
EPILOGUE

As may be found in the Declaration of Independence (“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”) and further in the Preamble of the Constitution of the United States (“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish the Constitution of the United States of America”) it is clear that liberty (freedom) is the preeminent Right. To be sure, Rights of all stripes abound in our present-day society. However, it would be foolhardy to keep piling them one upon another, thus diluting those that we hold paramount. Of more importance would be the refusal to balance legitimate Rights with commensurate applications of Responsibilities (and Accountabilities). The former, without the latter, represents a marked diminution of the heritage of our forefathers and their moral commitment to contribute to the general welfare of society (not to be confused with a welfare state). A to-the-point homily clarifies this: “Get off the wagon and help push that wagon”. It is such that has made this country strong and good. Woe be unto

us if this state of mind wans. “Rights”, yes, but only with equal amounts of “Responsibility” and “Accountability”. The extent to which we lose this balance is the extent to which we diminish ourselves as a Nation (where “Nation” is a cohesive group of people and “Country” is just a place). This balanced mindset is the only rational way to proceed if we are to be successful as a Nation. To be sure, with that proper balance there comes a prevailing sense of satisfaction.

I can not close this Trilogy of “Flight Deck” without first saying a few words about whom I believe to be the unsung “heroes” of our nation. [A true hero is one who puts one’s physical life in jeopardy while in service to others. Do not diminish them by carelessly attributing this honor.] My “heroes” are they who devote their talents to the design and then the manufacture of tangible products or “goods” (“goods and services” equals GDP) . I have a special admiration for those who manufacture (produce) products. Strange though it sounds I feel emotionally stimulated when I watch an automatic production-line in operation. It’s why I left the “service” industry (which is now taking on more and more of our economic endeavors) and applied myself to the field of automatic controls, a crucial subset of manufacturing (even though my actual jobs were never directly so related due to the exigencies of “earning a living”).

In any event the study of the engineering aspects of automatic controls has been my “passion” and has occupied most of my attention ever since I turned to it fifty years ago.

As an important aside to the above I am pleased to be in the knowledge that one of my ancestors (Paul Moody) has been cited as the Father of the American Industrial Revolution and that my grandfather (Edward Atkins) was an entrepreneur who started an electric car company. My name, Edward Moody Atkins, encompasses both as does my father (Paul Moody Atkins, born in Boston and who was savvy enough to have received one “B” and all the rest “A’s” at Yale University and who subsequently met my mother in France during WWI, she from Charmonix and Paris, with an MBA from Syracuse University.

I will close now with what is to me an obligatory recital of Paul Moody’s pertinent “resume” as culled from the City of Lowell, MA historical files. Paul Moody was born in Newberry, MA in 1779 with descendants from England, starting in 1634. While his six brothers went to colleges (Harvard and Dartmouth) he went to work at a cotton mill at the age of 12 where he learned the trade. About thirty years later he teamed with Francis Cabot Lowell, the entrepreneur, to develop the world’s first vertically integrated production system, a cotton-mill factory, in 1814 (complete production-line from start to finish under one process and roof) . There Paul Moody was in charge of developing all the

machinery of this plant as well as modifying, maintaining and supervising the operation of the factory. He also had the responsibility to develop, maintain and operate the water-works necessary to generate the power used by the cotton-mill. While Francis Lowell provided the mathematical skills and financial requirements it was Paul Moody who designed and developed and maintained the machines and improved upon existing machines, and then integrated them into the cohesive production-line that was to become the model for all future manufacturing plants. Thus he was claimed to be the Father of the American Industrial Revolution with many patents to his name.

Paul Moody applied himself with special effect to the education and well-being of the employees and citizens of the community. He supported temperance even if only by example. He strongly supported the Episcopal church he regularly attended. As superintendent of the mills, the following is transcribed: “The part which he sustained in the origin and early development of Lowell (MA) greatly enlisted his interests in the welfare and prosperity of the community, and he gave the strength of his judgment and the weight of his influence to whatever might contribute to its beauty by the best use of its physical advantages, or might conduce to its beautifulness, or might secure an elevated moral tone of sentiment and conduct [the prime purpose of my books is to promote proper conduct.] He was especially efficient in promoting the cause of temperance.

.....His measures were quietly but effectively taken and sustained by his own example (and) were successful. [I still wonder at the inability of the many who are unable to comprehend the meaning of moderation and the one-way toll taken on the body and the mind.] In reference to his influence, both at Waltham and Lowell, no one would demur to the statement of Edward Everett that “to the efforts of his self-taught mind the early prosperity of the great manufacturing establishments in Waltham and Lowell was in no small degree owing”.....He was a warm friend of education and favored the most liberal expenditures for this purpose [remember that this is the 1810 period, 200 years ago.] An Episcopalian in sentiment and church membership he gave to the cause of religion the influence of his personal example, his careful observation of the Sabbath, his regular attendance at church and liberal [i.e., fulsome] contributions for its current and occasional expenses [our nation was founded by those of deep religious convictions that have become moderated with time.] Habitually cheerful, strong in his attachments, faithful in friendships, tender in his conjugal and parental relations, he was greatly respected and beloved by all..... From the earliest active measures he has sustained a conspicuous part of this enterprise; and it should be remembered, the place which he has held in this concern he has sustained by the uncommon strength and acuteness of his practical talents. He was kind to the poor. He was not wont to turn away from actual [not feigned] suffering

without an effort to relieve it. No person more fully appreciated the superiority of that charity which provides for the destitute by encouraging their own laudable exertions and industry [Would that we could tack these words on every lamp-post throughout the land, for this is, this needs be, our nation’s indelible heritage.] What he was as a friend, a brother, a father, a husband has been involuntarily attested to by the deep, unaffected and irrepressible emotion which this truly emotional event has occasioned.....The habitual cheerfulness of his disposition, the stability of his friendship, the fidelity and constancy of his attachment, the affectionate tenderness of his parental character are known—and written on the heart.....The use of few of his inventions has been superseded by more modern discoveries, and they were so numerous and important that to no one are we more indebted for the advanced and successful state of the cotton manufacture among us.”

There are tributes and there are tributes but the above are there to warm the heart. Yes, I am proud to be a part of his name in spite of the fact that I used to be “joshed” for having the moniker of “moody” in school (come to think on it I was no stranger to moodiness—but since divested of such). I will end this little dissertation by saying to all those others who are or have been beset by moodiness: In the final analysis we are all as happy as we make up our minds to be so (such as learning the art of appreciation of such as nature and human nature).