

## Primary Sources Battle of Bennington

Unit: Brunswick Regiment von Specht  
Lieutenant Anton Adolph Heinrich Du Roi (?)

1777      *Aug.*

Sixth Continuation of the Journal  
With the Brigade of Colonel Specht  
From August 7 to August 31, 1777.

Aug. 7 During the day, it is exceedingly hot in this region. During the night and toward morning, however, there is such a heavy dew and fog that even under the tents the covers become thoroughly damp. Almost every day there is a thunderstorm, yet these do not last

Aug. 8 All the German [Braunschweig and Hesse-Hanau] regiments sent detachments to Carillon via Fort George to take the bateaux stationed there with the baggage that had been left behind, to Fort George.

Aug. 9 Early in the morning, Brigadier Fraser set out for Fort Miller with his corps and the Savages. At the same time, Lieut. Colonel Baum had to start marching in order to undertake a separate expedition with the Dragoon Regiment, one detachment of 150 Savages, one detachment of Canadians and 80 Provincials, all under the command of Major Campbell, Captain Fraser, Mr. de la Naudiere, Captain Mackay, Captain Charret [Sherwood?] and other officers. In addition, there were 29 Braunschweig Jagers as well as 60 detached from Specht's brigade and the corps of Lieutenant Colonel Breymann; all these were under the command of Captain Dommès, Lieut. Burghoff, Ensign Specht and Ensign Andree; moreover, a like detachment of those ordered from Fraser's corps and finally 2 Engl. six-pounders under the command of the Hesse- Hanau Lieut. Bach. Tents, baggage and standards remained behind well protected.

As the procurement of supplies to our army from Canada was beset with innumerable obstacles and as the army with the greatest effort could fill its needs only for a few days [*at a time*], with the greatest effort (because of which our expeditions have been frequently interrupted even though the course of our fighting has been favorable so far), General Burgoyne thought it profitable to do the following: a corps of 521 men was to invade the well settled townships of [New] Hampshire and Massachusetts Bay and not only with kindness but also by force requisition live cattle, flour and grain [corn?] as well as horses and vehicles, which are still much in demand by the army. He believed [*that he would be likely*] to succeed in this matter as the enemy had positioned his military forces on the other [west] side of the Hudson. Several inhabitants on this side of the river seemed to favor us and had voluntarily nailed the manifestos on their doors. For this purpose,

Governor Skene had to accompany the corps and supervise the requisitioning of the items mentioned above so that none of the inhabitants could complain of acts of violence. Major General von Riedesel's aide-de-camp, Captain O'Connell, accompanied Colonel Baum to assist him with the Engl. language, notwithstanding *[the fact that]* the Engl. Lieut. Dumford had also been assigned *[there]* by said General [von Riedesel].

Aug. 10 In the morning, Brig. Powell marched to Fort George with the 53rd Regiment to go from there to Carillon and relieve Gen. Hamilton and the 62nd Regiment. Captain Boucherville marched to Fort George with his company while Captain Monin, who was standing there, had to march to the advance corps of the army with his company.

Aug. 11 Before the front line of the Regiment von Riedesel, an execution by firing squad was carried out today. Musketeer Fasselabend - from the company of Captain von Poellniz-, who had gone over to the enemy and enlisted there as an artillery man, was executed this morning. He had been caught on a war sloop, which had been captured from the enemy near Skenesborough. On orders from Gen. Burgoyne, the pickets of the entire army had to be present at this execution and form a circle. The general is trying by all means to prevent desertion and has given permission to the Savages not only to shoot the deserters they meet but even to scalp them.

Aug. 12 The advance corps of Brigadier Fraser moved ahead on this side of the Hudson into the vicinity of a place on the other side of the Hudson, called Saratoga. The corps of Lt. Colonel Baum, however, moved further down the Hudson to begin its enterprise in the more cultivated regions to the left [east]. Gen. Arnold stood with his corps at Stillwater.

Aug 13 At dawn, Lt. Colonel Breymann set out with his corps to march to Fort Miller. Lt. Colonel Baum, on the other hand, is said to have started his march toward the region of Bennington. The army got marching orders for the following day and for this purpose had to provide themselves with supplies *[that would last]* until the 16th. So that the baggage could be moved, every regiment received two bateaux in Fort Edward to have its things transported down the Hudson River.

Aug. 14 At 6 o'clock in the morning, the army set out and marched to the right. The Regiment von Rhetz again occupied a camp near Fort Edward and 2 companies of the Hesse-Hanau Regiment occupied the post at Jones' House, where the Regiment von Rhetz had been until now. The army marched 7 Engl. miles along the Hudson River. The roads were rather good and not hilly at all. Almost all the habitations we saw, however, were destroyed, i.e., abandoned by their inhabitants; grain and grass had withered in fields and meadows. We passed by Schuyler's Island where we could still see the ruins of a bridge, which used to provide communication with the mainland. We moved into a camp at Fort

Miller, actually to the left of it onto two heights close together near Duer's House, in which General Burgoyne had his headquarters. This was the first house built in good taste that we had seen for a long time. It consisted of two stories and was covered with an Italian roof; a pavilion was built on each side of it in which were the kitchen and pantries; by means of a covered gallery, they were connected with the main building. This house was considerably damaged as to its doors and windows and devoid of all its furniture. Its owner is a member of Congress and holds the office of commissary of the enemy army.

The so-called Fort Miller lies on that side of the river and had once consisted of two other buildings: a blockhouse, surrounded by palisades and a magazine. Some time ago, it served as depot for victuals and war necessities when the Forts Edward and George had to be occupied by Engl. detachments to preserve these parts against an attack by the Savages. As these forts have not been occupied for a long time, this post has gone almost completely to ruin and hardly any traces of its previous palisades can be seen.

The corps of Lt. Colonel Breymann moved farther downstream toward Saratoga. Brigadier Fraser still stands farther ahead and is busy with having a bridge built across the river, over which the army can move to the other side.

We got the news from the corps of Lt. Colonel Baum that they had procured a number of cattle and 70 horses and that they had come upon 90 tons of flour and close to 1,000 minots of grain [a minot equals about 39 liters], which the enemy had left behind in various houses. The heat today was as intense as we had ever felt before; many men were therefore in danger of collapsing on the march; all the regiments left behind many lying exhausted, who finally reached the camp this evening.

The army received orders to keep themselves in readiness to move out again at the first marching order.

Aug. 15 Because news came from Lt. Colonel Baum during the night that the enemy had begun gathering in that region and because the Lieutenant Colonel had to fear an attack from them, Lieut. Colonel Breymann got the order this morning to set out with the Grenadier and Chasseur Battalions and 2 Engl. 6- pound cannon under the command of Lieutenant Spangenberg from the Hesse- Hanau Artillery. They were to support the corps of Lieut. Colonel Baum, that was about 24 Engl. miles away from the post of Lieut. Colonel Breymann. Consequently, Lieut Colonel Breymann set out this morning at 9 o'clock and left his baggage and tents stand. Today, the army corps was partly occupied with building a bridge across the Hudson River, partly with taking empty bateaux across the rapids.

Aug. 16 The bridge mentioned above was finished and Brigadier Fraser established a post on the opposite bank of the Hudson at Saratoga. The entire magazine at Skenesborough was taken to Fort Edward and Major Irving, having stood there with his detachment, moved back to the army today. At 9 o'clock in the evening, the army was ordered to set out

at 6 o'clock in the morning to make the crossing over the Hudson and to move into a camp near Saratoga.

Aug. 17 The army was already standing under arms ready to set out when we learned of one of those sad events, often caused by the changing fortunes of war. We got the news that before he could get support from Lt. Colonel Breymann, Lt. Colonel Baum had yesterday been attacked on all sides by the enemy in his position near Sancoik Mills. After an extremely lively defense but not before the entire ammunition both of the artillery and of the muskets had been fired, he was compelled to surrender unconditionally to the enemy with the remainder of his corps. At night, Governor Skene reported this unhappy event in writing and in the morning, Mr. de la Naudiere, who had been present at this affair but had saved himself, unfortunately confirmed orally the news of this sad occurrence as reliable. The latter added that Lieut. Colonel Baum had fortified himself on a height with his dragoons and the regular infantry with him as well as time and circumstances would allow; that having heard of the imminent arrival of Lieut. Colonel Breymann with reliable assurances, he had planned to defend his post to the utmost until the latter's arrival; that he had not wanted to lose any of the collected fruits and grains on account of which he had been ordered to undertake this expedition for the good of the army. The enemy, partly consisting of a considerable reinforcement of regular troops from Stillwater, partly of a large number of Provincials called up from the entire region of more than 24 Engl. miles and therefore surely amounting to more than 4,000 [men], had pressed the corps from all sides with such intensity and exasperation that they did not even hesitate to fire at a distance of 8 paces at the cannon, that were loaded with grape shots. After all the light troops belonging to the corps had been scattered in all directions and Lieut. Colonel Baum had shot all his ammunition, he finally made his last and only [sic] decision; i.e., to pave a way into the woods with drawn saber for himself and the rest of his dragoons. In this attempt, however, he had to succumb with all his men against the force of the enemy. And, as he [Mr. de la Naudiere] added, Lieut. Colonel Baum had been wounded in the stomach and Lieut. Bach from the Hesse-Hanau Artillery had also been wounded; the Engl. Lieut. Dumford, however, had remained on the field of battle. No one could give us reliable information about the fate of the rest of the officers of our corps; unfortunately, it seems certain that a large part of them remained on the field or were wounded. As of now, the following are considered missing: Major von Meibom; the Captains of the Cavalry Fricke, von Schlagenteuffel jun., and Reinking; the Lieutenants Breva, von Bothmer and von Reckroth as well as the Ensigns Grafe, Stutzer and Schonewald; the chaplain, the auditeur and the regimental surgeon; also the following, being members of this corps at present: Captain Dommès and Ensign Specht from the Battalion von Barner, Lieutenant Burghoff from the Grenadier Battalion, Ensign Andree from the Regiment von Riedesel and finally Captain O'Connell. From this unhappy messenger, we likewise learned that Lieut. Colonel Breymann had also had a very heated exchange with the enemy in that same region on the

same day. Nothing precise was known as yet about the outcome, except that the corps had also to withdraw in the end for lack of ammunition.

All this gave rise to a completely different disposition for today's march. The army, to be sure, set out at 6 o'clock in the morning but left the bridge built over the Hudson to their right and hurried on the road to Bennington to rescue the corps of Lieut. Colonel Breymann in case it should still be pressed by the enemy. But since one reliable report after the other arrived that Lieutenant Colonel Breymann with both his battalions was on a safe march back and but a few Engl. miles away from us, the army stopped at a river, called the Battenkill. There, Gen. Burgoyne took only the 47th Regiment, waded through this river and marched towards Lieut. Colonel Breymann.

About 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the corps of Lt. Colonel Breymann reached us extremely weak and, exhausted, and we learned of the following more exact circumstances: Yesterday at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, Lieut. Colonel Breymann arrived in the neighborhood where the ill-fated corps of Lt. Colonel Baum had been fighting. He did learn, it is true, that that corps had already been tactically eliminated but since he still had a ray of hope of perhaps freeing the prisoners or finding some other opportunities, he did not hesitate to move immediately against the enemy with his two battalions and attack him with all imaginable fury. He was not openly contradicted by Governor Skene in this decision. He was lucky enough to drive the enemy immediately off 3 different heights lying one behind the other and to rout him for one hour but then he began to run out of ammunition for the 2 cannon as well as for the small arms. The enemy took notice of this because of the diminishing firing and attacked the corps on all sides; weakened by the many killed and wounded, they [Breymann's corps] were now compelled to look for a retreat. The enemy, who might have paid dearly for the advantages won that day, did not dare to pursue the retreating corps for more than 15 minute and stayed in its position; this yielded Lieut. Colonel Breymann a quiet retreat, however, which became still much safer through the oncoming night.

As this affair had occurred in the woods and among bushes, it was impossible to ascertain exactly the fate of all those missing in action. Captain van Schick remained; Lieut. Mühlenfeld from the Batt. von Barner, having been very severely wounded, had to remain lying on the ground and must probably be counted among the dead. Lieut. Colonel Breymann had received a superficial wound in his leg; Captain van Bartling, Lieut. Meyer, Lieut. Gebhard, who had definitely been wounded, and Lieut. d'Aniers jun. are missing. Major von Barner was shot in the right arm and received another wound nearby it in the chest. Captain von Geyso was shot through the flesh of the thick leg [thigh?], and Captain von Gleissenberg was wounded on one side of his abdomen. Lieut. Hannemann from the jagers was shot in the neck right below his chin, the Hesse-Hanau Artillery Lieut. Spangenberg, who had to abandon both cannon, was wounded by an unfortunate shot through the shoulder. Ensign Hagemann is missing. In the evening, the corps. of Lieut. Colonel Breymann returned to its old camp and the army to theirs near Duer's House to

stay for a few more days. After the failure of this expedition, the army could not entertain any hope of getting fresh supplies for the time being but will have to procure them from magazines for some time to come in order to be able to continue their future expeditions more efficiently and without any interruption. Anyway, as it was, the bridge recently built over the Hudson had broken down and had first to be repaired. The corps of Brigadier Fraser likewise changed camp and moved above the corps of Lt. Colonel Breymann near the Battenkill where the army had today bivouacked for a few hours.

Many of the Savages, Canadians and Provincials, who were with the corps and had been dispersed together with Major Campbell and Captain Charret [Sherwood?], arrived at the camp having made their retreat through the densest woods and the most impassable roads. We learned from them that the fury of the Rebels, some of whom were drunk by the way, had especially focused on the captured Provincials, whom they were said to have treated with all imaginable cruelty, In the evening and during the whole night, wounded soldiers, as well as those who were completely exhausted from terrible fatigue, periodically arrived at their battalions.

Aug. 18 The enemy had not only received reinforcements from Stillwater but had called up a large number of Provincials. He had not only become more formidable on this side of the Hudson River, but by the fortunate development [for him] on the 16th, had been encouraged to try something against our main magazine and arsenal at Ft. George. Therefore, Maj. Gen. van Riedesel and the 47th Regiment set out in the morning, taking along the Regiment von Rhetz, that was stationed in Fort Edward, and marched with both to Jones' House where the entire Hesse-Hanau Regiment joined him. Because several roads from the interior of the cultivated districts join here together into the main road to Fort George and Fort Edward, he [Riedesel] could cover both forts very well in this position. In addition, he expected 2 twelve-pound and 6-six pound cannon to make this post more secure. The 62nd Engl. Regiment, moreover, which had been relieved in Carillon, was supposed to move into a camp at Fort Edward.

More than 100 Albanians, who offered their services to the army, arrived today; they had already had a few small, unsuccessful skirmishes with the Rebels. From the corps of Lieut. Colonel Breymann, several slightly wounded men and several healthy men arrived [from the Battle of Bennington]; they had gotten lost in the woods and therefore had to make long detours. They told how they had remained lying less than half an hour [2 miles] away from the battlefield during the night and had even buried the fallen Captain van Schick without seeing anything of the enemy; they gave us hope again that Lieut. d'Aniers and the wounded Lieut. Gebhard with some other men, who had, however, been greatly exhausted, [would eventually] arrive in our camp. Captains Fraser and Mackay likewise returned and even brought along several Savages and Canadians. A hospital was established for the wounded in some nearby houses, where they were very well taken care of.

In the evening, Gen. Burgoyne received the reliable report that the enemy had begun to fortify themselves strongly on the place where the affair had occurred with the corps of Lieut. Colonel Baum. They were probably afraid of being attacked there by our army.

Aug. 19 Although a few individuals from the corps of Lieut. Colonel Breymann were still arriving, they could not give us reliable news about the fate of the Dragoon Regiment nor of the missing officers mentioned above. In the afternoon, the Chasseur Battalion, which on Aug. 12 had set out with 317 men, was missing as many as 101 men, among whom the 28 wounded in the hospital and in the camp were not even counted. The Grenadier Battalion is still missing 97 privates. The Dragoon Regiment, with all their sick and those kept on as detachments for protection, including the recruits, consists of no more than 3 officers, 2 noncommissioned officers, 2 drummers, 73 privates and 2 servants. The remaining officers are Captain of the Cavalry von Schlagenteuffel sen., who is ill, Lieutenant Bornemann, commanded to the camp, and Lieut. von Sommerlatte, sent to Canada to get the large baggage.

Today, there was again a congress of various nations of the Savages at Fraser's corps: several definitely wanted to have their [part in the] campaign terminated in order to go home. No great effort was made to persuade them and still less to beg them to stay longer; it was observed with indifference how about 200 Savages on

Aug. 20 went back to Fort George the following day to regain the woods of their homeland. A reliable report came from Lieut. Colonel St. Leger that he was actually in possession of the important Fort Stanwix. From the side of Howe's army, we learned with certainty that several ships with troops had so much advanced up the Hudson River that they could not be very far from Albany. What further confirmed this report was the retreat of the enemy from Stillwater to Albany; for this they could not have had any other reason than the fear of being caught among three different movements which, without a doubt, could cut them off from any further retreat.

Aug. 21 More and more families, who were afraid of the Rebels and their acts of violence, fled Albany to come to our army out of the woods. They occupied dwellings on the other side of the Hudson River with the cattle they had brought along; ten or more families could at times be found there. All assured us that the rural population of Albany, of whom a large part is of German descent, had only been prevented by the Rebels' extreme use of force and the personal ambitions of their men in power from declaring themselves for the party of the Crown. We would not only find all possible assistance [to fill] all our needs in Albany but also see how the people who had fled from or taken by force by the Rebels would come back to their old possessions in great numbers. Between 30 and 60 daily entered headquarters to take another loyalty oath and quite a few of them decided to take up arms together with us for the general good. These numbers greatly reinforced our good opinion

of the Albanians and we hoped in the near future to see an entire regiment of them under the command of one Peters to be incorporated in our army.

Aug 22 Colonel Skene received the reliable report from some Provincials that Lieut. Colonel Baum had not been wounded but captured. Today and yesterday, it was exceedingly hot both during the day and at night, so much so that some Engl. officers who had been in East India assured us that they had not felt the heat worse in Madras than here.

Everything went as we had wished with the transportation of our bateaux over the nearby rapids and of our supplies by land to load these into the empty bateaux again. We hope that we will soon finish bringing the rest of our necessities from Ft. George; we can thus forego being supplied from Canada.

[...]

Aug. 23 Almost all the Savages have returned via Fort George to Canada by now so that Brigadier Fraser did not retain many more than 50. His corps of Provincials, on the other hand, increases daily and there is hope of soon forming an entire regiment with them. Nothing has changed in the position of the army and the detached corps these days.

[...]

Aug. 26 Today, what remained of the Dragoon Regiment received horses for 20 men. In regards to the affair of Aug. 16, the following declaration and order was made known in headquarters: [now follows Burgoyne's daily orders for 26 August 1777]

*The Specht Journal. A Military Journal of the Burgoyne Campaign* Helga Doblin, transl., Mary C. Lynn, ed., Donald M. Londahl-Smidt, military notes (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995), pp. 65-71.

The identification of Lieutenant Anton Adolph Heinrich Du Roi is tentative but probable; see *ibid.* pp. xvi-xvii.

## Primary Sources Battle of Bennington

Unit: Hesse-Hanau Infantry Regiment Erbprinz  
Colonel Wilhelm R. von Gall

Colonel Wilhelm R. von Gall to Wilhelm IX., Graf von Hanau [excerpt]

Im Lager bei Johnhaus, 14 Stunden von Albany, den 29. August 1777.

Durchlauchtigster Fürst, Gnädigster Fürst und Herr!

In meinen beiden letzten Briefen habe ich die Gnade gehabt, den sehr vorteilhaften Vorfall bei Carillon ganz untertänigst zu melden. Aber nun kommt ein Fall im Gegenteil, den wir mit der Armee den 16. d. M. bei Bennington erlitten haben. Ich habe die Gnade, die Liste und erhaltenen Rappots von der Artillerie untertänigst einzuschicken, we auchdas ganze, was von den 3 Regimentern Braunschweigern verlorengegangen ist.

Die Ursache von diesem Verlust war dieser, dass der commandierende General Nachricht erhalten, dass die Rebellen 10 Stunden zur Seiten nach Albany eine Menge Pferde für Frucht und Mehl beisammen bringen liessen; dieses alles zusammen wollten wir ihnen wegnehmen lassen und hatten die Dragoner den 15<sup>ten</sup> auch schon vieles weggenommen. Den 16<sup>ten</sup> als die 2 anderen Bataillone nachgeschickt wurden, hatte sich das Regiment Dragoner schon ganz verschossen und war das feindliche Corps von den Rebellen in der Zeit verstärkt worden, dass solches 6000 Mann ausgemacht hat. Die Dragoner sind bis auf 7 Mann alle gefangen, totgeschossen und blessiert worden, die beiden anderen Bataillons, als Breymanns Grenadiere und Berners Freibataillon benebst der Compagnie Jäger sind ebenfalls mit einem grossen Verlust zurückgeschlagen worden und haben alles im Stich lassen müssen. Zum Glück hatten die Dragoner die Fahnen nicht mitgenommen sondern mit einem Commando im Lager zurückgelassen, diese sind gerettet, aber die 4 Kanon, so sie bei sich gehabt, sind verloren gegangen. Der Lieutenant Bach ist allein gefangen, ob er auch blessiert ist, weiss man nicht, der Lieutenant Spangenberg ist hart in die Schulter mit einer kleinen Kugel geschossen, sodaß der Knochen entzwei ist; ob er mit dem Leben davon kommt, ist unbekannt; sollte er am Leben erhalten bleiben, so wird er gewiss lahm werden. Dieser Vorfall hat keinem in der ganzen Armee gefallen wollen, weil die Sachen mit zu wenig Überlegung angefangen und ausgeführt worden ist, überhaupt ist die Armee nicht halb so zufrieden, als im vorigen Jahre, denn es wird für nichts gesorgt, sowohl für den Offizier als Gemeinen. [...] die Mannschaften und Officiere haben mir gesagt, dass sie nicht begreifen könnten, warum keine Engländer bei diesem Fall gewesen seien, es scheint also wohl, als ob dieses die Absicht gewesen, dass die Dragoner

ihre Pferde haben selbst und allein mit ihren Truppen haben holen wollen, den sie sollen alle Pferde haben, nun ist es um so viel leichter zu Machen, da so viele gefangen worden sind. Der Generalmajor von Riedesel hat einen Tambour an den Commandeur und Oberstlieutenant Baum schicken wollen, welcher ebenwohl gefangen ist, aber der General Bourgoyne hat es nicht zugegeben, es heisst jetzt, in etlichen Monaten sollten die Gefangenen ausgewechselt werden, ich glaube aber, die Rebellen werden dieses so lange aufzuhalten suchen, als es möglich ist, weil wir viel mehr als sie dabei an den Officiren verlieren, und auch ebenwohl an den Gemeinen. Es ist eine sehr böse Sache für uns, dass sich die Rebellen beständig an solche Plätze hinziehen, wo sie erst alles wegnehmen und aufzehren, dass wir gar keine Lebensmittel bekommen können als was der Armee nachgefahren wird an gesalzenem Fleisch und Mehl, das ist alles, was wir haben und bekommen. Eben bei dieser Gelegenheit, den 15ten und 16ten haben wir solche Leute gefangen bekommen von den Rebellen, die vor sehr kurzer Zeit erst den neuen Eid der Treue dem König geschworen und doch wieder zu den Rebellen gegangen und gegen uns gedient haben, es ist und wird in Ewigkeit eine böse Nation dahier verbleiben.”

The recipient of the letter, Count Wilhelm IX of Hanau (3 June 1743 – 27 February 1821) was the eldest surviving son of Frederick II, Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel (or Hesse-Cassel) and Princess Mary of Great Britain, the daughter of George II. Following the death of his father in 1785 he became reigning *Landgraf* of Hesse-Kassel and as Wilhelm I. *Kurfürst* von Hessen following the *Reichsdeputationshauptschluss* of 1803, a title which he continued to use even after the end of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806.

William van Vleck Lidgerwood Collection Fiche 304-309, Letter U: Reports of the Hesse-Hanau Infantry Regiment von Gall, 1776-1782, fiche 305 pp. 157-167, pp.157-159 and 161-162. Morristown National Historical Park, Morristown, NJ.

The letter was published in *Hanauer Journale und Briefe aus dem Amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg 1776-1783 der Offiziere Wilhelm Rudolph von Gall, Friedrich Wilhelm von Geismar, dessen Burschen (anonym), Jakob Heerewagen, Georg Paeusch sowie anderer Beteiligter* Manfred von Gall, ed., Hanau: Hanauer Geschichtsverein, 2005), pp. 69-73.

On p. 75 Gall prints a report on the Battle of Bennington from the *Neue Europäische Zeitung* No. 189 in Hanau of 1 December 1777.

The following translation of the relevant sections of the letter is mine.

The cause for this loss [at Bennington] was that the commanding General [Burgoyne] had received the news that the rebels had collected a large number of horses, cattle, fruits and flour about 10 hours on the Albany side (in the East). We wanted to take all of that away from them and on the 16<sup>th</sup> the dragoons had already much taken away. When the two other battalions were sent after them the dragoon regiment had already used up all its ammunition and the enemy corps of the rebels had in the meantime been re-enforced so that it amounted to 6000 men. Except 7 men all dragoons have been captured, shot dead or wounded. The two other battalions, namely Breymann's grenadiers and Bärner' Free Battalion besides the company Jäger were also beaten back with large loss and had to abandon everything. Fortunately the dragoons had not taken their flags with them but left them behind in camp with a detachment, those are saved, but the four cannon which they had with them were lost. Lieutenant Bach alone has been captured, one does not know whether he is also wounded, Lieutenant Spangenberg has been hit hard in the shoulder with a small [i.e. musket] ball so that the bone is cut apart; whether he will survive is unknown; should he survive he will certainly be lame. No one in the whole army liked this event since the thing was begun and carried out with to little planning, in general the army is not half as content as the previous year because nothing is taken care of, neither for the officer nor the common soldier. [...] the enlisted men and the officers told me that they cannot understand why no Englishmen were involved in this case, thus it seems as if this was the intention that the dragoons had wanted to go get their horses by themselves and alone with their troops because they are all supposed to have horses, now this will be much easier to achieve since so many of them have been captured. Major General von Riedesel wanted to send a tambour to the commanding officer Lieutenant-Colonel Baum who [i.e. Baum] is also captured but General Burgoyne would not allow it, now they say that the prisoners are supposed to be exchanged in a few months, but I think the rebels will want to prolong this as long as possible because we lose many more officers that way than they do and just the same with common soldiers. It is a very bad thing for us that the rebels continually move to such places where they first take away and eat everything up so that we can not get any other food stuffs than what is brought up to the army in salted meat and flour, that is all that we have and receive. At that opportunity, the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> we captured such people from the rebels who only a very short time before had taken a new oath of fidelity to the King and nevertheless went over to the rebels and served against us, it is and will remain here in all eternity ad evil nation.

In a letter from Winterhill near Boston of 16 March 1778, Gall analyzed the causes and consequences of the surrender at Saratoga. In it he wrote:

Der 16. August von der kleinen Affäre bei Bennington hat unseren ersten Grundstein zum ferneren Unglück gelegt. Darauf wurden die Rebellen aller Regimenter von der ganzen Stärke unserer kleinen Armee vollkommen überzeugt und von diesem Tag an ist ein ganz anderes Herz in die Rebellen gekommen, und sie haben ihren gefassten Entschluß auch vollkommen behauptet, bis auf die letzte Stunde unseres Verderbens, worinnen wir jetzt wirklich sind.

The 16th of August with the little affair at Bennington laid the first foundation stone to our future misfortune. Thereafter the rebels in all regiments were completely convinced of the strength [i.e. weakness] of our little army and from that day on a completely different heart [i.e. courage] entered into the rebels and they completely maintained their decision until the very last hour of our ruin in which we now really are.

The complete letter is printed in Gall, pp. 91-100; the translation is mine.

See also Bruce E. Burgoyne, *Hesse-Hanau order books, a diary, and rosters: a collection of items concerning the Hesse-Hanau contingent of "Hessians" fighting against the American colonists in the Revolutionary War* (Bowie: Heritage Books, 2003), pp. 32-77 with "Brigadier (Colonel) von Gall's Order Book" which ends, however, on 19 June 1777.

## Primary Sources Battle of Bennington

### Unit: Hessen-Hanau Order Book

#### Orders in Camp at Fort Duar, 17 August 1777

An effort has been made from the left wing of this expedition to obtain such a supply of cattle and provisions so that the line would be in a condition to continue the march. As this effort has failed because of the fortunes of war, therefore the troops must halt for a few days, to allow the movement of foodstuffs. The various regiments are to use this opportunity to collect their sick and convalescents [...]

#### Orders of General von Riedesel

The corps of Lieutenant Colonel Breyman is to send its wounded with the wagons which brought the flour to Doctor Hess at the hospital, where they are to be taken into the houses and every measure taken for their care. Both regiments are to send their surgeons also, in order to provide the best care for officers as well as privates. General von Riedesel extends his highest praise to both battalions for their bravery, and declares that it was not their fault that they could not completely defeat the enemy, but that the time lapse between the two attacks, by the corps of Baum and Breyman, was the cause that both corps could not unite. Honor is always present for troops which conduct themselves well, and the general herewith thanks Lieutenant Colonel Breyman as much for his demonstrated fortitude, as for his good dispositions, which allowed him to withdraw from the battle. The same applies to Major von Barner for the bravery, which he demonstrated during this opportunity. And, as the general does not wish to neglect everyone who distinguished themselves, but the senior officers, he is sending a report to His Highness and will himself, at all times, acknowledge the merit that the officers displayed during this opportunity. Although this expedition was not as successful as was anticipated, there is no reason to be downcast, but we must wait for another opportunity to again recapture that which was lost. When the coming day has past, and possibly other troops have been found who have returned, Lieutenant Colonel Breyman is to submit a casualty list of both battalions.

*Hesse-Hanau Order Books a Diary and Rosters* Bruce E. Burgoyne, transl. (Berwyn Heights: Heritage Books, 2003), pp. 205/06.

## Primary Sources Battle of Bennington

Unit: Brunswick Regiment Prinz Friedrich  
Ensign Julius Friedrich von Hille

Aug. 23 The 4 standards of the Dragoon Regiment were given over to the Regt. Pr. Fr. Because the former had been made prisoners in the expedition to St. Croix [Sancoik] Mill on the 16<sup>th</sup> and [before setting out] had left the standards behind in the camp.

*The American Revolution, Garrison Life in French Canada and New York. Journal of an officer in the Prinz Friedrich Regiment, 1776-1783* Helga Doblin, transl., Mary C. Lynn, ed., (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1993); pp. 77/78. The year 1777 is covered on pp. 65-89 with an appendix on pp. 90-104.

## Primary Sources Battle of Bennington

Unit: Major General von Rhetz Brunswick Musketeer Regiment  
Lieutenant Friedrich Julius von Papet, Jr.

2 September – a letter arrived here from general von Riedesel. [...] concerning the action of 16 August, he mentioned very little. It is now confirmed that Captain Schick and Lieutenant s'Annières were killed.

[...]

9 September – Captain von Tunderfeldt writes much of what is not good from the army. It is believed that Lieutenant Colonel Baum, Captain von Schick, Riding Master [Captain] Reineking, Lieutenants d'Annières, Jr., and Hoblenfeld are certainly dead. Major von Barner and Captain Dommès are wounded and Lieutenants Uhlig and Gebhardt are missing. No one of the Dragoons has escaped except Captain von Schlagenteufel and 32 men and the baggage and standards which were left behind in a house, prior to the battle. I learned all this in a letter

10 September - of 24 August which I received from my dear brother and thanks to him, a letter from the senior field cashier of 30 August. The first wrote that he was still well but had to put up with excessive fatigue which surpassed all human expectations. God has graciously protected him this far, but everyone assumes that they are in a perilous situation. He only briefly mentioned the losses of 16 August. They consisted of 21 officers dead, wounded, or captured, and 350 men, and these losses are described as well as the [enemy ?] superiority, and also the poor support when reinforcement was neglected. However, the rebel army continues to retreat, and with God's help the whole province of Albany will soon be occupied. Most of the inhabitants there are very friendly and welcome them [the English army] with open arms.

Bruce E. Burgoyne, ed., *Canada During the American Revolutionary War: Lieutenant Friedrich Julius von Papet's Journal of the Sea Voyage to North America and the Campaign Conducted There* (Westminster: Heritage Books, 1998), pp. 74/75.

See also Friedrich Julius von Papet, "The Brunswick Contingent in America, 1776-1783" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* vol. 15 no. 2 (1891), pp. 218-224.

Aug. 26 [...] Toward 10 o'clock, Seigneur Lanaudière arrived here from the army with dispatches from General Burgoyne to General Carleton. He brought the sad and dismal news along that our army had suffered heavy losses. Lt. Colonel Baum had been detached with the Dragoon Regiment. Four thousand Rebels attacked and encircled them in a terrain very disadvantageous to them. All Dragoons had either been killed or captured. The Grenadier Batt. Breyman and that of von Baerner had come to their succor but too late; they too had incurred heavy losses. Major von Baerner is said to have been wounded twice as were Lt. Colonel Breymann and many other officers. On the whole Lanaudière betrayed a feeling about the fact that on many sides very much had happened that one would take pains to suppress.

## Primary Sources Battle of Bennington

Unit: Headquarters

Major General Friedrich Adolf Riedesel, Freiherr zu Eisenbach

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As the motives of this unsuccessful expedition have been described by the historians of the North American war in such a contradictory manner, we take the liberty of giving them verbatim as we find them in General Riedesel's journal. He says:

"Lieutenant Colonel Baum marched to-day (11th), from Fort Miller to the Battenkill. General Burgoyne rode up to him to give him further instructions. As the said general had received intelligence that there was a magazine of considerable importance at Bennington defended only by a small body of militia, he countermanded the instructions he had previously given Baum and ordered him, instead of marching to Manchester and thence to Bennington, to take the direct road, attack the enemy and capture the magazine. General Burgoyne informed General Riedesel, upon the latter's return from Fort George, of the alteration in his plan respecting the expedition under Lieutenant Colonel Baum. General Riedesel expressed his fear and astonishment in regard to the danger attending it. General Burgoyne, however, considered the change in the plan necessary for the following reasons: 1st. It would be of great advantage to the army to gather their subsistence from the captured magazine of the enemy, until supplies could be transported to the army sufficient to last for four weeks. 2d. In case he should move with his whole army against the enemy near Stillwater, General Arnold would not be able to send a strong force against Colonel Baum. 3d. That he had received intelligence that Colonel St. Leger was besieging Fort Stanwix, and that Arnold intended to send a considerable force to the relief of this place ; therefore, it was of the greatest importance that a detachment of the left wing should make a move and thus intimidate the enemy, and prevent him from sending this force against St. Leger. These three reasons overruled the representations of General Riedesel."

Bennington is situated between the two arms of the Hoosick river, about twenty-four miles east of the Hudson. The road

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thither was very bad, and led through dense woods. A royalist, who knew the road, and offered to guide Lieutenant Colonel Baum, also called the attention of Burgoyne to the dangers connected with this expedition, and stated that at least three thousand men were

necessary, as the Americans would exert themselves to the utmost to hold their position. But in spite of all this, it was destined that the expedition should start.

On the 12th of August, Lieutenant Colonel Baum marched from the Battenkill to Cambridge, 1 at which place he met a detachment of the enemy, which he attacked and defeated, capturing a few supplies and eight prisoners.

On the 13th, Baum reported to Burgoyne that he had heard the magazine at Bennington was defended by between fifteen and eighteen hundred militia men; but, on account of their disaffection, he believed they would evacuate the fort upon his appearance. He would, therefore, at once march upon the enemy. General Burgoyne, very much pleased with his report, immediately consented, with the understanding, however, that he was not to make the attack until he had thoroughly acquainted himself with the position of the enemy. In order to make the attack successfully, Baum determined to halt four miles this side of Bennington, and carry out the advice of his commanding general. Lieutenant Colonel Breymann marched on this day from Fort Edward to Douart's house ; while Fraser, who was to advance as far as Saratoga, started in advance. On the 14th, the army began to advance from Douart's house.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 15th, General Burgoyne received a report from Lieutenant Colonel Baum, dated the

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14th, in which he stated that his advance guard, on its march to Bennington, had been attacked by a corps of the enemy numbering about seven hundred men, but after a few cannon shot had been fired they had retreated. He also said that, from prisoners and loyalists he had learned that a body of eighteen hundred men were in camp near Bennington, favorably situated and fortified, and who were only waiting for additional reinforcements to meet and attack him. He, therefore, asked for reinforcements. Burgoyne immediately instructed Riedesel to send Lieutenant Colonel Breymann to his support. Riedesel, who was much troubled in regard to the entire movement, asked and obtained permission of Burgoyne, to give Breymann a few suggestions. The latter set out at once, leaving the tents, baggage and superfluous ammunition. A rain that had fallen for several days, made the roads, which were already miserable, even worse ; and this circumstance, added to the lack of horses for the transportation of artillery, forced Breymann, after a short march, to bivouac seven miles this side of Cambridge. He, therefore, dispatched a few men to Baum to notify him of his advance. The latter had been again attacked on this same day, but was able to repulse the enemy with his artillery ; and having confidence in his position, and expecting speedy reinforcements, he resolved to stand his ground. Toward nine o'clock, on the morning of the 16th, small bodies of armed men made their appearance from different directions. These men were mostly in their shirt sleeves. They did not act as if they intended to make an attack ; and Baum, being told by the provincial, who had joined

his army on the line of march, that they were all loyalists and would make common cause with him, suffered them to encamp on his side and rear. Shortly after another force of the rebels arrived and attacked his rear; but, with the aid of artillery, they were again repulsed. After a little

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while a stronger body made their appearance and attacked more vigorously. This was the signal for the seeming royalists, who had encamped on the side and rear of the army, to attack the Germans ; and the result was, that Baum suddenly found himself cut off from all his detached posts. For over two hours he withstood the sallies and fire of the enemy his dragoons, to a man, fighting like heroes but at last, his ammunition being used up, and no reenforcements arriving, he was obliged to succumb to superior numbers and retreat. The enemy seemed to spring out of the ground; indeed, they were estimated at between four and five thousand men. Twice the brave dragoons succeeded in breaking a road through the enemy's ranks; for, upon their ammunition giving out, Baum ordered that they should hang their carbines over their shoulders, and trust to their swords ; but bravery was now in vain, and the heroic leader, himself severely wounded, was forced to surrender with his dragoons. Meanwhile, the Indians and provincials had taken flight, and sought safety in the forest.

Lieutenant Colonel Breymann, who had again started early on the morning of the 16th, reached the bridge of St. Luke at three o'clock in the afternoon. Here he met Governor Skene, who assured him that he was only two miles distant from Lieutenant Colonel Baum. Skene, however, not informing him of the events that had occurred he continued his march as quickly as possible, notwithstanding his troops were greatly fatigued. Scarcely, however, had he advanced fifteen hundred paces on the bridge, when he saw a strongly armed force occupying an eminence toward the west. Governor Skene assured him that this force were not rebels; but Breymann, not satisfied with this assurance, sent ahead a patrol toward the eminence, who were immediately received with a volley of musketry. Upon perceiving how the case stood, he at once ordered Major Barner to advance upon the eminence, sent his grenadiers to the right, put the guns of both regiments into position, and directed the fire upon a log-house occupied by the enemy. The Germans

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drove the Americans across three hills ; but their ammunition soon giving out, they were obliged to cease from the pursuit. The enemy, guessing the cause of the halt, in their turn once more advanced; upon which Breymann, relying solely upon the darkness, which was fast coming on, to save himself, halted his men opposite the enemy, and remained there till it was perfectly dark. He then, under cover of the darkness, retreated across the bridge, but

was obliged to leave his cannon. At twelve o'clock at night he arrived with his fatigued corps, at Cambridge, and reached the army on the Battenkill on the 17th. General Burgoyne received the news of the unfortunate termination of both engagements at three o'clock on the morning of the 17th. He immediately consulted with General Riedesel, and resolved to start with the entire army and save, if possible, one or the other corps. Captain Gerlach was, thereupon, sent to find Breymann and tell him to rejoin the army, which was on its way for his relief, under the command of Riedesel. While on his way, however, to the relief of these corps, he received orders from Burgoyne to take up a position on the Battenkill. Here he received news from Breymann that he had escaped with his corps, and was within six miles of the Battenkill. Riedesel immediately reported this intelligence to Burgoyne, who ordered him to return again to his former camp.

William L. Stone, *Memoirs and Letters and Journals of Major General Riedesel, during his Residence in America* 2 vols., (Albany: J. Munsell, 1868), vol. 1, pp. 128-132.

#### MEMOIR OF GENERAL RIEDESEL TO GENERAL BURGOYNE

SKEENSBOROUGH, July 22, 1777.

Sir : Your excellency will remember that in the spring, on your arrival at Three Rivers, you gave me permission always to express my opinion to you freely, whenever an opportunity for doing good to the regiments offered itself. The position in which the army is at present induces me to take this freedom, with the firm confidence that the kindness of heart, and the friendship of your excellency will pardon it.

Great and rapid successes have at once placed the army in such a position that we will often be forced to be, either with the whole or part of the army, far away from the rivers and our bateaux. The equipment of the army is of such a nature that our bateaux are very necessary, if we would not find ourselves short of everything. This makes trouble. One-half of a regiment runs around to procure the necessaries for the soldier. The men are weary from toil, and the battalion grows so weak that they look more like slim companies than heavy masses of men. The movements of the army can only be carried out slowly and by piece-meal, lacking, as it does, the means to transport that which is most necessary. I, therefore, give it as my opinion that there are only two ways for us to do. We must with the army always remain near a river, and not leave it until means offer themselves for transporting the bateaux to another river the time for their transportation not being more than eight days. This proceeding, however, in my opinion, is attended with the following disadvantages:

1st. The army are able to move but very slowly; and the advantages which offer themselves upon the sudden retreat of the enemy cannot be availed of in tune. Consequently the consternation which might perhaps be produced among the rebels by the presence of the royal army would not be increased.

2d. The inhabitants of the country, who are at present extremely frightened, will voluntarily submit, and the army in a short time be

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provided with everything, provided we now and then appear with detachments. The latter, however, must not be allowed to go too great a distance from the main body. The enemy has small parties everywhere, and these keep the people in subjection. Therefore, confiscate all the teams, and make a desert of the whole country. Thus your excellency will be able to gain a much wider field for the operations of your army than at present.

3d. The country, which our army has just left, has taken fresh courage ; a new militia has been organized ; small detachments once more roam through these districts ; and each partisan can operate against our communications. This latter circumstance may in future be even more detrimental to us than at present.

To avoid all these evils, our army must be brought into a condition in which it can move with much more celerity than it has been accustomed to. That is, the requisite number of horses must be procured to carry the necessary baggage of the officers, the tents, ammunition, artillery and provisions. It is, in my opinion, very disadvantageous to transport the baggage and tents on Canadian carts. They spoil the good roads, and can get along only with the utmost difficulty on good roads. The column is, therefore, lengthened too much, and the men are very often without tents, the carts not being able to keep up. But a pack horse goes everywhere. It can walk on the flanks of the regiment, and thus always provide the army with necessaries. Pack horses, therefore, would in my humble opinion, do away entirely with the carts. I would, also, keep no more teams than were absolutely necessary for the transportation of the provisions and artillery.

When the regiments have a sufficient number of pack horses collected, and when the transportation of the artillery is safely provided for, then your excellency can send out detachments at pleasure ; keep a check upon the main body of the enemy ; and thus keep the inhabitants in subjection yea, even break up their militia, and procure the necessary support for the army You can, also, extend or contract the army as you see fit, and thus freely operate independently of the bateaux and a thousand other contingencies.

I believe that the army may easily be placed in this independent position in three or four weeks at the furthest.

The country between here and the Connecticut and even fifteen miles beyond that river is destitute of troops and full of the best horses. In fact, there is not an inhabitant who does not possess three or four horses.

If your excellency will detach to the Connecticut, the regiment of dragoons, the corps of Peters and of Yessop, and an officer and thirty

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of each regiment, under the command of a good staff officer, I am convinced that this corps would procure the necessary number of horses for the army. The regiment of dragoons would thus be mounted, and do all that your excellency would expect from it. Your excellency might determine upon a proportionate tax of about five to six guineas for each horse. A commissary might go with this corps and give a receipt for each horse to the owner, who, upon producing it, could be paid by the general cashier. The officers who received horses might then have the money for them, gradually deducted from their tax, while the horses for the dragoons would be paid for by the king. This detachment, also, could, at the same time, gather up all the ox teams to be used in transporting the provisions. This plan, if carried out, would place the army in the most flourishing condition, and your excellency would no longer have any difficulty in carrying out each movement, either in detail or otherwise according to your own plan.

Your excellency might, perhaps, think it mean to take all the horses from the inhabitants, but it must be considered: 1st. That the chief work here is done by oxen, and that horses are only made use of either for carrying grain to the mill, or for riding. 3d. The horses could be bought at a price much above their value. 3d. If there was a want of horses, they would not be able to convey the news to the enemy so rapidly or so often. 4th. This little blood letting would, at least, be a just punishment for their treason and bad conduct toward their king. I am convinced that this course can be justified before God, the king and parliament, it being to the material advantage of the army and his majesty. Having thus communicated my ideas candidly and confidentially to the friendship of your excellency, I rely on your forbearance and pardon for my freedom.

I have the honor, etc.,

RIEDESEL.

Ibid., pp. 252- 254.

The “LETTER OF JUSTIFICATION OF GENERAL RIEDESEL IN REGARD TO THE ENGAGEMENT NEAR BENNINGTON, ON THE 16TH OF AUGUST, 1777, TO DUKE CHARLES WILLIAM FERDINAND OF BRUNSWICK”, written from New York Island on 3 September 1780, is *ibid.* pp. 259-264; the Duke’s response *ibid.* p. 265.

Additional correspondence between Riedesel and Burgoyne intermittently relating to the Battle of Bennington *ibid.* 265-273.

## Primary Sources Battle of Bennington

Unit: Staff of Baron Riedesel  
Corporal Johann Jakob Schmidt

August 14 – A large quarrel began between the English and the Colonel [unnamed, presumably Baum?]. General Burgoyne ordered Colonel Baum and his men to go to Bennington to capture a Rebel provisions depot there. General Riedesel let the English know it was suicide to send the advance force out without reinforcements. The Englishman [Burgoyne] would not discuss the matter further and ordered the advance.

15<sup>th</sup> – The general [Riedesel] sent me and four men of my unit along with Colonel Baum to immediately report any difficulties. As we approached Bennington we met many hundred foresters and farmers with guns, among them also many Germans from the Palatinate and from Hussia. They said they were loyalists from Canada and New England and wanted to join us. The colonel was very happy, but it did not seem quite right to me. I therefore stayed far behind these dispersed loyalists. Just before we arrived at Bennington these stragglers suddenly unfurled an enemy flag and began shooting. Shooting also began from the Rebel front. The colonel with all his men had walked into a trap. I rode back with the news.

16<sup>th</sup> Later Hannes Stoeppler of my group also made it back to us. Colonel Baum had been severely wounded and surrendered with his men.

17<sup>th</sup> – There was again a quarrel with the English. On top of everything General Burgoyne wanted to send Colonel Breymann with 300 men after Colonel Baum. General Riedesel tried to explain to the Englishman that he was now committing the second mistake because he again and again dispatched detached units without base support. The Englishman did not listen to him.

19<sup>th</sup> Colonel Breymann barely returned. He had lost 87 men and did not achieve anything. General Riedesel is very sad and depressed.

Excerpts from the Diary of Corporal Johann Jakob Schmidt from Lauterbach (Oberhessen) on Major General Riedesel's Staff, February 20, 1776 October 15, 1783. Donald M. Londahl-Smidt Collection.

The translation is mine.

Johann Jakob Schmidt was born a subject of Baron Riedesel in Lauterbach on 17 April 1739. Following five years military service under Duke Ferdinand of Austria he joined Riedesel's staff as a corporal in late December 1775. He died on 18 August 1810 in Wolfenbüttel.

His diary, presumably over 300 pages long covering his time of service in America from 20 February 1776 to 16 October 1783, was last known to have been owned by the Österreichisches Kriegsarchiv in Vienna where it was microfilmed for the archives of the former German Democratic Republic in Potsdam. As of June 2017 neither the original diary nor the microfilm have been located. In 1994 and 1995 the Johannes Schwalm Association received excerpts of the diary from a Peter Schmidt in Germany who presumably owned the microfilm but has been unsuccessful to gain access to the complete diary.

## Primary Sources Battle of Bennington

Unit: Hesse-Hanau Infantry Regiment Erbprinz  
Lieutenant Carl Dithmar von Spangenberg

Artillery Lieutenant Carl Dithmar Spangenberg to Count Wilhelm IX of Hanau

Durchlauchtigster Landgraf und Erbprinz, Gnädigster Fürst und Herr!

Euer Hochfürstlichen Durchlaucht wird es allbereits durch die eingegangenen Rapporte höchst gnädigst bekannt sein, daß ich in der Affaire bei Bennington den 16. August a.a. sehr hart bleßiert worden bin. Obgleich ich nun zwar anfangs hoffte, dass meine Wunden von der Beschaffenheit sein würden dass ich in der Ferne nicht dadurch verhindert werden sollte in den hochlöblichen Kriegsdiensten Euer Hochfürstlichen Durchlaucht zu verbleiben [...] ist doch leider durch die im offenen freien Felde gar zu übel etablierten englischen Hospitälern mit der nachlässigen Pflege der darin befindlichen englischen Ärzte [...] nichts weniger al seine Hoffnung zur Wiederherstellung dieses zerschmetterten Glieds vor mir, sondern statt dessen einen zeitlebens lahmen und unbrauchbaren rechten Arm“.

Nothing about the battle but requests to be recalled to Germany and discharged.

The attest of *Regimentsfeldscher* Heidelberg dated *Barracken zu Winterhill* 24 March 1778 is enclosed. Spangenberg is still at Winterhill on 16 Oktober 1778 and even in November 1782 he is still in US though he has been promoted to Captain. On 14 March 1783 he reports that he was released on Parole in Rutland on 24 September 1782 and is in Long Island and returns to Europe with the rest of the troops.

The original is in the William van Vleck Lidgerwood Collection Fiche 304-309, Tom. VIII fol. 338.

A translation was published in *Most Illustrious Hereditary Prince ... Letters to their prince from members of the Hesse-Hanau military contingent in the service of England during the American Revolutionary War*. Bruce E. Burgoyne, transl. (Bowie: Heritage Books, 2003), pp. 163/64.

Your Highness will already know from the reports submitted that I was severely wounded during the affair at Bennington on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August of last year. I originally hoped that my wound would be of a nature which would not prevent my remaining in Your Highness' service in the future, so that I could make myself more fortunate and more worthy of Your Highness' special favor. Unfortunately, due to the poorly organized English open field hospital, with the negligent care by the English doctors therein, whose services I had to have initially, and which were of the most intermittent sort, I often went three days without being bandaged, and added thereto was the miserable retreat for the wounded, and finally, as a result of the entire army being captured, the lack of transportation made it necessary, as I could not remain in the hospital, to follow the company. I was always in hope, however, that I would have a quick recovery and quickly to be able to resume my duty, but my wound grew so much worse from these fatal conditions, despite our Regimental Surgeon Heidelbach having done everything possible and providing excellent care, while I was under his care, and which I definitely desired, I now no longer have more than a hope of recovery of this shattered member, and throughout my life will have a lame and useless right arm.

The additional correspondence by Spangenberg and Heidelbach *ibid.* pp. 165-172.

## Primary Sources Battle of Bennington

Unit: Brunswick Regiment Prinz Friedrich  
Captain Carl von Tunderfeld

Right Honorable Sir,  
Most esteemed Major General,

The day before yesterday, I have had the honor of receiving your most honored letter from August 31.

Everyone wishes here from the bottom of his heart that the unfortunate affair of Lt. Colonel Baum will not have any further adverse consequences nor that the Rebels will increase their following. [...]

Most chiefs of the Savages who have been with the army such as the Fox, Puant [?], Ottawa, Huron, Nipissing &c., have been here with Mr. de St. Luc for a counsel. [...] They said of the Germans that they were too brave and did not know how to make use of the trees and to hide behind them. [...]

Québec, Sept. 15, 1777

Niedersächsisches Hauptlandesarchiv Wolfenbüttel v. Riedesel II, 35. Teil 3.

Translation by Helga Doblin in Saratoga National Historical Park.

Primary Sources Battle of Bennington

Unit: Brunswick Leib Regiment  
Company Surgeon Julius Friedrich Wasmus

9th At midnight, the standards of our regiment were taken to the headquarters of our general; this is an indication that we are to be assigned to an important expedition, Leaving tents and baggage behind, we set out at 5 o'clock this morning, marched to our left through the camp of the Breymann Corps and attached ourselves to the baggage of the Fraser Corps, that had likewise set out on the march; our march continued along the Hudson River. We found both banks of this river settled with rather well-built houses in German style, which were all empty; the families had fled into the wilderness with all their belongings just for fear of the Germans. The beautiful wheat and rye fields were going to ruin; they were all ripe. We passed several bridges and places where the enemy had camped. We also saw grapes, although not ripe, as well as many bilberries, raspberries and blackberries on both sides of the well laid-out military road. It was noon when we entered the camp at Fort Miller. Here, we composed the right wing of the Fraser Corps and, facing Albany, camped close by the Hudson River, which was flowing on our right. On a height on our left, one saw a magnificent building, several respectable houses, as well as various sawmills and gristmills, which were all empty. We made huts with boards which were lying about in large quantities near the sawmills. respectable houses, as well as various sawmills and gristmills, which were all empty. We made huts with boards which were lying about in large quantities near the sawmills.

We advanced -----18

Total ----- 325

10th Today was a day of rest. The Hudson River here again requires a portage of 5 or 6 miles and is therefore not navigable for batteaux. I looked at the beautiful building previously mentioned, which could be called a small castle, and wondered what such a beautiful building was doing in this wilderness. The owner of this house had taken flight to Philadelphia. V Brig. Gen. Fraser has moved into this house. Around the house was a plain of more than 2,000 morgen of land, which was nearly all cultivated. The harvest was ripe but had not been gathered. Last night, 2 Hesse-Hanau cannon came to us and were placed in front of our regiment's lines. Lieut. Bach commanded them. Our Major General von Riedesel came to us this morning and had a long conversation with our Lieut. Colonel Baum and at his departure, he left our Captain O'Connell and the English Engineer Lieut. Durnford behind. Among the Volunteers, we also had Colonel Skene with us, who owns

Skenesborough, Colonel Forster [Pfister] (a Braunschweiger by birth), and Capt. MacKay. These have been assigned to Lieut. Colonel Baum either as aides or because they knew the countryside around here and could understand several languages, especially English, French and the language of the Savages. Since Lieut. Colonel Baum understood none of all these languages, those men were very necessary for him. This evening, they sent us flour on horseback, from which bread is to be baked tonight. Our corps is designated to advance to Bennington in New Hampshire to destroy the magazine there, and take horses and oxen etc. away from the inhabitants living on the way there as well as in the adjacent countryside. N.B. after we have driven off the scattered corps of the Americans, who are at Bennington. --

11th This morning, beef and bread were given out. Brigadier Gen. Fraser came a few times this forenoon and talked with our Lieut. Colonel Baum. We set out at noon and our corps, which Lieut. Colonel Baum commanded, consisted of our Dragoon Regiment, not quite 200 men strong; 100 Tories, 100 Savage Mohawks, 100 Canadians and 50 Englishmen from Powell's brigade, that formed the tete of our regiment and were commanded by Capt. Fraser. The Savages were commanded by Capt. Lanaudiere Adjutant of Gov. Gen. Carleton, the Tories by Colonel Forster, and the Canadians by Canadian officers. The two 3-pound cannon were being drawn along in front of our regiment. This was the corps designated for the expedition; the Fraser Corps remained quietly in the camp. We also passed quite a pleasant region, which was cultivated on both sides of the Hudson River. We came to a traverse whose river emptied into the Hudson. For lack of a bridge, the corps had to walk up to their waists through the water, which was a most unpleasant and dangerous undertaking; for the current was so fast that one could hardly keep one's balance. To offset this discomfort, the corps had the delight of seeing the first church since Canada, which lay on the opposite side of the Hudson River. Near the church was a large manor with many respectable buildings, which belonged to Gen. Schuyler. He has been summoned by the Congress in Philadelphia to defend himself together with Gen. St. Clair as to why they had abandoned Ticonderoga so quickly. Not far from this large manor were 5 large barracks of identical construction wherein the workmen of this general were living.

The parish is called Saratoga. We kept the Hudson River on our right and moved into a camp across from the church next to 2 beautiful houses. Some of the corn [grain] had been harvested and stored in the houses, some was overripe and being crushed. They had also started drawing the flax, but had run off. Their enmity against the King of England and the fear of the Germans had driven them away. They were probably roaming around in the woods, for their cattle returned to the house in the evening, but were treated in an overly aggressive manner by us strange, hungry guests. -- They cultivate much Turkish wheat [maize] here and many pumpkins have been planted in between. The gardens are full of fruit [*and vegetables*] especially potatoes, from which one can conclude that we are

enjoying ourselves very much. -- Today, Musketeer Fasselabend is to be shot. He had deserted last year, had served under the Americans and had been caught in Ticonderoga. Whether the execution has actually been carried out, I do not know as yet.

We advanced -----16

Total----- 341

12th Last night, another detachment of 50 men came to us; they were from our corps and under the command of Captain Dommès. We set out at 6 o'clock in the morning and marched up a mountain on our left and into the woods. We had hardly covered one mile in the woods when we went back again and made our camp one mile behind the place where we camped last night. The reason for this was a false report stating that the enemy, a few thousand men strong, had occupied a post not far from us. This afternoon, Generals Burgoyne and Phillips came to us, talked a long time with our Lieut. Colonel Baum, and returned to the army.

13th At 5 o'clock this morning, we set out, marched along yesterday's road and reached the borders of New England at noon. The first village we came to was called New Cambridge in the Province-of New Hampshire. Here we took the first horses and captured 6 Rebels, one of whom deserted again. These had been sent out as patrols. We had lost the Hudson River, passed through the wilderness on a rough road, which only last year had been cleared by the Rebels. At 4 o'clock in the afternoon, we moved our camp into this village near a beautiful house. The house stood empty; the owner had taken to flight with his family this morning. Here we came upon a detachment of Rebels that were driven back. Thereby, one Tory was shot through his leg, which I bandaged. This evening, we heard the retreat shot of the American army very far away on our right. We gathered a booty of 15 horses today. This village is large and scattered and was first settled 12 years ago. Our herd of cattle has increased because we came upon some oxen at all the houses we passed. They allowed themselves to be tied and came with us. -- A report arrived that Colonel St. Leger has won a victory over the Americans; I had written about that on June 1. Without a doubt, this is only being spread to inspire our men with courage, for who would want to bring us this news here in the wilderness? We have advanced further toward Bennington by ----- 23

Total ----- 364

14th We set out at 5 o'clock this morning, reached the parish of Sancoick at 7 o'clock and made a rendezvous near a beautiful house, which the owner had left this very morning. There was little household furniture left in the house but what there was being destroyed by the Savages. These also discovered a beautiful Engl. clock, several portuguese [coins] and guineas in a chest. The owner of this house, son of a Dutchman by birth, is called Van

Rensselaer. He had a gristmill with a sluice near his house. The mill was full of flour and the floor full of wheat and rye; we also found several barrels of salt here. Our tetes [Teten] had driven off the Rebel detachment that was standing in front of the bridge. Thereby one of the Savages was wounded, whom I had to bandage on orders of our commander. At this house, the enemy had just slaughtered an ox; it had not yet been completely skinned. We set out again and marched across the bridge at the mill; at the houses we were passing, we came across some more horses, which we took along. At noon, we arrived at the Walloon [Walloomsac] Creek just before the bridge across the river. We made our camp in the gardens of two houses here. The inhabitants had loaded 2 wagons full of furniture and put 6 oxen to them. They were just about to depart and take flight in the wilderness. But now they had to unload and our commander placed a guard in front of both houses so that nobody could take anything from them. They could safely remain there, for none of our men would take anything from them. Every one of us was happy enough if he could manage all that his shoulders were already forced to carry. But it was the habit of the Savages to scalp and demolish everything. On the other side of the river stood another two houses at which the Savages, the Tories and the Canadians had taken up their posts. On our left, we had a very high mountain, which extended quite far. The oldest of all Savage Mohawks, whom they venerate as their king, was shot on our arrival at the bridge today. He had ventured out too far, perhaps to take some booty. The Savages were very grieved and sad about this incident. They made a kind of coffin, laid the dead man in it and carried him to a grave 4 feet deep. Carrying his musket to the grave, a detachment of 16 dragoons from our regiment followed. When the coffin had been lowered and covered with a little dirt, the detachment fired 3 volleys. The Savages appeared to be very satisfied with that. On the other hand, the enemy seemed to be alarmed. An enemy corps of some 1,900 men stood about half an Engl. mile in front of us behind a height. Since they had heard the bullets whistle at the burial shooting - the dragoons had loaded with balls --, they probably thought we were attacking them. They appeared on the height and attacked our patrols positioned there. We, the dragoons, quickly took possession of the mountain on our left and our 2 cannon were taken up that mountain. The enemy, still behind trees, however, focused their attack on our right and left wings at the foot of the mountain. On this side of the river stood our jagers and light infantry, namely the detachment that had come to us under the command of Capt. Dommès on the 12th. The enemy sneaked behind a house that stood on the other side of the river, where they loaded their guns and shot at our left wing. One cannon was being directed against this house and fired. As the 2nd shot went through the house, the enemy came out at full speed and ran away. On our right wing, they were likewise driven back and our cannon on the mountain pursued the enemy by the bridge, cannonading them on their retreat. We have seen today how the enemy attacks: either lying on the ground or standing behind trees, they load their guns and shoot. They run from one tree to another and then forward as circumstances demand, and the Savages do likewise. The house across from our left wing, behind which the enemy had hidden, was

set afire. On our side nothing [sic] was killed or wounded, but in this affair the Savages had one killed and 2 wounded. 1 bandaged one of them, who had a bullet in his arm. When I had to cut it out, the Savage behaved rather shockingly and if I had been alone with him, I believe he would have scalped me; N.B. if he could indeed have overpowered me. -- The Savages were so enraged about this loss that they wanted to depart for Canada tonight. Perhaps they thought themselves rich enough for they had collected much money among themselves, also stolen some and sold many horses to officers in the army; almost every one of them had a horse laden with all kinds of stolen goods. The affair had not quite ended when another detachment of 50 men from our regiments came to us; they joined Capt. Domes. Captain MacKay was very dissatisfied that the enemy had not been attacked and pursued with vigor. "Now they will become bold," he said, "we leave them too much time, for they will gather by the thousands during the night." "I cannot understand," he added, "how one can entrust a detachment to such a man as Lieut. Colonel Baum, who has no military expertise at all, cannot take proper measures, particularly here in the wilderness, and who has no knowledge at all of foreign languages," "How is it possible," he exclaimed, "that General Riedesel could entrust such a ----- man with such an important expedition, who is so coarse and rude and also despises the counsel of those who had been sent along for guidance, assistance and advice ... " He said much more which I have forgotten. Muskeeter Fasselabend of the Regiment von Riedesel has actually been shot by a firing squad at Fort Edward on the 11 th of this month. Tonight, everything was quiet. The men were posted behind trees. It has forever remained incomprehensible to us why no picket or even a guard had been posted before the line of our regiment. No sentinel had been posted, -- I thought of Capt. MacKay. Up to here we advanced -----9  
Total----- 373

15th This morning, the attack upon the right wing started again. Under the command and direction of Capt. Fraser, the Tories and a few Englishmen had to layout a small entrenchment with big trees at our left wing. The squadron of Maj. Gen. von Riedesel occupied it under the command of Captain of the Cavalry Fricke and Cornet Stutzer. A report came that the Breymann Corps was on its way to help us. Would that this be true or that we would withdraw but to the bridge at the mill in Sancoick. We would be much safer there than here where every 40 paces a man is standing behind a tree. The inhabitants living around here come and go through our camp; they will surely give the enemy information of our weakness. Soon I am afraid they will no longer be deterred by our 3-pound cannon but take them and all the rest of us. The Savages are all lying behind the baggage, dispirited; they do not want to go forward. The attack continues the whole day. Also today, we have neither dead nor wounded; the Tories and Canadians, however, have had losses both yesterday and today. We have more than 180 oxen, also the horses are on the increase; the officers have all they need. On our left wing it has been completely quiet

today. Every 2 hours, patrols were sent out who have not seen anything in particular up to tonight.

16th This morning, 100 oxen were sent to our army. Everything is quiet; we neither see nor hear anything of the enemy and the patrols that were sent out have not seen anything of the enemy as far as one hour's march away. This morning, we took possession of many other horses. All noncommissioned officers of the regiment and several dragoons in each squadron have horses. If this continues, the regiment will soon be mounted. The 2nd patrol then had been sent out from our left wing brought the news that some of the enemy has appeared not far from us in the woods and in the brush. This was immediately reported to our commander. He sent Capt. O'Connell to reconnoiter, who indeed saw men in front of our line in the brush. After he had gone, it became increasingly lively in the brush in front of our line, [*a fact*] which was also reported by our Major von Meibom. A cannon was therefore requested, which was sent with the reminder: one should not consider a few individuals to be a line or a regiment. The strangest of all was that our commander did not know where we were standing. He had not visited us in these last 3 days and as Adjutant Lieut. Brevia had to keep running from one wing to the other, the orders were transmitted through our Auditeur Thomas. -- All the Savages came onto our mountain, lay down behind the trees and refused to go forward against the enemy. Now came the news that the Breymann Corps was very near and would soon arrive. Everyone wished they were here already. The enemy is marching in force against our right wing and it appears that they want to encircle us. There is also some shooting on our right wing. After 12 o'clock, a patrol was sent out from our lines and was driven off by the enemy, who fired at them. Half an hour later, a violent volley of fire erupted against the entrenchment that was occupied by 35 dragoons. Our dragoons fired up volleys on the enemy in cold blood and with much courage, and it did not take them long to load their carbines behind the breastworks. But as soon as they rose up to take aim, bullets went through their heads. They fell backwards and no longer moved a finger. Thus, in a short time, our tallest and best dragoons were sent into eternity. The [German] cannon shot balls and grapeshot sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left and then again forward into the brush. The Savages made terrible faces and ran from one tree to the next. I had chosen a very big oak tree close behind our entrenchment, behind which I dressed the wounded. The Savages also came behind this tree and 4 or 5 of them lying down on top of me almost crushed me to death. From the enemy side, the fire became increasingly heavy and they [the enemy] pressed harder. When the Savages saw that, one of them, probably the oldest, emitted a strange cry, which cannot be described; whereupon they all ran down the mountain toward the baggage. The cannon in our entrenchment was quiet because the sergeant artificer who commanded it, had been shot: the 8 men at the cannon were either shot or wounded. At the bridge, where our Lieut. Colonel Baum was standing, the cannon and volley fire had ceased. Capt. Dommès, who was covering our left flank: and rear, was driven back with his few men and captured; we could see this quite well from our mountain. We were thus completely encircled. We too

withdrew now with great speed while I was still busy dressing wounds. Then, following the regiment in a great hurry, I stumbled over a big, fallen tree about 300 paces from our entrenchment. When I got up, the enemy came rushing over our entrenchment and 3 quickly took aim and fired at me. I again fell to the ground behind the tree and the bullets were dreadful, whistling over and beyond me. I remained lying on the ground until the enemy urged me rather impolitely to get up. One grabbed me by the arm and another said he should kill me, whereupon he placed the bayonet of his gun with tightened trigger on my chest. He asked whether I was a Britisher or a Hessian. I told him I was a Braunschweig surgeon, shook hands with him, and called him my friend and brother; for what does one not do when in trouble. I was happy they understood me (Freund und Bruder) for that helped so much that he withdrew his gun. But he now took my watch, looked at it, held it to his ear and put it away [in his pocket]. After this, he made a friendly face and was so human that he urged me to take a drink: from his wooden flask. He handed me over to his comrades, who started anew to search my pockets. One of them took nothing but my purse in which, however, were only 14 piasters (specie). He continued eagerly looking for money but then left, whereupon the third began searching my pockets. This one took all my small items as my knife, my paper, my lighter, but he did not find the best; they were so dumb that they did not see the pocket in my overcoat. Thus, I saved my Noble [sic] pipe. If I had put my watch and moneybag into this pocket, I would not have lost anything. Now, they made me sit down on the ground. There was still some shooting down near the bridge and I was terribly worried because I believed myself to be the only prisoner. I blamed myself in my mind for not having retreated earlier and faster, but as some other prisoners were brought to this spot, I was soon rid of my anxiety. These assured me that they all were prisoners and so I calmed down. It is surely true that a man likes to have company in his misfortune, -- and would a man in misery not fall into a kind of despair if he were persuaded to be the only miserable one of his kind! -- When one of the enemy heard that I was a CHIRURGUS [surgeon], he led me behind our entrenchment to dress the wound of his son, who had been shot through the thigh. Now I saw what effect our cannon and musket fire had had, since the enemy had suffered great losses here. General Stark, who in attire and posture was very similar to the tailor Muller in Wolfenbuttel, had commanded the corps of the Americans against us. As he now saw me dressing the wounds of the first, he ordered me to bandage several others of the enemy, but I hurried toward our entrenchment because there were dragoons and Hesse-Hanau Artillerymen in need of my help. But the Americans did not allow me any time but pulled me along by force. We went past the trusty tree that had warded off so many bullets from me. Here I found some of my instruments and bandages etc. in a case. Putting all of it in a bag, I wanted to take it along, but my guide took it away from me and urged me to drink some strong rum with him. All the enemy were very well provided with it and I noticed that almost all of them were drunk. Each one had a wooden flask filled with rum hanging from his neck; they all were in shirt-sleeves, had nothing [to cover] their bodies but shirts, vests and long linen trousers,

which reached down to their shoes; no stockings; *[in addition]* a powder horn, a bullet bag, a flask with rum and a gun - that was all they had on them. They all were well-shaped men of very healthy appearance and well-grown; better than the Canadians. -- We came to the bridge where Lieut. Colonel Baum had stood; our men had taken this route for their retreat and some of them had run through the water. Many had been killed or wounded in their flight; all the rest had been taken prisoner. They [the Rebels] did not capture one single Savage; it is incomprehensible to me how they [the Savages] got through. The unfortunate Tories (Royalist Americans) who were not killed also fell into the hands of their countrymen. Like cattle, they were tied to each other with cords and ropes and led away; it is presumed that they will be hanged. Some of our men who had been wounded were still lying here and there; they will be taken to the houses at the bridge. These scenes can not really be described ---- reading this, the best will perhaps be moved, but it is actually not possible to feel the horror of these scenes. A thought that makes your flesh creep! To see a friend or fellow creature lie bleeding on the ground who has been cruelly wounded by the murderous lead and approaches his death shaking - crying for help, and then not be able, not be allowed to help him, is that not cruel? --It was past 5 o'clock when we heard cannon and volley firing in the direction of Sancoik. This was the Breymann Corps that had been designated for our aid but unfortunately had now arrived too late. All the enemy ran there from the battlefield and all the prisoners who had assembled here at the bridge were quickly led away. It was 4 o'clock when I was made prisoner; this means we had continually been under fire since 1 o'clock, that is 3 hours. The dragoons had shot their 100 cartridges; in the artillery coffer lay another 3 shots of 174 [sic], that is to say one ball and 2 cartridge shots. We now were on the road to Bennington; my guide kept holding me tight by the arm, particularly when he was noticed by his countrymen. On this road, we came past Lieut. Col. Baum, who was lying completely naked on a cart. He was shot through the abdomen and was crying and begging that the cart should go slow but the men did not understand our language. Consequently, crying and begging were of no use. They speedily went to the parish of Bennington where the cart stopped at a house. We helped him from the cart, took him into the house where we had to lay him on the dirt floor. Since the Reg. Surgeon Vorbrodts also came by, it was the lieut. col.'s order that he or I, one of us, should stay with him. The time had come, however, that his orders were no longer allowed to be followed. The guard took us from him by force. Shaking hands with us, he said goodbye and still charged me and the Reg. Surgeon with several messages for our Gen. Riedesel and also for a person in the homeland. -- We were taken further, and on the way, Capt. O'Connell came to us, who was without regimentals and in nothing but shirt-sleeves. We went past one of our 12-lb. cannon; near it, instead of balls lay a pile of stones because they [the German artillerymen] had been out of balls. After darkness, we were taken into a house where we were to stay overnight. Another 8 wounded dragoons and several wounded Americans were also brought in, all of whose wounds I dressed. To my great sorrow, I learned that my cousin had also been wounded on the retreat but no one could tell me

where he was. About one hour later, Capt. von Bartling sen. as well as the Lieuts. Gebhard and Meyer from our Grenadier Battalion came in and we learned that the Breymann Corps had suffered the same fate as we inasmuch as half of them were fatally wounded or captured. If Lieut. Col. Breymann had hurried more to get to us, not as many men would have had to be sacrificed - and who knows what other unfortunate consequences this calamitous affair may have. - The Americans used to consider us invincible and did not believe they could capture our regular troops, but what will they now say about us! -- Will they keep on running away from us in the future? -- I thought of Capt. MacKay --. From our Dragoon Regiment, Captain of the Cavalry Reinking was shot dead. [*The following*] have been wounded: Lieut. Col. Baum, shot through the abdomen; Lieut. Adjutant Brevia, shot through the joint of his right shoulder; Pastor Melzheimer, shot through the right arm; Cornet Stutzer, shot through his abdomen and leg. The remaining officers from the regiment have all been taken prisoner except for Captain of the Cavalry von Schlagenteuffel, who had remained in Fort Edward, Lieut. Bornemann, who had been commanded to the baggage, and Lieut. von Sommerlatte, who had been sent to Trois-Rivieres for our heavy baggage. From the Breymann Corps, Capt. von Schick, Lieutenants Bode and Mühlenfeldt as well as Ensign Hagemann were shot; Lieut. Col. Breymann, Major von Barner, Capt. von Gleissenberg were wounded but not captured; Lieut. Gebhard and Ensign Specht were wounded and taken prisoner; Captains von Bartling sen., O'Connell and Dommès, Lieutenants Meyer, Burghoff, d'Aniers and Ensign Andree were taken prisoner; Lieut. Bach from the Hesse-Hanau Artillery, the Engl. Engineer Lieut. Durnford and Ensign Baron von Salans were wounded and taken prisoner. An enemy major, a very handsome man, who had the command over us, was wearing a Braunschweiger Grenadier's cap on his head, had Ensign Andree's gorget hanging on his chest and the long straight sword [*Pallasch*] of our dragoons on his side; with these he was showing off. One can well get an idea of the simplemindedness of these creatures. -- Capt. O'Connell spoke to this major in English, told him how my guide had taken possession of my things, and one quarter of an hour later my guide came and presented me with my things in a most polite manner; they were not embarrassed at all. -- As I still had one pound of ground coffee in there, this was most welcome to me. Otherwise, I was very poor, had no money and no prospect of getting any. [*I had*] my worst shirt on, the worst articles of clothing. As they had told us we would soon return, each one took his worst stuff along, but now! -- The future frightens me. To all appearances, we live here under a nation extremely enraged, whose language none of us understands; each one is asking what will become of us. -- But we were cheered up a little when we were regaled tonight with beef, pork, potatoes and punch; we were greatly pleased. "Well," everybody said, "I am satisfied if we will not be treated any better or worse during our imprisonment." While we were still sitting at dinner, a man entered the room who sat down at my side and joined us at dinner. This was the American Colonel Warner. After the meal, he took out a small metal box from his pocket, which belonged to me. It contained lancets, 48 that he contemplated with great curiosity. Capt. O'Connell asked

him in my name to return them to me. He gave me 6 pieces and the remaining 6 he wanted to keep as something very peculiar. He also had this journal of mine, which he returned to me together with my receipt book. I had someone inquire after the other items that had been in my coat folds, but he assured me that he had not seen the portmanteau. A soldier had given him the box and the papers. Van Rensselaer joined this gathering, whom I have already mentioned on the 14th of this month. He was a captain and, like the others, behaved with extreme politeness and civility toward us, but we could not understand each other. Up to here we advanced ----- 3

Total ----- 376

17th This morning General Stark came and assured us that as much *[of our possessions]* as possible would be brought here and that we would get our lost things back. Gen. Stark had commanded the right wing while Colonel Warner had commanded the left wing against us. We set out and, accompanied by a heavy guard, went up to Bennington. On this road, at least 800 to 1,000 men came past us; mostly on horseback and provided with guns, they went to join General Gates' army. In Bennington, we came upon all our prisoners. All the officers were in the tavern. in a room on the second floor, with a heavy guard in front of the door. The privates were locked in the church and as 480 men were in there already, it was quite crowded. We were also taken to the tavern in the room upstairs. Lieut. Col. Baum is supposed to be very sick and Colonel Forster is also lying in the same house; Lieut. Brevia lies mortally wounded in a farmhouse while all the other wounded officers are lying in the tavern. We got fresh beef this noon, which was put in big chunks in a trough placed upon the table together with Turkish wheat [maize] bread. They did not give us any knives or forks and since all knives had been taken away from the prisoners, the meat was tom apart with our hands and devoured by our hungry stomachs; this was a remarkable scene. A vessel with water was placed in the room and each could drink as he pleased. The inhabitants of this province were said to be the worst Rebels; they made disagreeable faces and perhaps did not wish to express themselves in overly refined terms toward us; but to our comfort, we could not understand them anyway. There was no one among us proficient in the English language except Capt. O'Connell and the Engl. officers. Today the following calamitous incident occurred in the church. As the prisoners did not all have room enough for standing, sitting or lying, boards had been laid above the pulpit; the captured Canadians lay on these boards. They may have moved too forcefully whereupon one board broke. Afraid that the Canadians might fall down on their heads, the prisoners pressed towards the door. The guards standing in front of the church and hearing the noise and the uproar, believed that the prisoners wanted to break out. Since they did not understand each other, the guard shot into the church door whereby 5 men were wounded and 2 killed. 1 and my colleague Sandhagen had been asked for dinner by the enemy's doctor to another house belonging to a capt.; as we were just about to sit down at the table, the noise started. No

one knew the reason for this uproar. The people all ran out of the house leaving us alone. Since we did not think we were safe, we wanted to go to our quarters.' On the way, we came upon a detachment, which Pastor Allen of Pittsfield was leading with his naked sword in hand. He first started to strike and push us, the detachment cocked their triggers and wanted to shoot. While the pastor was abusing my colleague, someone embraced me from the back and spoke to the detachment. Thereupon the men calmed down and did not shoot. Of his speech, I understood nothing but the word doctor. It was the major, who last night had, guarded us not far from Bennington. He saved my colleague from the hands of the barbaric pastor after he [the pastor] had given him 40 or 50 blows with his naked sword. He then led us into the church where, after having tended to those unfortunate wounds, we stayed overnight. If the major had not recognized me in the dark, we would have been out of luck. I have never seen a man so enraged as this noble pastor. Another detachment came into the church tonight, inspected the pockets of all the prisoners and took all bread and other knives that they found away from them; so fearful were these Americans. In spite of everything, our dinner was not lost. The doctor called on us and we ate on the pulpit, [consuming] what he had brought us with great appetite. We also slept there, yet not without chagrin, for my colleague quarrelled with me and was annoyed that I had not, like him, been abused and beaten up by the pastor - another proof that a man likes to have company in his misfortune! -- The pastor's skill had been so extraordinary that all blows had fallen flat in the dark, for my colleague's coat showed no hole, but -- up to Bennington we advanced -----4  
Total----- 380

18th This morning, I again went to the tavern, for we surgeons had yesterday gotten permission to look after the wounded. Last night, there had been another great alarm here. More wounded arrived today but my cousin was not among them. I learned, however, that he lay in the same house where Lieut. Colonel Baum and Colonel Forster were, who both have died of their wounds today. This Forster, born a Braunschweiger, had beautiful estates in the vicinity of Albany. -- One of the enemy doctors was a Mecklenburger, born in Gustrow; he had trained with Municipal CHIRURGUS Fricke in Braunschweig. He said his monthly salary amounted to 60 piasters in paper money; he wanted to persuade me to accept these. I no longer remember what I answered him because I was annoyed. He regaled us with Madeira wine, we became high-spirited, remembered the martial pastor and made a few more remarks about him and his huge wig. The major previously mentioned, who had recognized me in the dark, was again showing off today with the grenadier's cap, a gorget and the short, straight sword of a dragoon. All the Americans who saw him gazed at him in astonishment. -- Several of our officers got some of their baggage back today. General Stark had much captured baggage unloaded on a place near the church in Bennington and each could pick out his own, but nothing of mine could be found. Ensign Andree had his watch returned; General Stark had sent it thinking it was mine. All the

healthy, captured privates were taken away under heavy guard today. One can see that the Americans nourish great hatred against the English inasmuch as they treat them with much more contempt than us. I learned from the German doctor that at our arrival at the Walloon's Creek, the enemy had been no more than 1,500 men strong and we could have advanced up to Bennington without great resistance on the first day. They, in fact, had believed nothing else but that we were 1,500 men strong and had 4 cannon with us. But the fact that we stopped at Walloon's Creek and did not go any further made them think that we were not as strong. This was indeed reported to Gen. Stark by the inhabitants who were going back and forth. Immediately upon our arrival, this general had sent out a summons to this province and the neighboring ones, whereupon the men were slowly assembling. By the 16th at noon, the general had, by reliable report, more than 6,000 men. -- Thus, they could have easily encircled and captured us. Our landlord had 5 sons in that action, of whom 2 were shot dead. All in the house were very sad and our presence was probably very disagreeable to these people. Capts. Fraser, Lanaudiere, and MacKay are not here; I hope they are alive, well and safe. Not even one of the Savages has been captured; I cannot comprehend how they got through. Several volunteers from the American coast were also here; very handsome young men.

19th Several other wounded came today but my cousin was not among them; that worries me a great deal. Generals Stark, Lincoln and Fellows held a meeting here at the tavern this morning together with the Committee from Bennington. The officers and we too had to sign the parole that we would not desert nor talk in any way about the affairs of the war with the inhabitants of the country. More baggage was unloaded, and each one could pick out what was his, but there was nothing of mine there. I was so conscientious that I did not even take a shirt; mind you, I wore my worst shirt and had none besides that. -- Bennington is a village that had been settled but 18 years ago. The church has neither spires nor altar. The inhabitants profess the Calvinist doctrine; they are Presbyterians. We finally set out at noon; most of us, particularly the wounded officers, received riding horses. We had a new captain by the name of Johnson, and a few men on horseback with us who are all under the command of Gen. Fellows, who will accompany us up to Boston. Lieut. Brevia remains in Bennington; Lieuts. Gebhard, Dumford, and Bach, Pastor Melzheimer, Cornet Stutzer and Ensign Specht, all 6 of whom had been wounded, went along. Although I was previously to stay in the hospital at Bennington, -- *[as it was]* my turn and I would have liked to remain there for my cousin's sake, I was ordered to go with the wounded officers. As I cannot stay with him, I warmly recommended my cousin to my colleagues Sandhagen, Radloff and Meyer, who were staying behind in Bennington, and I have full confidence that they will do everything possible for him. Our march went through the parish of Pownal to Williamstown. We were no longer treated as prisoners on our march. We rode and went as we pleased. In front of all the houses that we passed stood people who looked at us with the same intense curiosity as the people in Germany when the first rhinoceros arrived

there. We understood no English but they treated us like friends, spontaneously offering us milk and beer. At all the houses there were orchards with trees full of fruit, which although not yet ripe, the inhabitants, especially the children, were eating. Wine and rum were very expensive in this region, each of these cost 3 specie or 3 piasters a quart. Most of us had no money and but one shirt. If this were ever to be washed, we would have to go without a shirt for that period of time. Is that not regrettable? No money and no hope for getting anything, what will become of us? -- Williamstown is a pleasant village and lies in a beautiful valley in between mountains that are called the Green Mountains. We all were quartered here in the inn and received very good food, wine and punch. Gen. Fellows asked the officers to request whatever they wished to have. If it could be provided, they would get it. With this kind of treatment, we could easily have forgotten we were prisoners, but our miserable equipage reminded us of it every moment. Everyone was surprised by the beauty of the fair sex and their dresses in the Engl. style, and with all that, they were but farmers' servants. One noticed but few men or none at all. At most houses, one saw black slaves and many children. We advanced toward Boston -----18

20th At 9 o'clock this morning, we set out and had a bad road ahead and many high mountains to climb. We did not have as many horses today as yesterday and arrived in Lanesborough after a troublesome march at 8 o'clock at night. We advanced -----23

Total -----422 [sic]

Besides the servants, we were 25 men and were quartered here in 5 houses. We received very good food and drink. On our march today, we had seen the first Savages again, disgusting creatures; they were from the Wolf Clan. Our landlady had a child, 9 months old, that she was carefully hiding. I was curious to know the reason and asked Capt. O'Connell to question the woman as to the cause. I was very much humiliated by my curiosity, however, because the landlady said she had heard the Germans were cannibals, slaughtering children etc. When we expressed our astonishment about that, she asked whether we had churches in our country and whether we also prayed! Whether we believed that God was our creator and Christ our Saviour! She had been reliably assured that we were the Savages of Germany. This had been told to the inhabitants to inculcate hatred against us. -- At 6 o'clock this morning we set out, passed through beautiful country, assembled in the village of Pittsfield and had breakfast there. Many fair women and girls came on horseback to take a look at us. They rode like hussars, riding sidesaddle [Engl. woman saddle]. Since Bennington, we have not seen any Germans.

*An Eyewitness Account of the American Revolution and New England Life. The Journal of J. F. Wasmus, German Company Surgeon, 1776-1783* Helga Doblin, transl., Mary C. Lynn, ed. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1990), pp. 67-76.