

My 5th great grandfather, Col. James Moody: Loyalist

I am very proud to know from decades of meticulous genealogy research by my Dad, John Wentworth Moody III, a WWII veteran, that my 5th great grandfather was the Loyalist Col. James Moody (see [portrait via ancestry.ca](#)).

Col. James Moody was born in 1744 in Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey, and died 1809 in Weymouth, Nova Scotia. There is a story about my ancestor in the June 2, 2009 edition of the Nova Scotia *Digby County Courier* entitled “[Celebration of Loyalist leader Col. James Moody](#).” This article includes a picture of St. Peters Church in Nova Scotia that Col. James Moody helped found and mentions a book that I treasure about his life: *So ObstinateLY Loyal*, by Susan Burgess Shenstone (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), which is available from Amazon.ca.

I recently re-read “*Lieut. James Moody's narrative of his exertions and sufferings in the cause of government, since the year 1776*” that was printed in London in 1782 and is available from Amazon.ca as part of the Century Collection Online Print Editions. One exploit that intrigues me was the time he secretly joined the search party of Rebel soldiers who were out seeking to capture him. But something I am particularly proud of in this narrative is a sworn affidavit of another Loyalist also held prisoner in 1780 in a dungeon at West Point that was then under the command of General Benjamin Arnold where Lieut. James Moody was held under deplorable conditions and in torment with painful wrist and leg iron restraints. He stated in this affidavit that after being shown a gallows erected in view of the dungeon that “if he (Lieutenant Moody) was hanged, it could be for no other reason than being a Loyal Subject to one of the best of Kings, and one of the 2

best of Governments, and added, if he had *ten* lives to lose, he would sooner forfeit the ten as a Loyal Subject, than *one* as a rebel.”

Col. James Moody is listed in the UELAC [Directory of Loyalists](#).

I thank my Dad, now deceased, a founding genealogy member of the British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa ([BIFGSO](#)) at for discovering such an exceptional ancestor as Col. James Moody.

Rick Moody, PhD
Ottawa, Canada