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THE COURT MARTIAL OF BENEDICT ARNOLD

In Morristown, at the corner of Spring and Water Streets, the Union Baptist Church stands on ground famous in the annals of American history as the scene of a dramatic and far-reaching event. On this site there stood during the Revolution a public house, known as Dickerson's Tavern, then owned by Robert Norris.

Here it was that the officers and men of the colonial army and the citizens of Morristown used to gather to discuss questions of the day and to while away the long hours of the trying winter of 1779. Washington had established winter quarters at the Ford House in Morristown. The sufferings endured by the poorly clad, ill-fed soldiers were only a repetition of what had been endured at Valley Forge. The great general was harassed by a thousand and one anxieties. He needed money for his army. His troops were showing signs of restiveness as a result of their sufferings and, last but not least, he had been forced by circumstance to bring to trial one of his most trusted and brilliant officers -- Benedict Arnold.

It all began when Washington had appointed Arnold to the command of the military forces at Philadelphia, following the British evacuation. It was a comparatively safe post, and it was given to Arnold because of wounds he had suffered in the service of his country and, perhaps, to console him for what he considered unjust treatment at the hands of Congress.

Benedict Arnold was foredoomed by his temperament to his disgraceful and tragic end. He had indomitable physical courage, a brilliant mind and a high-handed manner.

His courage had been evident from his earliest days. As a boy in Massachusetts he had been wild, mischievous, reckless and a bit of a bully. At 15, despite every opportunity for education and the comforts of a good home, he had run off to the Indian Wars. His mother intervened to have him sent home because of his youth; but hardly had he returned when he ran off again. When he had had enough of adventuring and the hardships of the campaign, he returned home through the woods, living as he could on a few grains of parched corn in his pockets and what he could forage for himself with his flintlock musket.

At the outbreak of the Revolution Arnold, then thirty-five years old, was among the first to offer his services to the colonial cause. At Ticonderoga and at Quebec he had shown evidence of his courage, his patriotism and his inspiring leadership. When in 1777 five men, his juniors in rank, were promoted