's Allowance.

I find that in the summer of 1776 Mrs. Connolly was also held in Philadelphia. On the 15th of July, in that year, the minutes of the Council of Safety show that "The Hon'ble Continental Congress, having desired this Board to settle an Allowance for the Maintenance of Mrs. Connolly, and the Board taking the same into Consideration, do Resolve, That Mrs. Connolly be allowed 30s per week for the time she has been detained by Congress, and that in the future she be allowed 25s per week until otherwise directed by Congress." On August 22, 1776, Treasurer Nesbitt was directed to pay Mrs. Connolly £6.5.0 for five weeks' allowance.

The following facts as to his parole I may be allowed to quote from his narrative:

I find that on December 11, 1776, Connolly wrote the following letter to "The Council of Safety," of which Thomas Wharton was Chairman:

"Amidst the multiplicity of your concerns, permit me to demand your attention for a moment. Engaged as I have been in this unhappy national

contest, it has been my misfortune to have experienced a very long and rigorous confinement, highly aggravated by constant sickness; the effects of this complicated distress have reduced me to the lowest condition, and it may be thought expedient to remove me from hence, indiscriminately with other sufferers, to partake with them the inclemency of some Frontier Jail, without any regard to my very infirm state. I have taken the liberty to request your interposition in my favor, supposing it may be in the line of your Department, to alleviate the afflictions of those who are your prisoners, and at your disposal. As I require nothing inconsistent with your own safety, I flatter myself you will be pleased to give such directions with regard to me as may be correspondent with the feelings of humanity."

Twelve days later he wrote another letter to Chairman Wharton, rehearsing the same request and asking for the privilege of walking about in the daytime, promising to take no advantage from the indulgence, if it was granted.

Paroled on Bail.

It appears that he and his friends were making all possible efforts to secure his release from jail, on bail, as will be seen in the following action: At a meeting of the Provincial Council, held on April 2, 1777, it was ordered that "John Connolly, a prisoner confined in the Goal of this City (Philadelphia), be permitted to retire to the Plantation of James Ewing, Esq., (his half brother), giving security himself, in Two Thousand Pounds, and Two Freeholders in One Thousand Pounds each, this security being given for his good behavior, and that he will continue within five miles of the same vizt: That John Connolly do not either write to, speak or Correspond with any

person or persons, whatsoever, employed by or under the Authority of the King or Parliament of Great Britain, nor to or with any person or persons unfriendly to the United States of America, knowing them to be such, nor take up Arms, or employ or procure any other person or persons to take up Arms against the said States, or aid or assist the Enemies thereof in any sort whatsoever, nor do or say any matter or thing, directly or indirectly, which in any wise is or may be injurious to the said States or any of them: And that the said John Connolly do confine himself on the Plantation of the above-named James Ewing, and within five miles of the said Plantation, situated in the county of York, and the same whereon the said James Ewing now dwells, and that he, the John Connolly, shall be and appear before the Supreme Executive Council of the Commonwealth, when thereto he shall be required, then the above obligation shall be void, or otherwise remain in full force and virtue."

Still Complaining.

A few days later Connolly sent the following letter to President Wharton: "I hereby transmit your Excellency the Obligation signed by my Brother, who has mistakenly struck out the words & severally as judging it, rendering Him liable for double the sum which he had entered into in the last Recognizance, the mistake your Excellency will observe to be his, from his letter which I here beg leave also to send.....I hope that the state of my health, & past sufferings will induce your Excellency to obviate any objection which might be alleged, in consequence of his mistake will greatly add to the civilities already received from your Excellency."

He remained on his brother's farm

in York county from April 11, 1777, until the 14th of the following October. On that day he was again apprehended by an order from the War Department and put into the York jail. Virginia had passed an act restoring the estates of all loyalists who renounced their allegiance to the King, but he gloried in having spurned the offer. The York prison at this time was greatly crowded with English prisoners, so that a contagious fever broke out. Connolly and five others wrote and sent a long and somewhat impudent letter to Henry Laurens, President of the Continental Congress, in which they complained of being "subject to all the indignities and low insults of an illiberal goaler and turnkey, and placed upon the same footing with horse thieves, deserters, negroes, and the lowest and most despicable of the human race."

He Gets Cold Comfort.

That letter was placed before the War Department and an investigation ordered. A long report followed the investigation. It proved in the most emphatic manner that Colonel Connolly was kicking, as usual; that things were not as stated; that these six complainants had three servants to wait on them, and that Connolly was put back into prison for prudential reasons, he "having also sundry times behaved amiss while on parole." It was not the first time he had complained and his complaints found to be groundless.

Colonel Connolly remained in the York jail until Lord Howe evacuated Philadelphia. Then he claims he was officially informed that he had been exchanged, but it turned out not to be so. Later, he says a letter was received at York from the American Commissary General of Prisoners, requiring him, along with others, to go to Eliza-

bethtown to be exchanged. He was paroled, obtained a passport for himself and servant to go to Philadelphia. He went, called on the Commissioner, showed his passport, and then, with his usual bad luck, and much to his disgust, was again clapped into jail. In his anger he wrote to the President of Congress, and got no reply. Then he wrote a letter to General Washington, and got this for an answer: "That he had transmitted Connolly's letter to the President of Congress, but could extend no relief, as the complainant was the immediate prisoner of that body."

Inveighs Against Congress.

At this point he breaks out again in one of his usual tirades against Congress, to which he had again written and asking why he had been refused an exchange, and on what pretext he had been subjected to such unparalleled injustice and indignities. Finally, he was taken before a committee and had a hearing. He was told he had not held to the spirit of his parole; that he had tried to turn the proceedings of Congress into ridicule; that he was not taken in actual warfare, but while trying to make his way through the country on a warlike mission, and was amenable to martial law as a spy. Connolly pretended extreme surprise at all this, and urged various reasons against such a judgment. A few days later he received from the committee the following brief note: "The committee appointed to take into consideration the application of Lieutenant Colonel Connolly request that that gentleman will inform them of his reasons for not producing and pleading his commission, at the time he was first taken, and for a considerable time afterwards." He does not give his reply to those pertinent questions, but says he "made them so cautious an answer

that they were obliged to drop this plea and once again take refuge under the Spy."

A Report on His Case.

The Committee made a long report to Congress, in which they went over the whole business from the beginning. That when first seized he was not in arms, but clandestinely making his way to join and aid the English garrison at Detroit; as was shown by his own intercepted letters. That no demand until quite recently was ever made by any British General for his release or exchange; that while a prisoner and debarred the use of pen and ink he continued to write and send letters to British officers in Detroit and Kaskaskia, which letters were captured on one of his agents; that while on parole on his brother's farm his conduct gave rise to grave suspicions; that during the same period he had twice tried to escape, despite his parole; and the report concludes in this wise: "Resolved. That Lieutenant Colonel John Connolly cannot, of right, claim to be considered and treated as a prisoner of war, but that he was, at the time he was apprehended, and still is, amenable to the law martial, as a spy and emissary from the British army;.....and that the repeated representations made by Lieutenant Colonel John Connolly, of the grievances he undergoes, are not founded on facts; that General Washington be directed to transmit the foregoing resolutions and state of facts to the Commander-in-Chief of His Britannic Majesty's forces in New York; and to inform the said officer that if, under the pretext of retaliating for the pretended sufferings of a person, who, by the law of nations, has no right to be considered as a prisoner of war, any American officer, entitled to be considered and treated as a prisoner of war, shall undergo any extraordinary re-

straints or sufferings, Congress are determined to retaliate on the person of an officer of the first rank in their possession, for every species of hardship or restraint on such account inflicted.

“(Signed.)

“CHARLES THOMPSON,
“Secretary.”

Colonel Connolly's comments on the above report are, as usual, full of equivocation, evasions and explanations that do little else than beg the question. The Committee had taken his full measure and they made public the facts.

His Commission Certified To.

Although Connolly's commission was issued by his friend, Lord Dunmore, it was, nevertheless, held as entirely valid by the British War Department, as the following certificate sent by him to Congress testifies:

“Inspector General's Office,
“New York, Nov. 27, 1778.

“This is to certify that John Connolly, Esq., was appointed Lieutenant Colonel in His Majesty's service by His Excellency, Lord Dunmore; and said Lieutenant Colonel Connolly is now confined in prison by the enemy in Philadelphia; and I further certify that I have received Lieutenant Colonel Connolly's full subsistence, up to the 25th of December, 1778: by order of His Excellency, Sir Henry Clinton, Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's forces in North America.

“H. ROOK,
“D. I. G. Forces.”

Some time after this report on Connolly's case was made, for some reason I have not been able to ascertain, he was denied the privilege of walking in the prison yard, locked in his room and denied all converse with outsiders. This order scared him, as he thought it meant his execution. Doubtless he had been again found

plotting, and this action was to head off his plans. After six weeks' close confinement he was again given the privilege of the jail yard. In April, his chronic excuse for securing special favors, sickness, was again brought forward. He got two Philadelphia doctors to certify to his condition and as a result he was allowed four hours on horseback daily, but compelled to go to his place of confinement at night.

In November, 1779, the War Department issued this order: "That the Commissary General of prisoners be authorized to exchange Lieutenant Colonel John Connolly, for any Lieutenant Colonel in the service of the United States, now a prisoner with the enemy. By order of Congress.

"CHARLES THOMPSON,
"Secretary."

He is Finally Exchanged.

He was given permission to go to New York on parole, **first giving** this pledge: "His Excellency, General Washington, having granted me permission to repair to the City of New York on parole, for the purpose of negotiating my exchange for that of Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsey, I do promise, on my word of honor and faith as a gentleman, that I will pass from here on the direct road to the said City of New York, by the way of Elizabeth Town, and that I will return to captivity at the expiration of one month from this day, unless within that time the above mentioned exchange is effected." Sir Henry Clinton also released Colonel Ramsey on his parole, but the final adjustment of the exchange did not take place until October 25, 1780, after he had been a prisoner nearly five years.

No sooner was Colonel Connolly a free man once more than his restlessness and irrepressible loyalism was again at work. "I was no sooner free," he

says, "than I was highly solicitous to be employed in the mode most likely to render service." He submitted a plan to Sir Henry Clinton proposing to attack the outposts on the frontiers of the Middle Colonies, seize Pittsburg and fortify the passes of the Alleghenies. The plan was put aside for the time being. He had been trying to raise a Tory regiment in New York, but failed, so he joined Lord Cornwallis in Virginia. He was placed in command of the Virginia and North Carolina Loyalists for operations on the peninsula formed by the James River and Chesapeake Bay.

Plots Anew and Again Captured.

But hard luck was again at hand. Being attacked by a severe spell of illness, he started to ride into the country to the home of a brother loyalist, but on the way three men arrested him and carried him to Newport News. He was then put into a boat and taken on a French warship, and the next day carried on shore to Gen. Washington's headquarters. He had known Washington before the war, and when both were at work on the Virginia and Pennsylvania borders. A letter from Washington to him shows them to have been on cordial terms. But things were changed now. He says: "I was now to see a man with whom I had formerly been upon a footing of intimacy, I may say friendship. Politics might induce us to meet like enemies in the field, but should not have made us personally so. I had small time for reflection; we met him on horseback coming to view the camp. I can only say the friendly sentiments he once publicly professed for me no longer existed. He ordered me to be conducted to the Marquis de la Fayette's quarters." Evidently he met a very cool reception; was snubbed. Washington had learned to know him and wanted nothing more to do with him.

Leaves for Europe.

Washington, however, paroled him and sent him sixty miles into the back country, where he remained until Yorktown was taken. He applied to be allowed to go New York with the rest of Cornwallis' officers, but was refused. The Governor of Virginia gave him permission to go to Philadelphia, where he arrived on December 12, 1782, where, after living at a public house about two weeks, he was once more put into jail on the charge of having broken his parole given in Virginia. Once more he wrote to General Washington, but the latter, instead of liberating him, was inclined to return him to Virginia. At last friends secured him permission to go to New York. When the British fleets began carrying their soldiers home Sir Guy Carleton gave Colonel Connolly permission to accompany them, and it was in London, in 1783, that he published the narrative of his adventures and affairs which I have in part detailed.

Character of the Man.

From its general character, from the manner in which his services, his difficulties, his imprisonment and repeated illnesses are detailed, it is plain his narrative was written for the purpose of securing consideration and compensation from the British Government. Everything he did is magnified to his own credit. The aim is to show how valuable his services were to Britain, and how much he had suffered and lost thereby. An air of exaggeration pervades all he says, evidently to strengthen his claim for recompense. The general facts are, in the main, correct, but they must be accepted with a wide margin of allowance from his irrepressible tendency to magnify his individual services. It is true, those services were unproductive of valuable results, but that was due to a series of

untoward circumstances over which he had no control. That he would lie, break the terms of his parole, and was ever ready to give the British any information he could to promote their cause is beyond all dispute. It crops out on every page of his narrative. The man was so thoroughly saturated with Toryism and so hated the cause of the Colonies that he could not do otherwise. I am persuaded he believed every species of hypocrisy and deception was justifiable when employed in the cause of King George the Third.

It only remains for me to gather the scattered and little-known facts of his after career. I have already told of his efforts to persuade the English Ministry to reimburse him for the losses he claimed to have sustained through his adherence to the cause of the Crown. How successful he was, and whether he ever got more than his pay as an officer in their service, I have failed to ascertain. Most probably he did not, because a few years later he was in this country again attempting to recover the lands he had forfeited by his disloyalty to the cause of the Colonies.

His Loyalty Did Not Pay.

He appears to have been needy during the Revolution and afterwards. His name does not occur among the three hundred and more names of Pennsylvanians who were attainted of treason, and whose estates were confiscated; doubtless he had at that time no estate that could be seized.

For a time, at least, after the war, he remained in this locality, but the republican atmosphere was uncongenial and he preferred the company of his loyalist friends in Canada. It is related in Evans and Ellis' history of this county, on what authority we are not told, that upon

one occasion, while living in the family of his half-brother, James Ewing, after the war, his expressions of hatred and contempt for the young republic and its friends were so bitter that General Ewing rose from the table at which they were sitting and attempted to throttle him, and was prevented from doing so only through the interposition of his wife. It is also said of him, and this is additional proof of the reduced financial straits in which he is believed to have been, that, desiring to leave for Canada, and not having sufficient means, he "confiscated" a horse belonging to a farmer named Herr, and rode away on his northern journey. To his credit, it must be said, that after reaching Canada he remitted the value of the animal to its legitimate owner, his loyalist friends having no doubt enabled him to do so.

After Career and Death.

In 1798 he and a number of other disappointed and disaffected persons, doubtless unreconstructed Loyalists like himself, held secret conferences at Detroit, looking to the seizure of New Orleans and the adjacent territory from France, and to hold in forcible control the navigation of the Mississippi river. In this he appears to have anticipated the later scheme of Aaron Burr and his fellow-filibusters. The Government, however, got early knowledge of what he was after and took effectual measures to thwart him. His latter years were passed in Canada.

Of his family very little appears to be known. He alludes neither to wife nor children in his narrative. But I have ascertained that he was twice married. His first wife, a Miss Sample, was the daughter of an innkeeper, living at or near Fort Pitt. His second wife was the widow of Samuel Wel-

lington, of Delaware. One son, James Connolly, was born on April 1, 1781, while he was a prisoner in Philadelphia, and another, Thomas Connolly, was born April 9, 1783, during his stay in London. Some of his descendants are said to be still in the English service. Colonel Connolly himself died while residing in Canada.

Addenda.

The will of Dr. John Connolly, the elder, is on record in the Lancaster Court House, in will book A, vol. I, 141. It is dated March 3, 1747, and was probated on March 11, 1747. He gives to his wife, Susanna, one-third of his real estate during his life, and one-third of his personalty, absolutely. He gives his minor and only son, John, the subject of the foregoing sketch, all the rest of his estate. He leaves legacies, however, to his brother, Luke, and his sisters, Bridget and Elizabeth, all living in Ireland. His wife, George Smith, John Hart and Thomas Doyle are named as executors. His silver watch, silver mounted sword, spurs, gold ring, gold buttons and silver knee buckles, are also bequeathed to his son, John.

Mrs. Susanna Connolly's will is on record in will book B, vol. I, 13. It is dated April 27, 1753, and was probated on July 7, 1753. She left to the two sons by her marriage with Mr. Ewing, John, £100 and James, £60; to her son, John Connolly, £250 and a silver table spoon. She also gave £5 towards erecting the wall around the Donegal Church, and £3 towards building the wall at St. James' Church, at Lancaster. She also refers to her daughter, Rebecca Polson, and son George, to her son-in-law, James Lowry, and son-in-law, Benjamin Chambers, and grandson Chambers. James Wright and Arthur Patterson were named as executors.

From the above will, which I have examined since the foregoing sketch was in print, I am led to infer that neither the elder Connolly nor his wife were as well fixed financially as I was led to believe earlier, the estates of both being only moderate in amount.

F. R. DIFFENDERFFER.

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Title: Col. John Connolly / by F. R. Diffenderffer.

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