

**JOHN CONNOLLY,**

A TORY OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY CLARENCE MONROE BURTON.

John Connolly was born at Wright's Ferry, York County, Pennsylvania. His mother, Susanna Howard, was married three times. Her first husband was James Patterson, an Indian trader, who lived in Conestoga Manor from 1717 until his death in 1735. There were five children born of this marriage, James, Susanna, Sarah, Rebecca and Thomas Patterson. In 1735 she married Thomas Ewing who had come from the north of Ireland about 1730 and who was then a widower. There were four sons born of this marriage, James Ewing, born August 3, 1736, a general in the Revolutionary War; John Ewing, Captain in the Sixth Company first battalion of York militia, probably killed in some engagement during the Revolution; and William and Samuel Ewing who died young. Thomas Ewing, the father, died in 1741 and his widow married John Connolly, an Irishman, who had been an officer in the British service. There was one son, John, born of this marriage, who studied medicine with Dr. Cadwalader Evans in Philadelphia. After a proper length of study in Philadelphia, young Connolly went to live with his uncle, George Croghan, the British Indian Agent, not far from Pittsburg.<sup>1</sup> Susanna Connolly, the mother, died in Lancaster in October, 1753, leaving considerable estate.

John Connolly says in his narrative that he was "bred to physic" the practice of which it was intended he should pursue.<sup>2</sup> He enlisted in the army and was sent to Martinico.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Notes and Queries (Egle) Vol. 2, No. 3, page 209.

<sup>2</sup> Narrative.

<sup>3</sup> Martinique was captured by the British in January, 1762. There is a full account

He served in two campaigns against the Indians in 1762-4, and after the peace was obtained from the Indians he spent some time traveling among them through Canada, to learn their ways. After these exertions he settled down in the western part of Augusta County, Virginia.

In 1770 he was living in Pittsburg practicing his profession and was a man of some local importance. George Washington, then on a trip through the west inspecting the country, was very much entertained by conversation with Connolly and by the information obtained from him. The meeting made as deep an impression upon the latter, as he referred to it several times in his correspondence of later years. It is probable that Washington read Connolly's character for turbulence in the few hours of conversation he had with him at this time, though he speaks in appreciative language of him.

Under the date of November 22, 1770, Washington in his journal, writes that he was at Pittsburg and was invited to dine at Sample's with Dr. Connolly, "a nephew of Col. Croghan," a very sensible, intelligent man, "who has travelled over a good deal of the western country, both by land and water. He was familiar with the country about Fort Chartres and at Vincennes, and laid before Washington a plan to settle 100 or more families on the Swanee River to form a new government, to be bounded by the Ohio River on the north and west, the ridge that divides the Tennessee or Cherokee River south and west and a line to be run from the falls of the Ohio or above, so as to cross the Swanee River above the fork of it."

Washington uses the term "new government" in connection with this proposed settlement, but does not indicate whether it was to be a new colony or a new and independent government. It is probable that Connolly had this "new government" in contemplation when he obtained a tract of land now comprising a large part of the City of Louisville, Kentucky, and still later when he sought to separate that

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from the *London Gazette* in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for that year and a map of the island in the same magazine for 1759. If Connolly was at Martinique in 1762 he was very young and it may have been before he studied medicine.

part of the country from the then new United States in 1788.<sup>4</sup>

In June 1774, Connolly and Campbell laid out this land into village lots and advertised it for sale.<sup>5</sup>

The same year (1770) he took up 300 acres of land on Charles Creek, Augusta County, Virginia. This land was in that disputed district claimed by both Pennsylvania and Virginia but finally settled as being within the boundaries of the former state. He was also, at a later date, the owner of lands adjoining Pittsburg. In a statement made by him in 1784, he says that he was an intimate friend of Washington before the Revolution. He was on familiar terms with Lord Dunmore, Governor of Virginia, and in 1772, received from him a grant of 4000 acres of land in Fincastle County, Virginia, now a part of Louisville, Kentucky. Before 1773, he was a surgeon mate in the general hospital of British forces in America. We are not informed as to the minor military offices he held, but he was a Captain Commandant in the Virginia militia from December 16, 1773, and later held the office of Major Commandant to June 16, 1775.

It was during the first part of this period that Lord Dunmore concluded to settle the boundary line dispute with Pennsylvania by forcibly taking possession of Pittsburg, or Fort Pitt, and attaching it to the colony of Virginia.<sup>6</sup>

In 1771 the Colonial troops had been withdrawn from Pittsburg, and Fort Pitt was abandoned, so that in 1774 when Connolly, sent by Lord Dunmore, reached the place he was unopposed.<sup>7</sup>

Pennsylvania claimed that Pittsburg was in Westmorland County and that the County seat was at Hanna's Town.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Washington's Journal, Ford Ed. Vol. 2, page 314. In one of his letters Connolly says that he is related to Croghan and to Alexander McKee but the degree of the relationship is not given.

<sup>5</sup> Oddities of Colonial Legislation, page 346. Also Am. Arch. IV series, Vol. 1, page 278.

<sup>6</sup> Bureau of Archives (Toronto) 1904, page 1144.

<sup>7</sup> Frontier Forts 2, 124.

<sup>8</sup> Westmorland County was organized in 1773 and this aroused Virginia to assert her claim to Pittsburg. Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, Vol. VII. 151.

On January 1, 1774, Connolly, as Captain Commandant of militia, issued a call for the militia of Augusta County to meet him at Pittsburg, on January 25th, for the purpose of organizing a new county to include Pittsburg.<sup>9</sup>

Arthur St. Clair, afterwards governor of the Northwestern Territory, who was then a Pennsylvania Magistrate, (Justice of the Peace and Clerk of Westmorland County) arrested Connolly on January 24th for disobeying the laws of Pennsylvania and confined him in jail at Hanna's Town for a few days.

Connolly soon persuaded the sheriff to permit him to go to Pittsburg and he was released upon his promise to return.<sup>10</sup>

A proclamation was issued to the people who were assembling at Connolly's call, telling them of the injustice and impropriety of it and that if the militia was, at this time, installed at Pittsburg, an Indian war would likely result. It is worthy of remark that this proclamation, being signed by William Lochry, Arthur St. Clair and others who took an active part in the defense of our liberties in the War of the Revolution, bears for its first signature, the name of Alexander McKee who was, during nearly the entire course of that conflict, one of the most bitter enemies that the new government had. He lived at Detroit and died at Chatham, near that place, January 14, 1799.<sup>11</sup>

When Connolly was liberated he promised the sheriff to return. He kept his promise, but in an unlooked for manner. He went to Mr. Croghan's neighborhood, where he had lived before, and collected the militia to the number of about 80 persons and with them returned, using the militia as a body guard and defying arrest. He prevented the Court of Westmorland from holding sessions and usurped the entire government of Pennsylvania in and about Pittsburg.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> This Notice is printed in Colonial Record X, 141 and in St. Clair papers 1, 272.

<sup>10</sup> Penn. Arch. IV, 484.

<sup>11</sup> Penn. Arch. IV, 479.

<sup>12</sup> Col. Rec. Pa. X, 141. Penn. Arch. IV, 476. The letter of instructions from Pennsylvania to St. Clair is printed in Col. Rec. X, 145. He directed St. Clair to arrest Connolly.

Information of these proceedings to establish a new county was conveyed to Governor John Penn, and a spirited correspondence took place between the two governors, Penn and Dunmore.

Dunmore demanded the immediate dismissal of St. Clair from his official position.<sup>13</sup>

To this demand Governor Penn replied "Mr. St. Clair is a gentleman who, for a long time, had the honor of serving his Majesty in the regulars with reputation, and in every station in life has preserved the character of a very honest, worthy man; and though perhaps I should not, without first expostulating with you on this subject, have directed him to take that step, yet you must excuse my not complying with your lordship's requisition of stripping him, on this occasion, of his office and livelihood, which you will allow me to think is not only unreasonable,—but somewhat dictatorial."<sup>14</sup>

The claims of Dunmore to this country were a part of the unjust assumptions of the government of Great Britain that brought on the War of the Revolution. It will not be necessary here to enter into the merits of the dispute, but a reference to the imperious language of the claimant, Dunmore, will suffice to show how it aggravated the people and incited them to begin the long contest for their liberties.

Dunmore admitted that the land once belonged to Pennsylvania, but asserted it was lost to that colony because she allowed the French to take possession of it, and that when Great Britain recaptured it, in the French-Indian War, the title was vested in the Crown, and that, as Virginia was a Crown Colony, the title passed to that colony rather than to Pennsylvania which was a proprietary government. Pennsylvania retorted that if the land once belonged to that colony it had never been lost to it, for Great Britain

<sup>13</sup> Col. Rec. X, 156.

<sup>14</sup> Colonial Record X, 162.

The first court held at Pittsburg under Virginia laws was on February 21, 1775. The justices of Augusta County were George Croghan, John Campbell, John Connolly, Dorsey Pentecost, Thomas Smallman and John Gibson.

Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography VII, 151.

had not carried on war against Pennsylvania, but against France. In any event Pennsylvania was willing to surrender a portion of the disputed territory contiguous to Pittsburg for the sake of peace. Dunmore in his reply said, "Your proposals, amounting in reality to nothing, could not possibly be complied with, and your resolution, with respect to Fort Pitt (the jurisdiction over which place I must tell you, at all events, will not be relinquished by this government, without his Majesty's orders) puts an entire stop to further treaty and makes me sincerely lament that you have put it out of my power to contribute to re-establish the peace and harmony of both colonies, and to evince my good intentions as well towards the one as the other."<sup>15</sup>

The reply of John Penn to Dunmore's letter was in a very conciliatory tone,—in that spirit which indicated that right must prevail in the end,—and still the writer asserted his claim to the usurped district. The letter is dated at Philadelphia June 28, 1774, and concludes as follows: "I have so many complaints of the behavior of Dr. Connolly that I am obliged to wish your lordship to make some inquiry into the conduct, which, if my information be true, is extremely oppressive and tyrannical with respect to our people; and what is still worse, there is great reason to fear his military operations may have a dangerous tendency to involve the colonies in a general Indian War. He seizes upon the property of the people without reserve and treats the persons of our magistrates with the utmost insolence and disrespect, and with menaces, not only of imprisoning them, but even pulling down their houses, and it is said he has sent out, or is to send out, parties against the Indians, with orders to destroy all they meet with, whether friend or foe. These matters may be exaggerated but I cannot doubt but that Mr. Connolly has afforded some grounds for these complaints, and although your lordship hath been pleased to claim the jurisdiction of Pittsburg, and the country thereabouts, I would fain hope that you would

<sup>15</sup> Olden Time I—495. Colonial Record X, 188. Letter to James Tilghman and Andrew Allen, dated May 26, 1774.

not encourage Mr. Connolly in such exorbitances and outrages as are laid to his charge."<sup>16</sup>

At the same time Penn wrote to Arthur St. Clair urging him to prevent an Indian War, if possible, and to force the people to stand firm in resisting the savages. He called a meeting of the Assembly of Pennsylvania and wrote to Sir William Johnson, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, giving him information of the situation. Regarding Connolly he wrote as follows to St. Clair, "I have also written to Lord Dunmore complaining of Connolly's outrageous and tyrannical behavior at Pittsburg, and representing the dangerous tendency his military operations may have to involve the colonies in a general Indian War."<sup>17</sup>

St. Clair, with George Croghan, Devereaux Smith, Æneas McKay and Richard Butler raised a company of one hundred men to resist the Indians. At the same time (June 26) it was reported that Connolly had sent two parties down the Ohio River who met some of the Indians, fired on them and wounded one.

A number of inhabitants of Pittsburg petitioned Governor Penn to give them some assistance so that they might be relieved of Connolly and his adherents. He was pulling down the houses, imprisoning and generally maltreating all those who would not acquiesce in his method of government.<sup>18</sup> Upon the assembling of the militia and the arrest of Connolly by St. Clair, the other officers who had been appointed by Dunmore organized the new county, with Pittsburg as its judicial seat, and changed the name of Fort Pitt to Fort Dunmore. Connolly himself participated in the larger part of the matters as he was only temporarily in confinement.<sup>19</sup> Further than the mob violence that occurred at this time from the too free distribution of

<sup>16</sup> Olden Time 1-497. Colonial Record X, 193.

<sup>17</sup> Olden Time 1-497. Colonial Record X, 194.

<sup>18</sup> Olden Time 1-500. St. Clair papers 1-317.

<sup>19</sup> The Provincial Council of Pennsylvania organized the county of Westmorland including Pittsburg, but provided that Hanna's Town should be the county seat, February 26, 1773. Old Westmorland, page 5. This act is entitled "An Act for erecting part of the county of Bedford into a separate county." Colonial Record X, 77.

whiskey, no open rupture took place, and the new government seemed likely to become established.

The memorial of the inhabitants of Pittsburg to John Penn was drawn up on June 25, 1774, and signed by some twenty-seven of the foremost citizens. The entire burden of their complaint was the action of Connolly in oppressing the citizens and driving them from their houses and fomenting disturbances with the Indians.<sup>20</sup>

Attached to this memorial were some "remarks on the proceedings of Dr. Connolly" containing the following statement, "The distressed inhabitants of this place have just cause to charge their present calamity and dread of an Indian War entirely to the tyrannical and unprecedented conduct of Doctor Connolly, whose design, as we conceive, is to better his almost desperate circumstances upon the distress of the public, and the ruin of our fortunes." This was followed by a long list of insults to citizens and deprecations committed by Connolly or by his orders.

A short time afterwards some of the same committee made another report in which they said, "Dr. Connolly continues to exercise his authority as usual. Our persons are daily insulted, our property forcibly taken, and even our lives threatened," and again new and additional instances are given to substantiate these charges. Lord Dartmouth was appealed to by Governor Penn. He investigated the matter and wrote to Lord Dunmore on September 8th to make proper changes to prevent Indian troubles and dissatisfaction of the people.<sup>21</sup> Many of the people of Pittsburg refused to submit to the new order of things and were brought into daily conflict with the Connolly men. In the address already referred to, they were advised not to act hastily but to maintain the already established government. Many of the old residents, however, preferred the Virginia government to that of Pennsylvania and sided with Connolly. Croghan, who was an Indian agent of considerable importance, wrote to David Sample that he had long been convinced that Fort Pitt and its dependencies was without

<sup>20</sup> The Olden Time 1-500. St. Clair Papers 1-317.

<sup>21</sup> Olden Time 1-502.



the limits of Pennsylvania, and his opinion had great weight on the occasion.<sup>22</sup> There was a meeting of the Indians at Pittsburg on June 29, 1774, and an attempt made to pacify them. Captain White Eyes, an Indian chief, delivered a communication from the Delawares to George Croghan, John Connolly and Alexander McKee urging them to restrain the whites who were making assaults on the Indians all over the frontier and were killing them without provocation.<sup>23</sup> It seemed now that an Indian War would break out, for it was the evident intent of Virginia to harrass them to the point beyond endurance.<sup>24</sup> Depredations were committed by the whites, either under the leadership or under the encouragement of the Virginia authorities.

Michael Cresap, a Pennsylvanian, who was accused of murdering a number of the Indians, including a sister of the Mingo Chief Logan, she being the Indian wife of John Gibson, alleged that his authority was a proclamation issued by Connolly.<sup>25</sup>

After these murders were committed, Connolly sent word to Cresap to refrain from more work of that nature, and the latter returned home in high dudgeon, declaring that what he had already done, was by Connolly's orders, and St. Clair reported that the Indian War which must ensue, was a part of the Virginia plan.<sup>26</sup>

The Pennsylvania men were very eager to prevent any trouble with the Indians and sent agents to see them and assure them of the peaceful disposition of the Pennsylvania citizens and officials. Connolly, of course, heard of these advances and attempted to prevent their recurrence by

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<sup>22</sup> Penn. Arch. IV, 481.

<sup>23</sup> Am. Arch. IV Series, Vol. 1, page 545, and *Oddities of the Colonial Legislation*, page 343.

<sup>24</sup> Penn. Arch. IV, 495.

<sup>25</sup> This is confirmed by Zeisberger in his letter of May 28, 1774. *Dunmore's War*, page 10. Penn. Arch. IV, 499. There are many papers and documents on this subject collected by Thomas Jefferson and printed in the latest edition of his works.

<sup>26</sup> Penn. Arch. IV, 501. "The distressed inhabitants of this place (Pittsburg) have just cause to charge their present calamity and dread of an Indian War, entirely to the tyrannical and unprecedented conduct of Doctor John Connolly, whose design as we conceive, is to better his almost desperate circumstances upon the public and the ruin of our fortunes." Penn. Arch. IV, 528. See also *Mass. History Col. 4th series*, Vol. X, page 720.

ordering the people not to carry on a correspondence with the Indians.<sup>27</sup>

The Quaker feeling of friendliness towards the Indians did not pervade the territory occupied by the Virginians. The constant encroachments on the Indian lands could have but one result: The Indians retaliated for every injury inflicted upon them and it was found necessary by Lord Dunmore to raise an army to invade the Ohio Country.

On the 10th of June 1774, Dunmore issued a circular directing the militia of the various counties to organize and hold themselves in readiness to proceed against the Indians.<sup>28</sup>

A month later (July 12) General Andrew Lewis was directed to proceed at once to destroy the towns and magazines of the Indians and to distress them in every way.<sup>29</sup>

This invasion resulted in what is known as the Dunmore War. There were two detachments of the army, one under Lord Dunmore and the other, General Andrew Lewis.<sup>30</sup>

It is not certain that Connolly personally accompanied the army on its entry into the enemy's country. Dunmore, in his letter to Connolly of June 20, 1774, directed him to remain at Fort Dunmore, and to send William Crawford, with what men he could spare, to operate with Colonel Lewis "or to strike a blow himself if he thought he could do it with safety." He recommended the taking of as many Indians prisoners as possible, especially women and children. These he could hold as hostages for the future good behavior of the Indian tribes.

In conclusion he said, "and should you be so fortunate as to reduce those savages to sue for peace, I would not

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<sup>27</sup> Penn. Arch. IV, 521. Connolly's proclamation is dated June 18, 1774. Brantz Mayer, the defender of the name of Michael Cresap against the charges of the Indian Chief Logan, has this to say regarding Connolly: "It is not a little singular, even if nothing more than a coincidence, that Lord Dunmore should have chosen the report of a menaced Indian War, and of a growing dispute with the Mother Country beyond the sea, to assert formidably the rights of Virginia, not only by issuing his proclamation, but by dispatching to the scene of action a man like John Connolly, who was well known not only for his bold, reckless, artful temper, but for his sagacity, his knowledge of the world and of Indian affairs, and his exceedingly lax morality." Logan and Cresap, a Discourse by Brantz Mayer, page 40.

<sup>28</sup> Dunmore's War 33.

<sup>29</sup> Id. 86.

<sup>30</sup> "Indians in North America," page 42. Sent into the Ohio.

grant it to them on any terms till they were effectually chastised for their insolence and then they trade with us only, for what they want."<sup>31</sup>

There are many references in other letters and documents to indicate that Connolly was with Dunmore on the expedition.

It is probable that Lord Dunmore had no other intention in this war than the suppression of the Indians to insure peace on the frontier. That he afterwards became a foe to those who were fighting for the liberties of the colonies, would not prove that he was deceitful in his efforts for peace at this time. He certainly hoped that the British control would continue in America and it is far easier to believe that he desired the continuance of friendly relations with the Indians with British control, than to expect unfriendly relations with the savages in the future.<sup>32</sup> In his narrative Connolly says the result of the war was very satisfactory. Whether this is a fact or not is problematical for the general opinion was that the war might have been averted, and if it had been, a different feeling would have existed between the Indians and frontiersmen and some of the massacres that took place during the Revolution would have been avoided. Actual warfare terminated with the battle of Point Pleasant, which took place October 10, 1774. The battle lasted all day, and the Indians withdrew towards night. Dunmore's detachment did not participate in the battle.

The Indians, after the affray, went to meet Dunmore and at once offered to enter into a treaty with him.<sup>33</sup>

When they were about to enter into a council preparatory to making a treaty, Dunmore noticed that the Mingo deputies who had solicited peace had suddenly left camp. He sent John Gibson, a trader, to bring in Logan, a Mingo chief,

<sup>31</sup> Penn. Arch. IV, 522.

<sup>32</sup> Even as late as July 22nd, St. Clair thought that an Indian war could be avoided. He wrote to Connolly at that date, "I have uniformly declared that I saw not the least probability of war, unless the Virginians forced it on. The different manoeuvres, up and down and across the river have now probably brought that event about; who may see the end of it, God only knows." St. Clair Papers 1-328.

<sup>33</sup> Dunmore's War, 386.

to take part in the deliberations. Logan refused to come, saying that he was a warrior; not a councillor. Upon further urging he gave Gibson the speech that has been deemed an Indian Classic.<sup>34</sup>

Some writer of more recent times has condensed the elegant speech into a couplet that runs,

"I appeal to the white man, ungrateful, to say,  
If he e'er from my cabin went hungry away?  
If naked and cold unto Logan he came,  
And he gave him no blanket, and kindled no flame?"

But the original declamation contained an eloquence which only comes from contact with nature. It will be remembered that Logan did not espouse the cause of his countrymen and take up arms with them against the whites, until his own family had been murdered.

"I appeal to any white man to say if he ever entered Logan's cabin hungry and he gave him not meat; if he ever came cold and naked and he clothed him not.

"During the course of the last, long, bloody war, Logan remained in his cabin, an advocate for peace. Such was his love for the whites that my countrymen pointed as they passed and said, 'Logan is the friend of the white man.' I had even thought to live with you, but for the injuries of one man, Col. Cresap, who the last spring, in cold blood, and unprovoked, murdered all the relatives of Logan; not even sparing my women and children."<sup>35</sup>

"There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I

<sup>34</sup> In his narrative Connolly says that Dunmore commanded, in person, the soldiers in battle. No other account of that affair gives this version. He also states, in an indirect manner, that he, Connolly, participated in the battle.

St. Clair refers to the Dunmore War as "The War betwixt the Indians and Virginians is at last over." "The Mingoos that live upon Scioto did not appear to treat and a party was sent to destroy their towns, which was effected, and there were twelve of them now prisoners in Fort Pitt." Thus St. Clair considered the entire transaction as a matter in which Virginia was interested and in which Pennsylvania took no part. St. Clair papers 1-347.

<sup>35</sup> Heckenvelder vouches for the authenticity of this speech. Mem. of Historical Society of Pennsylvania XII.-112. Jefferson notes, Edition 1800, page 67.

have sought it. I have killed many. I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country I rejoice at the beams of peace. But do not harbor a thought that mine is a joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one."

The treaty entered into by Lord Dunmore and the Indians was very generous towards the latter. The most onerous obligation was that they should deliver hostages to insure their future good behavior. They were also to meet Dunmore in Pittsburg in the following year to conclude a permanent treaty.<sup>36</sup>

The troubles between America and England that had been increasing rapidly for some time were not unknown to Dunmore's army. The leader in that army was upon the British side. It is stated that when the men reached the mouth of the Hockhocking River, on their homeward march, a meeting of the soldiers was held at which it was resolved to exert "every power within us for the defense of American liberty and for the support of our just rights and privileges."<sup>37</sup>

Surrounded by such an array of patriotic Americans, Connolly very clearly comprehended that his usefulness in Pittsburg was likely to soon terminate. He made up his mind to stand by the established government, and undertook to organize the people of that place in the British interest but was unsuccessful, though he engaged a large body of his friends to support the constituted authorities. He called his friends together and in the course of their debates predicted the demand of the colonies for independence. Connolly, in his narrative, says that he was a friend of Washington. It is certain that they had met before and that Washington was well enough acquainted with him to consider him a dangerous man. Connolly was in Winchester, Penn., and wrote to Washington, February, 9, 1775, stating that he was going to Williamsburg but that

<sup>36</sup> Dunmore's War, page 386.

<sup>37</sup> "Winning of the West," 1, 239.

his presence in Pittsburg was necessary. The situation of the public affairs would, he stated, prevent Dunmore from meeting the Indians in Pittsburg as he had agreed, and he asked Washington for advice and what he was to do with the Mingo Indian prisoners he had.<sup>38</sup>

Washington's reply dated February 25th advised him to follow Lord Dunmore's instructions regarding the Indians, but to keep them in good humor. Regarding the general situation of the country he said, "The state of affairs is sufficiently alarming; which our critical situation, with regard to the Indians; does not diminish." "With us here, things wear a disagreeable aspect and the minds of men are exceedingly disturbed at the measures of the British government. The King's speech and address to both Houses, prognosticates nothing favorable to us."<sup>39</sup>

The news of the outbreak of hostilities in Massachusetts was received in Pittsburg in May, 1775. A Public meeting was called on the 10th of the same month to endorse the action of the Massachusetts men. At this meeting a committee of twenty-eight was chosen, of which George Croghan was chairman, to adopt proper resolutions of approval of the action of the New Englanders.<sup>40</sup> Samuel Sample, the father-in-law of Connolly, was one of the members of this committee.

Connolly remained but a short time in Pittsburg after this event. Virginia and Pennsylvania might quarrel about boundary lines and political control of the country, but the people were pretty well united on one subject, and that was the defense of their liberties.

After the news was received of the battle of Bunker Hill, the "flames of rebellion began openly to blaze." Connolly wrote to Lord Dunmore for instructions and found that the latter had been forced to leave his government. Before

<sup>38</sup> Am. Archives Series 4, Vol. 1, page 1222. There were twelve Indian prisoners. Revolution in Upper Ohio, page 18. Fort Dunmore was left in charge of Major Connolly with a garrison of 75 men. There were twelve Mingo prisoners or hostages in the Fort. Dunmore took the Shawnee prisoner with him to Williamsburg. Revolution in Upper Ohio, page 18.

<sup>39</sup> Narrative, page 5.

<sup>40</sup> Old Westmorland 13. Sample was a tavern keeper in Pittsburg. The resolutions of the Committee are given in Craig's History of Pittsburg, page 128.

leaving he directed Connolly to disband the troops returned from the Indian Country and try to induce the Indians to join the cause of Great Britain. The Indians had previously been called to meet in council in Pittsburg, and Virginia sent delegates to impress upon them the justice of the colonists in their quarrel with the King. Connolly says in his narrative that owing to his superior knowledge of the Indian manners and tempers he was successful in retaining the friendship of the natives to his cause. The council at Pittsburg lasted a fortnight and then the Indians dispersed fully satisfied that justice would be done them at a general treaty soon to be held.<sup>41</sup>

Connolly's troops being disbanded, he called his friends together, and after sounding them privately to ascertain who were likely to remain steadfast, a compact was entered into by which they agreed to assist him in restoring constitutional government, if he could obtain the necessary authority to raise men. He now prepared to leave Pittsburg to seek Dunmore who had been driven from the land and had taken refuge on a vessel in the harbor at Norfolk.<sup>42</sup>

Connolly now prepared to leave the country, but two nights before his intended departure in June 1775, he was arrested at night at the instance of St. Clair and compelled to ride all night, reaching Ligonier the next morning. His captors were preparing to proceed with him to Philadelphia when he was rescued or set at liberty through the influence of a party of friends who had learned of his abduction and hastily followed him from Pittsburg.<sup>43</sup>

Upon being liberated he returned to Pittsburg, and in a few days (July 20, 1775) set out for Winchester, taking with him the treaty he had entered into with the Indians. He pretended that the journey he was making was in the settlement of the Indian troubles, until he was gone so far from Pittsburg that there would be little danger of his being

<sup>41</sup> Revolution on the Upper Ohio, page 36.

<sup>42</sup> Dunmore went on board a man-of-war at York, June 11, 1775. He dismissed his Indian hostages and told them to make the best of their way back to their own country. *Am. Arch. Series IV, Vol. 2, page 975.* In the *Hist. Mass. Com. 14th Report part 10, page 330* it is stated that Dunmore was on the Fowery.

<sup>43</sup> St. Clair papers, 1-357.

again arrested. He also gave out that he was to take some of the Indian Chiefs to England, and took several of them from Pittsburg with him when he left the place.<sup>44</sup> Lord Dunmore had sought safety on board the *Royal William*, and here Connolly visited him and remained fourteen days perfecting plans for future operations. It was arranged that he should go to Boston to discuss matters with General Gage, and he sailed for that place on the tender *Arundell*.<sup>45</sup>

At Boston he placed before Gage his plan for capturing Fort Pitt and holding it as a headquarters for the British Army in the west.

It is apparent from these plans that the object of Dunmore and Connolly in carrying on the Dunmore War and in entering into the subsequent treaty was to cause the Indians to adhere to the British side. This is his proposition as submitted to Gage: "As I have, by directions of his Excellency, Lord Dunmore, prepared the Ohio Indians to act in concert with me against his Majesty's enemies in that quarter, and have also dispatched intelligence to the different officers of the militia of the frontiers of Augusta County, in Virginia, giving Lord Dunmore's assurance to such of them as shall hereafter evince their loyalty to his Majesty, by putting themselves under my command when I should appear amongst them with proper authority for that purpose, of a confirmation of titles to their lands, and the quantity of three hundred acres to all who should take up arms in support of the constitution, when the present rebellion subsides, I will undertake to penetrate through Virginia and join his Excellency, Lord Dunmore, at Alexandria early next spring," upon the following conditions:

First; He was to have a commission of Major Commandant of such troops as he could raise on the frontier, including French and English partisans.

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<sup>44</sup> James Tillman, in a letter dated July 20, 1775, says that he has heard that Dr. Connolly, "Lord Dunmore's chief instrument, is going to England with some Indian Chiefs of the Delaware tribe, who seek a confirmation of their lands. All things seem verging towards anarchy." *Hist. Mass. Com. 14th, Report part X, page 341.*

<sup>45</sup> *American Archives Series IV, Volume 3, page 1047.*



Second; General Gage was to direct Captain Lord, on the Illinois, to proceed to Detroit with his troops and put himself under Connolly's command when he reached that place.

Third; An artillery officer should go with Connolly to Detroit to collect ordnance sufficient to destroy Fort Dunmore (Pitt) and Fort Fincastle if they should resist.

Fourth; Connolly was to be authorized to make proper presents to the Indians to "urge them to act with vigor in the execution of his order."

Fifth; Gage was to furnish arms as might be necessary.

The proposals were accepted by Gage and the commission to Connolly made out as requested.<sup>46</sup>

William Crowley was a servant in the employ of Connolly at Pittsburg and left that place with his master and travelled with him to Lord Dunmore, and accompanied him to Boston.

He knew of the various plans that Connolly had formed and was invited by him to join in the expedition to the Indian Country and to Detroit. Crowley was acquainted with Washington and when in Boston sent word to the latter that Connolly was on a visit to Gage, and informed him of the object of his visit. It is uncertain whether Crowley left Connolly at this place, or later at New York, where Connolly stopped and went on board the *Asia*. It is certain that Washington was informed of Connolly's plans and sent a messenger as speedily as possible to Maryland, to notify the Committee of Safety to be on the lookout for him.<sup>47</sup>

Connolly remained in Boston with Gage for some time and on returning reached Portsmouth, Virginia, on the 12th day of October. He was ill for some days and unable to leave the vessel. On November 5th he received a commission from Lord Dunmore as Lieutenant Colonel Commandant.

Having perfected his plans for the conjunction of the British forces at Detroit and in the Illinois Country for

<sup>46</sup> *Olden Times* 1-522. A narrative of Connolly's plot, copied from the *Pennsylvania Packet*, is in *Revolution on the Upper Ohio*, page 136.

<sup>47</sup> Crowley's statement is in *Am. Archives Series 4*, Vol. 3, page 1947. Also in *Maryland Report of Council of Safety*, page 93. It is not dated.

the descent on Fort Pitt, Connolly started on his overland journey to Detroit. He intended to proceed by the most direct route, not touching Pittsburg, but going very near that place, at Standing Stone. He parted from Lord Dunmore in the night of November 13, 1775, in company with Allen Cameron<sup>48</sup> and John Smyth. Within a few days they reached Hager's Town, and passing through it, stopped at a tavern, after a journey of about five miles. Here Connolly was recognized by the landlord. He was also, soon after recognized by others, for he was well known in this part of the country. A letter that Connolly had, some time before this, written to John Gibson had been published and it thus became known that Connolly was a Tory. It was soon noised through Hager's Town that he had passed through and as he was a suspicious character a body of troops was sent to arrest him and bring him back. Connolly and his companions were soon overtaken and the three men and their servant were returned to Hager's Town and kept in separate houses. They were examined by the Committee of Safety the next day. This Committee was not fully determined as to their duties in the matter and they ordered Connolly and his companions taken back to Frederick Town for further examination.

As soon as Frederick Town was reached Connolly met and was recognized by a Colonel who had just returned from Washington's headquarters at Cambridge, and was familiar with Connolly's visit to Gage.

It was useless now to attempt to deceive the Committee in their examination, and Connolly made a clean breast of the entire affair except that he did not give up his commission and the other papers he had received from Gage. His servant, who knew that this commission, with some other papers, was secreted in the saddle that Connolly used, took it out and sent it to his master and destroyed the other papers. The "proposals" that Connolly had submitted

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<sup>48</sup> "Cameron was a native of Scotland. He agreed to accept a commission as first Lieutenant in the regiment to be raised by Connolly. John Smyth was also a native of Scotland and was to be a surgeon in Connolly's regiment. *Am. Arch. Series IV, Vol. 3, page 1659. Narrative page 23.*

to Gage were discovered and preserved. The Committee of Safety sent word to Congress that they had captured Connolly and his companions and asked for instructions.<sup>49</sup>

A request was sent to Maryland that the prisoners should be escorted to Philadelphia under guard.<sup>50</sup>

Preparations were made to convey them from Frederick Town to Philadelphia, but a day or two before they were to start, Connolly succeeded in obtaining pen, ink and paper and wrote several letters. These he gave to Smyth and assisted him, on the night preceding their departure for Philadelphia, to escape confinement.<sup>51</sup>

There were five of these letters. They are all printed in *Am. Arch.* Series IV. Vol. 4, page 615. In substance they are as follows:

First; A letter dated November 24, 1775, not directed, possibly for Lord Dunmore.

Second; To Alexander McKee at Pittsburg, telling him to provide for Mrs. Connolly, and to tell Captain Lord, at Vincennes, to push down the Mississippi and join Lord Dunmore.

Third; To Captain Lord Kaskaskia with the same information.

Fourth; To Captain Lernoult at Detroit, stating that the Americans may attack him early the next spring. "Let this suffice to give you notice of such intentions, and whether upon that account you might not judge it expedient to evacuate the garrison, and with Captain Lord move down the Mississippi and join the Earl of Dunmore at Norfolk."

Fifth; Another letter to Captain Lord with the like information.

Sixth; A letter to his wife, Susanna, at Pittsburg, in which he mentions his child and sends love to Sally.

These letters, except the first, are dated December 16, 1775.

Smith made his escape and after wandering over the country in various directions, was robbed of his money

<sup>49</sup> Connolly was arrested as the result of information received from Washington. Report of Committee of Safety, Maryland, page 92. *Journals of Congress*, new edition. Vol. 3, page 394, December 1, 1775. *St. Clair Papers* 2-98.

<sup>50</sup> *Journal of Congress*, Vol. 3, page 415.

<sup>51</sup> *Narrative*, page 25.

by a companion guide that he had picked up, and was finally recaptured on January 12, 1776, by a party of nine "ruffians" who had been sent after him from Pittsburg. The letters intrusted to him by Connolly were found on his person and he was sent back to Philadelphia where Connolly had, in the meantime, been conducted.<sup>52</sup> Connolly had not been long in jail before he began making applications to Congress for various purposes, evidently expecting, if his requests were granted, that he would be able to escape. His first petition for privilege to be permitted to walk in the prison yard was granted, with the instructions "to the gaolkeeper to take especial care to prevent his escape."<sup>53</sup>

In one of these petitions about February 8, 1776, Connolly says, "A prejudice, universal as it is groundless, seems to have rendered me particularly odious to my countrymen; conceiving that I was to have been the base instrument of instigating the savages to desolate the frontier, to sacrifice the defenseless women and children, and to introduce the utmost scene of calamity and distress, appear to render my situation peculiarly severe. But when I assure you that a design so inhuman never entered my breast, that no earthly consideration could ever induce me to promote so dishonorable and inglorious a proceeding, I flatter myself, I shall gain your credit."

He asked to be allowed to visit his brother in the country for his health and would obey any directions Congress might impose. The brother he refers to was General James Ewing, a half brother.<sup>54</sup> This additional precaution to watch and guard him, did not prevent him from asking

<sup>52</sup> Smith was brought to Philadelphia January 18, 1776, by Captain Shryock, and was committed to close confinement. Colonial Record X, 461, 469, Journals of Congress IV, page 120. Dr. Smith in his tour of America says, "My mind distracted, my body enfeebled, emaciated and tormented with excruciating pain, in an enemy's country, destitute of money or resource and without a single friend. I was in a condition truly to be commiserated and not to be excelled in distress. This was a trial, the most arduous and severe I ever met with, but still my resolution did not forsake me and I determined to proceed, notwithstanding every difficulty and danger." Connolly was escorted to Philadelphia by Adam Fisher and privates under his command, and committed to jail, with Smith and Cameron. Journals of Congress IV, pages 29, 31, and 34. American Archives Series IV, Vol. 4, page 508, January 3, 1776.

<sup>53</sup> Journal of Congress IV, page 120.

<sup>54</sup> American Archives Series IV, Vol. 4, page 958.

other, and making repeated requests for additional privileges or for the relaxation of stringent rules.

Congress was informed on March 28, 1776, that some prisoners meditated an escape and that they had come very near carrying it into execution, and then Connolly, Smith and Moses Kirtland were confined in separate apartments and the jailer, Thomas McKean, was allowed fifty additional men to defend the jail.<sup>55</sup>

A committee was appointed to examine the jail and see if it was secure. It was proposed to remove Connolly from the new jail, which had recently been completed, to the old city jail, but this was not done and he remained in the old building. Connolly's wife now came to Philadelphia, leaving her child at Pittsburg, and upon request of Connolly she was permitted to visit him but was not permitted to leave the city after seeing him.<sup>56</sup>

For a time she lived without the jail but as she had no means to pay for her support she moved into the prison, but later lived outside and was supported by Congress.<sup>57</sup>

Samuel Sample, Connolly's father-in-law, called on him repeatedly while he was confined in jail, in March and April, 1776, and as the authorities suspected that everything was not as it should be, they investigated and found that a plan had been formed to liberate the prisoners. They were more closely confined and messengers were sent to stop Sample, who had left the city and was already on his way to Pittsburg.<sup>58</sup>

Connolly was charged with the conspiracy, but stated that he had never undertaken to escape and would not now if his enlarged jail limits were restored. He said that Moses Kirkland had escaped but that he knew nothing of his plans.<sup>59</sup>

Mrs. Connolly, in June, 1776, reported to Congress that her husband was very ill and required additional attendance. She also asked that she might be sent back to Pittsburg

<sup>55</sup> Journals of Congress IV, page 239.

<sup>56</sup> Journals of Congress IV, pages 350, 366.

<sup>57</sup> American Archives Series V, Vol. 2, page 254.

<sup>58</sup> Colonial Record X, page 533.

<sup>59</sup> American Archives Series IV, Vol. 6, page 433.

and if it was deemed injurious to the Country to permit her to be at large, that at least they would imprison her in Pittsburg, where her child was. Congress voted her 25 shillings per week for her support.<sup>60</sup>

In November, 1776, she informed the Committee of Safety that her husband had planned to escape, and she told the jailer that in consequence of her actions Connolly had used her so badly it was impossible for her to live with him longer and she asked permission to go to her family at Pittsburg.<sup>61</sup>

Notwithstanding this revelation, Connolly was, at this time permitted to go to his half-brother, General Ewing, on the River Susquehanna. Here he remained two months when, on account of suspicious circumstances, he was remanded to his former place of confinement.<sup>62</sup>

In September Mrs. Connolly was liberated and permitted to return to her family in Cumberland County.<sup>63</sup>

Connolly, in his narrative, says that in December, 1777, Cameron, Smith and Maclean undertook to escape from prison. They gained the roof of the prison and made a rope of their blankets on which to slide down to the ground. Cameron was the first one to undertake the descent. The rope broke and he fell nearly fifty feet, breaking both ankles and very nearly killing him. It was a long time before he recovered. It was in consequence of this affair, in which Connolly was suspected of having had a part, though he denied it, that General Putnam was directed to send him, under guard, to be confined in Baltimore.<sup>64</sup>

This order was not carried out for he was still in jail on December 23rd.<sup>65</sup> Through the intercession of his half-brother, General Ewing, he was permitted to go to the latter's home upon agreeing to return to his prison when called upon. He remained but a few days at liberty when he was again summoned to return.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Colonial Record X, pages 648 and 696.

<sup>61</sup> American Archives Series V, Vol. 3, page 777. There is no further mention of Mrs. Connolly in any of the Records. She did not join him in his later life.

<sup>62</sup> Journals of Congress Vol. XII, page 1225.

<sup>63</sup> Journals of Congress V, page 748.

<sup>64</sup> Journals of Congress VI, page 1025.

<sup>65</sup> Penn. Arch. VI, page 130.

<sup>66</sup> Penn. Arch. VI, pages 242 and 245. He returned February 25, 1777.

He was ill at the time and made repeated applications to be permitted to return to his brother's home. The resolution granting that permission passed the Supreme Executive Council, April 2, 1777, and a short time after that a bond for his good conduct was given and he was set at liberty. One of the conditions of the bond was that he should confine himself within a distance of five miles from his brother's plantation in the County of York.<sup>67</sup>

He remained at liberty until October 13th when the following resolution was passed in Congress, "Resolved, that it would be inconsistent with the public safety to permit Dr. John Connolly, at present a prisoner on parole, to remain any longer at large, and therefore that the Board of War be directed to order him into safe custody immediately, taking care to seize such of his papers as may be of a political nature."<sup>68</sup> At this time Philadelphia was in the hands of the British and Congress was in session at Baltimore.

Connolly says they took every scrap of manuscript they could find, and hurried him away to York Town prison, where he was closely locked up and every former severity renewed. Later his papers were returned as nothing of importance was found in them.<sup>69</sup>

A petition from some of the prisoners in York Town was presented to Congress on May 17, 1778, which made charges of a very serious nature against the management of the prison. This petition, upon being received, was referred to the Board of War and an investigation made, which was published with the petition. The object in publishing the papers in conjunction with the petition was to satisfy the British authorities that Connolly was not improperly treated as a prisoner. Copies of the papers were directed to be sent by Washington to the Commander of the British forces in New York.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Colonial Records XI, pages 196 and 200. Penn. Arch. V, pages 297 and 298. In a letter from James Ewing to Dr. Connolly of April 4, 1777, he says, "I shall expect you early next week. Archy says he will be in Philadelphia on Sunday and I would not advise you to stay any time in town after your release. Pa. Arch. V page 298.

<sup>68</sup> Journals of Congress IX, page 800.

<sup>69</sup> Narrative, page 32.

<sup>70</sup> Journals of Congress, Vol. XII, pages 1130 and 1225.

In this report it was stated that Joshua Loring, British Commissioner of prisoners, in his letter of September 1, 1778, threatened to retaliate on American prisoners for sufferings which Connolly pretended to suffer. The reply of Congress to the complaints of Connolly was that he had no right to be considered or treated as a prisoner of war, but had been, and still remained amenable to the law martial as a spy and emissary of the British army; that when arrested he bore no commission as an officer in British service and was not armed or at the head of armed troops but was clandestinely making his way through the country to join, give intelligence to, and aid the garrison at Detroit.

Shortly after this Doctor Berkenhout was arrested and put in prison with Connolly and kept for some time.<sup>71</sup> Upon his release and return within the British lines, he proposed that the exchange of prisoners between the forces at war be suspended until Connolly was exchanged or set free. When the exchange took place Connolly was to proceed northward to join Butler Rangers and immediately begin, or continue, guerilla warfare on the frontier settlements. This plot coming to the ears of Silas Dean, then ambassador to France, was communicated to Congress and Connolly was again strictly and closely confined. He knew nothing of the reason for this change of conduct on the part of Congress and supposed that they had determined to execute him as a spy.<sup>72</sup>

An entire year of imprisonment followed in which a little more indulgence was granted the prisoner as time elapsed, but it was not until after General Sullivan's return from his invasion of the country of the Iroquois that any steps were taken to exchange Connolly. Sullivan's success had induced Congress to think that the Indians were so badly defeated that they could not recover and that Connolly

<sup>71</sup> There is some difficulty in determining the exact date of Berkenhout's arrest and confinement. It is noticed in the Pennsylvania Packet of September 5, 1778. The order for his arrest was made by the council, September 3, 1778. Col. Rec. XI, 567. He was ordered sent within the enemy's lines near New York City, September 12, 1778. *Id.* page 576.

<sup>72</sup> Dean Papers III pages 73, 119, 188. Narrative, 50.



could do nothing among them that would be of any great detriment to the Americans. A resolution to exchange Connolly for any lieutenant colonel in the British prisons was passed by Congress, and on July 4, 1780, he was permitted to go to New York on his parole. He agreed to effect an exchange with Lieutenant Colonel Ramsay. Ramsay was at once liberated on parole but the final exchange was not completed till October 25, 1780. Connolly now sought employment in the British army, and laid before Sir Henry Clinton a plan for attacking the frontier outposts with the expectation of soon being able to take Pittsburg, and then he was to act with the Indians of the west. The season was too far advanced to proceed that year and in the following April he was ill, but in June he joined the army under Cornwallis and moved southward. He was with Cornwallis at York Town and was appointed to command the Loyalists of Virginia and North Carolina. Upon the arrival of the French fleet he was ordered to return to York Town. Many of the troops were taken ill on account of the impure water and the hot climate, to which they were unaccustomed. Connolly was among the number incapacitated from the duties and accepted the invitation of one of the inhabitants living in the country near York Town to make him a visit. Leave of absence was granted him by Lord Cornwallis on September 21, 1781, and he set out on his expected vacation<sup>73</sup>. Unfortunately for him he wandered into the territory in possession of American troops, was arrested and taken before Washington. Regarding the incident he says, "I was now to see a man with whom I had been formerly upon a footing of intimacy, I may say of friendship. Politics might induce us to meet like enemies in the field, but should not make 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 sentiment he once publicly professed for me no longer existed. He ordered me to be conducted to the Marquis de Lafayette's quarters."<sup>74</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Narrative, page 54.

<sup>74</sup> Narrative, page 55.

He was, within a few days, sent by Washington sixty miles back into the country and remained there a prisoner until after the surrender at York Town. The governor of Virginia gave him permission to go to Philadelphia, where he arrived December 12th and where he applied to the Secretary of War for leave to go to New York. Instead of obtaining the desired permission he was again committed to prison on the ground that he had violated his parole given to Virginia. On making another application to Washington for relief he was informed that it was not intended that he should leave Virginia. He remained in jail in Philadelphia until March 1782 when he was permitted to go to New York and from there he sailed for Europe.

The war was practically at an end at this time, and those who had devoted themselves to British interests were seeking to receive compensation for their losses, or pay for their time. It was for these purposes that Connolly prepared and had printed in London, in 1783, his narrative which ends as follows: "A compensation for my loss of estate is all I require; and I shall endeavor to support this unmerited adversity with that conscious dignity of mind which I hope will never forsake me, and in a manner the least exceptionable."

He was not successful in obtaining allowance from the government or even the half pay of a retired officer. Under an act of Parliament passed to provide compensation for loyalists who had lost property in the war, applications were being made to commissioners appointed to receive them and he presented his claim which was heard on the second of February, 1784, and on the following days. His testimony in most particulars corroborates the other records concerning his life and the property which he had lost by reason of the war. He testified that he was an American, born and inherited land in Pennsylvania, which he sold, and settled in Virginia in 1770. He was engaged in war against the Indians and commanded the militia in Augusta County. He then tells of being sent by Dunmore to General Gage and of his return and arrest on the 19th of November 1775 and his imprisonment for five years. "He was not

particularly ill treated." He was exchanged in 1780 and went to New York. He was again taken prisoner in September, 1781, and remained in prison until in March, 1782, when he was paroled on condition that he go to England. He owned 300 acres of land in Augusta County, 40 acres of land and a house near Pittsburg, with furniture, etc. He had 4000 acres in Fincastle County granted to him by Lord Dunmore in 1772. He claimed, as his losses, £1000 for land, house and furnishings near Pittsburg; £4000 for the 4000 acres owned in Fincastle County; £500 for other lands in that neighborhood and £307 13s 9d for pay as Major Commandant of Militia from December 16, 1773, to June 16, 1775. He also made claims for other losses, such as wheat, flour, pack-horses, horses, etc., in the sum of £849 13s.

He produced, as witnesses on his behalf, the Earl of Dunmore, Major Stockton, who was in jail with him in Philadelphia, and Joseph Galloway.

The commissioners evidently felt that Connolly was exaggerating his losses and only allowed him a small portion of his claims. For his land in Pennsylvania he was allowed £120, and £48 for his house and 40 acres near Pittsburg, for his furniture he received £150 and for the 4000 acres in Fincastle County he was to have £475. Thus his claims were fixed at £793. It is well to note that he accepted the sum of £475 for his confiscated lands in Fincastle, the present City of Louisville.<sup>75</sup>

At a convention held at Danville, Kentucky, in 1785, the entire separation of Kentucky from the United States was discussed. The reasons for the desire to form a separate government were the impossibility of applying for assistance to a central eastern government from which the State was so far removed and the difficulty of being adequately repre-

<sup>75</sup> Bureau of Archives (Ontario) 1904, page 1146. From Political Beginnings of Kentucky (Filson Club). Fincastle County, Virginia, was organized in 1772. (Henning's Statutes, at Large, Vol. 8, page 600.) This act was passed in February, 1772, and is entitled "An act for dividing the County of Botetrot into two distinct counties." In October, 1776, Fincastle County was divided into Kentucky, Washington, and Montgomery, and the name of Fincastle became extinct. Henning's Statutes Vol. 9, page 257. "An act for dividing the County of Fincastle into three distinct counties and the parish of Botetrot into four distinct parishes."

sented in the legislature distant several hundred miles from the people. It was resolved to apply to the general assembly for an act to separate Kentucky from the remainder of Virginia, in order that it might enjoy "all the privileges, advantages, and immunities of a free, sovereign, and independent republic."

A memorial by General James Wilkinson, was prepared on the occasion of the presentation of the resolution to the Assembly.<sup>76</sup>

"An act concerning the erection of the district of Kentucky into an independent State" was passed in October, 1785.<sup>77</sup>

The act provided that Kentucky should be formed into an independent member of the American Confederacy, and it was further conditioned that the consent of Congress to the formation of the State should be first obtained.

There were unforeseen delays in carrying into effect the act for the separation of Kentucky as a separate State and a new act on the subject was passed by Virginia in October, 1786,<sup>78</sup> and a further act on the same subject was passed in October, 1788.<sup>79</sup>

All these acts provided that the State should be admitted with the other States, with the consent of Congress. It was at this time that the New Federal Constitution was being adopted by the States, and before the Kentucky matter could be disposed of in the Continental Congress that body ceased to exist and Kentucky still remained a part of Virginia. Many of the people of that State were greatly displeased at the delay, which they thought to be unnecessary and some of them, taking advantage of this uneasiness entered into a conspiracy to form Kentucky into an independent government, or to transfer allegiance to the Kingdom of Spain. As our particular interest is only to show the connection of Connolly with the State, we will refer again to the patent of Lord Dunmore in 1773.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Pol. Beg. of Ky., 70.

<sup>77</sup> Hening's Statutes Vol. 12, page 37.

<sup>78</sup> Hening's Statutes, Vol. 12, page 240.

<sup>79</sup> Id. 788.

<sup>80</sup> A copy of this grant is printed in the "Centenary of Louisville," page 131.

By this patent Connolly became the owner of 2000 acres of land, and by another conveyance he and John Campbell became the owners of two thousand acres adjoining. By some subsequent partition proceedings Connolly became the owner of the upper and the lower parcels, of one thousand acres each. Connolly had designed to establish here such a colony as he had proposed to Washington in 1770.

In 1774, Campbell and Dunmore divided a portion of this tract into lots and advertised them for sale in Pittsburg.<sup>81</sup>

This land now constitutes a portion of the present City of Louisville. Connolly, as we have seen, had taken sides with Great Britain in the contest that begun in 1775 and his property, as well as that of many others, was confiscated because of his opposition to the new government. Campbell, the partner of Connolly in this real estate transaction, was a firm adherent of the new government. In 1779, he was proceeding up the Ohio River with goods for Pittsburg when he and his companions were surprised by the Indians and many of them killed, including Major David Rogers. Campbell was carried prisoner to Detroit and from there to Quebec and there exchanged and released on parole. While he was absent an act of the Virginia Assembly was passed for the establishment of the town of Louisville.<sup>82</sup>

This act, of May, 1780, recites that certain property of John Connolly, has been settled upon by sundry people who have petitioned the Assembly to establish a town there, and it is resolved that one thousand acres of land, being forfeited property of John Connolly, adjoining the lands of John Campbell, is vested in John Todd, Jr., Stephen Trigg, George Slaughter, John Floyd, William Pope, George Meriwether, Andrew Hines, James Sullivan, and Marshen Brashiers as trustees for the location of the new town.

A law providing for the forfeiture to the state of property belonging to Tories was passed in May, 1770, and under the<sup>83</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Am. Arch. Series IV, Vol. 1, page 278. Centenary of Louisville, 134.

<sup>82</sup> Hening's Statutes 10, page 293.

<sup>83</sup> Hening's Statutes 10, page 66.

provisions of it, proceedings were taken to confiscate the lands of Connolly. The escheat jury in this case, sat in Fayette County, with Daniel Boone as one of its members. The act establishing Louisville on the lands of Connolly and the verdict of the jury, by a singular coincidence, took place on the same day, July 1, 1780.<sup>84</sup>

When Campbell returned from his captivity, he found that the act establishing Louisville had been passed in his absence and that while it purported to take the lands of Connolly, it, in reality, took some of his property also, and he held a mortgage on Connolly's portion. Upon his representation the Assembly restrained further sale of the land by an act of May, 1783.<sup>85</sup>

In the following October another act was passed providing for the division of the property of Connolly from that of Campbell and the lands then found to belong to Connolly<sup>86</sup> were used first to pay Campbell's mortgage and the remainder turned over to the trustees of Louisville.<sup>87</sup>

After the termination of the war, Connolly remained for a time in London where he engaged himself in laying plans for the recovery of America to the British Crown. Some papers, said to emanate from him, are printed in the Canadian Archives Report for 1890 on page 97.

He supposed the Americans were either just ready to re-attach themselves to England or to form a new monarchy with Washington as king. He was in Detroit in 1788<sup>88</sup> and reported that he sent a man to Fort Pitt who had ascertained that the people of Kentucky wanted to separate themselves from the federal government and form an independent government. A new colony was being established on the Ohio and General Samuel Holden Parsons, concerned in it, had made advances to Connolly for a harmonious understanding with Great Britain relative to keeping the Mississippi River open to their trade.

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<sup>84</sup> St. Paul's Church, Louisville (Filson Club) 8.

<sup>85</sup> Hening's Statutes 11, page 276.

<sup>86</sup> *Id.* 322.

<sup>87</sup> *Id.* 475.

<sup>88</sup> Connolly came to Detroit from Quebec during the winter of 1787-8. St. Clair Papers 2-101.

Connolly asked permission to visit Pittsburg or Kentucky "in order to draw out propositions from men of character."<sup>89</sup>

Having obtained the required consent, Connolly proceeded to Louisville, ostensibly to look after his confiscated estate, but in reality to see if some arrangement might be made for the betterment of the British government. This could be done either by the formation of Kentucky as an independent government that would continually look to England for assistance in a quarrel with Spain likely to grow out of the navigation of the Mississippi, or by the juncture of Kentucky with Spain which would soon result in the surrender to England of Kentucky and Louisiana. Thomas Marshall, in a letter to Washington of February 12, 1789, narrates the negotiations between General Wilkinson and the Spanish authorities relative to Kentucky, and states the connection of Connolly with the affair, as follows; "About this time arrived from Canada the famous Dr. (now Colonel) Connolly. His ostensible business was to inquire and repossess himself of some lands he formerly held at the Falls of the Ohio; but I believe that his real business was to sound the disposition of the leading men of this district respecting this Spanish business. He knew that both Colonel Shuter and myself had given it all the opposition in the convention we were able to do; and before he left the district he paid us a visit though neither of us had the honor of the least acquaintance with him. He was introduced by Colonel John Campbell, formerly a prisoner taken by the Indians and confined in Canada, who had previously informed us of the proposition he was about to make. He (Connolly) presently entered upon his subject, urged the great importance the navigation of the Mississippi must be to the inhabitants of the western waters; showed the absolute necessity of our possessing it;

<sup>89</sup>" A Lieutenant-Colonel Connolly, a half pay officer, who has been recently fixed at Detroit, with the appointment of lieutenant governor, has penetrated through the western country, with a view doubtless to mark and try the spirit of the people; he found them nearly divided and therefore in that respect, was protected in his person from any public apprehension, but found it requisite to escape from the dread of private assassination." *Can. Arch. Rept.* 1890, page 124.

and concluded with assurances that, were we disposed to assert our rights respecting that navigation, Lord Dorchester was cordially disposed to give us powerful assistance; that his Lordship had, I think he said, four thousand British troops in Canada besides two regiments at Detroit, and could furnish us with arms, ammunition, clothing and money; that with this assistance we might possess ourselves of New Orleans, fortify the Balize at the mouth of the river, and keep possession in spite of the utmost efforts of Spain to the contrary. He made very confident professions of Lord Dorchester's wishes to cultivate the most friendly intercourse with the people of this country, and of his own desire to become serviceable to us; and with so much seeming sincerity that, had I not before been acquainted with his character as a man of intrigue and artful address, I should in all probability have given him my confidence. I told him that the minds of the people of this country were thoroughly prejudiced against the British, not only from circumstances attending the late war, but from a persuasion that the Indians were at this time stimulated by them against us; and that so long as those savages continued to commit such horrid cruelties on our defenceless frontiers, and were received as friends and allies by the British at Detroit, it would be impossible for them to be convinced of the sincerity of Lord Dorchester's offers, let his professions be ever so strong; and that if his Lordship would have us believe him really disposed to be our friend, he must begin by showing his disapprobation of the ravages of the Indians. He admitted the justice of my observations, and said he had urged the same to his Lordship before he left Canada. He denied that the Indians are stimulated against us by the British, and says that Lord Dorchester observed that the Indians are free and independent nations and have a right to make peace and war as they think fit, and that he could not with propriety interfere. He promised, however, on his return to Canada, to repeat his arguments to his Lordship on the subject, and hopes, he says, to succeed. <sup>90</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Letters to Washington IV, 250. Butler's Kentucky, 184.



Wilkinson's version of Connolly's visit does not materially differ from Marshall's. He says that he asked Connolly to call on him at Lexington and, having gained his confidence, ascertained everything Connolly knew about the intrigue. He says that Connolly arrived in Louisville in October, 1788, having travelled from Detroit through the woods to the mouth of the river Big Miami and then by boat down the Ohio. He visited Wilkinson November 8th. He said Dorchester would furnish ten thousand men for the enterprise. These men would proceed from Detroit through Lake Erie to the River Miami, thence to the Wabash and thence to any designated point on the Ohio. After Wilkinson had obtained from Connolly all the information he desired, he told him that the British were greatly disliked in Kentucky and that he was afraid the people would injure Connolly if they found out who he was. In order to carry out this scheme of frightening Connolly, he employed a hunter to assault him on pretext that he was avenging the death of a son who had been murdered by the Indians at the instigation of the English.

Wilkinson told Connolly that he was afraid the people would kill him and advised him to escape at once. Connolly asked for an escort to conduct him out of the country. This was furnished, and on November 20 he recrossed the Ohio on his way back to Detroit.<sup>91</sup>

It was not until October the following year (1789) that the report of Connolly's trip to Kentucky was sent to Lord Grenville.<sup>92</sup>

We lose track of Connolly for the next few years. The treaty between America and England of 1794, generally known as the Jay Treaty, went into effect in 1796. It does not appear that Connolly lived in Detroit in the latter year for his name is not in the list of persons who desired to remain British subjects and he certainly, at that time did not intend to become an American Citizen. In that year

<sup>91</sup> Gayerre's *Hist. Louisiana* III, 236. *Spanish Conspiracy*, 300. Wilkinson's Second Memorial *Am. Hist. Rev.* IX, 751. A passport issued by Connolly while in Kentucky in 1788 is printed in *St. Clair Papers* 2, 106.

<sup>92</sup> *Can. Arch. Series Q* 2, page 623.

he applied to the Canadian Land Board for a grant of land as an United Empire Loyalist.<sup>93</sup> When Connolly first came to Detroit, he met there his old Pittsburg acquaintance, Mathew Elliot, and his relative, Alexander McKee. Both of these men were in Pittsburg when the war broke out and both left unceremoniously to join the British soldiers in Detroit, when they began to be eyed with suspicion by their fellow citizens of that place. McKee was more closely connected with Connolly than was Elliot, and when Connolly returned from General Gage in the fall of 1775, he bore with him a commission appointing McKee to a responsible office in the army they expected to raise at Detroit. This commission was never given to McKee but was destroyed by the servant of Connolly when the latter was arrested in Frederick Town in 1775.

Both Elliot and McKee held important positions in the Indian department at Detroit. Elliot was superintendent of Indian affairs in the west and McKee was Deputy Superintendent General.<sup>94</sup>

In 1798 Elliot had gained the enmity of some of the other officers at the place and he was removed from his position. McKee took up his work and performed it as well as his own duties, to the satisfaction of the department.<sup>95</sup>

Both men were getting along in years, though Elliot lived to take an active part in the War of 1812. During these years he made repeated and strenuous efforts to be reinstated in the Indian department. In 1799 McKee died and the administration of his office was given to James Baby, Alexander Grant, and Thomas McKee, jointly. There were several applications made to fill the vacancy created by the death of McKee. Elliot asked that his conduct be further investigated in order that if he was found satisfactory, he be reinstated and he could then obtain McKee's place. It was also recommended that William Claus, a grandson of Sir William Johnson, be appointed to the

<sup>93</sup> Can. Arch. Q. 282, pp. 336 and 408.

<sup>94</sup> Mich. Pio. and Hist. Soc. XXV, 210.

<sup>95</sup> Can. Arch. Q. 80 and 2, page 4.

vacancy, and James Baby also sought it.<sup>96</sup> Claus was soon given the place but this did not satisfy all of the applicants. Connolly applied to the Duke of Kent and asked him to use his influence to give him the place even if, in order to do so, some other occupant was forced out.

Connolly arrived in December, 1799, bearing a letter to Sir John Johnson ordering him (Connolly) to supersede any person who might have been placed by General Prescott in the situation in the Indian department formerly occupied by McKee. The orders from the Duke were peremptory. Johnson at once reported the matter to Lieutenant Governor Hunter. He reviewed the qualifications of McKee and stated the necessity of having a man well qualified by association with the Indians to fill the office of Deputy Superintendent of Indian affairs, and then he continued, "Your Excellency will therefore, I presume, agree in opinion with me that it would be highly necessary for the good of the King's service that the person appointed to succeed him should at least possess those essential requisites which it cannot be presumed Lieutenant-Colonel Connolly does, and I am sorry to say as I think it my duty to be under the necessity of declaiming he does not, though he possesses other talents that might render him useful in any other line of service."<sup>97</sup>

Governor Hunter also was as decidedly opposed to the appointment of Connolly and as his report was to be made directly to the Duke of Kent, it became of greater interest to know of its contents. He wrote "I feel it my indispensable duty to state to your Royal Highness that so far as I am capable of judging I am decidedly of opinion the removal of Captain Claus and the appointment of Lieutenant Colonel Connolly in his room, would be highly prejudiced to his Majesty's service."<sup>98</sup>

The appointment of Connolly was cancelled by the Duke of Kent, at the request of the Duke of York, in June of the following year.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Can. Arch. Q. 82 and 238 and Q. 286 and 2, page 428.

<sup>97</sup> Mich. Pio. and Hist. Soc. XXV, 206.

<sup>98</sup> Can. Arch. Q. 287-1, pp. 21, 18. The letter is dated December 27, 1799. The Duke of Kent was the father of Queen Victoria.

<sup>99</sup> Can. Arch. Q. 287-1, pages 121, 123.

Connolly seems now to have given up hope of obtaining government position and took up his residence in Montreal.

He died at that place, January 30, 1813, after a long and painful illness. His widow, Margaret, in a petition for a pension said that the distress of his illness was considerably augmented by the effects of his disappointments that had long preyed upon his mind. He had little property and lived upon his allowance of half pay granted by government.

It has been stated that Connolly was a Roman Catholic and his memorial to Del Campo substantiates that idea, though his mother was a staunch Presbyterian as appears by the terms of her will.

Connolly's first wife, as noted above, was Susanna Semple, a daughter of Samuel Semple, a tavern keeper in Pittsburg. There was at least one child born of this marriage, but the name and sex is not to be ascertained at the present time.

Mention is made by the Moravian minister, Zeisberger, of Connolly's son coming from Detroit in 1788 on his way to Pittsburg.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Zeisberger Diary, Vol. 1, page 406.

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