

The Life Adventures of Lieutenant-Colonel John Connolly: *The Story of a Tory*

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CHAPTER III As Dunmore's Representative In Pittsburgh: Indian Affairs

It has been charged that Lord Dunmore and Capt. Connolly were chiefly responsible for the series of untoward incidents that culminated in the expeditions, usually referred to as "Dunmore's War", made against the Indians west of Pittsburgh during the summer of 1774. Having encountered stronger opposition than they expected in their endeavor to bring the disputed territory under the control of Virginia, they feared that civil strife might result. To prevent this, so it is affirmed, they conceived the idea of goading the Indians to warfare, thus hoping that the Pennsylvanians, being forced to protect themselves against their red foes, would pay no attention to Virginia's action in regard to the boundary. In carrying out their scheme Dunmore was going to undertake to manipulate the House of Burgesses while Connolly was to entice settlers and place them upon the contested land with Virginia patents. (1) A study of the documents relating to the affair, and the knowledge of how both men later planned to use the Indians during the Revolution, leads one to place some credence in the above interpretation of the actions of the conspirators. Moreover, Connolly, when writing to Washington on May 1, 1774, stated that he hoped all would forget government disputes and would be "unanimous in opposing a common Enemy." (2)

However, a conversation which Thomas Wharton, a close friend of Governor Penn, had with Patrick Henry, the Virginia patriot, throws further light upon the motives of Lord Dunmore, and would seem to place most of the responsibility for the war upon him. Henry claimed that "he was well acquainted with the secret springs of this af-

—Being the second installment of an article which first appeared in the January, 1928 number of this Magazine.

fair," having been in Williamsburgh when Connolly, "a chatty, sensible man," had first come to that place and conversed with Lord Dunmore concerning "the extreme richness of the lands which lay on both sides of the Ohio." His Lordship had been particularly attracted by Connolly's description, inasmuch as he had decided, at that time, to bring his family to America and settle in this country. Accordingly, he had consulted several authorities who had told him that a purchase from the Indians was as full and ample title as could be obtained. Therefore, so Henry believed, speaking in September, 1774, Dunmore was actually "pursueing this war, in order to obtain by purchase or treaty from the natives a tract of territory." (3)

In any case, it is a well-established fact that Connolly's activities in and around Pittsburgh in the spring of 1774 were viewed with no little concern by the surrounding tribes. On the day of the very first muster of militia, January 25th, some of the rougher men, when dispersing, wantonly and maliciously fired upon some friendly Indians who were reposing quietly in their huts on the opposite shore of the river. (4) Moreover, the constant sight of armed men patrolling the streets of the town led many of the natives to believe that an attack was being planned upon them and their country. (5)

Though these facts may lead us to conclude that Connolly and Dunmore with their warlike actions were ultimately to blame, still we can not wholly absolve the Indians. It was well known that they did not want to see the white man settling in Kentucky, their great hunting ground, and were probably not averse to taking measures to prevent them from so doing. Moreover, in 1773, two white traders on the Hockhocking River had been killed and robbed by the redmen. Again in the spring of 1774, April 16th, (6) they had been guilty of violence when they had killed two more white traders, helpers of William Butler, and stolen their goods. (7) Whether or not these deaths were justified is immaterial, for in either case such measures were bound to arouse the antagonism of the frontiersmen.

The man generally held to have started the actual warfare was Michael Cresap, but this is not quite just. Early in the spring of 1774 Cresap had gone with a party of men

to the Ohio country for the purpose of securing land. Being one of the first, he could select the best and richest of the Ohio bottoms. Having made his choice, he put his men to work at building houses and clearing away the forests. But, while thus peaceably and diligently engaged in the prosecution of his object, he was startled by the receipt of a circular letter from Capt. Connolly which had been sent to warn the settlers to be on their guard as the Indians were on the warpath. This notice caused Cresap to abandon his project immediately and to lead his men to Fort Wheeling. (8)

The presence of these hardy backwoodsmen at this post was soon made known to Connolly. Knowing their tendencies, he sent them a message telling them that a war was imminent, and requesting them to remain in their present position for a time, as a message had been sent to the Indians, the reply to which, being due in a few days, would enable him to determine his future course of action. The little band sent word that they did not intend to leave their quarters for some time, and that during their stay they would see to it that the enemy did not harrass the neighborhood. But before this answer could reach Pittsburgh, Connolly had, about April 21st, (9) sent a second letter to Cresap informing the latter that the message returned by the Indians had made war inevitable, and asking him and his party to scout the country until the inhabitants could fortify themselves. Cresap read the letter to his men. Its contents could hardly have been more pleasing to these rugged Indian fighters. A council was immediately held and war was declared in a most solemn manner. That same evening two Indian scalps were brought into camp. The next day, some Indian canoes being sighted on the river, a chase was given and kept up for fifteen miles before the redmen stood at bay and fought. In the engagement a few were wounded on both sides, one Indian was taken prisoner, and the ammunition in the canoes was seized by the white men. (10) This testimony, by one who was a member of Cresap's band, ought to disprove the assertion that the redoubtable Indian fighter was alone responsible for opening hostilities. Nor can we wholly cast aside Cresap's own statement that he took action only because of Connolly's instructions. (11)

At that time it was currently believed, both by whites and Indians, that Cresap and his men were guilty of other atrocities. In one case they were charged with enticing some Mingoes, who lived at the mouth of Yellow Creek, to the other side of the river, where, after giving them rum to make them drunk, they killed five. It was said they were not content with this but contrived to kill others later, among them was John Gibson's wife, a Shawnee woman. (12) But Jacob, Cresap's biographer, maintains that this Yellow Creek affair took place even before the backwoods leader had taken the offensive. (13) A far more serious offence, in its consequences, that of murdering the family of Logan, the famous Mingo leader, was also said to have been the work of Cresap and his followers. But of this crime, too, he has been absolved, for it has been shown that a renegade by the name of Greathouse was guilty of the atrocious deed, and that Cresap's party was nowhere near the place, Baker's Bottom, when the crime was committed. (14) What Cresap actually did, soon after his scouting expedition out of Fort Wheeling, was to return to his home in Maryland. But he did not remain there long, for, after a few weeks, he returned to the west. (15) Thus he will appear again in the course of our narrative.

Connolly's actions during these months of April, May, and June, are difficult to understand and interpret. All the evidence seems to point out that up to the time of the breaking out of actual hostilities, he rather abetted the ill feeling between the whites and the Indians, in the hope, perhaps, that the war would bring the opposing factions together. Then, as he observed the settlers fleeing the country in mortal dread of Indian vengeance, and doubtless realized what a catastrophe this flight would be for his position and ambitious, he changed his tactics, and strove with some effort to maintain peace. In his *Narrative* he asserts that "every endeavour at pacification was employed by me, but unhappily without effect". (16) In this work he was ably helped by his erstwhile aggravated uncle, Col. Croghan, who strove indefatigably for peace, possibly because his own interests, also, were at stake; (17) and by Alexander McKee, the Indian Agent.

As precautionary measures, however, Connolly sent out urgent orders commanding the militia to assemble at

once, and proceeded to seize all tools and instruments that could be used in putting Fort Pitt in a proper state for defense. At the same time he sent orders down the river telling the people to suspend their hostilities. He was then ready to begin his attempts at an "amicable Reconciliation", though he was not at all sure that his efforts would be successful. Accordingly, he dispatched invitations to the various Indian tribes asking them to meet with him in conference in order to try to reach a solution of their mutual grievances.

In response to this request, representatives of the Six Nations and other tribes came to confer with Connolly, Croghan and other influential men, on May 3, 1774. At this gathering the representatives of the white people made their apology and gave gifts of condolence for, as they said, "some outrages being committed upon several of your people going down the Ohio by some ill disposed white persons settled upon it". In their apology they affirmed that "We discountenance so barbarous a breach of friendship with you, and we can assure you that it has not been done with the intent or knowledge of Government". Wampum was then exchanged and, after a few more formal remarks, the meeting adjourned. (19)

At the next gathering, held on May 5th, Connolly addressed the councilors in the following manner:

Brethren: I am very sorry to find that a dispute has happened between our people and yours, which has been attended with bad consequences to both parties. You ought to be certain, brothers, that our wise men had no act or part in what has happened, and that it was entirely owing to the folly and indiscretion of our young people, which you know, like your own young men are unwilling to listen to good advice. As to the particulars of what has happened, we yet do not know; we are sure, however, that people are killed on both sides, but we hope as the dispute happened only between the young and foolish people, that it will not engage our wise men in a quarrel in which none of us had a part. It is, however, brothers, very unlucky that any difference should have happened between us at this time, as the great Headman of Virginia and all his wise people are just going to meet together to counsel about the settling in this country, bought from you from the Six Nations; and to give orders to their young men, which may come to be your neighbors, to be kind and friendly towards you. And, likewise, I expect they will buy goods to clothe your old people and children, to brighten the chain of friendship between us, and to convince you that we will be as friendly towards you as your late neighbours from Pennsylvania were. And, therefore, I desire you, brothers, not to listen to what some lying people may tell you to the contrary, for although we are always ready to fight our enemies, yet we will show our true and steady friendship upon every occasion, when necessary.

This speech doubtless had a soothing effect, even after being interpreted, for when the necessary wampum had been exchanged, the Indian chiefs in their replies agreed that their tribes would remain quiet. (20) Now that their differences were adjusted, the conference was declared at an end and the Indians returned to their homes.

But the Shawnees, the most hostile of the tribes, had sent no representatives to the council. Consequently, they remained to be pacified, if possible. As a council which had been held with the Delawares at Newcomers-town on May 13th, had shown that this tribe was peaceably inclined, Connolly determined to try to use their good offices in dealing with the Shawnees. Accordingly, the Delawares were asked, in a letter of May 21st, to speak to their neighbors and to warn them that "any unruly conduct of theirs at this time will only produce more fatal consequences than had already happened". The Delawares kindly delivered this message and received a rather cool reply on May 25th. The Shawnees refused to put any faith in what Connolly, McKee or Croghan might state, saying, "We look upon it all to be lies". Moreover, since they knew the Delawares to be friendly with the whites, the guess was hazarded that "perhaps what you say may be lies also". Nevertheless the hostile tribe agreed to give ear to what the intercessors had to say, since this was the "first time you have spoke to us". (21) Evidently Chief Newcomer, of the Delawares, made the most of his opportunity, for, on June 5th, he sent a message to Pittsburgh informing Connolly that the Shawnees were quiet except for two parties, of thirteen braves each, who had had relations killed and, therefore, refused to be guided by their chief's advice. Hence, the chiefs hoped that they themselves would not be blamed. Newcomer gave the further information that the men on the warpath were most of them Mingoes and were bound for that part of the river where their friends had been killed, or to somewhere below that point and upon the Virginia shore. (22)

Throughout these negotiations it was evident that the Indians inclined toward war made a distinction between the Pennsylvanians and the Virginians. Toward the former friendly feelings were entertained, as can be noted in their message of May 25th, when they stated that they knew the

path to Philadelphia to be open, and that they would keep it so if they pleased. (23) Moreover, it was rumored around among the settlers that the Indians had fixed a boundary line between the two groups, and that a Pennsylvanian would not be killed or touched. (24) On the other hand the Virginians, or the "Big Knives" as they were known among the redmen, were blamed for starting the ill feeling between the two races. Cornstalk, a chief of one of the recalcitrant tribes, even sent word, May 20th, by Alexander McKee to Connolly and Croghan, that he deemed them responsible for the killing of one of his braves. (25) Considering their actions and responses to Connolly's advances, it would seem that the Shawnees, at least, were very reluctant to enter into negotiations until their desire for vengeance upon the Virginians had been satiated. (26)

It was on this scene that Cresap reappeared, this time with a Captain's commission from Lord Dunmore and a body of volunteers from Maryland, to assist in the Indian war that he believed was impending. But he got no further than where Washington, Pennsylvania, now is, for at that place he was stopped by a "peremptory and insulting order from Connolly, commanding him to dismiss his men and return home". (27) Why Connolly did this is not known, but it may have been because Cresap had shown that the Doctor's orders had been responsible for his actions in and about Fort Wheeling during the month of April. (28) At any rate the order made Cresap very angry, (29) so he wrote to Connolly and McKee threatening to proceed immediately to harass the Indians on his own authority unless he was given assurance that the redmen would do no more mischief for at least six months. (30) But for some reason this threat was not carried out and Cresap did as he was bidden, though he returned once more to take an active part in the war that followed a few weeks later. (31)

Another thing that makes Connolly's refusal of the aid of the Maryland force difficult to understand, is the fact that, at about the same time, he was actually changing his plans again and meditating pushing on into war. This about-face may be partly accounted for by the fact that he had already incurred such expense in repairing the Fort and in calling out the militia that he feared the Virginia government would not meet the debts he had made

unless disturbances were created that would give his measures the appearance of necessity. (32) Moreover, since great numbers of the inhabitants were continuing to leave in spite of his efforts to allay their fears, he may have considered it good policy, as he was at that time in "good posture of defence", (33) to go ahead and conquer the intractable redmen and thus settle the problem once and for all. At any rate he had ceased trying to placate the Indians and to the contrary had, surely knowingly, sorely irritated them by giving a lieutenant's commission to one John Drinning, an erstwhile follower of Cresap, who publicly boasted of having killed the Indians that had met their death at the hands of the scouting party out of Fort Wheeling in April. (34)

In any case, by May 27th, Connolly had definitely decided to begin offensive demonstrations, for on that date he despatched the following order to one of his Captains:

As I have received intelligence that Logan, a Mingo Indian, with about twenty Shawanese and others, were to set off for war last Monday and I have reason to believe that they may come upon the inhabitants about Wheeling, I hereby order, require and command you, with all the men you can raise, immediately to march and join any of the companies already out and under the pay of the Government, and, upon joining your parties together, scour the frontier and become a barrier to our settlements, and endeavor to fall in with their tracks and pursue them, using your utmost endeavors to chastise them as open and avowed enemies. (35)

This was followed, on June 9th, by a letter to the Six Nations and the Delawares expressing the kindest feeling for those tribes, though concluding with this admonition: "But brethren, as the Mingo and Shawnese have since struck us, notwithstanding our endeavours to restore friendship, we have now upon this account, again to desire your people to withdraw from amongst them that no injury may happen to you". This message was sent after Connolly had received communications from Dunmore which gave his conduct tacit approval. (36)

For some reason or other Connolly was very anxious to obtain Washington's sympathy and approval of his procedure. In a letter of May 28th he informed his friend that the safety of the disputed district was due only to the fact that it was under the control of the government of Virginia. In justifying his moves against the Shawnees

he expressed the opinion that they ought to be "thoroughly chastised and convinced" of their "insignificancy"; and that he further believed that this discipline would prove exemplary to their "continuous Neighbours". (37) Further justification and future plans appear in a letter of June 7th. Here he writes that the Shawnees had for years past shaken the tomahawk over the heads of the whites and "threatened to strike should our People ever attempt to pass below the Kankawa" (this was a clever reference, for Washington owned land on that stream). To permanently subjugate them he would like to be able to build a stockade on that river and another on the Hockhocking, "from which places we may be enabled to send terror into their Country for the present, & keep them from annoying our Settlements; & hereafter will forever deter them from daring to affront our Adventurers in the prosecution of their lawful designs down the Ohio". (38) This last reference was, doubtless, to Washington's investments along that stream. But Connolly was not to win the approbation of the great Virginian so easily, for the latter had information concerning the Doctor and his exploits other than that supplied by the Doctor himself. In a letter of May 8th, William Crawford had commented on Connolly's ability in these words: "we are in great want of some proper person to direct us, who may have command,—Mr. Connolly, who now commands, having incurred the displeasure of the people. He is unable to take command for two reasons: one is, the contradiction between us and the Pennsylvanians; and the other is that he carries matters too much in a military way, and is not able to go through with it". He further remarked: "I do not mean to say anything against Mr. Connolly's conduct, only he can not carry things on as he could wish, as he is not well acquainted with the nature of the people he has to deal with. Fair means would do better, and he could get anything he wanted more readily". (39)

Whatever others may have thought of Connolly's ability to handle the present state of affairs, he had the utmost confidence in himself. He, therefore, proceeded to make preparations to carry out the plans about which he had written Washington on June 7th. It is well to note, in passing, that Dunmore, when he learned of these projects, approved them. (40) In pursuance of his program Connolly despatched, on June 10th or 11th, (41) a party of

militia consisting of one captain, one lieutenant, and forty privates, (42) to Wheeling, with orders to fall upon every Indian they met. (43) At Wheeling they were to wait until he joined them. (44) He proposed to follow the little band on the 14th, with about two hundred men. After their union at Wheeling, he planned to build a stockade fort at that place, another at Hockhocking Creek, and then to proceed against the Shawnees' towns. (45) After maturing these plans, Connolly wanted St. Clair to act in concert with him in carrying them into execution, and so wrote to the Pennsylvania official requesting his cooperation. But St. Clair was, as he wrote Governor Penn, "cautious of taking any step that may have the most distant tendency to draw this Province into an active share in the War they have had no hand in kindling". (46) This refusal, however, did not prevent Connolly from proposing to go ahead with his own forces.

But his plans, as the "best laid plans of mice and men" often do, miscarried. The little force that he had sent to precede him met with disaster before reaching Wheeling. Connolly had ordered them to attack any Indians they might meet. On the 11th, having got wind of a party under Logan, pursuit was given. As they neared Ten-mile Creek, which emptied into the Monongahela about ten miles above Redstone Fort, the Captain, Francis McClure, and the lieutenant, Samuel Kincaid, were far ahead of their men. Suddenly the careless officers were pounced upon by Logan and four of his braves. When the militiamen reached the spot they found their Captain dead, and their Lieutenant badly wounded. The Indians had made their escape. The forty privates buried their Captain, and then, their one officer being incapacitated, returned with the wounded Lieutenant to Fort Pitt. (47) When Connolly heard of this catastrophe he gave up entirely his part in the proposed expedition and remained at Pittsburgh.

Fuming at this frustration of his plans, he was ready to consider any other means by which he might punish the Shawnees, and, if the measure could be so manipulated as to inconvenience the Pennsylvanians, this would not make it objectionable. The Shawnees were obtaining ammunition and powder from somewhere and, since it was well known that they favored the Pennsylvania traders more than those

from Virginia, Connolly can hardly be blamed for reaching the inevitable conclusion. Immediately he drafted and posted the following advertisement (49):

Whereas the Shawanese have perpetrated several murders upon the Inhabitants of this Country which has involved this promising Settlement in the most calamitous distress; and whereas I have very good reason to believe that certain imprudent people continue to carry on a correspondence with, & supply the said Enemies with dangerous Commodities to the infinite prejudice of all His Majesty's Subjects, and expressly contrary to an Act of Assembly prohibiting such unwarrantable intercourse: These are therefore in His Majesty's Name, strictly to require and command all His Majesty's Subjects, to take notice thereof and to deport themselves as the law directs, as they may be assured that a contrary conduct will draw on them the utmost severity thereof.

Given under my hand at Fort Dunmore this 18th June, 1774.
John Connolly.

Not satisfied with his own restriction, he endeavored to induce the commander at Detroit to do the same. But that officer refused because he saw no prospect of war. And furthermore, before taking such a step, he insisted upon having the orders of the Commander-in-Chief at least. (50)

At the time that Connolly was formulating the above proclamation, another opportunity was presented to him for persecuting the Shawnee Indians. On June 16th, Richard Butler and a few other traders were escorted by three Shawnee chiefs to Fort Pitt. The Indians had done this to protect the traders from unfriendly redmen that might have been met on the way. Butler, fearing that the militia might do harm to his red friends, left them just outside the town, (52) while he went on in and interviewed Connolly. He requested the Commandant to give protection to the three chiefs but this Connolly positively refused to do. A day or so later Butler again sought the Doctor and begged that his charges might be safe-guarded but was once more refused, this time in an ill-natured manner. (53) Determined not to be so importuned again, Connolly, on the following Sunday, June 19th, (54) sent out a party of forty men to make prisoners of the Shawnees. (55)

This act created a veritable furor among the Pennsylvanians. Some went to get the Indians safely away and others to warn St. Clair that the armed party was headed for Bullock Penns. At this place, only seven miles east of town, thirty of the Pennsylvania Rangers were stationed. It had been reported that Connolly, only a few days before,

had determined to dispossess the Rangers of that post; and had stated that if they did not behave themselves he would not suffer one Pennsylvanian to live this side of Laurel Hill. (56) The people of Pittsburgh, therefore, feared that the sortie to take the Indians was only a ruse, and so informed St. Clair. This officer immediately waited upon Connolly and insisted upon being told in direct terms the purpose of the armed party. Connolly reiterated that he had sent out the men to make prisoners of the Indians who had escorted the traders to the Fort. (57)

Being thus reassured as to the safety of his own men, St. Clair bethought himself of the friendly Indians, who, as fortune would have it, had arranged to meet him at Col. Croghan's at the very time that Connolly had sent out their would-be captors. At the meeting St. Clair was to have tried to assuage their anger at the depredations lately committed against them, by giving them presents and a soothing speech. (58) Knowing this to be now impossible, he sent word to Croghan to get them safely away. (59) This was accomplished by the Butler brothers, Richard and William, who succeeded in getting their Indian friends safely across the river, where they were given handsome presents for their friendship and fidelity and sent away well satisfied with their treatment by the Pennsylvanians. William Butler was later severely threatened for his part in this rescue. (60) When Connolly's force arrived at Croghan's home they surrounded and searched all the buildings but, finding their quarry gone, they returned to Pittsburgh. (61) It was later reported that the Indians were eventually pursued and one of them killed or wounded. (62) Such conduct on the part of Connolly and his Virginians induced the Pennsylvanians to believe that the former faction was bent on bringing about a general war. St. Clair sought to impress this interpretation of their actions upon Governor Penn. (63) The latter was apparently convinced, for he reported to his Assembly that he believed that the Province would soon "be involved in the Calamities of an Indian War." (64)

Nor were the Pennsylvanians wrong in their conclusion, for Connolly and Dunmore were rapidly maturing plans for attacking the Shawnees. Messengers were continually on the road between Pittsburgh and Williams-

burgh. It was believed that the Virginians, in order to force the war, would demand of the Shawnees that they deliver up Logan and others for punishment, as these Indians were held to be guilty of several murders. (65) But Connolly was not going to be trusted with the campaign, for, toward the last of June, Dunmore had sent him these orders:

It is highly necessary that you continue at Fort Dunmore, and I think therefore that you could not do better than send Captain William Crawford with what men you can spare to join him to cooperate with Coll. Lewis, or to strike a stroke himself if he thinks he can do it with safety. (66)

Either Dunmore changed this order or Connolly for some reason failed to follow it, as will be noted later. At the time, his mind was occupied with another matter.

It seems that Michael Cresap had appeared once more in the western territory. As he was very popular with the frontiersmen, and widely known as a skilled Indian fighter, it is not strange that large numbers of the backwoodsmen, and even some of Connolly's militia, flocked to his standard. This circumstance once more brought down upon him the wrath of the Commandant. Consequently, July 14th, he received an order which read:

Your whole proceedings, so far as relate to our disturbances with the Indians, have been of a nature so extraordinary that I am much at a loss to account for the cause; but when I consider your late steps, tending directly to ruin the service here, by inveigling away the militia of this garrison by your preposterous proposals, and causing them thereby to embezzle the arms of government, purchased at an enormous expense, and at the same time to reflect infinite disgrace upon the honor of this colony by attacking a set of people which, notwithstanding the injury they have sustained by you in the loss of their people, yet continue to rely upon the professions of friendship which I have made, and deport themselves accordingly—I say, when I consider these matters I must conclude that you are actuated by a spirit of discord so prejudicial to the peace and good order of society, that the conduct calls for justice, and due execution thereof can only check. I must once again order you to desist from your pernicious designs, and require of you, if you are an officer of militia, to send the deserters from this place back with all expedition, that they may be dealt with as their crimes merit. (67)

Cresap doubtless obeyed this command, for he remained in the country and took an active part in the expeditions which were soon sent out against the Indians. (68)

At the time the above episode was taking place, or shortly after, the Shawnees were guilty of some attacks

and murders along Dunkard Creek. On hearing of these atrocities, Connolly definitely concluded that the depredations should be checked. He desired once again, if he could obtain it, the cooperation of the Pennsylvanians. Accordingly he dispatched, on July 19th, a letter to St. Clair in which he said, in part:

The people of the Frontiers want nothing but the countenance of government to execute every desirable purpose, & your Province appearing backward at this juncture, will most indubitably be highly displeasing to all the Western Settlers. I am determined no longer to be a Dupe to their amicable professions, but on the contrary shall pursue every measure to offend them; whether I may have the friendly assistance or not, of the Neighbouring Country, will I expect, depend much on your just representation of matters. (69)

But St. Clair was not to be so easily enticed into giving his approval or assistance to Connolly's program, for he believed the Virginians to be responsible for their predicament. Moreover, it appeared to him that the Indian operations, so far, had been chiefly aimed at that faction. (70) Therefore, in his reply, while agreeing that something should be done, he suggested that, instead of war, an "ample Reparation ought to be made them for the injuries they have already sustained, and an honest open intercourse established with them for the future," as this method would be cheaper, easier and quicker than stirring up strife. To the insinuation that his "representation" of the state of affairs had not been heretofore entirely "just," he answered: "I shall, however, represent matters as they occur to those in Government in the light they appear to me, as I have done hitherto, and have uniformly that I saw not the least probability of War, unless the Virginians forced it." (71) This response was written in spite of the fact that he had learned that the story of the Indian ravages on Dunkard Creek was true, and not concocted by the settlers, as he had supposed, to prevent the execution of Connolly's orders to Cresap. (72) Though it was evidently not intended that it should, the letter could not have had a very soothing effect upon the Commandant.

As a matter of fact Connolly had already decided to go ahead without the aid of the Pennsylvanians, and was planning to lead a body of troops, on July 22nd, to reinforce a number of men whom he had some time before stationed at Wheeling. (73) From thence the long meditated

expedition against the Shawnee towns was to set forth. But neither Connolly nor William Crawford was to head the campaign.

Early in 1774, a certain Captain Angus McDonald, while surveying military bounty lands on the Ohio and Kanawha Rivers, had been driven off by the Indians. Desiring to punish his assailants, he had secured Dunmore's permission to raise a regiment of four hundred men for that purpose. (74) Consequently, this gentleman, with the rank of Major, was charged with the task of subduing the Shawnees. As Connolly did not accompany him, it is unnecessary to recount the complete story. It is enough to quote the following extract from Major McDonald's report to Connolly, in which he stated that, on the 2nd of August, "I and my party attacked the Upper Shawnees towns; I destroyed their corn fields, burnt their cabins, took three scalps and made one prisoner; I had two men killed and six wounded." In the course of their journey the troops had also shot at several roving Indians. (75) From this it is evident that no great damage was done, but the depredations committed served to arouse the various tribes north of the Ohio. Hence another expedition was made necessary, if the people were not to suffer further horrors. (76)

Lord Dunmore himself was determined to have a part in this second attempt. In fact he was very enthusiastic over the prospect, if reports were true, and had settled on September 25th as the day for attacking the great Shawnee town on the Scioto River. (77) In the ensuing warfare, popularly known as "Dunmore's War," Connolly must have played but an insignificant part, if he had any part in it at all, for the records fail to disclose any mention of him in any of the engagements. (78) Consequently, a short summary of the affair is sufficient for our narrative.

To act with him in this enterprise, Lord Dunmore had ordered a Colonel Andrew Lewis to raise one thousand men. This force was to proceed down the Ohio to the mouth of the Kanawha River and there halt at a place known as Point Pleasant. At this spot Lord Dunmore was to join them with an equal number of men. In accordance with these instructions, Col. Lewis set out on September 11th, and arrived at the rendezvous on October 1st. In the meantime

Dunmore had changed his plans and, by so doing, left Lewis and his troops to meet an unexpected Indian attack on October 10th. In this hotly contested battle of Point Pleasant the white men had seventy-five killed—several of them officers—and one hundred and forty wounded. Despite this loss, Col. Lewis, having determined to wait no longer for his commander, started for the Shawnee towns on the Sciota the next day. Dunmore, coming down the river from Wheeling, arrived just in time to accept a truce offered by the Indians, and to order a retreat, a command which Col. Lewis and his men reluctantly obeyed. The war was diplomatically ended by the treaty of Camp Charlotte in November, 1774. (79) St. Clair, on hearing of the conclusion of the unhappy affair, posted the glad tidings to Governor Penn. His opinion as to where the responsibility should rest was unchanged, for he wrote, "The War betwixt the Indians and Virginians is at last over." (80)

Before closing this chapter on the Indian Affairs in 1774, it will be well to note that Lord Dunmore was called to account for his actions and those of his agent, Connolly, by the Earl of Dartmouth, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies. Governor Penn had made repeated advances to Lord Dunmore in order to reach a peaceful solution of their difficulties and to avoid Indian troubles. (81) To most of these approaches Dunmore had turned a deaf ear or made evasive replies. In one of the latter he had gone so far as to request the removal of St. Clair. (82) Finally, Governor Penn, despairing of attempts to solve the questions through this channel, laid his complaints before the Earl of Dartmouth. This official, writing from England on September 8, 1774, asked Dunmore to explain various charges brought against him. In particular, he mentioned that he had learned—

.....that this Connolly, using your Lordship's Name and pleading your Authority, has presumed to re-establish the Fort at Pittsburgh, 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 Earl hoped that if these charges were untrue, they might be, as he said, "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." (83)

Dunmore, writing from Williamsburgh on December 24, 1774, to give an official report of his "War," made his defense as best he could. He justified the rebuilding of the Fort as a means "of keeping the Neighbouring Indians in awe," and lauded Connolly for his ability to keep on friendly terms with all the tribes except the Shawnees who were implacable. To the charge that Connolly had mistreated friendly Indians (84) of the latter tribe at Fort Pitt, he wrote: "And I can assure your Lordship that, upon the Strictest enquiry which I could make, no one of these facts were attributed either to the design or even negligence of Mr. Connolly." In fact, so great had been his faith in Connolly's discretion, that he had himself sanctioned the expedition of Major Angus McDonald. (85) Concerning the destruction of the King's boats, he made the rather terse observation: "I never heard of any destroyed by Mr. Connolly or used by anybody, or even that there were any capable of being used or destroyed," though he had seen some, that were said to be the King's, rotting in the river. In his conclusion, as might be expected, he endeavored to throw responsibility for all the trouble upon the Pennsylvanians. (86)

FOOTNOTES OF CHAPTER III

- 1 Burk, *The History of Virginia*, III, 374.
- 2 *Letters to Washington*, IV, 379f.
- 3 "Letters of Thomas Wharton, 1773-1783," *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XXXIII, 445f.
- 4 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 528.
- 5 *Ibid.*, pp. 486, 528.
- 6 Mayer, *Tah-Gah-Jute or Logan and Cresap*, p. 48
- 7 Jacob, *Life of Captain Michael Cresap* (edition of 1866), pp 53ff.
- 8 *Ibid.*, pp. 49f.
- 9 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 512.
- 10 "George Rogers Clark Papers," *Coll of the Ill. State Hist. Lib.*, XIX, 7f. Clark, who was with Cresap's party, writes this letter June 17, 1798, to disprove the charge that Cresap started the hostilities on his own responsibility, and also to prove that the party had nothing to do with the murder of the family of Logan, the famous Mingo chief. The killing of the two Indians is also referred to in Jacob, *op. cit.*, p. 67.
- 11 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 502, 512, 528.
- 12 *Ibid.*, p. 499.
- 13 Jacob, *op. cit.*, p. 66.
- 14 For the guilt of Greathouse see the footnote by R. G. Thwaites, editor of Withers, *Chronicles of Border Warfare* (new edition.

- 1895), p. 149. For the innocence of Cresap see "George Rogers Clark Papers," *Coll. of the Ill. State Hist. Lib.*, XIX, 7f.
- 15 Jacob, *op. cit.*, pp. 67f.; also *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 512.
- 16 *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XII, 312
- 17 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 525.
- 18 May 1, 1774. *Letters to Washington*, IV, 379f.
- 19 *Am. Archives*, 4th series, I, 475ff.
- 20 *Ibid.*, pp. 477f.
- 21 *Ibid.*, pp. 478f.
- 22 *Ibid.*, pp. 481f.
- 23 *Ibid.*, pp. 479f.; also *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 501.
- 24 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 522.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 497.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 501
- 27 Jacob, *op. cit.*, pp. 67f.
- 28 *Vide Supra.*
- 29 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 502.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 512.
- 31 Jacob, *op. cit.*, pp. 77ff.
- 32 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 502.
- 33 *Letters to Washington*, V, 6.
- 34 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 502.
- 35 Letter to Capt. Joel Reece, see Jacob, *op. cit.*, pp. 75f.
- 36 *Am. Archives*, 4th series, I, 482.
- 37 *Letters to Washington*, V, 5ff.
- 38 *Ibid.*, p. 8.
- 39 *The Washington-Crawford Letters*, p. 49.
- 40 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 522.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 632.
- 42 *Ibid.*, p. 517.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 515.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 517.
- 45 *Ibid.*, pp. 519, 632.
- 46 *Ibid.*, p. 519
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 632, 517. Kincaid was a son-in-law of Col. Wilson and had lately been issued a special Commission of the Peace by Governor Penn, but had, within this short time, gone over to the Virginia faction. See *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 620.
- 48 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 517, 519. R. G. Thwaites, co-editor of *Documentary History of Dunmore's War*, states, in a footnote on p. 86, that the fort at Wheeling was built early in June, 1774, by William Crawford under Connolly's orders. Now if Connolly was simply considering the matter on June 7th, when he was writing to Washington, it could hardly have been built prior to that time. Nor was it built before June 14th, else Connolly would not have stated it as one of his purposes for going to Wheeling on that date. Consequently, it would appear that Fort Wheeling, or Fort Fincastle as it was later called, was not built by anyone early in June, 1774.
- 49 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 521.
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 575.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 527.
- 52 *Ibid.*, pp. 523f.
- 53 *Ibid.*, p. 570.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 582.
- 55 *Ibid.*, pp. 523, 524, 527, 570, 582.
- 56 *Ibid.*, pp. 631f.
- 57 *Ibid.*, 524, 582f.
- 58 *Ibid.*, pp. 523f.

94 *The Life Adventures of Lieutenant-Colonel John Connolly*

- 59 *Ibid.*, pp. 582f.
- 60 *Ibid.*, pp. 527, 570.
- 61 *Ibid.*, pp. 582f.
- 62 *Ibid.*, p. 570; also *Colonial Records*, X, 197ff.
- 63 *Colonial Records*, X, 197ff.
- 64 *Colonial Records*, X, 197ff.
- 65 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 541.
- 66 *Ibid.*, pp. 522f; also *The Washington-Crawford Letters*, p. 95.
- 67 Jacob, *op. cit.*, pp. 78ff.
- 68 *Ibid.*
- 69 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV. 548.
- 70 *Ibid.*, p. 551.
- 71 *Ibid.*, p. 550.
- 72 *Ibid.*, p. 551.
- 73 *Ibid.*
- 74 Kercheval, *History of the Valley of Va.* (2nd edition), pp. 97ff.
- 75 *Documentary Hist. of Dunmore's War*, pp. 151ff.
- 76 Kercheval, *op. cit.*, pp. 97ff.
- 77 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV. 559.
- 78 R. G. Thwaites, editor of Withers, *Chronicles of Border Warfare* (new edition, 1895), states, in a footnote on p. 164, that Connolly was with Dunmore's detachment.
- 79 Kercheval, *op. cit.*, pp. 97ff.
- 80 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV. 586.
- 81 *Ibid.*, 4th series, III, 457, 464, 470, 478, 480. Also *Colonial Records*, X, 176, 193, 236f.
- 82 *Pa. Archives*, 4th series, III, 470.
- 83 *Ibid.*, 1st series, IV, 577f.
- 84 See pp. 64f.
- 85 See p. 69.
- 86 *Documentary Hist. of Dunmore's War*, pp. 380ff.

CHAPTER IV

As Dunmore's Representative In Pittsburgh: To The Time Of His Departure

Though his quarrel with the Pennsylvanians and his negotiations and struggles with the Indians had occupied most of his time during the spring and summer of 1774, Connolly had not wholly neglected his land speculation. As has been noted before, (1) Lord Dunmore had, in December, 1773, given to Connolly and his friend, John Campbell, as tenants in common, a patent for four thousand acres of land lying at the Falls of the Ohio River. (2) The two realtors apparently had visions of a great settlement arising at that time and intended to enrich themselves thereby, for not long after the grant had been made Connolly sent a surveyor, by the name of Douglass, to lay off the entire four thousand acres (3) and divide them into town lots. Anticipating the completion of the surveyor's task, the promoters had advertisements, proclaiming the lots for sale, printed and posted in various parts of the country. They appeared in Williamsburgh as early as April 7th. (4) According to this announcement the lots were to have an eighty foot frontage and a depth of two hundred and forty feet. The purchase price for each was fixed at four Spanish dollars and one dollar per annum quitrent forever. As a further stipulation the purchasers were to build thereon within a specified time. (5) The same notices were being circulated in Philadelphia by May 2nd, and it was predicted at that time that "a great number of lots" would be sold. (6) This prediction was probably not fulfilled due to the fact that altercations with the Indians of the Ohio Country were beginning to assume an alarming aspect. (7)

In any case, Connolly could not devote much time to his personal affairs, for the boundary dispute was still unsettled and it was his duty to prosecute the claims of Virginia. So far his performance of this task had won the approval of Lord Dunmore, (8) as was evidenced by the fact that he had been, sometime during the autumn of 1774, promoted to the rank of Major. (9)

Flushed with pride in his promotion and feeling secure from further Indian troubles, he resumed his persecution of the Pennsylvania officials. A Mr. Scott was among the

first to suffer. On November 12th the newly created Major issued a warrant for this gentleman ordering him to appear before the Virginia court for a number of offences alleged to have been committed by him under a pretended authority from Pennsylvania. Mr. Scott refused to pay any attention to this warrant. Connolly met this insubordination by having him seized that very evening by a squad of men and taken to Redstone Old Fort. There the unfortunate official found Lord Dunmore, Mr. Campbell and Mr. Penticost ready to sit in judgment on his case. After some debate, he was obliged to give bail, with two sureties, that he would appear at the next court to be held at Pittsburgh for the county of Augusta, on the 20th day of December, or soon thereafter, and answer for having acted as a magistrate of Pennsylvania contrary to Lord Dunmore's proclamation. As it was a case of giving bail or going to jail, Scott chose the former. (10) The outcome of the case is not recorded, but it at least served to revive the animosities of the old dispute.

Soon after the above incident the Virginians received additional strength when William Crawford added his support to their forces. This shift of one who had such powerful influence in the district was all the more remarkable when it is remembered that he had hitherto been President of the Court in Westmoreland County. (11) At any rate the Pennsylvania faction was appreciably weakened, and an increased impetus given to the efforts of their opponents.

Encouraged by this welcome support, Connolly and the Virginians became even more bold in the persecution of their antagonists. Once more Hannastown became the scene of their operations. On the 24th of December there appeared before the jail in that village a number of armed men under the leadership of William Christy and Simon Girty, who commanded the keeper, Samuel Whitesitt, to open the prison doors and set free one William Thomas who had been convicted of burglary at Reading on November 19th. (12) This, Whitesitt refused to do. While the band was debating whether or not they should tear the jail down, Major Connolly appeared. On being informed of the cause of their hesitation, he threatened to tie and carry off the keeper, if the latter persisted in his obstinacy. Rather than be inconvenienced with a prisoner, however, the

Major finally decided to tear off the roof of the jail. As he perceived that serious damage would be done to the property, Whitesitt agreed to open the door and allow the prisoner to speak to the party. But the moment the door was ajar Connolly rushed in and dragged Thomas forth. At the same time another prisoner, by the name of William Dawson, was also set free. (13)

Not content with this assault these men were guilty of further disturbances on their return to Pittsburgh. Stopping at one home and finding the woman there alone, they demanded "Victuals & Drink, & being told she had not any to spare, Drew their Bayonets, swore there would be a Corpse on the Green if they did not get what they wanted." This brutality very nearly had serious results, for the good woman, who was pregnant at the time, was obliged to keep her bed for several days as the result of her fright. (14) Halting at another farm the rowdies were leading off a calf when the farmer appeared and remonstrated. He was silenced when they vowed they would kill either the calf or himself. (15)

Distorted rumors of these affairs reached Philadelphia. One of them had it that Capt. St. Clair was arrested by Connolly and forced to give security to the amount of four thousand pounds that he would not attempt to hold another court in the territory. (16) This report was apparently untrue, for no records can be found to substantiate it. However, Aeneas MacKay again came in for his share of abuse, for on January 5, 1775, one of his horses was impressed by Connolly for the use of an express rider. When it was returned, on the 10th, much the worse for wear, the owner was not even thanked. (17)

But jail-deliveries seemed to be more the order of the day. Early on the morning of February 7th, a squad of militiamen, under the leadership of a Benjamin Harrison, broke open the door of the Pittsburgh jail with a sledge hammer and set free three prisoners. Harrison was pleased to announce that it was done at the command of Major William Crawford. (18) He further asserted that these orders empowered him "to press Horses and what was necessary, and to go to Hanna's Town and to open the Gaol and let the Prisoners go out". This command, also, he proceeded to carry out. In the course of the expedition

two Pennsylvania constables, Captain James Smith and Edward Murray, were apprehended for daring to execute the duties of their office. It was reported that the party had authority to shoot any Pennsylvania officer who dared to oppose them in the execution of these orders. (19) In the face of such threats the Westmoreland Justices and their Sheriff had little heart for carrying out their duties. (20)

The very next day, between 8 and 9 o'clock, Devereux Smith's home was attacked by a dozen or more armed ruffians of the militia. Stones were hurled at the building and attempts were made to break open the doors and windows. The bombardment was kept up until midnight, the crowd volunteering the information that they were showing him "what Virginia Boys could do." Only the fact that Smith was armed and determined to resist violence committed on his family or himself, prevented them from carrying their lawlessness to extremes. (21)

Disheartened by this abuse, a group of the Pennsylvania magistrates penned the following letter to Governor Penn, on February 13th: (22)

Sir:

Our difficulties on account of the Connolly Party is now grown to an Extream; all we can do or say in favour of our Privileges from Pennsylvania, will not do; the Depositions sent down or transmitted to you will, we hope, give you a sense of their very irregular Proceedings. We are sorry to have occasion to repeat our Complaints so often, but William Crawford Esquire, and Dorsey Penticost, hath each opened a Land Office, and assumed the Title of Deputy Surveyors to execute their Entries. Several surveys they have already made. The People in general hath already given up, and what can we do to support Government, there now being writs granted for almost every acting officer in this County, and we are every Day expecting Confinement. In short, any Person applying for Justice to us, may be assured to be arrested by them. James Smith, Capt. was taken and bound over to the Virginia Court, for only applying to the Laws of Pennsylvania for to have a Bandite of Villians punished for pulling down his House. Our Gaol is of no use, the worst Raskel is set at Liberty; so we rest with patience waiting for the opinion of your Honour, with such Instructions as you may think adequate to our present Difficulties.

Robt. Hanna
W. Lochry
John Carnahan
Devereux Smith

For some of the incidents that called forth this mis-
sive, Connolly cannot be held directly to blame, for he was
not in Pittsburgh at the time. About the first of February

he and Campbell had started for Williamsburgh with a petition, which they had had some of the disaffected citizens of the village sign, asking the House of Burgesses to lay out a town at Pittsburgh. (23) But they had gone only as far as Winchester when they learned that Connolly's "immediate return to Pittsburgh was indispensably necessary." Before retracing his steps, however, the Major took time, on February 9th, to write a letter paying his respects to Washington. In this epistle he remarked that Dunmore had planned to be in Pittsburgh in the spring in order to deal with the Indians personally, but that the "distracted affairs of government" would now prevent this, in all probability. As this would leave him to manage the negotiations, he would like to have Washington's counsel, saying: "If I have proper orders how to proceed, everything may be extremely well adjusted." He hoped for an answer and opinion by return express, (24) but it is more than likely that Washington, as well as Dunmore, was occupied with the "distracted affairs of government" early in 1775. Nevertheless the great Virginian found time, on February 25th, to answer the letter. But he did not presume to give directions as he judged Lord Dunmore had already done so. However, he did hope that every measure would be taken to keep the Indians quiet during these trying times. (25)

Soon after Connolly's return to Pittsburgh, Robert Hanna, as he had expected, and Justice Cavet, were imprisoned, February 22nd, for attempting to perform their duties. (26) For three months they were held within the bounds of the jail, and often threatened with close confinement. (27) On May 5th Cavet felt impelled to disclose their predicament to St. Clair. Said he: "Mr. Hanna and myself will at this Court be Confin'd in the Guard-Room of Fort Dunmore if We Don't Give Bail, and God Knows Where it Will be in our Power so to Do, for We are informed by some of our Friends, that none other will be Exceptable but those who will Come in to Open Court and Swear they are Worth What Ever Sum is in the Recog'e, and no Doubt it will be an Enormous Sum." He suggested that St. Clair send the sheriff with fifty men to release himself and the others as there were at the time "but Eighteen Men in the Fort." (28) Hanna and Cavet had cause to feel uneasy, for not a single one of their letters to Governor Penn had

been answered, and in the meantime their businesses were on the verge of absolute ruin. (29)

Not content with imprisoning the Pennsylvania officials, efforts were made to deprive them of their property. As a means to this end it was proclaimed that the lands lying between Pittsburgh and Ligonier, being in the disputed district, were held under doubtful titles. To adjudicate the contentions that followed, a jury of twelve men was chosen, by the Virginians of course, to not a single one of which could the defendants object. Moreover, when the cases were tried, the testimony of a defendant's sworn enemies was accepted in good faith by the court. On the 3rd of May Devereux Smith was dispossessed in this manner of a tract of land lying to the east of the town, and the title declared to be vested in one George Sly. Smith was inclined to resist the execution of this decree. Accordingly, on May 9th, Connolly's sheriff broke open the door of Smith's house and gave Sly possession. (30) It was probably because of this resistance that Smith was seized on May 13th, and held for damages to the amount of one hundred thousand pounds. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at, that he, along with Hanna and Cavet, was facing absolute ruin. (31)

But these three men were not alone in their sufferings. Others, too, foresaw a state of destitution unless Connolly's activities were stopped. In their extremity they once again petitioned Governor Penn. Many of the Commandant's misdeeds were cited, and the story of their wrongs poured forth. In fine, they assumed that the purpose of the Virginians was to bring them to "utter Ruin and Destruction, if they by any means Can accomplish their aim, for they are not satisfied with imprisoning our persons, (of which everyone of us have participated in turn) but Insult and Domineer over us, as well in open court as everywhere else opportunity serves, they have a Considerable Number of Litigious Lawsuits enter'd against everyone of us for acting as magistrates by authority from the Government of Pennsylvania." As these lawsuits were incurred as a result of the performance of their official duties, they felt justified in retaining a lawyer, one John Harvey, for thirty pounds, and in asking him to seek payment from the Province. (32) This latter act was taken, perhaps, by way of forcing Penn to render them some sort of aid, at least.

But the Governor must not be too heavily censured for his neglect of his western representatives. At the time he was doubtless too much occupied in watching the fever of revolt then mounting in the eastern colonies, and in particular in the city of Philadelphia, to give much attention to the situation in the west.

It was probably due to his observation of the same trend of affairs in the east that Lord Dunmore advised Connolly to disband his troops, convene the Indians, and devote his efforts to persuading the latter to espouse the royal cause. In accordance with these instructions, Connolly ceased his persecutions of the Pennsylvanians and proceeded to conciliate the Indians. To attempt to win them to the side of the King was a dangerous task inasmuch as the Virginia Assembly had deputed a committee of their own to inspect his conduct and to make the redmen see the colonial side of the rebellion. As he records: "This was the direct contrary to what it was my duty, if possible, to effect; and narrowly as I was watched, I had the happiness to succeed in this dangerous and critical undertaking." Though the negotiations lasted a fortnight, he claims that he sent the Indians away "perfectly satisfied and informed," and ascribes his success to his "superior knowledge of Indian manners and tempers." (33)

The story of these negotiations is interesting as well as instructive, and hence well worth recounting. On May 19th an invitation was sent to the Shawnees asking their chiefs to come, as soon as possible, to the Forks of the Ohio, "so that the Chain of Friendship may be brightened and the affairs that were not finally settled with you and the Mingoes may be adjusted to our Mutual Satisfaction." On the 20th of May a similar appeal was dispatched to the Mingoes; on the 21st, to the Delawares. (34) It is interesting to observe, in passing, that the Pittsburgh Committee of Safety, possibly suspecting Connolly's motives, immediately petitioned Congress to hold a conference, also, with the Western tribes at this time. (35) But Connolly was before them.

In response to his request a number of chiefs from the Six Nations arrived in Pittsburgh on June 19th. On the 21st they met the Major at Col. Croghan's where they performed their peculiar ceremonies symbolical of wiping their

tears away, cleaning their ears, and removing ill feeling from their hearts. When these rites were concluded, they told Connolly they would see him the next day. (36)

But when the Indians arrived at the appointed time and place, they were surprised to note the absence of the Commandant who had been arrested by the Pennsylvanians and carried off to Ligonier the evening before. (37) Connolly himself tells the story of this dramatic incident in his *Narrative*. After due allowance has been made for exaggeration and self-glorification, it can be accepted as essentially true:

Two nights before my intended departure, my servant entered my room after midnight, to inform me that an express was just arrived, with dispatches from Lord Dunmore, and desired admittance. I ordered him to be brought in, and immediately a man followed my servant in a travelling 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 that 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, and the contest becoming unequal, I was compelled to submit myself their prisoner. I was scarcely allowed time to dress, my servants were secured; I was mounted on a horse brought for that 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-four miles from Pittsburgh. (38)

There he was held prisoner at the home of St. Clair. Soon after his arrival he learned that he was to be sent, as soon as possible, to Congress at Philadelphia as an enemy. Thus he realized that, if his friends were to be able to effect a rescue, the departure must be delayed. Feeling slightly ill, he pleaded sickness and was, therefore, allowed to go to bed and remain there the rest of that day and the following night. (39) During this short stay, his host, St. Clair, was unusually kind, but from an ulterior motive, for he wished to obtain information. In this he was not particularly successful, in spite of the liquor he pressed upon his prisoner, for Connolly succeeded in deceiving him. Accord-

ing to the story the wily Major told, he was to go, with some Delaware Chiefs, to England to obtain for them from the King a permanent title to the lands on which they were then living; and that Lord Dunmore had some design upon the islands in the Delaware River, for he had asked him, Connolly, to procure all the information he could respecting them. (40)

While the Major was feigning illness and deceiving St. Clair, his friends were very active. On the day of his capture they had met and drafted a very spirited letter to the Pittsburgh Committee of Safety, demanding that their commander be released. It was signed by all present and sent off posthaste (41) to Ligonier, where it arrived the next morning just as preparations were being made to escort their leader to Philadelphia. Connolly relates that two horsemen arrived at about the same time, one from Pittsburgh and the other from the mountains, and that the messages they bore seemed to disquiet his captors. He did not know exactly what the news was, but in passing through the kitchen of the "public house," a maid told him that his friends were waiting at Laurel Hill, and that they had vowed to kill every man found guarding him and to burn down the home of the man responsible for his arrest. Emboldened by this information, Connolly sought out St. Clair and prevailed upon him to see that, since it was to the interest of both to repress civil dissension, it was best to let the matter go no further. Thus his release was obtained and he was permitted to set out for Pittsburgh. (42)

But he was not to reach that village so easily. Just outside of Ligonier he met his servant who was bringing clothing for his master's journey to Philadelphia. This one reported that he had seen several men at Hannastown who were evidently plotting mischief. He was not wrong in his supposition, for they had not proceeded far on their way before they were met by three Pennsylvania magistrates, George Wilson, Joseph Spear, and Devereux Smith, (43) whom Connolly had previously mistreated. These gentlemen, who were accompanied by their sheriff, promptly arrested the Major "on a writ of twenty thousand pounds damages, for having confined their persons." They wanted to return with him to Ligonier but Connolly insisted on being taken to Hannastown, as he secretly realized that

this would be nearer his home and friends. The latter, however, not knowing of his re-arrest, remained quiet for two or three days, but when they did hear about his second misfortune they were greatly enraged. (44)

A party of them from around Chartier's Creek, with no authority whatever, hastened to Pittsburgh and seized the three officials responsible for their leader's predicament. These they loaded into an old leaky boat and sent them, under guard, down the river to Fort Fincastle, at Wheeling, to be held as hostages for Connolly's release. (45) This was soon obtained by a letter from the senior magistrate of Westmoreland County, presumably St. Clair, which had the desired effect, and Connolly was at length allowed to return to Pittsburgh where he was met by a great number of his sympathizers who were armed and impatiently awaiting his coming. (46)

The three officious magistrates held at Fort Fincastle were accordingly released, but this did not mean that the Virginians had decided to let the matter drop. On the contrary an unsuccessful attempt was made to carry off the Westmoreland sheriff who had served the writ on Connolly. Also, the Virginians were careful to let it be known that they had warrants for the arrest of that officer and several other officials; and that they, from then on, intended to enforce Lord Dunmore's proclamation in regard to the country west of Laurel Hill. Nor were the three men responsible for Connolly's re-arrest forgotten. George Wilson, especially, had to suffer. Even as late as September 20th, this gentleman "was bound over for aiding, advising, and abetting certain disorderly persons, who on the morning of the 22d of June last, violently seized and carried away Capt. John Connolly from Fort Dunmore, and also advising others not to aid the officers of justice, when called upon, to apprehend the aforesaid disturbers of the peace. He, not appearing, his recognizance was forfeited." (48)

All during these disorders, the Indians whom Connolly had summoned to confer with him were impatiently awaiting his return. Hence, the moment he was free, he resumed negotiations with them. On June 29th, they were once more assembled at Fort Dunmore. With Connolly were Alexander McKee, George Croghan, William Crawford, John Campbell, Alexander Ross, and John Gibson.

Connolly made the opening speech, a very pleasing one, commending his red friends for their observance of peace and asking that this state be continued. He also requested that they aid him in securing the attendance of the Shawnees. The representatives of the Six Nations and Delawares replied in like tone and agreed to assist him with the irreconcilable tribe. Accordingly, on July 1st, another message was dispatched to the Shawnees, stating that their arrival had been awaited for some time, and that, if they were not coming, they should send word to that effect, for the conference could not be prolonged much further as some of the Indians already met were bent on returning home. (49)

No reply to this letter having been received on July 3rd, the date of the next meeting, the Indians present requested to know how long they would be delayed in waiting for their obstinate brethren, but no definite answer could be given to this query. Turning to other matters, they asked, among other things, that Simon Girty be appointed their official interpreter. On the following day Connolly took it upon himself to reply. Again he exhorted them to continue in peace, to bury their weapons, and to forget the rashness and misdeeds of the young men, white and red. Then he transmitted Lord Dunmore's request: "Your Brother the Big Knife is desirous that you should acquaint your people to refrain from hunting amongst his people who are now settling in great numbers on the South side of the Ohio until we may have an opportunity of regulating their Settlements lest any accidents prejudicial to the peace now established should happen." He finally assured them that their request for an official interpreter would be forwarded to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for that official's approval. (50)

Perceiving with what graciousness their requests were received, the Indians, on July 5th, proceeded to press their wants. Connolly was reminded that he had once promised to appoint a blacksmith to mend their guns and tomahawks, as had aforetime been the custom, when they passed up or down the River. Also, they would have a person selected to regulate their trade at the post to "prevent Impositions on us in dealings with you". Furthermore, they broadly hinted that a gift of ammunition would be very gratefully

received. In reply, Connolly stated that he had no authority to appoint a man to regulate trade, but that he felt certain that "the Great Man of Virginia" would, as soon as he had time, "do everything necessary to satisfy you upon that head". As to the blacksmith, that business, too, was properly the affair of the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and he would, therefore, be consulted. Their veiled request for ammunition, he apparently forgot. (51)

On July 6th, Chief White Eyes, speaking for the Delawares, lauded the peace pact, and pledged the loyalty of himself and tribe to "King George our Mutual Father". Chief Killbuck, also of the Delawares, speaking to Connolly, said that he was "glad to hear what you said yesterday concerning our young Peoples hunting on your side of the Ohio. You may be assured that we shall comply with it". Connolly answered them, expressing his gratitude for their friendly sentiments and promising them the belt they had given him would be placed in the hands of the King. But before their dispersal he was rather artfully accosted by one of the chiefs with these words: "But one thing you seem to have forgot which is a little Powder and lead for our young men to kill provisions on their way home". Again Connolly evaded a direct answer by saying that he would consider the request before he departed. The conferences were closed by a speech in the same friendly tenor from the Committee of Augusta County (52) which had come to inspect Connolly's transactions with the Indians. (53) In fact the Committee seemed to be well pleased with Connolly's diplomacy, for one James Wood, who was also in attendance, writing, on July 9th, to a friend in Virginia, records: "The Committee as well as Major Connolly's most inveterate Enemies all agree that he Conducted this Affair in the Most Open and Candid Manner, that it was transacted in the presence of the Committee and that he laid the Governors Instructions on this Occasion before them". (54) In fact it was the general opinion that his peace treaty would last, as Connolly was prevented from carrying out his nefarious schemes by later being taken into custody by the Continental Congress. (55)

In the foregoing account it has been noted that Connolly spoke of leaving Pittsburgh. This report had been circulating around in the district and it was believed that

his reason for contemplating this move was that the Invasion Law passed by the Virginia Assembly and under which his garrison had been kept up, was about to expire. (56) The rumor proved to be true, for, when his dealings with the Indians were brought to an end, he began to make plans for his departure.

But before setting out he determined to do all that he could for the royal cause, because, as he says, of his loyalty and "respect for the established form of government". In line with this resolution he had already been instrumental in preventing the formation of a Committee of Safety in West Augusta County. (57) However, he had even more sinister designs in mind.

According to his own story he gave, a few days before leaving the town an entertainment to such of his friends as he "could best depend upon". Most of them were officers in the militia or magistrates with influence and wealth. In sounding their sentiments he "found them universally enraged against the arbitrary proceedings of the Republican party". Drawing a few of them aside, he proceeded to inform them of his plans. These were evidently approved, for "A solemn compact was immediately entered into, stating, that if an accommodation did not take place, and I could procure the necessary authority to raise men, they would, at the risk of life and property, most willingly, engage to restore the constitutional authority, as far as any co-operative measure from that county contribute to so salutary a design, after which the strictest secrecy was enjoined, and the company separated". (58) It was probably Connolly who, as a result of this gathering, composed the list of names of Loyalists in Western Pennsylvania which was given to the British in 1775. It concluded, among others, such prominent men as Alexander McKee, James McKee, Alexander Ross and John Campbell. (59) Having done all he could to further his cause, Connolly left Pittsburgh on July 25th, intent on reporting to Lord Dunmore. (60)

It is doubtful if many tears were shed over his departure, unless they were those of his creditors. Alexander Ross had a debt of about seven pounds charged against him. It was of old standing, too, having been contracted July 27, 1774. (61) Connolly may have forgotten it, as it was relatively small, but it was brought to his mind

when he was sued for that and other debts while in prison in Philadelphia. (62)

Other obligations, of much larger proportions, had been provided for, but in no very secure fashion. It would appear that he was sorely in need of funds during the summer of 1775, for at that time he had borrowed four hundred and fifty pounds from John Campbell and Joseph Simon. For this loan he had given as security a mortgage on one thousand acres of his land lying at the Falls of the Ohio. (63) From these friends he had also obtained other sums and supplies at various times, and to secure the payment thereof had assigned to them his pay as an officer in the Virginia Militia. The two creditors, therefore, presented their claims to the Virginia Convention on December 18, 1775, saying that "the Commissioners appointed to settle the Accounts of the Militia lately drawn out into actual service, refused to allow them". (64) A committee was appointed to investigate the matter, and, on January 2, 1776, made its report. It found—

. that John Connolly on 8th day of June last, executed a bond to the Petitioners for the sum of 397 £, 11s. 0d, Pennsylvania currency, the 1st of July, 1776, and that the said Connolly, on the 2d day of August last, did assign unto the petitioners his pay as a Captain or Major in the service of this Colony, and for sundry articles furnished the soldiers during that time, and also to settle such accounts with the Commissioners, and receive what should be found due to him, and come to the following Resolution thereupon

Resolved, That the said Petition is reasonable and that the sum of 657 £. 10s. 1d. ought to be allowed and paid to the said petitioners by publick; and that there appears to be due to the petitioners on account of the pay of the said John Connolly, as an officer, and for other services, the sum of 286 £. 13s. 9d., which ought to be allowed and paid to the said Petitioners, after deducting what may be due to the country from the said Connolly. (66)

The fact that Connolly had not paid these debts before leaving Pittsburgh cannot be cited to prove that he was wholly lacking in common honesty, for the sheer truth of the matter was that he did not have the funds to discharge his obligations. It was probably due to these straitened circumstances that he wrote from Winchester—whither he had come on his way to the coast—on August 1st, to George Rootes, member from West Augusta County to the Virginia Convention. In this letter it was observed that he had been employed for some time past in transacting the Colony's business with the Indians. The expense of these

negotiations had been considerable and so great that his pay as a militia officer would not cover it. Moreover, the conference had so fully occupied his time that he had to "relinquish every other pursuit". He would, therefore, fully appreciate any reimbursement which the Convention might see fit to make. However, he went on, "Pecuniary acknowledgment alone would be very unsatisfactory to my mind, did it not also bespeak the care of the Government which I have faithfully served, & must therefore silence effectually, the slanderous tongues of the ungenerous". (67)

Another portion of this same letter deserves to be quoted. But in reading it, one must bear in mind that the purpose of the entire communication was to persuade the Virginia Convention to pay him for his services.

It has been diligently propagated thro' this Country that I, as a Ministerial Tool, would be extremely solicitous to forward their designs; & should be ready to support every measure which Lord Dunmore might recommend to me, I have only to assure you that such insinuations are malicious, & far foreign to truth; & that no person would sooner shun an act, which must draw down upon Him the censure of His Countrymen than myself; & altho' gratitude, & honor call upon me to testify upon all occasions, the good offices which I experienced from His Excellency Lord Dunmore, yet you may be satisfied that such impression should operate no farther upon me, than it ought to do, & that I justly distinguish between a ministerial officer, & a Friend, a Gentleman in a private character. (68)

In the light of both his previous and later actions, these words would seem to constitute a deliberate falsehood.

FOOTNOTES OF CHAPTER IV

- 1 *Vide Supra.*
- 2 Hening, *Laws of Virginia*, XI, 321.
- 3 Entry on May 30, 1774 in "Hanson's Journal", printed in *Documentary Hist. of Dunmore's War*, p. 125.
- 4 Durrett, *The Centenary of Louisville*, pp. 27f; also *Am. Archives*, 4th series, I, 278.
- 5 *Am. Archives*, 4th series, I, 278.
- 6 "Letters of Thomas Wharton, 1773-1783," *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XXXIII, 331.
- 7 Burton, in "John Connolly, a Tory of the Revolution," *Proc. of the Am. Antiq. Soc.* (New Series), XX, 72, says "In June 1774 Connolly and Campbell laid out this land into village lots and advertised it for sale". The records cited above apparently prove that these transactions were carried out at least two months earlier than Mr. Burton's estimate.
- 8 *Vide Supra.*
- 9 *Colonial Records*, X, 227. In this reference, a deposition made on December 24, 1774, he is spoken of as "Major Connolly".
- 10 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 587. The incident is also mentioned in Jacob, *Life of Captain Michael Cresap*, p. 63.

- 11 *Colonial Records*, X, 228.
- 12 *Ibid.*
- 13 *Ibid.*, 227.
- 14 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 609.
- 15 *Ibid.*, p. 608.
- 16 "Letters of Thomas Wharton, 1773-1783," *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XXXIV, 42.
- 17 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 611.
- 18 *Ibid.*, pp. 604f.
- 19 *Colonial Records*, X, 235f.
- 20 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 603.
- 21 *Ibid.*, pp. 606f.
- 22 *Colonial Records*, X, 234.
- 23 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 612.
- 24 *Am. Archives*, 4th series, I, 1222.
- 25 "Connolly's Narrative", *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XII, 314.
- 26 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 625.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 627.
- 28 *Ibid.*, pp. 622f.
- 29 *Ibid.*, p. 624.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 626.
- 31 *Ibid.*, pp. 625f.
- 32 *Ibid.*, pp. 625f.
- 33 "Connolly's Narrative", *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XIV, 58ff.
- 34 "Virginia Legislative Papers," *Va. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XIV, 58ff.
- 35 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 629.
- 36 "Virginia Legislative Papers," *Va. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XIV, 60f.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 61.
- 38 *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XII, 317f; also *The Washington-Crawford Letters*, p. 102.
- 39 "Connolly's Narrative," *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XII, 318ff.
- 40 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 637.
- 41 *The Washington-Crawford Letters*, p. 102.
- 42 "Connolly's Narrative," *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XII, 318ff.
- 43 *The Washington-Crawford Letters*, p. 102.
- 44 "Connolly's Narrative," *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XII, 320ff.
- 45 *The Washington-Crawford Letters*, p. 102.
- 46 "Connolly's Narrative," *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XII, 320ff.
- 47 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 637.
- 48 An order of the District Court of West (probably meaning Western) Virginia, quoted in Peyton, *Hist. of Augusta Co., Va.*, p. 126.
- 49 "Virginia Legislative Papers," *Va. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XIV, 62ff.
- 50 *Ibid.*, pp. 66ff.
- 51 *Ibid.*, pp. 71f.
- 52 *Ibid.*, pp. 72ff.
- 53 See pp. 84ff.
- 54 From part of the "Diary of James Wood," printed in *The Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 1775-1777*, p. 34.
- 55 *Correspondence of the American Revolution, being Letters of Eminent men to George Washington*, I, 89.
- 56 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 628.
- 57 "Connolly's Narrative," *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.*, XII, 314f.
- 58 *Ibid.*, p. 316.
- 59 Hanna, *The Wilderness Trail*, II, 79f.
- 60 *Pa. Archives*, 1st series, IV, 682.

- 61 *Ibid.*, 6th series, XIII, 14. Actually 6 pounds, 9 shillings, 4 pence.
62 *Ibid.*, p. 14.
63 Hening, *Laws of Virginia*, XI, 276f.
64 *Am. Archives*, 4th series, IV, 88.
65 Evidently Connolly had left Pittsburgh on July 25th without securing this debt. Campbell and Simon probably found him at Winchester and persuaded him to the action recorded here.
66 *Am. Archives*, 4th series, IV, 104.
67 "Virginia Legislative Papers," *Va. Mag. and Hist. and Biog.*, XIV, 78f.
68 *Ibid.*, p. 79.