

the fence surrounding the place of his confinement immediately gave the alarm, and in a moment the cry was general: "Moody is escaped from the provost." It is impossible to describe the uproar which now took place throughout the whole camp. In a few minutes every man was in a bustle, every man was looking for Moody, and multitudes passed him on all sides, little suspecting that a man whom they saw deliberately marching along with a musket on his shoulder could be the fugitive they were in quest of. The darkness of the night, which was also blustering and drizzly, prevented any discrimination of his person, and was indeed the great circumstance that rendered his escape possible.

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

At length he arrived safely within the British lines. In the following spring he was engaged in two hazardous enterprises—the interception of despatches to General Washington—in the first of which he was successful, but failed in the second.

The last and most dangerous undertaking in which Lieut. Moody was engaged was an attempt to carry off the most important books and papers of Congress at Philadelphia. The projector of this scheme was