

The Joshua Huddy Era: Documents of the American Revolution

Abstract

Near the end of the Revolutionary War, Captain Joshua Huddy of the New Jersey Militia was captured while defending the salt works at Toms River. On April 17, 1782, Huddy was lynched on a beach in Highlands, Monmouth County, by British Loyalists at the direction of ex-New Jersey Governor William Franklin, the son of Benjamin Franklin, in retaliation for the extrajudicial executions of Loyalists by the Committee on Retaliation, a Patriot vigilante organization. For the Patriots, Huddy's death was an outrage, especially since it came after the war was, except for the peace treaty, essentially over. General George Washington came close to having a captured British officer hung in response and the affair almost scuttled the peace negotiations. This lecture reviews the key events in Huddy's life and its aftermath through primary source documents.

Biography

Gary D. Saretzky, archivist, educator, and photographer, worked as an archivist for more than fifty years at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Educational Testing Service, and the Monmouth County Archives, from which he retired in 2019. At the Monmouth County Archives, he curated annual exhibitions on New Jersey history, including "The Joshua Huddy Era: Documents of the American Revolution," in 2004. Saretzky also taught the history of photography at Mercer County Community College, 1977-2012, and served as coordinator of the Public History Internship Program for the Rutgers University History Department, 1994-2016. He has published more than 100 articles, reviews, exhibit catalogs and other publications on the history of photography, photographic conservation, and other topics, including "The Joshua Huddy Era: Documents of the American Revolution. Catalog of the Exhibition at Monmouth County Library Headquarters, October 2004." He lectures regularly for libraries and other organizations throughout New Jersey.