THE GERMAN SOLDIERS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION (VOLUMES I AND II, CHAPTERS 1-12)

ELLIOTT WHEELOCK HOFFMAN

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THE GERMAN SOLDIERS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
(VOLUMES I AND II, CHAPTERS 1-12)

Abstract
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the British to attempt to successfully wage war without affecting the stability of British society. The six
German states that sent troops to America did so as a result of hundreds of years of normal troop trade. Few
Britons questioned the legality of the hiring of foreign troops. Britain could not fight the war without such
troops and even the critics of the war acknowledged this truth. The Germans often made up half the forces
facing Americans on the battlefield.

This dissertation analyses the reasons for the troop trade, the treaties between Britain and the German states,
the recruiting of the forces, and their organization for battle. This is followed by a narrative of battlefield
actions from Long Island in August 1776 to Yorktown in October 1781 and stresses the contributions and
limitations of the German troops. Finally, several chapters deal with the place of the Germans within the
British military establishment, a statistical analyses of selected German units, American blacks as German
soldiers, Germans’ images of the American Revolution, German atrocities and plundering, and German
prisoners of war and deserters.

The Germans represent just about the last major European army to fight for mercenary payment, but they also
prefigure the professional peacekeepers of the twentieth century, soldiers fighting not for national
preservation, but rather for some conception of societal order. In terms of utility, the British made a good
bargain.

Keywords
History, United States

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THE GERMAN SOLDIERS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
VOLUME I, CHAPTERS 1-7

BY

Elliott Wheelock Hoffman
B.A., Gettysburg College, 1969
M.A., The University of Vermont, 1974

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire
in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
History

December, 1982
This dissertation has been examined and approved.

Charles E. Clark
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Garrett Matzan, Professor of History

Marc L. Schwartz, Associate Professor of History

Jeffrey Kieflendorf, Associate Professor of History

Don Higgenbotham, Professor of History
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
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This dissertation probably grew out of interest I developed while writing an undergraduate paper on the same topic many years ago. The interest continued when I lived in Germany over a decade ago while serving in the Army. I visited Hanau simply because it was one area that I knew sent Germans to fight in the American Revolution. Modern Hanau is an industrial city that has grown out of the ashes of World War II. There is little there to excite the imagination, or so I remember. Had I known that I would someday undertake this study I would have spent more time exploring the central part of West Germany.

My interest in writing anything on the subject of the German troops emerged rather late in graduate school and stemmed both from a desire to deal with something meaningful and a feeling that most studies of the subject were limited and out of date. Edward J. Lowell published The Hessians and the other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War in 1884. This has remained the standard account in English. Although a good narrative of military actions, Lowell provides only a limited scope for his stories of battles and campaigns. He admires the Germans'
courage, but deplores their servitude. Lowell's judgments have colored several generations of American military historians, who see the Germans as sort of war-like sheep. Max von Eelking, a Prussian officer, wrote a study of the German soldiers in the Revolution in the 1860s. It was published in this country in 1893 under the title of _The German Allied Troops in the North American War of Independence_. Von Eelking lauds the performance of the mercenaries, calls their hiring normal for the eighteenth century, and provides extensive transcripts of German letters and diaries not previously available in this country. He is, however, not critical of his sources, not familiar with America, and lets his nineteenth century German nationalism intrude into his narrative. Rodney Atwood's recent study entitled _The Hessians_ is useful in its history of mercenaries in the British Army and the diplomatic area of troop hiring. His story of the Hessians fighting in America is fragmentary.

Atwood deals only with the troops from Hesse-Cassel. His description of the diplomatic maneuverings of hirings the Hessians is first-rate, but the remainder of his work is sketchy and insubstantial. My dissertation analyses the military participation of all the German states and uses sources that Atwood overlooked to gauge the
composition of the forces and their order of battle, to
assess the attitudes of officers and enlisted men, and to
study the Germans who remained in America. My study asks
more questions than Atwood and gives fuller answers.

There are no other works dealing with the broad scope
of German participation in the Revolution in either German
or English. Some German scholars have dealt with
particular states (Hesse-Cassel and Anspach-Bayreuth) and
have placed all the records of Hesse-Cassel and Waldeck
soldiers in a computer data bank. Americans have
translated several good primary sources into English, but
no one has looked at the entirety of the topic in a
hundred years and asked the crucial questions of who made
up the rank and file, why did the units fight so effective-
ly, how did the utilization of the Germans change over
time, or what conceptions did the Germans have of their
mission and of America. This is an attempt to set the
American Revolution in an international setting and look
at the British employment of auxiliary troops as a normal
condition of eighteenth century warfare.

I deal with the military side of the story: Britain's
employment of foreign troops, the composition of these
units, and their battles and campaigns in North America.
Particular areas of consideration, prisoners of war,
deserters, British-German relations, and plundering have also been included as being important for the subject. I have not fully dealt with the Americans' impression of the Germans, other than as being targets for induced desertion. The American side of the topic needs a dissertation itself.

Research for this project has been furthered by a Fulbright Fellowship and a grant from the University of New Hampshire's Central University Research Fund. My full thanks go to both granting agencies.

People not at the University of New Hampshire have aided in various ways, particularly Bruce Bugbee at Gettysburg College and Neil Stout and Wolfe Schmokel at the University of Vermont. To Charles Clark, my chairman, and other members of the Department of History at the University of New Hampshire go my thanks for direction and patience. Special thanks to Don Higgenbotham of the University of North Carolina for his advice and comments. The staff of the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress and the staff of the New York Public Library have rendered friendly and prompt attention. And to the members of the Northeast Corner Club, and especially to my children, I express gratitude for shared sanity.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................ iv
LIST OF MAPS ............................................. ix
ABSTRACT ...................................................... x

CHAPTER

VOLUME I

I. TRENTON ......................................................... 1
II. GREAT BRITAIN AND HER MERCENARIES .................. 25
III. THE GERMAN STATES AND THE TREATIES ............... 54
IV. THE GERMAN TROOPS ......................................... 91
V. THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGNS ................................ 143
VI. BURGOYNE'S CAMPAIGN ..................................... 204
VII. THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGNS ................................ 258

VOLUME II

VIII. THE GERMANS WITHIN THE BRITISH MILITARY
      ESTABLISHMENT ........................................... 304
IX. THE GERMAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT .................. 367
X. IMAGES OF AMERICA AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION ... 415
XI. GERMAN STIGMA: PLUNDER AND CRUELTY ................ 445
XII. GERMAN LEGACY: PRISONERS OF WAR AND DESERTERS ... 476

AFTERWORD .................................................. 530

APPENDIX ONE: GERMAN UNITS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION ... 537
APPENDIX TWO: GERMAN CASUALTIES ........................... 561

BIBLIOGRAPHY .................................................. 572

viii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Battle of Trenton</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The State of Hesse</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The German States</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Battle of Long Island</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Philadelphia Campaign</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Battle of Brandywine</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations on the Delaware</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle of Monmouth</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action on Lake Champlain</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle of Bennington</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Leger's Route</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Battle at Freeman's Farm</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack on Forts Clinton and Montgomery</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Battle of Freeman's Farm</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seat of War in the Southern States</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siege of Charleston</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle of Guilford</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siege of Yorktown</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

THE GERMAN SOLDIERS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

by

Elliott Wheelock Hoffman

University of New Hampshire, December, 1982

The thirty thousand German soldiers who served with the British Army in the American Revolution enabled the British to attempt to successfully wage war without affecting the stability of British society. The six German states that sent troops to America did so as a result of hundreds of years of normal troop trade. Few Britons questioned the legality of the hiring of foreign troops. Britain could not fight the war without such troops and even the critics of the war acknowledged this truth. The Germans often made up half the forces facing Americans on the battlefield.

This dissertation analyzes the reasons for the troop trade, the treaties between Britain and the German states, the recruiting of the forces, and their organization for battle. This is followed by a narrative of battlefield actions from Long Island in August 1776 to Yorktown in October 1781 and stresses the contributions and limitations of the German troops. Finally, several chapters deal with
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American blacks as German soldiers, Germans' images of the
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The Germans represent just about the last major
European army to fight for mercenary payment, but they also
prefigure the professional peacekeepers of the twentieth
century, soldiers fighting not for national preservation,
but rather for some conception of societal order. In terms
of utility, the British made a good bargain.
CHAPTER ONE

Trenton: "Der Feind, der Feind, Heraus!"

Lieutenant Andreas Wiederhold of the Regiment Knyphausen stepped out of his guard hut along the Pennington Road and glanced to the northwest. He blinked as sleet flew into his eyes, burning them. Something was wrong. Men ran towards him, seeming like shadows in the early morning storm. Wiederhold yelled for the guards to turn out and fall into line. Americans! They could not be on this side of the Delaware! His men straggled out into the storm and lined up, but the shadow-men had come closer and began firing at the astonished Hessians. After his men had received three volleys, Wiederhold ordered them to fire in return. The men lost their loading and firing rhythm and began firing as fast as they could. The lieutenant saw that several units of the enemy had already worked around his flanks and he gave the order to retreat. The Germans continued firing as they fell back to Captain Altenbockum's picket post, but there were too many Americans and the pickets ran for their lives into Trenton, alerting as many sentinels as possible. ¹

The surprise of Wiederhold and his comrades was

¹
complete. This simply could not be happening to them. The enemy had all but been destroyed and these soldiers of Colonel Johann Gottlieb von Rall's brigade had been leaders in the destruction. The colonel, a hero of the Seven Years War and campaigns in Russia, had disembarked his three regiments—the Regiments Rall, von Lossberg, and von Knyphausen—on August 16, 1776 at Staten Island, and since then the eighteen hundred men had taken part in several major actions where their bravery and skill had defeated the American rebels. Rall's men had scored a signal triumph on Long Island, where they first faced the enemy, inflicting hundreds of casualties with trifling ease and loss. They had penetrated the American position and even defeated the vaunted American riflemen in the woods, the Americans' favorite fighting place. After crossing to the mainland, Rall's brigade had crushed American opposition at the Battle of White Plains and led the attack through burning woods up into the American defenses. Rall himself won acclamation at the next engagement, the reduction of Fort Washington. This day was the Hessians' greatest of the war, the day they overran three thousand Americans in a strongly fortified position on the banks of the Hudson River. Rall's men once again led the advance, pulling themselves uphill through the
bushes on hands and knees, in the face of heavy American musketry.

The Americans had been on the run since that action on November 16th. Rall had won the honor of maintaining the extreme right wing position, a position of great honor awarded only to the best troops. The British quickly ran George Washington's rag-tag army out of New Jersey and across the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. General William Howe then declared the campaign over for the season and set up an arc of positions through western New Jersey. Rall's men occupied the key position at Trenton.

Trenton lay at the head of sloop navigation of the Delaware River, being near ferries connecting the post road between New York and Philadelphia. The town contained one hundred and thirty houses on several streets that ran parallel to the central King and Queen Streets. Assanpink Creek ran through the southerly portion of the town, joining the Delaware not far away. Rall's men arrived on December 10th and the commander scattered his men throughout the town, placing the Regiments Rall and Lossberg in the northern part and the Regiment von Knyphausen in the southern part, where it guarded both sides of the bridge over Assanpink Creek. Rall stationed a line of pickets on the roads leading from Trenton to cover the area and prevent
THE BATTLE OF TRENTON
Dec. 26, 1776
at 8:30 o'clock A.M.

FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,
WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
any sort of surprise attack, not that the broken rebels could hope to mount one.\(^2\)

The Germans settled in for a peaceful encampment with all its dulling routine. Standing brigade orders called for the relief of the guards and sentinels at nine in the morning and of the pickets at four in the afternoon, when the password and countersign would be given out. Rall held a parade every morning at eleven, and even though he generally did not visit the picket stations, he did attend the parade. During the first week all soldiers not on guard duty fell out at four in the afternoon, stacked arms, placed a sentinel to guard the weapons, and then remained dressed until morning, ready to turn out at any sign of trouble. The artillery horses remained in harness, ready to move.\(^3\)

This constant readiness exhausted the troops; many of them ended up in the hospital. After the first week, in face of manpower shortages and no enemy action, Rall reduced the force on call to one regiment per night, letting two units sleep soundly.\(^4\)

Rall's brigade was supported by Colonel Carl Emil Kurt von Donop's grenadier brigade in Bordentown, some eight miles to the south. Donop served as area commander over Rall. The two brigades operated under orders of Major
General Sir James Grant. Grant ordered the Germans to tally the amount of supplies that could be taken from Jersey farmers in order to increase British food reserves. He cautioned them not to exceed the ration allowances to feed their own troops, but if they found supplies too much for a family's use, the Germans were to confiscate the excess as rebel property and issue it to the troops. Grant further requested the officers to give up some of their horses, because forage was running low and had to be cut back.⁵

Rall's men soon began to feel the pinch caused by lack of supplies. Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer and Major Karl Friedrich von Dechow, of the Regiment Knyphausen, went to Rall and asked for more clothing; the men especially needed underwear. Rall replied that he would run barefoot over the ice on the Delaware River to take Philadelphia, "and if Major Dechow did not want to share the honor, he might stay behind."⁶ Scheffer became so depressed at Rall's attitude that he worried himself sick. Dechow wanted to place the brigade's baggage in a better defensive position. Rall haughtily replied: "The rebels will not come. If they come, all they can hope for is a good retreat."⁷

Andreas Wiederhold bitterly noted Rall's insensitive attitude towards the exhaustion of the troops. Rall seemingly cared only for the parades. "Only the hautboists!
That was his affair! Trenton's children led and followed the daily parades, apparently being the only people in town who enjoyed living in a garrison. To make his King Street headquarters appear more military, Rall stationed his artillery there, instead of putting them in the field.

Wiederhold noted that Rall stayed up half the night enjoying the delights of the provincial town, and often slept late in the morning. Many mornings he could not attend guard mount because he was in his bath, forcing the troops to wait in the cold. Rall did not set up procedures for alarms, and, worst of all, refused to have fortifications dug to defend Trenton.

Captain Reinhard Jacob Martin of the Hessian engineers called on Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer on his way to Bordentown. While there, Major von Dechow and Major von Hanstein came in and predicted disaster, citing the lack of fortifications. Both expressed a desire to be relieved of any responsibility in case of disaster. Martin wrote a letter to the Hessian commander in America, Lieutenant General Philip von Heister, but did not mail it until Christmas day.

Trenton had no natural defenses, except for the Delaware River to the west. Many roads led into town, and although all had guard posts on them, none had prepared positions
from which to fight. Rall scoffed at the motley collection of rabble at the far side of the river. He echoed James Grant's contempt for the Americans and went as far as to disregard Donop's instructions to fortify the post. 11

A roving band of Americans shot and killed one of Rall's English dragoon messengers on December 20th. Grant wrote Donop, full of sarcasm, that "Colonel Rall sent a Detachment of a hundred men and a Cannon to Princeton. I don't touch upon that, but surely it was not necessary—it was making more of the Rebels than they deserve." 12 Wiederhold added that "the English laughed at us, and truly it was laughable." 13 The Jersey militiamen caused a flurry of letters between Grant and Donop, however Grant kept Donop appraised of enemy activity, slight as it was. Grant told Donop that "there is no Rebel force on this Side the Delaware, which will attempt to stand before Hessian Grenadiers under Your command...I can hardly believe that Washington would venture at this season of the Year to pass the Delaware..." 14 The letters passed back and forth, Grant's written in English, Donop's written in French. 15

British General Thomas Stirling wrote to Donop with alarming information on December 21st. A spy counted three thousand rebels operating near Mount Holly, New Jersey, near Donop's front; the agent further reported that
Washington might cross the Delaware to join those troops already in New Jersey. 16 The information became clearer after Basilla Haines returned from Mount Holly. He had walked around the American troops when they paraded. He counted only eight hundred, "near one Half Boys, and all of them Militia a very few Pennsylvanians excepted." Many of them were his neighbors from Gloucester, Egg Harbor, and Penn's Neck. 17 Donop moved out to disperse this group and dallied at Mount Holly for two days, leaving an eighteen mile gap between his troops and Rall at Trenton.

Grant wrote to Rall on December 21st to allay any alarm over losing an occasional dragoon. "I am sorry to hear your Brigade has been fatigued or alarmed, you may be assured that the Rebel army in Pennsylvania ...have neither Shoes or Stockings, are in fact almost naked, starving for cold, without Blankets, and very ill supplied with Provisions." There are only small, scattered parties on this side of the Delaware, not totalling three hundred men in all. Their principal objective is to pick up some of the light dragoons, but do not send a hundred men and a gun to deliver a dispatch; four or five dragoons will suffice, Grant added.

The situation changed within days, and Grant's Tory spies knew it. Jonathan Gamble wrote to Donop the day
before Christmas, warning of an attack on Trenton. Pennsylvanians were bringing in supplies and filling up American magazines. Washington had eight thousand men, most of whose enlistments would be up on New Year’s Day; something had to happen before then. Grant himself added that Washington had been told the British were weak at Trenton and Princeton. American General Lord Stirling had expressed a desire to attack these two places. "I don't believe he will attempt it, but be assured, that my information is undoubtedly true, so I need not advise you, to be upon your guard against an unexpected attack at Trenton."\(^{19}\)

Rall complained to Donop the same day that his troops were extremely fatigued because of the miserable weather and continuous service, and the brigade was in no condition to defend the post without relief and reinforcements. Only two officers in the Rall Regiment were fit for duty and the other regiments had similar complaints. The Regiment von Lossberg had suffered more than any other during the campaign and needed rest.\(^ {20}\)

The Germans celebrated Christmas Eve and Christmas Day as best they could in this foreign country; military operations continued at the same time. Major Dechow again advised Rall to send the baggage to the rear for protection,
a topic that broke into the Christmas revelry. Rall replied heatedly that "These country clowns shall not beat us!"²¹

A party of thirty Americans, who were scouting without Washington’s knowledge, shot up a Hessian picket post that afternoon, just for the pleasure of doing so. They wounded six Lossbergers and brought off six muskets as trophies.

Rall alerted all his troops and sent a patrol out, but the Americans had escaped to their boats at Johnson’s Ferry.

With this diversion quickly over, Rall dismissed the troops and dropped in at Mr. Abraham Hunt’s house for supper, wine, and cards. A Tory spy reached Hunt’s, but the Negro butler would not let him enter. He passed in a note describing Washington’s preparations to cross the Delaware; Rall folded it into his waistcoat pocket unread; it was later found unopened on his body. Rall went to bed late, full of wine; most of his men also slept soundly in the midst of a storm that turned to sleet. ²²

The storm hid George Washington’s preparations for a last-ditch attempt to win a victory in 1776. Washington mustered just over two thousand men, but with a sense of purpose that more than made up for any lack of numbers, he crossed from Pennsylvania to an area six miles north of Trenton. The Americans then marched in several columns towards the sleeping town, running into Lieutenant
Wiederhold's pickets at eight the next morning. With Wiederhold's men in flight, the Americans ran into Lieutenant Friedrich von Grothausen's Jager riflemen. Grothausen took a dozen men to meet the Americans, leaving Corporal Franz Bauer to take a position in the road behind him. Bauer's men, fighting from behind trees and fences, could barely pick out targets in the ice storm. Faced by hundreds of figures running towards them, and having artillery fire from across the Delaware drop very close, Bauer and his men turned and sprinted for Trenton, meeting Grothausen on the road, fleeing in front of overwhelming numbers of Americans. 23

Lieutenant Jacob Piel ran to Rall's house and banged on the door to wake the colonel. Piel had already tried twice since half past six to wake Rall, but to no avail. This time, Rall, clad only in his nightclothes, opened a window and called down to Piel, asking what was the matter. Piel indicated the musketry. Rall quickly dressed and came out and mounted his horse. The troops had likewise been awakened and began to form in the streets; the Regiment Rall formed along King Street and the Lossbergers fell in on Queen Street. The Regiment Knyphausen remained as a reserve, close to the bridge over the Assanpink. 24

Andreas Wiederhold reached the town with his pickets:
Nobody came to see what was going on, no one came to our assistance with reinforcements, and yet Rall's regiment had that night its turn to be on watch. I took up my position in front of one of the first houses of the town and fired at the enemy who was just forming in battle order on the upper side of the town. Only at this juncture the Brigadier made his appearance and he seemed quite dazed, I considered it my duty to report what had happened outside of the town, as he was ignorant of everything...  

The Americans quickly surrounded the town and began moving down the main streets to get at the trapped Germans. They fired artillery into the streets, cutting down many Hessians. Rall put himself at the head on his regiment and advanced with part of the Lossbergers up King Street, yelling "All who are my grenadiers, forwards!" Wiederhold added that "he tottered back and forth without knowing what he was doing." Alexander Hamilton's guns decimated the leading companies and fire from American infantry on the flanks dropped more men. The Hessians fired two volleys and then fell back in disorder, carrying the rest of the Lossberg Regiment with them. The Americans overran the artillery cutting down the gunners. Rall reformed his men, and with the band playing, led a Jayonet charge up Queen Street. Americans fired from the houses and the lots, again breaking up the attack. The Lossbergers lost thirty men before they could get within thrusting distance. Rall then ordered a retreat to where
the Regiment Knyphausen lay; just after giving the order
two bullets hit him in the side. He fell from his horse
and aides helped him into a house. 28

Rall's men retreated into town. They attempted to
break out along the New Brunswick Road, but were driven back
and finally surrounded by masses of American troops at a
range of about sixty feet. Both the Regiment Rall and the
Lossbergers surrendered. Lord Stirling received the
officers' swords. 29

John Sullivan's division took care of the Regiment
Knyphausen and Major von Dechow's battalion of the Lossberg
Regiment at the lower end of town. John Stark's men over-
rans the Hessians, mortally wounding Dechow. The Germans
tried to cross the Assanpink Bridge, but could not force
passage. Some tried to wade the creek through deep water,
only to meet Americans on the other side. The men finally
lowered their colors, the officers raising their hats on the
tips of their swords in token of surrender. The battle was
over; it was just nine o'clock. 30

Aftermath

Donop's grenadiers at Mount Holly found their position
menaced by the capture of Rall's brigade. General Leslie
sent word to Donop of Rall's capture and Donop fell back
to the east. 31 He occupied the town of Black Horse and
filled the houses on the ends of the village with hay and straw, telling the inhabitants that he would burn the village if attacked. On the night of December 26th, Donop fell back once more, carefully guarding a train of plunder made up of several hundred wagons. 32 Donop's position at Mount Holly had left Rall's brigade without support and overextended the entire British defense line in New Jersey. One of his officers muttered that the reason that Donop remained at Mount Holly was that the colonel, "who was extremely devoted to the fair sex, had found in his quarters the exceedingly beautiful young widow of a doctor. 33

Captain Johann Ewald, an expert on small-unit tactics, felt that the blame for Trenton included the extension of British lines, particularly by the forward move by Donop, "who was led by the nose to Mount Holly by Colonel Griffin and detained there by love," and partly due to the failure of the Jäger detachment under Lieutenant Grothausen to properly patrol and support the infantry pickets under Lieutenant Wiederhold and Captain Altenbockum. Ewald noted a week later that Grothausen was, "fortunately for him," shot dead at the Battle of Princeton along with several of his men. The captain felt that after the "Brave Colonel Rall" had been killed, his three regimental commanders "lost their heads." He mused that, "thus the fate of entire
kingdoms often depends upon a few blockheads and irresolute men."\textsuperscript{34}

The defeat at Trenton and the subsequent defeat at Princeton changed the course of the war. The British evacuated New Jersey and pulled back to a line of fortifications encircling Manhattan. British Captain John Bowater spoke for many British soldiers in writing that, "the Business was done if it had not been for this affair but the Rebels exposed their Prisoners and the Trophies of War.... By these and other artful methods, they prevailed on their People to Reinlist, and they have got a very considerable Army together...."\textsuperscript{35} Johann Ewald put the Trenton defeat in its proper light:

Thus had times changed! The Americans had constantly run before us. Four weeks ago we expected to end the war with the capture of Philadelphia, and now we had to render Washington the honor of thinking about our defense. Due to this affair at Trenton, such a fright came over the army that if Washington had used this opportunity we would have flown to our ships and let him have all of America. Since we had thus far underestimated our enemy, from this unhappy day onward we saw everything through a magnifying glass.\textsuperscript{36}

The defeat at Trenton cost the Hessians twenty-two men killed and ninety-two wounded. Nine hundred and forty-eight prisoners marched to Philadelphia on the first leg of the journey to prisons in Pennsylvania. The men were not freed until an exchange of prisoners in 1778. The material
losses numbered six brass cannon, six wagons, forty horses, 
a thousand muskets with bayonets and equipment, fifteen 
regimental and company colors, the complete instruments for 
two military bands, and forty hogsheads of rum, which 
Washington ordered poured out on the ground. The total 
American losses numbered two officers and two men wounded. 37

George Washington and Nathanael Green visited the 
dying Rall, who had been carried into the house of a Quaker. 
"In his last agony," wrote Corporal Johann Reuber, "he yet 
thought of his grenadiers, and entreated General Washington 
that nothing might be taken from them but their arms. A 
promise was given and was kept." 38 Washington recrossed 
the Delaware to Pennsylvania, leaving behind twenty-eight 
Hessians too badly wounded to be moved.

A Hessian courtmartial convened at Cassel in the spring 
of 1782 to try the officers who were captured at Trenton. 
Twenty-eight officers faced charges of misbehavior. The 
trial ended by laying the blame only on two men: Colonel 
Rall and Major Dechow, both of whom were six years in the 
grave. 39

Andreas Wiederhold concurred in Rall's guilt. The 
lieutenant lamented that he had ever seen Trenton, that 
place to "which our all too merry Brigadier is said to have 
brought us by his solicitation. How well he would have
done not to have solicited for it! He might perhaps have
kept and preserved the undeserved praise which was
ignorantly bestowed upon him. But here it all fell into
the mud!" As Wiederhold marched into captivity he mused
about Rall's place in history. "He died...and lies buried
in this place which he has rendered so famous, in the
graveyard of the Presbyterian church. Sleep well! dear
Commander! The Americans will hereafter set up a stone
above they grave with this inscription:

Hier liegt der Oberst Rall,
Mit ihm ist alles all!"

The Battle of Trenton marks a turning point in the
American Revolution because George Washington showed the
British and the Americans that his army was not dead and
could continue to fight on. The rebellion continued as
the British gave up New Jersey and retreated into their
arc of fortified camps outside of Manhattan.

Trenton has a great meaning for this study of the
German troops, for it is not only the first defeat suffer-
ed by them at the hands of the Americans, but the mistakes
of the campaign underscore the position of the Germans
within the British system. Rall's brigade had won several
easy victories since August 1776, but it put up a decidedly
poor fight when assaulted by an American force that had never before tasted victory. Operational failures led the way to defeat: poor communication among allies, misused intelligence, limited logistical support, and lack of proper defensive positions all took their toll. Yet, the chief failures came as results of less tangible ideas. The Germans and British underestimated the powers and intentions of their foes and so overextended their positions. Previous estimates of the abilities of Johann Rall proved inflated. A commander who led his regiment with success earlier in the campaign proved to be woefully inept at a higher command. The Battle of Trenton stands as the main factor in the change in British and American perceptions of German soldiers, and of German self image as well. The British began to see the Germans as less reliable allies. The Americans began to see them as human beings rather than unbeatable shock troops. The Germans began to question their reasons for being in America in the first place.

The critical need of a study of the Germans within the British Army is to measure how they functioned as allies and auxiliary soldiers. This study analyses the Germans as part of the British military establishment. The first three chapters deal with the British need for
soldiers, the German states and their armies, and the hiring of troops and their passage to America. The following three chapters are narrative accounts of the campaigns undertaken by the Anglo-German forces. The final five chapters are topical in nature and deal with German-British relations, the German military establishment, German soldiers' images of the American Revolution, German atrocities and plundering, and, finally, deserters and prisoners of war.

The long-held stereotypes of the German troops being slow-moving, dullwitted and particularly destructive are slowly being changed by modern historians. This study stresses that the British hiring of German mercenaries was particularly normal and the Germans made very good soldiers. The British could simply not fight in America without enlarging their army by hiring foreigners and the troops they hired were well-disciplined fighting men. The British could have won a military victory in 1776 with an army so constituted, that they did not win one was not the fault of their German allies. The Germans' reputation for war-like ferocity stood highest in the summer and fall of 1776, until the surrender at Trenton caused all "to fall into the mud", in Wiederhold's words. The Germans retained their fighting edge into 1778, but the long years of garrison inaction afterwards brought on morale and discipline problems for
Germans and British alike.

The morale problems caused by such a long war can be seen in both plundering done by the Germans and in the high number of deserters. British, American, and Germans all took part in extensive bouts of plundering and although the Germans certainly did their share they cannot be singled out by a judicious reading of the evidence as being the chief perpetrators of crimes against civilians. Their reputation as deserters also needs revision. Few men ran away from their units until 1778 and many, if not the most, deserted while prisoners of the Americans. Germans simply did not come to America to desert at the first (or second) opportunity.

This study deals with the cogent issues of German participation in the American Revolution to answer the questions of why such soldiers existed, why they were hired, who they were, how they fought on the battlefield, and how they responded to conditions in America. American historians have not addressed these issues in this century in any extensive manner. German historians who have are generally unread in America. The conclusions of a study dealing with eighteenth century mercenary soldiers have a very modern ring in that they were soldiers told by their leaders that they were fighting for world order. Yet, they fought far
from home for a cause which they little understood and became objects of antipathy for their foes, allies, and countrymen alike. The Germans who fought in the American Revolution were about the last major force in western history to fight as hired troops. However, they also prefigure twentieth century forces that fight for causes of societal order and stability and they take on increasing importance as examples of outsiders trying to contain a popular revolution.

Chapter Notes:

1 Andreas Wiederhold, "Rall at Trenton," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, XXII, (2, 1898), 465; Wiederhold, "Tagebuch eines Kuhrhessischen Officers," Bancroft Collection, New York Public Library, 7-11.


3 Slagle, p. 77.

4 Ibid.

5 Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS, 1248. Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, number CXX.


7 Slagle, pp. 79-80.

8 Wiederhold, "Rall," p. 462.

Slagle, p. 79.


Letter dated Dec. 21, 1776, In OWS 1248, number CXX.

Wiederhold, "Rall," p. 464.

Letter dated Dec. 17, 1776 in OWS 1248, number CXX.


Intelligence report dated 2 o'clock Saturday (Dec. 21, 1776) in OWS 1248, number CXX.

Undated report referring to Dec. 21, 1776, in OWS 1248, number CXX.

Letter Grant to Rall, Dec. 21, 1776, in Ibid.

Gamble to Donop, 24 Dec. 1776 and Grant to Donop, 24 Dec. 1776, in Ibid.

Bernard A. Uhlendorf, ed., Revolution in America, (Rutgers, 1957), pp. 78-79. This is a collection of the letters of Adjutant General Carl Bauermeister; hereafter cited as Bauermeister.


"Tagebuch des Corporals Johannes Reuber," Bancroft Collection, NYPL.

Wiederhold, "Rall," p. 466.
27 Ibid.

28 Ward, I. 298-300.

29 Ibid., p. 300.

30 Ibid., p. 301.

31 Leslie to Donop, December 27, 1776, OWS 1248, number CXX.

32 Johann Ewald, Diary of the American War, (Yale, 1979), pp. 42-43.

33 Ibid., p. 42.

34 Ibid., pp. 44-45, 49.

35 Letter dated May 22, 1777 in Marion Balderston and David Syrett, eds., The Lost War, New York, 1975, p. 126.

36 Ewald, p. 44.

37 Ward, I, p. 302:

38 Irving, pp. 457-458; Reuber, "Tagebuch."

39 "Report of the Court Martial on Trenton."

40 Wiederhold, "Rall," p. 462.

41 Quoted in Irving, p. 458. "Here lies Colonel Rall, it's all over for him!"
CHAPTER TWO

Great Britain and Her Mercenaries

And is, then, Albion still not yes replete
With blood of Germans brave and bold
Who fought in others' fights
For freedom doomed to meet
Their deaths, paid for by gold?

August Herman Niermeyer 1782

Thomas Gage faced a situation that he could not control. He had no control over the province of Massachusetts of which he was governor, except the portion occupied by his infantry regiments. It was the autumn of 1774 and royal authority had collapsed in New England.

Gage combined military and civilian power, for he had been commander-in-chief of British forces in North America since 1763 and he had recently replaced Acting Governor Thomas Hutchinson, Massachusetts' own native son who had left for England decrying the power of the mob. Gage had been in Boston since British regiments landed to keep order and enforce the Townshend duties in 1768. He faced the effects of the Boston Massacre, the Gaspee incident, the Tea Party, and finally the resistance to the Coercive Acts, known to Patriots as the Intolerable Acts. Three of the Coercive Acts arrived in August 1774 and Gage tried to put them into
effect. His spies told him that the Massachusetts militia was arming and training in earnest and Gage was not ready to declare war. He did not have enough troops. He built defensive positions in Boston and adopted a policy of conciliation. He had nine battalions and parts of two others in Boston, some 3,000 men in a city of about 15,000 people, but he was no fool; he knew that he faced countless thousands of armed men who could fight effectively as he had seen during the French and Indian War. He needed more men; Britain needed more men.¹

Gage wrote to Lord Barrington, the secretary of the army, on October 3, 1774 that to conquer America and put down rebellion effectively and "to prevent further bickerings, you should have an army near twenty thousand strong composed of regulars, a large body of good irregulars such as the German Huntsmen, Canadians, etc. and three or four regiments of light horse, these exclusive of a good and sufficient field artillery."² On October 30th he wrote Lord Dartmouth, secretary of state, that, "If force is to be used at length, it must be a considerable one, and Foreign Troops must be hired, for to begin with small numbers will encourage resistance and not terrify; and will in the end cost more blood and treasure."³

Thomas Gage certainly did not want to fight a war, but
he understood his lack of power in the face of extensive armed resistance. His calls for the hiring of mercenary soldiers came as no surprise to the leaders of the British establishment, for Britain had hired foreigners to help fight wars for well over a century. Although no British-hired mercenaries had ever fought in North America, such troops had fought in Europe and freed British regiments for operations in North America, particularly during the French and Indian War.

The unthinkable happened. British regulars fired on American militia on April 19, 1775 during an expedition to locate and destroy militia arms and equipment in nearby Concord. The Americans responded by defeating the expeditionary force and blocking the British in Boston. Gage found himself facing an army of over 10,000 men, who proved to be particularly skillful opponents in defensive operations. He cried out for more men on June 12th. "Nothing is to be neglected of which we can avail ourselves. Hanovarians, Hessians, and perhaps Russians may be hired, let foreigners act here to the eastward, particularly Germans, as they will find none of their country in these parts to seduce them. Spare arms should also be sent out, as people may be found hereafter willing to side with government."4
William Howe replaced Cage after the Battle of Bunker Hill and he immediately asked for 6-7,000 recruits and 4,000 foreign troops. A lower ranking officer in Boston, Richard Reene, wrote to Sir George Howard the same sentiments. "If it should be found inconvenient to spare any more British troops from home it is to be presumed you will take auxiliaries into pay. If that should be thought inexpedient you must share America with some foreign power and subdue the rest."  

It proved more than inconvenient to send more British troops, it proved almost impossible. The British Army numbered 48,677 in 1775, broken down into 39,294 infantry, 6,869 cavalry, and 2,484 artillery. Roughly 15,000 men were in England, 12,000 in Ireland, 8,000 in North America, and 10,000 in the West Indies, Africa, Minorca, Gibralter, and Scotland. A war office report pointed out that only 10,000 regulars could be sent to America along with 5-6,000 recruits in time for the 1776 campaign, precious few to help out during the siege of Boston. The King was not ready to raise extra regiments that took about a year to put into the field. In fact, the government raised only one new regiment before 1778, when the disaster at Saratoga forced the raising of thirty-five new regiments of infantry and dragoons.

The power structure of the British Empire comprised
many differing interest groups, one of which was the army. Lord North, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, served as prime minister. His was a strong, if erratic personality, and he could manipulate both Lord Barrington and Charles Jenkinson, weak individuals who served in succession as secretaries of war. Jeffery Amherst became commander-in-chief of the army in 1768, but he did not offer decisive leadership during the Revolution. His opposite in the Royal Navy was Lord Sandwich, First Lord of the Admiralty. Amherst and Sandwich coordinated the logistics of the services. The Treasury Board got provisions for the army, while the navy supplied its own needs. This arrangement became so ineffective that after 1779 the navy also supplied the army. A Board of Ordnance coordinated the stores and equipment of both services. The competition among the Treasury, Navy, and Ordnance boards for transport and supplies complicated the administration of the war in America.\textsuperscript{9}

The British cabinet planned and approved policy and the secretaries of state executed the plans through orders and resolutions to the Treasury, Admiralty and Ordnance Boards and the commander in chief of the army. The cabinet comprised the First Lord of the Treasury, who presided, the three secretaries of state, the Lord Chancellor, the Lord President of the Council, the Lord Privy Seal, and the
First Lord of the Admiralty. The commander-in-chief of the army joined the cabinet in 1778. The cabinet's decisions were embodied in a draft dispatch forwarded to the King for approval; all ministers shared the responsibility for the cabinet's actions.  

The various Executive Departments operated below the cabinet, being controlled by the secretaries of state. The army needed much reform. The engineers and royal artillery came under the purview of the Ordnance Department, while the rest of the army was controlled by the commander-in-chief. The Secretary of War, a figure rarely in the cabinet, supervised the army's administration and finance. The army suffered from a complete lack of uniformity in drill and doctrine; neither the Secretary of War nor the commander-in-chief was responsible for strategy or the strength of the forces.  

The secretaries of state formed the link holding the British war machine together. There were three secretaries: one each for Northern Europe, Southern Europe, and North America. These three offices translated planning into preparation—dividing military plans along the same geographic lines as their mandates. The secretaries controlled supply, movement, transportation, and preparations. Lord Rockford controlled the Southern Department in
1775, being replaced that fall by Lord Weymouth; Lord Hillsborough succeeded Weymouth in 1779. Lord Suffolk ran the Northern Department until his death in 1779. Lord Starmont replaced him. The Northern Department conducted the negotiations that led to the hiring of the German troops in 1776. Lord Dartmouth was Secretary of State for North America, running the American Department until replaced late in 1775 by Lord George Germain. These secretaries not only cut up responsibility for military operations, but also contended with the various executive departments. Piers Mackesy, the historian most noted for his study of British wartime administration, has depicted the Treasury as being in conflict with the army over transport and supplies, the Ordnance Department as grossly inefficient, and the Admiralty as wayward and independent. Thus the British began the American Revolution at cross purposes, a confusion that had no little effect on their losing the war for America.

If the organization of the British government created ambiguities, tensions, and strains on the military establishment, the aristocratic structure of British society affected discipline and promotions, particularly among the officers. Favor counted most. A man's advancement depended upon his social contacts and his ability to
purchase a commission, rather than upon experience and bravery. The patronage system disrupted the ministry, for it played ministers off against each other in trying to advance different interests. George III took his military prerogatives seriously, often placing military interests above political calculations. He resisted raising new regiments for the friends of ministers.  

Members of both houses of Parliament condemned the raising of troops without their consent as illegal, unconstitutional, and a breach of the fundamental privileges of Parliament. They objected that many of those who raised volunteer units were "Jacobites, Tories and Highlanders," whose loyalty to Parliament was suspect, and contractors "who were under the immediate influence of the crown." Commons adopted a resolution that the private subscriptions for the purpose of raising troops must state explicitly that any such corps would be employed "for such uses as the Parliament should think fit."  

A common eighteenth century conception painted the British soldiers as being from the dregs of society. Enlistment attracted only those to whom army pay looked better than their poverty, and criminals who could win their freedom by enlisting. The draft law provided for inducting only beggars, fortune tellers, and any idle,
unknown, or suspect fellows who could not give an account of themselves, or those who had been in jail or known as incorrigible rogues or poachers. Of the 15,000 recruits inducted in 1778, some two-thirds were Scots, sons of a depressed agrarian population. Between 1775-1777 over 7,000 Irish enrolled in the British Army. Scotland remained the best source of recruits during the war. British officers found it impossible to recruit successfully in Ireland because Irish crops were very good in the 1770's; this was not true in Scotland, where many enlisted in order to reach America.

The British used recruiting parties for "beating up for volunteers" to recruit for standing regiments and to fill up newly-raised units. The recruiters offered a bounty of a guinea and a half as soon as a man signed the roster; out of this sum the soldiers deducted the cost of outfitting the recruit with a shirt and a pair of shoes. During the American Revolution nobles and towns were allowed to raise regiments and they would underwrite the cost of recruiting. In December 1775 Adjutant General Edward Harvey lamented the "sad work everywhere in recruiting...In these damned times we must exert zeal." After 1778 the British raised their bounty to £3 and set up a local levy of the unemployed and the poor. A parish received 20s for every man who
enlisted from it. The army also resorted to press gangs.\textsuperscript{19}

The press system was used in both 1778 and 1779, being aimed particularly at "non-privileged elements of society," to conscript those who received the benevolence of the poor laws and were a burden to society. Under the act of 1778 the clergymen of each parish had to account for the parish's poor laws. Each parish had to draft one man for each £100 of poor rates collected in the three previous years. The Press Act of 1779 netted only 2,200 men; its chief importance lies in the stimulus it gave to regular recruiting. This can be measured in that 1,981 men volunteered to enter the army in the eleven weeks before the act went into effect. During the eleven week period of the act the number of volunteers rose to 3,008 men. Only 1,925 volunteered during the eleven week period after the termination of the Press Act. Just a small number of the pressed men went to North America; most served in the West Indies, Minorca, and Gibraltar.\textsuperscript{20}

Great Britain underwent some fundamental demographic changes during the second half of the eighteenth century. There was a sharp reduction in death rates after the 1740's and a substantial rise in the birthrate after 1750. Historians have questioned just when the Industrial Revolution forced the dislocation of society and its effect
on the cloth trade, manufacturing, and agriculture. Rising prices encouraged more production after 1760, but the prosperity was not general; many people were squeezed off their land or out of their traditional jobs. While many Englishmen retained a reluctance to join the army, many of the professional soldiers and recruits had lost their vocations as textile workers and joined the service in order to survive. 21

Although mercenaries and social misfits comprised a sizable percentage of a unit's strength, some soldiers were men of "respectable origins, decent by birth and character." The majority were obliged to enter the army, some by state coercion, some by economic constraints. 22 The soldiers still ranked quite low on the British social scale. In the words of some in the Royal Navy: "A messmate before a shipmate, a shipmate before a stranger, a stranger before a dog, a dog before a soldier." 23

By 1781 the British Army, for all the pressing and recruiting parties, was short of its authorized strength by 27,000 men. The government formed new regiments, but the old ones wasted away. It became very difficult to obtain recruits after Saratoga, criminals, Irish Catholics, Scots, and short-term service could not fill the army. The recruiters widened the age and physical limits
restrictions, but this hardly increased a regiment's fighting abilities. 24 Also, after 1778 the British had to keep many regiments in Europe to face the threat of France, Spain, and Holland. The Empire simply could not meet all its own military needs without resorting to total war. 25

The British leadership felt that the colonies had the potential to raise 150,000 men to oppose their military campaigns, but that these rebels could never stand up to concerted British strength. Governor Martin of North Carolina remained convinced of Loyalist support in his colony and waited only for military power to initiate an action against the rebels. Dunmore of Virginia said that he could regain his colony with just 300 men. In August 1775 the British resolved to increase the size of their own army to 55,000 men and began to send out feelers to see if they could hire mercenary troops. 26

European Mercenaries

Medieval armies had been based on feudal vassalage, on popular levies, and on the growing use of mercenaries, men who fought for the highest bidder. Feudal vassalage, at least in its military role, ceased to function by the end of the fifteenth century. Popular levies did not die out, but they became increasingly ineffective. Only mercenaries
remained as a potent military force and such groups
dominated the European military scene down to the seventeenth century. The English crown employed them during the
Hundred Years' War. As that war spilled over into many
corners of Europe, the use of mercenaries spread with it.27

Mercenaries had developed in Italy after the thirteenth century. Two centuries of Italian civil wars among the city-states exhausted the native population and the cities resorted to hiring mercenaries. Italian mercenaries formed closed corporations, elected their own leaders, and operated as independent powers. These condottiere fought for whatever spoils they could steal from civilians. The booty was handed over to the captain who distributed it among the men according to fixed ratios. Over time the condottiere began working for themselves, rather than for a particular city and did not disband after the completion of campaigns. The nationality of these mercenaries changed with the centuries. Most of them were English or German in the fourteenth century; in the fifteenth the French predominated. The fourteenth century gave a new addition to European warfare: the first national army, the Swiss. It was made up of the burghers of the towns and the free peasants. All physically fit Swiss males had to serve in it. The Swiss managed to defeat the
less organized forces of the Holy Roman Empire and became such great warriors that the Swiss leaders hired the troops out for pay. The Swiss maintained a supremacy of the battlefields of northern Italy and Burgandy for over a century. 28

The war contractors that had supplied the Italians with mercenary armies drifted north and Germany became the most popular area for recruiting. As in Italy, there was no monarchical power strong enough to control this growth. Outside of Switzerland, where the cantons managed to become troop-suppliers, military leaders, acting themselves as general agents, contracted with rulers to recruit an army, or with officers to recruit regiments or companies. The contract with a warlord included the Kapitulation, which spelled out the conditions of the agreement, and a patent issued by the sovereign. These contracts often specified the areas in which recruiting could be done. The sovereign paid the leader a sum to defray the costs of recruiting. The sovereign usually had to borrow money against his lands and possessions in order to finance the recruiting and employment of mercenaries. He could also tax his own populace and issue orders that the mercenary army could live off the produce of the countryside. 29

The war contractors could be generals leading their
own armies, colonels of regiments, and even captains of free companies. In practice, regiments and companies became property and could be bought or sold, or even left in a will. Their loyalty depended totally on the generosity of the highest bidder. The kings of France, Spain, England and Sweden managed to retain control over their generals by limiting the hiring of mercenaries only on regimental or company level. In the smaller German states after 1650, the rules, who had control over his own army, turned war into an industry, hiring out to others like Frederick I of Prussia, who hired some of his regiments out to the Holy Roman Emperor. 30

Some smaller German states kept oversized armies for hire; by the eighteenth century this tradition went far back into history. The political fragmentation after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 played off many small states against each other. Many Catholic sovereigns in southern Germany found that they had a reliable buyer in the person of the King of France. The Protestant princes sold to the English or sent their troops against Europe's common enemy, the Turks. The Turkish threat, plus nearly constant warfare between France and England from 1689-1783, offered ample opportunities to sell troops to the major powers. 31

After Hesse, a state in central Germany, sold soldiers
to Venice in the 1660's, to the nearby duchy of Brunswick in the 1670's, and again to Venice to fight the Turks in the 1680's, George I hired 12,000 Hessians to protect his throne. This marked the beginning of a fifty-year relationship between Hesse and Britain that saw the Germans being hired, or at least retained, so as to keep them out of unfriendly hands. All wartime British administrations bought German troops for use on the continent and in Britain, particularly in 1745 and 1756. The decision to call on aid from Germany in 1775 was a result of normal British military and political practice; the difference was that mercenaries had never been sent to North America before the American Revolution. Whatever the thought of the Americans, British leaders who remembered the employment of Hessians against Scots at Culloden could see little difference in employing them against American rebels.

The hiring of Hessians received criticism from some English during Waipole's and Pitt's ministries and although the Hessians and English had a long history of working together militarily, the link was not automatic. The English did not first approach the Hessians in 1775, but rather looked farther afield to the Russia of Catherine the Great.

George III and Catherine were on very good terms
because England had virtually consented to the partition of Poland in 1772. The Treaty of Kutschuk, or Kainardsche, with the Turks in 1774 had left Russia with a powerful standing army once the operations against the Turks drew to an end. Gunning, the English minister to Russia, began negotiations for twenty thousand men in the summer of 1775 and reported to the King that Catherine had agreed to the treaty. He pushed the negotiations, but found that Catherine really would not furnish the soldiers. Although rebuffed this time, some Britons continued to think of Russia as a potential source of troops, including aide-de-camp Friedrich Muenchhausen, who noted that General William Howe asked George Germain on July 7, 1777 for a corps of ten thousand Russians because of the increased fighting power of the Americans. Germain did not try to contact Russia concerning this request. 35

The British next contacted Holland for a brigade of Scots in Dutch service. The Dutch refused. George III then took five regiments from his territory of Hanover and dispatched them to Gibralter, where they took the place of English regiments. 36 By the end of the summer of 1775, inquiries concerning service of hired troops began to come from several German states.

Negotiations began in earnest by January 1776 and with-
in three months treaties had been signed with Hesse-Cassel, Hesse-Hanau, Waldeck, and Brunswick, states in the central portion of today's Federal Republic of Germany. Early in 1777 the British signed a treaty with Anspach-Bayreuth, a divided territory in the northern part of Bavaria, and, finally late in 1777, with Anhalt-Zerbst, a very small state contiguous to Brandenburg in eastern Germany. 37

Lord North moved that the treaties between the King and the Duke of Brunswick, the Prince of Hesse-Hanau, and the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel be referred to the Committee of Supply to be promulgated. He defended the treaties in Parliament as military necessities and as the best and most speedy means of forcing the American colonies to obey lawful constitutional authority. North pictured the German soldiers as cheaper than native troops and indicated that previous treaties with German princes had been much dearer. He ended his appeal by saying that such a powerful force would probably cause the collapse of the rebellion without further bloodshed. 38

The ensuing debates in both houses of Parliament fell along party lines with the Tories in full support of the hiring of foreign troops. Debate in the House of Commons began with Mr. Cornwall, who had served in the German pay office during the Seven Years' War. He maintained that the
treaties' terms were quite favorable to the Crown. George Germain defended the treaties on the grounds of necessity, echoing Lord North. He listed the precedents to show that in every war and rebellion England had used foreigners to help fight her battles. Lord Barrington even though he disapproved of many policies of the administration, also supported the treaties out of utility. Native recruits, he thought, simply could not be found in sufficient numbers. 39

The Whigs replied by attacking the treaties' various points, condemning both the general concept of mercenary soldiers and particular aspects of these documents. Lord John Cavendish stated that Britain was disgraced in the eyes of all Europe. He particularly objected to the treaty with Hesse-Cassel that gave the soldiers of that state the right to operate together in a body under their own lieutenant general. What controls would British officers have over those twelve thousand troops? he asked. Lord Irnham stated that he felt that the German princes had no authority to hire their men without permission from the Holy Roman Emperor and pictured them as blood-thirsty money grappers. Mr. Seymour called the whole notion of favorable terms suspect. When had a treaty ever cost the nation more for similar bodies of troops? James Luttrell pointed out that there were already a hundred and fifty thousand
Germans settled in America and that the German soldiers were more than likely to desert. Edmund Burke felt that for every thousand foreigners, Britain could raise fifteen hundred natives at the same cost.  

In spite of a vociferous opposition, the measures passed Commons 242 to 88 votes.

The House of Lords produced similar debate and the same result. The Duke of Richmond led off on March 5, 1776 by entering a motion to countermand the march of the troops of Hesse-Cassel, Hesse-Hanau, and Brunswick and give immediate suspension of hostilities in America as a step towards reconciliation with the colonists. Through his verbal histories of the treaties between Hesse-Cassel and Britain, he demonstrated that the landgraves had raised their demands over time and still extorted better terms by always establishing the previous extortion as a precedent. This was a mercenary bargain, "for the taking into pay a certain number of hirelings, who were bought and sold like so many beasts for slaughter." Richmond criticized the treaties point by point and ended by declaring that the war would bring cruelty, civil rage, and devastation unprecedented in history. He suggested in closing that the militia should be called out to cover the garrisons, whose troops could then be sent to America.
The Earl of Suffolk declared that Richmond's objections were unsubstantial and the treaties were not abnormal. In fact, the treaties were most useful and the rebellion had rendered them necessary. We need the troops, said Suffolk, and we got them cheap! The Earl of Coventry replied that the treaties were impolitic and unwise. Further, Americans should not have the same government as in Britain, but should have a sort of territorial government. The Earl of Carlisle undercut Coventry by saying that Britain must strain every nerve to keep America—and this included hiring mercenaries.

Most of the remainder of the arguments echoed what had already been said. The Duke of Cumberland did not want to see Brunswickers used in the defense of liberties, but the Duke of Chandois answered again that the treaties were necessary and constitutional.

The Duke of Manchester summoned up old Whig fears by calling the use of Hanovarians in Gibraltar without Parliament's consent an "unconstitutional doctrine." British rulers sought to abridge British as well as American liberties. The hiring of mercenary Germans would not bring victory, he added, because American can raise many men; those who think the continent can be subdued are in for a surprise. The Earl of Effingham followed this
lead by declaring that one year's pay and levy money for 17,000 mercenaries equalled the same expenses for 40,000 English troops. The Germans, he added, will have too much power in America and will not end this "unnatural war." The Earl Temple continued by attacking the Ministry. "I have not a good opinion of the King's servants," he stated.

The Earl of Talbot then declared that Parliament had a right to govern America and Viscount Townshend added that the King could use foreigners without the consent of Parliament. Lord Lyttelton stated that the Americans' insolence called for the most effective and decisive measures, a feeling that permeated all Tory responses.

The Duke of Grafton, the Earl of Shelburne, and Lord Camden underscored the Whig position. Grafton called the honesty of the Ministry in question. "It has been indeed the uniform practice, since the commencement of this business, to give false information, or proceed on none." Shelburne stated that the British could fight this war without the assistance of "two paltry German states" and still keep men home in agriculture and industry. This had been done in the Seven Years' War. The treaties, further, had been brought about by men with German connections.

Lord Camden ended the debate by asking if "the whole of
this transaction be not indeed a compound of the most solemn
mockery, fallacy, and gross imposition, that was ever
attempted to be put on a House of Parliament?" Are there
"men...not to be had in this country, sufficient to give
efficacy to the necessary powers of the state...?" Cannot
Britain be powerful without mercenaries, he asked, for
"should the time ever arrive, in which our existence as a
nation depended upon the assistance of foreign hirelings,
from that instant I should deem our consequence as a
sovereign state, and our liberties as a free people, no
more."\textsuperscript{52}

Richmond then called for a vote on his measure to turn
back the troops, but the House of Lords voted it down 100
to 32 votes. The Whigs fell back on drafting a protest that
stated the danger and disgrace of hiring foreigners, called
for a conciliation with the colonies, and predicted that
the colonists would now fight harder and make alliances with
France, Spain, and Prussia. The protest contained a fourth
point, calling the mutual defense pact with Hesse-Cassel
to be unwise.\textsuperscript{53} Only the treaty with Cassel called upon
England to step in if that state was attacked while its
troops were in America.

The objections to the treaties included, then, the
great cost of hiring foreigners, the likelihood of
extensive destruction in America, and the potential of greater American resistance. All of these came to pass. The Whigs were further frightened over prospects of the loss of traditional liberties in England. The potential was there as well.

Lord Suffolk became the leader in calling for the mercenaries. The Whigs hurled contempt on the German princes and soldiers. In 1778, during a debate over modifications to the treaties to increase the numbers of troops, Suffolk answered the Tories. "Who saved the kingdom from French invasion in 1748? and helped England to save Hanover, Brunswick, and Hesse from submission and to win at last a satisfactory and honorable treaty? Who have enabled the British to hold their own in America? The German soldiers, who today are said to be worthy of no good word." Suffol and the Tories had the weight of history on their side, for the use of foreign troops was commonplace in British history. The total cost of the 29,867 troops amounted to nearly seven million pounds sterling by the end of the war. This amount of money gave the British sufficient strength to carry on several major campaigns without disrupting society with an extensive draft. As Lord Denbigh wrote to his son Lieutenant William Feilding in Boston on March 3, 1776, "You will have in the
course of this summer every assistance this country can
give you; the House of Commons yesterday voted 17,000
foreigners by a majority of 242 against 88,"56 Every
assistance in this case amounted to a normal British trans-
action that neither undermined the strength of the country
as a whole nor filled the forces with untrained levies.
From the point of utility, the British made a good bargain.

Mercenaries or Not?

The common concept of a mercenary is of a soldier who
fights for personal gain, without thought to the cause in
which he is employed. Americans labeled the Germans
mercenaries; so did many British. So have historians. Yet,
the German troops got precious little out of the bargains
between their princes and the King of England. The British
paid them on the British pay scale that was somewhat higher
than normal German pay. The real profits, however, went
into the princes' pockets. Most of the units employed in
America, with the exception of the Waldeck and Anhalt-
Zerbst regiments and some minor Hessian units, were
regular standing units or organized militia. Their
princes pointed and the men marched. They had no choice,
but only followed orders.

The official term used to designate such foreign
soldiers was that of auxiliary troops. Auxiliary designated them as foreigners rather than marking them as soldiers used only in rear areas in the place of native soldiers. The Germans fought beside British troops and sometimes made up half the forces facing Americans on the battlefield.

The term mercenary has been retained in this dissertation as a traditional designation of the Germans. It has not been used in a prejorative sense. The German soldiers functioned in a normal eighteenth century manner and their situation certainly has modern parallels. They would fight very well indeed, but the American Revolution was not their war.

As soon as the treaties were signed, the Germans began mustering their forces under the supervision of British officers. By late spring some seventeen thousand Germans began to march towards coastal towns to board transports to carry them to America. As Lord Denbigh said, it was the greatest assistance that Britain could offer the beleagured troops already in America.

3 Ibid., I, 380.
4 Ibid., I, 684.


14 Frey, p. 4.

15 Johannes Schwalm, *The Hessian*, (Millersville, 1976), p. 7; Frey, p. 4, Claims that many British soldiers were men caught in the throes of the Industrial Revolution and had no other recourse than to join the Army.

16 Frey, p. 4; Curtis, pp. 53-54.

17 Frey, pp. 3-4; Curtis, p. 55.

18 Curtis, p. 51.


20 Frey, pp. 4-5.
21 Ibid., pp. 5-7; Friedrich Kapp, Der Soldatenhandel deutscher Fürsten nach Amerika, (Berlin, 1874), pp. 24-25.

22 Quoted in Frey, p. 4.

23 Curtis, p. 55.

24 Mackesy, p. 368.

25 Ibid., pp. 110-111.


33 Higginbotham, p. 130.


37 See Chapter Two for an account of these states and the specifics of the treaties.


55 Greene, p. 211; Lowell, pp. 282-283.

CHAPTER THREE

The German States and the Treaties

Germany? Tell me where is it?
For I do not know how to find it.
Where culture begins, politics end.

Friedrich Schiller

Germany has always been a confusing land of immense contradictions, a land and a people that have given the world great good and much evil, a land of breathtaking beauty and unfortunate ugliness, a nation rich in culture and poor in politics. At the time of the American Revolution Germany existed only in the mind, behind the shadow of the powerless Holy Roman Empire and its hundreds of sovereign states. Eighteenth century Germans would have been hard pressed to define the reality of Germany; certainly Americans could not. Germany was neither the political state of German-speaking people, nor the lands controlled by the Hapsburg Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II, who was more king of Austria than he was emperor of Germans.

The German-speaking world was divided between two major powers, Prussia in the north and Austria in the south. Between them lay three hundred sovereign principalities and about fourteen hundred possessions of nobles.
Many of the miniature lands had its own prince and its own army, and vied with the others to emulate the courts of Berlin and Vienna. Some of these states often had more officers than enlisted men on their rolls.¹

The Holy Roman Empire stretched from Trieste on the warm Adriatic Sea to Brussels on the English Channel, and Lübeck on the low, gray Baltic coast. Included within its geography lay West Prussia, the Rhineland, Bavaria, Saxony, Bohemia, Moravia, Austria, Baden, and what today is Belgium. Most of the people in these places spoke German, but certainly the people of Belgium, Bohemia, Moravia, and northern Italy did not. Areas of a German-speaking populace extended beyond the lines of the Empire to include East Prussia, Switzerland, Alsace, Lorraine, and portions of Hungary. The Holy Roman Empire and the German-speaking world did not coincide; it did not matter, for by the time of the American Revolution the Empire had been dead for over a century, although its spirit had been held earth-bound.²

The German-speaking world faced the nation-state of France on its western border. Louis XIV's armies had devastated western Germany; some scars remain to this day. By the mid-eighteenth century French culture dominated German thinking, just as French arms awed German
military men. To the southeast lay the Turks, a foe
Germans had fought for centuries; the Turks were distinctly
on the retreat, although a slow retreat indeed. Germans
had driven eastward against the Slavs for centuries and had
made inroads against the Poles and Bohemians. Indeed, the
name of the state of Prussia came from an extinct tribe,
one that had lost out to German conquerors. 3

The Holy Roman Empire retained the legacy of the
original Roman Empire, at least in the minds of some,
although this ancient link was tenuous at best. The
territorial princes had emerged in the course of the Middle
Ages and had originally been the servants of the emperor
and his court. These princes transformed their feudal
privileges into territorial grants vested in their persons
and families. In the case of Bavaria territorial rule
coincided with part of the old German tribal region. In
other places the tribal identity existed only in the name
of the region. Even the Austrians were really Bavarians,
transformed a bit by geography and modern history. By the
sixteenth century the emperors had lost their visions of a
great German empire. With the Reformation breaking out
after 1520, the emperor had to choose to lead or crush the
Protestants. Emperor Charles V, also king of Spain, decided
to crush the movement, an attempt that fragmented further
German culture flourished in the Middle Ages. Southern and western Germany had often been in the forefront of European history and sometimes led religious and secular attainments. The Thirty Years' War ended this leadership. The struggle broke out in 1618 as a conflict between the Austrian Hapsburgs and the Kingdom of Bohemia. It ended as a war between France, Sweden, and Holland on one side and Austria and Spain on the other, with Germany on both sides and in the middle. The Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 partitioned Germany into Protestant and Catholic sections and underscored the various princes' local autonomy. The chief loser was German civilization. A generation of warfare destroyed a rich and flourishing country. "In the end, when all countries are reduced to ashes we shall have to make peace," wrote Marshall Wallenstein, the great commander of the Empire's troops. And Wallenstein certainly was responsible for his share of the ashes.

The Treaty of Westphalia helped give rise to the rivalry between Prussia and Austria as centers of power. Austria looked more and more to the east, against the Turks, and Prussia began to gather power in the Baltic. The Holy Roman Emperor was also king of Austria, but he had few powers outside of his own possessions. He could never exert
enough power and influence to achieve sovereignty within Germany for himself. This apparently delicate balance of power and influence was quite difficult to maintain. German princes could play politics with the emperor to gain stature for themselves, but most could ignore imperial edicts as they saw fit.8

Under the shadow of rivalry between Prussia and Austria, the other states of Germany lost more and more power. They had neither the resources nor the population to make them first-rate nation states. Even the larger states of Bavaria, Saxon, and Hanover gradually lost political and economic power. Most states, even the smallest, seemed not to be aware of the insignificance of their power. Their pretentions to power grew. The rulers of these states imposed the greatest despotism on their subjects, using them in all manner of ways, including renting them out as part of another’s war machine. The lower nobility and portions of the middle class, who felt in the impact of the enlightenment, did, at times, oppose powers of absolutism. But only in Württemberg and Mecklenburg did these elements place some limits on the princes’ powers.9

The great number of petty courts gave rise to cultural rivalries in areas of architecture, music, and drama. The princes spent large sums to construct beautiful castles,
residences, art galleries, parks, theaters, operahouses, and other public buildings. The little German states set the stage for the flourishing of German culture in the late eighteenth century, but all too often the funds came from the selling of soldiers.  

Prussia became the model that other states emulated. The Prussian state forged a strong army. The needs of the army determined, to a considerable extent, the social, political, and economic life of the country. The army was the only force that held the country together in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Frederick the Great, touted as an enlightened despot, held very conservative ideas about the place of the army in society. Prussia's political power centered in the king supported by the aristocrats who held great estates. The urban middle class, the burgers, held no political power. The peasants who worked the land were serfs and counted for nothing. One sixth of suitable men served in the army (about 4 percent of the population), but two-thirds of Prussia's budget went for the military. Prussia, and the rest of Germany, was overwhelmingly an agricultural country and so the countryside had to bear the brunt of taxes to pay for the military. The peasants paid the most taxes and made up the enlisted men. The aristocrats formed the officer corps.  

The social structure of the country and the rank system of the army strengthened each other. Those in charge of the estates also led the battalions. But it is difficult to maintain an army on a rural economy and the Prussians resorted to brutal discipline to forge their fighting forces. The peasants intent on staying out of the army resorted to self-mutilation, bribery, and flight. The Prussian soldiers in turn enforced more brutal recruiting procedures—the slaughter of peasants was not uncommon. The news of recruiting parties led who villages to flee, looking somewhere for sanctuary. The enforced recruiting methods disrupted the economy; press gangs even took men from the estates. Some land became depopulated and those who remained ruined themselves by bribery to escape the press. Taxation revenues declined. By the time Frederick II gained Prussia's throne, some elements of society saw the need for reform.  

The petty courts tried to copy Prussia's mode of political life and kept war as a necessary part of their political system. Europeans admired Frederick the Great as being other than a Prussian warlord like his antecedents, and viewed him as a champion of western culture. The Prussian created tension within the rest of Germany by his struggles between peace and war and other states tried to
copy his army, even though "playing soldier" often bankrupted their treasuries. The Seven Years' War brought military wreckage to most of Germany; many armies deteriorated in strength and prestige, particularly the forces of Bavaria and Württemberg, so much so that England did not even contact these states in 1776, although Württemberg would have welcomed a military treaty.13

Frederick did undertake many necessary reforms to make his army more palatable as an institution and less of a threat to the economy and stability of Prussia. The soldiers got time off to go home and help with the harvest, a move that the peasant enlisted men used both as home leave and a source of additional income. As the economy improved Frederick hired mercenaries to ease the burden placed on the peasants of enforced military service. The officers initiated both of these actions, for their income was augmented as the income of their estates improved. Earlier, the Prussians introduced the Canton System in 1733, wherein recruiters enrolled all the men in each canton for military service. The men served in the army from eighteen months to two years and then went home to serve as a sort of reserve force, although in eastern Prussia these reservists had to wear their uniforms all the time. The king also demanded a professional officer class loyal to himself. The
officers received tax exemptions and could, unofficially, make more money by bribes (for leaves or marriage) or by issuing shoddy material and food. But they were also trained and schooled in their duties and forced to become proficient in their profession. The German states that sent troops to America copied these reforms.  

Desertion was the major problem of eighteenth century armies and had a profound effect on tactics. An army could not afford to move by night or through heavy woods or forest. The troops moved in one large mass in open country and had to march very slowly, about seventy-five paces per minute. Mounted troops both scouted to find the enemy and to apprehend deserters, but even reconnaissance patrols frequently headed for home and therefore there could be only extremely limited intelligence gathering. The armies brought extensive baggage trains with them that slowed their march even more. Because of all these factors, eighteenth century warfare was really won by a series of tactical maneuvers coupled with diplomatic moves, not by total war. Many small wars ended with the victors putting the losers at a tactical disadvantage that ended a campaign with little loss of life on the battlefield.  

Most German states had mercenaries for sale, a tradition that went back to the times of the Roman Empire.
The selling of mercenaries contrasted with the rise of a mood of paternalism and humanitarianism among German princes. The petty princes had to think about their public images, even though absolute ruler themselves; they had to pose as natural guardians of the people, as being unselfish benefactors who put the public good ahead of political power. German intellectuals condemned the selling of mercenaries, especially after the treaties between Great Britain and the six states had been concluded. Johann Herder, Immanuel Kant, Johann Fichte, Christian Schubart, Johann Goethe, and Friedrich Schiller all questioned the troop trade. Germans outside of the six states could point their fingers, but the effect was nil. 17

Some Germans fancied that ties between American and Germany existed. Germans had emigrated to North America all through the century, but not at an even rate. Between seventy and eighty thousand Germans found a home in the English colonies after 1700, but fewer Germans left for America after 1750, although there was a slight rise after 1700. At the same time many more Germans emigrated to eastern and southeastern Europe. 18 The decreasing emigration after 1750 indicates the loosening of ties between Germans and German-Americans. Few people had accurate information about conditions in America. The
selling of soldiers in 1776 brought further interest in the American cause and Enlightenment ideas. The German middle class came to look very favorably upon the American Revolution, and later on the French Revolution as well.¹⁹ Yet, until the selling of troops, Germans had shown little concern about the American rebellion. Most newspapers tried to be neutral and all wanted a peaceful settlement.

Understandibly, the newspapers in the six treaty states supported the British war effort and the place of their soldiers in the British Army.²⁰ In short, there had been no hostile comments in Germany about the selling of mercenaries prior to the outbreak of the War for American Independence when many thinkers felt that the German princes violated the ideas of the Enlightenment by combining the most tyrannous characteristics of seventeenth century despotism with the most backward aspects of feudalism.²¹

Few people knew the causes of the war. Johann Konrad Doebla, later an Anspach soldier, considered this to be the cause: That Parliament had asked for more "tribute and work" from the colonists...
Moreover, they sent them some very expensive tea to buy, in order to gain more profit and income from this country. Since there is no lack of the very best tea in America, everyone having all he wants, they refused to accept this tea from England.22

The German middle class condemned the treaties with England. Most spoke in general terms about the rights of men and how a struggle for liberty should not be suppressed. Christoph Friedrich Bretzner wrote: "By rights no honest man should raise his hand against a people fighting for the rights of mankind, for liberty, and for their country."23

Most Germans, however, confined themselves to noncommittal remarks. The poets and writers became the most outspoken opponents of the soldier trade, but few other Germans followed their lead. Horst Dippel, the most important German historian specializing in the time of the American Revolution, concludes that the noncommittal attitude on the parts of most Germans "was also proof that they hardly knew how to express themselves politically.24

Strong pro-American sentiment existed in all of the six treaty states except tiny Anhalt-Zerbst. Even in Cassel in 1776-1777, Jakob Mauvillon, a faculty member at the Collegium Carolinum could espouse the American cause publically and vehemently. A colleague, Christoph Wilhelm Dohm, later a noted Prussian diplomat, published the first
German edition of Thomas Paine's Common Sense in 1777. A number of Benjamin Franklin's correspondents lived in Anspach-Bayreuth. The six states could limit, but not stop, free expression of criticism.²⁵

British and German criticism of the hiring of auxiliary troops really had little effect upon the governments involved. Whigs in Parliament could question the quality of the German troops, the seeming excessive costs, and the likelihood of massive desertion. English critics could also question the morality of sending foreigners to fight British citizens. German criticism centered around the misuse of a prince's powers by his selling his subjects to fight for foreign pay. Critics in both Germany and England composed carefully thought out arguments to end the soldier traffic, but none of them got beyond the power of the written word. The King of England and the princes in Germany still retain sufficient power and prestige to complete their troop barter. This was not changed until the social upheavals of the Napoleonic Wars helped create interest in German nationalism and dried up Britain's source of foreign troops.

Honore Mirabeau, a French émigré, became the most well-known critic of the troop traffic. A fugitive in Holland, he published a pamphlet addressed to the Hessians
and the citizens of the other states concerned. The pamphlet protested the greed of the princes and praised the patriotism of the Americans. Landgrave Friedrich II of Hesse-Cassel attempted to buy up the entire edition. Failing in this he published a pamphlet himself, supposedly written by his chief minister Schlieffen, in which he defended his position. Friedrich claimed that the sale benefitted the state as a whole and that Charles I had made Hesse-Cassel powerful through the sale of mercenaries. In essence, mercenaries were Cassel's best exports.26

The only head of state who protested the sale of troops to England was Frederick the Great. He alone could have blocked the deal, but did not. Frederick had sided with the British in the Seven Years' War, but William Pitt concentrated British power in the Americas and left Frederick alone to fight France and Austria. Frederick never forgave the English, even though he managed to hold out against his enemies. He disliked the English and he disliked his nephew in Anspach who took the Austrian side of the German question. He treated American agents Arthur and William Lee with respect, although little came of their meeting.27 Frederick controlled areas between Hesse-Cassel, Hesse-Hanau, and Anspach-Bayreuth and the sea. He at first treated the selling of troops with contempt and only stated
that he would "make all the Hessian Troops, marching through his dominions to America, pay the usual cattle tax, because, although human beings, they had been sold as beasts." 28 He also added that the selling of mercenaries showed the complete obsolescence of the world of the petty states as, "They had sunk so low that they did not shrink from thus abusing the loyalty of their sturdy subjects or from hiding beneath a guise of political alliance what was in fact no more than an outright business transaction." 29

Frederick let the first years' supply of troops pass through his territories, but in the fall of 1777 he denied the passage of Anspach-Bayreuth and Hanau recruits. This forced the men to make their way through Holland to reach the ships to take them to America. 30 When the Anhalt-Zerbst Regiment marched through Magdeburg, 334 men deserted in ten days, probably with the help of Prussian officials. The regiment's colonel, though, recruited 130 men in Prussian territory to take their place. This incident caused a great deal of concern for the British diplomats engaged in the recruiting of German troops, the Earl of Suffolk, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir Joseph Yorke, British minister at the Hague, and Colonel William Faucitt, the British commissioner. Yorke supposed that the lack of Prussian recruits had something to do with Frederick's
stubborness, for his sources indicated that the Prussians recruited but one man in October 1777. Yet, for whatever reasons for withholding passage, when the War of Bavarian Succession broke out in 1778, Frederick became more conciliatory towards England. 31

William Faucitt became the chief negotiator for the hiring of German troops. Lord Suffolk sent him to Germany in August 1775 as minister plenipotentiary, giving him orders to muster Hanovarian troops for British service. Faucitt had served in Germany during the Seven Years' War and was no stranger to the country. The Hanovarians sent five battalions into English service on the strength that George III was also the political head of Hanover. Faucitt mustered the troops in September 1775 and they left for Gibraltar the following month, freeing British troops there for employment elsewhere in the Empire. Parliament decreed in November that the Hanovarians could not be used in any territory of England covered by the constitution. The Hanovarians served in Gibraltar until 1784. More importantly, while Faucitt was in Hanover, word came to Suffolk that five German princes were ready to supply troops at small costs. 32

Sir Joseph Yorke at the Hague put out feelers to the petty German courts in the summer of 1775. He reported to
Suffolk in September that Hesse-Cassel, Hesse-Darmstadt, Württemberg, Sachsen-Gotha, and Baden could raise many troops at a comparatively low price. Hesse-Cassel seemed particularly interested. Yorke wrote Suffolk concerning two points to consider when hiring German troops. First, use the Hanovarians as much as possible. Second, there would be no problem with the Germans if they remained in Europe. Yorke recalled that problems had surfaced when Germans campaigned in Scotland in 1745 and he predicted more trouble if German troops went to America. He reported the dangers of delay and received his orders to pursue the matter on November 14th. Ten days later Suffolk authorized Faucitt to see what he could do with Hanover's neighbors Brunswick and Hesse-Cassel. Faucitt hurried to see the crown prince (Erbprinz) of Brunswick on the day he arrived, hardly having time to change from his traveling clothes. On December 2nd, only two days after Faucitt arrived, Brunswick agreed to sell troops to England. The Duke of Brunswick answered King George on December 5th, and by January 9, 1776 Faucitt had worked out all the details.

Faucitt had served under Crown Prince Charles William Ferdinand during the Seven Years' War. Duke Charles I reigned over Brunswick until his death in 1780, when Charles William Ferdinand succeeded him. The crown prince
had married Lady Augusta, the sister of George III, although
he kept numerous mistresses due to her insignificance,
plainness, and lack of cultural education (in the prince's
eyes). Father and son shared the monarchical duties of
running this small state in the rolling countryside of north
central Germany. Brunswick straddled the Oker and Leine
Rivers and lay in two geographic segments to the northeast
of Hesse. There were 150,000 inhabitants in Brunswick; most
of them were small farmers. After the destruction of the
Seven Years' War the state counted a debt of 12 million
Thalers. In spite of the debt, Charles maintained an
Italian opera and a French ballet, foreign and native whores,
dabbled in alchemy, and loved to play with his soldiers.
The theater director and pimp, Nicolini, an insignificant
Italian adventurer, reportedly received a great salary
while philosopher Karl Lessing, employed as a librarian,
earned only 300 Thalers per year. Lessing maintained he
learned rather to be hungry than vile while working for
Charles.35

The crown prince had a better head for finance than
his father. He instituted a lottery that brought in good
income. Yet, although the Duke of Brunswick received less
per soldier than the other five heads of state, Charles
pocketed 4160,000 before the end of the war from the employ-
ment of his 4,300 man corps. 36

Faucitt met with Feronce von Rotenkreug, the Duke's representative to work out the deal. In the treaty the Duke mustered 3,964 infantry and 336 unmounted dragoons. The Duke had to equip this corps for combat, except for the dragoons' horses. The treaty specified that the troops would march in two divisions from Brunswick in February and March and that the English would take steps to prevent desertion when passing through Hanover on the march to the transport ships at Bremelehe (today's Bremen). The British undertook to pay and feed the soldiers on the same footing as their own soldiers, that is, not to pay lower rates and pocket the difference. The British did not trust the Duke to pay his men this greater wage and so sent their wages directly to the soldiers in America; the money did not pass through German government hands. The British succeeded in the same arrangement regarding pay for all the German states except Hesse-Cassel, where the landgrave there did succeed in handling the money. 37

The British also agreed to care for wounded Brunswickers in British hospitals and to transport the dangerously wounded back to Germany. In turn, the Duke agreed to provide recruits to make up losses and to discipline and equip them. The British agreed to bear this expense if the
Brunswickers should suffer an extraordinary loss in battle or by shipwreck. 38

The Duke received under the title of levy money an amount of 30 crowns banco for each soldier, or 47 4s. 4½d. outright. George III also granted an annual subsidy payment of £ 11,517 17s 1½d. from the day of signing the treaty to the return of the troops, and double that amount, £ 23,035 14s. 3d. for two years after the troops' return. Further, because the troops were recruited hastily, the King granted them two months' pay previous to their march and underwrote all expenses from the time of leaving their quarters. 39

The treaty contained one provision that has received notoriety. According to the language, a man killed would be paid for at the rate of levy money (or 30 crowns to the Duke each man killed) and that three wounded men would count as one man killed. The "blood money" clause also appeared in the treaties of Waldeck and Hesse-Hanau. 40

The Duke of Brunswick found his state divided into two camps as a result of the treaty. Those attached to the court sided with England, while all the others favored the Americans. 41 He ignored complaints and proceeded to use his troops in the manner of a tyrant. When most of the Brunswickers surrendered at Saratoga he begged the British to send his men to the West Indies instead of home, for he
was afraid that their complaints would interfere with the hiring of more soldiers. At the end of the war he wished to cut expenses by reducing his army by half and so instructed his commander in America, General Riedesel, to advise the men to remain in America. There were few civilian jobs for veterans. The British offered land in Nova Scotia and some Brunswickers settled there. Of the 5,723 Brunswickers who served in America, only 2,708 ever returned home.  

Faucit turned to Hesse-Cassel, a larger state in the center of today's Federal Republic of Germany. He arrived in Cassel on December 10, 1775 and found the gray winter made a bit cheerier by the sights of Cassel's luxury—gardens, palaces, art galleries, and the like. Cassel had a long history of selling troops to pay for such things. Under Charles I (1677-1730), who was called the barracks and church builder, Cassel sold thousands of soldiers, including 1,000 to fight the Turks in 1687, 9,000 more in 1702, 11,500 for the Italians in 1706, and 12,000 to George I after the Treaty of Utrecht. When George II came to power England paid £240,000 yearly to Hesse-Cassel for troops. Frederick I (1730-1751) sold 24,000 troops to Sweden. Wilhelm VIII (1751-1760) sold 6,000 soldiers to George II in 1743. During the Seven Years' War it was
FROM ERNST KIPPING

THE HESSIAN VIEW OF AMERICA
Hessian versus Hessian, as the mercenaries fought with both England and Austria. 43

Hesse-Cassel contacted Yorke sometime in August 1775 about the possibilities of a treaty. Yorke passed this information on to Suffolk who in turn told him to exploit "our friends on the Continent." 44 Frederick II of Hesse-Cassel wasted no time in contracting the British. Like the Crown prince of Brunswick, Frederick also had one-time ties to the English throne, for he had married a daughter of George II, Princess Mary. She left him when he converted to Catholicism and retired to Hesse-Hanau with their son William. The father and son hated each other and the states remained separate. Frederick kept a French theater and ballet and took French writers into his halls. 45 The Hessians depended upon the money made by their mercenaries to pay for all their wonderful things. An English traveler in 1800 came to Wilhelmshöhe near Cassel and found gardens, fountains and cascades,

and other rattles of this monarch's bauble... Every German appears to be enraptured with it...Most of these playthings were made by sovereigns who lent their armies to Great Britain. They were, in fact, paid for by the bones and blood of those Hessians, who were sold by their fathers (for so the German sovereigns call themselves), as soldiers, to put down freedom in America. It is left to nice casuists to determine, whether there be more guilt in buying or
in selling men; but surely nothing but an utter forgetfulness of the fact, could save any man from the reproaches of his own conscience, who could look upon this blood-bought splendour with any feeling but horror. Yet men do look on it with rapture, and our modern Iscariots are prevented from hanging themselves, because they find a world to flatter, to imitate, and to worship them.... With fine palaces, in a land without commerce, there may be much more poverty and many beggars, and I saw more of the latter in Cassel than I had seen for some time.46

Frederick's Hessian soldiers were the best of those sent to America. Well-officered and well-disciplined, most of the original members came from Hesse-Cassel. The army copied the system of Prussia regarding organization and discipline. Frederick did reduce taxes on remaining Hessians after his troops went to America, and did put some of his money into schools and museums. The war did, in spite of lower taxes, cause extreme hardship in the state, particularly as recruiters depopulated rural areas to fill out regiments.47

There were 300,000 people in Hesse-Cassel in 1776. The state existed in three fragments, with the largest area lying around Cassel to the northeast and Marburg to the southwest. Another area lay northwest of Wiesbaden and straddled to the Rhine and a third, smaller, area lay south of Fulda. These regions made up about a third of
today's state of Hesse. Hesse-Cassel was a good agricul-
tural area that included several small cities. From this
state came 16,992 soldiers, by far the largest number of
troops from any of the treaty states; because of this, most
Germans were simply called Hessians. 48

The Hessians worked out the treaty most favorable to
any signed by a German state. The provisions included a
defense alliance between Hesse-Cassel and England to protect
the Germans while more than half their army fought in
America. This became an important consideration for one out
of four able-bodied men left Hesse-Cassel for the army; a
similar levy would have raised 400,000 men in England and
Wales alone! The Hessian forces were to be kept together
under their own general and retain brigade and division
organizations, but also were to receive all the privileges
afforded English units. The British generally did live up
to this part of the treaty. Landgrave Frederick proved to
be a shrewd bargainer for he received more than twice as
much per man than any other German prince. He also
received payment of a claim dating back to the Seven Years' 
War of £ 41,820, a claim that Parliament had previously
disallowed. The subsidy amounted to 450,000 crowns per
year, or £ 108,281 5s., which was continued for one year
after the troops returned. 49
The British originally hired four grenadier battalions, fifteen infantry regiments, two Jäger companies, and the Hesse-Cassel artillery corps, amounting to 12,805 officers and men. Additional Jäger companies, provided for by additions to the treaty in 1777, plus recruits for original units, raised the Hessian contribution to 16,992 soldiers. The Landgrave agreed to supply the initial equipment and accouterments for this corps and the British supplied the artillery pieces and all ammunition. The Landgrave established a War Department "War Commissariat" for recruiting, supplies, and personnel actions directly under his supervision, which handled the preparation and administration of the Hessian soldiers in America. 50

By 1778, after the last additional company of Jägers had sailed for America, the Landgrave could no longer send more units to America. Faucitt approached him to send new recruits, but Frederick refused to send another corps. Faucitt finally persuaded him to allow the voluntary enlistment of some companies of light infantry. Not much came of this, less than 250 men enlisted; the British dropped further calls for more units. The Hessians did continue to send recruits for regiments already in America right up to 1783. 51

Crown Prince William of Hesse-Hanau lived life much
like his father. He governed the independent county of Hanau, which lay east of the great city of Frankfurt-am-Main. William and his mother Mary broke with Frederick II, but William did succeed his father in 1785. 52

Faucitt concluded the treaty with William's chief minister Baron von Marlsburg. William had written to George III in August 1775 as soon as he had heard of the Battle of Bunker Hill, offering a regiment without making any conditions regarding payment and service. The treaty, signed on February 5, 1776, called for one regiment of infantry and one artillery company. Later the British hired some Hanau Jägers in 1777 and a volunteer (Frie) corps in 1780. Some 2,422 Hanau soldiers served in America. William wanted the British to keep them even after the war, but the survivors came home in 1783 and 1784. 53

Crown Prince William maintained that he supplied soldiers to Britain as a loyal ally. He proclaimed that "profound unrest and rebellion" in Britain's American colonies led him to take this step. And so loyal Hanauers marched off to America. William did show some compassion towards the families of his soldiers by lowering the taxes of those who had a son or husband in the army. The rest of the people in this small rural corner of Germany kept on paying. 54
Little Waldeck made money supplying soldiers to the Dutch. Prince Frederick reigned over this small state on Hesse-Cassel's western border. Waldeck (literally 'corner of the woods') had already supplied two regiments for Holland many years before 1776 and these units remained permanently in Holland. The entire male population of Waldeck, except for university students, was subject to compulsory military service. Frederick wrote Suffolk on November 3, 1775 that he would regard it as a favor if George III would accept a regiment of infantry. When Faucitt arrived in Waldeck he found only 200 men in uniform in the entire principality. They formed the basis of the seven-hundred-man regiment, which the prince filled by recalling soldiers from Holland and by instituting a ruthless conscription. Faucitt and the Waldeckers signed the treaty on March 17, 1776 and the regiment joined the Hessian troops to sail to New York.  

The British concluded treaties with these four states in the winter months of 1776, enabling them to hire 19,813 soldiers. All of these men reached America and Canada between June and October 1776. The British rejected treaties with states whose armies were in poor shape, such as Württemberg and Bavaria. Faucitt remained in Germany and the British received word of two more states interested
in selling troops. Faucitt signed a treaty with Anspach-Bayreuth early in 1777 and Anhalt-Zerbst in the fall of that year.

Anspach-Bayreuth had been two separate countries until 1769 when they united under Markgrave Charles Alexander. The two areas, which were not physically connected, contained about 400,000 people, over a hundred thousand more than Hesse-Cassel. Bayreuth lay northeast of Nürnberg and Anspach lay due west of that city. By 1777 Charles Alexander was deeply in debt. He offered two regiments in the fall of 1775 and renewed his offer a year later. Faucitt received instructions to negotiate with the Markgrave on January 14, 1777 and signed a treaty on February 3rd.

Anspach-Bayreuth provided two regiments of infantry under the treaty, plus some Jägers and artillery. Faucitt mustered the troops within the month and they sailed down the Main on March 3rd. Anspach-Bayreuth did not send the great number of troops to America as the Hessians mustered, but the recruiting still depleted the numbers of young men in the country. In a 1972 census Anspach-Bayreuth numbered 420,000 inhabitants, of whom 23,673 were of military age and 1,872 were fit for duty. In the American Revolution the area provided 2,386 soldiers, a greater amount than could be mustered fifteen years later.56
Charles Alexander provided poor relief and pensions for those in need and for those whose sons and husbands were in America. He also provided for wounded soldiers. Most of the soldiers were farmers, artisans, wanderers, and tramps, and the officers were made up of the sons of the nobles. Over half of the officers has served in the Seven Years' War and brought their experience to the American situation. Charles Alexander has been seen as a reformer who initiated reforms in agriculture and mining in the manner of his uncle Frederick the Great. It must have bored him. In 1791 he sold his country to another uncle and spent the rest of his life in England, where he died in 1806. 57

Baron Reinhard von Gemmingen worked out the details of the troop barter with Faucitt. He felt ashamed at his actions:

It is always very difficult for me to deal in troops, but the Markgrave is determined to put his affairs in order at any cost, and to pay off all his debts as well as those of his predecessors. So the benefits that may result from such a treaty of subsidy may far outweigh the hatefulness of this business. 58

When the treaty became public knowledge a great feeling of pro-American sympathy swept Anspach-Bayreuth. The rules responded with sanctioning numerous publications, sermons,
and prayers for special occasions containing pro-English sentiments to combat the dissidents.⁵⁹

The final area to sell troops was also the smallest, Anhalt-Zerbst. The dukedom numbered but 20,000 people in an area east and south of Magdeburg. Prince Frederick August, a brother of Catherine the Great, lived in Basel or Luxembourg and ruled his country by sending instructions to his officials. Just about the poorest country in Germany, the agricultural economy had been hard hit by famine, war, and disease. When Frederick August first offered troops to George III the letter was so clumsily written and the penmanship so poor that the King could make nothing of it. He did not reply. The Prince then sought the aid of Hesse-Cassel, Brunswick, and, finally, Sir Joseph Yorke. Faucitt received authorization to open negotiations on April 29, 1777, but the treaty was not signed until that October. Faucitt mustered the troops early in 1778 and they marched off on their way to Canada. Anhalt-Zerbst furnished 1,152 men, of which all but 168 returned. One wonders why.⁶⁰

These six states furnished Great Britain with nearly thirty thousand men. All the treaties specified that the soldiers had to swear allegiance to the King of England, but without renouncing their loyalty to their own German sovereigns. The Germans retained control of their units in
areas of discipline, promotions, and other personnel actions. The British exercised control of their operational deployment and grafted the German regiments on to the logistical network.

The six treaties came out of hundreds of years of European history. The hiring of Germans, particularly Hessians, formed a cornerstone of British military practice, likewise, Germans had served as hired soldiers for hundreds of years. The treaties differed only in small areas regarding payment and probably mirrored the intensity of bargaining done between William Faucitt and German diplomats. Yet, this was really the last gasp of such agreements. The revolutionary nature of the war in America, the ideas of the Enlightenment, and, particularly, the radical effects of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars smashed the barter in troops. The Germans fought for the British because money had changed hands, money in which the soldiers never shared, and only for that reason. This would be the last episode when men would kill each other for the practical reason of gain; in the nineteenth century men would die because of the irrational motive of nationalism.

Chapter Notes:

1 Martin Lezius, Deutsche Kämpfer für fremde Fahnen, (Berlin, 1934), pp. 54-55; W.H. Bruford, Germany in the


4 Mann, pp. 7-9; Rodes, chapters six and seven.

5 Good standard accounts of the Thirty Years' War are G. Pages, The Thirty Years' War, (New York, 1939), and C.V. Wedgewood, The Thirty Years' War, (Garden City, 1961).

6 Quoted in Mann, p. 12.

7 Andre Corvisier, Armies and Societies in Europe, 1494-1789, (Bloomington, 1979), p. 67. He was also an outstanding professional soldier. For destruction see Pages and Wedgewood.


9 Rodes, pp. 246-247; Holborn, pp. 272-299.

10 Lesius, pp. 55-57.


14 Kitchen, pp. 8-20.

15 Ibid., p. 20.

16 Albert B. Faust, The German Element in the United States, I, Boston, 1909, 350; see Chapter One above.

18 Horst Dippel, Germany and the American Revolution, (Chapel Hill, 1977), pp. 236-237. Unfortunately, there is no way to tell how many veterans traveled back to America to settle.

19 Elisha P. Douglass, "German Intellectuals and the American Revolution," William and Mary Quarterly, XVII, (1960), 204.


21 Douglass, pp. 202-203.

22 Quoted in Dippel, p. 77.

23 Ibid., p. 129.

24 Ibid., p. 130.

25 Ibid., p. 219.


28 Quoted in Robert Ketchum, "England's Vietnam: The American Revolution," American Heritage, XXII, 4, (June 1971), 81. Ketchum feels that Americans in Vietnam can be compared to the English in America. The comparison is most apt if we play the part of the Hessians.

29 Quoted in Ritter, p. 37.


31 Friedrich Kapp, Der Soldatenhandel deutscher Fürsten nach Amerika, (Berlin, 1874), p. 43. In spite of Kapp's very
liberal views concerning German history, this is still the best work on the hiring of German soldiers in the American Revolution. Kapp became an American citizen (he was an 1848 refugee), but this book has never been translated.


33 Baurmeister, p. 4; Kapp, pp. 37-38; 43; 228-229.

34 Kapp, p. 43.

35 Ibid., pp. 40-42; Baurmeister, p. 5.

36 Lowell, p. 8.

37 Baurmeister, p. 5.

38 For treaties see Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Heeresarchiv, Rep. 15A; Kap. XXXIII, numbers 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269.

39 Ibid., numbers 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222.

40 Ibid., numbers 205, 206, 207, 208, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214.

41 Dippel, p. 226.


43 Kapp, pp. 56-58.

44 Suffolk to Yorke, Sept. 1, 1775, in Kapp, p. 227.

45 Lezius, p. 55; Greene, pp. 195-196; Baurmeister, pp. 6-7.


47 Lowell, p. 6; Dippel, p. 126.

48 See Appendix One for Order of Battle.
49 Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Heeresarchiv, Rep. 15A, Kap. XXXIII, number 269, 208; Slagle, pp. 4-5; Kapp, p. 209.
50 Baumeister, p. 15; Preussisches Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Berlin, Heeresarchiv, Rep. 15A, Kap. XXXIII, number 268.
51 Eelking, p. 153.
52 Lowell, p. 7.
53 Kapp, pp. 244-246; Baumeister, p. 8; Treaty copy is in William Stone, ed., Journal of Captain Pausch, (Albany, 1886), pp. 3-11.
54 Geschachtsverein zu Hanau, Ms. number 2189.
55 Baumeister, pp. 8-9; Kapp, p. 256; for an analysis of the composition of the Waldeck Regiment, see Chapter 11.
56 Baumeister, pp. 9-10; Erhard Stadtler, Die Ansbach-Bayreuther Truppen im Amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg, (Nürnberg, 1955), pp. 22-26; Lezius, p. 56; Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Nürnberg, XIV/313/2/1.
57 Stadtler, pp. 33, 41. 72.
58 Quoted in Baumeister, p. 13.
59 Dippel, p. 122.
60 Lezius, p. 57; Baumeister, p. 10.
CHAPTER FOUR

The German Troops: Organization, Recruits, and Passage to America

Hungry or thirsty, cold or hot,
Working or wanting, whatever out lot;
Injustice, rape, and murder our trade;
That is how mercenaries are made.

Hans Jacob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen

Colonel Charles Rainsford assisted Colonel William Faucett in the inspection and mustering of the German regiments. On March 21, 1776 he described a Hessian infantry unit's preparation for war in America:

As soon as the Reg't could be accoutered they landed and marched to the Parade, where I passed along the Front, + was saluted as in usual + at their own desire after this I call over the Names of the Officers + Men by Companies according to the form, + found every Man present and only one sick who was produced to me.

The Regiment was in very fine order, the men of good appearance + very fit for service--The Grenadiers remarkably good, the Centre Rank only a little short, but very proper Men. There were some new recruits, not fully disciplined but in good condition;--I then saw them march by + very quick.¹

The six German states fielded twenty-seven regiments of infantry, five battalions of grenadiers, a regiment of
dragoons, eleven Jäger companies, artillery detachments, and a Free Corps of light infantry. ²

The Hessian infantry regiments included both standing units and militia called up for service in America. The regular regiments numbered five line infantry companies of 540 men and a grenadier company of 112 men, plus a regimental staff that numbered 18 officers and men, making the unit total 670 officers and men. The regiments detached their grenadier companies for service in America and formed these units into battalions of four companies each, following the British practice. The organization of an infantry company called for a captain, a first and a second lieutenant, an ensign, a sergeant major, two sergeants, one captain at arms (an armorer), one color bearer, two corporals, three drummers, and ninety-three privates. The regimental staff included a colonel, a lieutenant colonel, a major, an auditor (pay master), a quartermaster, a surgeon, three surgeon mates, a provost marshall and servant, and a band of drum major and six woodwind players. ³

A regiment took its name from its chief, if present, or from its commanding officer. The chief was really the figurative head of the regiment, an officer who never led the unit in action, but who could play politics to get favorite officers advanced. Major General Wilhelm
Knyphausen was chief of the unit called the Regiment Knyphausen, although Colonel von Borck commanded the unit in actuality. The regiment that had the hereditary prince for a chief was called the Erbprinz Regiment. Prince William of Hesse was chief of the Erbprinz Regiment until he passed the unit to his brother Prince Friedrich. The unit promptly became the Regiment Prince Friedrich. A unit’s name could change several times in a few years. Colonel Johann Rall was chief and commander of the Regiment Rall until his death at the Battle of Trenton. Colonel Wilhelm von Wollwarth replaced him as chief and commander and the regiment became the Regiment von Wollwarth. In 1778 Lieutenant General Leopold von Trumbach became the unit’s chief and Colonel Johann C. von Koehler the commander. From 1778 to 1780 the unit was called the Regiment von Trumbach, until a fourth chief, the Marquis d’Angelelli, was appointed. So the unit ended the war as the Regiment d’Angelelli, a distinctly non-German sounding designation.

Hesse-Cassel Troops

The Hessians divided their regular infantry regiments into fusilier and musketeer regiments, a legacy of a much earlier period. A fusil was a lighter and shorter version of a musket, but the differentiation regarding arms does not
seem to have mattered in America, for most German units carried muskets. What did matter was a difference in uniforms. Fusiliers sported a brimless brass or white metal helmet fronted with the landgrave's arms. Musketeers wore black tri-cornered hats. The regular Hessian fusilier and musketeer regiments formed the First Division of Hesse-Cassel forces that left the garrison towns late in February and early in March 1776.

The Hessian Second Division, commanded by Wilhelm Knyphausen was generally made up of garrison regiments, militia units activated for service in America. These soldiers assembled for four weeks each year between sowing and hay harvest to exercise in company and regimental formations and were not professional soldiers. The soldiers stored their arms in their villages and the men could be called on as local police for peacetime emergencies. In wartime their training limited them to garrison duties and home defense. While the First Division contained well-trained professional soldiers, the men of the Second counted few professionals in their ranks.

The grenadier battalions contained four grenadier companies taken from line infantry units. The Hessians provided four such units, the first three being made up of regular soldiers and the fourth being made up of grenadier
companies from the garrison regiments. The first three battalions were organized into a brigade under Colonel Carl von Donop; after 1778 the garrison grenadier battalion generally operated with this unit as well. A grenadier battalion called for sixteen officers, twelve non-commissioned officers, one surgeon, two musicians, and four hundred and twenty grenadiers. The men wore distinctive high-mitred brass helmets, taller than helmets worn by fusiliers. The brimless helmets supposedly facilitated the throwing of grenades, but the grenadiers had not carried hand grenades for many years. Traditionally only large, powerful men could be grenadiers (in order to hurl grenades); they were in 1776 really heave infantry shock troops. Regulations called for a grenadier to be tall and well-formed (the helmets made them appear of gigantic proportions) and the officers enforced the strictist discipline. Contrary to the clean-shaven mores of the eighteenth century; grenadiers had to grow fierce-looking mustaches which they blackened with boot blacking. They were the only troops authorized to grow facial hair. Common to other German units, the grenadiers also kept their hair long and gathered into a pig-tail worn down the middle of the back. The grenadiers formed the German elite, and although some of the men were not as tall as called for, the grenadiers served as the
most aggressive and disciplined troops among the mercenar-
ries. 7

The Hessians also provided two Jäger companies in 1776. These grew to five by 1778 and Hanau, Anspach-Bayreuth, and Brunswick also provided Jäger companies. The Jägers (literally hunter or forester) drew their men from game keepers and huntsmen who could fire a rifle with deadly accuracy. Regular German troops wore blue uniforms and carried smooth-bore weapons. The Jägers, officers and men, carried short, accurate rifles that reached a great range, and wore green coats that identified them with their hunters' heritage and which were useful for warfare in the woods. The English called these troops "chasseurs," a designation often used by the Germans as well. Additional treaties raised more Jägers for the troops were so effective against American riflemen. The Jägers had much better training and discipline than the Americans. They maneuvered by using hand and arm signals, voice commands, hunting horns, whistles, and drums. A Jäger company numbered four officers, twelve sergeants, a medical orderly, three musicians, and one hundred and five privates. The Jägers usually operated in detachments for reconnoitering, patrol duties, and guarding forage parties and headquarters. They also generally led a column's advance and guarded the
flanks; the Jägers also covered retreats. The British used them as snipers in siege operations. Although the quality of Jäger recruits dwindled during the course of the war, they were rightly the most effective and feared of German troops. They also suffered the most casualties of any German unit.  

Three companies of artillery accompanied the Hessian troops to America and were specially raised for the expedition. An artillery company numbered five officers, fourteen sergeants, three musicians, a medical orderly, and one hundred and twenty-nine privates. The companies never operated together, but were assigned in detachments to infantry units, generally two guns per regiment. The British supplied the field pieces and most equipment. The Germans impressed the British within the innovative artillery tactics of putting two guns on the firing line with an infantry unit, increasing the firepower and fighting ability of the troops. The British copied the practice by the end of the war.  

The Other German Units

Each state organized their units in similar fashion, although the actual number of soldiers in each type of unit might vary from state to state. The two Anspach-Bayreuth
regiments retained their grenadier companies, but had only four line companies instead of the five in Hessian units. The Anspach regiments numbered 570 officers and men. The Jäger companies were smaller, having 101 officers and men, rather than the 125 called for in a similar Hessian unit.\textsuperscript{10} The Brunswick detachment organized along Hessian lines by creating a grenadier battalion out of companies taken from regular infantry units. The Anhalt-Zerbst Regiment operated in two battalions in America. The Waldeck Regiment consisted of a grenadier company and four infantry companies, likewise, the Hesse-Hanau infantry regiment retained its grenadier company. The Hanau and Brunswick infantry regiments contained a light infantry company each, made up of agile men and used for scouting and picketing. The Brunswickers organized their light companies into a battalion in British fashion. The Hanau company remained with its regiment.\textsuperscript{11}

Generally the Germans fielded units more uniform than not, units that were numerically larger than their British companies numbered about seventy officers and men. However, the British companies in the field in reality numbered only about twenty-five men. Because of this, a British regiment brought about two hundred effective men to the field during the Revolution, while the German regiments numbered between
four and five hundred men for combat. 12

Except for the Waldeck and Anhalt-Zerbst regiments, all of the German units had lengthy histories, whether the unit was an active unit or militia. The Regiment von Lossberg dated back to 1683 and had its headquarters in Rinteln, a small, isolated walled city on the Weser River between Hameln and Minden. From the twelfth century to 1640 Rinten was the principal town of the Earldom of Schaumberg, an independent political entity ruled by the Earl of Holstein-Schaumberg. In 1640 the ruling line died out with the death of Otto V and after the Thirty Years' War the territory was divided at the Peace of Westphalia. One part went to the Duchy of Colemburg, another became the fief of Earl Phillip of Lippe-Alverdessen and the rest went to Hesse-Cassel in a personal union between a new Earl of Schaumberg and the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel. The Von Lossberg Regiment (then called the Regiment Schaumberg) first fought against the troops of Louis XIV in the Spanish Netherlands in 1693-1697. They fought the French in 1708 at Auderiarde and in 1709 at Malplaquet. In 1734 during the War of the Polish Succession, the regiment fought along the Rhine River and at Trier. In the War of Austrian Succession the unit participated in the defense of Bergin Op Zoom in Holland in 1748. During the Seven Years' War the Lossbergers fought for the British at
the Battle of Hastenbeck, where the colonel, von Haundring, was killed. The regiment also fought at Minden. 13

The Lossbergers garrisoned Rinteln in 1775. The unit's authorized strength was 633 men (21 officers, 60 sergeants, 22 musicians, plus the privates) but the unit could count only 437 actually present. The unit contained a mix of native Hessians and a number of deserters from the forces of nearby princes. The enlisted men came from three areas, the town of Rinteln, the area around the village of Ucht in Hanover, and the village of Bussum also in Hanover. Because the maintaining of extensive numbers of troops strained the Hessian economy and the treasury, the regiment placed thirty of each company's soldiers on leave at any one time. These men were free to follow their crafts and earn money while at home. A professional Hessian enlisted man could switch from civilian to soldier and back again during the normal twenty-four year enlistment. Because all the regiments called back their men on leave and filled up the remaining vacancies with recruits, each unit contained a number of soldiers to be trained before leaving the garrison. Training became a greater problem for the garrison regiments, the Waldeckers, and the Anhalt-Zerbst Regiment. 14

Most of the officers of the Lossberg Regiment had seen
active service. Many were from the lower nobility or were younger sons of the landed gentry. Some middle class youths could buy their way into a unit, but promotions for them came very slowly. It was possible for an enlisted man to earn a commission; many of the garrison regiments filled out by promoting active duty enlisted men to company officers. A man could also be appointed a Free Corporal, a sort of officer candidate. A Free Corporal served in the ranks for three years, generally carrying his company's standard, and received a commission at the end of his tenure if deemed worthy. Many times sons of company commanders filled these positions. The officers longed for active service, and although many were members of the intellectual elite of their states, few questioned the desirability of fighting in America.

Arms and Equipment

The German uniform served as sort of shock weapon. Most of the troops wore blue woolen coats cut small to make a soldier appear larger than he really was. The coat fitted tight around the torso and the sleeves ended an inch or two above the wrists, allowing the shirtsleeves to show. The coats' tails were shorter than on civilian coats. These tailor-made shortages gave the impression that the men were too big even for the largest sizes. Many men wore a high
black "holsbinder" stock around their necks to keep the head erect. The tall grenadier and fusilier helmets added more height. The men's tall black leggings accentuated the length of the legs. The uniforms, covered with metal buttons, buckles, the metal caps, and the weapons, all suggested energy in those who could keep them shiny. The uniform served three purposes: to look handsome, to intimidate the enemy, and to meet practical military needs. Such restrictive coats were not practical features, but the blue color resisted fading and disguised the grime of field duty. A regiment in blue looked more massive than one in a lighter color. The canvas leggings did protect the soldiers' legs, although during Burgoyne's campaign these were further covered by overalls made from canvas or old tents.17

Each service had its own uniform. Musketeers and officers wore tri-cornered hats, fusiliers and grenadiers each wore distinctive helmets, and dragoons wore large, high, rimless hats. The officers and sergeants wore finer uniforms than the privates, covered with lace and cords. All officers wore sashes around their waists and officers of the higher ranks wore metal gorgets around their necks. All officers wore high riding boots, although few officers below field grade were authorized to ride horseback. Each regiment had its coats faced with a distinctive color. For
example, the Garrison Regiment von Bunau wore a crimson collar and cuffs without a lapel, while the Fusilier Regiment von Dittfurth sported a bright yellow facings. The coats were generally lined red and had pewter or brass buttons. The men wore a bayonet belt around their waists and every soldier carried a short sword, a practice out of fashion in British units. The German cartridge box, decorated with a plate bearing the prince's arms, was worn over the shoulder on a wide white belt. The soldiers carried knapsacks of hairy animal hide slung over the opposite shoulder.18

Two units deviated from this. The Jägers wore greener uniforms, whatever state they were from. The Anhalt-Zerbst Regiment wore a uniform based on Austrian design, being a white coat faced red with a red cloak. In garrison the regiment wore black felt shakos surmounted by a feather, but replaced this when in the field by a tri-cornered hat.19

The German units carried muskets patterned after Prussian arms made in Frederick's Potsdam Arsenal. The smaller German states had little in the way of manufacturing facilities and the troops carried a variety of arms from German and Dutch arsenals, including castoffs from their own supplies. The Prussian musket probably carried by many German troops was a .75 calibre. A soldier carried it by a
red leather sling, buckled at both ends of the piece. Officers and dragoons carried pistols for defense. Sergeants did not carry a musket, but rather carried a halberd, long pikes with a blade at one end, used more as a distinction of rank rather than a weapon. Officers carried spontoons, elaborately engraved smaller versions of the halberd. Officer and enlisted Jägers all carried specially made rifles, not the older trappings of formal warfare.

Mobilization and Recruiting

The regular German units received word of their service in the British Army only when the treaties became public knowledge. The Brunswickers and Hessians notified their troops in January 1776; the Hessians also mobilized their garrison regiments. Hanau troops received word in February and the Waldeck troops in March. The Anspachers did not mobilize until 1777 and Anhalt-Zerbst held off until 1778. All units suddenly needed recruits and sent out officers as recruiting parties to scour the countryside. The Hessian War Department organized a central office for recruiting and several sovereigns and cities gave permission for recruiting in their areas. The recruiters were generally officers, sergeants, and enlisted men of Hessian Guards Regiments and of the three Hessian dragoon regiments, none
of which were going to America. They carried printed instructions that permitted almost any means to attract recruits—obscure machinations, bribery, "pressing" by making men drunk, and other time-worn tricks so common in European history.\textsuperscript{21} This was not just a local affair. The recruiters did hang posters in all public houses and on town gates, but this medium did not drum up enough interest. Recruiting parties then moved into "foreign areas". Waldeck sent recruiters into Württemberg, Upper Silesia, and Switzerland.\textsuperscript{22} The Hessians cut their territory up into recruiting districts, each of which had to furnish a number of recruits to a certain regiment. The officers did receive instructions to bring in as many foreigners as possible in order to spare the districts. Army regulations stated that regimental chiefs and captains would recommend themselves to favor by enlisting foreign recruits.\textsuperscript{23}

Official Hessian orders specified that recruits must be between sixteen and forty years old and must have no physical defects—the men especially needed teeth to bite the cartridges. The recruiters could enlist deserters, if they could obtain a pardon. The recruits had to be transported to Cassel where they would be assigned to a unit. The officers had to make timely reports to render an accurate appraisal of the recruiting effort. The orders
further stressed that officially no force should be used in
enlisted soldiers. 24

The recruiters seemed to have evaded all of these
official proscriptions. The recruiting parties were well
armed. After signing up a soldier the first thing that they
told him was that a misstep would cost him his life. The
recruiters would then take the recruit away, avoiding all
areas known to him. They avoided all large towns. They
used inns that experience showed could be trusted. The
recruiters and recruits gave up their clothing and most
arms to the innkeeper, so that a recruit could not grab a
weapon and run away. They permitted no conversation on the
march and the recruit had to obey every order. The same
went for his wife, if she accompanied the party. One
officer could control between seven and nine recruits.
Orders specified that the recruit would be the first into a
room and the last out. His conversation would be noticed.
Dogs could be used to help maintain control and extra
civilian guards could be hired to help guard the recruits.
If a man did manage to run away, the recruiter would appeal
to the authorities for assistance. 25 "Never did I see so
many poor wretches chased through the streets as in Cassel,"
reported one German traveler. A recruiting officer told him
that, "It is less injurious to the health than running the
gauntlet," referring to the discipline meted out to
criminal soldiers. 26

Johann G. Seume became the most famous reluctant
recruit due to his subsequent literary career. In 1781
Seume resigned as a student at the University of Leipzig
because of a controversy with the school's officials over
his religious principles. He set out across western
Germany to make his way to Paris. "I left Leipzig after
having paid my debts without saying anything to anybody. I
started out, my sword hanging at my side, several shirts on
my body—one on top of the other—a knapsack on my back and
a few volumes of the classics in my pockets." 27 Truly a
student-wanderer! "The third evening I stayed in Vacha and
here the Landgrave of Kassel, the great trader in human
beings of that day and age, took care, through his recruit-
ing agents, all of my future lodgings in Ziegenhain, Kassel,
and later on in the New World." 28 The recruiters took Seume
to Fortress Ziegenhain where he found men collected from
all over Hesse gathered to be shipped to America in the
spring of 1782. "At that time no one was safe from the
minions of this seller of human souls; persuasion, cunning,
deception, force, everything was justifiable. No one asked
about the means by which this cursed business was carried
on. Strangers of all sorts were stopped, imprisoned, then
set off." The recruiters denied a man his identity. "They tore up my academic papers (proof that I had been a student) my only means of identification." 29

Seume's fellow recruits decided to plot an escape by overpowering their guards, stealing weapons, and breaking out of the fortress' gates. The plot ended when somebody informed the officers. "But when we came in companies to the drill ground the day before our planned escape, we found there one hundred soldiers instead of the usual twenty men. At the far end of the drill ground cannons were drawn up with soldiers stationed by them holding burning matches ready to fire." The officers called out the names of the ringleaders and clapped them under arrest. "I was one of the first named, because the gentlemen found it very improbable that the runaway student should not be part of it. But since no one could testify against me, they let me go, most probably also because of the great numbers of prisoners they had." 30

The Hessians sentenced two men to be hanged and had the rest of the prisoners run through the gauntlet from twelve to thirty-six times. "It was simple butchery," Seume recalled. The Landgrave commuted the sentences of the two men sentenced to hang to running the gauntlet thirty-six times and then be sent to Cassel in chains.
"To be in chains' and 'to be pardoned' by the mercy of the Landgrave were synonyms at those times, and they meant as much as 'without redemption, without deliverance' forever."31

The recruits started their march to the sea to board transports: "Our procession resembled a parade of prisoners, because we were all unarmed and the trained dragoons in their high boots, the guardsmen and riflemen kept good order in our columns simply by carrying loaded muskets."

At that time I used to carry a book under my belt, between my vest and trousers. The book must have been a little too thick and made my stomach somewhat protruberant. "What the deuce have you got there? said Captain Lesthen one day, standing in front of me and lifting the corner of my vest. He brought out Julius Caesar. "What the deuce are you doing with a book?" he continued. "I read in it," was my answer. "Where did you study Latin?" "One usually learns that in school." He shook his head. I had made quite a number of marginal notes in the book. "Who wrote those notes?" "I, and before me some other gentleman." He looked at me and dismissed me with the mocking remark, "You expect to be a great man someday." "That is doubtful," I said, "and is not very probable among the Germans, but at least it will not be my fault for lack of trying."33

Grenadier Stephan Popp was a regular soldier in Anspach-Bayreuth when his unit received word of their sailing to America. His journal begins simply: "I was 22 years old when we marched off to America." He described
the mobilization of his regiment on January 26, 1777. "In
the evening at 7:00 Lieutenant Colonel von Schlammersdorf
arrived here, and went at once to Major von Seyboth,
bringing the following order: namely, all leaves to be
cancelled at once. As a result, many corporals and lance-
corporals had to go to the officers at once to bring this
order to those on furough." Preparations for movement
began that night. "And everyone who had anything to do with
providing military provisions had to work day and night
that everything might be ready soon." Then on February
2nd:

It was reported to all companies and
made known in the regiment that we
must take to the road within three
weeks...At the same time, young lads
from all walks of life were brought in
as recruits. Then there occurred a
lamentation. Fathers, mothers, and
relatives came daily and visited their
sons, brothers, and friends...Some for
sorrow and dislike could hardly be
consoled over the fact that they should
be torn away from their parents. Wherever
you looked you heard nothing but moaning
and groaning.34

Recruiting became more difficult as time went by due
to the decline of the potential number of recruits in each
state. Many young Germans fled the recruiting areas. This
forced the recruiting of the old and the infirm. The
British complained and the Germans did try to enlist better
recruits, but these attempts generally met with failure. The Landgrave of Hesse had to order the discharge of a sixty-three year old man who could not walk erect; another was "completely lame and limping because of one of his legs was some inches shorter than the other." Charles Rainsford looked over a party of Hessian recruits in 1777 and found that eleven had been reclaimed at Coblenz (for that state's army), thirty-seven were old men between fifty and sixty, six had only one eye, four were very weak and thin, one was lame from a wound and unable to march, and one had no nose and was unserviceable. Finally, Lieutenant General von Gohr, the officer in charge of recruiting, promised stricter standards and no recruitment of men over forty years old.35

One British officer wrote home calling his friends to "only picture to your imagination ensigns of forty and fifty, commanding troops not much younger, and judge how proper they are for an active and vigorous campaign in the thick woods of America."36 William Faucitt expelled six recruits at the embarkation port of Bremelehe on December 13, 1777 on account of age and infirmity.37

The original troops sent to America in 1776 and 1777 contained few men who could not stand the rigors of military life. The quality of the recruits in succeeding years declined remarkably. One levy included a disabled tailor.
from Cassel who came to America not to fight but to collect
to collect old debts from officers. 38 Even the elite Jäger Corps
suffered. Captain Johann Ewald, who arrived with his
company in America in October 1776, noted that recruits who
joined the Jägers in November 1777 in Philadelphia consisted
primarily of deserters from all over Europe, ruined
officers and noblemen, students from all the universities,
bankrupt merchants, and all kinds of adventurers. 39 In
May 1778 some three hundred Hessian recruits joined Clinton's
army. Ewald felt the most remarkable recruit to be one
Leonhard, a former Hessian captain during the Seven Years' War who had deserted because of debts, served in several
countries as a common hussar, and had enlisted again in
Hesse to serve in America. "The remainder consisted of
nothing but foreigners of all classes and the scum of the
human race." 40

Ewald continued to inspect his recruits very closely.
They did not get any better. Three hundred more men
arrived in August 1778; part of them had rebelled on ship-
board and some of them had to stand trial. The captain
found nobles and former officers among the rebels, including
a Frenchman named Detroit who had been a corporal in Poland
and had very good recommendations from Polish officers. 41
More recruits rebelled on the Atlantic in 1779, only to
give in when an English frigate threatened to shoot them down. Ewald looked over the nine hundred men and found again the ringleaders to be nobles and former students. "Generally, they are handsome people, whose ways of thinking will no doubt be changed by good discipline." 42 A year later he found most of that year's nine hundred recruits to be deserters from Austrian and Prussian units. 43 A British officer in 1781 described the German recruits as being generally good, except for the recruits for the Hanau Free Corps. On August 11, 1781 some 2750 Germans arrived in New York, including 993 Hessians, 747 from Hesse-Hanau, 121 Anspach Jägers, 98 other Anspach recruits, 164 Brunswickers, 153 Waldeckers, and 474 from Anhalt-Zerbst. 44 The German princes did manage to provide soldiers right up to the end of the war.

Many officers and enlisted men took their wives with them to America. Many recruits who wanted to desert insisted on taking their wives. In August 1781 Colonel von Wurmb of the Hessian Jäger Corps complained to General von Jungkenn back in Hesse that too many women arrived on the transports. "This nuisance increases from year to year." Some transport captains denied the wives passage because there was no room for them. 45 Many men married just before leaving home. Some did not. One woman came over with the
Second Hessian Division looking for her mate in the First Hessian Division. She located her man, stepped into his tent, and promptly gave birth. The couple later married. Three wives with the Regiment von Donop gave birth at sea. Their beds lacked all ordinary needs for comfort and nourishment. Colonel Johann August von Loos recorded in May 1776:

The wife of a soldier of one of my companies became ill this morning; an hour later she gave birth to a girl. The military child bed lacks the arts of our modern doctors, and a simple company surgeon had to replace Dr. Stein. All our petted beauties of Cassel would be touched if they could see this poor creature. Instead of having nourishing broth, essences, and other needed things, she lies in a dark place, stretched on a mat; a mouthful of brandy, warm beer, and pepper were her only sustenance.

When Colonel Rainsford mustered a detachment of Hanau recruits in 1777 he counted 15 women, 2 children and 421 soldiers.

Once German recruiting parties gathered the men and brought them to the units the men swore allegiance to the particular German sovereign. The troops received all pro-English information regarding the course of the war in America. The German princes lauded England as a friend of Prussia in particular and Germany in general; especially stressing England's support during the Seven Years' War. It
was time to repay the British. The full-strength units then could be turned over to the British agents for inspection and muster into the service of George III.

Lord Suffolk dispatched Colonel Charles Rainsford to the continent on February 28, 1776 to assist William Faucett's efforts to get the Germans on board the transports as soon as possible. Rainsford traveled to Nijmegen in Holland, a city on the Rhine, to receive the Hanau regiment and conduct the unit to Willemstad where the men would embark transports for America. On March 1st Rainsford had an audience with George III. "I kissed the King's hand upon the occasion + in the Evening I receiv'd a Letter from Lord Suffolk No. 1 accompanying the List No. 2 of Extra Camp Necessaries that were shipped on board the Three Sisters."

Rainsford went to Suffolk's office the following day and got a copy of his instructions, a copy in French of the treaty with Hesse-Hanau, and an order on the Treasury to draw £150 for equipping himself. After some delay in receiving his final orders, Rainsford was directed to proceed directly to the Hague and get the latest information on the progress of the Hanau troops from Sir Joseph Yorke.

Yorke saw to the conveying of the unit from Nijmegen to Willemstad, making sure that the troops received sufficient rations along the route. Rainsford had to go to Nijmegen to
meet the regiment's commanding officer, accompany the unit to the port, and administer the "usual oath of Fidelity to the King" before the men embarked. Rainsford also had to deliver orders regarding instructions to be used on the transports. Finally, he had to report to the King, through the Secretary of State, a full account of the "Condition, Numbers - Compleatness" of the unit. 51

Rainsford had to administer the oath that all German soldiers had to take:

I, A.B. do swear, that I will be faithful, + bear true Allegiance to His Most Sacred Majesty George, King of Great Britain, France + Ireland, etc. etc., And that I will behave with Fidelity in the Service in which I am now engaged. 52

He met Prince William of Hesse at an inn at the Hague on March 9th and met Yorke the following day. Yorke had arranged for twenty boats to carry the regiment to the coast. Yorke asked Rainsford to write Suffolk for permission to purchase vinegar for the transports and asked the colonel to smooth the border crossing. After Rainsford left Yorke, he once again met the Prince to inform him of the arrangements. On March 11th Rainsford dined with Prince William, the Prince of Waldeck, Yorke, and Dutch officers to further coordinate the passage of German troops through neutral Holland. 53
Rainsford went to Nijmegen and crossed the border into Wesel, a Prussian town. He brought along a former Prussian officer to ease the crossing through Prussian territory. "This Gentleman had been in the Prussian Service, + was well acquainted with the temper of these people, and their method of recruiting."²⁴ He obviously worried about Prussians stealing men from Hanau ranks.

Rainsford then conferred with Colonel Van der Hoop, the commander of Nijmegen about the necessary toll to be paid to enable the troops to cross the border. He got 2000 Ducats from a Mr. Levi, upon whom he had letters of credit from a bank in the Hague and gave half to the burgomeister of the Dutch city and reserved half for passage and tolls to Willemstad. While at Nijmegen, Rainsford learned that the route of the Hanau regiment would be the same as the route of the troops specified in the 1763 treaty that brought other Hessian units into the British fold. On March 22nd the Hanau regiment crossed the border and Rainsford gave each company the oath while the men stood on the Nijmegen quay. Three days later the men reached Willemstad and went on board the transports.²⁵

Pay and Benefits

"No one found fault with our going into the British
service for pay," wrote one German officer. All the ranks benefitted from the higher British pay scale. A colonel made £ 1 4s a day, a captain made 10 shillings, and a private received 8 pence per day. The British also paid forage money to officers which was used to outfit and feed the troops. Frugal General Riedesel saved 15,000 Talers from this source. Special troops received more pay in line units. A Jäger company commander got more than a pound a day and his privates received more money than the regular infantrymen. Many officers could support a family at home and still live very well. The privates could not. Deductions from their pay for food and equipment cut into the 8 pence until few men had any money to spend except upon cheap luxuries such as tobacco and alcohol. Some officers and men risked their pay by gambling among themselves and with the game-loving English. Several officers amassed considerable debts while in America. Hesse-Cassel did offer bounty money to officers who served in America, but they had trouble collecting. The British did tell some German officers that those who served with distinction were to be given assignments in America after the war with good money and large plantations in the British defeat ended this hope and many Germans were happy just to survive. The British did pay the Germans on a regular basis as they
paid their own men. The real profits for fighting, though, did not go into the soldiers' pockets, but rather into the coffers of the princes.

The March to the Transports

The troops from Brunswick, Hesse-Cassel, and Waldeck generally marched north from their garrisons to the port of embarkation at Bremerlehe, today's Bremen and stayed in the Elbe Estuary. Troops from further south utilized canal and riverboats to transport the soldiers, some of whom ended up in Holland for embarkation on the English channel. The officers began training the units before leaving garrison and used the march to break in many new soldiers. German officers tolerated no slaggards. Soldiers who disobeyed orders faced harsh discipline. Recruits found that the officers would use handcuffs, thumb-screws, heavy chains, and canings to break an individual's will. The officers repeatedly humiliated the new mewn to break their spirits--to make a recruit's only motive for action to escape punishment. The recruit found his regiment to supply all human contact and came to respect its colors and traditions. 64

The discipline never let up. One thing stands clear throughout the history of the American Revolution: in spite of morale, logistical, and health problems, German discipline never
wavered in battle. The harsh discipline worked, enabling officers to force the enlisted men to fight effectively.

Just about the first thing a recruit learned to do was march. The Germans used a parade step to make them look handsome, formidable, tall, and graceful—the famous goosestep. Ironically, in the light of later history, the British Army used the same step in the eighteenth century.65 Valentin Asteroth, a stocking maker from Treysa, marched away from the fortress of Ziegenhain with his regiment to the mournful cries of many onlookers.66 Officers also felt the pangs of leaving home. General Riedesel, commander of the Brunswick contingent, wrote his wife that, "Never have I suffered more than upon my departure this morning. My heart was broken, and could I have gone back who knows what I might have done. But, my darling, God has placed me in my present calling, and I must follow it. Duty and honor force me to this decision, and we must be comforted by this reflection and not murmur."67 Stephan Popp remembered that when the officers gave the order to march, "Then we really heard the lamentation of the people. We drew up in ranks and amidst the shedding of many tears we marched off."68 Yet a Brunswick officer recorded that his regiment marched off with bands playing attended by the jubilant shouts of the soldiers, who could not wait to get
to the transports. 69

The troops generally marched short distances each day (about four to six hours) and included rest days on their schedule. When they passed through neutral countries, troops of those states escorted the marchers. The Brunswick troops marched from Wolfensbuttel to Stade, a distance of 110 miles between February 22 and March 6th. The Hessians marched through Gottingen to Hanover, and then on to Cuxhaven on the coast. 70 The route could be dangerous. Lieutenant Colonel Scheffer and Major von Hanstein of the Regiment Von Lossberg were almost killed when the ceiling of their room in a monastery billet collapsed upon them. 71

Captain Georg Pausch led his Hesse-Hanau artillery battery to Holland. The Hanau troops embarked on river boats in the Main River on May 15, 1776 and sailed into the Rhine. The men anchored the boats in the middle of the river at night for reasons of security. Many of the soldiers passed time by singing hymns, a feature of their life that set them apart from British soldiers. Pausch had to travel to the Hague to get passes to allow his men to cross the Dutch frontier and met Rainsford, who inspected the troops at Nijmegen. The company boarded the Ship Juno at Willemstad and discovered it to be a former slave trader, a symbol lost on many of them. 72
German troops met with little resistance in Europe except for the delays of red tape during the seven years that they were employed by the British. The officers faced three problems: desertion, mutiny, and delays overtly caused by other princes. Only desertion caused great concern, although all three types of incidents took place from time to time. A Brunswick officer recorded the story of his march:

A number of newly-recruited youths, attracted by the bounty money, contemplated deserting their colors at the first opportunity, but no sooner had we crossed the Hanovarian boundary than we were surrounded by a detachment of cavalry. During the daytime, whenever we halted, pickets surrounded us, and at night we were quartered in barns and stables, which were locked and guarded by sentries.  

On November 26, 1777 Captain Plätzfeld wrote to the Erbprinz concerning deserters from the detachment of recruits he led to the transport ships. On November 17th two recruits jumped overboard in the Rhine and four more escaped on November 21st. Plätzfeld underscored the danger that the men would try to desert everyday.

The Regiment Von Lossberg lost fifteen men before it reached the ships, but had brought along supernumerary personnel and filled the losses. Some recruits got away before units marched. Sixty-three men deserted from
Ziegenhain in March 1781, showing that the fortress was not as strong as some thought. Other German princes often claimed men from units passing through to the coast. Officials at Coblenz visited a group of Hessian recruits and claimed seventeen of them as deserters from their own forces. Another recruit jumped overboard and swam away across the Rhine. So the Hessians lost eighteen men at this one stop. Recaptured deserters were courtmartialed, disciplined, and returned to their units for transport.

Only one group of soldiers mutinied enroute to America. The two Anspach-Bayreuth infantry regiments boarded small river boats at Ochsenfurt on the Main River on March 10, 1777. The soldiers endured one night of very cramped quarters and then got off complaining that they had been cooped up like rogues. Sutlers brought wine to the men and because most of them had enough money to get drunk their discipline disappeared. The officers quickly stationed Jager riflemen around the mob and threatened to shoot if the men would not obey orders—a threat they carried out. The riflemen wounded about thirty men, but the rest of the drunken soldiers (probably a thousand or more) forced the Jägers to flee by attacking them with muskets and fixed bayonets. In the confusion many took an opportunity to desert. The officers desperately sent word
to the Margrave who furiously rode up from Anspach. The men docily gave in when they saw him (and perhaps the effects of the wine wore off) and he lined up the two regiments and asked them (!) if they would freely go or not. "There was one who wanted to say no. Then His Highness asked whether anyone had any objections to make. Of them there was plenty. One wanted this, another that. After everything was concluded satisfactorily we went back aboard ship." 79 The Margrave accompanied his men all the way to Holland to make sure that his investment would not be lost. The Anspachers received a check at Mainz, for the elector there had blocked the Rhine by a bridge of boats in order to collect tolls. The Margrave led the successful attempt to break through the boats and continue down the river. When Rainsford heard of this incident he mused that, "I am sorry after this proof of spirit + conduct that he don't go Himself to America with his Troops." 80 But he didn't.

The Anspachers' troubles did not end with the passage of Mainz. William Faucitt had joined the units and he wrote Rainsford that, "I understand there are a few deserters from the Dutch amongst them, but it will be an easy matter for you to arrange things with the Commanding Officer upon the spot so as to smuggle them on board the Transports, if you find it necessary, without exposing them
to be seen publicly at the Muster." Rainsford duped the Dutch and the regiments embarked without further incident.

A party of Hanau recruits mutinied in March 1777. Hanau Captain Kornrumpff commanded a detachment sailing down the Rhine into Holland. One boat under a Lieutenant named Mayer docked at a small Dutch village and Mayer went into town "amusing himself—my good Colonel may see that the whole blame lay upon him," wrote the fearful Kornrumpff. Seven men deserted and Kornrumpff could only catch four of them. Three deserters fled to the village and the villagers ran to protect them. Kornrumpff had to retreat back to the boats empty-handed.

These two incidents of mutiny show the lack of ability of the soldiers to protest their own fates. Only a handful of the thirty thousand soldiers tried to escape service while still in Europe. The mutiny of the Anspachers depended upon wine and when the effects wore off the men became docile. Every unit reported deserters while on the march to the transports, but few men escaped due to the tight security that the officers set in place. Discipline and force undercut any concerted attempt to halt the march to war.

One German prince did try to stop the march, although probably only to demonstrate his own power rather than for humanitarian feelings. Frederick the Great's complaints
about the selling of soldiers to Britain came to a head when he stopped a detachment of Anspach recruits on the Rhine in October 1777. Frederick disliked his nephew Margrave Charles Alexander and so he denied the passage of the soldiers through his Rhineland territories. Charles held his men on their boats in Bendorf am Rhine, a town belonging to him, for a month, and then sent them to Hanau for the winter. But the men still could not leave the boats due to troops on shore who guarded the Anspachers. This was not a sign of Hanau's animosity towards Anspach; some two hundred and fifty Hanau recruits endured the same conditions. Both groups finally marched to the coast in February and March 1778.

Frederick the Great affected the passage of the Anhalt-Zerbst Regiment, a unit from a territory that bordered Brandenburg. The unit had to march through seven different states and free cities to try to avoid Prussian territory. At Zeulenrode a corporal chased a deserter into an inn, shot at him through a window and accidentally killed the innkeeper's wife. The townspeople mobbed the regiment, mortally wounding a lieutenant in the ensuing riot. The soldiers beat a retreat. Prussian officers then saw the Zerbst regiment as fair game and attempted to steal recruits. The Prussians hounded the regiment and even
fought a skirmish with the unit during its march. Three hundred and thirty-four men deserted within ten days, leaving just 494 with the colors. The Zerbst officers did manage to enlist 130 men along the route, but the regiment was understrength when it left Stade on April 22, 1778. These two incidents mark the extent of Prussian interference with the German soldier trade and ended in the face of the outbreak of the War of Bavarian Succession in 1778. 84

Passage to América

Once the German troops reached their ports of embarkation Rainsford or Faucitt inspected the units, mustered them in to British service, and sent them on board the ships. Riedesel reported that Faucitt reviewed the Brunswick dragoons and grenadiers on March 19, 1776. "With the former he was very much pleased, but found some fault with the latter in regard to their height. Some of these, also, he thought too old; but in the main he was satisfied." Faucitt was more pleased with the Brunswick infantry and began drilling the recruits himself before the men embarked. 85

Most of the German troops had seen no bodies of water larger than the lakes and rivers at home; the Atlantic amazed them. Some found the size of the ships "unnatural." The sailors were a "raw and wild tribe" who scorned the
landlubbers and played tricks on the easily duped peasants. Most soldiers quickly came down with seasickness. 86

The British found it very difficult to transport their new allies because of the great numbers involved. The First Hessian Division required some ninety ships to carry them to America and the Second Division needed almost as many; many of the necessary ships were already carrying the Brunswickers to Canada. 87 By July 5, 1776 the Admiralty scoured Britain, Holland, and Germany for 370 ships of 127,249 tons, a greater number than had been used in the Seven Years' War. 88 This number proved adequate, but transportation to and from America remained a major British logistical problem.

General Riedesel recorded his life on the ocean in letters back home to his wife. On a routine day he rose at seven A.M., ate breakfast, wrote or read, smoked several pipes of tobacco, and then ate dinner at two in the afternoon. Dinner usually lasted an hour, plus almost another hour of drinking toasts of wine—the general and his staff generally consumed four bottles of wine per day, plus half a bottle of arrack, a liquor distilled from rice and used as a base for punch. Then came coffee. If able to move, the officers inspected the vessels before gathering to play whist. They ate supper at 8:30 P.M., usually dining on
cold meat, wine, and beer. They dropped off to bed at
10 P.M. 89

The general route used by the fleets was very simple.
The ships picked up the Germans either on the North Sea or
in Holland and brought them to Portsmouth on the southern
English coast or Cork in Ireland. Larger fleets guarded by
many warships gathered and sailed to America on a schedule
several times a year. A voyage usually took at least eight
weeks to complete. Because of the lack of sufficient trans-
ports, not all elements of British or German troops sailed
at the same time. 90 Eight British regiments and 2,000
Brunswickers left Cork and Portsmouth on April 8, 1776 for
Canada. Three weeks later 3,500 Highlanders left the Clyde
Estuary bound for Howe's army and 8,200 Hessians of the
First Division reached Spithead in the south and changed
transports. When these men left Breemlehe the British left
behind the Rall and Mirbach regiments, plus a third of the
Knyphausen Regiment due to lack of room. German commander
Heister did not want to sail without all his men, but the
English insisted upon it. Heister's First Division left
England in May, and arrived in New York in August. This
still left 4,000 Hessians of the Second Division and 3,000
Brunswickers without transport. The Brunswickers finally
left England in June and reached Canada in September. The
Hessians and the Waldeck Regiment left England in July and got to New York in October. By October over 19,000 Germans reached North America safely.

The fleets faced the threat of American privateers, so the British issued powder and balls to enable the soldiers to somewhat defend themselves. The British also issued 42,480 musket balls and 7080 flints to two German regiments at Portsmouth on May 17, 1776, a supply probably taken to America and shared with other units.

The Germans sailed on a variety of national vessels and often had language problems with the crews. Part of the Von Lossberg Regiment on board the ship Judith panicked after the ship's captain asked for a depth sounding and a seaman dropped the lead and called back "four"; the Germans thought he said "Feuer" (fire) and headed for the boats. In the resulting confusion the Judith scraped a nearby Dutch transport.

All the transports had rules to follow. British naval officers denied the Germans authority to punish British seaman. All men were to go up on deck every morning after cleaning their bunks. There would be no gaming and no hard liquors. The men could not smoke below decks. Chaplains sailed with each unit and on the way to America they heard penitants, buried the dead, gave consolation and
inner support. They conducted regular morning and evening prayer services on deck when the weather permitted.

Conditions were harsh. Each man had a small mattress, a pillow, and a woolen coverlet. The food varied somewhat. The men got peas and bacon on Sunday; four pounds fed six men. On Monday the menu included soup, butter, cheese, four pounds of meat, three pounds of veal, and a half pound of raisins for the same six men. This was repeated on Wednesday. Menus for the other days included pork and rice or oatmeal and beef. The men also received hard bread (hardtack) daily. The men also got a ration of beer and rum as long as it lasted—water was only the last resort.

In spite of adequate food the men became seasick and many did not eat. Riedesel had to cook for himself and even dressed himself for he could find no one to help him.

Many soldiers developed symptoms of scurvy. Every transport carried between 130–200 men ill; a transport generally carried from 900 to 1,000 men. On some ships up to 40 men died during the passage. Even though men cleaned their areas daily, disease progressed quite rapidly. Soldiers in the First Hessian Division discovered that rats gnawed their way through the water casks and even began to nibble the cartridges. The soldiers quickly buried their dead. One Hessian officer wrote home to his brother
that on, "May 17th, 12 P.M., one of our recruits died and immediately was thrown overboard in the usual way, i.e., laced in a linen hammock with a sandbag at his feet." A day later an Anspach officer's attendant stole a shirt from his master and jumped overboard for fear of punishment. The sailors pulled him out of the ocean dead. 101

The British also suffered from their confinement on board ships. A soldier stole a shirt from one of his messmates and jumped off the bow of the ship, which passed over him. The ship lowered a longboat and pulled him out of the ocean "with difficulty." He survived. A sergeant quarreled with his wife at breakfast and, in a rage, "leaped overboard and was seen no more." A recruit provoked by his comrades to such a point "that in a fit of rage he jumped overboard, uttering at the same time curses upon them. He was swallowed up by the great deep in a moment." 102

The officers realized the tensions and unreleased energies of the men. One ship sprung a leak in bad weather; the captain told the officers that it might not reach Newfoundland. The officers quickly manned the pumps themselves, saying that they needed the exercise and in this way not alarm the men. Then they induced some of the enlisted men to help pump "for exercise." The exercise lasted two days until the sailors could seal the leak! 103
Tensions among the officers also could get out of hand. Lieutenant Kleinschmidt accidentally stepped on Captain Count von der Lipp's dog, which cried out in pain. Offended by the captain's insulting remarks, Kleinschmidt demanded an immediate pistol duel and mortally wounded von der Lipp. Kleinschmidt faced a court martial, but was acquitted. Like the burials of men who died of disease, the chaplain buried the captain in white canvas, weighed with a stone. 104

Many of the officers and men who could obtain sufficient wine and rum often times crossed the ocean in a stupor. In 1778 Major Hertfeld wrote back to the Erbprinz of Hesse that Lieutenant Merz and Color Bearer von Buineburg were drunk daily and generally passed out on the floor. 105

Hertfeld also told of the dreadful condition of the ship. The men were eaten up by vermin, most of them only had one shirt left, and their shoes, trousers, and socks were in the worst possible condition. The men had no money and could not buy anything extra. 106 A British officer commented that, "The Germans usually suffer more by those disorders on board transports than our men do, owing to the want of experience in the officers, and the natural laziness and want of cleanliness among the men." 107 A German officer wrote home that, "I must confess that the discomforts of the voyage are so great that I am not competent to
describe them adequately. This much is certain, however, each of us who has survived this trip won't repeat it for many thousands, nor will anyone who half knows the discomforts dream of taking a trip to America."108

The discomforts of the voyages included icebergs, storms, accidents, and privateers. The First Hessian Division ran into a major storm between May 25th and May 30th. Many sailors were washed overboard; others committed suicide in desperation. The soldiers kept below "as if buried alive in coffins" and prayed.109

Some transports encountered American privateers and supply ships. An American privateer attacked the fleet carrying the Second Hessian Division on September 29, 1776, but the British Navy quickly overpowered and captured the American ship.110 The British distributed the crew among the various vessels in the fleet. Captain Johann Ewald watched the American captain and surgeon come aboard. "Both were trembling when they came aboard, and we eyed each other with the same attention and curiosity one gives a strange animal."111 On other alarms the Germans manned the sides of the ships with their muskets and helped direct the artillery.112 The transport carrying Captain Waldenberg's unit captured an American transport and the soldiers received the 12,000 Reichstaler prize money.113
Most German soldiers never saw an American sail, and rather fought the boredom of the passage. Occasionally the boredom led to disorder. A group of recruits caused trouble on the transports in October 1777, Lieutenant Wollwarth reported back to Hesse. A fleet containing English and Hessian recruits ran into trouble in February 1778. The recruits started to complain and finally mutinied. Jäger recruits took their rifles and the infantrymen took whatever they could to arm themselves. One Jäger leveled his rifle at Major Flatzfeld's head, but Color Bearer Micklaschwitz knocked the weapon out of the man's hands. When the major reproached the mutineers for their behavior as Hessians, they all cried that they were not Hessians for they had sworn allegiance to the King of England and wanted to be treated as English soldiers—they wanted better treatment. The mutiny lasted four days. The men gave in when promised an increase of pay when in America. Flatzfeld noted that bad as the conduct of his men, the English recruits were far worse. Many had to be kept in chains for the duration of the voyage.

The survivors finally reached North America after two or three months on the ocean. An Anspach soldier saw that confinement on board ship just prefigured another type of confinement. No sooner had his unit landed on Staten
Island than "we were at once warned not to run away."

And so the troops came to America to help the British put down the American rebellion. The German princes sent off natives and foreigners, packed them on ships, and sailed them across the ocean to a land few knew anything about. This was accomplished with the efficiency of a regular military establishment. Deserterers got away when they could, but most of the soldiers reached America fit to fight. Over 19,000 reached America during 1776 and some 10,000 more joined their units by 1783. The arrival of these troops justified the reason for their hire; they enabled the British to take an immediate and overwhelming offensive that defeated Washington's forces and sent them running to Pennsylvania. The German forces formed the critical part of British strength in 1776, the year that they had the best chance to totally defeat the Americans on the battlefield and end the rebellion.

Chapter Notes:


2 For unit histories, see Appendix One.

3 Rainsford, p. 350.
All name changes are listed in Appendix One.


Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Heeresarchiv, Rep. 15A, Kap. XXXIII, numbers 195, 196, 197.

Baurmeister, p. 18; Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Hessen Kabinett ministerium OWS 1248, number CXVII and CXIX.


Rainsford, pp. 355-357.


Ibid., pp. 15-16; Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Heeresarchiv Rep. 15A, Kap. XXXIII, number 222; Ms Hass 80, number 128, Heft 1.

Peter Paret, Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform, (Princeton, 1966), p. 82.

See Chapter Eleven for further discussion.


Katcher, pp. 106, 110-111.


26 Ibid., p. 194.


28 Ibid., p. 555.

29 Ibid., p. 556.

30 Ibid., p. 557.

31 Ibid., p. 558.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., p. 559.


35 Kipping, p. 7; Rainsford, p. 409.

37 Preußisches Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Heeresarchiv, number 196.

38 Schwalm, p. 11.


40 Ibid., p. 129.

41 Ibid., p. 144.

42 Ibid., p. 178.

43 Ibid., p. 250.

44 Frederick Mackensie, Diary of Frederick Mackenzie, II, (Harvard, 1930), 585,587.

45 Quoted in Kipping, p. 7.

46 Schwalm, p. 1.

47 Quoted in Kipping, p. 8.

48 Rainsford, p. 378.

49 Dippel, p. 122.

50 Rainsford, pp. 317-318.

51 Ibid., p. 318.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid., pp. 320-321.

54 Ibid., p. 327.

55 Ibid., pp. 331-332.

56 Quoted in Eelking, p. 15.

57 Preußisches Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Berlin, Heeresarchiv, Rep. 15A, Kap. XXXIII, numbers 210, 211, 269.

58 Eelking, p. 15.
Ewald, p. 118.


Baurmeister, pp. 314-315.

Kipping, p. 7.

Ewald, p. 346.

Greene, p. 182.


Ibid., p. 1.


Popp, p. 1.


Riedesel I, pp. 31-33; Ewald, p. 5; Landesbibliothek Kassel, Ms. Hass. 40, number 228; Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Berlin, Heeresarchiv, Rep. 15A, Kap. XXXIII, number 222.

Slagle, p. 20.


Preussisches Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Berlin, Heeresarchiv, number 196.

Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS, 1248, Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, number CXIX.

77 Rainsford, p. 391.
78 Slagle, p. 21.
79 Popp, p. 2.
80 Rainsford, p. 389.
81 Ibid., p. 369.
82 Ibid., p. 383.
83 Lowell, pp. 50-51.
84 Ibid., p. 52; Friedrich Kapp, Der Soldatenhandel deutscher Fürsten nach Amerika, (Berlin, 1874), p. 252.
85 Riedesel, I, 33.
86 Popp, pp. 3-4.
87 Landesbibliothek Kassel, Ms. Hass. 40, number 186.
89 Riedesel, I, pp. 34-35.
91 Ibid., Eelking, pp. 24-25.
93 Slagle, p. 23.
94 Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS 1248, Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, numbre CXIX.
95 Preussisches Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Berlin, Heeresarchiv, Rep. 15A, Kap. XXXIII, number 214; Rainsford, p. 359.
96 Schwalm, pp. 1-2.
97 Ibid., p. 2; Eelking, p. 24; Preussisches Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Berlin, Heeresarchiv, Rep. 15A, Kap. XXXIII, number 214.
98 Riedesel, I, p. 37.

99 Kipping, p. 8.


104 Schwalm, pp. 4-5


106 Ibid.

107 Mackensie, II, 586.

108 Pettengill, p. 160.

109 Pausch, pp. 53, 55; Pfister, pp. 9-10.

110 Pfister, pp. 11-14.

111 Ewald, p. 7.

112 Pfister, pp. 18-19.

113 Baurmeister, pp. 31-32.


115 Ibid.

116 Popp, p. 5.
CHAPTER FIVE

The Northern Campaigns

General William Howe aimed his forces at the New York harbor region for an assault to capture the major American port and use it for a staging area to put down the rebellion. His forces numbered some 32,000 men by the middle of August, 1776, being made up of British forces brought south from Halifax, British forces from England and Ireland that sailed directly to New York from Britain, and Germans sailing direct from Europe. The Germans initially involved were the First Division of Hesse-Cassel troops, some 8,000 men.  

The British Navy had arrived off Manhattan in June and landed several regiments on Staten Island at the mouth of the Hudson River. They were not annoyed by the American defenders, for the English ships could screen potential American attacks from New Jersey, Manhattan, or Long Island. Howe's army built up strength for two months, warily watching the Americans and waiting for a predominance of strength that would give them the initiative. The first Germans reached Staten Island on August 12, after their nearly four months on shipboard. The landings went smoothly, but German commander Heister went to Howe to declare that
his men were exhausted by their voyage and could not take the field without rest on land. Howe wanted immediate action. He ordered some 5,000 of his British troops to be ready to attack Long Island; some say this shamed the Germans into readying their troops faster than they wished. The campaign began on August 22, just ten days after the Germans came ashore.\(^2\)

Howe intended a massive offensive to crush the American forces in the New York area. His 32,000 men numbered the largest military force Britain had ever sent overseas. Howe had the support of a fleet commanded by his brother comprising 10 ships of the line, 20 frigates armed with 1,200 guns, and hundreds of transports, all manned by some 10,000 sailors. To pay for action in America, Howe brought along a war chest of £850,000. His foes had some 19,000 men scattered throughout Long Island, Manhattan, and New Jersey, an amateur army led by amateur officers, ill-trained, poorly armed, and poorly supplied. Washington had not a single warship or transport, and his war chest consisted of a printing press in Philadelphia, issuing paper money that depreciated in value day by day.\(^3\)

Faced with the task of holding the New York harbor area in face of the British might, George Washington decided to spread his outnumbered defenders between Long Island and
Manhattan, divided by the great expanse of the East River. He sent a division of troops under General Israel Putnam, whose chief command prior to this had been a company of rangers during the French and Indian War, to occupy western Long Island, while Washington himself remained behind in Manhattan. Putnam took his men out of the extensive intrenchments adjacent the East River, in what is now Brooklyn Heights, and marched them east and south to face the ocean. The Americans anchored their right flank on the East River, the main body faced the Atlantic, but their left flank ended "up in the air" without proper pickets or scouts to give them alarm at the presence of enemy troops. The Americans were woefully unprepared for extensive combat. 4

At dawn on the 22nd of August some 15,000 British soldiers began to board flatboats, bateaux, and row-galleys to make an amphibious assault on Long Island, covered by the fire of many British warships. By 8 o'clock in the morning the British advance corps, made up of four battalions of light infantry, a regiment of dragoons, 4 battalions of grenadiers, the 33rd and 44th Regiments of Foot, plus Colonel Carl von Donop's elite corps of Hessian grenadiers and Jägers, in all some 4,000 men, embarked and landed with little opposition. Commanded by generals Clinton and Cornwallis, these troops covered the landing of some 5,000
more attackers, all of whom were ashore by noon. These 9,000 men skirmished with the Americans, but did not bring on a general engagement. Finally, on the 25th of August, two brigades of Hessian infantry landed, being under command of General von Heister, "a tough old soldier of the Seven Years' War." The Hessians stood in the boats "with muskets sloped and in column of march, preserving the well-considered pomp of German discipline."  

The Jägers overmatched the American riflemen, who chiefly were semi-disciplined men from the frontier. British soldiers feared the accurate fire from American riflemen. The Germans effectively countered them. One German wrote home that:

The rebels have some very good marksmen, but some of them have wretched guns, and most of them shoot crooked. But they are clever at hunter's wiles. They climb trees, they crawl forward on their bellies for one hundred and fifty paces, shoot, and go as quickly back again. They make themselves shelters of boughs, etc. But today they are much put out by our greencloths, for we don't let our fellows fire unless they can get good aim at a man, so that they dare not undertake anything more against us.

Major Carl Baurmeister reported that on August 24th the Jägers killed nine Americans, while losing just one man in return. Two light cannon with the Jägers "sufficed to chase away this lot of rabble which parades under the name of"
riflemen."\(^8\)

The Germans did not always meet with success. Lieutenant Colonel James Chambers of the 1st Continental Infantry led his troops in killing "several Hessians." His regiment fought the Jägers all day, with a loss of but two men wounded. His men forced the German advance troops out of Flatbush, which the Germans set on fire as they retreated. "This was doubted by some, which enraged our men so much that a few of them ran and brought back several Hessians on their backs."\(^9\)

The scattered skirmishing lasted until dawn on the 27th of August. By this time the British line ran from southwest to northeast. The British advance corps lay on the right and included the Hessian grenadiers. The Hessian infantry brigades under Heister made up the center on the British line, while the British left consisted of Redcoats only, under the command of General James Grant. British tactics were simple and effective: while Heister and Grant attacked to fix the Americans in position, the British advance corps swung out in an arc to the right and rear of the American position. Then attacking from east to west on August 27th Howe rolled up the American army, causing it to flee into the Brooklyn defenses, minus over a thousand casualties.\(^{10}\)
FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,

WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
The German grenadiers served with the British flanking attack. They moved out in good order, with their flags flying and bands playing, in perfect battalion formations. The heavy woods restricted movement, but the men hauled along their artillery by hand. The Americans, seeing themselves assaulted on three sides, fought back desperately. The Hessians, angered by "useless resistance" fired just one volley and then fell upon the Americans with their bayonets.\textsuperscript{11}

The German infantry brigades under Heister in the center of the line also had an easy time. The infantry brought along their field artillery in their regimental lines "continually beating their drums."\textsuperscript{12} The massed English troops suffered greater losses, for the Germans marched "in-corrigibly", unlike their allies who marched, in German eyes, like the bravest and best of soldiers (and therefore lost more). Yet, whenever the British or Hessians attacked, the Americans ran "as all mobs do". By the end of the day the entire German force counted just two men killed and two officers and 23 men wounded.\textsuperscript{13}

One German colonel reported that "the English gave little quarter to the enemy and encouraged our men to do the same thing."\textsuperscript{14} Lieutenant Rüffer thought that the Americans had been told not to surrender because their officers had told them that they would be hanged.\textsuperscript{15} The Germans were
surprised that the Americans defense was not as strong as expected, especially from such "enthusiasts of Freedom." Colonel von Heeringen wrote home that:

The enemy had almost impenetrable thickets, lines, abattis, and redoubts in front of them. The riflemen were mostly spitted to the trees with bayonets. These frightful people deserve pity rather than fear. It always takes them a quarter of an hour to load, and meanwhile they feel our balls and bayonets.

Heeringen went on to say that the British also used the bayonet, knocking everybody head over heels. They took prisoners those they did not massacre. The Americans surrendered in great numbers, with officers bringing in many of their men. Many cried piteously for their lives, falling on their knees in front of German regiments. Colonel Rall's infantry regiment captured over 60 Americans and their flag. General von Mirbach, Rall's brigade commander rode up to demand the possession of the flag. Rall shouted that "My grenadiers took it and they shall have it!" and the flag remained theirs. Instead of resenting Rall's hot blood, Mirbach later made him brigade inspector.

No American was immune to rough treatment. Lieutenant Schotten noted that his men captured a rebel general in a cornfield. "They immediately robbed him of his belongings and treated him so roughly that he complained to General Heister." The general, John Sullivan of Durham, New
Hampshire, never forgave this incident. A grenadier tried to bring in an American colonel as prisoner. As they walked to the rear the colonel pulled out a pistol and shot the German in the arm. The grenadier turned and bayonetted him three or four times. 21

Many of the stories of atrocities committed by the British and Germans on Long Island are myths. There is no evidence that large-scale slaughter of wounded or prisoners took place. The Americans lost over a thousand men killed, wounded, and missing, while all the losses of the British numbered much less. There does seem to have been a perception on the part of Germans that American rebels deserved a harsh fate. In the pitched battles in Long Island's woodlands amateur soldiers fought trained professionals. The professionals had an easy victory. The overwhelming defeat accounts for most of their losses.

Manhattan

The Americans retreated into a ring of fortifications along Brooklyn Heights. Howe's army marched to within musketshot, but did not mass for an attack against the American lines, perhaps not wanting to bring on another Bunker Hill. On the night of August 29th, Washington secretly abandoned his very tenuous position, recrossing his forces to Manhattan and spreading them out from north
to south to face the East River. The Hessians perhaps had an opportunity to catch Washington ferrying his troops. A Tory woman discovered that the Americans were in motion. She sent her black slave to alert the British. The slave blundered into a Hessian camp, where, not being understood, he was arrested as a suspicious person and kept until daybreak, too late to stop Washington. 22

The British army did not pursue. Howe spent two weeks on Long Island, his camps stretching from Brooklyn to Flushing. Finally, on September 15th Howe sent the Navy in close to bombard the American positions and followed the cannon fire by ferrying four columns of British and Germans into Manhattan. Washington's defense collapsed once more. His troops from the lowest sections of the island tried to escape to the rocky area known as Harlem at the northern tip of Manhattan. British and German troops marching in from the east intercepted some of these troops. One British officer recorded one skirmish between the Germans and the Americans:

The Hessian Grenadiers who landed on the left met with a few of the Enemy in McWatts orchard who fired on them, by which two Hessians were killed and about ten wounded: but they paid dearly for this, as did some others who came forward soon after, with the intention of surrendering themselves, as the Hessians killed about 60 of them and took a few prisoners. 23
Von Donop's grenadiers fought General Wadsworth's retreating New York militia and captured between three and four hundred of them. The above estimate of the American loss in killed was greatly exaggerated, but the Hessian grenadiers did inflict most of the American casualties that day. 24

Washington managed to hold together most of his men along a ridge known as Harlem Heights. Instead of simply counting his losses and reacting to British advances, he attempted some minor offensive actions on September 16th, just one day after he gave up most of Manhattan Island to the enemy. About 120 American rangers under Thomas Knowlton of Connecticut advanced into British lines. The Americans ran into heavy musketfire; Knowlton died in a hail of bullets and his men began retreating into the American position. Incensed by the British blowing fox hunting horns to lead their men to chase the Americans, Washington reacted by sending out a much larger detachment of troops. The British troops, including the famous 42nd Regiment Black Watch, fell back. Howe quickly sent reinforcements, including a battalion of Hessian grenadiers and the company of Jägers. A hot fight developed, lasting two hours, during which the Jägers and the Scots regiment fell back onto the grenadiers. Not wishing to bring on a more general engagement, Washington pulled his men back, but not until the
luckless Americans had seen redcoats and Hessians running away from them. This skirmish at Harlem Heights became more a moral than tactical victory for the Americans. Yet Adjutant General Baurmeister reported a British loss of 70 dead and 200 wounded. If the report is accurate, this was the greatest British loss since Bunker Hill.  

The action at Harlem Heights ended active maneuvering for about a month. Howe received a substantial reinforcement numbering thousands of redcoats and the Second Hessian Division, under Lieutenant General Wilhelm von Knyphausen, which numbered 3,997 men, plus the Waldeck Regiment of 670 men. These reinforcements joined the army on October 18th, at a time when Howe had begun to once more advance on the Americans.  

While substantial British forces held the Americans along the line of Harlem Heights, Howe sent Germans and Redcoats in amphibious landings against the American-held mainland at Throg's Neck and Pelham in Westchester County. On October 12th some 4,000 of his troops landed on Throg's Neck, a small peninsula that jutted out from the mainland. Led by German Jägers, the British advance bogged down under American small-arms fire in the marshes and creek that separated the opponents. Failing in his attempt to force the position, Howe waited six days for reinforcements from
New York City to reach him. On October 18th Howe embarked his army on transports once more and landed at Pelham Point, three miles to the east. Here the British ran afoul of a Massachusetts regiment under Colonel John Glover of Marblehead, who skillfully traded space for time against the advanced force of some 4,000 British and Germans. At the end of the day, Glover withdrew, having lost eight killed and thirteen wounded, while inflicting a loss of three killed and twenty wounded on the British forces. The Germans lost more than their British comrades, but Howe did not report their losses. 27

The Battle of White Plains

When General Howe began his flanking moves on October 18th, Washington's army had just begun to leave the lines along Harlem Heights to cross to the mainland. Washington eventually posted his troops at the village of White Plains, along a number of hills. Howes main body finally reached White Plains on the morning of October 28th. Seeing the advance of the British, which was made up of Germans under Heister, six New England regiments under Major General Joseph Spencer moved forward from the main body of the defenders to intercept the enemy. Spencer's men fired from behind stone walls and caused some hesitation in the German
ranks, but Colonel Johann Rall arrived at the head of his regiment and attacked the right flank of the advanced Americans, causing the Yankees to break and flee across the Bronx River, where they remained scattered. The Americans lost almost fifty men and the Germans under Rall moved up to the foot of Chatterton's Hill, the right flank of Washington's main position. 28

Howe halted the main body of his army facing the American positions to the north. The British began the chief engagement by bringing up their artillery and subjecting the Americans to a furious cannonade. As in most eighteenth century artillery attacks, there was more smoke than damage. However, the artillery smoke, added to smoke caused by a fire in trees between the two armies (perhaps ignited by the artillery fire) masked the preparations for assault. The Regiment von Lossburg led the British attack, fording the Bronx River and scaling a steep slope in front. The regiment had to pass through the burning woods to reach the Americans. Twice repulsed, the Lossbergers rallied a third time and led Leslie's English Brigade and the Hessian grenadiers to the top. The regiment faced the day's heaviest fire, losing some fifty men killed and wounded. Howe silenced his cannon fire to allow this attack to reach the Americans, and also called on Colonel Rall to make a flanking
attack against Chatterton Hill with the forces under his command. Rall led his own regiment and the Regiment von Knyphausen across the Bronx and angled to hit the right of the American line in an oblique maneuver. In order to keep up the moral of the soldiers and to demonstrate that the river could easily be forded, Lieutenants Wiederhold and Briede jumped in first to set the example. Rall's men quickly followed and cut into the American flank, held at this point chiefly by militia. The militia fled, leaving Chatterton Hill in Rall's hands. Rall continued his attack, catching Colonel Hazlett's regiment of Delaware Continentals as they retreated northward. Three of Hazlett's companies broke and ran, but the remainder lined up behind a fence and twice repulsed attacks made on them.²⁹

Howe then called off the action, allowing Washington's army to escape into the hills to the north. Some Germans wondered why. Captain Ewald wrote in his diary that "during this action General Clinton occupied a small hill that lay on the left flank of the enemy, where he remained inactive while the enemy was being cannonaded. But why did he not move forward and resolutely attack the enemy is a riddle to me, for he had no more difficulties to overcome than the left column had."³⁰ Howe did not follow up his initiative, but turned south to deal with a fortress full of
Americans still on Manhattan Island, the isolated Fort Washington.

**Fort Washington**

When Washington constructed his original defense lines in the Manhattan region, he built two forts to command the lower Hudson River: Fort Washington in Manhattan and Fort Lee in New Jersey. They lay approximately under the east and west approaches of today's George Washington Bridge. Washington, giving in to the pleadings of General Nathanael Green, left some three thousand men behind in Fort Washington when he evacuated Harlem Heights in October. Here they remained, fed and reinforced from across the Hudson via Fort Lee, but really having no further useful mission to restrict navigation up the Hudson. British warships had already passed the garrison several times. As Washington retreated to northern Westchester and then across the Hudson into New Jersey, Howe moved the bulk of his forces back to Manhattan to reduce Fort Washington.31

Operations began on November 14th, when Jäger Captain Ewald, under the directions of Colonel von Donop, made a scout, along with Captain Pauli of the Hessian artillery and two enlisted men. The four crawled along a steep cliff to reach a vantage point. Howe also had the advantage of an
American deserter from the garrison who was more than willing to sketch complete plans of the defenses. Howe sent columns of troops to encircle the defenders. The right column was commanded by General von Knyphausen and was made up of two forces under Major General Schmidt and Colonel Rall. Rall commanded the troops closest to the Hudson River. Lord Percy commanded the left column. He had been left in control of New York City, but Howe chose him to lead part of the assault. Major General Stern of the Hessians took over command of New York from Percy. All was ready by the morning of November 16th. The British opened a fierce fire from artillery and naval guns at 7 A.M., with the attack beginning after 10 A.M. Knyphausen's Germans made the main thrust. The fort itself was built along the top of a steep, rocky ridge paralleling the Hudson. The Germans pulled themselves upward by bushes, exposed all the while to a severe fire from the defenders, who sallied out to meet the attack. Lieutenant Wiederhold and his men of the Rall Regiment were halfway up the slope when an order came from Howe delaying the attack, in order to marshall more support. Wiederhold later believed the heavy German losses came as a result of this delay. The Americans formed behind rocks and trees, firing into the face of the Germans. Rall exposed himself fearlessly in leading the Waldeck Regiment and the
Regiment von Koehler up the hill, remaining on the skirmish line with the Jägers. Von Knyphausen, then sixty years old, led his column, going uphill with Captain Medern's advance party of 100 men. The English, who watched this attack from safety, thought that the German advance rather resembled mountain climbing rather than a regular military attack. The Germans slung their muskets over their shoulders in order to use both hands to claw their way upwards.

When they reached a swamp on the slope, the Germans went right through it, not around it. One German private remembered that "we were obliged to drag ourselves by the beech-tree bushes up the height where we could really stand." Knyphausen even tore down fences with his bare hands in urging his men on and stood exposed like a common soldier.

One lieutenant in the Waldeck Regiment remembered that "we marched through a valley where the cannonballs howled terribly over our heads." Suddenly he saw a fellow officer, whom he had not seen since they embarked at Bremele. "He reached out his hand to me as we marched close by the woods. We were happy to see that the other had arrived healthy and well in America. A quarter of an hour later I saw him dead--white and being carried away. Once more, I looked at him with tears in my eyes, that noble and courageous man, and with heartfelt sadness I left him."
Lieutenant Wiederhold of the Rall Regiment went forward with the advance guard of one hundred men commanded by Captain von Medern of the Regiment Wutgenau. Von Medern fell mortally wounded and his second in command, Lieutenant Lowenfield, was instantly killed. Wiederhold thanked God for remaining alive, being scratched only by a twig, although the command of the advance guard, now down to thirty men, fell on his shoulders. He took some solace in the old German proverb "weeds are never hurt." (Unkraut vergeht nict.)

Two of the Americans facing the onrushing Germans were Pennsylvania riflemen, who had learned German from their immigrant grandparents. Lieutenant Henry Bedinger and his fifteen year old brother Daniel heard the commander of the Jäger company facing them instruct his men to hold their fire until the Americans had fired first. Understanding the German, Beginger passed word not to fire until the Germans got close. They waited. Finally Bedinger popped up facing a German. Both fired; the German shot off one finger on Bedinger's right hand—Bedinger put his bullet into the German's skull, and he watched as the corpse tumbled downhill. After beating back the German advance five times, Bedinger and the remnants of his troops fell back into the main fort.
Ichabod Perry, an eighteen year old Connecticut soldier, tried to escape to the top of the fort, but the Hessian advance threatened to cut off Perry's company. "When I passed them (we had to go in single file) there was a Hessian that had got within eight feet of us who fired off his gun, the contents of which went through the leg of Lieutenant Meade, which was next to me. I discovered the Hessian behind a cedar bush. I immediately dropp't my gun with the muxxel to the bush and fired. I saw him pitch forward, but did not stop to pick him up. There was a few that got past after me." Later the company stood in line and waited until "they got within five rods of us, and we made use of our long guns pretty supple. We then retreated to the fort." 39

Rall led on his troops, yelling "Hoch! Hoch!" (Up, up). He even brought up a field band and had them play. All the drummers struck up a march, all the haut-boy players blew. Inspired by the martial strains the men who were yet alive shouted "Hurrah!" and leapt upon the defenders, where the Germans paid back their losses by dealing thrusts with their bayonets. Finally forced back into the main works of the fort, the American commander, Colonel Magaw, could not hope to defend the lines with the number of troops left to him. Rall sent out a Captain Hohenstein, who spoke English,
with a drummer. The Americans fired on them, but both reached Magaw. Hohenstein told Magaw that if he would surrender his troops could still keep their private property. Magaw and Hohenstein went to General von Knyphausen. Magaw demanded to march from Fort Washington with the honors of war and be allowed to take his men to New Jersey. Knyphausen refused and gave Magaw one half hour to surrender. Howe arrived and demanded immediate surrender, with only guaranties of his life and baggage. Magaw surrendered just three minutes after meeting with Howe.40

The Germans quickly entered the fort and disarmed the defenders. One German officer accosted Captain Graydon by half unsheathing his sword, and with a look as if he intended to use it, muttered in broken English "Eh, you rebel, you damn rebel."41 Yet one British officer reported that within ten minutes after the surrender the Germans, English, and Americans together drank the rum left in the fort.42 At four P.M. the defenders left the fort, many of them losing their property before marching away south to the prison ships.

The captures of Fort Washington marked the high point of the mercenaries reputation in the Revolution. They lost fifty-six killed and two hundred seventy-six wounded, while the Redcoats counted a further one hundred and twenty men
killed and wounded. The Americans lost far fewer, but nearly three thousand men surrendered at the end of the fight. The quartermaster of the Grenadier Battalion von Minningrode felt the manner of the American's fighting accounted for the heavy losses. The Americans fired from behind trees, rocks, and stone walls, and furthermore fired at long range and ran away. The German muskets carried only one-third as far and German marksmanship could not hit running Americans. 43

The legacy of Fort Washington completely undermined its initial meaning. Colonel Rall, who ably conducted the assault, received the independent command at Trenton, where six weeks later he demonstrated his unsuitability for independent command. The status of the German troops, never higher than after their capture of Fort Washington, would within the end of the year plunge to its lowest ebb with the capture of Rall's brigade at Trenton.

Across New Jersey to Princeton

The British pursued the Americans across the Hudson on November 19th and within several days chased Washington into Pennsylvania. Howe officially closed the campaign on December 14th and established a string of posts along a line from Princeton to Staten Island. The Americans used the British lack of initiative to turn the campaign around late in
December by first attacking and capturing Rall's brigade at Trenton and then defeating a British force at Princeton. Few Germans took part in the later battle. Washington and his men survived, almost against all odds, Howe's army retained just the fringes of territory around Manhattan. The bleak winter quarters belied the idea that either army could win a quick and easy victory.

The 1777 Campaign

The soldiers saw little action until June 1777. The Jägers patrolled and fought an occasional American, but most men battled only against cold and boredom. Howe moved west into New Jersey early in June to lure Washington's army into a trap, but the Americans generally avoided heavy contact. By July Howe decided to attack Philadelphia and marched much of his army on transports for an amphibious assault. The fleet, numbering 260 warships and transports, left Sandy Hook on July 23rd and reached the mouth of the Delaware River six days later. Howe determined that the river defenses were too formidable and ordered the fleet south into Chesapeake Bay. The fleet reached the northernmost point of the bay, the Head of Elk, on August 25th; the first troops went ashore that day, after being on shipboard for six weeks, during the hottest part of the year. Two
regiments of British light infantry, two of British
grenadiers, and the German Jägers came ashore in flat-
bottomed boats and easily brushed aside the Maryland militia
defenders, who fled without firing a shot. 44

On the afternoon of August 26th, while the bulk of the
British army disembarked the Jäger Corps conducted a patrol
into the interior of the country, finding waist-high grass,
oxen, sheep, turkeys, and all sorts of other wild fowl. The
Germans met no Americans, but instead skirmished with the
animals and returned with the trophies of war to the cook
fires. There was still real danger in Maryland, if not
from American bullets. Ewald reported that several Jägers
"fell down dead" during their chase, due to the heat. 45

The foot and mounted Jägers led the march northward
that began on August 28th. Half of Howe's army moved
forward under General Cornwallis. General Knyphausen
commanded the remainder, comprising the bulk of the German
forces, with attached units of English and Provincial
troops. The army moved somewhat slowly into Pennsylvania,
its advance marked by skirmishes between the Jägers or the
English light infantry and the American defenders. Captain
Carl Baurmeister, a regular infantryman, boasted that the
mounted and foot Jägers usually hested the Americans. "The
Jägers, dodging behind fences and around the fields and
THE
PHILADELPHIA
CAMPAIGN

British Advance
American Retreat

FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,
WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
woods, had an opportunity to demonstrate to the enemy their superior marksmanship and their skill with the amusettes \textit{very light artillery}, and the enemy, who soon retired to a dense forest, left behind many killed and wounded."\textsuperscript{46}

The Jägers bumped into a strong American position on Iron Hill in northern Delaware early on the morning of September 4th. Ewald led a reconnaissance force of six English dragoons beyond the front lines. A sudden volley from the Americans killed or wounded all six Englishmen. Ewald's horse plunged, mortally wounded. He called up his Jägers, who received the support of the entire Jäger corps under Lieutenant Colonel von Wurmb, who also directed the English light infantry in the fire fight.\textsuperscript{47}

By the time daylight arrived the Germans could see that they faced a hill that rose over three hundred feet above the surrounding area. Howe personally directed von Wurmb to drive the enemy off the mountain. The ensuing fight lasted several hours. By the end, the Germans lost eleven men killed and forty-five wounded. They bore the brunt of the fighting for the English light infantry tried to flank the American position, but got isolated in a swamp. The Americans fell back in the face of a German bayonet assault, leaving behind about thirty dead and forty prisoners.\textsuperscript{48}

Ewald reported his riflemen closed with the Americans and
used their hunting swords as much as they did their rifles. 49

Knyphausen's forces came up after this attack, bringing in five hundred head of cattle and a thousand sheep that his foragers had stolen for the British cook pots. Washington meanwhile took up a good defensive position between the British and Philadelphia, along the highlands north of Brandywine Creek. Knyphausen's troops approached the American position head-on on the morning of September 11th, led by Tory troops under Major Patrick Ferguson and followed by two of General Grant's brigades and Stirn's brigade of Hessian infantry. The Tories fell into an ambush sprung by a force of Americans under General Maxwell, who had crossed to the south of the Brandywine. Virginia troops, crossing to back-up Maxwell, fell on the Tories and a hundred Germans in their support, forcing all of them back. Finally Knyphausen committed more British troops and sent the entire body of Americans scurrying back across the river.

American artillery pounded the British, but "though the balls and grapeshot were well aimed and fell right among us," said Captain Baurmeister of the Regiment von Mirbach, "the cannonade had but little effect—partly because the battery was placed too low." 50

Knyphausen brought up his own artillery to bombard the American positions. He placed the 28th, 23rd, 55th, and
40th British regiments with the Leib and Mirbach regiments overlooking the ford across the Brandywine. The Combined Regiment (made up of survivors of the three regiments captured at Trenton and still in American hands) and the Regiment von Donop reinforced the center of the position. Both sides then sat down to an artillery duel.\textsuperscript{51}

While Knyphausen focused American attention, the other wing of the British army under Cornwallis, with Howe's supervision, marched westward along the Brandywine River and attacked Washington's hapless army on its right flank. Most of Cornwallis' men were British or Provincials, but he did command the Jäger Corps and von Donop's four grenadier battalions.

The British attacked the American flank at about 3 o'clock, led by the Jägers and the light infantry. They dispersed a brigade of three Maryland regiments, and then hit the head of a relief column led by New Hampshire's John Sullivan. Sullivan's men formed a ragged line across the onrushing tide of British Guards and Hessian grenadiers. This bayonet assault routed Sullivan's men, who fell back in disorder towards the American main force still facing Knyphausen. Washington committed his reserve force on a run (some of his troops ran four miles to meet the British), and troops under Nathanael Greene, the Marquis de Lafayette,
THE BATTLE OF BRANDYWINE
Sept. 11, 1777
at 3:30 o'clock P.M.

FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,
WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
and Sullivan, about three thousand in all, managed to temporarily block twice their number of British and Germans. 52

When Knyphausen heard Cornwallis' guns, he pushed his troops across the Brandywine, directly against the American defenders, who now found themselves caught between two fires. American General William Heath recorded a curious observation. "It is said that after the Hessian grenadiers had crossed the Ford, they halted at the foot of the hill, below the Americans, under warm fire, and with great deliberation changed their hats for their heavy brass caps, which they carried by a loop on a button at the hip, and then ascended the hill, from which the Americans were obliged to retire." 53 With Cornwallis smashing his right flank and Knyphausen successfully assaulting his main position, Washington fell back northward towards Philadelphia.

Johann Ewald's Jägers came upon parts of Washington's retreating army at the village of East Bradford. Ewald deployed both foot and mounted Jägers to attack the Americans, relying on British troops for support. Heavy fire from the village drove the Germans back, wounding two of them. Alone with just a handful of the British advance guard, Ewald decided "to obtain information about these people who had let me to so easily." Taking a mounted Jäger
named Hoffmann and two Scots, Ewald rode to the top of a
hill to the right of the village. "I gazed in astonishment
when I got up the hill, for I found behind it--three to four
hundred paces away--an entire line deployed in the best
order, several of whom waved to me with their hats but did
not shoot." Ewald sent Hoffmann back to urge Cornwallis'
attention. The captain then rode back, noticing more troops
marching away from the field. He rejoined his detachment,
where he was soon joined by most of Cornwallis' troops.
Ewald once again assaulted the village. The attack succeeded
this time and the British drove the Americans back several
miles. Night closed the action. Both sides had lost about
a thousand men killed and wounded, and the Americans
additionally lost about four hundred prisoners.  

For gallantry at Brandywine, Jäger Captains Ewald and
Wreden received Hesse-Cassel's highest military media, the
pour la vertu militaire. Most German units did not
suffer heavy casualties during the day. The Jägers lost
thirty men, including Hessian Captain Tratuvetter and
Anspach Lieutenant Forstner, both of whom were shot dead
while serving with the advance guard.  

The Battle of Germantown
Cornwallis moved to take possession of Chester and
Darby on September 13th. Again, the Jägers led the way.
The troops learned of a force of Americans near their left
flank before daybreak on September 16th. Colonel von Donop
took command of the advance, which consisted of the Jägers
and his grenadiers. Donop pushed out with a foot Jäger
company under Captain Wreden and the mounted Jägers under
Captain Lorey. The Americans fell back and Donop pursued
them—into a trap. Quickly encircled, Donop had to fight
his way out, to the amusement of the veteran Ewald: "the
colonel got off with his skin—that is not a trade for one to
follow who has no knowledge of it—we all laughed secretly
over this partisan trick."

Colonel von Donop rode off to report his adventure
directly to the General Howe. At five that afternoon a
severe thunderstorm broke, wetting the muskets of both
armies. Washington, undaunted by this late defeat, wished
to attack the British. In the midst of the downpour, the
Americans did dislodge some of the Jägers flank patrols.
Knyphausen rode to Ewald's company and ordered him to
attack. "I ordered the Jägers to fire and discovered at
the second shot that the rifles misfired. But since the
attack had to be carried out, I ordered the hunting swords
drawn, I reached the wood at top speed and came to close
quarters." Ewald's men overran the Americans "who during
this furious attack forgot that (they) had bayonets and
quit the field." The Jäger Corps lost five killed, seven wounded, and three missing, and brought away four American officers and thirty men.\(^58\)

By September 20th Washington still stood between the British and Philadelphia. At 10 P.M. a British detachment under Major General Grey fell upon the exposed troops of Anthony Wayne's division, using just the bayonet. The resulting "Paoli Massacre" outraged the Americans. Washington could not retain control of the city and slipped westward. On September 26th Howe occupied Philadelphia with two British and two Hessian grenadier battalions, leaving the rest of his force encamped at the village of Germantown.\(^59\)

Reinforced by Continental soldiers and militia, Washington decided to attack the Germantown position. Neither Howe, nor any other British soldier, felt that Washington could or would attack. But, on October 3rd, the Reverend William Smith, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, came to Captain Ewald and told him of the American preparations. Smith was a friend of the United States, but he had been impressed with Ewald's fairness and friendship and decided to warn his new German friend. Ewald immediately went up his chain of command with the information. He finally got to Howe. Nobody wanted to believe
Smith's stories. Ewald reached Howe in the evening of October 3rd; Washington struck before dawn on October 4th. Ewald's men were the first troops struck by the Americans. The British camped just south of Germantown, a small village that stretched for two miles along the road running from Philadelphia to Reading. Except for the advanced line of Jäger sentries, most of the German troops camped in the rear area of the British position. Washington's ambitious plan called for the simultaneous attack of four independent columns of troops on the British position. Due to poor planning, dense fog, and numbers of untrained militia, the victory eluded Washington, but not before the British fell back from their advanced positions. The successful defense of the stone Chew House by Colonel Musgrove of the 40th Regiment gave Howe time to muster his entire army. The Hessian units did not see much action. The Leib Regiment took possession of Germantown. Von Minnigerode's grenadier battalion supported the Jägers. Von Linsing's grenadier battalion came out of Philadelphia for further support operations. The ubiquitous Jägers again saw the most action of any German troops. They ended the day pursuing the retreating Americans some three miles. They lost three killed and eleven wounded, most of whom died due to the severity of their wounds. The British altogether lost over
five hundred men killed or wounded; American losses reached nearly seven hundred, with four hundred more taken prisoner. 61

Red Bank

Even though the British army had occupied Philadelphia during September, the Royal Navy could not reach the city because of two American forts in the Delaware River below the town, at Mud Island and Red Bank. The garrisons in these forts received supplies and support from Americans in New Jersey, and their heavy guns, and barricades in the river, kept the navy from supplying Philadelphia. Howe decided to eliminate the fortification at Red Bank by a direct assault. He gave the honor to Colonel von Donop, who crossed into New Jersey with the Jäger Corps, the entire Hessian grenadier brigade, the infantry Regiment von Mirback, and two howitzers from the British artillery, about two thousand men in all. Donop, the commander almost captured on the skirmish line several weeks previously, had once been a personal aide-de-camp to the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel. He had led the grenadier battalions since his arrival in America, and had taken part in all the major battles since 1776. He had commanded the post at Mount Holly when Washington attacked Trenton, and although his
actions there had raised some eyebrows among Howe's staff, Donop generally performed well. In a staff meeting at headquarters on October 21st, Howe told Donop that if Germans could not capture the fort, then the British would. Donop became very angry at this remark and told his chief that the Germans had courage to do anything. Donop later made a prophetic remark to his friends that "either that will be Fort Donop or I shall be dead."62

Donop's men invested Red Bank on October 22nd. He sent Ewald forward to make a reconnaissance of the fort. "On my way back," Ewald noted, "I met Colonel Stuart with a drummer who was to summon the fort, and right behind them I met Major Pauli, Captain Krug, and both adjutants of the colonel. All these gentlemen regarded the affair with levity. The only man who had any real knowledge, and looked upon the business as serious, was worthy old Captain Krug."63

Donop expected the fort to surrender at the summons. The Americans, a body of four hundred Rhode Island troops under colonels Christopher Greene and Israel Angell, did not listen to the Hessian officer who arrogantly stated that the "King of England orders his subject to lay down their arms and they are warned that if they stand the battle, no quarters whatever will be given."64 Greene replied that he accepted the challenge, and that there would be no
quarters given on either side.

Von Donop opened fire with his eight artillery pieces after ordering each battalion to construct one hundred fascines each, baskets of sticks used in filling in ditches so that they could be crossed. He formed the Linsing Battalion on the left of his line, the Regiment von Mirback in the center, and the Minnigerode Battalion on the right, keeping the Lengerke Battalion in the rear. Nobody thought to bring saws or axes to cut through American obstacles. Yelling "Vittoria," the attackers swarmed from their attack positions and reached the American abatis (wooden obstacles), clawed their way through a ditch in front of the American position, and mounted the earthworks. But they had no scaling ladders to climb the steep sides of the fortification. Attempting to climb the parapet, the Hessians made each targets at close range. Then, and only then, did Greene give orders for his men to fire—to fire at the broad crossed belts the Hessians wore. Men fell in heaps. Von Donop and other officers tried to rally the broken troops. Von Donop went down with several mortal wounds. His men fell back. They rallied once, only to be decimated once more by the American fire. The survivors ran back to their attack position in the nearby woods, leaving behind twenty-two Hessian officers and three hundred and seventy-
one enlisted men killed or wounded. Twenty others, clinging to the parapet so as to be out of the direct line of fire, were taken prisoner. The Rhode Islanders lost fourteen killed and twenty-three wounded.65

Grenadier Johann Buettner had been struck down by a bullet as he tried to retreat. "And so I dropped to the ground... Racked in agony, listening to the screams of pain from my comrades, I lay there unattended, through the chill October night... And even before nightfall I saw the jubilant Americans come down to the palisade in their glittering uniforms and heard them call to us: 'Oh, you Hessian scoundrels! Now we are going to put an end to all of you!'66

Colonel von Linsing took over from von Donop, and using Von Wurmb's Jägers as cover, returned to Philadelphia that night. Since no one had thought defeat possible, there were no wagons to transport the wounded, and most of the wounded men were left on the field. The survivors lodged in barracks in the city "for they could not possibly do service very soon."67 Adjutant General Baurmeister's reaction to the defeat stands as a comment on the loss: "I have to admit that I am sensitive and let things affect me, especially our wounded, so that I do not know where I am." He added in the same letter home to Germany that "it is truly to be desired that this miserable war will soon
The wounded Germans in American hands faced additional horrors. One American surgeon boasted that "whenever he was called to a Hessian wounded in the leg or arm he immediately amputated it, whether necessary or not, to prevent their doing any more mischief." Other Americans plundered the Hessian casualties. A French volunteer, Manduit, came upon the mortally wounded von Donop. The Americans brought him into the fort and cared for him until his death three days later. In a well-circulated, but probably apocryphal story, Donop's last hours were spent in regret of his actions in America. "It is finishing a noble career early, but I die the victim of my ambition and of the avarice of my sovereign."

Ewald, who lost five friends killed in the assault, including a relative, and four more wounded, laid the blame directly on von Donop. He should not have alerted the fort with a summons, Ewald felt. He should have made better plans and prepared better assault equipment. But von Donop was a man of action and would not listen. He underestimated the American capacity for defense. Grenadier Stephan Popp echoed Ewald. The enlisted men faulted von Donop for waiting to attack until the Americans were waiting for him.
FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,

WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
Von Donop left one other legacy for the Landgrave, "a negro boy about 13 years old whom he bequeathed to your Lordship." The boy had been instructed in German by Chaplain Koster of Von Donop's Regiment, and German staff officers wanted to send the boy to Hesse as soon as possible. 73

In Philadelphia

The British army lay inert in camps around Philadelphia from November 1777 to June 1778. The British managed to open the Delaware River by the end of November by using the strength of the Royal Navy, augmented by British infantry and artillery. The rest of the army settled in for a quiet encampment.

Von Knyphausen commanded portions of the troops garrisoned in Philadelphia proper. He dealt with the citizens both fairly and honorably, even bowing deeply to respectable people in the street. He lived in the home of John Cadwalader, one of Washington's officers. When the British were about to leave Philadelphia the following June, Knyphausen summoned Cadwalader's agent and presented him with an inventory of the house—nothing had been removed or injured, not even a single bottle of wine from the well-stocked wine cellar. Major John Andre lived in
Benjamin Franklin's house. Andre took away some of Franklin's books and even a portrait of Franklin done by Benjamin Wilson. 74

The Germans counted up their losses in anticipation of further hard campaigning in 1778. The two Hessian divisions, to which had been added sixteen hundred recruits, numbered almost fourteen thousand officers and men between 1776 and February 1778. During this period the Hessians lost twenty-two hundred in dead and deserters, comprising fifty-nine officers, one hundred forty-four non-commissioned officers, and almost nineteen hundred privates, and permanent loss of over fifteen percent. Clearly, losses had cut into strength. The American campaigns began to take their toll on the mercenaries.

On May 10th Sir Henry Clinton arrived in Philadelphia to take over command from William Howe. Howe had not vigorously brought the war to the Americans, had let slip many opportunities, and had no heart for further effort. Clinton, faced with war with France, as well as against America, brought directions with him to move the British army from Philadelphia to New York. With France in the war, and the occupation of Philadelphia of no earthly use, British command decided to once again make Manhattan the center of military activity. In doing so the British
returned to just where they had been in August 1776, minus men, money, and material wasted.

The Hessian troops with Clinton's army numbered just under three thousand, comprising the Jäger Corps, the Grenadier Brigade, the artillery detachment, and three infantry regiments. The two regiments from Anspach-Bayreuth, and the Anspach Jäger company also served with Clinton, raising the total of German troops to nearly four thousand troops. The rest of the German troops garrisoned New York or Rhode Island and did not see much active service. 75

Before abandoning Philadelphia to march to New York, Clinton began skirmishing with advanced portions of the American forces. Johann Ewald let one hundred and fifty Jägers on foot and twenty on horseback on a May 19th raid out to the falls of the Schuylkill River. Clinton himself followed, with two English brigades and the Regiment Von Donop and the Leib Regiment. A spy alerted the American commander--Lafayette--who quickly retreated. The British captured a French major and several Oneida Indians armed with bows and arrows. After the Americans reached safety, the British returned to their starting point. 76

By early June the British made no denial of their abandonment of the city. They sent sick soldiers and
supplies by sea, and prepared to march across New Jersey to Staten Island. Tories who could flee did so. Others remained behind. One German officer noted that "the backwoods inhabitants from Tulpehocken, and their brave people who have rendered such good service to the King, are being left behind. They grumble and swear that the army will leave Philadelphia and would rather let them be hanged by the Congress than serve England. God alone knows what will happen to them!" 77 In walking through the town in June, the officer noted that the streets were full of Loyalists packing to leave and that about fifteen hundred families seemed to be giving up their property. Continental money had begun once more to appear. 78

Those Loyalists who could leave, left by sea. The soldiers had to march. The leading elements of the army left the town on June 16th, with the last British soldier leaving town two days later. Knyphausen commanded the advance wing, and guarded the immense wagon trains of supplies and equipment. Cornwallis commanded the rear guard, including the Jäger Corps and the German grenadiers. Both the British and the pursuing Americans moved slowly, due to the intense early summer heat. Wells and streams dried up. Men fell out, tired or sick, and never rejoined their units. On June 26th, in the middle of New Jersey,
Ewald's Jägers fought a rear guard skirmish against attacking American riflemen. The Americans pressed the Germans. By the end of the day, sixty out of one hundred and eighty foot Jägers were gone. Twenty of these men dropped dead from the intense heat. The British army lost two hundred men just from the heat that one day. A large number of German soldiers simply gave out in the heat. Lieutenant Piel of the Regiment von Lossberg noted the number of deserters who fell out beginning about June 20th. In three days his regiment lost two sergeants and eight privates. By the time the army reached Staten Island early in July, some four hundred and forty Hessians had deserted.

Adjutant General Baurmeister reported to the Landgrave that there had been no pillaging or plundering on the part of the Hessians on the march, but "it is my duty to report to your Lordship that we have had many deserters."

Baurmeister did not blame the heat or the fatiguing march, but rather "our long stay in Philadelphia and the many kinds of temptation, which need not be very alluring to blind the common soldier and make him break his oath." Baurmeister admitted that the officers took no pains to keep a wary eye for deserters, because nobody suspected the demoralization brought up by contacts with Americans. Although the Germans made up less than a quarter of the British forces
BATTLE OF MONMOUTH
June 28, 1778

FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,
WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
at this time, they made up almost seventy-seven percent of British deserters. 83

The two armies clashed at Monmouth Court House on June 28th, 1778. Because most German troops marched with Knyphausen's advance corps, they did not face the Americans. American General Heath noted the efficient handling of the British baggage at Monmouth, "through the difficult defiles, under the careful and experienced hands of General Knyphausen." 84

The Jägers found themselves in difficult and confusing terrain of sunken roads, impassable underbrush, crossed by brooks and marshes. They were nearly cut off from the main army. "I thought that I was connected with the division, and ran into whole swarms of Americans not over twenty to thirty paces away. But since we took up the favorite cry of the great Frederick" 'Allons! Allons!'--and our Jägers knew nothing else, we constantly got out of this business with honor," Ewald remembered. "Indeed, large groups of Americans penetrated several times between intervals of the Jäger platoons up to the wagons, killing men and horses. Then, when they were driven back by the infantry escorting the wagons, they ran against the Jägers, and we were forced to fire on all sides." 85

Night brought an end to the confusing battle. Both
Americans and British claimed victory at Monmouth, yet both sides gained little after losing about four hundred men each. The English continued their retreat the next morning, being followed by detachments of American troops. On July 1st the Jägers lost three killed and five wounded in a skirmish; the following day the Americans ambushed a Jäger patrol, killing one and capturing two men. By July 5th, the English army reached Sandy Hook where it would be transported to Staten Island and Manhattan. The Jägers fought their last skirmishes of the campaign, not with the Americans, but with the New Jersey mosquitoes. "We were so severely pestered by insects of all kinds on these uninhabited mountains that I did not know whether I would not rather skirmish with the enemy than spend one day longer here. We were so terribly bitten at night by the mosquitoes and other kinds of vermin that we could not open our eyes for the swelling in our faces. Many men were almost unrecognizable, and our bodies looked like those of people who have been suddenly attacked by measles or smallpox." The second campaign in the north was over. The British had gained nothing. The return to Manhattan marked the emptiness of their strategy. The numbers of Germans with the active maneuvering forces in 1777-1778 was proportionally smaller than in 1776. Many German units had remained behind in
garrison in Manhattan or Newport. Those who had been at the front had not seen the same success as in 1776. German infantry had not made dramatic contributions at Brandywine, Germantown, or Monmouth. They had failed utterly at Red Bank. Never again would German units attain the successes of 1776, and never again would British commanders employ them in massive independent organizations. After 1778 the mercenaries became mundane garrison troops more often than crack units leading decisive attacks.

The Germans in the North served in various locations until the end of the war. Six regiments made up part the garrison on Aquidneck Island at Newport, Rhode Island and held off an American attack in August, 1778. Other German units, particularly Jäger detachments took part in British raids along the Atlantic coast. The majority of German troops in the North camped in Manhattan.

Clinton kept great numbers of troops in this area. Returns for 1779 show that Clinton had a total of 28,756 men in and around Manhattan: 13,848 British regulars, 10,836 Germans, and 4,072 provincials. These soldiers saw comparatively little action while they remained in New York, but Clinton's men fought small skirmishes, conducted reconnaissances, and foraged to bring in food. Chief among the most active troops were the ubiquitous Jägers, who
exelled in small unit actions, but line regiments sometimes became involved as well. However, there were German units, and many British ones too, that never fired on Americans after 1778, being relegated to guarding Manhattan Island. 87

Most of the skirmishes fought around Manhattan after 1778 took place in Westchester County, that area that stretched from the American-held areas in the Highlands north of Peekskill south to Kingsbridge, the ling to Manhattan Island. Known as the "Neutral Ground", Westchester was the scene of guerilla war between Loyalist "Cowboys" and Patriot "Skinners", marauding bands that preyed on the population. Both British and Americans jockied to control Westchester and the battle lines flowed back and forth, back and forth, until the end of the war.

Knyphausen's New Jersey Campaign

The spring of 1780 opened in good style for the British cause. Henry Clinton had transferred much of his army from Manhattan to South Carolina, where he captured Charleston. In the north, many states seemed on the verge of collapse, particularly New Jersey. Washington's army, then at camp in Morristown, numbered about four thousand men fit for duty. The American soldiers starved on less than half rations.
Regiments of the Connecticut Line mutinied on May 25th.
Continental currency depreciated to a worthless level.
Intelligence reached Manhattan of impending disaster, and
the British decided to speed things along by invading New
Jersey. General Wilhelm von Knyphausen commanded the
Manhattan garrison in Clinton absence and personally led a
force of five thousand men from Staten Island in June. This
was the largest independent action led by a German general
during the war. 88

Knyphausen, with the assistance of British brigadiers
Mathews, Tryon, and Sterling, crossed to Elizabethtown. The
force consisted of seven British regiments, four battalions
of Loyalists, the entire Anspach and Hessian Jäger Corps,
the Leib Regiment, plus the regiments Landgrave, von Donop,
von Bose, and von Bunau. The march from Elizabethtown lay
through Connecticut Farms (today's Union) to Springfield.
Knyphausen did not desire to be drawn into a prolonged
battle, but rather wanted to see if the reports of dis-
affection coming out of the state had a basis in fact.
Washington could not stop Knyphausen; he simply did not
have enough troops to risk a confrontation. But, in spite
the hard times, the Jersey militia rallies to confront
the British. Knyphausen had his answer: New Jersey had not
collapsed. 89
Twelve American militiamen fired into the head of the British column at Connecticut Farms, wounding General Sterling, the commander of the advance. The British managed to route the twelve and march into the village, "being annoyed by parties of militia the whole way."90 While moving through the village, one British soldier fired through the window of a house belonging to Patriot Reverend James Caldwell and killed Mrs. Caldwell. Her body was removed just before the house, and the rest of the town, was burned to the ground. General William Tryon probably gave orders to destroy the town.91

The Jägers moved out towards Springfield, meeting fierce resistance from the militia, losing fifty-five men before nightfall. Sergeant Krafft remembered that "the rebels began to attack us with unusual vigor." The British 22nd Regiment moved forward, but this unit encountered such a resistance that several German units came to its support. The British regiment twice fired volleys without hitting anybody, but had lost many killed, wounded, and prisoners by American action. "We saw an astonishing number of Rebels" in the bushes, Krafft recorded. Knyphausen fell back at 11 P.M. to Elizabethtown.92

Knyphausen remained in New Jersey after the stymied raid, trying to lure the Americans into open combat. "It
is almost impossible to surprise the enemy on any occasion," says the journal of the Jäger Corps, "because every house that one passes is an advanced picket, so to speak; for the farmer, or his son, or his servant, or even his wife or daughter fires off a gun, or runs by the floor path to warn the enemy." 93 Sergeant Krafft narrowly escaped death after crawling towards some Americans shooting at his platoon at long range. He listened to his men bid him take cover. As he fell back to them, a bullet buried itself in the ground where he had been lying. 94

Sir Henry Clinton returned from South Carolina on June 19th and assumed command of New York once again. He went to New Jersey, reviewed Knyphausen's forces, and decided to move towards Springfield once more. Knyphausen led four German regiments and the Jägers, plus six regiments of British and Loyalists. The Americans once again put up a staff resistance at Connecticut Farms, but they soon fell back to Springfield. The Passaic River lay between the two armies, with the Americans holding the only bridge over the stream. The Jägers waded the Passaic under heavy fire, while an English regiment attacked the bridge. This attack forced the defenders from Springfield, which Knyphausen occupied for an hour and then burned. Knyphausen once again returned to Elizabethtown, being harassed all the
by the Americans. The Jägers lost over fifty men during the
day and the other losses had also been heavy. 95

Knyphausen had showed himself as a capable division
commander after he had taken command of the Hessian Corps
from Major General Heister in 1777. This expedition did
nothing to improve his reputation as a military leader. The
barbarous incendiaryism and the murder of Mrs. Caldwell
increased the animosity of the people of New Jersey and
instilled a vigorous spirit of resistance in jaded American
troops. That Knyphausen's five thousand seasoned troops
could not drive a thousand militia and Continentals from the
battlefield shows that the German cannot be counted as a
first-rate tactician. Clinton trusted him to control New
York in Clinton's absence. Knyphausen should have stayed on
the defensive. After this expedition, there was no further
hostile incursion into New Jersey during the rest of the
war.

The British used the German troops differences as the
war progressed. The Hessians image of being shock troops
became tarnished after Trenton and generally disappeared
after Red Bank. They, along with most British and Loyalist
units, remained more and more in garrison as the war passed
them by. Most Germans who remained with the Northern army
faced many years of uncomfortable camp life. This army
failed to destroy Washington's forces and with its failure, the Revolution endured.

Chapter Notes:

1 Christopher Ward, The War of the Revolution I, (New York, 1952), 209. This work remains the standard source for an overview of military operations.


3 Ward, I, 209; "Journal of Heister's Corps," Preussisches Staatsarchiv Marburg, OWS 1248, Wihelmsöhre Kriegsakten, Number CXVIII.

4 Ward I, p. 210; Bernard A. Uhlendorf, ed., Revolution in America, (Rutgers, 1957), p. 35. These are the journals of Adjutant General Carl Baurmeister and are hereafter cited as "Baurmeister".

5 Ward, I, 211.


7 From "Die Neusten Stadtsbegebenheiten," Frankfurt am Main, 1777 and quoted in Edward J. Lowell, The Hessians and the Other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War, (New York, 1884), p. 61. Lowell has been the standard American work on this subject for the last hundred years.

8 Baurmeister, p. 36.


10 Ward I, pp. 218-223.

11 Ward, I, pp. 29-32; "Journal of Heister's Corps," Preussisches Staatsarchiv Marburg, OWS 1248, Wihelmsöhre Kriegsakten, Number CXVIII.
12 Baurmeister, p. 37.

13 Unnamed German officer is quoted in Lowell, p. 64.

14 Colonel von Heeringen, quoted in Eelking, p. 35.

15 Ibid.

16 Ray W. Pettengill, ed., Letters from America, (Port Washington, 1964), p. 154. This work is a collection of translated letters from German officers. It does not identify any of the correspondents. A good source of many insights.

17 Quoted in Lowell, pp. 65-66.


19 Eelking, p. 32; Johannes Reuber, "Diary," Bancroft Collection in the New York Public Library, number 32; also in Hanauer Geschichtsverein, Ms. number 1850 entitled "Tagebuch des Grenadiers Johannes Reuber."


21 Lowell, p. 66.


23 Frederick Mackensie, Diary of Frederick Mackensie, I, (Harvard, 1930), 48.

24 Ward, I, 243-244.


26 Lowell, p. 75.

27 Ward, I. 255-258; "Geschichte der Kuhrhessischen Jager"; Eelking reports the loss of Hessians and Waldeckers from 9-28 October 1776 as 13 killed, 63 wounded, and 23 missing, but this includes the Battle of White Plains. Eelking, p. 48.

29 Hufeland, pp. 141-142; Lowell, pp. 76-77; Landesbibliothek Kassel, Ms. Hass. 40, number 228.


31 Ward, I, 267-269.

32 Ewald, p. 15; Mackensie I, p. 101; Stern's command was the first such for a Hessian, see Lowell, pp. 80-81.


34 Quoted in Flood, p. 126.

35 Wiederhold, p. 95.

36 Quoted in Flood, p. 124.

37 Wiederhold, p. 96.

38 Flood, pp. 126-127; Baurmeister, pp. 69-71; "Diary of Lieutenant Piel," Bancroft Collection, New York Public Library.

39 Quoted in Flood, p. 122.


Lowell, P. 82. Eelking (p. 52) says the Americans lost only 53 killed and 15 wounded. If correct, most of the Americans must have died from bayonets. Fort Washington's loss was the greatest American loss in men and material until the surrender of Charleston, South Carolina in 1780. It was one of the most needless losses in American military history.


Baurmeister, p. 114.

Ewald, pp. 77-78; "Geschichte der Kuhrhessischen Jäger;"


Ewald, p. 78.

Baurmeister, p. 108.


Ward, I, 350-352; "History of the Hessian Grenadiers," Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS 1248, Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, CXX.


Ewald, pp. 84-86.

Lowell, p. 199.

"Geschichte der Kührhessischen Jäger;" Report of Brandywine in Landesbibliothek Kassel, Ms. Hass. 80, number 123.

Ewald, p. 89.

Ibid.

Ewald, pp. 92-93.

Ward, I, 363-371; Ewald, p. 93; "History of the Hessian Grenadiers."

Lowell, p. 204; von Eelking, p. 117.

Ewald, p. 98.

Ward, I, 374.


Baurmeister, pp. 126-127.


Buettner, p. 53.

Quoted in Benson J. Lossing, The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution, II, (New York, 1855), 88. Lossing also reported that in 1848 he found von Donop's grave, "marked by a small, rough sandstone, about fourteen inches in height. Vandal fingers have plucked relic-pieces from it, and so nearly was the rude inscription effaced that I could only decipher a portion of the words, DONOP WAS LOST...Even his bones have not been allowed to molder in his grave, but are scattered about the country as cherished relics, his skull being in possession of a physician of New Jersey." (p. 84)

Baurmeister, p. 131. There is no record if the boy went to Germany.

Johannes Schwalm, *The Hessian*, (Millerville, PA, 1976), This publication is from the Johannes Schwalm Historical Association, founded by family members of the deserter who remained in Pennsylvania.

Baurmeister, p. 169.

Ewald, pp. 130-131; "Geschichte der Kuhrhessischen Jäger."

Ewald, p. 130.

Ibid.


"Diary of Lieutenant Piel," Bancroft Collection, New York Public Library.

Ward, II, 585.

Baurmeister, p. 185.

440 Germans and 136 English deserted during the campaign. Ward, II, 585.

Heath, pp. 170-171.

Ewald, p. 136.


Ward, II, 610.

Ward, II, 620-621; "Journal of the Regiment von Mirbach."

Baurmeister, p. 353.
90 Ward, II, 621; Eelking, pp. 192–195; Popp, p. 16.

91 Ibid.; Lossing, I, 327–324.


93 "Geschichte der Kuhrhessischen Jäger."

94 Krafft, p. 113.

CHAPTER SIX

Burgoyne's Campaign

Major General John Burgoyne certainly conducted an ambitious campaign to end the American rebellion. He faced the task of transporting his army south from Quebec across Lake Champlain to attack Fort Ticonderoga and then drive down the Hudson River Valley to a link-up with forces that he hoped were moving north from Manhattan. This route had served as the traditional invasion route to and from Canada since the beginning of King William’s War in 1689, but it had been a route fraught with disappointment and disaster for the likes of Dieskau, Abercrombie, and Montcalm. Fort Ticonderoga, posed the first major hurdle to the campaign. Burgoyne, for all his faults analyzed by historians since 1777, reduced the fortress in short order, causing glee in the court of George III, and accusations of treachery in American ranks. That Burgoyne was able to conduct an effective offense depended on no little part on the presence of some four thousand troops from Brunswick and Hesse-Hanau among his army.

When the British appeared to be one step from being thrown out of Canada in 1775, the British command begged for reinforcements to counteract American pressure. The successful defense of Quebec bought time for reinforcements to arrive during the late spring of 1776. Included with the thousands of red-coated soldiers who reached Canada early in 1776 were
hundreds of blue-coated troops from Brunswick, who landed in Quebec early in June. More Germans landed in September, so that by the early fall there were four infantry regiments, one regiment of dismounted dragoons, one grenadier battalion, and one battalion of light infantry from Brunswick, as well as one regiment of infantry and one artillery battery from Hesse-Hanau.

When the four Brunswick infantry regiments arrived in Canada their five companies totalled 680 men each. Lieutenant Colonel Praetorius led the Regiment Prinz Friedrich and Lieutenant Colonel Johann G. von Ehrenkrook commanded the Regiment von Rhetz. Lieutenant Colonel Spaeth commanded the Regiment von Riedesel (named after the commander of the Brunswick detachment) and Lieutenant Colonel Johann F. Specht led his Regiment Specht. The Brunswickers organized a battalion of four companies of grenadiers drawn from the four infantry regiments (similar to the British practice) commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Heinrich Breymann. This battalion numbered 564 men. Major Ferdinand A. Barner commanded the light infantry battalion, made up of four companies of light infantry and one company of Jägers. Finally, the Brunswick detachment included the dismounted dragoon regiment of 330 men, the Prinz Ludwig, led by Lieutenant Colonel Friedrich Baum. The regiment planned to mount itself on horses captured during the course of the campaign. The Hesse-Hanau detachment was more modest in numbers. Colonel W. R. von Gall commanded the Erbprinz Regiment, a unit that retained its grenadier company, and
Captain Georg Pausch directed the artillery battery.\textsuperscript{3} Once in Canada the Germans found themselves in a strange country, facing a foe that they little understood. One officer wrote home that "here the Brunswickers found themselves far from the Fatherland and kinfolk, and in an unknown country, in which they—with Englishmen, Hanovarians, Hessians, and other German troops, were to do battle for England's supremacy and wage a successful campaign against the native-born of the land, who were familiar with every road and lurking-place, and who were striving for their independence."\textsuperscript{4}

Active operations began in September 1776, when most of the units marched from their transports to the Richelieu River Valley. Over 1,200 soldiers from the grenadiers, the Regiment Riedesel, the Erbprinz Regiment, and the artillery battery manned part of the British fleet that defeated the American forces under Benedict Arnold.\textsuperscript{5} Some of the Germans took part in the action off Valcour Island in October. At Valcour, the Americans sank a vessel that carried one of the cannons belonging to the Hanau artillery. Although the gun was later raised, two men drowned in the incident. The Germans retired with the army into Canada and settled into an arc of campsites around Montreal.\textsuperscript{6}

John Burgoyne was fortunate that Major General Friedrich Baron von Riedesel was the commander of the German forces. Riedesel had been born in 1738 and joined the Hessian forces at the age of fifteen. He traveled with his regiment to London, where he studied the English and French languages.
When his unit was recalled to Germany in 1756 at the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, Riedesel served as the aide to Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick. After gallantry at the Battle of Minden, he was promoted to lieutenant colonel of a Hussar regiment at the age of twenty-one, and, showing the fratricidal danger of German service, in 1761, had his horse shot out from under him by a cannonball aimed by his own brother in the Saxon army. Riedesel later commanded a cavalry brigade and served as adjutant general of the Brunswick army, and was appointed a major general in 1776 in order to command the Brunswick detachment in America.7

Riedesel displayed an understanding of intelligence gathering, staff routine, partisan warfare, and the command of combined elements of British and German troops. Burgoyne described him as a "frank, spirited, honourable character," but consistently misspelled Riedesel's name in orders and reports. At the end of the 1777 campaign Burgoyne tried to lay great blame on the failures of the German troops. In return, Riedesel and his wife, the ubiquitous baroness, had little faith in Burgoyne's abilities or character.8 Had Riedesel been born an Englishmen, his historical niche would be much more secure.

Burgoyne readied his forces throughout the spring of 1777. He divided his army into two wings. The right wing was made up of the British troops under Major General William Phillips, while Riedesel commanded the left wing made up of Germans. The dismounted Brunswick dragoons served as the army's general reserve.9 The dragoons, equipped as cavalry,
retained their leather breeches, high boots, gauntlets, heavy swords, and short carbines. Riedesel did, however, order long linen trousers, striped blue and white, to replace the breeches worn by the dragoons and the Regiment Riedesel. The trousers protected the soldiers' legs better than breeches. By mid-summer all German troops had been issued similar trousers, so necessary in the rocky, northern forests.  

Other supplies were not so plentiful. One German officer reported that each soldier had to bake his own bread in hot ashes or on hot stones, and that the men needed strong teeth to chew the hard and heavy product. "Furthermore, there was neither whisky nor tobacco, which the German soldiers were accustomed to at home. I consider these last indispensable for soldiers. According to arrangements of the English Commissary, the troops are never supplied with bread. Only flour is furnished and the men have to bake their own bread. We were not accustomed to this and do not know how to do it. Every other army furnishes bread to the soldiers, even the Russian army."  

Most of the German units broke camp at the beginning of June. The soldiers marched to St. Johns to board batteaux or small boats to sail up the Richelieu River into Lake Champlain and on to Crown Point. A member of the Regiment Prinz Friedrich stated that on June 13th, "the entire regiment started from St. Johns toward noon with very favorable wind. The soldiers put up all the sails, using even their blankets to get full benefit of the wind." When the wind failed, the men from central Germany had to learn how to row the batteaux,
which they did "right well". 13

The army camped on land at the end of each day's travel. There was little rest, however, as the Germans suffered from the heat and mosquitoes.

We had already made the acquaintance of mosquitoes in Canada, but never before had we suffered from them as much as today, for these insects attacked us in such quantities that it was impossible to protect ourselves from them, neither smoking of tobacco, nor the smoke of small fires all around the camp being of any avail. We nearly suffocated from the smoke and could not keep our eyes open. It was impossible to wrap ourselves up in blankets on account of the heat, and the blood-thirsty mosquito would sting even through three-fold linen sheets. It is impossible to describe the torture, indeed, I think myself justified in stating that nobody could endure it continuously for more than a few days and nights without becoming insane. If anybody could have watched us... he would have thought the whole camp full of raving maniacs. 14

Many soldiers discovered that the summer weather on Lake Champlain left much to be desired. The men suffered from heat that exceeded the hottest days in Germany. Some days brought violent thunderstorms that ended quickly, but did not cool the air. Heavy fogs or dews moistened the camps each morning. 15 "The hardships of war here are different from those in Europe. Although our troops had endured a great deal during the last war in Germany, it was much harder to keep them in good spirits here. Their sufferings on this march surpassed what they had expected." 16

Burgoyne's Indian allies also impressed the Germans as being odd. One German officer found the Indians as "wicked
as Satan... They are considered cannibals, but I don't believe it... that they maintain butcher shops with human flesh is probably not so; beef surely tastes better to them." However, the officer did record that the Indians had a striking martial bearing. 17 Once the army passed Ticonderoga, neither the Germans nor the British recorded anything in favor of their erstwhile allies.

The army left the camp at the mouth of the Boquet River, thirty miles north of Crown Point, at noon on June 25th and sailed up the lake. The fleet passed Split Rock that evening, and the narrowness of the passage caused great confusion. Boats rammed one another, causing broken oars and leaks, while others came near to sinking. The Germans landed at Buttonmould Bay, on the Vermont side of the lake, but the soldiers remained in their boats and chained them together for security. 18

The advanced portions of Burgoyne's army arrived at Crown Point on June 26th. The Germans again landed across the lake in Vermont. A hospital was established, and, after a four day wait for provisions, the army broke camp on July 1st. The Germans marched past Chimney Point in battle array—each wing of the army kept close to the lake shore, and the march was coordinated by a series of cannon shot. 19 That night the Germans moved a mile inland and camped. "No trails and no guides," one of the recalled, "it is the biggest disorder imaginable. Only after midnight [did] the first men reach the camping ground but there are no more than
40 men of each regiment together." 20

After realigning his command on the morning of July 2nd, Riedesel marched his soldiers down the eastern bank of Lake Champlain to attack and capture Mount Independence, a large earthwork that guarded the Vermont side of the Ticonderoga defenses. A floating bridge connected Fort Ticonderoga with Mount Independence; from the eastern end of the bridge wound a military road through Castleton and Rutland to New Hampshire. While Burgoyne maneuvered against Fort Ticonderoga Riedesel's Germans were to cut off any chance of an American escape into Vermont. But Riedesel's forces had little opportunity to distinguish themselves. The British right wing overran Mount Hope, drove in the American picket line, and eventually dragged guns to the top of Mount Defiance and forced the evacuation of Ticonderoga. Meanwhile, Riedesel's forces got stuck in the dense marshes along East Creek and were unable to reach Mount Independence. The advance under Lieutenant Colonel Breymann came under fire from the American defenders on the afternoon of July 2nd, and the two forces settled down to a near bloodless skirmish at long range. The German officers spent much time and energy trying to find a way through the swamps and deep creeks to get at Mount Independence, but they were unable to find a route. Burgoyne detached Brigadier General Gall's brigade on the afternoon of July 3rd and sailed them across the lake in order to support the main attack against Ticonderoga. These troops, however, saw no further action. Riedesel, with his forces now reduced to just over two
thousand men, was still unable to find a way to cross East Creek. 21

The Germans and Americans exchanged gunfire for the next two days, but the rugged terrain and the reduced strength of Riedesel's forces kept the Germans to the north of the East Creek barrier. When the Americans evacuated Fort Ticonderoga on the night of July 5th, the Germans were still not close enough to Mount Independence to capture the troops who escaped into Vermont. The effective pursuit of the Americans was spearheaded by General Fraser's Advance Corps who followed the Continentals across the floating bridge. The Germans emerged from the swamps on the morning of July 6th to find both Ticonderoga and Mount Independence in British hands. To Riedesel's credit, he set out at the head of his troops to hurry to Fraser's support, leaving behind the Brunswick Regiment Prinz Friedrich to garrison Mount Independence. 22

The American invalids, women, and artillery, along with what stores could be moved, had been placed on five small warships and 200 batteaux and sailed to the southern end of Lake Champlain to Skenesboro. The main body marched across the floating bridge to Fort Independence and then through Hubbardton and Castleton in Vermont to rendezvous in Skenesboro. Brigadier Fraser's Advance Corps, numbering about eight hundred and fifty soldiers, moved out along the hilly roads towards Hubbardton, marching into the depths of the forested Green Mountains. The road was a path just wide enough for two men to walk abreast, and was full of stumps. The weather was hot and sultry, the air between the forest
walls still and soon fogged with dust. The American commander, General Arthur St. Clair, drove his men on, but left a detachment of three regiments at Hubbardton: Colonel Seth Warner's Vermont regiment (Ethan Allen's former Green Mountain Boys enlisted as Continental soldiers), Colonel Ebenezer Francis' 11th Massachusetts, and Colonel Nathan Hale's 2nd New Hampshire. All of the men were worn out and perhaps many New Hampshire men had developed fever; Colonel Hale was in poor health. Although the Americans posted sentries, they sent no patrols back toward Ticonderoga to see if the British were following.23

Riedesel hurriedly followed Fraser with the Hesse-Hanau Jägers and 80 men of Colonel Breymann's grenadier battalion, ordering the rest of the Germans to follow, except for the Regiment Prinz Friedrich. After a forced march of fourteen miles, he reached Fraser's camp at 1 A.M. on July 7th. The two generals conferred briefly before Fraser marched an additional three miles that night and went into camp. Fraser also sent Indians forward to scout Hubbardton. At 3 A.M. both Fraser and Riedesel woke the troops and moved out, the Germans being some three miles to the rear. At 5 A.M. Fraser came upon the Americans cooking their breakfast, catching them by complete surprise. The British overran the American pickets and forced them back on the main body. The 2nd New Hampshire dropped everything and ran. However, Warner and Francis got their regiments in line. The British forced Warner back, but Francis' men hit the British left flank, killing several British officers and breaking up
Fraser's attack. Even though outnumbered, the Americans sensed victory. Suddenly, with fifes, drums, and hunting horns sounding, and then men singing a German hymn, Riedesel led the Jäger company and the eighty grenadiers into battle. The music confused the Americans as to the German's strength. Riedesel sent the Jägers under Captain Geyso directly against the Bay State soldiers, while the grenadiers under Captain Schothelieus came in behind the Americans. The green-coated Jägers dodged from tree to tree, cutting down Americans with accurate fire. They shot Francis dead. Within twelve minutes the tide had turned and the Americans fled the field; Warner told his men to disperse into the woods. The battle ended with scattered sniper fire, but the British had won. Colonel Hale and seventy of his men came out of the forest and surrendered, too sick to run away.24

The Battle of Hubbardton wore out Fraser's Advance Corps. They made no pursuit. In less than one hour they lost fifty killed and one hundred and thirty-nine wounded. Riedesel counted ten killed and fourteen wounded. The Americans lost about three hundred, many of them prisoners. Riedesel had saved the day. Even Major Anburey, who fought with Fraser, admitted that "I could not help feeling for his Riedesel's situation, for the honour of a brave officer who was pouring forth every imprecation against his troops for their not arriving at the place of action in time enough to earn the glories of the day."25 But Riedesel did win those glories.

Riedesel sent back to the Regiment Prinz Friedrich for a
detachment to collect the wounded. Major von Hille brought over two hundred men to escort the wounded back to Ticonderoga. 26 Riedesel moved the rest of the Germans forward to Castleton. Burgoyne praised both Fraser and Riedesel "who by bravery, supported by officers and soldiers, have rendered the greatest service to the king." 27 Praises for the Germans would end soon. Burgoyne needed a scapegoat.

The Germans in Vermont found most Americans there opposing the crown. One officer estimated that one-sixth of the population was royalist, one-sixth neutral, and the rest rebel. Very few Vermonter's consented to take the oath of allegiance, but the Germans dealt "pleasantly and kindly" with "these unhappy people." Yet, the rebels were hard and cruel to their neighbors who expressed adherence to Britain. Many had to leave home, giving up their livelihood and cattle. Rebels could be very puzzling. Their officers were not much—being only blacksmiths and tailors, but their riflemen could outshoot German soldiers and made formidable foes in the woods. 28

That not all Germans treated Americans in a kind and pleasant manner is evidenced by Riedesel's orders of July 22nd, forbidding plundering. Housebreaking, plundering, and similar offenses would be punished the first time by whipping and the second time by running the gauntlet. Riedesel gave the colonels of his regiment the responsibility to see that the troops would not misbehave. He acknowledged the difficulty in distinguishing rebels from Loyalists, but preached restraint when dealing with the natives. 29
Friedrich Adolf von Riedesel was perhaps the best general among England's mercenaries. Well liked by Americans and British soldiers alike, he operated successfully as Burgoyne's left wing commander. He spoke English, had studied in London, and had at least three English aides on his staff to coordinate German and English operations. Captain Edmonstone, who had studied before the war at the Collegio Carolina in Brunswick, accompanied Riedesel to Canada. Captain Willcooe of the 8th Regiment joined the staff in Canada. He knew the country and could speak German. Later in the campaign, Captain Freeman, former aide to General Fraser, became a staff officer. He served during the Battle of Saratoga. Riedesel, a Brunswicker, also commanded the Hesse-Hanau troops. Captain von Geismar was a Hessian adjutant on Riedesel's staff particularly concerned with the Hesse-Hanau troops. Riedesel's staff effectively served their chief in the ensuing months, but were unable to save Burgoyne from committing blunders.

Burgoyne had followed the Americans south along Lake Champlain, landing at Skenesboro (today's Whitehall, New York) and catching the Americans there by surprise. He did little more than run them into the woods before stopping to gather his strength. He concentrated his army near Fort Anne by calling in Riedesel's forces from Vermont and gathering supplies from Canada.

The victories at Ticonderoga and Hubbardton raised morale to new heights. Sergeant Roger Lamb reported that "the
officers and men, were highly elated with their good fortune. They considered their toils to be nearly at an end; Albany to be within their grasp, and the adjacent provinces reduced to a certainty."34 The soldiers celebrated and some celebrations got out of hand. On July 16th, several drunken British soldiers insulted a German guard. Tempers flared so badly that Burgoyne had to issue an order two days later citing that "any conduct for the future whether of the British or Germans that shall tend to obstruct the harmony, which has hitherto too so happily reigned between the Two Nations, and which must continually subsist among brave troops, serving in the same cause, unless violated by intoxication or misapprehension must be punished as a crime the most fatal to the success of honor of the Campaign."35

The plans for the campaign called for Burgoyne to march from Skenesboro to the Hudson River, a distance of thirty miles, and then drive down the Hudson to Albany, where he counted on linking up with William Howe's army up from Manhattan. Fort Ticonderoga became the chief link between Burgoyne and Canada. The garrison included several British regiments and the Regiment Prinz Friedrich, all commanded by Brigadier General Hamilton. Hamilton had to issue orders for sentries not to sit on post, for many American prisoners were escaping, an indication of the lax discipline at the fortress. By August 1st, most of the troops had left, but the Prinz Friedrich and the 53rd British regiments remained behind to keep the link open. The units garrisoned both Fort
Ticonderoga and Mount Independence, having hardly enough men to properly man the walls. As the campaign reached the Hudson, over fifty miles to the south, the Americans aimed a counter-blow at Ticonderoga. Colonels Brown and Warner attacked on September 18th, capturing a company of the 53rd Regiment outside the fortifications. The Americans then moved to a work commanded by Lieutenant Volckmar containing thirty-three men and an old iron cannon. The Germans kept the cannon firing until the powder accidently caught fire, fatally burning the lieutenant and two of his men. The rest held out until reinforcements reached them. The siege lasted until September 22nd when one hundred and fifty Brunswick reinforcements from Canada forced the Americans to withdraw. They had lost some eighty men in disrupting British communications and logistics. They burned wagons, batteaux, camp equipment, and also captured some cannon. They then withdrew to fight further south. 38

Lieutenant Colonel Barry St. Leger came south from Canada with more reinforcements immediately after the American assault. He brought with him a detachment of the 34th Regiment, Sir John Johnson's regiment of New York loyalists, and the Hesse-Hanau Jäger Corps. These troops hoped to cover Burgoyne's retreat into Canada. 39 It was a vain hope. Due to Burgoyne's surrender and the lack of proper winter clothing and huts, the British abandoned Ticonderoga on November 8, 1777. The troops burned or demolished everything that they could not carry away. They burned the float-
ing bridge across Lake Champlain, the hospital, and the camp
sites. The war along the Canadian border was over. 40

The March to Saratoga

Burgoyne called back the German troops in Vermont
under Riedesel on July 24th and the Germans quickly marched
to rejoin the right wing at Skenesboro the next day. Riedesel
consulted with Burgoyne and when he returned to his troops
prepared them for a march into the forests of New York. The
Germans sent their unnecessary baggage back to Ticonderoga on
July 26th and the regimental adjutants processed their last
requests for recruits from Canada to fill unit vacancies.
With this last minute administration out of the way, the
mercenaries were stripped to fight. 41

Burgoyne started south from Skenesboro by a slow march
on July 23rd, taking a week to reach Fort Edward on the
Hudson River. The capture of Fort Edward resulted from a
culmination of activity begun just after the fall of
Ticonderoga, but due to poor roads, rugged terrain, and
American resistance, Burgoyne's offensive lagged way behind
schedule. Riedesel reached Fort Edward on July 31st, but
most of the infantry under Lieutenant Colonel Breymann did
not come in until five days later. The march further south
began again on August 3rd, but so slowly that the troops did
not reach Fort Miller, only seven miles away, until August 9th.
Ominously, several desertions occurred in the British ranks and Burgoyne ordered the Indian allies to pursue these men and bring back their scalps. 42

Riedesel received a surprise at Fort Edward—his young wife, two small daughters and a newborn daughter all joined the army after a long voyage from Germany. The baroness remembered that "a few days after my arrival the news came that we were cut off from Canada. Had I not availed myself of the fortunate opportunity when I did, I would have had to spend three years in Canada without my husband." 43 Riedesel had mixed feelings about letting his family accompany the army, but on Burgoyne's suggestion had sent Captain Willcoe to fetch the baroness. Frederika Charlotte Louise von Riedesel was certainly equal to the rigors of the campaign:

We were very happy during these three weeks!  [at Fort Edward] The country was lovely, and we were in the midst of the camps of the English and German troops... I had only one room for my husband, myself, and my children, in which all of us slept, and a tiny study. My maids slept in a sort of hall. When the weather was good we had our meals out under the trees, otherwise we had them in the barn, laying boards across barrels for tables. It was here that I ate bear meat for the first time, and it tasted very good to me. Sometimes we had nothing at all; but in spite of everything, I was very happy and satisfied, for I was with my children and was beloved by all about me. If I remember correctly, there were four or five aides with us. The evenings were spent at cards, while I busied myself putting the children to bed." 44
The sylvian idyll did not last long, being roughly shattered by the German disaster at Bennington and by the horrors of Saratoga.

Burgoyne needed both supplies and intelligence and decided to dispatch a column into southern Vermont to support Tories there and to steal horses to drag supplies. Baroness Riedesel noticed a lack of operational security around Burgoyne's headquarters.

It displeased me, however, that the officers' wives were familiar with all the army's plans and seemed all the more strange to me, as during the Seven Years' War I had noticed that in Duke Ferdinand's army everything was kept absolutely secret. This lack of control bothered this wife of a professional soldier, for 'here, on the contrary, even the Americans were acquainted with all our plans in advance, with the result that whenever we came they were ready for us, which cost us dearly.45

Burgoyne's selection of troops to raid Vermont was as poor as his security procedures—he chose Lieutenant Colonel Baum's dismounted regiment of dragoons.

Riedesel rode to Burgoyne to protest Baum's orders, expressing to the Englishman his astonishment and fears for the expedition. Burgoyne countered by saying that the army needed to gather supplies and that a forward movement down the Hudson by the main army would keep the Americans off Baum.46 In overruling Riedesel's objections, Burgoyne did
little to prepare Baum. His orders were an amazing document, rambling and poorly phrased enough to baffle a master of the King's tongue—which Baum neither read nor spoke. Baum was to enter Vermont and sweep across it from Manchester to Brattleboro to "try the affections of the country, to disconcert the councils of the enemy, to mount the Riedesel dragoons, to complete Peter's Loyalist corps, and to obtain large supplies of cattle, horses, and carriages...as many saddles and bridles as can be found...wagons and other convenient carriages, with as many draft oxen as will be necessary to draw them, and all cattle fit for slaughter (milch cows excepted)..." Baum was to say that his command was the advance guard of an army attacking Boston and would link up with troops driving north from Newport, Rhode Island. Further, Baum was to take prisoner any officers working under the direction of Congress and hostages from "the most respectable people." Burgoyne thought the expedition would take about two weeks and ordered Baum to rejoin the command at Albany at the end of that time. Baum's troops numbered some six hundred and fifty rank and file, being made up of one hundred and fifty men from the dragoons, some Jägers, a detachment from the Hess-Hanau artillery with two small guns, Peter's incomplete Queen's Loyal Rangers, Captain Fraser's Rangers, some Canadians and a motley collection of Indians.
Colonel Philip Skene went along as a political advisor, to aid Baum in determining what measures to be taken against the civilians. The detachment moved out on August 11th. 48

John Stark of New Hampshire commanded the Americans at Bennington in southern Vermont. He had responded to an appeal from settlers there by raising fifteen hundred men and marching to Manchester, Vermont during the last week in July. Stark refused orders to join the American defenders in front of Burgoyne, but did move twenty-five miles south to cover the American supply base at Bennington. 49

Baum reached Cambridge, New York on August 13th and on the next day began to march south to the Walloomsac River, where he ran into the first American defenders. Stark's skirmishers reported back that they were fighting a party of Indians. The Americans burned a bridge over the river, delaying Baum, but not giving him much cause to worry. He sent two dispatches back to Burgoyne on August 14th, sizing up Stark's forces and also requesting reinforcements. Late in the afternoon the raiders camped in the hilltops overlooking Bennington. Stark, aware that he faced more than Indians, sent for Seth Warner's Vermonter's, who had been left behind in Manchester. 50

Baum posted his men in detachments all over the nearby hills, some of the detachments had half-mile gaps between
units. He then awaited Stark's moves. Rain poured down on August 15th, ending any possibility of combat. At Bourgoynes headquarters at Fort Miller, Lieutenant Colonel Heinrich von Breymann led his grenadier battalion of five hundred and fifty men out to reinforce Baum, but there was no sense of urgency in this; the move was just a normal supporting mission to aid an operation apparently going well. Seth Warner also set out from Manchester, making slow progress over back roads and rough country. The rain continued throughout the night and into the morning of the next day.51

The rain ended by midday, when Stark supposedly uttered his famous remark about Molly Stark becoming a widow if he could not beat the enemy. He sent scattered parties out to harass the various groups of defenders, getting into Baum's rear. Baum thought at first that these men were either Tories or leaderless Americans intent only on retreat. Skene persisted in his insistence that the country contained many Loyalists, just waiting the arrival of the Royal troops. The Americans opened fire at about three o'clock, coordinating the assaults of over fifteen hundred militia. The separated parts of Baum's command began soon to surrender or try to escape into the nearby woods. The Indians and Canadians ran for their lives; the Loyalists followed. Fraser's Rangers and the Jägers were overrun. Baum's dragoons desperately
MAP OF THE
BATTLE OF BENNINGTON

FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,
WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
held on, but when their ammunition gave out Baum ordered them to draw their sabres and hack their way through. Baum soon fell mortally wounded; his men gave up. 52

Stark's militia began to scatter to plunder the enemy camps, most of them looting the baggage and equipment. Seth Warner's men entered this confusion from the east just as Breymann's reinforcements entered from the west. Breymann could not hear Baum's firing because of the hilly terrain, but his men hit Stark's looters, driving them back towards Bennington. Warner's regiment quickly deployed and halted Breymann's advance. The Germans recoiled into a defensive position and beat off a second American attack. Both sides were exhausted from the heat of the day and the day's long march. The Germans soon began running short of ammunition and fell back. Darkness ended the fighting. Breymann pulled back towards the Hudson minus a quarter of his men and all of his artillery. 53

The defeat at Bennington cost Burgoyne almost fifteen percent of his entire army. The British counted some two hundred and seven men killed and over seven hundred prisoners in the day's action. The Americans lost thirty killed and forty wounded. British and German reaction to the defeat varied. British sergeant Roger Lamb commented on Breymann's grenadiers: "Notwithstanding the severe fatigue they had undergone, his troops behaved with great vigour and
resolution, and drove the Americans from several hills, on which they were posted. But, the Germans were driven once their ammunition gave out. Lieutenant Thomas Anburey felt that the effect of Bennington would bring exultation to the Americans and would divest them of fear of Germans, especially since raw militia had defeated them. Burgoyne had left nothing to chance; the Germans had bungled. He felt the principal cause of the disaster to be Breymann's delay in supporting Baum. The slowness of the Germans march has been described ever since by historians, who picture Breymann halting several times an hour to properly dress his ranks, yet Breymann and Warner had the same distance to march—twenty-five miles—and the supposedly fleet-footed Americans took exactly the same time to march the same distance.

One German officer admitted that the defeat had done much harm, for the advance had to halt and tighten its belt in lieu of obtaining supplies from Vermont. The soldiers had to drag boats between Fort George on Lake George and the Hudson River, "which was a damned hard task because of the dearth of horses and carts." It was so hot one could hardly breathe. Dysentery ravaged the camps. Another German officer reported how the lack of provisions, the extraordinary fatigue, sickness, and insufficient clothing all weakened the troops and made them discontented and dejected. Even
Sergeant Lamb admitted the troops "felt unusual mortification" that "abated their confidence."\(^{58}\)

Survivors from Baum's and Breymann's commands drifted in for several days after the battle, sick and injured men who brought stories of struggles to the campfires along the Hudson. Some of the wounded died and had to be buried.\(^{59}\)

One German officer wrote that "the unhappy occurrence at Sen Cuir has not dispirited us. We regret nothing but the loss of brave friends and men...it is serious business fighting in wild woods."\(^{60}\) Soon a change in morale could be measured by all observant soldiers; some fellow soldiers began to desert.

Large-scale desertions began just after Bennington. Burgoyne's Indians, at best unreliable and erratic warriors, simply ran away. Lieutenant Thomas Anburey then noted that the Canadian volunteers became easily dispirited and that the provincials could not be relied upon.\(^{61}\) A German officer saw a British deserter from the 9th Regiment, who had been unlucky enough to have been recaptured, shot at the front on August 27th. The German thought that deserters merited harsh treatment. The Americans sent German-Americans to seduce soldiers away from their units, but the officer felt that few soldiers deserted as a result of this persuasion.\(^{62}\)

The Brunswickers caught one of their deserters on board an American ship at Skenesboro. Musketeer Fasselbend of
Captain von Pollniz’s company of the Regiment von Riedesel deserted and joined the Americans. He enlisted in an artillery battery only to be recaptured. Found guilty at his courtmartial, Fasselbend paid the supreme sacrifice. Burgoyne ordered all pickets of the army to form a circle around him and the men watched as a firing squad exacted the final price of disloyalty. This example did not stop desertion as Burgoyne moved south.

Fort Stanwix

While Burgoyne’s main army aimed south along the Hudson, a smaller British force under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Barry St. Leger tried to occupy the Mohawk Valley, in order to march eastward to join Burgoyne at Albany. St. Leger gathered of about nine hundred whites and a thousand Indians. Part of his men consisted of a hundred Hesse-Hanau Jägers newly-arrived from Germany. This small force gathered together at Oswego on Lake Ontario, and marched eastward towards the main American post of Fort Stanwix, half-way to Albany, which St. Leger thought was undermanned and in poor repair. The British reached the fort on August 2nd, but found it well-manned and ready to fight. St. Leger settled down for a siege. He first tried to intimidate the garrison by parading his troops in sight of the defenders. The Americans must have been impressed by
the scarlet British uniforms, and the Tories, Jägers and Canadians in green, but the thousand naked Indians were more impressive. The Americans decided to hold out at all costs. 64

St. Leger attacked a relief column under Nicholas Herkimer at Oriskany on August 6th, some five miles below Fort Stanwix. The ambush mortally wounded Herkimer and killed almost two hundred of his comrades, but the Indians also suffered severely and fled the battlefield. Hearing the noise of the fighting, the Stanwix garrison sallied out to the poorly-defended British camp, drove off the defenders, and looted or destroyed all the supplies they could find. St. Leger returned to the siege, deserted by most of his Indians. The rest fled when a half-wit sent by General Benedict Arnold falsely reported great numbers of Americans moving westward along the Mohawk River. The Indians looted what remained of St. Leger's supplies and deserted. The British broke off the siege on August 21st, returning to Oswego and back to Quebec as fast as possible. 65

The Battle of Freeman's Farm

Indians brought word of St. Leger's defeat on August 28th, but Burgoyne did not attempt to cross to the west side of the Hudson until September 13th, because he was awaiting his last reinforcements and supplies. He called in some troops from Lake George and had three hundred more men join from
FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,

WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
Canada; all arrived during early September. Then engineers built a bridge across the Hudson and the troops began to cross on September 13th; all the troops were across and the bridge demolished two days later. The British had taken leave of all communication with Lake George, Ticonderoga, and Canada. The English troops led off, followed by the Germans; the right wing kept to the road to Albany and Riedesel's left wing marched through the meadows close by the banks of the river. They proceeded three miles to a farm called Dovecote, or Dovegat, where the army camped for two days. The soldiers found fresh vegetables here and some managed to find straw on which to sleep.65

Thomas Anburey questioned Burgoyne's method of marching on Albany. The lieutenant felt the British could never reach the city; they needed more equipment, the roads were poor, and the troops had yet to cross the Mohawk River. He reserved more criticism for the German troops. "As the Germans must be included in this rapid march, let me point out the encumbrance they are loaded with...especially their grenadiers who have, in addition, a cap with a very heavy brass front, sword of an enormous size, a canteen that cannot hold less than a gallon, and their coats long skirted. Picture...a man in this situation, and how extremely well calculated he is for rapid march."66 The British soldiers had all cut off
FIRST BATTLE AT FREEMAN'S FARM
SEPTEMBER 19, 1777

FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,
WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
their coattails to free themselves for rapid movement in the woods. In spite of Anburey's criticism, the Germans would prove that they could still move rapidly even in long coats.

Burgoyne did not know the exact position of the Americans and sent out a reconnaissance on September 16th to locate the enemy. The American army under Major General Horatio Gates had prepared a fortified position on Bemis Heights, just south of a group of clearings in the forest known as Freeman's Farm. Most of the farmers in the area had abandoned their farms in face of the British advance, but American soldiers patroled the clearings. A small party of British soldiers and women found potatoes at one abandoned farm and set about busily digging them up. An American patrol discovered them, killed several, and took twenty prisoners; Burgoyne had found the enemy.67

Fraser's fight wing of British troops and Breymann's grenadiers, in all some two thousand men, marched into the woods to develop the American position. General Hamilton commanded the center of the British line, a force that contained four British regiments and some artillery; Burgoyne marched with his column. Riedesel and General Phillips led the left wing of three Brunswick regiments, Pausch's artillery, the Hesse-Hanau Regiment, and the English 47th Regiment. The British army totalled six
The British began their advance to contact on September 19th, and at ten that morning the three columns moved southward, being coordinated by cannonfire. Georg Pausch cursed the broken countryside which was cut by deep ravines. The Americans had destroyed all the bridges and the artillerymen had to drag their guns by hand, while the infantry sweated in the underbush.

The three columns could not see each other; nor could they see the enemy. American troops left their intrenchments to fight in the woods. Hamilton and Burgoyne ran into heavy fire when they reached the clearings around Freeman's Farm. Benedict Arnold's men cut down many English soldiers, badly roughing up the 62nd Regiment. Fraser sent Breymann's grenadiers to help out and they did "good service." The fighting raged back and forth across the clearings, with the tactical advantage changing sides several times. American riflemen hidden in trees cut down many officers and knocked out the artillery. The fighting became desperate, with the British beginning to give away.

Phillips rode to Burgoyne to offer aid, sending word back to Riedesel to send troops on the double. Riedesel had heard of the condition of the British center before Phillip's message could reach him, sent his own messages offering help,
and finally took it on himself to bring troops to Freeman's Farm. Riedesel turned over command of the left wing to Colongl Specht, then leading companies of the Regiment Rhetz, the entire Regiment Riedesel, and Pausch with two cannon, he moved to the left up the bluff leading to the fighting. The men struggled into the green hell of the underbrush; they had a mile and a half to go before meeting the enemy. The Americans concentrated on flailing the British regiments facing them and did not see the Germans approach. Without waiting for support from the Regiment Riedesel, the general led the two companies of the Regiment Rhetz, under Captain Frederdorff, into the fighting, "with drums beating and his men shouting 'Hurrah!' he attacked the enemy on the double-quick." The sudden and unexpected flank attack drove Arnold's men back. "General Riedesel exerted himself, brought up the Germans, and arrived in time to charge the enemy with great bravery."  

Pausch and his cannoneers desperately dragged the two guns through the woods. British officers and men and some Brunswick Jägers seized the dragopes and helped pull the guns into line. Pausch fired a dozen shots of grape into the enemy at pistol range, advanced sixty paces and fired a dozen more shots. The Americans fled. The Regiment Riedesel got into line, fired a volley of musketry, and then followed the Americans across a ravine. It was growing dark. The flight was over.

Horatio Gates could have thrown his four thousand
reserves against Specht's depleted left wing to cut the
British off from their supplies. Specht had less than a
thousand men left after Riedesel went to succor Burgoyne.
The Americans made no such move. 75

Riedesel's quick action saved the British line. The
eight hundred men in the three British regiments in the
hottest of the action lost three hundred and fifty men. The
62nd Regiment counted only sixty men left out of the three
hundred and fifty it had brought into action. The Germans
lost very few men, but British losses totalled over six
hundred men. The Americans lost less than half that figure. 76

The Germans occupied a position close to the American
works on the day after the battle. Woods and ravines
separated the two armies, but patrols bumped into each other.
The Americans kept the Germans from cutting down the woods
in front of their position, and in heat "enough to melt
you," the Germans entrenched their camp, outposts, and
picket positions. The army constructed great redoubts, a
magazine, and a hospital. Supplies began to run out;
"there is nothing in this desert." The men's uniforms
were torn to shreds by the brush, but neither side moved to
attack the other. 77 The Jägers went out to fight the
American riflemen—even British officers admitted that they
were the only effective soldiers against the American bush-
fighters—but, the Jägers were greatly inferior in numbers
to the Americans. 78 Burgoyne and his men, cut off from
the north, waited for British advances from the south.
Clinton's Drive Up The Hudson

William Howe left Henry Clinton in command of Manhattan when the British army aimed for Philadelphia. Clinton had seven thousand troops, almost half of the Tories, to defend Manhattan and its outposts. German reinforcements from Europe arrived late in September, giving Clinton a force to assist Burgoyne. He chose to attack forts Clinton and Montgomery, located near Bear Mountain in the center of the American defenses in the Highlands about forty miles north of Manhattan. The fall of these posts would create a diversion in Gates' rear and would, Clinton hoped, bring pressure off Burgoyne. Clinton gathered four thousand men, including the Trumbach Regiment, von Koehler's grenadier battalion, and some Hessian Jägers and Anspach grenadiers. Sailing up the Hudson on October 3rd, Clinton disembarked two nights later at Verplank's Point below the Highlands, making it appear that the British aimed at Peekskill. Early the next morning, Clinton left a thousand men to hold the point and re-embarked, carrying most of his troops over to Stony Point on the opposite bank. A Tory led the British through the mountains behind the forts, marching through harsh, if unguarded, terrain. 80

Clinton divided his small army into two parts in order to attack both forts at the same time. The British overran Fort Clinton's militia defenders, but only a few heavy losses among the leading assault elements. The German grenadiers and the Trumbach Regiment were among the first in
the works. The Jägers aided in the capture of Fort Montgomery, but there the British assault commander, Colonel Campbell, died in the attempt. Both forts fell at about the same time. The British then cut through the river defenses, even destroying the chain that blocked passage up the river. The American defenders knew that the way was open to Albany; all Clinton had to do was sail there. He had no intention of going further. After sending a force as far north as Esopus to burn the town, Clinton left a garrison in the forts and returned the rest of the troops to Manhattan. He had carried out his diversion and he thought he could do no more. He wrote a note to Burgoyne describing the success. The Americans caught the messenger and hanged him. Burgoyne's time ran out in the face of British indifference. 81

Burgoyne's Surrender

The Americans gathered thousands of reinforcements in the days after the Battle of Freeman's Farm, until they outnumbered the harried British troops almost four to one. Americans generally won the woodland skirmishes, harassing the British and causing Burgoyne's men to sleep in their uniforms, in order to be ready at all times. Food, ammunition, time, were all running out. Baroness Riedesel remembered that "the army made brief attacks every day, but none of them amounted to much. My poor husband, however, was unable to go to bed, or even undress a single night." 82

Burgoyne called an officers' conference on October 4th
and Riedesel proposed a retreat across the Hudson to reopen communications with Canada. Burgoyne refused to retreat before trying one more time to get around the Americans. He planned to use part of his army to attempt to turn the American left flank. If successful, the road would be open to Albany; if not, Burgoyne seconded Riedesel's plan to retreat northward. Burgoyne set the army to move on October 7th. Baroness Riedesel later recalled the scene:

Suddenly on October 7 my husband, with his whole staff, had to break camp. This moment was the beginning of our unhappiness! I was just taking breakfast with my husband when I noticed that something was going on. General Fraser and, I think, General Burgoyne and General Phillips also were to have had dinner that same day with me. I noticed a great deal of commotion among the soldiers. My husband told me that they were to go out on a reconnoissance, of which I thought nothing, as this often happened before. On my way back to the house I met a number of savages in war dress, carrying guns. When I asked them whither they were bound, they replied, "War! War!" which meant that they were going into battle. I was completely overwhelmed and had hardly returned to the house, when I heard firing which grew heavier and heavier until the noise was frightful. It was a terrible bombardment, and I was more dead than alive!

Toward three o'clock in the afternoon, instead of my dinner guests arriving as expected, poor General Fraser, who was to have been one of them, was brought in on a stretcher, mortally wounded. The table, which had already been set for dinner, was removed and a bed for the General was put in its place. I sat in a corner of the room, shivering and trembling...The bullet had gone through his abdomen...unfortunately the General had eaten a heavy breakfast, so that the intestines were expanded, and, as the doctor explained, the bullet had gone through them...I heard him often exclaim, between
moans, "Oh, fatal ambition! Poor General Burgoyne! Poor Mrs. Fraser." 84

The reconnoissance party that Burgoyne formed drew on all regiments in the army. Lord Balcarres led the right wing, made up of the British light infantry. Riedesel commanded the center of the line with a force made up of the 24th Regiment and a detachment of Brunswickers drawn from all the infantry regiments and Breymann's grenadiers. Major Acland commanded the left, leading the British grenadiers. Georg Pausch brought up two six pound guns to support Riedesel. This force totalled some fifteen hundred men; the rest of the army remained behind in the intrenchments. The columns moved southwestward beyond Freeman's Farm into a large wheat field; Burgoyne ordered a halt while foragers cut the wheat for straw. The generals mounted the roof of a nearby log cabin to use their fieldglasses to search for Americans. They saw none. 85

Horatio Gates ordered part of his army into action, sending his men through the woods to attack the British flanks. The Americans struck Acland's grenadiers, shooting many of them down and driving the rest back towards the British camp. They captured Acland, who had been shot through both legs. American riflemen and infantry also struck Balcarres' light infantry, driving them in disorder. Balcarres tried to rally his men, could not, and likewise fell back into the intrenchments. 86

Georg Pausch set up his two guns twenty-four paces apart, facing the front. An English officer galloped to
Pausch demanding that he send one gun to the left flank, to assist the English grenadiers, who were being overrun. Pausch protested as he had only two guns and could spare neither. He wanted the English to send other guns, because one gun was not a proper command for a captain; also, four English guns had just passed the position. The officer made himself scarce and did not return. 87

Riedesel's Brunswickers now remained the only troops left on the field and so received the main thrusts of the attackers, now under the command of Benedict Arnold. Arnold led three regiments up into the German position. Colonel Specht, then in field command of the Brunswickers, smashed the assault. Specht held the ground for some time, for he received reinforcements of detachments from the Regiment Rhetz and the Hesse-Hanau Regiment. But, the Americans worked around three sides of the Germans and Specht retreated to keep from being surrounded. His action was the most spirited of any on the British side that day. 88

Pausch fired directly into the onrushing Americans. His two guns lay fifty paces in front of the line of infantry and Specht did not notify him when the infantry pulled back, in disorder, as Pausch later charged. He pulled his two guns back into a small earthwork, where the gunners blasted back two more attacks, firing three wagon loads of ammunition. The infantry retreated once more and Pausch had to leave one gun in American hands.

We now brought up the other carriage, on
SECOND BATTLE AT FREEMAN'S FARM, CALLED BATTLE OF BEMIS HEIGHTS, OR OF STILLWATER
OCTOBER 7, 1777

- SPOT WHERE ARNOLD FELL
- SPOT WHERE FRASER FELL

FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,
WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
which I quickly placed the remaining gun, and marched briskly along the road, hoping to meet a body of our infantry and with them make a stand. But this hope proved delusive, and was totally dispelled; for some ran in one, and others in another direction; and by the time that I came within gun-shot of the woods, I found the road occupied by the enemy. They came towards us on it; the bushes were full of them; they were hidden behind the trees; and bullets in plenty received us. Seeing that all was irretrievably lost, and that it was impossible to save anything, I called to my few remaining men to save themselves.89

Pausch managed to break through a fence and escape into the woods. He met up with the confused mass of retreating infantry and went with them into the intrenchments.

Benedict Arnold would not let the British regain the security of their intrenchments without attempting to break the line. He gathered a force and attacked Balcares' redoubt, but the defenders broke up the attack and Arnold rose away to the next fortified position, a horseshoe-shaped earthwork occupied by Breymann's grenadiers. Breymann was exposed on all sides and his force of five hundred men had been reduced to three hundred by drafts for the reconnaissance. Arnold attacked the Germans in the front, and then on the side and rear of the position. Thomas Anburey, always a critic of the Germans, later wrote that "a party assaulced those of the Germans, commanded by Colonel Breymann, but either for want of courage or the presence of mind, they, upon the first attack of the enemy, were struck with such a terror that instead of gallantly sustaining their lines, they looked on all as lost, and after firing
one volley, hastily abandoned them; the brave officer,
Colonel Breymann, in endeavoring to rally his soldiers, was
unfortunately killed."90 A German pictured Breymann's
death in another light, decrying him "who was a constant
tryant to his grenadiers—he fell, struck down by a ball
from one of his own men, after the fiend had sabred four of
his command. Never sleeps the pursuing Nemesis!"91

Arnold fell with a bullet in his leg. Some said that
it was fired by a wounded German and that Arnold saved the
man's life, by calling out "Don't hurt him! He is a fine
fellow. He only did his duty."92

The Americans pursued the beaten Germans from the
redoubt. Some managed to escape to the British camps;
others simply gave up. The Americans plundered the camp
and settled in for further action. The Germans loss had
been quite high. The Brunswickers had lost Captains
Fredersdorff and Dahlstjerna, and Lieutenant Bode killed,
Captain von Gleissenberg wounded, and Colonel von Specht,
Captain von Geisau, and Ensigns Hoherlin, Denicke, and
Count von Rantzau captured. Lieutenants von Meyer, Cruse,
and Ensign von Geyling of Hesse-Hanau had been killed.
Enlisted loss numbered in the hundreds.93

The loss of Breymann's redoubt broke the British line,
forcing a retreat. The army readied itself for a move back,
but Burgoyne first had to bury General Fraser, which was
done at six in the evening of October 8th, the burial place
being near one of the main redoubts. "The English chaplain,
Mr. Brudenel, held the services. Cannonballs constantly flew around and over the heads of the mourners. The American General Gates said later on that, had he known that a funeral was being held, he would have allowed no firing in that direction. A number of cannonballs also flew about where I stood, but I had no thought for my own safety, my eyes being constantly directed toward the hill, where I could see my husband distinctly, standing in the midst of the enemy’s fire,” the Baroness later recalled.  

The retreat began that night. The Tories and Indians led off, followed by the Germans, the heavy artillery, the baggage train, and the British regiments. The army made no more than one mile an hour and did not reach the heights of Saratoga until the night of October 9th. Here the army dug in in fortifications constructed a month earlier when the troops faced the opposite direction. Gates arrived the next day and began to fire cannon on the British position; the fire lasted until Burgoyne’s surrender. The British beat off an American probing attack on October 11th, but within two days the army found itself surrounded by more and more Americans.

Riedesel wanted to abandon the baggage and retreat up the western bank of the Hudson and go on to Lake George. Burgoyne refused. He then begged for a quick nighttime flight with the soldiers carrying six days rations. Burgoyne again refused. Riedesel later recorded the condition of the army:
Every hour the position of the army grew more critical, and the prospect of salvation grew less and less. There was no place of safety for the baggage; and the ground was covered with dead horses that had either been killed by the enemy's bullets or by exhaustion, as there had been no forage for several days... Even for the wounded, no spot could be found which could afford them a safe shelter—not even, indeed, for so long a time as might suffice for a surgeon to bind up their gaily wounds. The whole camp was now a scene of constant fighting. The soldier could not lay down his arms day or night, except to exchange the gun for the spade when new entrenchments were thrown up. The sick and wounded would drag themselves along into a quiet corner of the woods and lie down to die on the damp ground. Nor even here were they longer safe, since every little while a ball would come crashing down among the trees.\(^{96}\)

Baroness Riedesel contrasted these scenes of horror with her view of Burgoyne's headquarters. She pictured Gentleman Johnny as having a jolly time on the retreat, singing and drinking half the night and amusing himself with the wife of a commissary. It was only Burgoyne's fault that the army did not escape, she believed.\(^{97}\) Perhaps her remarks should be taken in the context of Burgoyne's later criticisms of his allies.

Burgoyne asked Gates for terms on October 14th and the officers of the two armies worked out a "convention" giving the British the honors of war and letting them sail back to Europe from Boston after a pledge never to again serve in America. Gates agreed to the terms—an agreement later denied by Congress. Yet, Burgoyne stalled for time, hearing of rumors of Clinton's successes to tax the south. His army's morale, such as it was, could not stand much more.
One English officer described the Germans' attitude as "nix the money, nix the rum, nix fighten." Burgoyne gave in for good on the night of October 16th.  

The army marched out to surrender on the next morning, between lines of American troops. The Americans found the Germans extremely dirty. They brought a collection of wild animals—bear cubs, fawns, and squirrels that paraded along with the men. Just as odd were the many German women, a miserable looking set off oddly-dressed, Gypsy featured females. The troops smashed many of their weapons, and neither Britons nor Germans turned in their flags. Riedesel told the Americans he had burned the colors at Saratoga; in reality, his wife stashed the colors in her mattress and they eluded the Americans. On this day in the north some 2,404 British and 1,594 Germans laid down their arms.  

The army marched in columns towards Boston, where it was destined to spend over a year before Congress ordered it to Virginia to wait out the war. Many Britons and Germans would desert before 1783; the numbers of Burgoyne's forces who returned to Europe would be few indeed. Before leaving Saratoga, Chaplain Milius paid a last visit to wounded Germans, now in American hands. "We provided what comfort we could for our poor men, some who will never see home and folk again, and prayers were said at the graves of those who honored that place with their blood." An American surgeon, James Thacher, saw wounded of all nations being cared for in the same hospitals. All
received equal attention. English physicians were very
good, but Thacher found the Germans "do not credit to their
profession," being uncouth, clumsy, and destitute of
sympathy towards the suffering of their patients. 103

Burgoyne did not wait long after his army was on the
march to denigrate the Germans. His report to Germain
faulted the allies on many points. Burgoyne did not admit
that Riedesel had saved him on September 19th. He blamed
them for allowing the Americans to penetrate into the
fortified camp on October 7th. He did not mention the
English negligence in allowing the Americans to cut off the
supply lines from Ticonderoga. He did not admit that on
October 7th the Germans had held out long after the English
troops were defeated and driven back. 104 Burgoyne said he
could have cut his way out of the American encirclement,
but for the Germans, who would rather be taken prisoners--
forgetting that it was Riedesel who repeatedly recommended
escape and that he had even begged Burgoyne to retreat. The
ill-feeling between Riedesel and Burgoyne never ended.

Burgoyne needed a scapegoat and could not admit his own mis-
management. 105

One German officer wrote a more impartial account to
his brothers in Germany. Lieutenant Du Roi catalogued
British sins. The lieutenant noted the disagreements
within the British ministry, compounding a general lack of
knowledge of American affairs. He further could not under-
stand the need for a march to Albany, especially without
having a functional supply line to Canada. The Americans could trade space for time; this was especially evident between the fall of Ticonderoga and when the British reached the Hudson, a fifty-mile distance that took two months to cross. Du Roi pointed out the ineptitude of Phillip Skene, feeling that Skene was too concerned with his own property and was quite wrong about rebels at Bennington. He noted that Burgoyne lost troops daily, while the Americans gained strength, that the officers, particularly Burgoyne, took along too much baggage, and that the British counted too much on the loyalty of people in New York. All these factors, Du Roi felt, adversely affected the campaign. 106

It is hard to disagree.

With the notable exception of Bennington, the Germans fought very well for the British during Burgoyne's campaign, very well indeed. Bennington could have been avoided through better intelligence and Burgoyne's selection of troops better suited for an operation of that nature. Riedesel certainly should have had a larger say in directing the campaign, especially concerning the employment of all the German troops. But, the campaign was really doomed from the start, a prime example of British failures in strategy and administrative cooperation. The flaw was fatal. With Burgoyne and his men in prison in Boston, the stage was set for the American alliance with France, the critical factor in keeping the Revolution alive in the ensuing years.
Chapter Notes:


2 Ibid. pp. 2-4; Letter of Paul Wilhelm Schaeffer dated 4 July 1776, Geschichtsverein zu Hanau, Ms. 559f.


7 Riedesel, pp. 2-17.

8 Ibid., Elting, p. 23.

9 Riedesel, p. 105.

10 Ibid., p. 101.

11 Du Roi, p. 90.

12 Ibid., p. 84.


14 Du Roi, pp. 87-88.

15 Pettengill, p. 85.

16 Du Roi, p. 90.

17 Pettengill, pp. 81-82.

18 Du Roi, p. 91.

19 Ibid.


22 Elting, p. 31.
23 Ibid., pp. 31-32.
24 Ibid., p. 32; Riedesel, pp. 114-116; Nickerson, pp. 149-153.
26 De Roi, p. 174.
27 Riedesel I, pp. 118-119.
28 Pettengill, pp. 79-81.
29 Riedesel I, p. 123.
31 Ibid., p. 74; Pettengill, p. 147; Riedesel I, p. 39. Edmonstone died on the trip back to England.
32 Riedesel I, p. 82.
33 Baroness Riedesel, pp. 54, 88.
35 Du Roi, p. 96.
36 Quoted in Du Roi, p. 169.
37 Ibid., p. 177.
38 Ibid., pp. 90, 101-102.
39 Ibid., p. 104.
40 Ibid., pp. 109-110.
41 Riedesel, I, 123, 237-238; Elting, p. 39.
42 Riedesel, I, 123-126; Lowell, p. 144; Elting, p. 41.
43 Baroness Riedesel, p. 44.
44 Ibid., pp. 44-45.
Riedesel, I, 128.

Ibid., p. 127.


Nickerson, pp. 248-254.

Pancake, p. 138; Pettengill, pp. 88-89; Elting, p. 43.

Pettengill, pp. 90-91; Riedesel, pp. 129-132; Du Roi, p. 123; Pancake, p. 138; Elting, p. 43; Ward I, p. 430.

Lamb, p. 154.

Anburey, pp. 164-166.

Pettengill, p. 97.

Heusler, p. 220.

Lamb, p. 154.

Du Roi, p. 125.

Pettengill, pp. 91-92.

Anburey, p. 178.

Pettengill, p. 92.

Du Roi, p. 119; Pettengill, pp. 86-87.

Geschichte der Kuhrhessischen Jäger, Bancroft Collection, New York Public Library; Pancake, pp. 139-145; Elting, pp. 46-47.

Pettengill, pp. 98-99; Elting, pp. 46-47; Ward, II, 504-505.

Anburey, p. 160.

Ward, II, 505.

Ibid.
Pausch, pp. 133-135.
Lamb, p. 160.
Ward, II, 510-511; Pancake, pp. 156-159.
Quoted in Ward, II, 511.
Anburey, p. 174.
Ward, II, 512.
Ibid.
Pettengill, pp. 102-104.
Pettengill, p. 104.
Ward, II, 513-518; Geschichte der Hohrehssischen Jäger.
Baroness Riedesel, p. 50.
Ward, II, 525-526.
Baronnes Riedesel, pp. 51-52.
Pettengill, pp. 104-105; Ward, II, 526.
Pettengill, p. 105; Elting, pp. 60-61.
Pausch, pp. 159-166.
Pettengill, pp. 104-105.
Pausch, p. 171.
Anburey, P1. 185-186.
Heusler, p. 221.
Ward, II, 530.
Lamb, p. 164; Pettengill, pp. 106-107.
Baroness Riedesel, p. 53.
95 Pettengill, pp. 107-108; Ward, II, 532-534.
96 Riedesel, I, 163.
97 Baroness Riedesel, pp. 55-56.
98 Elting, p. 66.
100 Baroness Riedesel, p. 72.
101 Elting, p. 67.
102 Quoted in Elting, p. 67.
104 Riedesel, I, 213.
106 Du Roi, pp. 111-118.
CHAPTER SEVEN

The Southern Campaigns

The alliance between France and the United States increased the possibility of eventual American independence. It became important to the British to diminish the amount of territory held by the Americans, even if their main army under Washington could not be destroyed. Lord George Germain hoped that the more thinly inhabited southern provinces might speedily be reduced to obedience and royal authority established from the Gulf of Mexico to the Susquehanna River. Reports reached British headquarters of substantial numbers of Loyalists ready to rise and greet British soldiers in the South. On November 6, 1778 about thirty-five hundred men, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Archibald Campbell, embarked at New York for service in the South. The bulk of the force was comprised of American Loyalists, but it also included two Hessian regiments—the Trumbach Regiment and the Regiment von Wissenbach. Their destination was Savannah, Georgia.¹

The transports, delayed by bad weather, did not leave Sandy Hook until November 27, and did not arrive in the Savannah River until the 24th of December. General Augustine

258
Prevost, commanding the British forces in East Florida, had orders to aid in the reduction of Savannah, but he did not move north and Campbell undertook the task alone. The British landed on December 29th and easily defeated eight hundred Continentals and militia under the command of General Robert Howe. The British fought their way into the city, inflicting over six hundred casualties (including eighty-three men killed or drowned), while losing just three men killed and ten wounded.²

Savannah numbered some six hundred houses and included several barracks built during the colonial wars. Most of the inhabitants ran away, attempting to take their valuable possessions with them. The Germans found evidence of the hurried flight; broken mahogany furniture littered the streets. The Hessians did not plunder the town as did the more lightly disciplined Loyalist troops. The two regiments occupied the town's barracks.³

General Prevost arrived finally to take command of the army in Georgia. In the next six months the British and Americans marched back and forth occupying and reoccupying territory in the sort of mobile warfare that marked all of the campaigns in the South. The British captured Augusta, then abandoned it. General Lincoln, with an American army, marched towards Augusta, and Prevost sailed north, landed on
FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,

WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
the islands off Charleston, South Carolina, and began operations there. The British at last returned to Savannah, having done little damage. The Hessians took part in several incidents, including the defense of Stono Ferry, a small fort that covered one of the approaches into Charleston. It once had a bridge to the Carolina mainland, but the bridge had disappeared by 1779. The garrison consisted of the British 71st Regiment Highlanders and the Trumbach Regiment, together some four hundred men. Part of Lincoln's force attacked on June 19, 1779, causing the Hessians to fall back in some disorder. The Americans then fought the Scots hand to hand. German officers rallied their regiment and came back into the fight. More British reinforcements arrived and the Americans fell back, losing about three hundred men to the British total of one hundred and twenty-five.  

At about the same time, the Regiment von Wissenbach, using additional light artillery, fought several engagements against American armed sloops, causing the Americans to retreat or be destroyed. Corporal Johann Reuber reported that his regiment captured the USS Rattlesnake and found on it several cannon and flags of the Rall brigade taken at Trenton. Reuber's account might be very inaccurate, but remains the only source for his unit's action in South
Carolina. What Rall's flags were doing on an armed sloop in South Carolina remains a mystery.\(^5\)

The summer of 1779 in the south was fairly quiet, with the British content to hold onto Georgia and Port Royal Island in South Carolina. However, six thousand French troops arrived off Savannah on September 8th, in company with the fleet of Admiral Comte d'Estaing, who sailed north from the West Indies. The British quickly called in five hundred slaves to build earthworks to defend Savannah. The two Hessian regiments formed part of the defense. The French landed five thousand troops on September 12th and joined the American forces under Lincoln to assault the town. The French decided to proceed with European siege techniques and began to dig parallels on September 23rd. Then, threatened by an approaching British fleet and poor autumn weather, the Franco-American force made a direct assault on October 9th, into the muzzle of the waiting British, who had used the month to dig extensive defenses. The resulting battle was the bloodiest of the war since Bunker Hill. Colonel von Porbeck of the Regiment von Wissenbach received compliments for his actions in Prevost's report of the battle. The allies, defeated at every point, lost 16 officers and 228 men killed and 63 officers and 521 men wounded. The British lost 40 killed, 63 wounded and 52 missing. The French
sailed away, leaving the Americans to face growing Loyalist support in the South. 6

When Sir Henry Clinton heard of d'Estaing's arrival off Savannah he recalled to New York the Newport garrison of three thousand men. When he learned of the resulting victory, Clinton decided to mount a major offensive against Charleston, South Carolina. His armies could move throughout the South from that city. The British forces in New York then numbered twenty-five thousand troops, so he decided to send a portion south, while holding a substantial garrison in New York to keep Washington from capturing Manhattan. On December 26th, 1779 Clinton turned over command in Manhattan to Knyphausen and sailed south with Cornwallis as second in command. His forces numbered eight British infantry regiments, four Hessian grenadier battalions and one infantry regiment, and five corps of Tories, as well as detachments of artillery, cavalry, and Jägers, in all about 8,500 men. The Hessian infantry regiment was the Regiment von Huyn. 7 Captain Johann Ewald and two hundred and fifty Jagers embarked on December 19, 1779. Their ship was driven on to Long Island by ice, before floating free. After a stormy passage, the ship reached Savannah on February 2, 1780. On February 11th Ewald's ship put in to the North Edisto River and his men disembarked on John's Island off of
Charleston the following day. The whole army assembled there, the Jägers and light troops near the Stono Ferry, some thirty miles south of the city. 8

Not all the soldiers reached South Carolina. The bark Anna, having on board thirty Hessian and Anspach soldiers, as well as others, became dismasted in an early January gale. There was a total of two hundred and fifty people on board, but there was only enough rations for one hundred people for one month. Taken in tow by a man-of-war, a second storm snapped the tow cable leaving the Anna, a hulk, driven by the wind and waves. The Anna drifted for eight weeks. The people ate all the dogs, grinding up the bones to boil with shavings from salt beef barrels. The master proposed that the crew and passengers should feed on each other, with the men first devouring women. They rejected this with disgust. Finally, the Anna reached the Irish coast. The vessel hit a rock, but the captain tried to put out to sea to avoid paying the thirty guinea charge for a pilot. The boatswain took over and managed to reach St. Ives in Cornwall, where two boats came out to answer the Anna's distress signals. A pilot and carpenter came to the ship, but the sight of the starving soldiers frightened the carpenter, who turned around and rowed away as fast as he could. The pilot succeeded in beaching the ship just before it sank. The
crew and passengers survived. 9

Active operations against Charleston began on March 7th, when Clinton's forces reached the mainland south of the city. Charleston occupied the southern end of a narrow peninsula between the Ashley River to the west and the Cooper River to the east. The two streams flowed together in Charleston harbor, which was bordered on the south by James Island and Morris Island and on the north by mainland and Sullivan's Island. The forts that had defeated an attack by the Royal Navy in 1776 had fallen into disrepair, and there were no defenses to hold back an assault by land. The Americans quickly utilized slaves to build defenses. Lincoln's army, initially of some four thousand men, faced Clinton's of ten thousand, backed by many Royal Navy vessels. 10

The Jägers, as usual, led the attack. In a nameless skirmish early in March the Jägers killed one captain, one lieutenant, one sergeant, and seven men, and wounded thirty more. They lost one Jäger who was captured and later killed. 11

On February 24th American cavalry waited in ambush at a road junction. An English foraging expedition driving cattle came down the road "as usual" without a rear guard and without having loaded weapons. The Americans charged,
wounding three of the foragers with lances before the English could even load. Lieutenant Hinrichs of the Jägers happened to be strolling in front of his post. He heard the shouts and quickly gathered up eight Jagers and hurried to the "motley crowd." Captain Ewald also ran in with a platoon from another direction. The Germans drove the enemy off with rifle fire. The English lost six men wounded. Lieutenant Colonel Webster rode over and personally gave his thanks to the riflemen for saving his patrol.¹²

Service in the swamps and tidal rivers brought more dangers than American defenders. Ewald noted the number of alligator, some of them up to sixteen feet long.¹³

By March 12, 1780, the British advanced out of the swamps and drew in sight of the city. Lieutenant Hinrichs recorded a curious event that day. The British commander Lieutenant Colonel Abercrombie saw seven American cavalrmen, a thousand paces away. Instead of sending riflemen out to disperse them, the Briton ordered cannonfire. Hinrichs was disgusted with the wasteful attempt to shoot a man with a cannon.¹⁴

Hinrichs was also disgusted with the meagre results the Jägers had in ambushing Americans. The Jägers were usually out on ambush positions. On March 20th, Hinrichs had been on station all day. Finally he and his men were
relieved. Fresh Jägers came out, including a soldier who brought his dog, which ran ahead. The soldier whistled the dog back, using the whistle that meant recall to the soldiers. As a result, the entire post withdrew, believing that Hinrichs had called them back. When halfway to camp, twenty Americans rode through the ambush position. "Luck is the main thing in war," Hinrichs reflected. Ewald recorded a different version of this affair to him, Hinrichs "had set a bad example of sparing his men, which a young officer often follows and generally observes at the wrong time, he let the men leave the ambush in the morning about eleven o'clock because it was very warm." On March 23rd, George Clinton himself went out to a ford over the Ashley River to make a reconnaissance of the area. Hinrichs and forty Jägers guarded the commander-in-chief. Clinton wanted the Jägers to check out the British-held of the river, to make sure there were no snipers. "I made my way down through ditches and brushwood, up to my belly in water and morass, until I got close to the bank; there was no one on this side." He found an American post of four men located behind a stone barricade across the river. The Jägers opened fire to keep the four pinned down for an hour, so that Clinton could make himself familiar with the area. After dark the four Americans withdrew from
SIEGE OF CHARLESTON
MARCH 29 - MAY 12, 1780

FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,
WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
their position, but the next afternoon four more again appeared to reoccupy the position. Hinrichs, still on duty, posted four of his riflemen in a ferry house and then strolled along the river bank to draw fire. When he saw the Americans rise to aim at him he gave the order to fire. His men killed one, wounded two, and watched the fourth run off. The British were not molested further at that point. 17

On March 29th, most of the British army boarded boats to cross closer to Charleston. The British light infantry led off, followed by the Jägers, the four Hessian grenadier battalions, two battalions of British infantry, and four British infantry regiments. This force landed fourteen miles from the city. Johann Ewald took the lead with twenty Jägers, overpowered a troop of American dragoons, and followed the retreating Americans eight miles. 18

Ewald pushed his men through the swamps to get close to the enemy. On March 31st, the Jägers in the swamps protected Clinton and his staff on a reconnaissance. The British army continued to advance until April 8th, when they had encircled the entire American force. Clinton then settled down to a formal siege, completing the first encircling parallel. When the British first opened artillery fire on the city, Johann Ewald crept close to the city to judge the effect of the cannon. "In the short intervals between
the shooting I could often hear the loud wailing of female voices, which took all the pleasure out of my curiosity and moved me to tears." 19 From this time until the American surrender on May 12th, the story of Charleston is one of trench warfare and progress measured in yards. The Jägers, the best rifle unit in the British army, were always stationed in the foremost trenches, trying, and succeeding, to silence American fire. 20

The Americans raided the British trenches to injure the attackers. On the night of April 24th, two hundred Virginians and South Carolinians overran Hinrich's riflemen as they lay in the trenches. The Germans had to temporarily fall back, losing two men wounded by bayonets, while three more, and nine Englishmen, were taken prisoner. 21 The Americans covered their retreat by firing cannon loaded with broken shells, pickaxes, hatchets, flat irons, pistol barrels, and broken locks. Hinrichs silenced the guns by rifle fire, but not until the American fire razed one foot of the parapet. He felt that "through the negligence of the English the enemy was upon them too quickly, and without support they could not make a stand with discharged rifle against bayonets." Twenty-four hours later, fear of another enemy attack led to confusion among the British workers constructing the outer works. They rushed back into the
fortified line, drawing fire from their own supporting
troops. In the dark, the British shot about fifty of their
own men.22

As the siege progressed the Jäger riflemen became
increasingly effective. On April 27th, Captain Hinrich's
(a new promotion) detachment, supported by one hundred and
fifty British light infantry, opened on the American
positions. He put five Jägers and fifteen light infantry
at each post. The Americans could fire only one shot from
all their artillery during the entire day. An American
sniper killed one British workman, the only loss in Hinrich's
sector that day.23 When Americans saw the new approaches
being constructed, and being unable to fire, they marked the
position for heavy fire at night.24 After the surrender of
the city an American officer told Ewald that the Americans
suffered most severely from the Jägers, because rifle fire
could cause casualties as far back as the rear lines and
into the city as well.25 American deserters during the
siege told the British that when the Americans knew the Jägers
would go in and out of the trenches they would direct a lot
of artillery on the Germans.26 Jäger losses were generally
light, but on the morning of May 4th, a cannonball hit a
group of Jägers who were moving into the trenches—taking
off the leg of one man and wounding another in the thigh,
while five others were wounded by splinters when the cannon-ball lodged in a fallen tree.\textsuperscript{27}

Conditions for both besiegers and besieged were harsh. Ewald described his command post in his diary: "I set up my hut in an old, dilapidated Indian fort which lay on the highest hill; the ruins of its breastworks consisted of oyster shells. About six paces behind my hut two officers were buried, one of whom had died of his wounds during the siege. "Here I could daily sing 'Memento mori.'"\textsuperscript{28}

On the night of May 3rd, a group of men from the Grenadier Battalion von Graff rowed silently up to a three-masted vessel lying close to the town. They climbed on to the deck, which they found undefended, cut the lines, and towed the ship back to the British lines. When they went below in the daylight to examine their prize, the grenadiers found it to be a hospital ship, full of small-pox patients.\textsuperscript{29}

The totally-professional Ewald caustically viewed the progress of the siege. He felt that the British tactics could not have been used against a European army. The sloppy tactics would not capture a dovecote in Europe. The English soldiers were heedless, being as poor besiegers as they were brave men. Concerning the engineer in charge, Colonel Moncrief, "I assert once more that this man could hardly serve as an errand boy for an engineer during a siege
in a European war." 30

In spite of Ewald's observations, the English tactics worked. On the night of May 9th, two hundred guns fired simultaneously into the American lines, fired the city, and demoralized the defenders. Lincoln asked for terms. On May 12th, over five thousand Continental soldiers and militia surrendered to Clinton, the greatest American loss during the Revolutionary War. The defenders lost just eighty-nine killed and one hundred thirty-eight wounded. The total British loss numbered seventy-six killed and one hundred and eighty-nine men wounded. 31

The Continental soldiers marched off to prisons, but Clinton let the militiamen go home. The British moved into garrison the city. On May 18th, Ewald was going to go into the great magazine established by the Americans to get some muskets. Just before he entered the magazine he met his friend Captain Biesenrodt of the grenadiers and went with him to Biesenrodt's quarters. Suddenly the magazine exploded.

Never in my life, as long as I have been a soldier, have I witnessed a more deplorable sight. We found some six people who were burnt beyond recognition, half-dead and writhing like worms, lying scattered around the holocaust at a distance of twenty, thirty, to forty paces, and in the confusion no one could help them. We saw a number of mutilated bodies hanging
on the farthest houses and lying in the streets. Nearby and at a distance, we found the limbs of burnt people. Many of those who hurried to the scene were killed or wounded by the gunshots which came from the loaded muskets in the cellars.32

The British lost about three hundred men killed in this accident, far above what they lost during the siege itself.

The German units with Clinton’s forces saw much service during the siege, particularly the four grenadier battalions and the Jägers. Most Germans became part of the Charleston garrison, while Loyalist and regular British units moved into the back country. The war in the south came to resemble a true civil war; most German units returned north to Manhattan or remained in Charleston and Savannah. Germans did not take part in the battles of Camden, King’s Mountain, or Cowpens, and did not leave their garrisons to fight the encroaching Americans.

Guilford Court House

In October 1780 General Leslie sailed south from Manhattan to reinforce Lord Cornwallis’ army in South Carolina. Leslie brought several British regiments, plus some Hessian Jägers (about one hundred men) and the Regiment von Bose. This force first landed in Portsmouth, Virginia, but abandoned the town and landed in Charleston late in December. With these troops in hand, Cornwallis set out to
catch the American army in the back country, commanded by General Nathanael Greene. Greene proceeded to lead Cornwallis north to North Carolina, staying just ahead of the British and leading a merry chase. Having little baggage, the Americans could maneuver quicker than Cornwallis. The British general burned his own baggage train to free himself from being outstripped by Greene. From January to mid-March, the two armies raced northwards with the Americans crossing all the major rivers with time to spare. 33

Greene wore out his pursuers, and gained strength in turn. On March 15th, 1781 he attacked the British army at Guilford Court House. Greene had chosen the ground skillfully. The two armies met head on. The Jägers in the British advance fell back before the oncoming Americans. The right of the British line consisted of the Regiment von Bose and Highlanders, while the Jägers ended up supporting artillery in the middle of the line. Cornwallis attacked Greene in turn and the fighting centered around trying to gain control of clearings in the forested areas south of the courthouse. 34

The British forced the Americans from the open areas, driving them back into the woods. The Regiment von Bose continued to hold the British right flank, while the Jägers operated on the left of the British line. The musketeers of
FROM CHRISTOPHER WARD,

WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
the Regiment von Bose cut off a segment of the American line, causing the Americans to retreat to a second position. The Americans then held off three British bayonet assaults and fought the Regiment von Bose to a standstill deep in the woods. To force an end to the conflict, Cornwallis had his artillery fire into the melee of American defenders and British attackers. The fire cut down Continentals and Redcoats alike, forced the Americans back, and gave time for the British infantry to reform. The end of the main conflict also caused the cessation of the bush fighting between the Regiment von Bose and the Americans it faced, but not until British cavalryman Banastre Tarleton attacked the flank of the force that the Hessians fought. Both sides licked their wounds. Greene, not willing to risk destruction of his army, moved off at dusk. 35

Cornwallis held the field, but paid for his victory with blood. He lost 93 killed and 439 wounded out of his 1,900 man force. Twenty-nine British or Hessian officers were killed or wounded. Greene lost 78 killed and 183 wounded. These losses crippled Cornwallis' army. He decided to abandon North Carolina and move north into Virginia, where other British soldiers already operated. Nathanael Greene had lost a battle and won a campaign. 36
Operations in Virginia

No military operations took place in Virginia from the burning of Norfolk on January 1, 1777 to May 1779 when twenty-two transports landed some 1,800 British soldiers at Portsmouth. The Regiment Prinz Carl made up part of the force, commanded by Major General Mathews. The troops fanned out around the area, burning American ships and supplies, and then sailed away without the loss of a man. 37

Cornwallis wanted Clinton to abandon New York and invade Virginia with the total might of the British army and navy. Clinton would not agree to such a drastic plan, but did send a force under turn-coat Benedict Arnold in December 1780, and after April 1781, when Cornwallis marched from North Carolina to Virginia, did have subordinate commands sent to reinforce Cornwallis' forces. 38

Arnold's detachment consisted of Redcoats and Loyalists, plus a force of Jägers under Johann Ewald, in all about 1,600 men. The campaign opened with friction between Ewald and Arnold. Arnold sent four boats filled with Jägers against the Americans, to force a landing. The defenders opened fire on the Germans, who fired one volley, drew their hunting swords, and jumped into the water to attack the foe. Ewald lost three men wounded, but his swift assault drove off the
defenders and he captured about two hundred American militia. Arnold landed and expressed satisfaction with the victory.
Ewald wondered at a general who sent bayonetless men against men who had bayonets, especially when the British light infantry was also near at hand. The Germans had won only by chance! Ewald told Arnold that, "I wished that I had the shore to defend, and he had attacked me with all the sharpshooters in the corps. He looked at me and remained silent. I turned around and went to my men." 39

Arnold spared no energy in laying waste a large area of the Virginia peninsula and entered Richmond on the 5th of January. Ewald likened the expedition to a pirate raid, that ravaged and destroyed everything in its path. "Terrible things happened on this excursion. Churches and holy places were plundered." 40

On January 10, 1781, at Hood's Point, Arnold gave the honor of leading the column to the Loyalist troops, placing the Jägers second in line. Colonel Simcoe of the Queen's Rangers rode to Ewald and begged him not to take offense. Ewald surmised that Arnold gave the lead to Major Robinson as a favor in order to get his name in the newspapers. After a half-hour's march, twenty shots were fired into the head of the column. No one was hurt, but the march resumed without first searching the area. After another half hour
the British were challenged by a voice that demanded "Who is there?" Robinson ordered his men forward—into an American ambush. Over forty Loyalist troops fell, throwing the head of the column into great confusion. Arnold rode up to take direct command. Ewald addressed him: "So it goes when a person wants to do something that he doesn't understand!" Arnold gave the command back to Ewald, who straightened out the British line, but could not make further contact with the American soldiers, who vanished. After another half hour's march the British returned to their ships.  

After five years in America, Johann Ewald had proven himself an able leader of small unit actions. John Simcoe called Ewald "that gallant and able officer" and offered him a majority in the provincial rangers. "He is truly my friend," Ewald felt, "but I am a Hessian, body and soul, and it seems to me that I could not be happy outside this splendid corps in which I serve." The Jägers did retain their sharpness long after many other German units were relegated to garrison duty in seaboard towns. "It is impossible that any evil can await me in my native land, for I can say in all conscience that I have served as an upright man." But, the lack of promotions bothered Ewald. "If I have not yet been given preference by my sovereign, neither has he done me any wrong, and after all, he has awarded me
the order *pour le mérite*. I will not be ungrateful, but
serve my master until he does me an injustice.*"⁴³ When
after returning to Hesse Ewald received no promotion for his
long years of service in America, he resigned and entered
the Danish army, eventually rising to major general.

The comradeship and trust between Simcoe and Ewald
typifies the best sort of military cooperation between the
British and the German mercenaries. After a June 1781
skirmish, Simcoe wrote that "nor had he less reliance on
the acknowledged military talents of his friend Ewald, and
the cool and tried courage of his Jägers." During the fight
Simcoe had said that "I will take care of the left; while
Ewald lives, the right flank will never be turned."⁴⁴ And
so it proved.

Simcoe and Ewald operated together in the area near
Dismal Swamp in January 1781. Ewald found the operations
against small groups of Americans very trying. He became
sick with fever. He took medicine to combat the fever and
followed that with doses of red wine, which caused him
extreme distress. He continued the march, feeling that a
man can, if he will, do very much.⁴⁵ On this particular
march the Jägers had to cross swampy woods on a very dark
night. Ewald could not tell how the guides picked their way.
The men marched single file, going up to their knees in
muddy water, climbing over fallen trees that were difficult for the horses to cross. Finally the men reached the edge of the wilderness.⁴⁶

The Germans operated in Princess Ann County, where on February 10, 1781 Simcoe sent them to disperse an American force commanded by a New Englander named Weeks. Simcoe reported that "Captain Ewald, by almost impossible ways and bye paths proceeded to the same point: he fortunately surprised and totally dispersed Weeks' party."⁴⁷ Weeks escaped to meet Ewald again.

George Washington could spare few troops to hinder Arnold's operations along the Virginia coast. He did send generals Lafayette and Steuben to harass the British with militia and hastily-gathered forces. On March 18th, at Scott's Creek, in the vicinity of Portsmouth, one of Ewald's patrols caught an American trying to pass the lines and brought him to their commander. The Jäger captain threatened to hang the American if he refused to disclose the American plans. Faced with the possibility of a rope, the man talked, telling of a planned attack on the British position. Ewald sent out more patrols, who found the enemy. He then set out to defend a causeway leading into the British lines through a swamp taking with him one non-commissioned officer and sixteen privates. They found the Americans at
the opposite end of the causeway, who fired on the Germans, hitting Ewald in the knee and wounding three of eight men left with him. A few more Jägers came forward as reinforcements. Arnold rode out and asked Ewald if the Americans could take the post. Ewald, bloodied, cried "No! As long as one Jäger lives, no damned American will come across the causeway!" The Jägers fire caused the Americans to fall back and withdraw. Ewald was very proud of his men, he felt that they had fought thirty to one odds. His elation burst when Arnold refused to give official thanks. Ewald felt that lack of recognition was a result of national pride—that Loyalist Americans did not want to praise thirty-two Germans for holding off the American forces.  

Ewald and Arnold simply came from two very different worlds. The European professional soldier looked at the turncoat; "Gladly as I would have paid with my blood and my life for England's success in this war, this man remained so detestable to me that I had to use every effort not to let him perceive, or even feel, the indignation of my soul." The strain was eased when General William Phillips arrived from New York to take over Arnold's forces.

Incapacitated by his wounds, Ewald became the military commander of Norfolk, Virginia and found Colonel Fuchs with the Erbprinz Regiment at nearby Portsmouth. Ewald became
harassed by the American partisan Weeks, whose band he had dispersed two months earlier. Weeks sent word to Ewald, through the medium of a "wench", that he hoped to square accounts with the German. Ewald's defense kept Weeks from making an attack during daylight, but the Yankee freely operated under cover of darkness. "His supporters, the war prisoners, who were very noisy during the first days when I got there, were taken on board a ship." Weeks never did succeed in driving Ewald from Norfolk.

The main British forces meanwhile advanced into central Virginia. On April 25th the Jägers led the advance to within two miles of Petersburg. An American ambush killed one Jäger. A party of Jägers led by a British sergeant got around the American left flank and fired with great effect until the Americans retreated. Two days later, Lieutenant Spencer of the Queen's Ranger led a Jäger detachment by a concealed route along the banks of the James River to attack armed American ships below Richmond. British cannon fire and the bullets of the riflemen raked the ships. The Americans abandoned the nearest ship, the crew jumping into a boat to escape. The German fire caused many to jump from the boat into the river. Spencer had a hard time stopping the Jägers from firing when the boat surrendered. The result of the skirmish was the burning or sinking of four
ships, five brigs, and several smaller vessels, and the
capture of two ships, three brigantines, two schooners, and
five sloops, all laden with tobacco, flour, and naval stores.
The British suffered no losses. 52

Lafayette with 1,200 Continental troops arrived at
Richmond on April 29th to defend the city. Phillips
remained on the opposite side of the James River, although
he then outnumbered the Americans. Phillips then fell back
downriver to join his forces with Cornwallis' army coming
up from North Carolina. Cornwallis, who assumed leadership,
brought with him some 1,500 men, including the Regiment von
Bose. Within a few days Cornwallis' strength grew with the
addition of 1,500 troops from New York, including the two
regiments from Anspach-Bayreuth. Lafayette, also reinforced
had some 3,000 men to oppose the 7,200 men under Cornwallis'
command. Cornwallis wrote to Clinton that, "the boy cannot
escape me." 53

Some in Cornwallis' army questioned his leadership and
the direction of the campaign. Ewald, newly returned after
recuperating from his knee would bitterly wrote in his
journal:

What use to us are the victories and the
defeats of the enemy at Camden and Guilford?
We now occupy nothing more in the two
Carolina provinces than Charleston,
Wilmington, and Ninety-Six. In these areas,
we hold no more ground than our cannon can
reach. Why not operate out of one point
and use all our force there to be the master
of at least one province? What good are our
victories which have been so dearly bought
with our blood? We have made people miserable
by our presence. So, too, have we constantly deceived the loyally-disposed subjects by our freebooting expeditions, and yet we still want to find friends in this country. 54

Cornwallis planned to dislodge Lafayette, destroy American magazines and stores in central Virginia, and then move back down the peninsula to Williamsburg to await Henry Clinton's directions for the rest of the campaign. By the end of May Cornwallis had captured both Petersburg and Richmond and sent cavalry as far as Charlottesville in the west. Governor Thomas Jefferson fled in face of Tarleton's dragoon raiders. Lafayette and Steuben received reinforcements and began to move against Cornwallis, who slowly withdrew eastward to maintain his Chesapeake Bay communications with New York.

On June 26th a division of Americans under the command of Anthony Wayne surprised the British rear guard near Williamsburg, under the command of Simcoe and Ewald. Wayne decided to attack. Ewald had just fallen asleep when he heard several shots. He jumped up, asking where the shooting was. A few nearby officers assured him the firing was merely a few farmers sniping at Loyalists driving off cattle. Ewald fell back asleep only to be awakened a second time by the firing. This time he rode out, ordered his men to arms, and took an orderly and dragoon with him to make a reconnaissance. Riding into an orchard owned by one Spencer, Ewald discovered a man in a blue uniform a short distance away. Ewald sprang on him. The man turned out to
be a French officer in the Armand Legion. Ewald sent him to
the rear and ordered the Jägers forward into the orchard—
where he then discovered a long line of the enemy two
hundred paces away, behind a fence. "God be praised that I
did not lose my head!" Ewald ordered Lieutenant Bickell to
fall upon the enemy's left flank and rear with all the Jägers.
"At that instant I jumped off my horse and placed myself in
front of the center of the grenadiers and light infantry
company. I asked them not to fire a shot, but to attack
with the bayonet; the enemy would certainly be startled
by our resolution." The Americans had advanced from their
fence, saw the British coming, waited until Ewald was
within forty paces, and fired a volley. Down went two-
thirds of the grenadiers, but the Americans started to fall
back. "Everyone who had not been wounded by the volley
followed me like obedient children follow their father."
The remaining grenadiers and light infantry closed with the
Americans and fought them hand to hand, while the Jägers
shot from the flank. "We captured a French officer, a
captain of riflemen, and twenty-two men, partly from the
so-called Wild Irish Riflemen and partly from the light
infantry. I followed the enemy over two fences into the
wood, where they formed themselves anew and I killed
several men." British rangers joined the melee and Ewald
advanced several hundred feet into the woods. Ewald and
Bickell tried to rally the Jägers, now dispersed in the
woods and still trying to get around the American flank.
The Americans came on again, causing Ewald to fall back to his original position. More British soldiers came up, including mounted dragoons, who fell on one American flank while Ewald attacked the other. Once again, the Americans fell back into the woods. Fearing a trap, Ewald did not follow. Finally Cornwallis and the bulk of the British arrived and Ewald moved into the woods. "We dragged away our dead and wounded, which we had left behind, without being hindered by the enemy. The number amounted to three officers and fifty-four non-commissioned officers and privates...." Ewald felt he was saved from defeat only by his quick spoiling attack. Both sides reported a victory. 55

The Jägers scored another success on June 30th. Ewald sent Lieutenant Bickell with thirty men back to York by a roundabout way. The Germans put their linen shirts over their coats and then wore their leather straps and belts over that, and wore their tri-cornered hats down to look like American riflemen, who dressed in linen hunting shirts. They happened upon thirty to forty Americans and killed and wounded most of them in a short fight, bringing off one officer and nine enlisted men. 56

The combined armies of Washington and Rochambeau threatened New York at this time. Clinton felt he needed help from Virginia and ordered Cornwallis to march to Portsmouth to prepare for embarkation. Lafayette used this movement, which entailed the crossing of the James River, to fall upon the divided British forces. Cornwallis,
expecting an attack, shrewdly sent only Simcoe and the army’s baggage across the James and waited for the Americans with his main force. Anthony Wayne attacked with his division and ran into the bulk of the British forces, including the Regiment von Bose. Wayne, face to face with a superior British detachment, like Ewald the previous week, decided on a spoiling attack to throw the enemy into confusion and enable him to withdraw his men. Nine hundred Americans drove into several thousand British. The British defeated a regiment of Connecticut light infantry, but Wayne gained the time necessary to pull out, leaving behind one hundred and fifty casualties and inflicting seventy-five on Cornwallis.\footnote{57}

Cornwallis’ failure to follow up his victory saved the American troops. He marched back to Portsmouth. Confused by conflicting orders, Cornwallis’ forces marched to little effect. Cornwallis received orders on July 8th to send 3,000 troops to Philadelphia, not New York; on July 12th orders came to dispatch most of his forces to New York; on July 20th came orders not to send any troops at all but to hold them and occupy Yorktown. Late in July Cornwallis selected defensive positions at Yorktown and at Gloucester across the York River. He moved his army into these positions and set the stage for the last major battle of the Revolutionary War.\footnote{58}

The Yorktown Campaign

George Washington wanted more than anything else to
attack and capture New York. He commanded an army of about ten thousand men, plus he had Rochambeau's French army of nearly five thousand at hand. Clinton's army around Manhattan numbered some fourteen thousand, not including the Royal Navy. Clearly a successful assault on the British could not take place. The stalemate was unresolved when Rochambeau received a message from Admiral de Grasse, then at Santo Domingo in the Caribbean, that he embark three thousand men and a siege train of artillery and operate in the Chesapeake area. Washington decided to give up his proposed attack on New York to instead attack Cornwallis. Leaving a force to hold the British in New York, Washington dispatched Rochambeau and five thousand Americans to Virginia on August 21st. Clinton had received some 2,500 Hessian recruits, bringing his army in New York up to 17,000 men. Washington gambled on leaving 2,500 Americans behind in the Hudson Highlands to "hold" Clinton, while the rest went after Cornwallis. 59

Clinton did not know that Washington had left until September 2nd; by that time Washington's forces had entered Philadelphia. By September 26th the Franco-American armies united against Cornwallis and Admiral de Grasse's fleet had fought off a British fleet bringing reinforcements south to Virginia. The stage was set for the siege of Yorktown. 60

The troops present at Yorktown numbered almost nine thousand Americans and eight thousand French versus some six thousand British and Germans. Included in the Yorktown
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WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
defenses were the two regiments from Anspach-Bayreuth under
colonels Voit and Seybothen, numbering nine hundred fifty
men, the Hessian regiments von Bose and Erbprinz, about
seven hundred men, and sixty-eight Jägers under Ewald.
Conditions were not good. The Anspachers began deserting
in August and continued to do so up to the end of the siege.
The Anspachers had lost few men during their years in New
York. Their numbers melted away in Virginia's heat. It
was not a good sign. 61

The allies marched to contact on September 28th and
skirmished with the British defenders. On the morning of
September 30th the allies found that Cornwallis had
abandoned his outer works and retreated into a shell of
defenses around Yorktown and Gloucester. Cornwallis
decided to concentrate his forces to hold out for help from
Clinton. On October 1st Colonel Alexander Scammel, one of
Washington's most trusted officers, fell into British hands
and was killed. Some sources said that he died at the
hands of Tarleton's dragoons. Another source says Scammel
was shot by a Hessian officer. In this version, Scammel
was approached by two Germans and surrendered. One shot
him—either he did not know English or did not care about
the man he killed. 62

The allies took little action during the first week in
October other than to prepare for the coming siege. By
October 6th the allies were ready to dig. Artillery opened
on both sides and the work progresses through sharp
artillery fire. The French and Americans drew closer day by day. The artillery and musketry struck down many soldiers on both sides. The French and Americans each assaulted strongpoints in the British line on the night of October 14th. The French soldiers were from the Gatinois and Royal Deux-Ponts Regiments. The Royal Deux-Pont Regiment, ironically, was a German unit from the Saar. Their objective was a redoubt filled with Hessian soldiers. At eight o'clock the French advanced in columns by platoons. Three or four hundred feet from their objective they were challenged by a German sentinel with "Wer da?"—who goes there. The French made no reply, so the Hessians opened fire. Cutting their way through the defenses and moving up to the parapet under heavy fire, the French at last forced their way into the fort. The Hessians threw down their arms and discovered they were fighting Germans. The attackers lost fifteen killed and seventy-seven wounded; the defenders lost eighteen killed and fifty wounded. This incident, which sealed Cornwallis' fate, demonstrates the real meaning of eighteenth century mercenary warfare. Mercenary soldiers from Germany hired by the French and allied to the Americans were fighting Germans hired by the British, both killing each other in a Virginia swamp. Estimates run as high as one-third of the French army in America either being Germans or Swiss.

The Americans stormed a redoubt on the same night, overcoming British resistance in ten minutes, but with
smaller losses than the French. Cornwallis then faced the inevitable end, but postponed surrender for three days. He tried to embark his army and ferry the troops over to Gloucester, to break out to the north, but a sudden storm ended this frail hope. He asked Washington for terms on October 17th and the Virginia demanded complete surrender. Cornwallis gave in. On October 19th the garrison marched out between parallel lines of French and Americans, to the tune of an old English drinking tune, "The World Turned Upside Down." Sergeant Joseph Plumb Martin noted that "the British did not make so good an appearance as the German forces, but there was certainly some allowances to be made in their favor. The English felt their honor wounded, the Germans did not greatly care whose hands they were in." After the troops stacked their arms and colors, officers of all nations met on friendly terms. Johann Ewald noted that "I found on more than one occasion that the French officers preferred the company of the English, Anspach, and Hessian officers to that of their allies." The siege of Yorktown yielded over 8,000 captives from the British army and navy, 18 German regimental standards, 6 British standards (presumably the British soldiers destroyed the rest), 244 pieces of artillery, thousands of small arms, and considerable military supplies. Twenty Americans were killed and 56 wounded during the siege, the French lost 52 killed and 134 wounded, and the British lost 156 killed and 326 wounded. The Germans lost 142 killed or wounded out of
the British total. 66

Most of the British and German officers received a parole that enabled them to return to Manhattan. The enlisted men marched to western Virginia and Maryland, to areas close to where Burgoyne's Convention Army was still being held. When liberated in 1783, many Germans chose to remain there. Cornwallis' army, the last maneuver force in America, ceased to exist.

Return to Germany

The signing of the preliminary peace agreements by the allied and Great Britain signaled the end of the American Revolution. Britain had to find the resources to remove some thirty thousand men from North America. The Anspach regiments were the first German units to go home, leaving New York on May 7, 1783. Lieutenant von Krafft shows that even line officers were aware of the impending removal when he noted in his diary that a packet arrived in New York on June 1, 1783, bearing orders from Britain concerning the departure. On June 2nd, General Carleton, commander in New York, requested the embarkation lists from all German units. By this time, due to the abandonment of several garrisons, all German units were either in New York or close to the Saint Lawrence River. 67

The former captive troops from Cornwallis' army arrived in New York throughout the spring of 1783. However, Adjutant General Baurmeister counted the men who had
deserted since leaving their internment site at Frederick, Maryland; the Erbprinz Regiment lost 136, the Regiment von Bose 104, and the two Anspach-Bayreuth regiments lost 512 men! One-sixth of Burgoyne's Convention Army failed to return because of desertion, Baurmeister's report continued. 68

The British could not provide enough ships to remove all the Germans at once. Priority first went to removing the troops from Quebec. The troops left Canada in August and sailed to England, where they camped for the winter. Several units left New York in September and all the rest followed by November 23, 1783. Johann Ewald felt that:

Fortunate is he who has nothing further to do in New York! On all corners one saw the flag of thirteen strips flying, cannon salutes were fired, and all the bells rang. The shores were crowded with people who threw hats into the air, screaming and boisterous with joy, and wishes us a pleasant voyage with white handkerchiefs. While on the ships, which lay at anchor with the troops, a deep stillness prevailed as if everyone were mourning the loss of the thirteen beautiful provinces. 70

Some Germans never got on the ships. Some sailed to Europe only to return to America. Lieutenant von Krafft had secretly married an American girl, but sailed to return to his aristocratic family in Saxony to receive their blessings. He got as far as England before making up his mind that he could not face his parents. He caught the first ship back to New York to his wife. He never saw Germany again. 71
Some of the German troops from New York also \textit{wintered} near Chatham and Portsmouth in England, while those that left earlier sailed directly to Germany. The final German troops reached Bremel in April 1784, where they disembarked and retraced the routes taken in 1776 back to their garrison towns. The regular regiments returned to the normal garrison routine that they had left eight years since, and the garrison regiments were deactivated. Let Ewald have the last word:

On the 18th of April all the troops left the vessels, marched off, and arrived at Cassel at midday. After the regiments had been inspected by their sovereign, they marched to their permanent quarters. The Jäger Corps was reduced at once, despite its faithful and well-performed service. His Serene Highness the Landgrave and his entire suite did not bestow a single special, gracious glance on any officer. The subsidies had expired. We had willingly suffered eight years in America for the self-same money. All services performed were forgotten and we poor 'Americans', who had flattered ourselves with the best reception, were deceived in our expectation in the most undeserved way. Then envy stretched out its claws towards us.---- We became agitated, muttered in our beards, cursed our fate, and bent our proud backs under everything, because it could not be otherwise.

Thus ended the American War, and thus was the soldier treated by his sovereign in Hesse.

\textit{Amen!}

\begin{flushright}
\textit{Amen!}
\end{flushright}

\begin{center}
\textit{Chapter Notes:}
\end{center}

\begin{itemize}
\item Edward J. Lowell, \textit{The Hessians and the Other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War}. (New York, 1884), p. 239; Piers Mackesy, \textit{The War for}
\end{itemize}


3Lowell, p. 240.


5Max von Eelking, The German Allied Troops in the North American War of Independence, (Albany, 1893), p. 162; Lowell, p. 241; "Journal of Johann Reuber," Bancroft Collection, New York Public Library. No historian has been able to say why the trophies would be in South Carolina or even if they were there. Landesbibliothek Masses, Ms. Hass. Fol. number 247, a full account, does not mention the incident.


9Lowell, pp. 243-244.

10Ward, II, 696-698.

11Ewald in Charleston, p. 51. Not the same text as his separately published diary.


13Johann Ewald, Diary of the American War, (Yale, 1979), p. 199.

14Hinrichs, p. 205.

15Ibid., p. 213.

16Ewald, Diary, p. 209.

17Ibid., pp. 217-221; quote is on page 219.

18Ewald in Charleston, pp. 31-37.

19Ewald, Diary, p. 224.

20Ward, II, 700-703.

21Ewald, Charleston, p. 69.
22 Hinrichs, p. 261-265.
23 Ibid., pp. 269-271.
24 Ewald, Charleston, p. 75.
25 Ibid., p. 87.
26 Ibid., p. 77.
27 Hinrichs, p. 279.
28 Ewald, Diary, p. 225.
29 Lowell, p. 249.
30 Ibid., p. 230 and quote on p. 236.
31 Ward, II, 703.
32 Ewald, Diary, p. 236.
33 Lowell, p. 266; Landesbibliothek Kassel, Ms. Hass, 40, number 186.
34 Ward, II, 787-788; Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Rep. 15A, Kap. XXXIII, number 849.
35 Ward, II, 788-793; Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Militaria, OWS, number 1247.
36 Ward, II, 793-794.
37 Ibid., pp. 866-867.
38 Ibid., p. 867.
39 Ewald, Diary, pp. 259-260; quote is p. 260.
40 Ewald, Diary, p. 269.
41 Ibid., pp. 270-272.
43 Ewald, Diary, p. 316.
44 Simcoe, p. 232.
45 Ewald, Diary, p. 279.
Ibid., p. 280.

Simcoe, p. 174.

Ewald, Diary, pp. 289-291.

Ibid., p. 296.

Ibid., pp. 296-298.

Simcoe, pp. 166-199.

Ward, II, 872.

Ibid., pp. 872-873.

Ewald, Diary, pp. 299-302.

Lowell, p. 274; Ward, II, 875; Ewald, Diary, pp. 308-312.

Ewald, Diary, p. 314.

Ward, II, pp. 876-877; Landesbibliothek Kassel, Ms. Hass. 40, number 186.

Ward, II, 878.

Ibid., pp. 879-882.

Ibid. pp. 882-885.


Benson J. Lossing, The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution, I, (New York, 1855), 430. Because the men who shot Scammel were mounted, they were probably British, not German.


Ewald, Diary, p. 342.

67 Krafft, p. 183; Baurmeister, p. 568.

68 Baurmeister, pp. 564-565.

69 Baroness Riedesel, p. 132.

70 Ewald, pp. 359-360.


72 Ewald, p. 361.
THE GERMAN SOLDIERS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

VOLUME II, CHAPTERS 8-12

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-302-
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................. iv

LIST OF MAPS ................................................................. ix

ABSTRACT ................................................................. x

CHAPTER

VOLUME I

I. TRENTON ................................................................. 1

II. GREAT BRITAIN AND HER MERCENARIES ........................................ 25

III. THE GERMAN STATES AND THE TREATIES ........................................ 54

IV. THE GERMAN TROOPS ................................................................. 91

V. THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGNS ......................................................... 143

VI. BURGOYNE'S CAMPAIGN ............................................................ 204

VII. THE SOUTHERN CAMPAIGNS ......................................................... 258

VOLUME II

VIII. THE GERMANS WITHIN THE BRITISH MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT ................. 304

IX. THE GERMAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT ............................................. 367

X. IMAGES OF AMERICA AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION .................. 415

XI. GERMAN STIGMA: PLUNDER AND CRUELTY ..................................... 445

XII. GERMAN LEGACY: PRISONERS OF WAR AND DESERTERS ............... 474

AFTERWORD ................................................................. 530

APPENDIX ONE: GERMAN UNITS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION ........... 537

APPENDIX TWO: GERMAN CASUALTIES ................................................ 561

BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................................. 572
CHAPTER EIGHT

The Germans Within the British Military Establishment

Honor is like an island,
Steep and without shore:
They who once leave,
Can never return.

John Ewald 1781

The 29,867 German troops who served in America formed a sizeable portion of British strength, making up major segments of maneuver forces and garrisons. Both British and German officers tried to create an efficient military establishment; they generally succeeded in achieving an effective fighting force with the men and material at hand, although not without friction and hostility. British leaders viewed their allies in different lights according to the military situation. After the defeat at Trenton, William Howe complained that "the Enemy moves with so much more celerity than we possibly can with our foreign troops who are attached too much to their baggage." At the beginning of the campaign to capture Philadelphia in July 1777, after all the troops and equipment had been loaded on board the ships, Howe hosted a dinner party at a Manhattan tavern for fifty officers of the army. None were Germans.

Howe was behind the recall of General Heister, the first Hessian corps commander, who was unfortunate enough to be in command of the Germans during the Trenton disaster. Heister
was sixty years old, had entered the French army at an early age, and had been a Hessian officer since 1739, when he received a lieutenant's commission. He rose steadily through the ranks, becoming a noble in 1775. Heister had by the treaty between Britain and Hesse Cassel the right to command a half of Howe's army, but the antagonism between the two precluded Heister's having a great amount of independent action. The general received word of his recall on June 28; two days later Howe went to Heister and had an "unpleasant visit" with him. The Hessian immediately left for home, where he died, perhaps of mortification, on October 18, 1777.

Wilhelm von Knyphausen took Heister's place and served as Hessian chief to the end of the war. Knyphausen was also sixty, had commanded the second Hessian division in Manhattan, and got along well with British officers. Henry Clinton replaced Howe and was popular with German officers. He spoke German and had served under Prince Ferdinand of Prussia during the Seven Years' War. "General Knyphausen's attention and disposition, and the vigilance of the troops under his orders," prevented the Americans from damaging the army's baggage," said Clinton after Monmouth. When Cornwallis got into trouble in Virginia in the summer of 1781, Sir Henry said that he wanted to said there to take direct command himself, "but General Knyphausen's precarious state of health (who was the only officer to whom I could entrust the command in my absence)...made my presence in
New York indispensable."

Knyphausen invaded New Jersey in June 1780, while Clinton was still in South Carolina, as a result of reports of the breakdown of civilian and military authority in the state. Prompted by William Franklin and other refugees, Knyphausen attacked, only to find swarms of militia opposing his march. He displayed little ingenuity in this only independent action undertaken by a German general, but Clinton did not publically condemn him; he praised the spirit of Knyphausen's actions. Other British officers looked less favorably on Knyphausen's raids, but also felt that he was the victim of bad advice from loyalists, who were bent only on their own self interest.

Henry Clinton generally praised his allies more than Howe or Burgoyne. He refused a command from Howe to take command of the left wing at the Battle of White Plains, feeling that Heister should be kept in command. He did not fault Johann Rall's brigade for Trenton, saying "that was their proper post in the line, and no troops could have behaved better than Colonel Rall's brigade in the attack on Fort Washington." He rather blamed area commander
Cornwallis by implication. Clinton\'s feelings for the usefulness and strength of the Germans had limitations. Although he appointed Knyphausen to command New York in his stead, this was not to be a permanent posting. Cornwallis had a dormant command as commander-in-chief in the case that Clinton died or was removed--to insure that the command of the British army in North America would never pass to a German general.

Clinton could also be realistic about the need for proper leadership, regardless of national origin. In October 1777 he hurriedly returned from his victory at Fort Montgomery in the Highlands to Manhattan, because he had heard that Generals Leslie and Robertson were ill and "nobody but drunken General Schmidt to trust the fortresses to; I therefore determined to return myself."

Other British generals gave praise to their allies when it was due. Guy Carleton, the general who replaced Clinton in 1782, wrote to the landgrave that, "I cannot let slip the occasion to testify to Your Serene Highness, the sense I justly entertain...of the exemplary behavior of the Hessian troops...during the time that I have had the honour to command this Army." Major General Alexander Leslie reported to Clinton in November 1780 from Virginia that "the Hessians are a most respectable corps."
The Germans produced no generals of the first rank, but their leaders could be trusted by English and Germans alike. Veteran Frederick Mackenzie noted in his diary in June 1781 that "among the British and Provincial Generals there is no man of abilities except R; and S, is the only one among the Hessians, who possesses all his faculties, and is clear-headed and cool. He serves with zeal, and is attentive only to establish his character as a Soldier, and an honest man. The Regiment he commanded last, is the best disciplined in the Hessian Corps." The employment of either of these men is "attended with great difficulties," Mackenzie thought, so as not to give offense to other officers. 16 The German officer referred to is probably Major General Johann D. Stirn, who was the commander of the Erbprinz Regiment until 1779.

Other commendations were made in a more public fashion. Alexander Leslie wrote to Colonel Friedrich von Benning on October 8, 1782 that "due regard to the honor and advantage of the King's service renders it a duty encumbent on me to express to you in the strongest manner the very high esteem I entertain for the merit of your conduct in your late command on James Island, which was so strongly marked by the most assiduous attention to the various duties of that alert Station." 17 William Howe wrote to Carl von Donop on
October 13, 1777, "in Consequence of General Cornwallis' Report to me of the Spirited Behavior of Captain Stamford of Your Corps of Grenadiers yesterday in repulsing the Enemy's Party, that made an Attack upon the Battery by the Water's Edge." Howe passed on his thanks to the captain and wished to assure him that "I shall ever be mindful of this Act of Gallantry + good Service." He also sent twenty guineas by his aide Captain Muenchhausen to be distributed among the grenadiers. 18

Commendations could also be passed to King George. Howe complimented the appearance of Knyphausen's Corps in a military review in Philadelphia on May 4, 1778, just before Sir William gave up command of the army. He wished that Knyphausen would "please to accept of his Acknowledgements + Thanks for the magnificent Appearance they exhibited the Day, of which he will not fail to make the most faithful report to His Majesty." 19

Before Howe embarked to return to England on May 24th, he made special acknowledgements to Captains Wreden and Ewald for the services rendered by them and their two Jäger companies. 20 The two captains had just received the medal pour la vertu militaire from Friedrich II for their actions in America, a reward probably approved by the British commander. 21
Ewald found himself quite popular with British officers. He severely injured his knee in May 1777 and could not take part in military operations for several weeks. "All the general officers honored me with their visits, and reproached me somewhat because I had not been ordered to go with the party. However, such reproached are pleasant to hear when one has done more than his duty."\textsuperscript{22}

If the English officers had mixed feelings about the German allies, German officers also evaluated the English-men with whom they worked in similar fashion. Captain Friedrich Muenchhausen liked William Howe, the man he served as aide, but found Howe's British staff as displaying "typical English pride." Muenchhausen stated that he would never again serve with an English general. Henry Clinton brought Captain Wilhelm von Wilmowsky to his staff when he replaced Howe--there was no need for Muenchhausen to stay and so he left for Hesse Cassel in the summer of 1778.\textsuperscript{23}

Germans generally criticized Howe's professional conduct, although several mentioned that they liked his easy ways and his hospitality.\textsuperscript{24} Albert von Pfister reviewed Howe's career while still on board ship in July 1776. He charged Howe with several blunders, including surrendering Boston too early and being indecisive about where to campaign in America. "He had been selected
through an unfortunate note conducted by his party and so was entrusted with an affair, the nature of which demanded the speediest progress of arms and the greatest decision of character."²⁵ Pfister clearly thought Howe lacking in both counts.

Friedrich von Riedesel, in Canada in the spring of 1777, evaluated Howe's actions in the months after Trenton: "He seems to do nothing but play at cards all day long and gambling reigns so universally in this army that most of the officers are ruining themselves. They have pillaged frightfully and made almost a desert out of Jersey."²⁶ Several Germans, including aide Muenchhausen, felt that Howe's move towards Philadelphia was ill-timed. Howe never outlined the course of the campaign for Muenchhausen. The Hessian knew that Howe sent several men to Burgoyne with tactical orders, but did not know what had been relayed. Very much in the dark, he could only hope "that everything will turn out well."²⁷

After Burgoyne's surrender brought the French into the war, German criticism mounted. Lieutenant Johann Hinrichs voiced the frustration of many, by saying that the French would have never have entered the war "if that miserable bragocio Burgoyne had not lost the game on the North River, as France really was beginning to grow tired of her new
alliance."

Criticisms of Howe and Burgoyne, and to a lesser extent, Clinton, extended to other British generals. Friedrich Muenchhausen found General Leslie of the Highlanders a "very able and upright general," but he added, "the like of which the English have only a few." Adjutant General Carl Bauermeister believed in 1776 that Britain could win with only twelve thousand men "generalized in the German way, plus the present army, full strength." Relations between some high level German and British officers could become quite cool, yet lower ranking officers were free to form their own opinions. At the time of Benedict Arnold's treason Johann Ewald wrote of John Andre as being "one of the most skillful and efficient officers in the army." Ewald thought the conspiracy to surrender West Point a trick that was well planned, and if successful, would have made Andre immortal. As for Arnold, "He was truly a great loss for the united provinces." The Hessian lamented that "America must be free and Andre hanged!" The death of the popular young Englishman affected all elements of the British army. "From this time on the army occupied its winter quarters, and it seemed as if all courage was gone with Major Andre's death." The best indication of relations of German officers to
the English is the instances of placing Germans in command of English soldiers. Guy Carleton gave Riedesel command of a mixed group of an English battalion, the Brunswick grenadiers, the Regiment Riedesel, 150 Canadians, and 300 Indians when he ordered the German to pursue the Americans to Montreal in June 1776. Riedesel commanded few Englishmen during Burgoyne's campaign, and became, unfairly, one of Burgoyne's scapegoats for the surrender at Saratoga. After Riedesel arrived in New York in 1780, following his release from prison, Henry Clinton made him a lieutenant general in the English forces and gave him British troops to command, who seemed to like him.  

Wilhelm von Knyphausen also commanded many detachments of British troops during his seven years in America. In December 1777, he commanded the main corps of Howe's army in Philadelphia, which was half comprised of English soldiers. In turn, Cornwallis, commanding the other half of the army, included the Jägers and the German grenadiers as part of his forces. Knyphausen had commanded Englishmen as early as June 1777 while serving in Manhattan. His forces there also included provincials. Knyphausen would command more Englishmen than any other German general in the war, climaxing in the independent command of Manhattan in 1780.
Lower ranking Germans could command English troops at times. Johann Ewald records scores of incidents where he led German, English, and American provincials in combat. Friedrich Muenchhausen became possibly the first German to command a mixed group when he led the Grenadier Battalion Koehler and a train of English artillery into New Jersey in December 1776. The captain had written orders to have the German and English commanding officers follow his instructions.

German field and company grade officers held control over English soldiers for only limited time periods—the duration of a battle or a march, for example. Georg Pausch, the crusty Hesse-Hanau battery commander in Quebec, found more restrictions on his command in 1777. He complained that "the National pride and arrogant conduct of these people allow them to command men, while I am not permitted to command theirs!" He added:

Jealousy was the cause of my not being allowed to drill separately any longer; and I was thus forced to drill at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, according to their orders and by their drums, which my men do not understand at all, and who, if I left them to drill alone, would be totally demoralized. In fact, the Devil of Jealousy has been aroused because the English see that my men drill quicker and more promptly, and because, also, the spectators do use the justice publicly to acknowledge this to be the case. Hence,
instead of the former friendship between us, there is now enmity. 37

Pausch did get some gratification by praise from his superior, General William Phillips, chief of Burgoyne's artillery. Phillips conveyed his thanks for the battery's services to Pausch through an interpreter; Pausch in turn told the rest of his officers, who relayed the message to the enlisted men. 38

Communications between British and Germans on all levels became the most crucial factor in battlefield command and control. A few British officers spoke German and a few Germans, perhaps proportionally more, learned English. The leading generals of both nationalities all had officers from the opposite number on their staffs. However, the common language, used both in orders and on the battlefield, seems to have been French. 39

George Germain used diplomatic French to write to General Heister in 1776 and 1777, and Howe sent letters and orders to Heister in French as well. 40 Howe also wrote in English, a language neither Heister nor anyone on his staff spoke. Friedrich Muenchhausen was pulled out of his infantry company on November 17, 1776 and was told to report to Howe as an aide. "In spite of the fact that my horses were very tired, I immediately left, and rode back to
General Heister to whom I reported the news. General Heister was very pleased with the appointment because he had often received oral and written English orders, which he did not understand.  Howe quickly sat the captain down and had him translate. "Since my General has been in Jersey," he wrote in December 1776, "I have received daily orders in English for all the Hessians with us, which had to be translated into German for them."  

Wilhelm Knyphausen had a bit easier time while serving under Henry Clinton, who had, after all, served as aide to the Duke of Brunswick for a time during the Seven Years' War. Knyphausen had Lieutenant Cramond of the 42nd Regiment on his staff to complement Captain Wilmousky on Clinton's staff.  

The language problem became harder to deal with as one moved into line units. Muenchhausen wrote in June 1777 of the newly-arrived Anspach-Bayreuth regiments:  

I had to go with them to familiarize them with their place of encampment, the position of their picket and sentries, as well as other necessary details. The Anspachers make my life miserable. Their paymaster and their quartermaster can speak only German, and I have had to trade their money, check their bills, etc. However, now I have gotten rid of this money business. I found an adventurer who speaks German, French, and English, and have had him transferred to the Anspachers.  

The Germans faced similar problems and found the same
solutions in the Canadian army. Captain Pausch had to write in French to request to bring his equipment into winter quarters in the fall of 1776. By May of the next year he began receiving orders that had been translated from English into German. Captain Foy had accompanied the troops from Brunswick and served with Riedesel as an advisor until appointed Deputy Adjutant General of the army in Canada in June 1776. Two more English aides served on Riedesel's staff after that.\(^{45}\)

German officers who spoke some English still found their duty assignments affected by their lack of familiarity with the tongue. Clinton appointed Captain Reuting of the Grenadier Battalion Lengerke as town mayor of New York in November 1778. But because Reuting could not speak English well enough, he was replaced by Captain Max O'Reilly, an Irish-born company commander of the same unit.\(^{46}\)

Even Germans fluent in English could find problems in communication. Johann Ewald tried to dissuade General Cornwallis from riding with his staff through a wooded area easily infiltrated by Americans in South Carolina in March 1780. Ewald told them to be careful. Cornwallis replied, "Let us ride on, Ewald almost frightens me." Later that day, Ewald dined at Cornwallis' headquarters when word reached them that the Americans had captured Colonel
Hamilton and Inspector General Schmidt in that same area. "Now the generals liked my timely idea, and I laughed up my sleeve," Ewald wrote with evident pleasure.

If German and British officers found communications difficult, some enlisted men found it intolerable. Sergeant Johann Krafft, who seems to have fought more Britons than Americans during his Hessian service, recorded several incidents in his diary. In January 1780 he was "on the Ferry Watch. Two English sergeants were there who acted disrespectfully towards me, so I gave them both a thrashing, but did not arrest them, because at their request I agreed to cross swords with them the following day. I waited for them in vain, they did not appear." 48

On the 4th of March 1779, Krafft noticed a German being badly beaten by a group of "Green Pennsylvania Provincial Light Horse." The Tories were all drunk. Krafft led a group of Germans with drawn swords, who rescued their comrade, but the provincials outnumbered the Germans and beat them up, throwing Krafft and his men into the mud time and time again. 49

Krafft especially complained of Lord Rawdon's men, who perpetrated the grossest highway robberies—even murder—in the light of day. One night in August 1779 some English soldiers attacked a Hessian grenadier sergeant with their
bayonets, wounded him in many places, robbed him of everything, and left him lying on the spot, where he soon after died. On another occasion, Krafft had "a funny adventure:"

Towards evening I went with the Sergeant Major to a house where there were a company of people. Some Englishmen were locked inside. I listened. One stood outside and asked why I was listening. It was 8 o'clock; so I answered nothing, but drew my sword and flourished it menacingly at the English Sergeant. He yelled terribly, and, though he had a sabre in his hand, took to his heels, while those in the house jumped out of the windows. I set out in pursuit with my naked sword in my hand, but the whole party fled with the greatest possible speed.

In Canada another sword-wielding German found himself in more trouble. One evening in winter quarters, Cannoneer Nantz of Georg Pausch's artillery battery met a man on the road wearing a hood and escorting a girl. The hooded man called Nantz a "Dutch bugger." Nantz answered, "You may be an infamous bugger, but what am I doing to you, you dog, that you call me a bugger?" The hooded man jumped on Nantz with a bayonet, but Nantz drew his sword and cut the man across the cheek. The man ran off, but Nantz soon found himself surrounded by English soldiers who arrested him, put him in irons, and cuffed and kicked him. The soldiers brought Nantz to their camp and put him in confinement. "To his question 'what crime had he committed?' he is told that he had struck this officer." Nantz maintained
that he did not know that the man was an officer. Besides, he added, the Prince has no buggers in his service, only brave soldiers. 52

Pausch went to the English camp to investigate. He found that the officer Nantz had cut spoke only English. The investigation seems to have been conducted in French, although Pausch did not specify who did the translating. The Englishman readily confessed that he had called Nantz a bugger. Why, asked Pausch. "Because the cannoneer had looked at him." "Why did you look?" Nantz answered that "he had served the King of Prussia eight years and could look at him or anyone else on the street." After putting him in the main guard house, the English released Nantz back to his battery for punishment, but an English "spy" found that Pausch had returned Nantz to duty, setting off a great furor between the Germans and the English. The English local commander issued an order forbidding the Germans from carrying swords in the evening. Pausch refused to comply with the order. 53

Sword-play took place between officers as well. Two English officers tried to get a room at a house in Newport where a Hessian had his quarters. The house was full, so the German chased them away with a drawn sword. 54 A young German officer was drinking at a Staten Island tavern when
he was insulted by a British officer. Both men drew their swords and the German mortally wounded the Englishman. "This happens...now that our Germans, teachable as they are, have learned to stammer a little English," one officer wrote. 55

Sergeant Krafft was sitting in a New York tavern one afternoon when a drunken English soldier brought a piece of a dead horse into the room, offering it for sale. The Englishman pressed the carrion on Krafft with such pertinacity that the German finally became disgusted with the sight and overwhelming smell, that he bodily kicked the man through the door. This pugnacious Krafft would have further thrashed the soldier, but the smell was too great. The stench remained so long that the owners had to fumigate the room, leaving the Hessian to meditate on the crimes committed by drink-loving Englishmen who received little pay. 56 Conditions got so bad in New York after 1778 that Krafft often had a couple of soldiers follow him, in case he got into trouble. 57

Some Germans complained that they had no access to New York City, while the English troops lived quite well at various locations in town. Johann Carl Buettner transferred from Staten Island to northern Manhattan where his unit had to live throughout the winter of 1778 in caves
dug for their protection, without being allowed to enter
the city. Yet, Germans did make up part of the city's
garrison and Buettner's experience could be matched by
hundreds of Englishmen who wintered on Long Island and
northern Manhattan. National pride seems to have added to
disputes that arose in the day to day operations that are
typical of any army.

Germans and English forced to live in close proximity
could develop enmity. Georg Pausch noted that when his
artillery boarded the floating battery Radeu along with
English artillerymen on Lake Champlain in the summer of
1776, that "all the Englishmen, on account of this over-
crowding were unpleasant companions." This camp
friction could spill over onto the battlefield. When
grenadier Stephan Popp saw Henry Clinton's late arrival
after the Battle of Newport in August 1778, he wrote in his
diary that "he came too late. Just as the English have
done every time, so they did here too."

Germans carefully watched the examples set by both
nationalities general officers, measuring the care that
these men displayed for their troops. German officers
always embarked with their men on board the transports
before beginning amphibious operations; British generals
remained ashore until the last possible moment. Small
points such as this have always affected an army's morale, and the British officers' effectiveness dropped because of their unwillingness to share the hardships they expected the enlisted men to bear.

Sometimes Germans became pawns in a game they did not understand. Guy Carleton refused to let the Anhalt-Zerbst regiment land in Quebec in 1778 because he had received no notice of their coming. This stubbornness seems to have been a result of a feud between Germain and Carleton, but the sufferers were the Germans, who remained on shipboard for three months while a quartermaster returned to England for the necessary papers! 62

In spite of the friction between the two allies, the overall relations between Germans and English, over a period of seven very long years, seems to have been good. Friction between enlisted men and junior officers of different nationalities has always been present, even among the best of allies. The German elite units, the grenadiers and Jägers, enjoyed a very favorable reputation with the British rank and file. Johann Ewald, one of the most trusted of all German officers, saw only the smooth functioning of Germans and English and gave reasons why some Americans during the war tried to exploit alleged friction:

It is astonishing what stuff deserters often
tell in order to please their new friends and obtain a good reception. After I had been taken prisoner at Yorktown, and had made the acquaintance of several French officers, a French general, then chief of the Deux Ponts Regiment, asked me quite in confidence whether the Hessians were not very discontented with the English service, as it was very hard that these troops should often be wantonly sacrificed, that they should always have the worst quarters assigned to them; that they should receive the worst provisions; that they should be improperly paid and allowed to suffer want of all sorts. I could not help laughing at his story, and assured him that not a single word of all this was true, but quite the contrary; whereupon the general was very much astonished, for every deserter has assured him that it was so.63

The truth of the relations between English and Germans lies between Ewald's assurance that everything ran smoothly, with no snags, and Krafft's glum portraits of his English allies as murderers and thieves. Both men experienced the extremes of Anglo-German relations. Perhaps the best measure of the place of the mercenaries within the British establishment lies in reputations made in combat.

The Germans fielded units of differing capabilities. The grenadiers and the Jägers made up the German elite, both being highly trained and rigorously disciplined commands, who saw service from the minute they landed in America until Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown. Henry Clinton acted on their reputation when he heard of the mutiny of the Pennsylvania Line in 1781 and immediately
orders to "the British elite, and to the officers commanding the Hessian Grenadiers and Jägers to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's notice." Sir Henry also underscored the grenadiers' reputation for hard service when he used them in support at the Battle of Monmouth. He had criticized Howe's tactics used in 1776-1777 that had developed during the French and Indian War--of marching single file and operating in battle in "the open, flimsy order of two deep in line." Clinton thought this battle line too thin, but he retained it when he became commander, particularly because the Americans had no cavalry capable of riding down the thin line of battle. But he guarded against potential dangers by providing for solid support—in this case the grenadiers supported the advanced elements, who in turn supported the light troops who made the assaults.

The German regular infantry units varied in effectiveness during their seven year stint in America, depending upon leadership, training, personnel, morale, and equipment. A unit would rise or fall through the interplay of all these factors. In December 1780, Lord Cornwallis complained to Clinton about the personnel comprising his forces in North Carolina, particularly that "the species of troops which comprised it 'are, exclusive of the Guards and the Regiment of Bose, exceedingly bad.'" The Bose Regiment
was the only German battalion with Cornwallis' forces and had spent the greater part of the war in the New York garrison before being sent south.

The Rall Regiment, which had fought so hard at Long Island, White Plains, and Fort Washington, only to fall victim at Trenton, was supposedly made up of poor material, due to the unit's being hurriedly filled out in 1776. Yet, after spending two years in prison, the unit fought well in the southern campaigns in 1779 and 1780. 67

British criticism became particularly sharp after German defeats. One British officer in the spring of 1777 complained that the Hessians were the worst troops he ever saw, particularly the garrison regiments of militia. As for the regular regiments, the greatest part of them were recruits and so were little better. He added that their prince had cheated them all out of their inflated British pay, and being dissatisfied with this, the soldiers turned their entire thoughts upon plunder. Indeed, their devotion to plunder was responsible for the disaster at Trenton. The officer pictured the Germans as exceedingly slow (a common complaint) and being strictly enjoined by the Landgrave not to alter their mode of discipline, which was not suited for operations in America. "They are so very dirty that they have always one half of their People
in the Hospitals, and I am well assured they have Burried
almost a third of the Number they brought out, and they
now put to Earth six or seven a day."  

Major John Bowater disliked putting his opinions on
paper, but when he wrote to his patron Lord Denbigh after
Saratoga he blamed the Germans' "want of Spirits" as being
the principal cause of all British misfortune and felt that
"we should have been much stronger without them." Denbigh replied that "as to public Matters you Represent
the foreign troops in a very different light from what we
look upon them here, for the Attack which the Hessians made
upon Red Bank...tells very much in their favor."  

Importantly, both Bowater and Denbigh got their impressions
from information passed on second hand.

German officers also critically appraised the units
from the various German states. When the Anspach-Bayreuth
troops arrived in June 1777, Friedrich Muenchhausen found
that "they seem to be decent fellows. I hope they behave
better against the rebels than the imperial army during the
last war against the Prussian King." The Anspach infantry
regiments did not march with the army from Philadelphia to
Manhattan in 1778, but rather went by water to get them to
the garrison quicker, giving rise to Hessian rumors that
the units had shown an inability to march and American
rumors that they could not be trusted. There seems to have been no truth to either sets of rumors and the Anspachers' fighting abilities would be amply displayed at Newport within two months.

Germans could be critical of British units. Carl Baurmeister described the redcoats on Staten Island in 1776 as understrength and having poorly maintained equipment. Moreover, the British could not face American riflemen. Muenchhausen looked at the same forces and, although feeling that he was too young to be a proper judge, noted that Howe's Anglo-German army was a select corps of well-trained and well-led troops, a feeling, he said, which was underscored by contacts with older British and German officers.

Sir Henry Clinton stated the chief concern of operating with a large proportion of foreigners when he wrote to Germain in 1778 after ordering a large detachment of British troops to the West Indies and Florida. Those British troops who remained in Manhattan were good troops, "but their number will be too small to animate the over-proportion of foreigners, etc., who though they be faithful, etc., cannot be supposed to be equally zealous." Clinton put his military finger on the chief attribute of hired troops—they were faithful, but were not
emotionally drawn to the cause for which they fought. German officers could believe that they were fighting for the proper order of the world—of subordination to one's sovereign—but this was really not their war, nor their enlisted man's war. Germans fought well all through the war, sometimes better than British troops (particularly at Saratoga), but after the sacrifices of 1776–1777 it became more difficult to keep up morale and effectiveness. As the richness of America lured deserters away, as thousands of men sickened and died, and as the British war machine got deeper and deeper into trouble, German soldiers on the whole became less likely to wager their lives in a last ditch combat to hold the British Empire together.

**Tactics and Training of German Units**

The Jägers and the grenadiers formed the elite units, but grenadiers were common in the British army; German grenadiers were just blue-coated extensions of British heavy infantry. The Jägers were unique, not matched by any British light infantry or detached personnel. Originally formed from forest masters, game keepers, and huntsmen, the Jägers were trained to respond to verbal orders, hand signals, whistling, and hunting horns while maneuvering deep in the woods. Dressed in traditional green, the Jägers performed the duties of scouting, screening, picketing, and
sniping, The British concluded additions to the German treaties especially requesting additional Jägers. The original two companies from Hesse Cassel grew to five by 1778, including a mounted company. This unit became the Jäger Corps and included two companies of Anspach Jägers, who joined in 1777. A Brunswick Jäger company operated in Burgoyne's army as part of the Barner light infantry battalion, and a Hesse Hanau battalion operated in Canada after the summer of 1777. Relations between Jägers and the British rank and file seem to have been particularly strong. "Laughing eyes now beam upon us, and an incessant cheer is our reward, whenever a Briton sees the greencoats...How gratifying are the expressions of gratitude when we feel that we have deserved them." Johann Hinrichs proudly puffed. He wrote home that, "The English now praise us and everyone shouts 'hurrah' when they see a Jäger." 75

The Jägers lost a lot of men due to constant action. William Howe requested that three hundred men be drafted out of Hessian line units to fill up the depleted ranks. These men certainly would not have the same skills as the original members. 76

New recruits proven even more troublesome. Captains Wreden and Ewald, the original company commanders, began to grumble together when Lieutenant Colonel von Wurmb arrived
in June 1777 to take command of the Jager Corps. He brought with him Major Prueschenck's company of foot Jägers and a company of mounted Jägers, without horses. The mounted men consisted of soldiers drafted from the Hessian Hussar and cavalry regiments, filled out with deserters from all the armies of Europe (or seemingly so). Prueschenck's company consisted of deserters and insolent rabble, "whereat blood turned to water and all spirits sank in all of us of the old staff, who until now had commanded the most upright and obedient of men," Ewald lamented. 77

Even Colonel Donop, who was delighted with the reinforcements of the Jäger Corps, because it was his idea, was startled over this riffraff. He showed his displeasure to the good Prueschenck, who had commanded these people and could bring about good order, but who had not the spirit for it. The discontent of our old men was so great that they refused to serve with this rabble. In the meantime, however, their resentment gradually diminished, since these people had brought along over sixty amazons whose acquaintance was soon sought. 78

Ewald had to discipline the new men and make them ready for combat. He mixed up the members of the companies, putting fifty new men alongside fifty veterans. They marched out with noise and laughter, but luckily did not meet the Americans. "Afterwards I had this dregs of humanity severely beaten with stout canes." He also sent
reliable corporals into the new companies to restore order. The mixture of severe punishment and vetein leadership worked. Within a few days the Jägers ran into a small skirmish and the new men—bad as they were—did fight well. 79

The mounted Jäger company faced additional problems until they could obtain mounts. The men wore hussar boots and heavy swords and had to maneuver with the restrictive equipment as soon as they landed in New Jersey. Seven died within two weeks due to the heat. Ewald reported that "the commander in chief was greatly annoyed at Colonel Donop because he had used these men before they were mounted."

On July 1, 1777, Howe ordered that officers could sell their horses to the mounted Jägers and the artillery for ten guineas apiece and restricted the use of horses in other units to colonels and general officers. The Jägers were all mounted in two days. 80

The British needed more troops than the Jägers for Jäger-like duties, so they turned to provincial soldiers by 1778. Many armed loyalists began to operate in advance of the British forces, so many that the Jägers complained of inactivity in February 1778. Howe assured them he was only resting them for the upcoming campaign. 81

The British also turned to drafting Germans from line units into a company of chasseurs, or light infantry. In
1778 the chasseur company in New York was formed out of the men from eleven German infantry units and consisted of four officers, twelve sergeants, three drummers, and one hundred privates. These men were to be used in scouting and had three pound guns given them by the English. The chasseurs were formed and reformed as conditions dictated. 82

The quality of recruits for all German units varied as recruiting and drafting became harder and harder. As early as 1776 Germans began to search for deserters from their services among the various recruits sent to America from other states. Lieutenant Colonel Georg Heinrich Albrecht von Scheither was a Hanoarian who received a commission to recruit a corps for the English service—the service of Scheither's sovereign, George III. Scheither recruited only 150 men and sailed to America, where they were reviewed by Hessian Adjutant General Carl Baurmeister.

These low-spirited people have received nothing besides their German thaler pocket money, their two shillings at Portsmouth, and their daily rations, and, moreover, they have no prospect of getting anything. Some have been engaged as officers, but will never be able to serve in that capacity here, not even as non-commissioned officers. At our request, General Howe turned over to us all the Hessian deserters discovered among them.

The rest of Scheither's men quickly found themselves in red uniforms in English regiments. Baurmeister also got
permission to return to the units any deserter found among rebel prisoners. 83

Effective discipline forged German units that could fight effectively on the battlefield. German officers agreed that conditions of the war in America--of fighting in woods against irregular or ununiformed men--had to change traditional European tactics. The Jägers led this tactical change. Small unit warfare gave little opportunity for traditional concepts of the glory of war. Johann Ewald described his actions as a commander of a covering force in November 1776: "My officers were young and inexperienced in this kind of warfare. Bag and baggage, the detachment consisted of ninety-three men. Honor was not to be gained with them, for what I did no one would see. But should I suffer a reverse, I would lose my honor and the good opinion they had of me. Hence there was no other cure but 'Physician, heal thyself!'." 84

Audacious small unit tactics could bring great results. Lieutenant Zoll took fifty volunteers from the Regiment von Lossberg into the woods at the Battle of Long Island and routed an American detachment at the point of the bayonet, killing some and bringing off sixty-four prisoners. 85

One German officer in Canada quickly found that there was a "special way of waging war," that "utterly departs
from out system." Infantry could only operate two-deep in line because of the woods. The dragoons had to fight on foot. The regimental flags got entangled in branches and brush; the British did not carry standards because of this. Another German in Canada felt that the rules of war should be changed according to the condition of the country, that the ways of the inhabitants should be accepted and that officers should introduce the troops to customs best suited for the climate. The light troops would be the mainstay of fighting in America because one could not use the bayonet and artillery to greatest effect in the woods. The German found the woods immense and marshy. Each soldier had to seek cover behind a tree, but the Americans were accustomed to the woods as hunters and had the necessary light equipment. The rebels could select their terrain, while the British armies must attack. The Americans, he found, were not willing to fight in the open, and it was impossible to follow them through the forest. In fact, following retreating Americans brought the greatest danger, for a handful of them could ambush the well-equipped Europeans. Scouting parties of Americans could live off the land and were led by good officers. The British used Indians for the same purpose, but the Indians generally were cowards. The Brunswickers began to practice maneuvering in
open order in the woods as early as August 1776, after just
two months in Canada; the Germans surprised Guy Carleton
with their new tactics. This training made the Bruns-
wickers among the most effective troops during Burgoyne's
campaign.

Ewald, expert in the service of light troops, saw the
many dangers of these "American" tactics. The dangers on
patrol deeply affected Ewald, who felt that "one never gets
true information from the enemy. Each step that one takes
is soon betrayed. And then one is likely to be surrounded
by armed country people who are all excellent shots, without
considering the regular troops of the enemy." New tactics
or not, Ewald believed the chief fault of the British army
in America to be their consistent disregard they showed for
American abilities. "On every occasion during this war, one
can observe the thoughtlessness, negligence and contempt of
the English toward their foe," he wrote in December 1779.
Ewald also complained of a factor noticed by other Germans--
that British headquarters simply could not keep operational
plans secret. He knew of operations long before they were
officially detailed, and if he knew, Americans knew as well.

Some German units adopted English training. Georg
Pausch sourly gave his battery English gun drill, spending
almost a full hour daily running at top speed, something that
they had never done before! Pausch went on at some length:

Everyday, to my disgust, I have to practice the lately introduced quick-step, which we do not have, nor do they have in Prussia—may not in the world, except in the chase, with fast horses and good dogs! This is a splendid exercise for the man in winter; but in summer, when the weather is warm, it is detrimental to the health of the men. It has no good result except to make spectators laugh—for by this maneuver no closed ranks could be kept in an attack upon the enemy. In case, therefore, of a retreat we would not only fare badly, but would be exposed to the well deserved censures of the European and American press.

Pausch, in turn, tried to influence British practices, particularly in firing exercises. He noticed that the British cannoneers spunged out the cannon barrels after each shot, a method that built up a tough gum in the barrel that needed to be cleaned out. The Germans had abandoned that style twenty years previously and could therefore fire twice as fast with their method of limited spunging. Pausch urged English battery commanders to adopt the German method. The English did adopt the German style of cannon wipers and Pausch felt that these devices were so popular that they would be used by all the artillery in Canada.

The British were also impressed with the German practice of having an artillery detachment of two guns assigned to each infantry regiment. Guy Carleton ordered
all British infantry units to organize in like manner when he became commander in chief in 1782. Germans had demonstrated the effectiveness of close artillery support on Long Island, White Plains, Saratoga, Brandywine, and the siege of Charleston, by bringing their light artillery right up to the infantry line of battle.

Germans and British soldiers continued normal training activities when not on campaign. German units had periods of weapons practice with live ammunition. Anspacher Stephan Popp noted that the Waldeck Regiment took target practice in July 1777. On September 30, 1776, Generals Carleton, Burgoyne, and Phillips reviewed the Germans in Canada. Riedesel had his regiment attack through the woods in open order and then put on a display of sharpshooting. Each infantryman fired four aimed shots after taking cover behind a rock, tree, or shrub. The English generals expressed their satisfaction. Aimed firing might be nothing new for rifle-bearing Jägers, but to have an infantry regiment armed with muskets fire aimed shots was unheard of in both the British and German armies. Muskets had no rear sights to properly align the barrel; muskets were to be fired from the hip or shoulder with the troops massed in line, with volleys being coordinated by unit commanders, not by soldiers firing individual shots. Besides, a musket
usually was not reliable past a hundred feet. Riedesel made no comment about the effectiveness of his soldiers' new tactics. 97

Carl Baurmeister noted that when the Germans in Manhattan got forty new cartridges each in June 1782, they retained twenty of the old ones for practice. 98 If this happened on a regular basis the men could get in much needed practice. If the twenty cartridges could be used only sparingly, the firing would have far less effect. Germans in New York City got regular practice in 1778 as indicated by orders in the orderly book of Oliver DeLancey:

May 7, 1778: The Four Hessian Regiments will fire tomorrow morning between the hours of 8 + 10 o'clock upon the Common beyond the Jewes burying Ground. 99

May 22, 1778: The Four Hessian Regiments in Town will fire tomorrow morning between the hours of 7 + 9 o'clock. 100

May 24, 1778: The Regiment of Mirbach + Wissenbach Quartered on the Communication to McGowens Pass will fire tomorrow morning between the hours of 7 + 9 o'clock. 101

May 29, 1778: The Regiment of Prince Hereditair, Trumbach, + Stein will fire tomorrow between the hours of Seven + Nine o'clock beyond the Jews burying Ground—The Regiment of Mirbach will fire at the same time on the Greenwich Road. 102

The Germans probably needed all the practice they could get.

A German traveler reported:
A group of Hessians is said to have made another mistake of this kind in foggy weather! On encountering a row of buckwheat sheaves in a field, they spent half an hour firing at the enemy like the brave fellows they were, without causing them to move an inch. This incident would hardly be worth telling, were it not for the fact that the farmers of the region chose to interpret the field as an omen, and seized the opportunity to label the German troops as "blind Hessians".

Thus the Germans adapted to fighting in North America by operating in a more open manner, particularly in woods, and by aiming their shots. The Jägers improved British capabilities in the field and Germans and English learned from one another and from their American enemies. However, once back in Europe, both Germans and Britons forgot the lessons they had learned in America, and fought the Napoleonic Wars with traditional European tactics.

Food and Supplies

The British provided food, equipment, and uniforms for the mercenary soldiers and so brought the German units into regular supply channels. These channels did not function very well due to the nature of the war in America—all supplies, including rations, originated in Britain and had to be shipped to America. There were delays all along the line, including home contractors who delivered late, delays in assembling convoys, delays due to weather conditions, and
delays as a result of inadequate numbers of transports. This last factor was strained by retaining transports in America as store ships. There were examples of bad provisions, immense wastage, theft, and spoilage. The British in America existed as if at the end of a funnel, with all equipment and clothing, and most rations being carried westward from Europe. Military operations therefore depended upon sufficient naval forces to supply a war machine; many times the lines of supply just were not sufficient. 104

The British augmented their rations with food bought or stolen from Americans, because many times the troops were on the verge of starvation. Most of the raids around Manhattan had the objective of finding vegetables and beef as well as fighting the enemy. There were two civilian commissary generals who oversaw rations in America, and one in Canada, but the administration never fed the troops with abundance. It was a lean war on both sides. 105 British and German soldiers planted gardens next to their camps from seeds sent out from Britain—especially growing cabbage to be made into sauerkraut. Messes of five to six men combined their money to purchase vegetables to augment their salt beef and pork. The army consumed three hundred tons of food per week in North America; most of this food came across the Atlantic. 106
Delays in the arrival of a fleet could bring real suffering. Johann Ewald noted when the provisions fleet from Ireland landed on January 24, 1779 that the Manhattan garrison had not eaten bread for eight days, but subsisted only on grits. Washington cordoned off the country and tried to keep all supplies from the British, yet no one complained as long as he had money, because anything could be had for a sum.107 At the same time, Baurmeister complained of poor fodder for the horses and the effects of terrible snow and cold. Thousands of ducks and geese froze to death and were picked up by soldiers and civilians alike. The conditions, the adjutant general concluded, caused some desertion.108

Grenadier Stephan Popp camped in Newport during the harsh winter of 1778-1779. "Our quarters were the worst of all, but the provisions were a good deal worse." For a seven day period each man had only two and a half pounds of bread made from cornmeal and rice that was too brittle to eat. The soldiers finally made bread out of "miserable Oatmeal." By Christmas day the cold had killed nine English soldiers and the Newport garrison was reduced to eating frozen potatoes. In January the soldiers were issued oatmeal discarded two to three years previously, an incident that disgusted the troops. Yet the soldiers had
only this, plus rotten codfish to eat until a provisions fleet arrived in February. An epidemic of scurvey broke out in March; half the regiment developed symptoms and many died from the disease. 109

Johann Krafft brought some of his enlisted men to get rations from British supply ships off Sandy Hook in July 1778. They rowed for an hour and a half before reaching a ship, but it took eight more hours to find rations. "Never had I been hungrier and consequently I ate my salt pork, with the mouldy biscuit, raw and uncooked. After many entreaties I managed to get some very thin coffee without milk or sugar for a little money." 110 When the unit reached Manhattan it received normal rations—rum, fresh bread, salt meat, peas, rice, butter, spruce beer, and vinegar. 111

Krafft's platoon received scantier fare in the winter months. Three days after Christmas 1778, the men received only bread, made from nothing but uncooked oat grits, heavy as lead to eat and heavier to digest. The men ate it—what else could they do—but ate it with curses. "If we were to have bread of that kind much longer disease and desertion would inevitably break up the army," Krafft concluded. 112

Rations on campaign differed in quantity and quality from those available in camp. Just before the Battle of
Princeton Ewald had only biscuits and brandy for his company. In September 1777 outside Philadelphia he reported that salt and good bread were quite rare. The army's bread was just hard biscuits filled with worms; one pound often had to last a man three days. The soldiers began buying food from the country people, but the Americans kept the prices high. When the Jägers received no rations for three days in 1778, the men almost mutinied. The Germans faced similar health and morale threats in Canada. Riedesel returned from the front in the summer of 1776 to find the Quebec garrison at the point of mutiny, with the signs of scurvy breaking out. He quickly obtained fresh beef and vegetables from British supplies. The Germans in Canada found some exotic foods available from the natives, which they obtained by trading regular rations. The new foods included good fish, the meat of young bears, beaver tails, caribou and elk. Rations for the Waldeckers in Florida did not reflect food from the Gulf region, but rather that the supply system had broken down altogether in out of the way Pensacola: "Our mode of life is very strange. In the morning we drink water and eat a piece of dry bread; at midday we have likewise nothing to drink but water; our evening meal consists of a pipe of tobacco and a glass of water!" The Waldeckers died by the score in 1780.
The British augmented their food and drink by purchase or plunder. Carl Baurmeister reported that people from the eastern shore of Maryland brought fowl, fruits, and milk to the British fleet in the Chesapeake in the summer of 1777; the soldiers paid them well, especially after their being on board for nearly seven weeks.\textsuperscript{119} The British generally found Americans ready to trade provisions for hard coin. The soldiers stole when they could not find sufficient sellers or they ran out of money. Any salt provision or flour thought to exceed the needs of a family was to be confiscated in New Jersey in December 1776 as Rebel property and then assigned to the troops.\textsuperscript{120} This type of confiscation became a regular feature of the British war effort.

Lack of proper food affected the soldiers' morale. Hunger could cause a man to desert. When Johann Ewald's company operated in the Virginia swamps in January 1781 he exorted his men, who had received no bread for days, to maintain their good conduct. He promised them that they would have good subsistence after completing their mission.\textsuperscript{121} Empty stomachs made poor soldiers.

Camp garden plots became featured parts of soldiers' existence. When the 54th Regiment on Paulus Hook was relieved by the newly-arrived Anhalt-Zerbst Regiment in
August 1781, the Englishmen began pulling up their camp
gardens—the Germans would not pay for the ground and
expected the gardens to be left standing and so tried to
stop the Englishmen from digging them up. Officers brought
an end to the destruction, but the incident illustrates the
value the troops placed on fresh vegetables. 122

Occasionally the Germans had special drinks issued
them, due to victories or standing up to extreme hardship.
General James Grant issued this directive: "We are all in
great favor at home, his Majesty has ordered spruce beer
to be issued to the troops without any stopping, if we
cannot get spruce beer, we must continue to make small
beer. A brewer here has undertaken to serve the troops at
ten shinnings currency for a quarter cask containing
thirty-four gallons, that will amount nearly to a penny
currency for a quart to each man a day." 123 This was
issued just three days before the Battle of Trenton and
might have affected the outcome.

The poor quality and quantity of rations had two major
effects on the British operations in America. The outbreak
of disease, often leading to death, debilitated large
portions of the officers and enlisted men. Scurvy can be
documented; other diseases are harder to tie directly to
diet, but the effects of weakened constitutions made the
troops prime victims of communicable diseases. The effects upon morale of poor diet are amply documented. The second effect of poor rations can be measured in the plundering of American farms. Plundering was often a necessary feature of survival, but the enmity created undermined attempts at reconciliation and turned many loyalists away from cooperation with the British military.

The supplying of equipment and uniforms falls into the same pattern as the logistics of food supply. The British provided uniforms and equipment once the Germans reached America, but the infrequent resupply often forced the Germans to wear ragged uniforms, a condition some British soldiers complained, caused by the German sovereigns initially equipping their troops sent to America with obsolete equipment and shoddy uniforms.124

Different garrisons received supplies on very irregular schedules. A British officer reported from the backwater garrison at Newport in March 1778, that the Hessians there received their first resupply in January 1778, almost two years to the date of their leaving their German garrisons. The Germans kept their new clothing packed away for three months and did not wear the uniforms until it had been so ordered by General Knyphausen.125 The Englishmen noted the sufferings of the Germans in the cold and damp climate.
of Newport, enduring additional miseries because their tents were all worn out and torn to pieces in the brisk Rhode Island winds. 126

Friedrich Muenchhausen in New York in May 1777 counted the transports that arrived from England filled with new tents and field equipment for English soldiers. The British issued new equipment to their regiments each year, but did not re-equip the mercenaries on the same frequency. 127 The Hessians in New York (as in Newport) seem to have received their first new uniforms in January 1778; many delays and shortages, Carl Baurmeister knew, were due to the successes of American privateers. 128

The elite Jägers received complete new uniforms on January 23, 1777. A month later they were issued twenty heavy coats of the "finest English material," which were given out to the sentries and the sick. 129

Special items were issued if available. In December 1778 in Manhattan, the Waldeck Regiment, and the Hessian Regiments Erbprinz, Trumback, Stein, Wissenbach, and Koehler's Grenadier Battalion all were ordered to apply to the deputy quartermaster general for a pair of mittens for each effective sergeant, drummer, and private in the unit. 130 When special items were not available, the soldiers could fashion equipment out of whatever came to
hand. Georg Pausch created linen overalls for his artillery battery out of a supply of Russian linen; he deducted the cost of the material from his men's pay. Other German and English soldiers made overalls out of old tents. Johann Ewald illustrates another example: "Upon my arrival, I found the greater part of the Jägers had pieces of cowhide around their feet in place of shoes, which they showed me with laughter—here again is proof that the German soldier—and I should like to say that the Hessian—despite his strict discipline, never grumbles when he is alone and makes the best of everything."  

The Jägers went into winter quarters in New Jersey in January 1777, after the defeats at Trenton and Princeton and found that they could not even get straw for bedding in that section that had been plundered in the autumn and had been abandoned by the citizens. "The entire army had been stripped bare of shoes and stockings by the marching during the bad weather...snow had fallen for several days over a half man deep." Shades of Valley Forge! 

Winter quarters, when properly supplied and victualled, could be quite comfortable. Carl Baurmeister reported that in December 1778 in New York the barracks officers had supplied each regiment with sufficient mattresses, straw sacks, sheets, covers, lights, straw, and woolen gloves.
The Germans built their huts so solidly that the soldiers preferred them to being quartered in drafty houses. Even tents could be tolerable—under the right circumstances. Johann Krafft spent one October night on field watch: "My tent was so pitched that my head and feet were just against graves and I consequently right between them. But I slept without fear." German uniforms and equipment changed due to conditions in America. Lieutenant Colonel von Dincklage noted after the Battle of Long Island that, "Today we cut arquillettes (decorative cord) from our uniforms and the stripes from our hats. This was ordered so that we could not be distinguished from the common soldiers." This change marks the difference between warfare in Europe and America, in that officers became particular targets of far-sighted riflemen. Although the British continued to lampoon the Germans' accumulation of baggage, the Germans did modify their uniforms as they did their tactics.

Officers still had to maintain their uniforms and have their hats pressed, while encouraging enlisted men to do the same. Many of the uncertainties of British resupply, Georg Pausch found that things cost five times higher in Canada than in Hanau. Ewald found that Philadelphians knew of shortages in the British army and so hiked prices.
In spite of this, he had a green Jäger coat made in town.  

Officers had to pay for their entire uniform and equipment. These items became private property. Early in 1780 the effects of the officers killed at Bennington and Saratoge, which had been kept in Canada under seal, were actioned off and the proceeds sent to heirs by the regimental paymasters. Enlisted men left no such legacies.

Off Duty Moments

Officers and enlisted men had many opportunities for rest and recreation within the military hierarchy, particularly when not in the field; they spent their free time in a number of diverse ways. The officers made up part of the better sorts of society at home. While an officer might not have been particularly well educated, several left records of intellectual curiosity. America fascinated these men. Lieutenant Du Roi observed the Canadian peasants and contrasted their simple way of life with the "highly cultivated and polished inhabitants of the world," and felt small in the face of their contentment. No sooner had he arrived in Quebec than he observed an eclipse of the moon, calculated the time difference between Quebec and Brunswick, noted the differences in fashions and
religious paractices, and studied the Indians. Another
German officer in Canada studied the climate and the
geography of the country in relation to Germany.

Johann Hinrichs, the Jager officer to study America
as well as put down the rebellion, wrote treaties on life
in America, on education, on the resources for war, and a
history of the Revolution. Not content with those, "During
my leisure hours, I have composed quite a number of pieces--
English airs, Marches and Recitatives. This is my
favorite recreation and I succeed fairly well therein. I
now have a handsome piano." Hinrichs found no employment to keep him in America,
unless he would become a rebel, a possibility he scoffed
at. He even became a curator:

By the way, I have lately met with a
great loss, by my baggage being lost last
winter. (1) A lot of birds, artistically
and scientifically preserved, which I had
done in Jersey at great expense. (2) An
Indian bow, arrows, a net for catching
birds, scalp dagger, knife, etc., and
other curiosities have been stolen from
me. That I was exceedingly displeased with
this mishap, you may easily imagine, because
I intended enriching the Cabinet of our
celebrated Dr. Dolten with my acquisitions.
Still a few curiosities remain to me.

Most officers and men would not have loaded their
baggage with stuffed birds or bows and arrows. They turned
instead to more carnal pleasures. An officer in Canada
reported a series of receptions, banquets, and fetes throughout the winter of 1776-1777. Most of the officers there spent their nights in clubs and balls when not called upon for the special entertainments.

Officers and enlisted men turned to drink to help pass the years in America. Drinking sessions could lead to violence. The pugnacious Sergeant Krafft crossed swords with a fellow drunken sergeant; later that sergeant used Krafft as a second in a similar duel—all within ten days.

Whores frequented most areas of New York City. During the occupation of New York more than three thousand women, who were taken from Britain or the West Indies to serve as prostitutes for the British army, were confined in Despensard Meadows. In the "holy ground" located near St. Paul's Church, or in Canvas Town, in the area between Great Dock and Water Streets, drunks, runaway slaves, derelicts, and countless prostitutes lived in the skeletal ruins of burned-out buildings. An American report pictured similar conditions in Newport:

A Hessian deserter says the ladies of pleasure of Newport are taken up and confined in the common goal. The officers both Hessian and Br. frequently meeting at the houses of those ladies quarrelled about the beauty of their doxies, which coming to General Prescott's
ears he ordered them all in to goal. Count Kurpstack a Hessian Major and a
Hessian Captain lately fought a duel there about the famous Miss Sally Lake
a first rate lady of pleasure, in which glorious cause the major was run through the
body and is since dead.152

Although this duel probably did not take place, at least a
Count Kurpstack was not involved, the delights of prostitutes
were available to soldiers of all ranks. The presence of
prostitutes, camp followers, and local (non-professional)
lovers gave the soldiers the opportunity, however
transitory, of human intimacy.

Morale

Isolation from Europe in a seemingly endless war in
America caused many morale problems. There were no
opportunities for officers and enlisted men to return to
Europe on leave. Some officers were reassigned to European
garrisons, and disabled or chronically-ill enlisted men
were returned home, but the great majority of soldiers
served with their units until those regiments left America.
Deserters generally had to escape to the Americans because
the British did not control enough territory in which to
hide. Desertion and a successful return to Europe was
unheard of. The great distance from Germany, homesickness,
the new environment, the lack of needed supplies, and
defeats all caused the soldiers' morale to plummet.  

British soldiers suffered in similar fashion. A British officer in Newport in the summer of 1777 listed these occurrences: a soldier drowned himself, leaving a wife and child desolate in Britain; another shot himself after having an affair with the wife of a fellow soldier; another slashed his wrists; several more deserted who were of good character and were not suspected of personal problems. The officer believed that all of these were the results of a general state of inaction—the men were left to gloomy reflections.  

Germans committed similar acts. They seemed to be affected more by homesickness that induced real sickness. Johann Hinrichs analyzed the army's morale in 1779 and assigned concrete reasons:

That which vexes me most is the law, indifferent, and fretful spirit which now prevails throughout the entire army. This is a natural outcome of the great scarcity of money, which is caused again in turn by the enormously high prices of all commodities. Of course it is vexatious to consider, that a soldier can hardly take his meals in summer for want of time, and then again in winter he has not money enough to buy bread.

Defeatism entered the minds of some German soldiers very early. Friedrich Muenchhausen, aide to William Howe, wrote as early as November 1777 that, "Many of us hope that
England will give in, or else send 20,000 men early next spring. The first would be the most desirable, because I fear that England cannot accomplish the latter. 156 A few months later he indicated the main reason for "this unhappy and miserable war is rebels in England," who are in control of the government. 157 The traits of loyalty, unquestioned loyalty, was too ingrained in German officers to affect their service for King George. Most sputtered in their diaries and continued to soldier. Disaffected enlisted men deserted.

The German troops were isolated in America—isolated from their families, isolated from their culture, and generally isolated by a language barrier from their allies and Americans. The home ties were especially hard to maintain. One enlisted man in the Leib Regiment wrote home to, "My dear parents and brothers and sisters. I do not know what to do because you do not write. Do you think that I am dead or did you forget me entirely? Or are you glad that I left you..." 158 The arrival of mail, after months in transit, became a crucial event, one that took place very few times a year. In March 1778 George Washington forwarded to Knyphausen a parcel of German letters that the Americans had captured on board a British warship. The Americans opened all the letters, but sent all intact, even those that
contained money. British letters that had been captured on the same ship were destroyed and so the Hessians were glad to receive their mail, even though each envelope was marked, "Letters of no consequence." They were, indeed, letters of great consequence.

And so the Germans fought as part of the British establishment, being mistrusted by some high-ranking officers, brawling with enlisted men, irrationally supplied, housed, and fed, and facing problems of morale. The British troops faced the same problems, the difference between them and the Germans being that the British had more of a stake in the war and had less of a sense of isolation from their society. In spite of problems of administration, language, and morale, the Germans did function within the British establishment to such a degree that the British could conduct effective offensives and garrison that part of American territory that they wished to hold. That the British were unable to win the war lies in considerations of national goals and strategy, rather than in employing large masses of foreigners as soldiers. Given the limitations of traditional eighteenth century warfare, the Germans were no better nor no worse that the terms of their contracts. In several instances they proved to be better fighters than the British. But this was not
their war and they did not display a nationally-inspired enthusiasm or patriotism that fired both redcoats and patriots.

Chapter Notes:

1 For a synopsis of British strength see Piers Macksey, The War for America, (Harvard, 1965), appendix.


5 Muenchhausen, pp. 62n, 20.


8 Ibid., p. 306.

9 Ibid., pp. 192-194; see chapter eight above; see Archibald Robertson, His Diaries and Sketches in America, 1762-1780. (New York, 1971), pp. 231-232.

10 Clinton, p. 52n.

11 Ibid., p. 60. Clinton's narrative is anti-Cornwallis and this bias probably affected Clinton's true measure of the fault for Trenton.

12 Mackesy, pp. 403-404.

13 Clinton, p. 79n.

Ibid.


Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS, 1248. Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, number CXX.

Ibid.

Eelking, p. 155.


Ibid., p. 63.

Muehchhausen, p. 52.

Mackesy, p. 152.


Muenchhausen, p. 21.


Muenchhausen, p. 21.


Ewald, pp. 249-251.

33 Tharp, pp. 108-109. Riedesel continued to sign as a major general when corresponding with Brunswick.

34 Baurmeister, pp. 134-135.

35 Meunchhausen, p. 14. Knyphausen, then commanding in New York, had one German and two English regiments in the city and four German regiments and 3,200 provincial soldiers in Forts Knyphausen and Independence.

36 Ibid., p. 8.


38 Ibid., p. 122.

39 See introduction for reports concerning Trenton. The diplomatic language of the treaties is French, and many orders extant in German archives are in that language.

40 Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS, Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, number CXIX; contains many examples dated 1776.

41 Ibid., p. 6; Landesbibliothek Kassel Ms. Hass. Fol. number 247 has several examples of orders from Howe to various German officers, probably written by Muenchhausen.

42 Muenchhausen, p. 5.

43 Mackenzie, II, 608. Cramond died of yellow fever on August 30, 1771; Baurmeister, p. 572.

44 Meunchhausen, p. 13.

45 Pausch, pp. 96, 118, 103n. See also chapter six above.

46 Baurmeister, p. 234.

47 Ewald, p. 215.


49 Ibid., p. 82.

50 Ibid., p. 90.
51 Ibid., p. 31.
52 Pausch, pp. 110-112.
53 Ibid., pp. 112-116.
55 Ibid., p. 153.
56 Krafft, pp. 81-82.
57 Ibid., p. 79.
59 Pausch, p. 76.
61 Mackesy, pp. 425-426.
62 Ibid., p. 149.
63 Quoted in Lowell, p. 284.
64 Clinton, p. 241.
65 Ibid., p. 95.
66 Ibid., p. 232.
67 Friedrich Kapp, Der Soldatenhandel deutscher Fürsten nach Amerika, (Berlin, 1874), p. 63.
69 Bowater to Denbigh, Nov. 17, 1777, in Ibid., pp. 147-148.
70 Denbigh to Bowater, Dec. 31, 1777 in Ibid., p. 151.
71 Meunchhausen, p. 13.
72 Lowell, pp. 212-213.
73 Meuchhausen, p. 16.
74 Clinton to Germain, Oct. 8, 1778, in Clinton, p. 393.
76 Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS 1248, Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, number CXX.
77 Ewald, p. 68.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., pp. 69-70.
81 Ibid., p. 121.
82 Krafft, p. 56; see unit history in appendix one.
83 Baurmeister, p. 59.
84 Ewald, p. 22.
86 Pettengill, pp. 70-71.
88 Riedele, I, 58; Eelking, p. 93.
89 Ewald, p. 82.
90 Ibid., p. 183.
91 Ibid., p. 189.
92 Pausch, pp. 99-100.
93 Ibid., p. 180.

94 Ibid., pp. 125-127.

95 Baehrmeister, p. 517.

96 Popp, p. 7.

97 Riedesel, I, 64.

98 Baehrmeister, p. 509.


100 Ibid., p. 76.

101 Ibid., p. 78.

102 Ibid., p. 81.


108 Baehrmeister, pp. 244, 247.


110 Kraelf, p. 51.

111 Ibid., p. 53.
112 Ibid., pp. 76-77.
113 Ewald, p. 48.
114 Ibid., p. 92.
115 Krafft, p. 59.
116 Tharp, pp. 48-49.
117 Pettengill, pp. 41-42.
118 Marion Dexter Learned, ed., Philipp Waldeck's Diary of the American Revolution, (Philadelphia, 1907), p. IX.
119 Baurmeister, p. 95.
120 Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS 1248, Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, number CXX. For plundering, see chapter twelve.
121 Ewald, p. 280.
122 Mackenzie, II, 594.
123 Order from James Grant dated, Dec. 23, 1776 in Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS 1248, Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten. According to John Kreuger, adjunct professor of History at Norwich University and editor of the Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum, who has made spruce beer from an 18th century recipe, the produce is vile.
125 Mackenzie, I, 259.
126 Ibid., p. 212.
127 Munchhausen, p. 13.
129 Ewald, pp. 52, 55.
130 Delancey Orderly Book, p. 38.
131 Pausch, p. 106.
132 Ewald, p. 303.
133 Ibid., p. 51.
134 Baurmeister, pp. 236-237.
135 Krafft, p. 151.
136 Quoted in Kipping, p. 21.
137 Kipping, p. 9.
139 Ewald, p. 105.
141 Du Roi, p. 36.
142 Ibid., p. 38.
143 Pettengill, pp. 42-44.
144 Hinrichs, "Extracts," pp. 159-160.
145 Ibid., p. 150.
146 Ibid., pp. 144-145.
147 Pettengill, pp. 57-62.
148 Heusler, p. 222.
149 Krafft, pp. 32-34.
151 Frey, p. 61.
152 Letters dated March 21, 1777 in Schwalm, p. 15.
153 Kipping, p. 8.
154 Mackenzie, I, 146-147.
156 Muenchhausen, p. 42.
157 Ibid., p. 54.
158 Quoted in Kipping, p. 8.
159 Baurmeister, p. 155; Meunchhausen, p. 48.
CHAPTER NINE

The German Military Establishment

Miserable toy of blind fortune,
Victim of wrongs and laws,
Man, you, who through a thousand injustices
Must find life troublesome,
From whence comes only death, you
fear all its power.
Think, that if it is an outrage,
It is the last you will receive.

French Verse, carried by Johann Ewald

The British and German regiments that fought in America generally were units of long standing filled out with recruits for war in America. Exceptions to this rule include the Hessian garrison regiments, which were really standing militia units, although with long histories and traditions, the Waldeck Regiment, and the Anhalt-Zerbst Regiment. Both the British and German forces featured an infrastructure of trained officers and enlisted men who held the units together and trained new recruits. Even the Waldeck and Anhalt-Zerbst regiments included many veterans on their rolls, so that these regiments cannot really be called amateur regiments. The combined service of the men in each British and German unit was much greater than those of soldiers in the American forces, some of whom had served

-367-
in the militia or in the distant French and Indian War.

The average age of the British soldier was about thirty years, and he had generally served for some ten years. The British averaged five feet seven inches tall, the average size of an eighteenth century man.¹ The British regiments, although often identified with a particular locality, drew recruits from all corners of the British Isles and the continent. In 1760 England and Wales contained about six and a half million people, Scotland numbered one and a quarter million, and Ireland added another three and a quarter million. Yet, of the recruits who entered the 58th Regiment of Foot during the Revolution (some 1,500 men) 60% were English, 25% Irish, 10% Scots, and the rest Welsh. The elite Coldstream Guards counted 90% English, 7% Scots, 4% Irish, and 3% Welsh. A recent study has discovered that the majority of recruits for British regiments during the Revolutionary War period seem to have been men displaced by changes in the British economy. Twenty percent of the recruits for both of the above units were former textile workers who had lost their livelihood. The image of the British private as being the scum of the earth is now being revised.²

The British Isles could not fill up the requirements for all regiments, so some units had recruiting stations on
the Rhine. German recruits made up 2% of elite units and up to 10% of line units throughout this period. 3

British losses were high. In the period between 1774 and 1780, 10,012 soldiers died in the West Indies and North America. 4 Several thousand more died before the end of the war.

German soldiers also faced a large death toll and German units lost large numbers of deserters. 5 Analysis of German units demonstrates the great variety of different experiences that these soldiers had.

The Waldeck Regiment

The Waldeck Regiment was raised especially for the service of King George. The tiny duchy had already raised two regiments for the Dutch service and this third unit removed a sizeable amount of Waldeckers to America. The regiment filled up by hiring many "foreigners" from other areas of Europe. The unit fought at Fort Washington and at Pensacola, where most of the men were captured by the Spanish. The unit was paroled, returned to New York, and finally disbanded in Waldeck at the end of the war. When the Dutch declared war on the British in 1780, the Waldeckers in the Dutch service became the enemies of the Waldeckers in the British service.
The Waldeck Regiment comprised one grenadier company of 155 officers and men and four infantry companies of 603 officers and men. Captain von Horn led the grenadiers. Sixty-four of his men had prior service: 23 had served in the Waldeck militia, 28 in the two standing Waldeck regiments, while others had served in the armies of Prussia, Hanau, Würzburg, Brunswick (3 soldiers), Denmark, Darmstadt, Cassel, Hanover, and Priessen. Henrich Schluckenbier, the company's first sergeant, was 42 years old and a veteran of 21 years service in the militia. The men averaged 26.4 years old. Twenty-six said they were married, and 14 of them had children. Only 12 men listed their former occupations: 5 were shoemakers and the rest included a tailor, smith, locksmith, joiner, butcher, carpenter, and bricklayer. The men all listed their religions: 136 were Evangelical, 9 were Reformed, and 7 were Catholics. The company contained 101 Waldeck natives. 6

Captain Christoph Alberti's infantry company contained many young soldiers. His 140 enlisted men averaged only 22.5 years old. Alberti was 39, Lieutenant Keppel was 21, and Ensign Nolting was 26. The company's chief, Major Dalwigk, was 37. Although there were many young men in the unit, 46 had already seen military service. Thirty had served in the two Waldeck regiment and 9 in the militia; the
remaining veterans served with Paderborn, Anhalt-Zerbst, Hesse Cassel, Hanover (2 soldiers), Brunswick, and Prussia. The unit's first sergeant, Jacob Todt, was 48 and had already served 30 years with the Second Waldeck Regiment in Holland. Only 14 of these men were married, but 11 of them had children. These men listed a greater variety of occupations. There were 5 linen workers, 5 shoe makers, 4 tailors, 3 wagoneers, 2 masons, 2 smiths, and a miller, butcher, cooper, tanner, cobbler, and a paruque maker. These men also listed their religions: 123 were Evangelical, 11 Reformed, and 10 Catholics. Only 83 of this company were Waldeck natives.  

Captain Lieutenant Alexander von Baumbach commanded the third company of 149 officers and men. The enlisted men averaged 24.1 years old and 53 of them had prior service. Eleven had served in the militia, 29 in the two Waldeck regiments, 2 in the British Army (Georg Kessemeyer served with the British for 13 years), 5 with the Prussians, 3 with Cassel, and one each with Chur-Pfalz, and Brunswick. Some of the veterans had not been discharged from their former units. Johann Schmid, a 30-year old tailor from Nassau, had spent 5 years in the Prussian service before deserting. Wilhelm Fleishuth had deserted the Hessian service after two years. He was 23 years old when he joined
the Waldeckers and was a native Hessian. Twenty-one of the soldiers were married, 13 of them had children, and one widower also listed dependent children. This company's religions mirror the previous proportions: 131 men were Evangelical, 10 Reformed, and 8 Catholics. The men who listed their occupations included a variety of artisan skills. Three were linen workers, 2 each were surgeons, millers, cloth makers, shoemakers, and drapers. There was also a furrier, potter, mason, joiner, chimney sweep, butcher, papermaker, and druggist in the ranks. One hundred of these men were natives of Waldeck. Captain Baumback was a Hessian. Sergeant Heinrich Schumacher, a 28-year old Waldecker from Mengeringhausen had already served a half year with the Hessians (he deserted their army), nine years with the Prussians, and one year with the Second Waldeck Regiment. He listed his profession as surgeon, not soldier.

There were 159 officers and men in Captain Friedrich Pentzel's infantry company. The enlisted men averaged 22.3 years old. Only 11 were married and 7 of them had children. Not all of these listed their religions: 86 were Evangelical, 7 were Catholics, 6 were Reformed, and 5 were Lutherans. Forty-three had some prior service; 27 had served in Holland and 11 had service with the Waldeck militia. Two had served with the Prussians and 2 more with the Hessians, and another
with the Hanovarians, nine men had been tailors, five were
smiths, four were linen workers, six were shoemakers, three
were masons, two were tinsmiths, and one man represented
each of the professions of locksmith, hatter, draper, and
game-keeper. The three senior sergeants had a combined
servied of 59 years in the Waldeck forces. Ninety-two of
the officers and men were natives of Waldeck. Captain
Pentzel was born in Arolsen in Waldeck, but First Lieutenant
Henrich Heding came from Rinteln in Schaumberg. Enlisted
men also hailed from nearby Hesse, Darmstadt, and Hanover,
and from far-away Danzig and Hungary.

The last company in the regiment, commanded by Captain
Georg von Haacke, contained 151 officers and men. The men
averaged 23.7 years old. Forty-five men had served in other
regiment prior to their enlistment in this Waldeck regiment:
30 with the Waldeck units in Holland, 9 in the Waldeck
militia, 2 with the French, and one each with Hesse, Hanover,
Holstein, and Sardinia. Only 12 of these men were married
and 9 of them had children. Their professions included shoe-
makers (12), smiths (5), linen workers (30), game-keepers (2),
millers (2), paruque maker (2), tobacco workers (2), gold-
smith, musician, cloth maker, papermaker, wagoneer,
carpenter, and peddlar. There were 129 men of the Evangelical
religion in the ranks, 10 of the Reformed church, and 9
Catholics. Ninety-one officers and men were natives of Waldeck. Captain von Haacke came from Laas in Witgenstein. Private Claude Prieur, a 47-year old Frenchman, had served 8 years in Holland. Private Johannes Volmer, a 39-year old Hessian, had deserted the Sardinian army after 15 years service.

This Waldeck regiment, therefore, numbered 758 officers and men, not counting the field and staff officers; 467 had been born in Waldeck and 291 were foreigners, although several of these had already served in other Waldeck regiments. Many of the men were veterans; 251 listed service with some European power. It was still a young unit—the enlisted men averaged 23.4 year old, or nearly six and a half years less than their British counterparts. The men were overwhelmingly of the Protestant faith, including only five Lutherans.

Waldeck supplied recruits to this regiment until 1,225 men entered its ranks. The unit lost a large proportion of its men in America, particularly when it served along the Gulf of Mexico. Deaths were high: 46 men, including Colonel von Hanxleden were killed in action, and 407 died of disease, a total of 455 soldiers, or one out of three who served. The Waldeckers lost a number of men taken prisoner, including 59 in January 1777 in New Jersey, and
228 in Louisiana in 1779. Most of the rest of the regiment surrendered at Pensacola in May 1781. Many of the men remained in America; 246 deserted and 72 received their discharge in America. Added to the dead, these figures bring the total Waldeck loss to 773 officers and men, or 63 percent of the total troops furnished. The Waldecker's paid quite a price for the American Revolution.

Hessian Units

Hessian records show a variety of age groups in different units. The men of the Hesse Cassel Artillery Corps, a unit dispersed throughout the infantry regiments, averaged 28 years old in 1776. The average Jäger was a year older, perhaps an indication of the specialized background of the riflemen. The original members of First Lieutenant Wilhelm Graf's company of the Garrison Regiment von Stein averaged 28 years old in 1776. The oldest soldier had been born in 1733 and the youngest in 1759. These militiamen were filled up with soldiers who were on the average four years younger than the original company members. Statistics for Captain Johann C. Studenroth's company of the Garrison Regiment von Bunau show just the opposite trend. The average age of the original members was 26 years old in 1776. The recruits averaged a year older than the original members when they joined the unit.
The mounted Jäger company followed the same trend as Studenroth's company. The mounted Jägers drew on cavalry and Hussar regiments to make a composite unit. The original men averaged 30 years old when they arrived in 1777. Their recruits also averaged a year older than the original men, when they arrived. The mounted Jägers received much criticism concerning the quality of their recruits, and perhaps these age statistics back up those charges.\textsuperscript{13}

Johann Ewald's Jäger company averaged thirty years old when they arrived in America in 1776.\textsuperscript{14} A total of 176 men served in this unit during the Revolution. Sixteen of the men died in action, 34 died of disease, and one was executed, for a total loss by death of 51 men. This represents 29 percent of the unit. Ewald lost 72 deserters and discharged 12 of his men in America. These 84 men made up 43 percent of the whole, bringing the total permanent loss to 135 men, or 72 percent of the entire strength! Almost three of every four men either died or stayed in America, a more than staggering loss.\textsuperscript{15} The great number of deserters relates to the nature of the Jägers' service, being small unit actions with little supervision that gave the men the chance to see American society up close and also gave them the opportunity to escape.

Captain Karl August von Kutzleben's company (the
Leibkompanie) of the Regiment Prinz Carl did not suffer the Jägers' losses. The original members were older than the Jägers, being about 33 years old in 1776.\textsuperscript{16} The oldest member had been born in 1730 and the youngest in 1759. The recruits averaged about seven years younger than the original members.\textsuperscript{17} Never in much combat besides the fall of Fort Washington and the siege of Newport, the regiment spent most of the war in garrison, perhaps because of the age of its members. The company lost no men as a result of combat. Twenty-three men died of disease, 12 men deserted, and 7 took their discharge in America. The total loss of 42 men was just 23 percent of the entire company, a marked difference to Ewald's Jägers. Mostly far from the fighting, the Regiment Prinz Carl performed little duty that it would not have done in its garrison back in Hesse Cassel.

The company of the Regiment von Lossberg commanded by Captain Altenbockum saw more action in the first two years of the conflict than the Regiment Prinz Carl, being interned at Trenton, but it spent the rest of the war in garrison. The original men averaged 29 years old in 1776 and the recruits averaged four years younger.\textsuperscript{18} This company lost 12 men killed in action, all of them by May 1777. Twenty-three men died of disease, a total of 35 deaths representing 15 percent of the entire unit. Only 11 men deserted, 5
percent of the company, bringing the total loss to 20 percent. The number of deserters seems remarkably low since 49 men were captured at Trenton. Three of the 11 deserters left the unit in Germany before it sailed to America, 8 deserted from the lot taken at Trenton, and one man deserted in January 1780.

Captain Henrich Ludwig Boecking's company of the Rall Regiment also surrendered at Trenton. The original members averaged 28 years old in 1776 and the recruits were five years younger. The company lost far more men that its companion in the Lossberg Regiment. Eleven men died in action, but 62 more died of disease, a total of 73 men making up 25 percent of the total of the unit, which included 290 men first to last. Twenty-six deserted (9 percent of the total) and one man received his discharge in America. Total loss amounted to 34 percent of the unit.

The age of the soldiers from Hesse Cassel, both regulars and recruits, indicates that the men of the Waldeck Regiment were atypical, the result of the latter being recruited from whatever men had not gone into the two Dutch Waldeck units. The little duchy had to recruit soldiers of any age to send to America, natives or foreigners. The Hessians also filled their units with whatever recruits they could find. The original members of Hessian units compare...
in age to professional British soldiers.

The statistics indicate the severe losses suffered by German units in both dead and deserters. Perhaps the most unlooked for conclusion is that in all the units studied, except for Ewald's Jägers, the dead always outnumbered the deserters. Sickness killed far more troops than bullets and also accounted for far more losses than deserters. \(^{20}\)

The official list of Hesse Cassel losses from 1776 to 1784 numbers 4,620 dead and 357 killed, a total of 4,977 men dead, and 2,949 deserters out of a total of 16,992 troops on the rolls. \(^{21}\) The official list is not complete, but stands as a basic figure. \(^{22}\)

Some British soldiers and subsequent historians claimed that Hessian officers inflated their losses to receive more compensation from the British King. The British paid the Landgrave the equivalent of three men wounded as one man killed. This clause appears only in the treaties with Brunswick, Waldeck, and Hesse-Hanau, and not in the three other states' treaties. The inflated losses therefore would stem from the Saratoga campaign, the only major action in which the Hesse-Hanau and Brunswick troops participated, and the odyssey of the Waldeck Regiment. But neither of these operations caused comments of overstated losses. The charge has been laid on the troops from Hesse Cassel,
soldiers who would not need to inflate their losses, for it would gain them nothing. 23

That the Hessians suffered greatly from deaths due to disease can be seen in Table One. Information on deserters has been included to measure a unit's full loss.

Table One 24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Died of Non-hostile Causes</th>
<th>Killed in Action</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Deserters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rall</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wissenbach</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jäger Corps</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stein</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erbprinz</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koehler</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huyn</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turmbach</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donop</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minningerode</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditfurth</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knyphausen</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirbach</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lossberg</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>849*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linsing</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Died of Non-hostile Causes</td>
<td>Killed in Action</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Deserters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wutgenau</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leib</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bünau</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prinz Carl</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery Corps</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*I question the accuracy of this figure, but include it as given in the official report of losses.

The official list of men killed in action is probably a bit low, but still is an indication of a unit's loss on the battlefield. In Table Two, the rank list of deaths in action shows that the Jäger Corps and two grenadier battalions lost the most men on the battlefield.

Table Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank List of Hessian Troops Killed in Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jäger Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linsing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnigerode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirbach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turmbach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erbprinz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Deaths in Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wutgenau</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Block</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huyn</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lossberg</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koehler</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wissenbach</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery Corps</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditfurth</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knyphausen</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leib</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bünau</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stein</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donop</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prinz Carl</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>356</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Germans continued to supply recruits throughout the war to fill up their units, often resorting to the impressment of all sorts of transients and native sons. They also turned to other sources.

Black Hessians

Champer Ederson from Rhode Island was a German soldier. The twenty-two old black enlisted in January 1779 in the
Fifth Company of the Knyphausen Regiment. Serving as a drummer, he received a uniform, arms, and, presumably, pay for his term with his new comrades. He sailed with the regiment to New York when the British abandoned Newport in October 1779. Unfortunately, Ederson did not live to see the end of the war; the regimental rolls show that he died of disease in July 1782. Ederson's service with the Hessians illustrates a little-known attempt by German officers serving in America to fill vacancies in their units by enlisting black soldiers. 26

No study of blacks in the American Revolution deals in depth with the Germans' employment of free blacks and ex-slaves. Benjamin Quarles devoted only one short paragraph on the topic in The Negro in the American Revolution. He does not offer a tabulation of the number of blacks in German units, although he estimates that eight hundred served in the British Army. 27 James W. St. G. Walker's The Black Loyalists estimates that one hundred thousand blacks entered the British lines during the war. Walker cites a report made by British officers with Carleton's forces in New York in 1783. The report states that there were then 1,951 blacks with the army in New York. Of the total, 83 said that they had been brought in against their will, 1,410 said they were runaways, 409 claimed to be
legally free, and only 49 said that they were recruited as soldiers. \textsuperscript{28} Walker does not mention Germans as part of this affair. Other studies dealing with black soldiers or black loyalists fail to consider the black German soldiers. \textsuperscript{29}

This limited commentary is explicable. Literary sources occasionally paint a picture of the black camp follower, but camp followers are obviously not enlisted soldiers. On these, the literary record is all but mute.

The publication of \textit{Hessische Truppen im Amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitkrieg} (\textit{HETRINA: Hessian troops in the American Revoltuion}) contains the records of all soldiers who served in units from Hesse Cassel and Waldeck, including the one hundred and thirty-one identifiable blacks who enlisted in units in America. This project summarizes the military records as they appear in German archives. \textsuperscript{30}

Adjutant General Carl Baurmeister, a staff officer at the Hessian headquarters in New York, reported as early as 1777 that officers of the Erbprinz Regiment tried to fill vacancies in that unit by enlisting blacks. According to his report, some of these blacks deserted, while others were identified as runaway slaves and reclaimed by their former owners. \textsuperscript{31}

Other Hessian units began enlisting blacks as musicians, laborers, and private soldiers. The Germans followed the
example of the British Army by enlisting black soldiers and also using vagrant blacks in temporary positions. After the fall of Charleston, the British and Germans confiscated the slaves of patriots. Dressed in rags, few of these slaves spoke English. On May 30, 1780, ten blacks were allocated to each regiment returning to New York, while the rest were shipped to the West Indies for sale. 32 The ten blacks per regiment might have been enlisted by the Germans as laborers or to form regimental bands, but evidence is lacking.

The employment of non-enlisted blacks in great numbers by the British and German forces often caused a strain on military discipline. Captain Johann Ewald, always a stickler for discipline, wrote a colorful description of Cornwallis' army in Virginia in early summer 1781:

I cannot deny that the enormous train of the army astonished me considerably, not being accustomed to it as yet, the army looked to me like a migrating Arabian or Tartar horde. Since the army had fought continuously during the last ten months in the country, Lord Cornwallis had agreed that the company officers could keep two horses and one Negro...

But since there was no strict control, this arrangement got out of hand, and the corps of Sir William Phillips, which I had left less than three months ago, adopted a new practice, as had the Jäger detachment and the Rangers. Each officer had four to six horses, three to four Negroes and sometimes
one or two Negresses as cook or mistress. Each soldier's female companion was on horseback and had one or more Negro and Negress, also on horseback, as servants. Each corporal's guard had one or two horses and Negroes and each corporal had two horses and a Negro. Indeed, I can say that each soldier had his Negro to carry his food and his bundle.

This disorderly train was followed by about 4,000 more Negroes of every age and sex. The regions through which this train passed were eaten barren, like a field that has been attacked by a swarm of locusts. I don't know what these people lived on. It was fortunate that the army seldom stopped longer than one day or one night. When I arrived at the jäger detachment, I found more than twenty horses and almost each jäger had his Negro, which I corrected within twenty-four hours.

Even though Ewald separated the blacks from his men, he employed some of them as mounted scouts and lookouts.

None of these blacks ever formally enlisted in the jäger corps.

There were great differences between blacks who followed the armies and those formally enlisted into military units. Blacks in German units held the same rank as some white soldiers, such as grenadier, fifer, drummer, or laborer. Those blacks enlisted in the German Units made up a small, yet highly visible, element of the Hessian forces. The records of the troops from Hesse Cassel show that one hundred and thirty-one clearly identifiable blacks enlisted and served some period of the war with the Hessian
troops. (See Table Three). Most of the blacks, ninety-four, enlisted as drummers in regimental bands, while twenty-five others were carried on the rolls as laborers. Four served as fifers to complement the drummers, one in the provost marshall's department, one as a grenadier, one as a musketeer, and three as privates. Two blacks have no rank indicated. Three of the drummers later switched military occupations; one became a fusilier, one a private, and the third became a laborer. While the musicians were armed only with swords, the privates, musketeers, and fusiliers were clearly fully-armed fighting men.

Table Three
Black Enlistees in Hessian Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Military Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drummers:</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servants/Laborers:</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifers:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privates:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenadier:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musqueteer:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None Stated:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>131 Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final deposition of Black Enlistees
Died of Non-hostile Causes
Prisoners of War:  
Deserted:  
Separated in America  
None Stated: 

\[ \frac{67}{131 \text{ Total}} \]

The records further indicate that forty-five more soldiers of American origin, many of whom were probably black, served with the Hesse Cassel forces. (See Table Four). Twenty-four of these men were drummers, six laborers, thirteen privates, one grenadier, and a fifer. In this group, the fifer and one of the privates became drummers, and two of the drummers became privates. 37

Table Two
American Enlistees, Not Identified as Blacks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Military Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drummers:</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servants/Laborers:</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privates:</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenadier:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifer:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \frac{1}{45 \text{ Total}} \]

Deposition of Above
Died of Non-hostile Causes: 5
Deserted: 7
Separated in America: 4
Separated in Europe: 1
None Stated: 27
45 Total

Not all German regiments enlisted blacks into their ranks. Hesse Cassel units in America comprised fifteen regiments of infantry, four grenadier battalions, a Jäger corps, and an artillery detachment. Identifiable black enlistees range from twenty-three each in the Knyphausen and Rall regiments of infantry, to no identifiable blacks in five infantry regiments and the Jäger corps. (See Table Five) Both the Knyphausen and Rall regiments suffered great losses at Trenton and needed many recruits to bring them up to strength. The large numbers of blacks enlisted in those units indicate the great need for recruits of any color. Presumably, blacks serving as musicians freed white musicians for combat duty. However, the third regiment decimated at Trenton, the Fusilier Regiment von Lossberg, enlisted no blacks in its ranks. One is led to the conclusion that whatever manpower the Germans needed, the acceptance of blacks depended upon the attitudes of the officers in command of each unit.
### Table Five

**American Enlistments in Hessian Military Units**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Blacks</th>
<th>Americans Not Identified as Blacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knyphausen Regiment</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rall Regiment</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wissenbach Regiment</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landgraf Regiment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graf Grenadier Battalion</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lengerke Grenadier Battalion</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linsingen Grenadier Battalion</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prinz Carl Regiment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditfurth Regiment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huyn Regiment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leib Regiment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erbprinz Regiment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnigerode Grenadier Battalion</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seitz Regiment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artillery Detachment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bose Regiment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lossberg Regiment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirbach Regiment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jäger Corps</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bünau Regiment  0  0
Donop Regiment  0  0

131 Total  0  45 Total

Many military careers of the identifiable blacks and other enlistees from America can be reconstructed from the regimental records. Some records are incomplete, such as that of the drummer Possum from Ogeche, Georgia, who enlisted in the Second Company of the Wissenbach Regiment in May 1780 and appears in no further entries. The rolls are fuller for others. Jack was a black who enlisted in the Fifth Company of the Knyphausen Regiment in August 1779 in Carolina. He was about sixteen years old, served as a drummer, and was declared separated by the Germans after being captured by the Americans sometime before April 1782. Jack would never return from captivity and was dropped from the rolls by his former regiment.

Jacques, a fifteen year old native of the West Indies, entered the Second Company of the Erbprinz Regiment in March 1777 as a drummer. He became a fusilier in May 1777, but did not succeed in his new position; he became a drummer once more in October 1777. The Erbprinz Regiment surrendered at Yorktown in October 1781; but he is not listed as being a prisoner of war. Provided he did not die or desert before Yorktown and was captured there, the Americans did not exchange him after the end of the war along with his
Blacks who deserted were usually dropped from the rolls at the time of their desertion, or even after they had been recaptured and returned to their units. George William, a twenty-three year old black from Jamaicatown, enlisted in the Third Company of the Trumback Regiment in September 1778. He deserted the next month, yet was arrested and returned to his unit in October. The Germans discharged him as soon as he returned. Most black deserters were likewise discharged soon after their return. This was not the case with white soldiers, and might indicate that German officers considered blacks in their units as having a special status, one that depended only upon the willingness of the blacks to serve with German troops.  

Some of the blacks who willingly served with Hessians returned with them to Germany. Johann Carl Buettner, an enlisted man with the Hessian forces, recalled that at the end of the war the black musicians in the Hessian contingent were brought back to Germany, where they caused great excitement. The Hessians were not the only troops to bring black musicians back to the Fatherland. A Brunswick officer noted in 1783 that a battalion of troops in the city of Brunswick included a drum corps made up of blacks brought from America by General Riedesel.  

The presence
of black soldiers in Germany enhanced an exotic notion of service abroad. These blacks possibly served during the Napoleonic Wars and never again returned to the land of their birth.

Conclusions concerning the enlistments of blacks into Hessian units must be tentative. The great majority of blacks served in non-combatant positions, freeing whites for combat duty. However, a few blacks did serve as combat soldiers. The scant literary evidence does not allow the examination of Germans and blacks towards each other, toward the mixed composition of units, or toward the question of voluntary service by black soldiers. Apparently, blacks served only as long as they wished. Deserters generally were discharged, even though returned to their units, and many blacks received a discharge before the war was over. Black soldiers did make a contribution to the mercenaries' military activities, while the Germans offered blacks employment, clothing, food, and a type of escape from slavery, if only the questionable status of mercenary soldier.

Disease in German Ranks

Disease killed far more Germans than bullets. Less than one-tenth of German deaths occurred on the battlefield.
In seven years in America, the Hessians lost 4,620 dead from non-hostile causes and only 357 in action. The great loss of life resulted from the unfamiliar climate and unsanitary conditions of the camps. Medical care was less than adequate in terms of physicians and medicines. Sickness brought on periods of low morale and occasionally made some units totally unfit for combat. At one point every soldier in the Regiment von Donop was affected by intermittent fever. Lieutenant Lotheissen of the Leib Infantry reported from Newport in December 1776 that over seventy men had taken sick since the arrival of the regiment at the beginning of the month. Newport continued to be a dangerous garrison, especially in the winter. In January 1778 the three regiments of Ditfurth, Huyn, and Bunau (1850 men) had only seventy men sick, but the Landgraf Regiment had sixty sick alone. Why? The Landgraf officers said that the men had to march eight to ten miles daily to reach their duty station and that the soldiers' shoes had worn out. The officers were forced to buy shoes for their men. The regiment had lost its surgeon in the spring of 1777 and the remaining company surgeons were not very good, being ignorant of medicine. Some British officers suspected that the regimental officers had neglected the unit's "interior economy", but they also noted that sickness was
far worse in British units, where some 100 to 180 men were sick out of 1,700 men in Newport. 48

German surgeons requested medical supplies through British supply channels, but had to wait their turn for distribution. In the winter of 1777-1778 in Philadelphia, German units developed a critical shortage of medical supplies and requested help from British surgeons. Surgeon General Morris and other physicians petitioned Howe for guidance. They were afraid of serious consequences of sharing supplies with their allies. There is no record of Howe's decision, but shortages continued until the supplies were replenished from England that spring. 49

Doctors did work to improve the health of the Germans at other times. In the spring of 1777 the Germans on Manhattan suffered from scurvy due to a lack of fresh vegetables. Morris visited the hospitals very often and was satisfied with the care of Britons and Germans alike. Adjutant General Carl Baurmeister wrote to the Landgrave that, "No one can praise enough the English care, good provisions, beer, vinegar, and rum." 50 Baurmeister reported periodic outbreaks of sickness among the troops. He felt that few Hessians died, but most soldiers were affected in one form or another, being weakened and suffering relapses. He stressed the presence of ague, from which there was only
a slow recovery. He also felt that more English died than Germans. As adjutant general, he kept monthly statistics on all Hessian units and made his generalizations from these figures. His figures show that if most Hessians were affected by disease, one quarter of them died as a result. 51

Eighteenth century medicine and medical practice could not help most soldiers. Conditions were crude at best. Baurmeister reported in November 1777 that a Hessian hospital ship ran into a stockade in the Delaware River and sank. The men were saved. He added, however, that, "These miserable hospital ships have killed many a soldier. Of the five sick in my company only one has recovered." 52 Sickness during an active campaign could be horrible. Johann Ewald took sick in New York in 1780: "For several days I have been severely stricken for the first time by the local fever, with all its discomforts. Since I do not want to leave the Corps, and no house is close by, I am forced to resort to a small cave, in which the rats annoy me more than the fever." 53

Rats and mosquitoes annoyed all the troops. The insects swarmed all over North America, bringing discomfort and disease. One German wrote home:
There is a kind of knot here, which troubles us terribly. We can feel it on our own legs through the linen trousers. These bites develop into wounds, if one scratches them; the itching is almost unbearable. The English soldiers and the people living here are protected by their long wide sailor's trousers, and because the latter are wide, the mosquitoes cannot reach the flesh with their sting.54

The German troops were not prepared for the extremes of the American climate. The Waldeckers received little food in Pensacola in the summer of 1780 and the soldiers began to sicken in September. The more the men got sick, the greater their dislike for the British commander developed.55

The Anhalt-Zerbst Regiment faced the opposite conditions in Canada. Captain Thoma marched the regiment's second battalion across the ice of Lake St. Peter and lost fourteen men and two wives from the cold. Thirty more men had frozen limbs. Brigadier General von Ehrenkrook made an inspection of the unit and found fifteen dead, two missing, fifteen severely ill, and twenty-three slightly ill and most of the battalion unserviceable. He ordered Thoma courtmartialed, but the captain got off on the plea that no proper clothing had been issued and that he was only following orders.56

Soldiers could be discharged as a result of sickness. Some returned to Germany, some remained in America, and some re-enlisted. The Jägers enlisted former grenadier
Christoph Bachmann, who had been wounded at Red Bank. He had won the good will of the doctor, feigned lameness, and received a discharge from the grenadiers. What happened to Bachmann is unknown; his record does not appear with the Jäger Corps and so he might have been returned to his original unit. 57

German Discipline

Sergeant Johann Krafft led his chasseur platoon on a raid into Westchester County in October 1780. In the dark of the night the leading elements bumped into an American dragoon picket. The Americans fired and galloped off. Hessian discipline fell apart: "The men, however, were so eager for the spoils that they could not be held in order and it being dark they nearly shot down each other. I endeavored to keep my platoon together by beating them..." 58 Corporal punishment was quite common among the British and Germans, to a degree unheard of in American ranks. Such discipline was a long standing tradition and was inflicted by sergeants on the privates in the field and in camp.

The Germans generally did not lose control in the field, their training was rigid and the men performed under the scrutiny of their officers and sergeants. Harsh discipline made them good combat soldiers.
Breaches of discipline were much more common in the long winter camps, when morale of officers and men plummeted. Rank definitely affected punishment. In December 1779 Krafft attacked a colonel's groom who had insulted him. The sergeant used his sheathed sword to beat the man, but the sheath flew off and Krafft cut the groom down to the bone. He marched off to the colonel and received a pardon very easily. On another occasion Krafft found fault with a private olsider "by mistake," but the private talked back to him. "I gave him a sound thrashing," Krafft recalled. The private brought charges with his colonel. Krafft was "politely examined" and sustained. The private was beaten when he returned to his regiment.

Krafft was not afraid of fighting with an army surgeon, who ranked as an officer. The two got into an argument while inspecting the troops. Hot words followed. The sanguine Krafft "flourished my sword about his shirt bosom and then drew it (as he grasped it in the palm of his hand) through his hand so it was all cut open. Moreover I boxed his ears once or twice and then walked away." The surgeon complained to Krafft's lieutenant colonel, who placed the sergeant under arrest. Krafft was examined by a board of officers and the surgeon brought witnesses. The
board found Krafft guilty and had him put in irons with his left hand attached to his right foot. But he was soon released and "reprimanded...very politely...If it had not been I, degradation would have followed." Krafft had been a Prussian lieutenant and had traveled to America to obtain a Hessian commission. This incident did not block the sergeant's successful promotion.

Krafft fills the stereotype of the tyrannical sergeant:

11 April (1780) Tues. I was summoned to an examination of a musketeer named Herbert, a man of my Corps, who had already deserted all his masters. He said I was the cause of it because I had punished him several times. They did not want to examine me on that account, but I went directly afterwards to Col. von Gosen and Lieut. Col. Hinte who exonerated me.

Private Johann Buettner added to his pay by amateur medicine. He cured two prostitutes of venereal disease, but they refused to pay him for his services. He took revenge by taking two grenadier friends along to their house and smashing all the windows and mirrors. A Hessian colonel arrested the trio, but he let them go on Buettner's promise to pay for the damages. Buettner never heard another word about the incident and kept his money.

Punishment for committing crimes usually included running the gauntlet of fellow soldiers. For example, the articles of war of Anspach-Bayreuth specified that
a soldier had to get his commander's permission to marry. If a soldier married without such consent, he would have to run the gauntlet of two hundred who beat him with clubs between twelve and twenty-four times. In August 1780 an "impudent fellow" had to run the gauntlet six times between two hundred men. On July 18, 1781 a deserter had to run thirty times. On July 30th, a less fortunate deserter was shot. Conrad Doehla saw one soldier run who was "quite painfully cut and beaten and he had to be led all day by two non-commissioned officers because he could not walk."

Lieutenant Wollwarth reported to the Erbprinz of Hesse that on October 23, 1777 that seven men had been punished for theft in the Kingsbridge area. These men probably ran the gauntlet. Late in the war General von Lossberg had two men of the Leib Infantry hanged for highway robbery and the wounding of a civilian, the only hangings on record.

German discipline was generally left within German units. The English did interfere in a case in Georg Pausch's artillery battery in Canada. A German court martial sentenced Pausch's lead smith named Brad's to two months imprisonment on bread and water because of his "wickedness and excesses." Brad's daughter went to General Phillips and his wife to an English major. Pausch then received an order to liberate Brad's, who "crowed" along
with his English friends. Brads stated that only King George had authority over him and many German enlisted men felt the same way. Pausch wanted to impose prompt punishment—running the gauntlet, whipping, or confining in fetters—but he could not impose such a sentence alone. All German units mustered courts martial from high ranking officers. Pausch's fellow board members would not agree on quick punishment. 71

Punishment for officers took a much different form. Officers could receive verbal or written admonitions and continue in the field. Gross transgressions were not handled in America. In February 1778 Major Pauli was sent back to Hesse Cassel to be punished for his bad conduct. 72 Punishment for officers' major offenses ranged from cashiering to imprisonment.

Although some British soldiers claimed that Germans got lighter sentences than they, the discipline of Germans seems adequate. Just as plundering depended upon the attitude of officers in many instances, discipline was also handled as the officers saw fit. Controls were effective in the field and relaxed in camp. While there are few incidents of German loosing their discipline in battle, their long months in camp brought frustrations and temptations that placed a strain on officers and men alike. The autocratic enforce-
ment of discipline with blows and running the gauntlet lies squarely within the European tradition from which the Germans came.

German Piety

The officers and men who fought in America were overwhelmingly of the Protestant faith. One British officer described how off-duty Germans sang hymns like Yankees, "as bad as the Yankees, though it must be owned they have not the godly twang through the nose which distinguishes the faithful." Lord Rawdon echoed this bemused sentiment after watching the Hessians disembark at Kip's Bay in August 1776. "The Hessians, who were not used to this water business and who conceived that it must be exceedingly uncomfortable to be shot at whilst they were quite defenseless and jammed together so close, began to sing hymns immediately. Our men expressed their feelings as strongly, tho' in a different manner, by damning themselves and the enemy indiscriminately with wonderful fervency." Later Rawdon added that, "My grandmother will probably change sides when she hears the Hessians sing hymns as loud as Yankees."  

Ambrose Serle, civilian secretary to William Howe, first heard the German singers on Long Island in August 1776. "It was pleasing to hear the Hessians sing Psalms in
the evening, with great solemnity; while to our shame, the
British navy and army in general are wasting their time in
imprecations or idleness."75 Clearly Serle had a better ear
for religious music than his more military associates.

All of the German units had chaplains assigned and
several of the ministers served throughout the war. Little
is said about the troops' religiosity later in the war, but
the Germans came to America bringing with them the fervor
of their religion. The fervor, though, seems to have died
out as the war progressed.

Soldiers' Wives

Only three hundred of the two thousand women who were
at one time or another with Burgoyne's army appear on
rosters. An eighteenth century soldier could get married
and could bring his family along to war. Some wives appear
on rosters and received rations. There simply is no way to
count them. The Anhalt-Zerbst Regiment of 1,164 men brought
34 wives along, who served as washerwomen. Three babies
were born on the high seas when the Waldeck Regiment sailed
to America. The Brunswickers brought along 77 soldiers'
wives in 1776, but by 1781 the remnants of the Brunswickers
in Canada included 300 wives. The number among the Hessians
is unknown, but probably numbered in the thousands. Woman
camp followers provided a variety of services and skills.
They cooked for the men and nursed them when they were sick. They provided companionship and sex. Just who was married to whom, or if this mattered in any case, cannot be recovered. 76

The records of the Waldeck Regiment included spouses on the rolls. Johannes Faust was a twenty-eight year old married man from Neukirchen in Waldeck when he enlisted in March 1776. He was a veteran of eight and a half years in the Waldeck militia. He brought his wife along to America. The two soldiered together for three years until the regiment reached Florida. Unfortunately, both died of disease in 1779. 77

The most famous wife was the Baroness von Riedesel. Thirty years old in 1776, she traveled with her three daughters across the Atlantic to join her husband in the forests of upstate New York. She supported him throughout Burgoyne's campaign and marched with him to Boston in captivity. They set up house in Cambridge and, on parole, had much freedom of movement. In November 1778 she and her family traveled by carriage to Charlottesville, Virginia, one of the areas assigned to house the Convention Army. The Riedesels became friends of the nearby Thomas Jeffersons. The Jeffersons even sold their piano to the Baron for his delighted wife. The two wives particularly became close.
friends. When the Riedesels were paroled to New York in December 1779, Carl Baurmeister noted that she now spoke German with an American accent. The three girls spoke only English. The Baroness gave birth to another daughter in New York, appropriately named America, and had a fifth daughter upon returning to Germany in 1784 and a son in 1785. A loving woman of great insight and character, she has written the best first-hand account of the American Revolution done by a woman in the journal that she kept during her years in America. Perhaps sullied by comparisons to the companions of enlisted men, she represents the highest notion of familial devotion in eighteenth century warfare.78

The Power Structure

Even though serving as part of the British Army, the German regiments kept lines of control to each of their states. The states retained control over promotions, most discipline, recruits, and personnel actions. The British could intervene and influence some actions, such as the replacing of Heister by Knyphausen. General Howe also got involved in the military future of his aide Friedrich Muenchhausen. Muenchhausen was a grenadier captain when Howe picked him as aide. Because it was not considered good
for a grenadier to be away from his unit, Muenchhausen transferred to hold a company in the Landgraf Regiment, then in garrison at Newport. He never saw his new company. Muenchhausen had started his career as a Brunswick officer before transferring to the Hessian service. When with Howe, he wore the red uniform of the British Army. Howe recommended to the Hessian powers that Muenchhausen be given command of a grenadier battalion. Howe left for home in May 1778. Muenchhausen was so disgusted with the American war and so homesick that he did not accept the grenadier position and returned to Germany.79

Johann Krafft, the ex-Prussian lieutenant, came to America to get a commission either from Washington or the Hessians. He first tried the Americans and got nowhere, so enlisted as a Free Corporal in the Hessian forces. The position of Free Corporal marked a soldier as serving an apprenticeship before commissioning. It took Krafft two years of petitions to Cassel and letters of recommendation before he received his commission. Extracts from his diary show some of his intrigue: "June 1. In the morning I visited Col. von Goosen + asked him to remember me in Cassel which he promised to do."80 The next day he "sent the above mentioned letter to the Lord Mayor at Falmouth, Eng. in regard to my things + at the same time one to Cassel to Gen. von Donop and von Junckheim."81 The following day "I wrote to the Saxon Ambassador DuBois at the Hague in Holland +
asked him to write to Gen. v. Knyphausen for me, and gave the letter to Capt. v. Donop who promised to send it at first opportunity." And so on. German officers had to find the points of power within their hierarchy and make themselves known. A noble birth assured greater success. A man of middle class background might never get very far. Lieutenant Andreas Wiederhold was forty when he scrambled up the sides of Fort Washington. Captain Johann Ewald's seven years in America as the leader of the most effective fighting force of Hessians got him no promotion whatever. In the end, it was not the best trained or most effective officers who rose in German military circles, but rather men who developed sound contacts within each state's army. This is the chief reason why Germans jumped from state to state looking for the best jobs. Ewald ended his career as a major general in the Danish Army.

Conclusions

The Germans fielded a mixed group of soldiers for service in America. The regular regiments seem to be similar in terms of age of members to men in British regiments. The Units raised especially for service in America contained much younger men, although many of them were veterans. Due to the small size of each German state, the units contained a large number of men who had not been born in those areas. Hessian records show that some of the soldiers came from as far away as Russia, Spain, Ireland, and England. This need not mean that such foreigners were the lower elements of
society. Some of them were university students caught in
the recruiting net. Recruits were hard to find and Germans
filled their regiments with whoever was at hand, even
blacks.

Losses were staggeringly high. The deaths and deserters
amounted to 41 percent of the troops sent. Deaths by
disease became the chief factor in German losses and
desertions came in second.

Although the Germans were hired by the British and worked
within British supply channels and served under British
generals, they maintained their own identity and authority
regarding discipline, promotions, and recruiting. The
British could exert some leverage in these areas, but the
responsibility did not shift from Germans to English. In a
sense, the British grafted on the Germans for matters of
operations and logistics, but left the administration of
German units alone. The Germans retained their self-
identity and did not make the British situation any more
complex than it was already. When the war was over, the two
sides easily severed the ties between them and sailed
separately back to Europe, ready to see where the next round
of diplomacy would put them on the battlefield.

Chapter Notes:

1Sylvia R. Frey, The British Soldier in America: A Social
History of Military Life in the Revolutionary Period,

2Ibid., p. 10.

Ibid., p. 28.

See Appendix Two for German losses.

Company Roll from Hessische Truppen im Amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg, Volume Five, (Marburg, 1976), Cited below as HETRINA.

Ibid.

The birth year of 100 cases was 1748-49; HETRINA.

Based on 100 cases; HETRINA.

Based on 47 cases; HETRINA.

Based on 55 cases; HETRINA.

Based on 50 cases of the original members and 55 cases for the recruits; HETRINA.

Based on 34 cases for the original members and 48 cases for the recruits; HETRINA.

Based on 97 cases; HETRINA.

Company rolls in HETRINA.

Based on 103 cases; HETRINA.

Based on 77 cases; HETRINA.

Based on 110 original members and 64 recruits, a total of 241 served with the company, but 66 have no birthyear listed. Records in HETRINA show 12 of the company were killed in action, but the official casualty list compiled in Cassel in 1784 indicates only 10 men in the entire regiment were killed in action. HETRINA is probably correct.

Based on 125 original members and 108 recruits. The company numbered 290 officers and men from first to last, including those who have no birthyear listed.

See Appendix Two for German losses.

Appendix Two.

Rodney Atwood, The Hessians, (Cambridge, 1980), gives the total dead as 4,983, taking the returns listed Appendix Two and comparing them to regimental journals and British sources. The official loss is 4,977; he has added five more. I suspect the killed in action is too low; see note 18 above. Atwood feels that 3,014 Hessians remained in America. See his Appendices B and C.
23 Frederick Mackenzie, *Diary of Frederick Mackenzie, II*, (Cambridge, 1930), 390. Mackenzie alludes to troops from Hesse Cassel in Newport, but these troops would not gain from inflating their losses.


26 Ederson's service with the Knyphausen Regiment has been reconstructed from the unit rolls as they appear in HETRINA. I wish to thank Mr. David Williams, formerly of the History Department, University of New Hampshire, for aiding my compilation of data.


29 Gerald W. Mullin in *Flight and Rebellion*, (New York, 1972), notes the drain on the slave population in Virginia due to the presence of the British Army (p. 131). He also notes that slaves joined French units during the Yorktown Campaign (pp. 133-134). Robert McColley in *Slavery and Jeffersonian Virginia*, (Urbanna, 1964), says that Virginia lost about 33,000 slaves due to British operations, and adds that most of these people were sold as contraband in the West Indies (p. 82). He also observed (pp. 83-84) that the French hired blacks without investigating their status and then sheltered them from recapture.

30 HETRINA.


35 HETRINA, IV.

36 HETRINA.

37 The records indicate that these men were enlisted in America, but do not show what race they were. The internal
evidence of military occupations, plus that some are listed as having but one name, leads to the assumption that most were black. One cannot tell simply from the form of a name whether a soldier was black or white. Ludwig Deutes from Charleston, South Carolina, is clearly listed as a black drummer in the Rall Regiment, while Pohn Plymouth, a drummer in the Erbprinz Regiment, is not listed as black.

38 HETRINA, III.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.


43 Captain Heusler, ed., "The Brunswick Contingent in America, 1776-1783," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, (XV, 1891), 224. The number of blacks with the Brunswick troops, or other German forces, is not stated. The records of these contingents are mute. The Waldeck records in HETRINA show only one black servant. The total enlisted by all German forces might reach two hundred.


45 Ibid., p. 43.

46 Frey, p. 42.

47 "Diary of Lieutenant Lotheissen," Bancroft Collection, New York Public Library.

48 Mackenzie, I, p. 239.

49 John W. Jackson, With the British Army in Philadelphia, (San Rafael, 1979), p. 177.

50 Baurmeister, p. 90.

51 Ibid., p. 307.

52 Ibid., p. 130. Military medicine improved somewhat in the nineteenth century. In the Civil War 110,000 Northern soldiers died on the battlefield and 250,000 died of disease. It was not until the twentieth century that more men died in combat than by non-hostile causes.


57 Baurmeister, pp. 166-167,; HETRINA, IV.


59 Kipping, p. 9.

60 Krafft, p. 99.

61 Ibid., pp. 34-35.

62 Ibid., p. 36.

63 Ibid., p. 108.

64 Buettner, p. 64.


66 Krafft, p. 146.

67 Ibid., p. 164.

68 Frey, p. 90.

69 *Preussisches Staatsarchiv*, Marburg, Rep. 15A, number 196.

70 Kipping, p. 9.


72 *Preussisches Staatsarchiv*, Marburg, Rep. 15A, number 196.


74 Quoted in Frey, p. 117.

75 Ibid.

77 HETRINA, V.

78 Baroness, pp. xxx-xxix; Baurmeister, p. 327.


80 Krafft, p. 38.

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

83 HETRINA. The numbers of non-German foreigners seems to be few.

84 See Appendix Two: 13,961 dead and deserters out of 29,867 troops.
CHAPTER TEN

Images of America and the American Revolution

Hired for pay, they came to a war they did not know,
They did not know the climate, the Northern Sea
And they hardly knew the name of the Continent.

Johann Jakob Meyen 1787

In July 1776, after several weeks on the ocean sailing to America, the men of Johann Ewald's Jäger company began to swear that the ship had missed America altogether and had already sailed quite past it. No protests by the sailors could convince these men from central Germany that nobody could sail past the land mass. Ewald, an author of a well-received work on small unit tactics, did not have enough knowledge of America to dispell his men's fears. This incident, probably repeated on other ships, is an example of the lack of knowledge of America common to the German troops.¹

Most of the troops who fought in the American Revolution came from rural areas in the interior of Germany, areas displaying the greatest ignorance of the New World. The hundreds of thousands of Germans who flooded Pennsylvania and other areas generally came from the Rhineland and the Palatinate, two sections not part of any of the six states that sent troops. Surgeon Julius Friedrich Wasmus, who served with the Brunswick troops in Canada, commented on the
confusion of many soldiers: "The Spanish possessions in South America are called New Spain; our people often talk about this part of the world and firmly believe that Spain borders America, confusing the European and American Spain and assuming that it is possible to come by land from Spain to France and thence to Germany." The surgeon noted further that many deserters who tried to walk back to Germany were stymied upon reaching the banks of the St. Lawrence River.

Most of the literature available in Germany centered upon the Spanish Empire. More interaction with the English colonies came as a result of the Seven Years’ War, but it was not until 1776, with the hiring of troops, that "the eyes of almost all directed to this war." Many Germans had left home earlier in the century for new lives in the British colonies. Hundreds of thousands arrived in America and formed a sizeable portion of the American population, yet, most of the emigrants left Germany before 1750, and by 1776 there were few contacts left between Germans in America and their fatherland. Henry Steele Commager in his recent The Empire of Reason indicates that German intellectuals were grossly ignorant of American life. Augustus von Schölzer of Göttingen University was the recipient of many letters from German officers in America, but he was in no position to greatly enlarge the knowledge of conditions in America, except within a local area. Christopher Ebeling, who created the greatest library
of Americana in the world at Hamburg, did not gather most of his material until after the American Revolution. Although some German liberals closely monitored the progress of the Revolution, they, like their political foes, possessed little accurate information on the realities of America. Many German intellectuals decried the employment of German troops by the English, but their criticism had little or no effect upon the troops going to America. 4

Many historians have asserted that the German troops had absolutely no interest in the outcome of the war in America and were content to simply soldier as best they could and survive to return home. The German sovereigns who concluded treaties with Great Britain tried to influence public opinion in their territories by stating the necessity to uphold social order. The rebellion in America was represented by them from the British point of view. They portrayed the Americans as rebels who had illegally and arrogantly risen against their lawful king. They made the need to support the British cause to be unavoidable. Frederick II of Hesse-Cassel had a more concrete reason to fight: he had married the daughter of George II and had ties to the British throne. Even though public opinion in the other German territories was directed against the selling of Germans to fight for the British, this does not mean that many Germans saw the Revolution in a favorable light. It was one thing to criticize the hiring of mercenaries; it was quite another to approve the
idea of revolution. 5

The German officers who went to America, were a part of the intellectual community back home. A large proportion belonged to the lesser nobility, and due to their birth and education, they generally did not question the righteousness of the British cause. The military code demanded unquestioned loyalty to their sovereign in his political and military decisions. This loyalty influenced the officers' actions and thoughts, and was set forth as dogma to the rank and file. Quartermaster Christian Heusser of the Regiment von Lossberg began his journal with, "When, by great insults and revolts, the inhabitants of North America forced their legitimate sovereign, King George III of Great Britain, to take up arms against them, he hired a corps of 12,000 Princely Hessian troops." 6

Other journals voiced the same opinion. Of course, since these were official records there was no criticism or British or Germans motives in them. Some journals, however, make no political judgements and remain silent concerning the reasons for campaigning in America.

The private letters and diaries tell a similar story. German officers and enlisted men show little opposition to fighting in America, at least in print. One officer candidly reported that, "no one found fault with out going into the British service for pay." 7 The fighting in America offered a chance to get out of the dull garrison routine. Recruits filled the standing units before sailing to America. The militia-like garrison regiments had a much
larger proportion of citizen-soldiers. Even soldiers forced to enlist could find the opportunity for adventure in the New World enticing. One recruit later wrote:

I was taken under arrest to the fortress of Ziegenhain. Here I found companions in mistery, who had been collected from all over the country to be sent to America the next spring. I surrendered to my fate and tried to make the best of a bad situation...Finally I almost ceased to worry; one had to live somewhere, somehow. Where so many survived, I, too, would survive. Then, too, the idea of crossing the ocean was rather inviting for a young fellow, and on the other side there was undoubtedly something to see—or so I thought. 8

Yet, for many the temptation of adventure was not enough to bear the military service. Grenadier Stephan Popp recalled that he was glad to be out in the world, but that, "some for sorrow and dislike could hardly be consoled over the fact that they should be torn away from their parents. Wherever you looked you heard nothing but moaning and groaning." 9

The officers of each unit set out to crush the individualism of each recruit. Those who resisted military service faced the horrors of handcuffs, thumb-screws, heavy chains, canings, and repeated humiliations to break their will. Officers disciplined their men to make the recruits' only motive for living to escape punishment. The goal of the harsh conditions was to force the recruit to respect his unit and its colors—to make the regiment his only human identification. 10

The rank and file of the German forces represented a
wide cross-section of society. Johann Seume found his fellow comrades to be "another former student of Jena; a bankrupt merchant from Vienna; a lace maker from Hannover; a discharged mail clerk from Gotha; a monk from Wurzburg; a cashiered Hessian major from the fortress; and others of similar quality." This mass of humanity was generally well-disciplined. There is only one instance of recorded large-scale resistance to transport to America. In 1777, two regiments from Anspach-Bayreuth mutinied because some soldiers thought that they would have to cross the Atlantic on the small crowded canal boats that they had sailed down the Main River. The mutineers cowered at the prompt arrival of the margrave and docily re-embarked. However, most units reported desertions of several members before the regiments reached the transport ships.  

Some soldiers used transportation to America as an inexpensive method of emigration. Many men who intended to desert in America even brought their wives along as camp followers. The numbers who joined the mercenaries only to desert at the first opportunity cannot be determined, but by 1781, Colonel von Wurmb of the Hessian Jäger Corps warned that too many women arrived on each transport from Germany and that their husbands served only to desert at the first opportunity.  

A popular American concept is that many Germans enlisted just to desert. Desertion figures do not bear this out. Desertion was common on both sides during the Revolution,
but German desertion was not heavy during active campaigns, except for the sun-burned Monmouth actions. Recent studies show that the greatest number of desertions occurred in units interned after they had been captured at Trenton, Saratoga, and Yorktown, and right at the end of the war before units returned to Germany. Close contact between Americans and Germans, with Americans totally in control, was necessary to induce most Germans to desert. The prison camp dispelled ignorance of life in America.\textsuperscript{14}

Many Germans came to America with fanciful images of the New World in their minds. Some thought of America as the land of adventures and wonders. There were tales of vast deserts, wild men, malignant fevers, and semi-civilized descendents of Europeans.\textsuperscript{15} Baroness Riedesel heard that people in America ate horsemeat and cats. She was afraid of the strange country where she did not know the language.\textsuperscript{16} General Leopold von Heister's diary records his anxieties of campaigning in America:

> The order to fight was welcome to the war-minded Hessian, but the fate of a voyage across the sea and of a campaign on a foreign continent awakened anxious expectations. In the opinion of subordinate officials, the North Americans were cannibals, and a crossing of the Atlantic was rarely a happy one. This was true at a time when it was seldom decided to make a voyage at a moment's notice. One weighed the cause, made a decision, formally said farewell to his possessions, made his will, then locked the house and departed.\textsuperscript{17}

If the Germans had strange conceptions of life in America, they were reinforced by contacts with British
soldiers, who related degrading stories of Americans. One British officer in General Frasier's brigade at the Battle of Long Island admitted that, "we took care to tell the Hessians that the Rebels had resolved to give no quarters to them in particular, which made them fight desperately and put all to death that fell into their hands. You know all strategems are lawful in war, especially against such vile enemies to their King and country."\(^{18}\) Colonel von Heeringen of a Hessian grenadier battalion said that, "the English did not give much quarter, and constantly urged our people to do the like."\(^{19}\)

The results of the Battle of Long Island added to the Germans' conception of the worthlessness of their enemies. They had inflicted hundreds of casualties with only trifling losses. German officers mocked the Americans saying that the feeble defense was not what was expected of such "enthusiasts of Freedom." When attacked, Americans ran, "as all mobs do."\(^{20}\) The vaunted American riflemen fell before the prowess of their German counterparts—the green-coated Hessian Jäger Corps. The poor Americans took so long to load that Germans advanced and easily bayoneted them. Americans were taken prisoner, if only after falling on their knees and begging piteously for their lives, or some Germans remembered.\(^ {21}\)
From August, 1776 to the Battle of Trenton in December 1776 the Germans generally despised their foes—perhaps with good reason. Germans fought successfully in Manhattan, at White Plains, had forced the capture of Fort Washington, and chased the remnants of Washington's army across New Jersey. Germans described the Yankees during these months as peasants and rascals. American attacks on outposts incensed German officers. Colonel Johann August von Loos reported in September, 1776 that, "if they are all as bad as they were today, this will be more like a hunt than a war. But many a brave boy can be killed by these rascals, and that would be a shame."  

Contempt for Americans led directly to the Hessian disaster at Trenton. Colonel Johann Rall, disregarding the advice of his officers, treated American activities with scorn. He failed to post proper guards or fortify his exposed position. Washington's unexpected attack forced the surrender of three Hessian regiments and killed Rall. Doubt began to enter the minds of many Germans after the humiliation of Trenton.

The campaigns of 1777 believed the ease with which the Germans won victories the previous year. Germans made up almost half of Burgoyne's invasion from Canada. The long and difficult marches through the northern wilderness, the
bloody debacle at Bennington, and the surrender at Saratoga forced those Germans serving with Burgoyne to change their opinions of American will and strength. German officers who surrendered at Saratoga got their first close-up views of American soldiers. Even though the Americans had no uniforms, they all stood like soldiers, erect, with military bearing. They all had adequate weapons. During the surrender ceremonies the Germans were amazed that the Americans stood so still. No man turned to talk to his neighbor. All seemed slender, handsome, and well-formed; the Americans were generally larger than Europeans, surely a sign of superiority. The officers could hardly be told apart from their men, but all shared a common desire for victory. A German officer wrote: "You recognize at first glance the earnestness which has led them to seize their guns and powderhorns, and that—especially in engagements in the forest—it is no joke to oppose them, and that they can cold-bloodedly draw a bead on anyone. Quite seriously, the whole nation has much natural talent for war and military life."23

The Germans serving with Howe's army in the middle colonies, even though they met with no disaster such as Burgoyne's, also began to change their appreciation of American soldiers. Captain Johann Fwald felt that Americans
did not lack courage and that any man who fought against them could not speak of them with contempt. Ewald contrasted the contents of American officers' knapsacks he found on the battlefield, filled with books on warfare, with the contents of English and German officer's boxes—filled with hair powder, cards (instead of maps), and novels and stage plays.24

Colonel Johann von Loos felt by the end of 1777 that he had to lay aside his Hessian prejudice against Americans being poor soldiers. "Our losses prove that we were wrong...and if they had better officers...our job would be much tougher."25 Adjutant General Carl Baurmeister saw Americans as unyielding and fearless. American economic resources could not be blocked. He felt that Congress wielded absolute power over the American people and forced them to fight for their "indomitable ideas of liberty."26 Baurmeister recorded in his diary in January, 1777 the prophetic remark that Americans would exert themselves to the utmost to gain complete freedom. Even though the English had generally prevailed on the battlefield, nevertheless, final victory was doubtful.

The new appreciation of American determination in 1777 was followed by growing despair, especially after the Franco-American alliance. This bleak view of fighting in
America affected even the new recruits. Stephan Popp reported that when he landed on Staten Island in 1777 that his contingent was immediately "warned not to run away." Another German wrote home that he spent his first night in America in an old church, sleeping on the tombstones, "a beginning which gave us a real conception of the American war."28

Even though prospects for successful campaigning might be dim, the richness of the American landscape tempted the Germans, particularly the settled areas of New York and New Jersey. Many Germans fancied that the New World had to look much different than the Old, and were surprised to see fields, forests, gardens, and houses like those at home. Even most animals looked the same. Most of the hundreds of German records contain references to American prosperity. There was nothing useless or old in America, and certainly nothing dilapidated. "The houses are beautiful and are furnished in better taste than any we are accustomed to in Germany."29 The women were beautiful and the men handsome. The fine houses in New York seemed like palaces, all papered and expensively furnished. The land was incredibly fertile; the diversity and amount of crops struck the men from central Germany.

Quartermaster Bauer of the Grenadier Battalion von
Koehler thought that New Jersey was undoubtedly the most fertile and pleasant province in North America. "There are many fine farms here, which provide everything in abundance to feed the people. But there are not enough people in this province to cultivate the land sufficiently. It could feed four times the number it now feeds." 30

A German officer who reached New York in June 1777 wrote home that, "I must admit that in my whole life I never saw so beautiful a land, to judge by appearances, as we saw on both sides on entering the harbor—on the left New Jersey and on the right New York Island." 31 Several months before this, Johann Ewald made the same landing. "Everything was new to us and we liked it all." 32 Another German officer found New York a pleasant and pretty harbor town. The land inhabited by people who from luxury and sensuous pleasure did not know what to do with themselves. Only their pride brought on the rebellion. 33

Quartermaster Sartorius of the Erbprinz Regiment found Staten Island well cultivated and pleasant. He never saw anything like it before. The houses, all of white stone or stucco, resembled a military camp from a distance. 34

Germans found less desirable aspects of America. Baroness Riedesel thought Boston to be a pretty city, but inhabited by enthusiastic patriots who were wicked people.
Some women spat at her when she passed them in the streets. 35

Captain Hinrichs had at first written letters home full of descriptions of the beauty of America. When he reached Philadelphia in January 1778, he changed his tune. "My present notions of America depart greatly from those I expressed in my former letters...If the Honorable Count Pen would give me the country in exchange for my commission on conditions that I spend my life here, I should hardly do it." Then he added, "Nowhere have I found such a lot of madmen as here. 36 Two months later he expanded on the last thought. "Certain it is that there is no nation living in this good world, embracing such a hodge-podge of civilization and semi-barbarism and where therein is found side by side such learning and stupidity, virtue and vice, shortcomings and accomplishments as are to be found among the Pennsylvanians. 37 When his family wrote him concerning the possibility of his remaining in America after the end of the war, he replied, "I have given you the assurance, that I would never make my home in America. Though a world of bliss were here, yet I would not exchange therefor the converse of my dear friends in Europe." 38 Hinrichs, the scholar, found no one with whom to talk.

Germans found the South less desirable than the North. Johann Ewald turned up his nose at the areas around
Charleston, South Carolina. "I cannot say very much in favor of the part of Carolina that I have seen so far. It is marshland, very level, and cut up by swampy rivers, in which, as soon as it turns a little warmer, may be seen crocodiles sixteen feet long." 39

North or South, the American climate affected the European soldiers, who were used to more moderate temperatures. The sudden changes in temperature encountered throughout all seasons brought disease and death. Ewald noted in 1780 that hot days and cold nights in New York made the Germans, "die like flies." 40 Excessive heat caused a heavy loss in the retreat across New Jersey in June 1778. Ewald again. "Skirmishing continued the whole time. Many men collapsed and wretchedly lost their lives because of the enormous heat, the sandy ground, and the pathless woods, with no water to be found on the whole march." 41 Reports placed the temperature during the Battle of Monmouth at 96 degrees Fahrenheit.

Quartermaster Lotheisen wrote about his regiment at King's Bridge, at the northern tip of Manhattan, on June 29, 1778: "The heat was so enormous today that almost the whole regiment was sick. When the colors arrived at the spot where we were to camp, we did not have enough men for a color guard. Many soldiers fainted that day and some of them
died on the spot. We never had greater heat during the American war."  

Still, in spite of the heat and of conditions in the tidal South, Germans were astonished by the wealth and property of America and saw it as extending across the continent. The seemingly limitless wealth brought the possibility of freeing the personality, of creating a new race of Europeans. And what would the soldiers find back in Germany? Farming was depressed in the eighteenth century and taxes were rising. Handicrafts had fallen on hard times. Many thought that Germany offered little for ambitious young people. 

The problem for the Hessians was that America was too prosperous. Some soldiers felt that those back home who thought that Americans had good cause for rebellion ought to come and see how good conditions actually were. The meanest man here could live like the richest in Germany. If riches were so abundant, how could there be good reason for rebelling against the King? One officer admitted that he had been at first inclined towards the American cause, but that he had no further wishes for them. They were too prosperous to be unhappy in the British Empire. He saw ingratitude as the basic American trait. The British had defended them in the colonial wars, while they sat back.
Resistance to taxation was only a pretext. The rebellion had been conceived in New England by the Puritans and Presbyterians there who hated the King’s authority. Yankees were a crafty and deceitful folk who wore a mask of holiness. Another officer wrote to Professor Schlözer that, "you know the Huguenot wars in France; what religion was there, liberty is here, simply fanaticism, and the effects are the same." Johann Hinrichs spent much time and thought analyzing the state of affairs in America. "Call this war, dearest friend, by whatsoever name you may, only call it not an American Rebellion, it is nothing more nor less than an Irish-Scotch Presbyterian Rebellion." These people fostered the rebellion, along with the infamous Quakers, who led the rebellion in Pennsylvania. There were really two rebellions in America, Hinrichs mused. "The former was formenting fifty years ago. It was the result of a state projected upon false principles, whose citizens consisted of seemingly hypocritical pious imposters, and downright cheats. These hypocrits are the Quakers." The Quakers could be capable of abominable sins, of malice, envy, ambition to power, even though cloaked in the guise of religion. The Quakers attracted German immigrants and then swindled them. The second rebellion was that of the independence movement.
The original leaders had disappeared and now scoundrels run Congress. American soldiers fought on only because they do not want to become serfs again. 46

Carl Baurmeister also saw the leaders of Congress as wielding the reins of power. "Good for nothing and unimportant as most of these men may have been before these disturbances (because they were incompetent and without wealth) they now resort to every means, for more than one reason, to weaken the rich and the loyalists within and stubbornly resist the English without." Baurmeister wrote these comments in January 1777. He added that, "the Americans will exert themselves to the utmost to gain complete freedom, and they are by no means conquered." 47

Germans noted the destruction brought on Americans by the effects of the war. "It is likely, however, that this vexatious war will terminate by making America probably the most desolate country in the world and proving very expensive for England, too," Baurmeister wrote in 1779. 48

When Johann Hinrichs operated in the Kingsbridge area in September 1776, he guarded the empty houses that fleeing Americans had left behind. When they returned and found their possessions safe, most praised this Hessian and his men. Hinrichs soon received a wound near his heart in a nameless skirmish. The Americans nursed him. He had much
criticism for the British troops, in that, "seldom or never
did I find a house with the inhabitants in it where war
and the wantoness of the English had not ruined
everything."  \(^{49}\)

The Germans found little support from German immigrants
who preceded them to America. Johann Ewald found in
Pennsylvania that:

> the inhabitants are mostly Germans
> but are against us, the most ill-
> natured people in the world, who
> could hardly conceal their anger
> and hostile sentiments. One old
> lade, who was sitting on a bench
> before her front door, answered me
> in pure Palatine German when I rode
> up to her and asked for a glass of
> water. 'Water I will give you, but
> I must also ask you: what harm have
> we people done to you, that you Germans
> come over here to suck us dry and drive
> us out of house and home? We have heard
> enough here of your murderous burning.
> Will you do the same here as in New York
> and in the Jersies? You shall get your
> pay yet!'  \(^{50}\)

When the Convention Army reached Lancaster, Pennsylvania
after its march from Boston in 1779, the Brunswick soldiers
found that Pennsylvania Germans lived like those at home. But
they treated the captives very poorly. "We were ashamed of
being Germans, because we never had met much meanness in one
spot as from our countrymen."  \(^{51}\)

Lieutenant Piel, in confinement in Winchester, Virginia,
found a different type of German, one who had left the
Fatherland far behind. "The inhabitants are English, Scottish, Dutch, and Germans, the last being the most numerous. They have adapted such a mixture of language that it is difficult to understand them, no matter whether they speak English or German."\(^{52}\)

Still, many soldiers found wives among German-American girls. In the winter of 1777-1778, one German chaplain married a hundred girls to soldiers in Southwark, Pennsylvania.\(^{53}\) These wives then became camp followers when the troops moved back to New York that summer.

Not all romance was confined to the German language. August Moritz Wilhelm von der Heydte married Henriette Hopson in Philadelphia and brought her back to Anspach, where she bore him a son and together they founded the Bavarian house of that aristocratic family.\(^{54}\)

Germans found the ambiguities of North American society present in Canada as well. One Brunswick officer found that, "many inhabitants of this parish are serving with the rebels; among them is a habitant named Nugent, who eight years ago was a hairdresser in Montreal, but now is the high and mighty colonel of a regiment of Bostonians."\(^{55}\) Another officer added that there were no libraries in Canada and that Canadians were blockheads.\(^{56}\)

The Germans were tasked to work closely with the
Canadian militia to provide defense for Quebec. Many petty annoyances developed between Germans and Canadians, and some major ones as well. German officers wanted to billet more troops in private homes than the Canadians thought they could accommodate. Some militia officers wanted all the Germans removed. Germans stole food and sometimes fought with civilians. They also ran up debts. There were officers who antagonized the militia by making demands on them to serve the comfort of the German troops. Lieutenant Colonel Creutzbourg of the Hesse-Hanau Regiment became the particular offender after he took a horse from a local militia captain. Creutzbourg claimed that no man controlled him, but the incident reached General Haldiman's attention, who issued a reprimand.57 This friction between Germans and Canadians was matched by friction between Germans and loyalists in the United States.

Some Germans could readily differentiate between loyalists and patriots, and some contrasted the two groups. Ewald recorded this dialogue he had with a lukewarm loyalist in Virginia in January 1781. Why would the man not help to raise troops? Because of the uncertainty of continued British military presence.

How can you be called friends of the King if you won't venture anything for the right cause? Look at your Opposition Party:
they abandon wife, child, house, and home, and let us lay waste to everything. They fight without shoes and clothing with all passion, suffer hunger, and gladly endure all the hardships of war. But you loyalists won't do anything! You only want to be protected, to live in peace in your houses. We are supposed to break our bones for you, in place of yours, to accomplish your purpose. We attempt everything, and sacrifice our own blood for your assumed cause.

After Ewald cooled down he realized that the man would have been a fool to act as Ewald wanted. He was worth $50,000 and had a charming blonde wife. 58

Ewald well knew the determination of the patriots, for in March 1778 he remarked that the forcible American recruitment could only be practiced under a despotic government. Loyalists reported to him that the Americans had hanged several fathers in front of their houses for letting their sons escape military service. Ewald believed this to be true and remarked that the Americans had never experienced anything like this under the gentle yoke of the English government. 59

As previously noted, the most German journals indicate the disdain the writers had for the American troops early in the war. The Hessians held the Americans in contempt because of the use of hit and run raids and because armed civilians fought alongside of American regulars. 60 When the American troops surrendered at Fort Washington, the
Germans cast aspersions upon the men and their colors.  

The Americans still could prove dangerous, and their militia could not be ruled out, because these men became dangerous spies in occupied areas, attacked outposts to keep the British in constant alarm, and harassed the loyalists after the British moved on.

One German felt the Continentals were true slaves of Congress and that the effects of levying soldiers were as bad in America as in Europe. The regular American troops seemed to be made up of two major population groups. The Scots-Irish made up one group, being poor folk gathered from all nations and who lived in cabins in the mountains. These people had no discipline, but ran wild. The German immigrants made up the second group. Most of these people came from the areas of the Rhine and Main Rivers and only fought to procure booty and plunder the loyalists. The German added: "Who would have thought a hundred years ago that out of this multitude of rabble would arise a people who could defy kings and enter into a close alliance with crowned heads."

Grenadier Stephan Popp, in the attack on Elizabethtown in 1780, noted the Americans' discipline. "They retreated very well, as soldiers know how." Lieutenant Rueffer felt that obstinant defense by Americans was due to the
generals and officers telling the men that they would be hanged if captured. Captain Ewald added that, "he who served against this nation will be convinced (of American courage) and will not be able to speak of them with contempt." Johann Hinrichs felt that the Americans displayed great courage, enhanced by the enthusiasm engendered by falsehood and vagaries, "which are drilled into them, so that it requires time and good leadership to make them formidable."

Ewald, captured at Yorktown, had his first chance to see the American army up close and found the Continentals as disciplined as English regiments. He hit upon a great difference between the opposing sides: "I can assert with much truth that the American officer, like his soldier, hates his foes more than we do." He then went on, "with what soldiers in the world could one do what was done by these men, who go about nearly naked and in the greatest privation. Deny the best-disciplined soldiers of Europe what is due them and they will run away in droves, and the general will soon be alone. But from this one can perceive what an enthusiasm—which these poor fellows call 'Liberty'--can do!" Ewald came very close to the mark in his analysis of the meaning and strength of the American Revolution.
Respect for Americans as soldiers became marked after the first year of the war. In March 1780 the Jägers captured a mortally wounded American sergeant in South Carolina. The Germans told the sergeant that his wound was mortal. "Well, then, I die for my country and for its just cause.' Captain Hinrichs handed him a glass of wine. He drank it down with relish and died like a man."69

Liberty could bring men to do all sorts of questionable acts. Upon hearing of the death of the American General Pulaski, Ewald remarked, "It is a pity that this great man and courageous soldier had sullied his reputation in the history of his country through the conspiracy against his king."70 The German forgot that Pulaski was a Pole and not an Englishman. He failed to see the distinction between his own situation and that of Pulaski.

Some American officers and politicians had favorable reputations, even in the early stages of the war. Carl Baurmeister wrote in 1776 that, "Generals Washington and Putnam are praised by friend and foe alike, but all their mastery in war will be of no avail with the mob of conscripted, undisciplined troops. The two Adamses are men of excellent judgement, who have so far promoted the rebellion with the assistance of the wealthy Hancock and other equally rich merchants."71 Friedrich Muenchhausen
added, "Washington is a devil of a fellow." 72

Another German saw the American cause and its adherents in a positive light. He studied the pontoon bridge crossing Lake Champlain at Fort Ticonderoga and noted that the rebels worked on it, "with unfailing courage." He added: "It is well worth mentioning this fact, such perseverance is seldom found in history, except in a republic, where a general participation in a common cause would inspire and hold it. It is rarely, if ever, found in monarchies." 73

In the final evaluation of German images of the American Revolution and America one must keep in mind that as military opponents, it was difficult for Germans to have unbiased views. Germans came in ignorance and left with a variety of interpretations of the American struggle. Because they were ideological adversaries of the American war, they could not adequately assess its background. Even most Americans may not have understood the full meaning of liberty and independence.

As contact between Germans and Americans grew, the attitude of the German common soldiers changed. One out of six remained behind in the new republic; but the ideas of most of the officers relative to the struggle for independence remained firm. The persistent American propaganda, the
the defiant attitude of Americans who supported the cause of liberty, the guerilla tactics of the American soldiers, and the defeats all embittered German officers. Few stayed in America. They could look upon Americans as being worthy opponents, but they could never support a government that differed so radically from the privileged order at home.

Chapter Notes:

3 Ibid., p. 8.
4 A fine source is Henry Steele Commager, *The Empire of Reason*, (New York, 1977).
11 Seums, p. 556.
12 Popp, pp. 1-2; Greene, pp. 203-204.
13 Quoted in Kipping, p. 7.
14 Such are the conclusions of Clifford Neal Smith in his series concerning German prisoners of war and desertion rates.
See the German-American Research Monographs 1-3, DeKalb, Ill., 1974-1979.


17 Quoted in Kipping, p. 13.


20 Ibid., p. 64.

21 Ibid., p. 67.

22 Quoted in Kipping, p. 22.


25 Quoted in Kipping, p. 9.


27 Popp, p. 5.

28 Pettengill, pp. 164-165.

29 Baurmeister, p. 45.


32 Ewald, p. 8.

33 Pettengill, pp. 165-166.

34 Kipping, p. 13.

35 Baroness Riedesel, p. 70.

Johann Heinrichs, "Extracts from the Letter-Book of Captain Johann Heinrichs of the Hessian Jäger Corps," The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, XXII, 2, 1898, 141. The captain's name is generally given as Hinrichs.

Ibid., p. 162.

Ewald in Charleston, p. 29.

Quoted in Kipping, p. 19.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Pettengill, pp. 228-230.


Baurmeister, p. 146.

Ibid., p. 281.


Ewald, p. 91.


John W. Jackson, With the British Army in Philadelphia, (San Rafael, 1979), p. 83.

Stadtler, p. 33.

Pettengill, p. 33.

Ibid., p. 53.


Ewald, pp. 286-287.
59 Ibid., p. 122.
60 Kipping, p. 21.
61 Lowell, p. 83.
62 Hinrichs, "Extracts," p. 139.
63 Ewald, p. 341.
64 Popp, p. 16.
65 Kipping, pp. 21-22.
66 Lowell, p. 226.
67 Hinrichs, Extracts, p. 139.
68 Ewald, p. 339.
69 Ibid., p. 214.
70 Ibid., p. 209.
71 Baurmeister, p. 40.
72 Munchhausen, p. 16.
73 Du Roi, p. 98.
CHAPTER ELEVEN

German Stigma: Plunder and Cruelty

"If you was one frynd to the Koning," said Lieutenant Hastendudenrot of the Trumbrick regiment, "you vas gif me your vatch; if you vas one repell, by Got I take it."

The Advéntures of Johathan Corncob, 1787

In March 1780 Grenadier Stephan Popp crossed into New Jersey with his Anspach regiment to raid Hackensack, a quiet settlement some sixteen miles from Manhattan. The joint British and German force reached the town at night, dispersed throughout the streets, and proceeded to take prisoner every male they found. The troops broke into all the houses, stole whatever caught their fancy, and then burned the town to the ground. Popp took "worthwhile booty, both in money, silver and other chattle."¹ Other Germans took away silver watches, silver dishes and spoons, household goods, clothes, linen, silk stockings, gloves, satins, and silk. Popp's comrade Conrad Doehla stole a large amount of trinkets:

My own booty, which I brought safely back, consisted of two silver watches, three sets of silver buckles, a pair of women's cotton stockings, two shirts and four chemises of fine English linen, two fine tablecloths, one silver tablespoon, and one teaspoon, five Spanish dollars and six York shillings in money. The other part, viz., eleven

-445-
pieces of fine linen and over two dozen silk handkerchiefs, with six silver plates and a silver drinking mug, which were tied together in a bundle, I had to throw away on account of our hurried march, and leave them to the enemy that was pursuing us.  

Private Doehla certainly showed good taste in his plunder. The tablecloths, women's stockings, and chemises could either be given to female friends, sold or traded in New York for additional income, or simply destroyed out of spite. Doehla vividly describes one all too common reaction of Germans and British troops to conditions in America.

According to many British accounts, the Hessians were the most wanton plunderers, because they had been accustomed to taking what they wanted in European wars and had been told that they might be able to do the same thing in America.  

This is too simple an answer, although it is probably true as far as it goes to explain the Germans' motivations. Plunder and warfare go hand in hand. This is as true in the twentieth century as in the eighteenth. Violence and death obliterate the traditional respect for private property and soldiers are often led to commit violence on every level, abusing civilians and destroying non-military possessions as the frustrations of long and confusing wars come to a crisis. Private Doehla may well have stolen not to resell his plunder, but rather to vent his rage at a situation that he could not control.

The need for plunder and violence against civilians seems to stem from two sources. The first is the traditional looting that took place in all European military operations.
European soldiers for centuries had looted captured towns and camps and used this plunder to better their own conditions—either by sale or trade, or by personal use. Thus plunder becomes for a soldier what capturing a prize on the seas was for a sailor—a way to increase pay and benefits. A victory would bring plunder and became a concrete purpose for fighting for a man who otherwise had little reason to fight on. Further, the raping of women falls into this category—of reducing a woman to an object of pleasure to be had after a long siege or bloody battle.

The second reason for plunder and violence comes out of the soldiers' need to revenge himself on the enemy, a need expressed particularly in times of frustration against a population with whom the soldier does not identify. The many examples of British and German destruction and violence can be seen against a background of a long war that included few victories. The Germans did not feel similar to Americans; the different language and political and social ideas kept the Germans from identifying with their foes. They could therefore commit violence upon the Americans with little remorse. These traits are not confined historically to European mercenaries. They are found in all American wars. A similar example of frustration leading to mindless destruction is the looting that took place prior to the Battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862 when the hapless Army of the Potomac occupied that Virginia town. Frustration in the face of a foreign culture led to violence against
men and women who cannot defend themselves.

The Hessians began plundering as soon as they landed on Long Island. They and their redcoat allies caused so much destruction that many Americans turned against William Howe and blocked attempts at reconciliation. Germans could not tell Loyalist from Patriot, to the detriment of Sir William's policy of restraint and caution. But the Germans were not the only, nor perhaps the chief, plunderers in an army of mixed European and American origins. A German officer in Manhattan in 1780 noted the quite local military activity, but dwelt at length in a letter home about the exploits of the Johnsons and Butlers on the frontier, busily burning, murdering, and plundering and conducting whatever "little war-plays" there may be and making themselves terrible to the inhabitants.  

Plunder often went hand in hand with the need to keep healthy. Many Canadians accused the Brunswickers of pillaging in Laprarie in the summer of 1776. General Riedesel issued strict rules to end the stealing. He instituted a market day at Sorel, required the inhabitants to sell meat and vegetables, and carefully watched the transactions. Because some of his men came down with dysentery, he ordered them to clean up their camps. The orders and the discipline worked; the sickness declined and the men no longer felt that they had to steal to get food to which they otherwise had no access.  

Other plunderers were clearly just frustrated men who
did not need to steal what they took. The Waldeck Regiment committed many excesses in Manhattan in October 1776 because they had captured General Charles Lee's supply of wine and spirits, but General Howe had it spilled out on the road. The angry men took out their vengeance on local inhabitants.7

The Germans did bring an unstated code with them from Europe concerning their right to plunder. Johann Ewald led his Jäger company across New Jersey in November 1776 and he debated in his own mind the need for pillaging. "To be sure, I could plunder these prosperous inhabitants according to our rules, but to convince these people that there were humane persons in our army, and to invite their good will and gratitude, I gave them every protection, and they forfeited nothing by my visit but several dozen chickens and one young ox."8

Later that month Ewald's company and that of Captain Wreden captured a black slave who told them of a plantation near Newark containing wine and beer and having several Americans nearby. The Jägers had had only water for a long time and so drew up plans to capture the spirits. Wreden and Ewald took twelve men and the black and surprised the plantation. They threatened an old lady, who admitted that American soldiers had recently camped nearby. The Jägers loaded two wagons full of beer and wine and then discovered the footprints of Americans in the mud. Wreden and Ewald captured two sentries using just their sabres. The rest of the riflemen ran into an American detachment, who fired one
volley before beating a quick retreat. "This stroke taught
us novices in the art of partisan warfare what resoluteness
can do," Ewald recalled. He took thirty volunteers "whose
hearts were now strengthened with wine and beer" and set
out to find more Americans. They could not find any. 9

Abuse of alcohol went along with plundering. When the
Jägers, Hessian grenadiers, and some Scots pushed into
Mount Holly, New Jersey in December 1776 they plundered
the entire town, found a supply of wine, and drank until
"the entire garrison was drunk." The Jägers were stationed
in a part of town that was dry, but the grenadiers brought
so much wine to them that by midnight most were very drunk
and the officers had a difficult time keeping the men from
wandering off. 10 On another occasion Ewald led twenty
Jägers and twenty dragoons to seize a patriot civilian.
They found his house and family, but he had escaped. They
did not plunder the house, but brought off forty-five
bottles of madiera to share back at camp. Even Ewald drank
some—for once. 11

The Hessians created much hatred in New Jersey,
probably more so than the British. Both Britons and Germans
disregarded British orders of protection given to loyal
inhabitants. Four Hessians went to a Quaker's house and
saw that the man had an order of protection. They stole the
hat off the top of the man's head; the Quaker promptly
knocked down the leader of the Hessians. The other three
beat him up and kept the hat. Later, soldiers from a column
of British troops stole a mare and four hogs, even though there were high ranking British officers present.\textsuperscript{12}

The British command in New Jersey boarded soldiers in civilians' houses. One farmer had to put up with one hundred and seventy unwelcome guests, who, when they marched on, paid only twenty shinnings for £50 damage.\textsuperscript{13} After the Battle of Trenton, civilians found that the tables had turned. One farmer took two Hessians prisoner with only a pitchfork. He captured one in his barn and set his dog on the other as the soldier tried to run away. These two Hessians were probably exhausted survivors of the battle.\textsuperscript{14}

The dual defeats of Trenton and Princeton led to the abandonment of most of New Jersey. But before the troops marched eastward, both the British and Hessians plundered the packs of their own troops, taking what they wanted and leaving the rest in the dirt.\textsuperscript{15}

The stigma attached to the Hessians as being plunderers was never greater than in the Trenton campaign. Some of this was due to American exaggeration, building upon the fierce reputation that had preceded the Germans. Yet, Washington Irving, a historian who researched the Hessians on several occasions, remembered his mother saying that the Hessians quartered in their house in Rahway were very kind.\textsuperscript{16} The Irvings were not Loyalists.

By January 1777 the British army retreated into its shell of fortifications around Manhattan, where it remained, for the most part, for the next six years. All supplies
had to reach New York by sea, and both men and animals suffered from lack of fresh or abundant food. Johann Ewald led foraging operations to bring in sufficient fodder for the horses, but most of these small operations ran into Americans and Ewald found that "we could not procure any forage without shedding blood."

Ewald had been assigned a fine house, isolated on a hill, along the road between New Brunswick and Trenton, facing the enemy. He had the apple trees and peach orchard cut down on the side facing the Americans and placed the trees to blockade three entrances into the property. The Germans stayed there just overnight. By the end of the war such actions made northern New Jersey appear like a desert.

The small unit raids continued throughout the winter of 1776-1777, but were curtailed after supplies had been sent in great quantities from New York. Ewald felt that the raids would have eventually bled the British white.

When the British advanced westward in June 1777 to dislodge Washington's army, they marked homes of known patriots for destruction. Ewald counted fifty burning houses that had first been ravaged. British and German officers noted many symptoms of disposition to plunder among the troops; William Howe sent a message to General Heister to warn his men not to persist in committing outrages, saying that they would be severely punished if caught. Howe sent similar messages to British commanders,
down to brigade level. On one occasion, a Hessian officer turned in several British soldiers he caught plundering a farm. The court martial showed that Hessians had also been involved and that there was a Hessian guard post next door to the house plundered who had done nothing to stop the plundering.

The soldiers cannot be completely faulted for their actions. When official policy proclaimed that houses of patriots might be burned, the distinction between who was a patriot and who was not became blurred. All civilians suffered, and loyalist strength declined.

German discipline seems to have restrained participation in plundering and burning in the Philadelphia campaign. People left their homes when they caught sight of the British fleet in Chesapeake Bay, leaving homes free for the taking. The English soldiers began to plunder, and, in desperation, Howe hanged several men caught in the act, but in turn issued an order thanking the men of Donop's grenadier brigade and von Wurmb's Jäger Corps for observing the necessary discipline. German officers all said that the English were the greatest sinners in this campaign, but Général Knyphausen had ten men of Stirn's brigade run the gauntlet as punishment for looting.

As the troops moved northward towards Philadelphia, they ran into a new type of protection document—a paper printed in English and German to be signed by the British army. The men had never seen such a document before and
so brought copies to their officers, who investigated the
document. It turned out to be printed by the Americans, an
ominous sign that American leaders were aware of the move-
ments of the British army and could prepare for contingencies
in advance. 24

John Andre complained of Hessian conduct. On August
31st some Hessians on baggage guard demolished a whole flock
of sheep which the owners were voluntarily driving to the
army. Andre listened to many American complaints about the
plundering by the troops, complaints particularly about
Germans. 25 Some Britons agreed that the Germans were chiefly
at fault. Howe's secretary noted, "Hessians are more
infamous and cruel than any," and then lamented that they had
ever been hired. 26

The Jäger Corps would answer that they needed to plunder
in order to survive. Ewald described one patrol along the
Maryland-Pennsylvania border:

We found waist-high grass, oxen, sheep,
turkeys, and all kinds of wild fowl.
Since we did not find any of the enemy,
we skirmished with these animals, of
which so many were killed that the entire
Corps was provided with fresh provisions. 27

Germans loved to forage. A hundred Hessians left
Philadelphia and marched to Pembarton Plantation, swarming
over the area, digging up potatoes, turnips, and other
vegetables. Ten soldiers would take over a garden and
threaten the owner, saying that there was enough food for
all. The next day the soldiers would be seen selling
vegetables in the Market House. But this was petty thieving
when compared to that of the British soldiers who took over abandoned houses in the city and then sold them to loyalists and refugees, making off with all the payment. 28

German officers ordered the soldiers to purchase food from civilians, rather than steal it. The Regiment von Mirbach issued orders giving thirty strokes with a stick on the backside as punishment for men caught stealing food. The Germans found that looting took place among recruits, rather than among original members of the First and Second Divisions. The Regiment von Mirbach watched its recruits very carefully. One company commander prohibited cutting down fruit trees and the ripping up of fences and abandoned houses for firewood. 29

Ewald described the destruction of Richard Morris' Italian-style home located on the banks of the Schuylkill in November 1777. The soldiers pulled the entire house down for huts and then cut the fruit trees for firewood. 30

In December the British advanced against Washington, but could not catch the Americans. The army marched back towards Philadelphia, setting fire to nearby houses and barns.

But since the regiments had already set fire to several houses (Cresheim and Beggarstown), the conflagration was so great that the Jägers and rangers could scarcely get through. The sight was horrible. The night was very dark. The blazing flames spread about with all the swiftness and the wind blew violently. The cries of human voices of the young and old, who had seen their belongings consumed by the flames without saving
anything, put everyone in a melancholy mood. 32

The Germans and British continued to forage, mounting expeditions from Philadelphia. Conrad Doehla took part in what he described as walking tours to nearby Germantown and Frandford, where the men went hunting or gathered in hay. The officers bought most of the hay and the enlisted men went out to guard the hay wagons. When the wagons returned to Philadelphia, they looked like a caravan, often two or three hundred wagons following each other very closely. The main load consisted of hay, straw, and grain, but the soldiers also brought in chickens, geese, pigs, and other animals. "It was often funny to see the Negroes (who were by the wagons) with solemn intentions leading the horses to the hay wagons--with the bridle in the right hand, but carrying under the left arm one or two young pigs which were grumbling about the hard times and their fate and loudly crying." 33

Foraging parties could often end quite differently than the British and Germans planned. John McCasland, a Pennsylvania frontiersman serving in the militia, set out with a small group of soldiers in February 1778 "to prevent the Hessians from plundering and destroying property." He led sixteen men to a mansion in Bucks County and found a large Hessian standing guard in the yard. The Americans cast lots to see who would shoot the German. McCasland won:

I did not like to shoot a man down in cold blood... I concluded to break his thigh. I shot with a rifle and
aimed at his hip. He had a large iron tobacco box in his breeches pocket, and I hit the box, the ball glanced, and it entered his thigh and scaled the bone of the thigh on the outside. He fell and then rose. We scaled the yard fence and surrounded the house. They saw their situation and were evidently disposed to surrender. They could not speak English, and we could not understand their language. At length one of the Hessians came out of the cellar with a large bottle of rum and advanced with it at arm's length as a flag of truce.\cite{34}

The Americans took twelve men prisoners and marched them back to Valley Forge.

The raids went on back and forth until the British evacuated Philadelphia in June. When the Germans received orders to march, "Hereupon the soldiers indulged in a scene which was cruel and ridiculous to behold. Everything in the rooms was thrown out of the windows, and other endless confusion ensued.\"\cite{35} Sergeant Krafft found on June 19th that "this night, during the fire watch, I received 9 soldiers in arrest who had killed cattle, + also 2 English grooms.\"\cite{36} As the army retreated across New Jersey, Krafft noted that the English destroyed as they marched along, but the Germans did not, because the officers did not allow it. He did add, that much plundering did go on on the sly.\cite{37}

Johann Ewald retreated with his company through Bordentown, New Jersey, where he had made friends with Mr. Lewis in December 1776. Lewis was not a loyalist, but the two men had become friends in spite of their political views. Suddenly Lewis' house and barn caught fire and burned down in front of Ewald's eyes. "I felt doubly bad because I had
spoken with a servant from the house shortly before it was set on fire, and had promised to provide them protection. 38

The destruction committed by the soldiers could sometimes be controlled by their officers. The men tended to take part in total destruction if any sort of restraining was removed by commanding officers. For example, General Pigott ordered the corn and cattle of a farmer named Taggart siezed after he left Newport to join the Americans in October 1777. The cattle were given out to the troops, the corn went into the supply magazine, and Taggart's house was given to the Hessians. They promptly plundered it of all valuables and then pulled it down. 39

In a similar fashion, a company of German chasseurs marched to Phillip's Manor in Yonkers in September 1778 and cleaned out a potatoe field they found along the road. The men began secretly slaughtering beef and pigs, because they wanted to add to their field rations of salt port, crackers, and rum. The civilians complained to the officers, but the officers ignored the complaints. Seeing that they could get away with plundering, the men began to rob the deserted houses, although this was against orders, and, when the deserted houses had been stripped, they plundered the occupied homes. 40

In June 1779 Johann Ewald reached a house in Peekskill where he had posted a sergeant and a detail of guards. "But I found that much of the woodwork had bee.n ruined or burned. Thereupon I punished the non-commissioned officer with the
flat of my broadsword." Just as Ewald struck the sergeant, two American riflemen fired, narrowly missing the two Hessians. The German sentries must have carefully watched their captain's rage, for no one saw the Americans come or go. Ewald's corporal punishment, a staple of Hessian discipline, almost cost him his life.41

The soldiers in Manhattan conducted raids throughout Westchester County and eastern New Jersey throughout the war. Most of these raids had the object of stealing fresh food and bringing it to British lines. By the end of the war, these two areas had been picked clean by the British and Americans. Settled agriculture, well-maintained farms, and general pursuits of peace had all broken down. Successful raids brought food and recreation for the men and profits for the officers. In May 1779 soldiers from the British Light Infantry approached the Jäger colleagues with a petition to Sir Henry Clinton requesting participation in raiding parties. The light troops had been quiet all winter and did not have the opportunity to make money by plundering. They had to spend their own unit funds to pay for spies and guides and they needed to replenish their coffers before they could take to the field for summer duty. Headquarters replied that the light troops needed rest and that regular infantry troops needed the practice of conducting raids. Johann Ewald felt that this decision was a result of court intrigue at headquarters--that easy and valuable expeditions were plums to be given to friends and
that permission to raid depended upon one's contacts within the British powers that be. 42

Cruelty

Pillaging made up only part of the Germans' reputation as heartless European mercenaries. The Germans also stand accused of killing prisoners and mistreating American civilians; as in the case of their reputations as plunderers, this accusation has merit. Grenadier Stephan Popp fought from house to house in Springfield, New Jersey in June 1780. The Anspachers drove the Americans out of town. "The place was put to the torch and not even a pig-sty was left standing. About a hundred men had taken refuge in the church, but they had to burn with it. Their pleas for life were moving, but it did not help them." 43 Americans probably did burn to death in the Springfield church as Popp describes, but certainly not the hundred that he imagined. 44 The fact remains that the Germans resorted toroasting men alive in a minor skirmish in New Jersey. Lace and fancy uniforms could cover a soldier far removed from gallant imagery.

To say that war begets cruelty and indifference to human life and dignity is just about as cold a statement as can be written. It is nonetheless true. Plati tudes may convey the truth of human conduct, but they are bloodless and lifeless. Midshipman Bartholomew James of HMS Orpheus came ashore after the Battle of Long Island and came face to
face with the dark side of humanity. "As soon as the firing ceased from the ships I was sent in the barge to tow on shore the flatboats, when curiosity led me to follow the army through the works, where I saw a Hessian sever a rebel's head from his body and clap it on a pole in the intrenchments." 45

American soldiers died on Long Island after they tried to surrender, although the great proportion of casualties there can be explained by an amateur army being soundly beaten by European regulars who were incited by their officers. An English officer in General Frazier's battalion admitted that the officers prepared their men to destroy the Americans:

The Hessians and our brave Highlanders gave no quarters; and it was a fine sight to see with what alacrity they dispatched the Rebels with their bayonets after we had surrounded them so that they could not resist...Our loss was nothing. We took care to tell the Hessians that the Rebels had resolved to give no quarters to them in particular, which made them fight desperately and put to death all that fell into their hands. You know all stratagems are lawful in war, especially against such vile enemies to their King and country. 46

German officers noted that the English took no prisoners and urged that the Germans do the same. 47 The Hessians had been in America just over a week when they fought on Long Island and believed what the English said to
be true.

However, most of the thousand men that Washington lost on Long Island were taken prisoner. Most survived the process of being taken prisoner. Although some Americans painted their German captors as being friends incarnate, others felt that the Germans treated Americans better than the British. British soldiers insulted American officers and gave all prisoners poor rations before confining them in the dreaded prison hulks. Hessian soldiers often guarded the Americans; some took pity on their condition and gave them apples and even fresh beef. 48

Ichobod Perry, a young Connecticut soldier, encountered a reversed situation. He persuaded a British guard to fill his wicker covered glass water bottle, "but one of the Hessians, who was at the pump, found out who it belonged to, struck it with the breach of his gun, and broke it." 49

The Hessians' reputations for cruelty reached the zenith after the Battle of Long Island, whether especially deserved or not. The Brunswickers in Canada heard that, "The Hessians are reported to have slaughtered terribly on some occasions and been unwilling to grant quarters because they met with difficulty in getting their prisoners exchanged." 50 Did such mistreatment and murder really take place? Yes; many Hessian troops were involved.
Midshipman James was sent with a ship's barge to Manhattan just after the Hessians and British landed on that island in September 1776. He had been ordered to tow away several American flatboats, but once ashore he and his crew decided to pick up some souvenirs—muskets, swords, canteens, and the like. A boat from his ship, the Orpheus, saw them, and taking them for rebels, started to fire. "I was obliged to throw away my little affairs and take to my heels, as the enemy had done before." The crew finally made it back to the ship, where James heard a lieutenant describe to the captain how he had dispersed the rebels. James angrily told him just who had really been the target. The lieutenant also wanted souvenirs, so he, James, and another midshipman from the Phoenix went back ashore. The two midshipmen wandered off and came across a frightened American who surrendered to them rather than to the Hessians who were in the woods back of the beach. James then led a group of sailors into the woods in search of more stragglers. They heard voices and pointed their guns at the ready. "Up start two or three hundred Hessians, with flaming large brass caps on, and charged bayonets advanced rapidly towards us." The sailors were "alarmed prodigiously" and attempted to show the Germans that they were friends. The Hessians knocked them down and hit them with their musket.
stocks, and called them rebels. James managed to point to
his white cuffs to show that he was in the Royal Navy. The
Hessians pointed to a nearby American officer, propped
against a tree, dying, his right leg shot off by a cannon-
ball. He had the exact blue and white uniform on. The
Germans began hitting again and were about to bayonet the
sailors when up rode General Robert Pigot, who recognized
James and ordered the Hessians to stop. "They made a
thousand ridiculous apologies for their treatment and we
returned to our ships, in need of both cook and doctor, and
totally weary of our expedition." 51

James' confrontation with a battalion of German
grenadiers highlights the actions of that group of elite
troops. The grenadiers led the German attack on Long Island
and were the men accused of zealous use of the bayonet. They
never lost their fighting edge during the war, and except
for their bloody repulse at Red Bank in October 1777, never
met with defeat on the battlefield. These were the men the
British told to take no prisoners. These were the men who
formed the center of assault columns. The grenadiers fought
the war to the fullest. In May 1778 a group of them, along
with some British soldiers, made a quick attack on Brigadier
General Lacey's militia brigade outside Philadelphia and
scattered them after killing many. "Several grenadiers were
were so embittered that they burned nine rebels" and then they burned the American camp and defense positions. 52

Women camp followers mirrored the behavior of their men. Pennsylvania Ensign Jacob Barnitz, wounded at Fort Washington, lay on the field all night, shot through both legs, after being stripped "by the Hessians or their trulls." 53

When Captain von Malsberg entered Fort Washington upon its surrender, he was surrounded by American officers who invited him to their quarters where they served him punch, wine, and cold cakes. They complimented him on his affability, which they said they did not expect in a Hessian. They begged him for protection and he in return lectured them on the sin of rebellion against their rightful and just king. 54

Some German officers recognized the cruelty of the American Revolution and deplored it. Some lessened it. German zealouslyness seems to have declined after the debacle at Trenton. Germans did mistreat American prisoners on Long Island and at Fort Washington, but once a thousand of their own men surrendered, and once they discovered that the Americans did not turn out to be the criminals caricatured by the British, the incidents of large-scale atrocities ended. Friedrich Muenchhausen prayed for peace. "I wish
in my heart, especially because this war is attended by much cruelty, which our good General Howe cannot prevent, much as he would like to."\textsuperscript{55}

German officers did have a code of conduct to measure themselves and fellow officers against. In October 1778 Major Patrick Ferguson led raids against the New Jersey coast. He was contacted by a Hessian deserter, Lieutenant Carl Wilhelm Joseph Juliät, who had deserted from the Landgraf Regiment at Newport and joined the Americans. Juliät offered to lead Ferguson to the Americans. Ferguson's raiders cornered Pulaski's Legion in a farmhouse in Egg Harbor and killed, wounded, or captured about forty men. Johann Ewald loathed Juliät:

This miserable human being, who had betrayed his friends and served Major Ferguson as a jackal, was a Mr. von Juliät, who had run away from the Landgraf Regiment in Rhode Island. He took employment with the enemy and was placed with the newly raised Pulaski Corps. After his trick at Egg Harbor, he admitted his perjury to the English major, who obtained a pardon for him from General Knyphausen by petition of General Clinton. But since he found that everyone in New York despised him, he took employment on an English priviteer.\textsuperscript{56}

However, Adjutant General Baurmeister pulled strings and had Juliät transferred back to the fortress at Hesse-Rhinelfels, where Juliät continued in the Hessian service.

Although Ewald could despise Juliät's betrayal of his
friends in both armies, he was not adverse to use question-
able methods to extract intelligence from American soldiers
and civilians. He captured a man in Virginia in January
1781 and threatened to hang him if he did not tell what he
knew concerning American troops. He also showed the fellow
several guineas—for him if he spoke the truth. This carrot
and stick method worked. 57 Later, Ewald "lured one bold
fellow into the net and captured him. I found out by
threatening him that the Marquis de Lafayette had withdrawn
from Jamestown..." 58 Ewald consistently used threats of
violence on prisoners throughout the war and did let his
men hit and kick handcuffed prisoners and drag them by
nooses around their necks. 59

Early in the war, the Germans often punished civilians
who broke British laws. Some Hessians lashed civilians, but
high command ordered this practice stopped and the Germans
received orders not to interfere in civilian government. 60
Still, German treatment of American civilians could be quite
harsh. The Jägers wanted the owners to abandon a plantation
captured between the lines in the siege of Charleston. The
couple ignored yells, so the riflemen fired through the
windows into the house. The man and wife promptly came out. 61
In a similar incident, an Anspach soldier killed a Quaker
who resided in a house in Newport from which the Americans
had once fired. The dead man left a wife and two
children. 62

Some Germans did show compassion for rebel civilians. Ewald, in spite of his rough handling of prisoners, supported the cause of seventy-year old Pastor Weyberg, a fiery patriot who defamed the king and incited revolt through his sermons, or so it was claimed. The British in Philadelphia placed Weyberg in irons. His family was reduced to poverty. Ewald personally sent several petitions to Howe until the redcoats released the old man. Weyberg promised the captain to be quiet and never to preach. Ewald blamed the pastor's conduct on his "excessive and misplaced love of his country." Why had Ewald supported the minister? The Reverend Doctor Caspar Dietrich Weyberg was the pastor of the First Reformed Church in Philadelphia; Ewald, too, was a member of the Reformed church. 63

If the Germans did destroy by fire and sword, mistreat their prisoners, and abuse civilians, they also had a bit of provocation. The Revolution evolved into a civil war, with all the passions of fraternal warfare; patriots often treated loyalists as they themselves were treated by portions of the British army. In the fall of 1778 Ewald reported, "The dwellings of the loyalists in the entire vicinity of Tarrytown and White Plains had been set on fire,
which produced a deplorable sight. I was so enraged over this incendiarism that I decided to follow the enemy further than I should have, in order to get my hands on some of these homeburners, whom I was willing to throw into the flames of the burning houses. But I could not attain my end." Germans felt similar rage at the burning of New York City in September 1776, allegedly done by American agents. Cruelty begets cruelty, until no one is sure where it begins.

The German troops did plunder extensively and did deal harsh blows to Americans. The officers often gave their men free hands to do so. The Germans did commit atrocities on Long Island and Manhattan, but evidence that they continued these acts dies out after Trenton. Plundering continued and became institutionalized, an evolution due to the inadequacies of the British supply system and the force of long-standing European tradition. British soldiers committed the same acts. Loyalist soldiers committed atrocities through the end of the war. The Hessians have yet to shift their stigma to other parts of the British army, probably as a result of the legacies of the two world wars. Nevertheless, the German soldier, isolated by his language and his traditions, released his frustrations and rage on powerless Americans. These actions undermined
British efforts at pacification, but these actions are
timeless and all too human.

Chapter Notes:


4 Ibid., p. 113.


9 Ibid., pp. 20-21. The drinking problem lasted throughout the war; in January 1781 his company became so drunk on confiscated wine "that one could hear us two hours away." p. 268.


11 Ibid., p. 27.


14 Ibid., pp. 30-31.
15 Ibid., p. 37.


17 Ewald, p. 52.

18 Ibid., p. 51.

19 Ibid., pp. 53-55.

20 Ibid., p. 65.


22 Ibid., p. 29.


24 Ibid., p. 95.

25 Andre, pp. 41-42.


27 Ewald, p. 75.

28 John W. Jackson, With the British Army in Philadelphia, (San Rafael, 1979), p. 90.


30 Ewald, p. 108.

31 Ibid., p. 109.

32 Ibid.

33 Quoted in Jackson, p. 217.


36 Ibid., p. 41.

37 Ibid., p. 46.

38 Ewald, p. 135.


40 Krafft, p. 60.

41 Ewald, pp. 167-168; Van Cortland Manor, a museum operated by Sleepy Hollow Restoration in Croton-on-Hudson, New York, still contains panelling defaced by Revolutionary War soldiers, mostly being initials and scratches cut into the woodwork.

42 Ibid., pp. 159-160.

43 Popp, p. 16.


47 Lowell, p. 68.


49 Quoted in Flood, p. 135.

50 Pettengill, p. 75.


52 Baurmeister, pp. 168-169.
53 Dann, p. 118.

54 Lowell, pp. 82-83.


56 Ewald, p. 153.


60 Kipping, *View*, p. 9.

61 Ewald, p. 216.

62 Mackenzie, I, 391.

63 Ewald, p. 119.

CHAPTER TWELVE

German Legacy: Prisoners of War and Deserters

The early morning dawns already
The departure day is here!
The drum beats out its loud noise
Calling: To America.

Johann David Messerer 1777

Two days after John Burgoyne surrendered to the Americans at Saratoga his so-called Convention Army began marching eastward to Boston where the soldiers were to be housed for the winter before being shipped back to Europe for service there. Burgoyne outwitted Horatio Gates during the negotiations to surrender and obtained from him the promise to keep the army intact and to transport it to Europe, never to serve again in America. That the five thousand men could replace a similar number of soldiers there for service in America, or that the British might overlook the convention and bring Burgoyne's forces to New York seems to have escaped Gates. It did not escape Congress, who overruled Gates' convention and kept the army in prison camps until 1783; many of the soldiers disappeared during the six years the army lived in Massachusetts and Virginia.¹

¹
The five thousand or so British and German troops began their two hundred mile trek just after they ground their arms on the Hudson flats; this journey, being guarded by returning American militia, gave the European soldiers their first close views of populated areas in America. A German officer wrote home that he found Dutchmen of Schaghticoke very avaricious, greedy as Jews. But the people lived very well, although some of them stole several Canadian and German-born horses that the soldiers had been using for transportation. He noted incredible stores of grain on the German and Dutch farms. By three days into the march the enlisted men began to slip away, tempted seemingly, not by the mountains of grain, but by the "alluring voices of some pretty sirens," the daughters of the local "peasants' who he found to be healthy, slender, clean, well-mannered, and free from smallpox. The officer thought that in New York, unlike Canada, the women dominated their husbands and put great stock in the display of income. He reported that the war had affected the ladies' finery and "once this is worn out, the men will apparently have to make peace with the Crown so as to be able to replace it."²

New England pleased this officer less. In Great Barrington, Massachusetts he "never saw ruder, more spiteful people, and never have I been more on my guard against
blows." On October 26th he reached Tyringham, deep in the Berkshires, over abominable roads, the "American Caucasus," he concluded. He found Westfield to be "a real nice town" and he "never saw larger hogs and cattle" than in this Connecticut Valley town. At West Springfield he found the inhabitants passable, but damned curious; the citizens stared at the soldiers and entered the houses in which they were quartered. Many Americans found them commonplace, not fierce, and so went away disappointed. Like a circus come to town, the Convention Army marched through Palmer, Brookfield, Worcester, Marlborough, Sudbury, and on to Winter Hill in Cambridge, where the Germans were put up in barracks built for the American army two years previously. For all the outward cheerfulness that the troops of the Convention Army displayed on this march, there was still considerable desertion. Several hundred men, more English than German, escaped. A German-American named Thillemann induced many Germans to desert and join the Revolution. 3

Burgoyne traveled separately from his men and did not live near them when they finally encamped. Set up in a mansion in Cambridge, Burgoyne oversaw the troops from afar. Americans immediately noted the differences between the two nationalities: the British camps were chaotic with disorder while the Germans had much more discipline. 4

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The Germans found themselves in barracks of very poor quality, an important consideration in the approaching winter. The barracks had been built without foundations with plain boards—many holes let in rain and snow and the windows had no glass or shutters. The officers slept separately from the men, four or five together in a hole where they could hardly turn over. There was not enough wood for the fire places, in fact, there were no woods or bushes for five miles around. Washington's army had cleaned out the area in 1775; "Never have I been colder in any winter," an officer wrote home.5

The relations between the Europeans and the Americans left much to be desired. Within a month the Americans shot two English soldiers for crimes they committed. Germans noted the great animosity between the Americans and English; Americans seemed more curious of Germans than vindictive. The officers all got daily paroles that enabled them to travel within three miles from the place of their confinement, giving most the freedom of Cambridge, but not Boston. The Convention Army officers further noticed restrictions placed on them after they received visits from fellow officers captured earlier in the campaign at Freeman's Farm or Bennington. These captured officers were kept in Westminster and Rutland, Massachusetts, deep in rural
Worcester County, but they had been given liberty to travel or a parole, while Convention Army officers had to remain close to the sites of their confinement. The captured officers reported that the Americans had spread the captured enlisted men throughout the country from upstate New York and Vermont to southern New England. Some of the captured privates had been first sent to prison ships, but then had been allowed to go to the cities and the country to work for their keep.  

The Brunswick officers captured at Bennington were kept in Rutland, Massachusetts, a place they called Siberia, and most of them stayed there until 1783, long after the Congress decided to move the Convention Army into Virginia.  

The troops on Winter Hill endured a bleak winter. Their uniforms wore out, the cost of extra food was enormous, and their fate was uncertain. "I am well despite the late discontent and my devouring desire to return to Europe," a disheartened officer wrote to Germany.  The enlisted men began to lose their discipline. General Riedesel, also living in a mansion in Cambridge, wrote to William Howe on January 7, 1778, asking that he give assistance to get German officers exchanged Riedesel had retained the right of jurisdiction over his troops to maintain discipline. The soldiers were increasingly insubordinate and he detailed a
sergeant and sixteen privates from each regiment as a guard
detail to enforce discipline and catch potential deserters.
The Germans drilled each day and the officers retained their
sidearms for practice and self-defense. Riedesel continued
to command all the Brunswick troops in captivity, but the
Hesse-Hanau Regiment was run by its own officers.9

The Congress' decision to retain the Convention Army had
great effect upon desertions in Cambridge, particularly among
the British. More and more troops crossed the lines to desert
when the decision became known. Some soldiers left on their
own initiative; others needed urging by their captors. Only
ten Germans deserted in the first month in Cambridge, while
over four hundred Britons ran away. Most deserters were bored
and lived in poor conditions. Some came back after finding
out that life outside was little better. A French adventurer,
Colonel Armand, used his knowledge of German to inveigle
some of Riedesel's men into deserting, offering a place in
his corps and uniforms of his own design. Riedesel pardoned
those who returned and Major General William Heath, the over-
all American commander, forbade Armand to enlist deserters.10

Deserters found friends in the American ranks; other
prisoners did not. American Colonel Hawley commanded the
American guards on Prospect Hill, site of the British encomp-
ment. One night in January he ran into a group of eight
British soldiers and in a scuffle mortally wounded two of
them. This incident outranged Burgoyne, who pressed for a
court martial. Brought before the court, Hawley defended
himself against Burgoyne and other officers who offered testimony of outrageous American treatment. The court found Hawley innocent and he soon received the command of all American troops in Cambridge.\textsuperscript{11}

A German and his wife passed an American sentry post when six militiamen insulted the woman. Her husband attacked the six with his cane and drove them back until a sentry bayonetted him. No action was taken.\textsuperscript{12}

In spite of incidents like these many British and German soldiers deserted in Cambridge. In the year in which the Convention Army remained there some 773 soldiers made good their escape. Americans used these deserters to induce more desertion. They dressed up some of the escaped troops in fancy uniforms, supplied them with handsome coaches and pretty girls, and had them drive through the barracks areas to scream insults at their former officers.\textsuperscript{13}

Early in 1778 Americans posted a proclamation in German signed by Charles Thomson, Secretary of the Continental Congress, that appealed to the men to abandon their regiments and offering monetary rewards. The deserters would not have to serve in the American army unless they wanted to, the proclamation went on, and then they would never serve against their former friends. Riedesel and his officers protested this action and had the handbills destroyed. Colonel Hardy, then the American commandant, backed Riedesel, as did George Washington. Congress reversed itself and reneged on the proclamation on February 26, 1778.\textsuperscript{14}
When William Heath assumed command in the summer of 1778 he improved communications between Convention officers and American officers. Not only did he end Armand's recruiting efforts, he also treated German officers more as equals. When aged General Specht wrote Heath in September 1778 saying that he did not enjoy the amusements which pleased the younger officers and wanted to go hunting, Heath allowed him to carry a gun and go shooting within the limits of his parole. 15

The Americans decided to move the Convention Army to Charlottesville, Virginia in September 1778 to bring the men closed to sufficient supplies, to induce more desertion, and to place the soldiers in a rural area. The soldiers left Cambridge on November 9th and began the march south. 16 Deserters dropped out each night the army halted, two or three men disappearing into the New England night. 17 Henry Clinton sent a force northward to intercept the march when crossing the Hudson, but the British arrived too late and the American guards were too strong. 18 Many Germans deserted when they reached Pennsylvania, where some American women did their best to keep them as husbands, but more Englishmen ran away after they reached Virginia. Between 1778 and 1780 some 1,560 British soldiers deserted in Virginia, while only 725 Germans snuck away. The Germans seemed more content. They continued to draw pay sent across the lines by British paymasters. American guards granted them more favors than British prisoners. Germans could make even more money by hiring themselves out to Americans. One traveler found that
"the industrious among the prisoners quickly found employment...He had become a man of considerable wealth."\(^{19}\)

General Riedesel received a parole and reached British lines in December 1779. Once in New York he undertook a partial exchange of Brunswick officers. Within a few months 67 officers, 149 servants, and 113 sergeants gained their freedom. This left nearly 1,300 Brunswick and Hanau enlisted men still in American hands. These men remained in Charlottesville until the summer of 1781, when British operations in Virginia forced their removal to the Shenandoah Valley. They found themselves well treated by the German population of the lower valley. Some Germans ended up near Frederick, Maryland, another area with German population. The Germans tended to desert more after 1781, after four years' confinement, so much so that Adjutant General Carl Baurmeister reported in September 1781 that, "The non-commissioned officers and privates at Reading and Lancaster are gradually running away, so that now not even a thousand are left."\(^{20}\) By the time the hostilities ended and prisoners returned to German control, most of the Convention Army Germans had disappeared. Those few who returned had spent six years in American hands.

The Trenton Prisoners

The first large number of Germans captured during the war, the three regiments that surrendered at Trenton, received similar treatment: better conditions than British prisoners, offers of rewards for deserting, and outside employ-
ment to better their lot while in confinement. The Trenton prisoners remained in American hands until the summer of 1778, and in striking difference to the Convention Army, most did not desert.

The Americans segregated the officers from the enlisted men and marched all across the Delaware into Philadelphia. There the Philadelphians mobbed the Hessians and reviled them. Old women scolded the captives. Grenadier Johannes Reuber recorded:

At length General Washington had written notices put up in town and country, that we were innocent of this war and had joined in it not of our free will, but through compulsion. We should, therefore, be treated not as enemies, but friends... From this time things went better for us. Everyday came many out of the towns, old and young, rich and poor, and brought us provisions, and treated us with kindness and humanity.\footnote{1}

The officers were well treated by their captor, Lord Stirling, a New Jersey general with aristocratic pretentions. The German officers found themselves outside of Philadelphia quartered in a private house, a church, and a jail. Lieutenant Piel sat down to supper one evening when the officers encountered a strange figure:

We had scarce seated ourselves when a long, meagre, dark looking man, whom we took for the parson of the place, stepped forth and held a discourse in German, in which he endeavored to set forth the justice of the American side in this war. He told us he was a Hanovarian born; called the King of England nothing but the Elector of Hanover, and spoke of him so contemptuously that his garrulity became intolerable. We answered that we had not come to America to inquire which party was in the right, but to fight for the King.
Lord Stirling, seeing how little we were edified by the preacher, relieved us from him by proposing to take us with him to visit General Washington. The latter received us very courteously, though we understood very little of what he said, as he spoke nothing but English, a language in which none of us at that time were strong. In his aspect shines forth nothing of the great man that he was universally considered. His eyes have scarce any fire. There is, however, a smiling expression on his countenance when he speaks that wins affection and respect. He invited four of our officers to dine with him: the rest dined with Lord Stirling.22

The immediate effect of Trenton was to lessen the American's dread of Hessians. The images of fierce warriors collapsed in face of human reality.23 The Hessians changed from objects of hatred to ones of somewhat measured compassion, from their bringer of terror to victim. The enlisted men left Philadelphia on January 2, 1777 for a three day march to Lancaster. Some old women cried out that they should be hanged for coming to America; others brought food and wine. Once in Lancaster the prisoners found quarters in the local jail, old barracks from the French and Indian War, and a new fort built in 1776. The Pennsylvanians also built newer facilities for the prisoners, but the committee organized to deal with the men had other plans than to just let them rot in confinement: why not put them to work?24

On January 10, 1777 the committee questioned the Hessians as to their civilian skills. Thirty-eight shoemakers began working the next day for a small wage. In the germs of eighteenth century warfare, prisoners had to pay for their food, clothing, blankets, and incidentals. The Germans
received their pay and some equipment from New York while in prison, but many prisoners volunteered to work for pay in order to better their lives. Over half of the Germans captured at Trenton received a release to work with American civilians. The Americans dispersed the prisoners around Easton, Allendown, Reading, Lancaster, York, Hanover, Carlisle, and Middletown, an arc of sites about a hundred miles north and west of Philadelphia, in an area with large concentrations of citizens of German extraction.

Quartermaster Müller, who crossed the lines in February 1777 with equipment for the prisoners in Lancaster, found the prisoners all locked in the barracks. On his second trip he was astounded to find them riding on horseback, after hiring themselves out to civilians. They rode their employers horses to the barracks to make their regular Saturday evening report, a duty required of those who worked outside of town. In talking to the men he found that they worked to get away from the barracks and had been told that a failure to work would force the authorities to halve the rations due to a scarcity of food. They also wanted more money—although Müller brought them their full pay. They made their own A frame huts out of fence rails covered with straw and grass sod and survived quite well.

Americans worked quite hard to induce these men to desert by putting German language proclamations in camp offering two hundred acres of land, a cow, and two pigs for those who would desert. Some enlisted in the Continental
Army, particularly those men with wives and children.
Prisoners who did not want to join the army could become
American citizens by paying eighty dollars and signing an
oath of allegiance. The Americans also tried to keep
Quartermaster Müller and men like him away from the prisoners
with his pay and letters from home. 28

Some Germans worked on farms, some in iron works in
eastern Pennsylvania, and others worked their crafts. 29 One
American also noted this: "6 Feb. 1778--It is said that the
people who keep the ball in Lancaster allow the Hessian band
of music Fifteen Pounds for each night's attendance. This,
James Davidson told me he was able to prove and make good, if
called upon." 30

As the British neared Philadelphia in August 1777 the
Americans sent the German prisoners further into the back
country. On August 25th 345 Hessians with their women and
baggage left Lancaster for Lebanon to the north. A day later
365 left for Carlisle in the west. One American reported
that when Howe landed at the Head of Elk that, "It's said
that he sent one of his men to this town Philadelphia for
a Hessian man + woman, by name; that he found them last night
and they three set out for his camp this morning. This made
the people here uneasy." 31 Late in September the group from
Lebanon marched south to Winchester, Virginia. These
prisoners had angered Pastor Bader in Lebanon with their
music and fighting. He recorded on one occasion that, "Today
it was as if the abyss had opened and all the furies with
Mephistopheles and Zizzleputzli had come among the Hessians. 32 Those Hessians who settled in the Lebanon Valley kept up their erotic ways. The populace forced them to settle on the mountains, giving rise to a local Pennsylvania Dutch saying, "Drean net die Leit vum Barrick"—Don't trust the mountain people! 33

The Hessian officers had not been allowed to stay near their men, but had been marched directly from Philadelphia to Dumbries, Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley, and to Fredericksburg in December 1777. Local girls gave parties for their "guests" and Washington's brother, sister, and niece attended. 34

Some Hessians ended up in Frederick, Maryland, another area of German population. Several soldiers deserted, bought farms, and blended into the native population. In Frederick County the eighty dollar fee for freedom was often loaned by a deserters neighbors. Some Hessians entered Maryland regiments after a Colonel Beyerfolk requested permission from the governor to enlist German deserters in his unit. Western Maryland felt particularly secure from the British and many munition dumps and provision warehouses were located there. This feeling of security induced desertion. The Maryland Germans were the largest body outside of the established Anglican Church, strong, active dissenters who had a marked anti-English feeling and who became avid Patriots. 35

The British exchanged the Hessian prisoners in 1778, bringing another problem because several of the prisoners had deserted. A British commissary of prisoners reported to
Adjutant General Baurmeister that a hundred American dragoons roamed Virginia in search of prisoners living there with residents. Many did not want to be exchanged and were hidden by the inhabitants. Baurmeister went to Elizabeth-town, New Jersey on July 17, 1778 when 500 prisoners entered the British lines. All looked well, but there were still 400 to be accounted for. Some of the men were not Hessians, but were Brunswickers and men from Hanau who had been taken prisoner before the surrender at Saratoga and were therefore not members of the Convention Army. Lieutenant Colonel von Speth, a Brunswick officer, took these men to Long Island and then back to Canada, but before Speth could sail on September 11th, forty of his former prisoners had slipped away and deserted to the Americans.

The Hessians from Winchester, Virginia left there on September 29, marched through Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and reached the British lines on October 27, 1778. These men noted sixty sick Hessians in Philadelphia, but the rest of the prisoners had been turned back to the British, except for the deserters. The Winchester group lost 132 deserters during their two years in American hands. An American soldier contrasted the returned American prisoners with the prisoners returning to British service. "They had not the appearance of our poor emaciated countrymen, discharged by the English tyrants. Ours were reduced to the utmost extremity; those, hearty, plump and fat, with wagons to carry their baggage, women and children; ours stripped as
as hardly to have rags to cover them."\textsuperscript{39}

The Germans of the Convention Army and those captured at Trenton all received good treatment from their American captors, probably better treatment than British soldiers received. Americans feared German soldiers, but did not loath them as they did Britons. Germans were also potential deserters and good treatment could induce desertion. When a group of soldiers from the Waldeck Regiment fell into American hands in January 1777 in New Jersey, George Washington had them treated in a similar manner as Hessian grenadiers to cause them to desert.\textsuperscript{40} Adjutant General Baurmeister noted this special treatment as early as September 1776. A squad of soldiers from the Trumbuck Regiment were captured when the Americans raided Staten Island:

Lieutenant Clewe and eight men...were among those captured. The Lieutenant got away, but the 8 soldiers were taken to Philadelphia, where they were well treated and promised great rewards if they would enlist in the rebel army. Four of the oldest of these prisoners are said to have entered their service. We learned this from a commissary who was sent to Philadelphia at the beginning of the month to effect an exchange of prisoners in which, however, he was unsuccessful.\textsuperscript{41}

The Hessians set out to watch any returned soldier carefully, to see if he might be a rebel agent, sent back to induce more desertion.\textsuperscript{42}

Special treatment for Germans could extend beyond actual prisoner status. William Heath attacked lower Westchester in
January 1777 and came up against a body of troops in a fort near the Van Cortland Mansion in the Bronx. "The Commandant of the fort, and a considerable part of the garrison, being Hessians, the summons held out...generous terms. The answer, which was verbal, was a refusal to surrender." Heath fired some artillery at a Hessian battalion hurrying to reinforce the fort. The Hessians took cover; Heath retreated.

The special treatment given to Germans had little effect until they found themselves actually in American hands in one piece. Hiring out to American civilians, limited paroles, adequate food and shelter all could influence a soldier's decision whether or not to desert. However, not all Germans got special treatment or a friendly reception. Just the opposite. Johann Ewald reported that outside of Charleston on March 30, 1780, "A patrol of the light infantry had discovered the five missing Jägers, who had all been killed with bayonets. One of them had his eyes cut out, which showed that the enemy was very angry and must have lost many men." Although this atrocity probably was not common, it does reflect the horror of any war. Further, in September 1779 several boatloads of Hessian troops enroute to Canada were blown into American held areas during a hurricane, the same troops captured at Trenton. Some of the Germans ended up in a Philadelphia jail and were still there in July 1782, hardly an example of special treatment. The evidence is scanty, but perhaps these jailed Hessians were particularly difficult prisoners. The rest of the men went back to the familiar areas around Reading and Lancaster where they remained for four years. This time, many more deserted."
Many soldiers in American custody did not see their situation as being particularly fortunate. One officer wrote from Virginia of "our most disagreeable situation" cut off from Europe and Canada. The heat was severe. Neighbors were poor and there was hardly a gentleman within forty miles. This officer did not desert.\textsuperscript{46}

Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown brought the last large group of prisoners into American hands. The Americans paroled most British and German officers, but marched the enlisted men in three divisions to western Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. The two Anspach-Bayreuth regiments immediately lost large numbers of deserters, but these units had also lost many deserters prior to the siege.\textsuperscript{47}

Johann Ewald sailed back to New York with the officers in November:

On the 3rd all the unlucky heroes climbed on board their ships. The one which was designated for the German officers was called the Andrew. Our traveling companions consisted of thirty-six Anspach and Hessian officers and sixty-three English officers, chaplains, and surgeons. In addition, there were 143 officers' servants and camp followers, among whom twenty-two had their wives and children--or their stinking amazons--with them, as well as eight ships' captains and one hundred exchanged sailors. There were fifty various white and black two-footed creatures of both sexes. I could not see their faces because they hid them; they probably were contraband. There were also thirty-one dogs and pigs, the latter belonging to the sailors for their provisions.\textsuperscript{48}

The ship arrived in New York on November 25th; Carl Baurmeister felt it was impossible to describe the misery of those on board.\textsuperscript{49}
Many of the German enlisted men ended up near Frederick, Maryland, particularly those in the Hessian Erbprinz and Von Bose regiments. The German headquarters in Manhattan immediately prepared uniforms, pay, and medical supplies to be sent to them. Quartermaster Ludwig of the Erbprinz Regiment was placed in charge of forwarding the supplies. At the same time, Quartermaster Schmid of the Knyphausen Regiment set out with 1,000 guineas to pay the prisoners still held in Philadelphia. Ludwig got through, but the Americans stopped Schmid at Elizabethtown and took the money, plus Schmid's own purse. Schmid, undaunted, returned with more cash. Once in Philadelphia he heard the Americans tell the prisoners that the English would not pay for their support and that they wanted to hire the Hessians out for three years. The prisoners refused and offered to subsist on bread and water. The Americans dropped the plan.51

The Americans continued to hold out attractive offers to induce desertion—money to join the Continental Army, acres of land, and whatnot. Reports reaching Manhattan indicated that many men accepted the terms and slipped away.52

The Germans continued to send supplies to the prisoners throughout 1782. Quartermaster Flockshaar of the Regiment von Bose traveled to Frederick and Lancaster in December 1782 distributing blankets and pay, and bringing back intelligence reports.53 By the spring of 1783 some of the prisoners began returning to British control, but not initially in any sort of exchange agreement. In April two men of the Knyphausen
Regiment who had been captive since September 1779, reached New York after paying £30 currency each to allow them to leave. A petition from thirty Germans in New Jersey reached General von Lossberg on April 25th, asking for liberation from working in an American iron works. They had been bought out of prison by the owner of the iron mine and had to work for him until they paid off his debt. They reported further that some soldiers had been bought out of prison by women they later married.54

In May General Lincoln gave passes to Brigadier General Clarke, Lieutenant Colonel du Puy, Captain Marquand, Lieutenant von Eswege, and Lieutenant Reinking to travel to Philadelphia to escort Burgoyne's troops. This commission tallied the great amount of desertion from the Convention Army. The skeleton of Burgoyne's five thousand men surrendered at Saratoga in 1777 numbered some 1,000 British, 407 Brunswickers, and 67 Hanauers in 1783. The column contained a handful of other German troops captured at later dates. Some of the Convention troops had already escaped or had been exchanged, but most had deserted. When the commission counted Cornwallis' returnees, they found a similar story. The men began leaving Frederick to march to New York early in May. This forced a choice of whether to remain in America or return to Europe. Some 240 Hessians and 512 Anspachers fled the column between the time it left Maryland and reached Staten Island. The Americans helped this along by scattering printed invitations along the route and by
persuasion on the part of the populace. When the remnants of the Knyphausen Regiment reached New York after four years in captivity, the officers counted 140 deserters. 55

The situation did not improve in June. Even as the British made plans to abandon New York, the active regiments lost the greatest number of deserters during their period in America. Americans also blocked several attempts to have British and German officers reach prisoners still in captivity. General Clarke's mission to free Brunswickers held in Rutland, Massachusetts ended in failure because the Americans declared that they first wanted the British to return black slaves taken from patriots. The British refusal to return slaves prompted the Americans to use this as an excuse not to free all prisoners. However, even high-ranking German officers realized that many of their men would not return, especially those who were not natives of the area from which their regiments originated; there was no future for these men in Germany. 56

Johann Ewald met a group of returning Brunswickers in June 1783:

Several days ago, after the greater part of the prisoners had already arrived, two officers and fifty men of the Brunswickers came to New York quite unexpectedly. Since their captivity over five years ago they had heard nothing at all. They had been shut up in the mountains and employed in ironworks. They were not half clad, and misery and hunger could be read in their faces. On the whole, the Brunswick troops have endured the most misfortune of all the Germans. They were not clothed again by their masters, and not a single officer was advanced since that time.
There are many captains among them who were already captains in 1760.\textsuperscript{37}

General von Lossberg ordered Adjutant General Baurmeister to cross into the American lines in July to seek out Germans still held in captivity. Armed with a letter from Commander-in-Chief Carleton to General Benjamin Lincoln, Baurmeister ranged New Jersey and Pennsylvania. He met with Assistant Secretary of War Major William Jackson, who told him that the American military had no jurisdiction over soldiers who had been sold out of imprisonment by the inhabitants. The release of soldiers depended therefore upon their "owners", and Jackson added that no German would be released to the British Army unless the owners received reimbursement. The Germans could pay £30 per man conditional on whether the soldier wanted to return or not.\textsuperscript{58}

The Americans generally treated Baurmeister well wherever he traveled. He first rode out to Lancaster and found 162 Brunswickers and 13 Hanauers, most of them married and living on their own lands. Thirty-nine of the Brunswickers showed some interest in returning, or so Baurmeister thought. He next rode to Reading where 76 Brunswickers and 8 Hanauers could be identified. At Delaware Mills Baurmeister located 23 Brunswickers and 2 deserters from the Regiment von Knyphausen. Thirteen of the Brunswickers had tried to escape in June, but had been recaptured. All demanded their freedom, except the deserters. In Philadelphia he found 52 Hessian deserters, "but could do no more than let them read a copy of a general pardon, and even in doing this I had to
be very cautious." Many said they wished to return.

Baurmeister left Philadelphia for Mount Holly, New Jersey to see the 35 men of the Regiment von Knyphausen who worked in the iron mine. He found only 27, for 2 had brought their freedom and were then living in Philadelphia an the rest managed to get to New York. In order to expedite a deal, Baurmeister escorted the mine owner back to New York on July 16th. Carleton and von Lossberg negotiated with him and finally paid for the 27 out of Lossberg's private funds. The mine owner, John Jacob Foesh, had emigrated from Hesse-Cassel in 1766 and during the war cast cannon and shot for Washington's army.

Lieutenant Unger of the Regiment von Knyphausen went to New Jersey and returned on August 8th with 21 Hessians and 1 Hanau prisoner. The rest of the soldiers remained, "having no greater desire than to remain in Jersey."

Many German prisoners who returned to the army did so with mixed feelings after spending several years in American hands. When the Anspach-Bayreuth prisoners left Maryland the men arranged for a great celebration complete with fireworks, a band, and a ball. One German recorded that he was sorry to leave and "the people, and especially the women, were very sorry to bid them goodbye."

There is no way to reconstruct the numbers of prisoners who deserted. Hessians fell into American hands mainly in large groups. Over a thousand were in captivity by the end of 1776. The Hessians lost a few more in 1777 and 1778; most
of those who were taken prisoner in 1776 returned in 1778. The losses in 1779 stemmed from transport ships blown ashore in a hurricane. These men remained in captivity until 1783. Finally, over a thousand Hessians surrendered at Yorktown and also were kept until 1783.

**TABLE ONE**

Hesse-Cassel Prisoners By Year (Not Cumulative)

<table>
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<td>1783</td>
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The Anspach-Bayreuth units lost few prisoners until both infantry regiments surrendered at Yorktown. The Waldeck Regiment lost over fifty men in January 1777, but fought the Spanish afterwards, surrendering at Pensacola. The Brunswickers and Hanauers lost all their prisoners in the Saratoga Campaign, well over three thousand men. Capturing large blocks of prisoners gave the Americans the opportunity to pressure the men to desert. Most of the Germans ended up in the Middle Colonies in areas with large concentrations of German-American civilians--Pennsylvania, Maryland, the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia, and western New Jersey. Germans also spent the war in the Albany area and in central
Massachusetts. Germans deserted from all these areas and settled in the locality. Although most deserters seemed to prefer German-speaking areas, all the thirteen states had some deserters settle in them. 64

Desertion became an important legacy of the German troops. Perhaps 5,000 remained in America after the war, about one out of six soldiers. Desertion began in Germany in the training areas and on the march to the transports, and became common as the war went on. 65 In Hesse-Cassel any peasant who arrested a deserter received a ducat, but if a deserter passed through a village without the villagers arresting him, then that village had to pay for him. 66 This system might have made deserting a bit dangerous; but some soldiers deserted on the march to the coast. General Riedesel wrote to his wife on February 23, 1776 that his contingent arrived in Gifhorn, "thank God, without any desertion." 67 However, Riedesel had to soon sit on a courtmartial to try an officer who attempted to desert. 68

Once on board the transports the soldiers had little chance to get away. Yet, on March 25, 1778 Major Hertzfeld wrote to the Erbprinz of Hesse that a Jäger recruit went ashore in Cork, Ireland to to some shopping for the men on board and promptly deserted. Hertzfeld felt that the Irish helped the man escape. 69

Patriots saw the arrival of the Germans with both fear and expectation. The warlike image of the Germans preceeded them, but many American leaders saw the mercenaries as
potential targets of American propaganda. On August 9, 1776 Congress formed a committee to encourage desertion, being made up of James Wilson, Thomas Jefferson, Richard Stockton, and Benjamin Franklin. This committee resolved that all soldiers who left the British Army and became citizens of the states would be accepted. These new citizens would receive protection in their free exercise of religion and would be given all rights, privileges, and immunities of native citizens. Congress would give them each fifty acres of land. This later was increased to one hundred acres for a non-commissioned officer and one thousand acres for an officer. The Americans printed handbills to that effect and distributed many of them through Christian Ludwick, a Pennsylvania German. He was a 56 year old Philadelphia baker who later took charge of the prisoners at Elizabethtown, where he was noted for treating them well. He then suggested that an exchange of well-treated prisoners would increase desertion, a factor that might help explain the substantial desertion at the end of the war. Some of the handbills were packed in tobacco barrels and found their way to German soldiers.

The proclamations were only effective if read. Herman Zedwitz, the lieutenant colonel of the 1st New York Regiment, offered to help induce German desertion. He had served for a time in both the Prussian and British armies and entered the American service with the indifference of the true mercenary. Disabled by a rupture he received after a fall from a precipice
during the attack on Quebec, Zedwitz knew of the committee's proclamation of August 14, 1776 that offered rewards to Germans who might "choose to accept...lands, liberty, safety, and a communion of good laws and mild government in a country where many of their friends and relatives are already happily settled." Washington got a copy of this in German on August 19th. Zedwitz wrote to British Governor William Tryon that he had been asked to help translate the document into German and offered to spy for the British for £4,000. Unfortunately for Zedwitz, the Americans intercepted his letter, cashiered him, and clapped him in prison.72

Adjutant General Carl Baurmeister noted the proclamation as soon as he disembarked:

Congress intended to distribute in the Hessian camp several thousand printed leaflets, dated August 14th, informing us in high sounding phrases of their just cause, and promising property to deserters. A few of which came into the possession of the brigade on Staten Island, which has been commanded by Colonel von Lossberg since the 25th of August, when Lieutenant General von Heister and Major General von Stern and von Mirbach also crossed over to Long Island with all the other regiments. So far I have been unable to obtain one of these handbills.73

Congress also showed interest in printing handbills in Canada to induce Germans there to desert. They paid Fleury Mesplet two hundred dollars, plus expenses, to go to Canada in 1776 and set up his press there. While little came of this, the Americans did circulate a letter in German during
Burgoyne's campaign supposedly written by a German-American. "I am a free tradesman," the letter began, "a shoemaker by profession, yet I live better than most of your nobles in Germany." 75

In September 1777 an account of Baum's defeat at Bennington was written to sway the Hessian Newport garrison. Sentries found a copy a hundred yards in front of the advanced position, being, "A present of a piece of agreeable intelligence to people confined and cooped up on Rhode Island, particularly to the deluded Hessians, who are invited by their own brethren who have deserted from Slavery, and are now enjoying the inestimable sweets of freedom, and living on fat, fresh Congress Beef in Plenty." 76

On April 29, 1778 Congress upped its inducements. Each deserter would receive fifty acres, as before, but a captain who brought off forty men would receive eight hundred acres of woodland, four oxen, one bull, two cows, and four sows. He would not have to serve in the American Army, but if he did, he would get the next higher rank and would command a German garrison on the frontier—well away from former friends. 77

Little of this worked on the officers and little initially worked on the enlisted men as well. Few men left the colors until 1778. The following shows the official Hessian losses by the year of desertion.
<table>
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<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1783</td>
<td>734</td>
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<td>1784</td>
<td>36</td>
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How much effect did American propaganda and offers of land have? There is little literary evidence to tell. In 1782 General Alexander Leslie wrote to Henry Clinton concerning his troubles in Georgia.

From Colonel Clarke's letters to me, I find the Hessian Regiment (von Knoblauch) has been there too long, they desert fast, and I am afraid little dependence is to be put on them; I shall for this reason be under the necessity of withdrawing them; I am very much at a loss whom to send to replace that corps. I am sorry to observe that when the Hessian troops are sent to outposts, desertion takes place; that being so long here has been the means of their forming too many connections. And the enemy have taken every care to encourage desertion as much as in their power, this together with the assistance of their friends within our walls enables them to seduce the foreigners from the encouragement they give them.  

The propaganda used against these German troops in Savannah included a handbill in German and English:
Britain has given up the war on the American continent. You troops will be sent to the West Indies where the lucky ones will die quick deaths--others will languish in French prisons. You have a door open to save you from destruction, and to become wealthy and happy citizens of a free country, by seizing the first opportunity to come out and receipt of the bounty offered by Governor Martins. 80

Dated February 21, 1782 the proclamation offered two hundred acres of good land, a milk cow, and two breeding swine. The deserter would become a free citizen of Georgia or could go elsewhere.

Early in 1782 the Americans put more pressure on German prisoners to desert. The British were to pay for the prisoners' rations, but did not. The British did continue to pay the prisoners' wages to the German headquarters and the Germans forwarded the money to the men. Congress decided to bring German pressure on Britain to pay for the enormous ration debt by passing a resolution giving Washington the power to offer the German prisoners the alternative of choosing citizenship in the states or purchasing their rations with their own pay, which was too low to pay for sufficient food. This measure caused a great deal of desertion. 81

This forcing of German prisoners to make a decision did have effect, but one must also ask what deserters hoped to gain besides release from confinement. Did the enlisted men perceive America as the home of liberty and refuge from tyranny or just a country where they could better their lot of life? Did they feel completely foreign or did they strike
a positive relationship with the populace?

German culture had flourished in the Middle States since the beginning of the eighteenth century and emigration from Germany had not ceased, although the numbers of emigrants declined after 1750. Many Americans, English-speaking as well as German, had become interested in German culture, especially after the exploits of Frederick the Great as an ally of Britain during the Seven Years' War. Many American leaders could differentiate between the mercenaries and individuals like Frederick. Many people, patriot and loyalist alike despised the troops even before they arrived in North America. 82

Benjamin Franklin was perhaps the American most interested in Germany. He probably published the Philadelphische Zeitung in 1732 and he did join Anton Armbruster in publishing a German weekly newspaper in 1757. When Franklin helped found the Public Academy of the City of Philadelphia he insisted on instruction of both German and French. Franklin traveled to Göttingen in 1766 and inspected the university there. 83

Franklin led the way to increased knowledge of Germany, but the importance of the German language in the English Court and increasingly profitable commercial relations with Germany, particularly Hamburg, made the knowledge of German desirable in both England and America. 84 These factors, coupled with a large German-speaking American population, made the German troops a bit less strange than might first appear.
The first reports of German desertions came as wishful thinking, in face of overwhelming German successes on the battlefield. Early in November 1776 an American soldier wrote in his diary that, "A report prevails today that on the 28th, there were killed in the skirmish, of the Enemy, one colonel, eight officers, and a number of privates; and that 30 Hessian Chasseurs came over to our side, and brought with them a 3 pounder brass piece." Few Germans deserted in 1776 and 1777 (only 175 Hessians), but men began leaving their regiments in 1778.

A British officer reported an attempt to desert from Newport in September 1777. "A soldier of the Hessian Regiment of Ditfourth, attempting to desert early this morning by way of Commonfence Neck, was discovered by some of the British Sentries, who fired at him, shot him through the wrist and took him. Another soldier, his companion got off." It must have been particularly difficult to desert from Newport--it's on an island--but many Anspach soldiers ran away to the American lines in August 1778 during James Sullivan's siege of Newport. The British tried to stop the large numbers of deserters by telling them that the British had won a victory in New York and would soon arrive to reinforce the garrison.

Newport had been a quiet garrison for almost two years with little desertion. As soon as sizable American forces arrived and seemed able to win a victory, desertion began. This episode seems typical for all military maneuvers after
1778, although some soldiers deserted at any opportunity, or in the face of no opportunity.

Similarly, at Monmouth Court House, over four hundred Germans deserted in a week due to the heat, enemy pressure, and a desire to remain in Pennsylvania. Only 219 Germans deserted in the six months prior to the British retreat. The Erbprinz Regiment lost several men during the retreat. Four men left the grenadier company in eleven days, including Sergeant Justus Schaeffer. The Leib company lost three men during the last week in June, as did Captain Linsing's company. Captain Waldenburg's company lost five men on June 20th alone, and one more on the next day. The two other companies lost fourteen men in the same period, bringing the regiment's losses to thirty deserters, almost ten percent of the unit. The Erbprinz Regiment lost only seventy-six deserters during the entire war, so the heat of this June had great effect.\textsuperscript{89}

German recruits in English regiments had no loyalty to the unit to keep them in the ranks. Friedrich Muenchhausen reported in February 1778 that "The German recruits who have been distributed among the English regiments and who are very dissatisfied (for which they have good reason indeed) are now deserting in rather large numbers."\textsuperscript{90}

The Hessian headquarters in America saw little difference in their own recruits:

Most of the recruits, mainly foreigners, behave very badly and defect at the first opportunity; therefore we cannot use them on outposts. Many of them may have intended
to take advantage of the chance of free passage to this country, and finally to quit Europe. They would have had to work about four years to pay the costs of their crossing. We must take into account that the condition of those regiments which have already had great losses and which will have even greater losses if they stay a long time will greatly deteriorate by having recruits join them.  

The Jägers lost many deserters due to their service on outposts. The small, independent Jäger operations let men see America up close and gave them the opportunity to slip away. In May 1778 the Jägers scouted across the Schuylkill River outside Philadelphia. They did not find the Americans, but lost several deserters.  

Johann Krafft noted that a Jäger slipped away from his post in the Bronx on November 1, 1778 and although mounted troops went out after him, he got away.  

Bad food and poor camps always drove men away. Later that same month Krafft recorded that, "In the meantime the Jägers deserted in large numbers on account of bad camp (just like ours) and poor rations, namely (like the whole army) scarcely 5 lbs. of bread in 7 days and for 2 days rice instead of bread. How often, under such circumstances, the pieces had to be cut thin!"  

On January 4, 1779 Krafft hoped that now that the men received better rations that the great amount of desertion would stop.  

In November 1779 General William Heath watched two Jägers come into his camp at Peekskill with their rifles. Four days later two more found their way in.  

The soldiers needed the opportunity to make a successful desertion. While in camp at Staten Island in 1780
Stephan Popp's regiment lost few deserters. When the unit moved to the mainland at Yonkers, "Here at this place many from the Anspach regiment deserted, also some from ours."  

Some of the deserters' records can be reconstructed. Henry Seybert was a fifteen-year-old grenadier captured at Trenton. He worked three years as a tailor's apprentice for a Mr. Schaffner in Lancaster, deserted, and married Susanna Kreutzer in 1790. Jacob Hogenberger, a Brunswick soldier captured at Saratoga, was held at Lancaster and indentured to Jacob Zimmermann at Earl Township for eighty dollars. Justus Krow (Groh) served an indenture to a Mr. Carpenter for three years. Carpenter paid the state the eighty dollars on September 7, 1782. Krow later changed his name to Gray, a cover for his Hessian origins. On March 14, 1778 Rudolph Maximillian von Derpen received $100.90 towards a bounty of land for deserting. This is the only record of a cash payment to a deserter in the War Department archives.

In 1778 American Joseph Rundel lay in a Manhattan prison after being captured. He made friends with Michael Hilderbrand, a guard who could speak only broken English. The Hessian did not want to desert because he was afraid of being shot. Rundel finally talked him into it. When Hilderbrand was guarding the prisoners in the exercise yard
Rundel hid under his cloak. Hilderbrand maintained that Rundel had passed back into the prison. Both men later ran north and then floated across the Hudson into New Jersey. They finally reached West Point where they got new clothes to replace their lousy uniforms. Both men crossed into Connecticut, but Rundel returned to the army as General Putnam's waiter.99

Not all deserters simply ran away to the Americans for refuge. Some brought valuable intelligence information. A grenadier deserted during the siege of Charleston in April 1780. He was a Frenchman and a new recruit. He revealed the passwords and the precise time that working parties and pickets were relived. The Americans used this information to kill three British soldiers and wound two more and a Hessian in an ambush.100

Some deserters changed sides several times. After the defense of Mud Island in November 1777 Connecticut private Joseph Martin recorded that his regiment left one man behind when they abandoned the post. The man got drunk and fell into British hands. He was a German deserter, but the British never found this out and took him to Philadelphia where he enlisted in a British regiment. He received his bounty and uniform and promptly deserted back to his friends at Valley Forge.101

Surgeon James Thacher had little enthusiasm for Germans
who deserted to enter the American army. In December 1779 he wrote that, "During the present month, one Hessian lieutenant and seven Hessian soldiers, and four British, deserted from the enemy at New York. The lieutenant pretended to desire to enter our service as a volunteer, but deserters are generally suspicious or worthless characters, undeserving of attention." 102 In May 1781 he added that a considerable degree of desertion among the Hessians and British set in, where men came in two or three together. Some of these soldiers offered to enter Continental service, but all were rejected and sent into the country. Americans always suspected deserters, because they were used as spies. 103 However, George Washington recommended in 1780 that Hessians be enrolled to bolster his forces, and many American units did include German deserters on their rosters. 104

Not all deserters remained with the Americans. Johann Ewald brought in a deserter from Armand's Legion in New York in July 1779. The man was a native Russian and had served twenty-four years with the Don Cossacks. He had gone to Brunswick to get a commission, but ended up becoming a sergeant in the Jägers. After being captured at Saratoga he enlisted with Armand and then deserted. 105 Johann Krafft met several Brunswickers who deserted the Americans while on
guard near Kingsbridge in August 1778. "Some deserters came in from the Rebels. They were Brunswickers who had been taken prisoners with General Burgoyne. They told us much news, for instance that the Rebels received much and frequent held from the French." When the British captured Stony Point in June 1779 a Brunswicker who had joined the Americans came from Fort Putnam and gave exact information regarding troops and forts in the area.

The British and Germans put efforts into controlling desertion. These often took the form of written orders as in the case of Riedesel in Canada in 1783. While no Canadian helped deserters early in the war, desertion in Canada rose to a great level at the end of the war. The written word probably had little effect. German commanders used running the gauntlet or hanging as punishment. Some units sent out patrols to intercept deserters, and some used blacks and Indians to catch runaway soldiers. In Savannah these patrols received two guineas for each deserter captured or killed. In retaliation Congress ordered those blacks hanged when caught. "Received of Captain Raedicker Then Guines for 5 Hessian Deserteurs, One of Major Gobels and four of Major de Encle Compagnies of the Hessian Regiment de Knoblauch's, which was Catcht, and Killed from a Patrouil of Militia unter my command."
Savannah March the 10th 1782," reads one receipt. 110

Johann Krafft marched with the troops from Philadelphia to New York during the Monmouth Campaign, when much desertion took place.

Before we marched on, our Gen. v. Knyphausen came and made it known through the commanders of the regiments that there had been many deserters during the past few days; that we were marching directly to Hesse; that we were to believe nothing else, still less the statements in circulation, that the Rebels would give plantations and houses to those who remained behind...Very soon after an English deserter who had been caught by the English was hanged there on a tree by the road, which caused a dreadful uproar, because the hanged man had many still bleeding wounds...The same day 2 men deserted from our first company, and I and Sergeant Heynemann were sent to search in the bushes for them. We came to a meadow where we met some English soldiers with stolen goods. I wanted to take the goods from them, but they told me if I went 100 paces further, I would find plenty of Hessian soldiers there in the house who had done the same thing. 111

When Krafft and his friend explored the house they found no Hessians, so instead stole some chickens.

Not all deserters went over to the Americans. Some tried to remain out of sight in Manhattan or other garrison areas, although there were always great chances that they would be caught. If caught, the penalty could be death. "The deserter, Glatz, from the Eybsch company was executed by a firing squad. And 8 days later the Anspachers' also executed one," Stephan Popp wrote in his diary in August.
1780. Johann Krafft wrote on September 27, 1781 that, "Several desertions having occurred among the Hessians, a gallows was built in front of Fort Knyphausen in order to excite fear."  

German officers used other means besides running the gauntlet, shooting, and hanging deserters to deal with the problem of runaway soldiers. On May 1, 1779 the Royal Gazette in New York City published a proclamation for a free return of deserters with a full pardon. Such proclamations did have some effect. Twenty-one Jägers returned after a similar offer was published in 1781. General von Lossberg, the last Hessian commander-in-chief in America, gave a pardon to all Hessian deserters who returned between May 9 and August 1, 1783 and the Anspach contingent did the same. However, 1783 was the year of the greatest desertion, nearly doubling the 1782 losses.  

Frederick of Hesse used a bit different approach. He declared a two year grace period for deserters beginning in November 1784. After that period he would confiscate the deserters' entire property in Hess. This probably had little effect on deserters in America in 1786.  

Most of the deserters were enlisted men, but a handful of officers also ran away. "A Hessian lieutenant belonging to the Landgrave regiment, came out from the neighborhood of
Fort Washington; he pretended to desire to enter the American service as a volunteer," wrote William Heath in November 1779. In August 1778 Ensign Fuhrer of the Regiment von Knyphausen and Ensign Kleinschmidt of the Regiment von Woellwarth deserted to the Americans. "It is a pity that these nice-looking fellows think so little of the service and of their future," wrote a brother officer. When the two reached the Americans, both called on other Germans to desert. These two desertions rocked the Hessian establishment. Krafft noted that "Ensign Kleinschmidt of our company and of Regiment Woellwarth deserted on account of his debts, while under leave of absence from N. York." This in August 1778. In October 1781 Krafft saw that, "this morning the portraits of the 3 Hessian officers who had deserted, von Masco, Fuhrer and Kleinschmid, were fastened to the gallows." Away a long time indeed! Enlisted deserters could return during periods of amnesty; an officer who deserted could be symbolically hanged after three years from his running away.

Officers who deserted brought disgrace on the whole command. In 1779 the diarist of the Anspach-Bayreuth contingent reported, "We have the disgrace to report that an officer deserted," Jäger Lieutenant Johann Beck. Even George Washington became involved in the status of officer deserters when he wrote General Knyphausen in August 1778
that "I had the Honor to receive Your letter of the 16th instant. Altho' it is not my Business to inquire into those private Motives which may induce officers to leave Your Service, yet I cannot but be sensible of the consideration that could give me Notice of their Characters. The Officers, I can assure you, brought no horses to this Army or any of its Posts that I know of."  

Whatever the status of officer deserters, they were not horse thieves.

Hessians did assist Lieutenant Charles Juliart when he returned from desertion. He had deserted from his regiment at Newport, had aided Fuhrer and Kleinschmidt in organizing German deserters into a Continental Army unit, and had joined Pulaski's Legion. His desertion led to the bloody defeat of Pulaski at Egg Harbor, New Jersey in October 1778. He was too poor to wait for money from Congress; concluded Baurmeister, who eventually got him reassigned to Germany.

Fuhrer and Kleinschmidt placed an advertisement in the Pennsylvania Packet on December 24, 1778 to communicate their reasons for deserting. Desertion from the Hessians became justifiable, the officers said, because their prince had sold them to a foreign power "for infamous and wicked purposes, without their Knowledge or consent. We are of opinion, such subjects have a right to vacate the contract as soon as opportunity offers." The two then listed particulars: they
had been taken prisoner at Trenton and had been well-treated in Virginia; they there had learned the true nature of the Revolution; they had first resigned their commissions before leaving New York. Why had they come to America? They had both entered the Hessian very early in life and "in Hesse there is no other alternative but that of obedience." ¹²⁶

Few deserters explained their conduct as publicly as did Fuhrer and Kleinschmidt; so few officers deserted that the ones who did became objects of American propaganda.

Little was done to control desertion at the end of the war. In Savannah and Charleston, American propaganda, the presence of German-Americans, and a fear among prisoners of not being exchanged were the main reasons for desertion. ¹²⁷ Desertions almost ceased by August 1783, Baurmeister felt, but few prisoners returned as well, only one during that entire month. ¹²⁸ However, the news of embarkation to return to Germany had to be kept from the enlisted men to avoid desertion. ¹²⁹

Some German sovereigns did not want all their troops to come home and be unable to find work. Most states allowed discharges to men who wanted to remain in America. The Duke of Brunswick ordered soldiers guilty of crimes and disorderly conduct, and those unfit for further military service to be left in Canada, particularly in Nova Scotia. ¹³⁰ The Duke
decreed in an order of December 23, 1780:

That our final intention was then indicated, that not one-half of the officers and non-commissioned officers can remain in active service... In case not many should decide to establish themselves there (Canada), or receive their discharge, to seek service elsewhere, we will not refuse to grant some of our old and trusty officers and others, a just and sufficient pension. On the contrary, we are not disposed to the ruin of our military chest, to pay bounty to young and able persons.

Major General Riedesel was authorized to discharge any officer, sergeant, or private he saw fit. 131

There is no tabulation of how many soldiers remained to build Nova Scotia side by side American loyalists, but Anspach-Bayreuth Captain Christian von Molitor went to Annapolis County with his wife, six children, and ten servants and there received a bounty of seven hundred acres of land. Seven Germans from the Anspachers settled close by, in all receiving 1,900 acres. First Lieutenant Philipp von Beust obtained 500 acres in Lunenburg County. Jäger Joseph Gisler received one hundred acres. Another group of thirty-five Anspach soldiers settled in the Halifax area. Only Molitor’s reason for staying in North America has survived: he had married an American woman without the permission of his colonel. 132

Love also kept Johann von Krafft in America. The Hessian lieutenant had fallen for several American women.
"It is certain," he wrote in December 1779, "if I could make up mind to forget Europe and my position, that I would have turned my thoughts to nothing but my happiness with this girl. My own knowledge of the short-lived spells of love that I am constantly subject to gave me hopes of forgetting her in the future." Krafft at last fell for one particular woman, secretly married her, and resigned on the way back to Germany. Returning to New York, he became a civil servant and died in 1804 in Washington, D.C. as a draftsman in the Treasury Department.

Other Germans became American citizens, probably around five thousand, but they dropped quickly out of sight and cannot be counted. They settled from New England to the deep South, although most disappeared into German-speaking areas. Louis Boral, "now works with Mr. Russell at the stocking weaver trade in Norwich (Connecticut), and wishes to live under the dominion of the United States and never return to the service of the Prince of Hesse or of the tyranny of Great Britain," reads one grant of citizenship in February 1780. On February 11, 1785 the State of Georgia granted deserter Jacob Russell a total of 230 acres in Franklin County. Russell had made the name change that would keep him from being counted as a German in the 1790 census.
About nine hundred officially discharged Germans remained in America to join, in numbers at least, the deserters. Most of these men had been officers and sergeants. Conrad Bernker Gordeman petitioned the State of New York on March 25, 1784 saying he had resigned before the Hessians left the United States and he married a native of Long Island. He wanted full citizenship. 136

Former soldier Justus Hartmann Scheuler wrote to his former superior Friedrich von der Malsburg from Savannah on February 12, 1796 that, "How happy I and others are who have left the slavish spirit for republican and democratic angels!" 137 The seventeen thousand Germans who returned to Germany faced the chaos of the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars; those who remained in America gained citizenship and a place in the emerging American nation.

Although there are no statistics or official lists, it seems that there was a marked emigration from the six German states America immediately after the soldiers returned to Europe. The increase in Brunswick was so great that on March 29, 1784 the Duke issued a decree reconfirming an old ban on emigration, because "several local subjects seem to have decided to leave this country and to go to America in spite of everything." This from the duke who wanted his soldiers to settle in Canada. Early in 1785 a Karl Roess
from America brought many Germans back with him and the government then recalled the existing emigration regulations. In Hanau in 1784-85 numerous citizens left and also affected the nearby principalities of Isenburg, Nassau, Mainz, and the whole Rhine-Main area. Horst Dippel says this was a direct result of the returning soldiers. 138

The German soldiers who remained in America did not stand out in society—it would have been unwise to call attention to themselves. Clifford Neal Smith has devoted years of research into tracing deserters in the United States: "Unlike British deserters, there was no way for the Germans to lose themselves in the general populace; consequently, the German deserters are likely to have tried to reach German-speaking settlements in the Mohawk Valley or in Pennsylvania. This is stated as a working hypothesis only. American researchers still have too little data to make a more positive assertion." 139

Some accounts of soldiers' lives have passed down through family tradition. Johannes Schwalm deserted from the Regiment Knyphausen after being twice captured by the Americans. He married Margaret Resh in January 1785 and settled in Tulpehocken an area in eastern Pennsylvania populated by Germans. In 1795 the Schwalm family moved westward to Klingerstown; an area about forty miles north of
Harrisburg. The Schwalm family spread from there all across the country. Some family members are currently active in research and publication of Hessian material. 140

Johann Leibheit, a professional soldier from Brunswick, served in the Regiment von Specht. Captured at Saratoga, Leibheit was held at Cambridge and Charlottesville, and eventually Reading. Forced to enlist in the Continental Army, he entered Moses Hazen's 2nd Canadian Regiment under the name John Lipehite. He served in the company of Captain Anthony Selin, a Swiss mercenary who had come to America in 1776 and later founded Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. Lipehite was furloughed from the army on June 30, 1783 and removed to Pompton, New Jersey, where he married Polly Duffy in 1788. He joined the Bergen County militia in 1793 and received the same year 100 acres of bounty land in Ohio due to his service in the Continental Army. He sold this and remained in New Jersey. Lipehite received a veteran's pension in 1818. He died in 1831, aged 78. The family now spells its name Lightpe. 141

And so the German soldiers melted into American society, founding families that endure to this day. Desertion could not always have been an easy decision to make and carry out. Their stigma as mercenaries must have followed them and given them something to live down. More than fifty years
after the end of the war a Hessian veteran living near
Hamburg, Pennsylvania was set upon by a Pennsylvania-Dutch
veteran with a pitchfork. "I'll kill the ferdomm (damned)
Hessian!" the old man cried. His family had to restrain him.  

Chapter Notes:

1William M. Dabney, After Saratoga: The Story of the
Convention Army, (Albequerque, 1954), is the best study of
the subject.

2Ray Pettengill, ed., Letters from America, (Port Washington,

3Ibid., pp. 121-129; Dabney, pp. 2, 32; John C. Dann, ed.,

4Louise Hall Tharp, The Baroness and the General, (Boston,

5Pettengill, p. 129.

6Ibid., pp. 129-145; Max von Eelking, The German Allied
Troops in the North American War of Independence, (Albany,

7Pettengill, p.145; Bernard A. Uhlendorf, trans., Revolution
as Bauemeister.

8Pettengill, p. 142.

9William L. Stone, ed., Memoirs, Letters and Journals of

10Ibid., p. 9; Tharp, p. 279; Dabney, p. 39.

11Riedesel, II, 6.

12Dabney, p. 45; Riedesel, II, 28-20.

13Dabney, p. 40.
14 Ibid., pp. 39-40.


16 Dabney, p. 48.


18 Baurmeister, pp. 239-240.


20 Ibid., p. 76; Preussisches Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Berlin, Heeresarchiv, Rep. 15., Kap. XXXIII, number 259; Baurmeister, p. 470; Eelking, p. 151.


22 Piel quoted in Ibid., pp. 459-460.


26 John W. Jackson, With the British Army in Philadelphia, (San Rafael, 1979), p. 118; Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS 1248, Wilhelshöher Kriegsakten, number CXIX.

27 Ibid., Schwalm. p. 27.

28 Kipping, pp. 10-11.


31 Ibid., p. 123.
32 Schwalm, p. 28.
33 Wood, p. 232.
36 Baurmeister, p. 172.
37 Ibid., pp. 191-192; 198, 202, 205, 213.
38 Ibid., p. 238; Schwalm, pp. 28-29.
40 Baurmeister, pp. 65-66.
41 Ibid., pp. 58-59.
42 Frederick Mackenzie, Diary of Frederick Mackenzie, I, (Cambridge, 1930), 102-103.
43 Heath, p. 100.
45 Schwalm, p. 34; Historischer Verein fur Mittelfranken, Ms. number 485.
47 Baurmeister, pp. 474-475.
48 Ewald, p. 343.
49 Baurmeister, pp. 479-480.
50 Ibid., p. 480.
51 Ibid., pp. 497, 517-518.

52 Ibid., p. 541; Geschichtsverein zu Hanau, Ms. number 559g.

53 Baurmeister, pp. 541-542.

54 Ibid., p. 555.

55 Ibid., pp. 560, 564-565.

56 Ibid., p. 569.

57 Ewald, p. 349.

58 Baurmeister, pp. 572-574.

59 Ibid., p. 575.


61 Baurmeister, p. 580.

62 Quoted in Cunz, p. 150.

63 See Appendix Two.

64 Most deserters cannot be traced, but many Connecticut towns report "Hessians" coming to settle. In Canton, where I live, a Hessian reputedly lived in a house he built. I was skeptical until I traced the route of the Convention Army south in 1778—they marched right through town. Rumors of Hessians abound the Hartford area.

65 Kipping, p. 7; see also Chapter Three.

66 Kowell, p. 41.


68 Riedesel to wife, April 4, 1776 in Ibid., p. 167.

69 Preussisches Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Heeresarchiv, number 196.

Schwalm, p. 37; Kipping, p. 10.

Carl von Doren, Secret History of the American Revolution, (New York, 1941), p. 15; a copy of the proclamation dated August 14, 1776 is in Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS 1248, Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, number CXIX.

Baurmeister, p. 41.

Bowman, p. 98.

Quoted in Tharp, p. 201.

Mackensie, I, 98.

Schwalm, p. 37; Lowell, p. 286.

See Appendix Two.

Quoted in Kipping, p. 10.

Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Militaria. OWS 1247, Kriegsakten 1776-83, Fasc. a.

Schwalm, p. 35.

Henry A. Pochman, German Culture in America, 1600-1900, (Madison, 1957), p. 49.

Ibid., pp. 44-45.

Ibid., p. 47.

Marshall, p. 103.

Mackensie, I, 183.


Eelking, p. 165.


Quoted in Kipping, p. 10.

Baurmeister, p. 167.


Ibid., p. 70.

Ibid., p. 78.

Heath, p. 205.

Popp, p. 17.


Donn, p. 67.


Ibid., pp. 261-262.


Ewald, p. 174.

Krafft, p. 58.

Baurmeister, p. 284.


Kipping, p. 10.

111. Krafft, pp. 42-43.

112. Popp, p. 17.


114. Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS 1248, Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, number CXXI; Baurmeister, pp. 263-264, 493-494.


117. Schwalm, p. 44.


120. Krafft, p. 59.

121. Ibid., p. 151.


123. Washington to Knyphausen, Aug. 23, 1778 in Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS 1248, Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, number CXX.

124. See Chapter Twelve.


126. Extract of Pennsylvania Packet, Dec. 24, 1778 in Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, OWS 1248. Wilhelmshöher Kriegsakten, number CXXI.


129 Krafft, p. 198.

130 Lowell, p. 291.

131 Lowell, p. 292.

132 Stadtluer, pp. 33-34, 70-73, 151.

133 Krafft, p. 100.

134 Quoted in Schwalm, p. 41.

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid., pp. 40-41.


138 Ibid., pp. 240-241.


140 Johannes Schwalm, The Hessian is a family history and should be consulted to see how one Hessian and his extensive family made good in America.


142 In Schwalm, p. 15.
Afterword:

Every generation writes its own history. This dissertation was written in the light of forty years of American involvement in political and military events all over the globe, particularly this country's involvement in Vietnam. Several parallels exist between American soldiers in the 1960's and Germans in the 1770's. Both armies were sent to a very foreign area at the behest of political leaders without a declaration of war. The soldiers of both forces were told that they were fighting to protect world order and their own way of life. Both forces had a corps of professional officers who brought their professionalism and ideals, but who ultimately failed to understand the foes they were fighting. The enlisted men in both forces encompassed a number of dedicated professionals and a greater number of men who did not really want to be in the army. Both armies faced morale problems, lack of support at home, and mistrusting allies. Both forces displayed language problems, a lack of appreciation for native culture, and committed crimes because of these factors. Both fought a popular guerrilla war with tactics adapted from traditional battlefields and changed tactics very slowly. Prisoners faced years of confinement and constant enemy propaganda. And so forth.

-530-
The German soldiers who fought in the American Revolution fall into two time frames. On the one hand, they represent just about the last major European army to fight for pay, culminating hundreds of years of history of soldiers who fought for overt material gain on someone's part. They also prefigure, on the other hand, the professional peacekeepers of the twentieth century, soldiers fighting not for national preservation, but rather for some conception of societal order.

Americans have pictured the German troops as mindless plunderers and rather pompous toy soldiers. The legacies of both World wars have not changed such images. Blood-thirsty, dull, and slow seem to describe these men, particularly to historians of a generation ago, and although these images are changing, the stereotypes remain.

These are the points that any conclusion must stress:

Employment of mercenaries: Americans in 1776 had never had to face foreign mercenaries before. The British use of such troops caused great outcries up and down the Atlantic seaboard, got written into the Declaration of Independence, and caused many lukewarm patriots to become more fervent. However, the hiring of foreign troops was most common in British history. Mercenary soldiers had fought on British soil against rebellious subjects in the 1740's. Few Britons
questioned the legality of the hiring. Britain could not fight the war without such troops and even critics of the war party acknowledged this truth. The British did not initially raise more regular regiments or provincial units. Even when this had been accomplished, the Germans still made up a sizable portion of the British Army. In terms of utility, the British made a good bargain.

Battlefield Actions: The Germans suffered few defeats on the battlefield, but two of their three major defeats affected the war's outcome. Rall's defeat at Trenton kept the American cause alive and deflated the Hessians' war-like image. It is hard to deny that Rall himself was chiefly responsible for Trenton, although the combination of German (and British) overconfidence and poor intelligence of American strengths permeated the army from top to bottom. The humiliating defeat of the Brunswickers at Bennington began with Burgoyne's poor choice of men to undertake a raid into Vermont. Poor planning and timid execution can be seen in the actions of Burgoyne, Skene, and Baum; the last paid with his life. A third defeat, that of Red Bank, stemmed from Carl von Donop's overconfidence in the strength of his grenadiers and the weakness of his foes. The action at Red Bank did not affect the outcome of the war, but did give the Hessians their bloodiest battle in America.
Germans showed particular strengths in other actions. German professionalism helped win the battles of Long Island, White Plains, Fort Washington, Brandywine, and Charleston. German strength also showed forth at the two battles of Freeman's Farm, Monmouth, Newport, and Guilford Court House. Germans consistently displayed their discipline and effectiveness in battle. The Jäger units were probably man for man the best soldiers on either side.

Morale: Most Germans had high morale into 1778, when increased numbers of conscripts and the length of the war began to take telling effect. Germans were less likely to resort to desperate measures to win a battle, particularly in the later years of the war. While some British units would fight to the last man (such as the Loyalist soldiers at King's Mountain), Germans had no such desire.

Desertion: Desertion plagued some German units, particularly after 1778. Germans did not enlist in great numbers only to desert in America, although some of them did. There was very little desertion in the first two years of the war and it seems likely that most deserters were either prisoners, or had been prisoners. American pressure to desert became effective only in a captive audience. Some 5,000 Germans deserted, but 17,000 did not.

British-German Relations: The British did not make the
Germans conform to a standard British system. The British provided pay and some supplies, but the Germans retained control over the administrative concerns of their units. Supply problems plagued the British war effort and the British and Germans suffered alike. The language barrier hindered communications, but this seems to have lessened as time passed. Both groups displayed hostility toward one another, particularly in the second half of the war. Some enlisted men became overtly hostile. This probably had little effect in battle, but much effect in camp.

Plundering: The Germans earned quite a reputation as plunderers, although the British sometimes outdid them. The language barrier created animosity and confusion and both Americans and Britons saw the Germans as offenders. Evidence does not support the concept of the Germans as being particularly destructive in a war where both sides used destruction of public and private property as a weapon.

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Joseph Plumb Martin and a group of fellow Connecticut soldiers took an afternoon off from the war in the summer of 1778 to visit the battlefield of White Plains, where Martin had fought in 1776. The men studied the shallow graves of the Americans, British and Germans, side by side. Hogs and dogs had dug some of the bodies out of the ground. Martin
mused on the fate of the Hessians. His words still have
the most merit:

Here were Hessian skulls as thick as a bombshell. Poor fellows! They were left unburied in a foreign land. They had, perhaps, as near and dear friends to lament their sad destiny as the Americans who lay buried near them. But they should have kept at home. We should then never have gone after them to kill them in their own country. But, the reader will say, they were forced to come and be killed here, forced by their rulers who have absolute power of life and death over their subjects. Well then, reader, bless a kind Providence that has made such a distinction between your condition and theirs. And be careful, too, that you do not allow yourself ever to be brought to such an object, survile and debased condition.¹

APPENDICES
APPENDIX ONE

GERMAN UNITS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The units are listed alphabetically by the name of the unit. Capsule histories are given under the unit’s initial designation. Based on R. N. Katcher, Encyclopedia of British, Provincial, and German Army Units 1775-1783, Harrisburg, 1973.

The Anhalt Zerbst Regiment (Frei Corps): Arrived at Quebec in May 1778 and sent to New York in August 1781, spending the war there until returned to Germany in the summer of 1783. Never in combat. Authorized strength: 11 officers and 463 enlisted men in two battalions. Uniform: white coats with red facings, felt caps, red cloaks, and yellow worsted sashes worn by all ranks.

Commander: Colonel Baron von Rauchenplatt
First Battalion Commander: Major von Piquet
Second Battalion Commander: Colonel von Rauchenplatt

1st Anspach-Bayreuth Regiment (1777-1779); Regiment von Voit (1779-1783); 1st Anspach Battalion (1783): Arrived at New York in June 1777 and sent to Philadelphia in November 1777. Returned to New York in June 1778 and sent to the relief of Newport that August. Returned to New York in October 1779. Sent to Virginia in May 1781 and interned at Yorktown that October. Exchanged and returned to Germany in May 1783.
Authorized strength: 27 officers and 543 enlisted men.

Uniform: blue coat with red facings; white small clothes.

Commanders: Colonel F.L.A. von Eby to May 1778

Colonel F.A.V. Voit von Salzburg, May 1778
to end of war.

2nd Anspach-Bayreuth Regiment (1777-1779); Regiment Seybothen
(1779-1782); 2nd Anspach Battalion (1783): Same regiment
history and strength as 1st Anspach-Bayreuth Regiment.

Uniform: Blue coats with black facings; white small clothes.

Commanders: Colonel F.A.V. von Salsburg to May 1778

Colonel F.J.H.W.C. von Seybothen, May 1778 to war's end.

Anspach Artillery: Arrived with the Anspach infantry
regiments and served with them. Strength: 1 officer and
43 enlisted men; 2 field guns. Uniform: blue coats with
red facings and yellow buttons; white small clothes.

Commander: Captain N.F. Hoffman.

Artillery Company of Hesse-Hanau: Arrived in Quebec with
the Hesse-Hanau infantry regiment and had a similar history.
Uniform: blue coats with crimson facings; yellow small
clothes.

Commander: Captain Georg Fausch.
Artillery Corps of Hesse-Cassel: Served in various detach-
ments with all the infantry regiments of Hesse-Cassel
throughout the war. Strength at New York in October 1778:
373 officers and enlisted men. Uniform: blue coats with
red facings.

Commander: Major H. Heitel.

Light Infantry Battalion von Barner (Brunswick troops):
Participated in the Burgoyne Campaign and was interned at
Saratoga. Made up of the light infantry companies of
different Brunswick regiments and the Brunswick Jäger
Company. Strength: 24 officers and 634 enlisted men.

Commander: Lieutenant Colonel F.A. von Barner.

Regiment von Barner (Brunswick troops): Created in 1778 from
the survivors of the Saratoga Campaign and new recruits. The
battalion did garrison duty in Canada until returned to
Germany in 1783.

Commander: Lieutenant Colonel F.A. von Barner.

Garrison Regiment von Benning (Hesse-Cassel troops; see
Garrison Regiment von Püyn) 2nd Battalion Grenadiere von
Block (1776-1777); 2nd Battalion Grenadiere von Lengerke
(1778-1783); (Hesse-Cassel troops) Arrived in New York in
August 1776. Made up of grenadier companies of various

Commanders: Lieutenant Colonel von Block to 1777
Lieutenant Colonel von Lengerke 1777 to 1783

Musketeer Regiment von Bose (Hesse-Cassel troops; see Musketeer Regiment von Turmbach)

Grenadiere Battalion von Breymann (Brunswick troops):

Commanders: Lieutenant Colonel H.C. Breymann to
October 1777
Lieutenant Colonel O.C.A. von Mengen to war's end

Garrison Regiment von Bünau (Hesse-Cassel) troops: Organized in Witzenhausen. Arrived in New York in October 1776. Sent
to Newport in November 1776 and engaged in the siege in
August 1778. Returned to New York in November 1779 and to
Germany in 1783. Released from active duty in November 1784.
Strength in August 1778: 16 officers and 508 enlisted men.
Uniform: blue coats with scarlet collar and cuffs; changed
in 1783 to crimson collar and cuff, no lapel; white small
clothes; officers' lace: silver.

Commander Colonel R. von Bunau

Chasseurs (Hesse-Cassel troops): Drawn from regiments Land-
graf, von Ditfurth, von Huyn, and von Bunau in September 1777
at Newport. Formed into two companies of 4 officers and 150
enlisted men. First Company commander: Captain F.W. von
der Malsburg, Regiment von Ditfurth; Second Company commander:
Captain-Lieutenant A.C. Noltenius, Regiment von Bunau.
Companies disbanded on November 25, 1778 and the men returned
to their regiments. New chasseur company raised on July 21,
1778 at New York by taking two men each from the companies of
the regiments Leib, Erb Prinz, Prinz Carl, Donop, Mirbach,
Turmbach, Alt von Lossberg, Knyphausen, Wollwarth, and Seitz,
for a total of four officers and 115 enlisted men. Commander:
Captain-Lieutenant George Hanger. Disbanded and men returned
to their regiments on November 15, 1778. Hanger, an
Englishman in the Hessian Army, raised a new chasseur company
on December 10, 1779, which was sent to Charleston. The company returned to New York and disbanded in December 1780. The men in all the chasseur companies wore their regular regimental uniforms.

_Grenadiere Regiment d'Angelelli_ (Hesse-Cassel troops; see _Grenadiere Regiment von Rall_)


Chief: Lieutenant General W.M. von Ditfurth

Commanders: Colonel C. von Bose to 1777

Colonel M. von Westerhagen 1777 to end of war

_Musketeer Regiment von Donop_ (Hesse-Cassel troops): Left
the Homberg garrison on February 29, 1776 and arrived in New York in August 1776, fighting at Long Island and Fort Washington. Took part in 1777 campaign to Philadelphia, fighting at Brandywine and Germantown. Fought at Monmouth and returned with the army to New York in July 1778. Stationed in New York until the end of the war, fighting at Springfield in 1780. Returned to Germany in November 1783 and became part of the Cassel garrison. Uniform: blue coats with pale yellow facings: yellow small clothes; red socks; officer's lace: gold.

Chief: Lieutenant General H.A. von Donop

Commanders: Colonel D.U. von Gosen to 1780

Colonel C.P. Heymell from 1780 to end of war

Regiment von Ehrenkrook (Brunswick troops): Created from the survivors of the Saratoga Campaign in 1778, spending the rest of the war in garrison duty around Trois Rivieres, Quebec, until returned to Germany in 1783.

Commander: Colonel J.G. von Ehrenkrook

Fusilier Regiment Erbprinz 1776-1783; Musketeer Regiment Prinz Friedrich 1783 (Hesse-Cassel troops): Left Eschwege garrison on March 2, 1776 and arrived in New York in August, fighting at Long Island and Fort Washington. Stationed in
New York until sent to Virginia in March 1781 and interned at Yorktown. Returned to Eschwege in 1783. Five hundred and two men left for Virginia and 454 interned there. Uniform: blue coats with rose facings until 1783; when changed to crimson; white small clothes; white metal caps to 1783, when replaced with cocked hats; officer's lace: silver.

Chief: Erbprinz Wilhelm of Hesse to 1783

Prinz Friedrich of Hesse 1783

Commanders: Major General J.D. Stirn to 1779

Major General F. von Hackenburg 1779-1783

Colonel F. von Cochenhausen 1783

Fusilier Regiment Erbprinz 1783 (Hesse-Cassel troops; see Fusilier Regiment Leib)

Grenadiere Regiment Erbprinz (Hesse-Hanau troops; see Hesse-Hanau Regiment)

Regiment von Eyb (Anspach-Bayreuth troops; see 1st Regiment Anspach-Bayreuth)

Free Corps of Infantry (Hesse-Hanau troops): Raised in Germany in January 1781, arriving in New York in August 1781. A poorly disciplined corps, the unit did patrol duty around the city, leaving it and returning to Germany in July 1783. Disbanded upon return. Strength: 1 lieutenant colonel, 1
major, 1 surgeon, 1 paymaster and his attendants, 1 provost, and 1 gunsmith; a rifle company of 3 officers and 157 men and four light infantry companies of same strength. Uniform: green coats with red collars and cuffs and no lapels; half boots; the light companies in leather caps and the rest in cocked hats.

Commander: Lieutenant Colonel M. Janecke

4th Battalion Grenadiere von Graff (Hesse-Cassel troops; see 4th Battalion Grenadiere von Koehler)

The Hesse-Hanau Regiment: Arrived in Quebec in June 1776 and served in the Burgoyne Campaign, being interned at Saratoga. Uniform: blue coats with red facings; yellow small clothes; white metal grenadier caps.

Chief: The Count of Hesse-Hanau (who was the Erbprinz of Hesse-Cassel)

Commander: Colonel W.R. von Gall

Garrison Regiment von Huyn, 1776-1780; Garrison Regiment von Benning, 1780 to war's end (Hesse-Cassel troops): Arrived in New York in October 1776, fighting at Fort Washington. Sent to Newport in November 1776, returning to New York and being sent to Charleston in December 1779. Part of the garrison there until returned to New York in November 1782.
Returned to Germany in November and deactivated the next year. Uniform: blue coats with yellow collars and cuffs, no lapels; yellow small clothes; officer's lace: silver.

Chief: Colonel J.C. von Huyn to 1780

Colonel F. von Benning 1780 to war's end

Commander: Colonel J.C. von Huyn to 1778

Lieutenant Colonel L.F. Kurta 1778-1780

Colonel F. von Benning 1780 to war's end

Anspach Jägers (Anspach-Bayreuth troops); Three companies of 4 officers and 97 enlisted men, served with the Hesse-Cassel Jäger Corps. After the capture of all the other Anspachers at Yorktown, the unit was redesigned the Field Jäger Battalion, of six companies, and all Anspachers were assigned to it in March 1782. Returned to Germany in August 1783. Uniform: green coats with crimson facings; white breeches and green waistcoats.

1st Company commander: Captain C.G. von Cramon to July 1778

Captain C.G.J. von Waldenfelds July 1778 to war's end

2nd Company commander: Captain C.G.J. von Waldenfelds to July 1778

Captain F.W. von Roder July 1778 to war's end
3rd Company (and Field Battalion): Lieutenant Colonel C.L.R. Baron von Reitzenstein

Brunswick Jäger Company: Arrived in Quebec in September 1776, serving with the Light Infantry Battalion von Barner (Which see.) Uniform: green coats lined green and faced red; yellow buttons; green waistcoats and buff breeches; grey gaiters.

Commander: Captain M.C.L. Schottelieus

Hesse-Hanau Jägers: Arrived in Quebec in the spring of 1777 and were attached to Lieutenant Colonel Barry St. Leger's expedition against Fort Stanwix by the order of George III. In garrison duty in Canada following the failure of St. Leger. Strength in 1777: 342 officers and men.

Hesse-Cassel Jäger Corps: First company arrived in New York in August 1776; second company arrived in October. Two more foot companies and one mounted company were added later. Personnel for the mounted company were drawn from Hessian dragoon and hussar regiments. Served in virtually every action of the war in various detachments. Returned to Germany in November 1783. Uniform: green coats faced and lined with crimson; green small clothes, although white
sometimes worn in the summer; brown leggings; officer's
lace: gold.

Commander: Colonel C.E.C. von Donop to 1777

Lieutenant Colonel L.J.A. von Wurmb to
war's end

Garrison Regiment von Knoblauch (Hesse-Cassel troops; see
Garrison Regiment von Wissenbach)

Fusilier Regiment von Knyphausen (Hesse-Cassel troops): Left the garrison at Fortress Ziegenhain and arrived in New York in August 1776, fighting at Long Island, New York, White Plains and Fort Washington. Sent to Trenton, where it was captured. Survivors returned to New York and placed in the Combined Regiment von Loos for the 1777 campaign. That unit was split into two units in December 1777 and thereafter the Knyphausen reformed under its own name in 1778, as prisoners returned and recruits entered. Sent to Quebec in September 1779; however, suffered heavy losses at sea as result of a hurricane. Survivors returned to New York and were not sent to Quebec until May 1780. Returned to New York in October 1781 and to Ziegenhain in 1783. Uniform: blue coats with black facings; yellow small clothes, brass caps.

Chief: Lieutenant General W. von Knyphausen

Commander: Colonel H. von Borck
4th Battalion Grenadiere von Kohler to 1777; Battalion Grenadiere von Graff 1777-1782; Battalion Grenadiere von Platte 1782-1783 (Hesse-Cassel troops): Arrived in New York in October 1776, fighting at Fort Washington, the raid on Amboy, New Jersey in June 1777 and the attack on Forts Clinton and Montgomery in October 1777. Returned to Germany in 1783. Sometimes called the Garrison Grenadier Regiment, as it was composed of the grenadier companies of the four garrison regiments in America. Did not operate with the three other grenadier battalions as part of the Grenadier Brigade.

Commander: Lieutenant Colonel von Kohler to 1777
Lieutenant Colonel von Graff 1777-1782
Lieutenant Colonel von Platte 1782-1783

Musketeer Regiment Landgraf (Hesse-Cassel troops; see

Musketeer Regiment von Wutgrenau)

2nd Battalion Grenadiere von Lengerke (Hesse-Cassel troops; see 2nd Battalion Grenadiere von Block)

in November 1776, and returned to New York in May 1777. Sent to Philadelphia in September 1777, fighting at Brandywine and Germantown. Returned to New York in July 1778, staying there until returned to Germany in 1783. Uniform: blue coats with bright yellow facings; yellow small clothes; red socks; officer's lace: silver.

Chief: Langraf Frederick II to 1783
Erbprinz Wilhelm 1783
Commander: Colonel F.W. von Lossberg to 1780
Major General C.E. von Bischhausen 1780-1782
Major General F.W. von Wurmb 1782 to war's end

Leib Infantry Regiment of 1783 (Hesse-Cassel troops; see Musketeer Regiment von Wutgenau)

1st Battalion Grenadiere von Linsingen (Hesse-Cassel troops):

Commander: Lieutenant Colonel O.C.W. von Linsingen
Combined Regiment von Loos (Hesse-Cassel troops): Made in January 1777 out of the survivors of the Battle of Trenton. Served in the 1777 Philadelphia Campaign, fighting at Brandywine. Upon the return to New York in July 1778, the battalion was turned into two battalions and then into the parent units.

Commander: Colonel J.A. von Loos

Fusilier Regiment von Lossberg (Alt)(Hesse-Cassel troops): Left the Rinteln garrison on March 10, 1776 and arrived at New York in August 1776, fighting at Long Island, New York, White Plains, and Fort Washington. Part of the garrison at Trenton, where the regiment surrendered. Survivors put into the Combined Regiment von Loos for the 1777 Philadelphia Campaign. Reformed the parent unit in 1778. Sent to Quebec in September 1779, suffering heavy losses as a result of a hurricane at sea. Survivors returned to New York and sent again to Quebec in May 1780, where they spent the war until returned to Germany in August 1783. Returned to Rinteln. Uniform: blue coats with orange facings; white small clothes brass fusilier caps; officer's lace: gold.

Chief: Major General H.A. von Lossberg

Commanders: Colonel H.A. von Heeringen to 1778
Colonel J.A. von Loos 1778-1782
Musketeer Regiment Jung von Lossberg (Hesse-Cassel troops; see Musketeer Regiment von Mirbach)

3rd Battalion Grenadiere von Lowenstein (Hesse-Cassel troops; see 3rd Battalion von Minnigerode)

3rd Battalion Grenadiere von Minnigerode to 1779; Battalion Grenadiere von Lowenstein 1779-1783 (Hesse-Cassel troops):

Commanders: Lieutenant Colonel von Minnigerode to October 1779
Lieutenant Colonel F.H. Von Schuter 1779-1781
Lieutenant Colonel von Lowenstein 1781 to 1783

Musketeer Regiment von Mirbach to 1780; Musketeer Regiment Jung von Lossberg 1780 to war's end (Hesse-Cassel troops):
Arrived in New York in August 1776. Fought at Long Island,
New York, White Plains, and Fort Washington. Engaged at Brandywine and Red Bank during the 1777 Philadelphia Campaign. Returned to New York in December 1777 and remained there until it returned to the garrison of Melsungen in 1783. Uniform: blue coats with red facings, trimmed with plain white lace; white small clothes; red socks; officer's lace: silver.

Chief: Major General W. von Mirbach to 1780

Major General W. von Lossberg 1780-1783

Commanders: Colonel J.A. von Loss to 1777

Colonel von Block 1777-1779

Colonel C.C. von Romrod 1779 to war's end

4th Battalion Grenadiere von Platte (Hesse-Cassel troops: see 4th Battalion Grenadiere von Koehler)

Musketeer Regiment Prinz Carl (Hesse-Cassel troops): Left garrison at Hersfeld and arrived in New York in August 1776, fighting at Long Island, New York, White Plains, and Fort Washington. Sent to Newport in November 1776 and returned to New York in May 1777. Sent to Charleston in December 1779 and returned to New York in November 1782. Returned to Germany in November 1783 and garrisoned Hersfeld. Uniform: blue coat with red facings trimmed with yellow lace; white small clothes; red stocks; officer's lace: gold.

Chief: Prinz Carl of Hesse

Commanders: Major General M.C. Schmidt to 1780

Major General D.V. von Gosen to war's end
Regiment Prinz Friedrich (Brunswick troops): Arrived in Quebec in June 1776. Small detachment in the Saratoga Campaign and interned there, while 450 men left at Fort Ticonderoga. Spent the war in Canada until returned to Germany in 1783. Uniform: blue coats with yellow facings and yellow buttons; white small clothes.

Chief: Lieutenant General Prinz Friedrich August of Brunswick

Commander: Major General E.H. von Stammer

Field Commander: Lieutenant Colonel C.J. Prætorius

Dragoon Regiment Prinz Ludwig: (Brunswick troops): Arrived in Quebec in June 1776. Served in the Burgoyne Campaign, being decimated at Bennington and rest interned at Saratoga. Few men mounted. Survivors in Canada continued to draw reinforcements and reached a strength of 282 men by 1779. Returned to Germany in 1783. Uniform: light blue coats faced and lined yellow; yellow buttons; cocked hats with white plumes; yellow small clothes; leggings when dismounted.

Chief: Prinz Ludwig Ernst of Brunswick

Commander: Major General Baron F.A. von Riedesel

Field Commander: Lieutenant Colonel F. Baum to August 16, 1777

Major J.C. von Meibom August 1777 to war's end
Grenadiere Regiment von Rall ot 1776; Grenadiere Regiment von Wöllwarth 1776-1778; Grenadiere Regiment von Trümbach 1778-1780; Grenadiere Regiment d'Angelelli 1780 to war's end (Hesse-Cassel troops): Part of the Grebenstein garrison. Arrived in New York in August 1776, fighting at Long Island, New York, White Plains, and Fort Washington. Regiment captured at Trenton. Survivors posted to the Combined Regiment von Loos for the 1777 campaign. Old parent organization resumed in the summer of 1778 at New York. Sent to East Florida in November 1778 and then to the defense of Savannah, where the regiment lost heavily. Sent to Charleston in July 1780. Returned to New York in November 1782 and back to Grebenstein in 1783. Uniform: blue coat with a red collar and cuffs, no lapels; yellow small clothes; red stocks; brass grenadier caps; officer's lace: gold.

Chief: Colonel J.G. Rall to December 26, 1776

Colonel W.F. von Wöllwarth 1776-1778

Lieutenant General L. von Trümbach 1778-1780

Lieutenant General le Marquis d'Angelelli 1780-1783

Commanders: Colonel J.G. Rall to December 26, 1776

Colonel W.F. von Wöllwarth 1776-1778

Colonel J.C. von Koehler 1778-1782

Colonel M. Hatzfeld 1782 to war's end
Regiment von Rhettz (Brunswick troops): Arrived in Quebec in September 1776, taking part in the operations along Lake Champlain. Interned at Saratoga after taking part in Burgoyne's Campaign. Survivors merged into the Regiment von Ehrenkrook, serving at Trois Rivieres, Quebec until returned to Germany in 1783. Uniform: blue coats with white facings; white small clothes; officer's lace: silver.

Chief: Major General A.W. von Rhettz

Field Commander: Lieutenant Colonel J.G. von Ehrenkrook

Major B.B. von Lucke during the Saratoga Campaign

Musketeer Regiment von Riedesel (Brunswick troops): Arrived in Quebec in June 1776, fighting in Lake Champlain area that fall. Sent on Burgoyne's Campaign and interned at Saratoga. Uniform: blue coats with yellow facings; blue and white striped overalls while serving in 1777; white pom pom with yellow center on cocked hats.

Chief: Major General Baron F.A. von Riedesel

Commander: Lieutenant Colonel E.L.W. von Speth

Garrison Regiment von Seitz (Hesse-Cassel troops; see Garrison Regiment von Stein)

Regiment Seybothen (Anspach troops; see 2nd Anspach-Bayreuth Regiment)
Scheither Corps (Hanover troops): In 1775 Lieutenant Colonel G.H.A. von Scheither was granted authority to raise a corps for service in America of 4,000 men. He failed to raise many men, and, giving up recruiting, left Germany on March 26, 1776 with 250 men who were merged into British regiments upon their arrival in New York.

Musketeer Regiment von Specht (Brunswick troops): Arrived in Quebec in September 1776. Took part in operations around Lake Champlain in the fall of 1776. Engaged in Burgoyne's Campaign and interned at Saratoga. Uniform: blue coats with red facings and yellow buttons; white small clothes; white pompons with a red center on the cocked hats.

Chief: Colonel J.F. Specht
Commander: Major C.F. von Ehrenkrock

Garrison Regiment von Stein to 1778; Garrison Regiment von Seitz 1778-1783; Garrison Regiment von Porbeck 1783 (Hesse-Cassel troops): Left Hersfeld garrison on May 6, 1776 and arrived in New York that October, fighting at Fort Washington. Sent to Halifax in September 1778, where the unit spent the war, leaving for Germany in August 1783. Released from active duty on October 26, 1783 at Heiligenrode. Uniform: blue coats with orange collar and cuffs, no lapels; white small clothes; officer's lace: silver.
Chief: Lieutenant General General J.L.F. von Stein to 1778
Colonel F.C.E. von Seitz 1778-1783
Colonel F. von Porbeck 1783

Commander: Lieutenant Colonel von Kitzel

Musketeer Regiment von Türmbach to 1778; Musketeer Regiment von Bose 1778 to war's end (Hesse-Cassel troops): Left the Hofgeismar garrison and arrived in New York in August 1776. Sent to East Florida in November 1778, serving in the siege of Savannah. Sent to Charleston in December 1779, fighting at Stono Ferry, Guilford Court House, and with the army in Virginia. Interned at Yorktown. Returned to Hofgeismar garrison in November 1783. Uniform: blue coats with white facings with a variety border and buttonholes; white small clothes; red stocks; officer's lace: gold.

Chief: Major General L. von Türmbach to 1778

Major General C. von Bose 1778 to war's end

Commander: Colonel C.E. von Bischhausen to 1780

Lieutenant Colonel B.H. von Münchenhausen 1780

to war's end

Grenadiere Regiment von Trumbach (Hesse-Cassel troops; see Grenadiere Regiment von Rall)
Regiment von Voit (Anspach troops; see 1st Regiment Anspach-Bayreuth)

3rd Waldeck Regiment (Waldeck troops): Raised specifically for British service in May 1776. The first two Waldeck regiments were in Dutch service. Arrived in New York in October 1776, fighting at Fort Washington and the defense of Staten Island. Sent to Pensacola in October 1778, where the unit served until that post fell to the Spanish in May 1781. Then sent as prisoners to Havana before being returned to New York. Returned to duty there in July 1782 before being returned to Germany in July 1783. Two 3 pound guns attached to the regiment. Uniform: blue coats with bright yellow facings; white small clothes.

Commanders: Lieutenant Colonel J.L.W. von Hanxleden to January 1781
Lieutenant Colonel A. von Horn January 1781 to war's end

Garrison Regiment von Wissenbach to 1780; Garrison Regiment von Knoblauch 1780 to war's end (Hesse-Cassel troops): Left Melsungen on May 7, 1776 and arrived in New York in October 1776, fighting at Fort Washington. Sent to East Florida in November 1778 and to Savannah in December 1778. Fought at Stono Ferry, South Carolina, while 80 men were sent to
St. Augustine, East Florida. Returned to New York in August 1782, and to Germany in 1783. On November 19, 1783 the regiment was released from active duty at Homberg. Uniform: blue coats with white facings, until lapels were removed in 1783, thereafter black collars and cuffs; white small clothes; officer's lace: silver.

Chief: Lieutenant General M.A. von Wissenbach to 1780
Major General H. von Knoblauch 1780 to war's end
Commander: Colonel A. von Horn to 1778
Lieutenant Colonel F. von Porbeck 1778 to war's end

Grenadiere Regiment von Wöllwarth (Hesse-Cassel troops): see Grenadiere Regiment von Rall)

Musketeer Regiment von Wutgenau to 1776; Musketeer Regiment Landgraf 1776-1783; Leib Infantry Regiment in 1783 (Hesse-Cassel troops): Part of the Rheinfeld garrison. Arrived at New York in October 1776, fighting at Fort Washington. Sent to Newport in November 1776 and remained there until returned to New York in November 1779. Remained in New York until returned to Germany in 1783 as part of the Cassel garrison. Uniform: blue coats with red collar and cuffs, decorated with white brandenburgs with two orange worms; yellow small clothes; red stocks; officer's lace: gold.
Chief: General H.W. von Wutgenau to 1776

Landgraf Friedrich II 1776-1783

Commanders: General H.W. von Wutgenau to 1776

Colonel H.A. von Heeringen 1776-1777

Major General C. von Bose 1777-1778

Major General H.J. von Kospoth 1778 to war's end.
APPENDIX TWO

German Casualties


Total number of troops furnished: 16,992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dead</th>
<th>Killed in Action</th>
<th>Deserted</th>
<th>Prisoners (Not Cumulative)</th>
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<td>71</td>
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<td>350</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>442</td>
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<td>546</td>
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<td>1780</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>288</td>
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<td>1781</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>446</td>
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Official losses by unit:

Grenadier Battalion Linsing

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<td>43</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>67</td>
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<td>Prisoners</td>
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Grenadier Battalion Block/Lengerke

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Grenadier Battalion Minigerode/Lowenstein

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Grenadier Battalion Koehler/Graf/Platte

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Regiment Bünau

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Artillery Corps

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Jäger Corps

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Loss of Hesse-Hanau Troops: (Sources: Edward J. Lowell, The Hessians and the Other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War)

Total Troops: 2,422
Returned in 1783 1,441
Did Not Return 981
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Loss of the Waldeck Troops: (Source: HEITRINA)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total troops: 1,225</td>
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<tr>
<td>Killed: 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died of Disease: 407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Deaths: 455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deserted: 246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharged in U.S.: 72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Loss: 773</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss of Anspach-Bayreuth Troops: (Source: Erhard Stadtler, Die Anspach-Bayreuther Truppen im Amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total troops: 2,353</td>
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<tr>
<td>Killed by Unit:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killed/Died of Wounds: 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jagers: 19</td>
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<td>1st Infantry: 11</td>
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<td>Died of Disease: 357</td>
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<td>2nd Infantry: 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Officers: 2</td>
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<td>Total Deaths: 401</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deserted/Remained in U.S.: 679</td>
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<td>Total Loss: 1,080</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Loss of Anhalt-Zerbst Troops: (Source: Lowell)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Troops: 1,152</td>
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<tr>
<td>Returned in 1783: 984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Return: 163</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loss of Brunswick Troops: (Sources: Lowell; Max von Eelking, The German Allied Troops in the North American War of Independence)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total troops: 115 Officers and 5,608 Enlisted men:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: 5,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officers casualties: 7 killed and 12 died, total: 19</td>
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</table>
Remained in U.S. with leave of Duke of Brunswick: 7

Troops returned in 1783: 2,708
Did Not Return: 3,015

Total German Losses:
Total troops sent: 29,867
Total Dead and Deserted: 13,961
Bibliographic Essay

I have made extensive use of manuscript sources in writing this study. Between 1929 and 1931 Dr. Georg Smolka photocopied the entire holdings of public German repositories dealing with emigration to America and the American Revolution. The Library of Congress holds these documents in either a paper or microfilm form. Thousands of documents from the six states that sent troops are available through the Library's Manuscript Division. Unfortunately, the copies are negative photocopies and are particularly difficult to use, especially because most documents are in Gothic handwriting script. In spite of limitations, a researcher can gain access to all German materials held in state archives in that country in the manuscript reading room.

The New York Public Library contains many copies of German material brought back from Germany by George Bancroft in the mid-nineteenth century. Although hardly as extensive as the Library of Congress' collection, the Bancroft papers are more legible. Most are letters, diaries, and regimental journals. The Clements Library in Ann Arbor, Michigan holds the Von Jungkenn papers, the third largest collection of manuscripts dealing with the German troops in this country. Several of these items have been translated and published in

-572-
book form.

Together, these three libraries provide the greatest collection of manuscript sources, greater than any single German source.

Several printed works must be studied as rudimentary subject material. Edward J. Lowell's *The Hessians and the Other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War* (New York, 1884) and Max von Eelking's *The German Allied Troops in the North American War of Independence* (Albany, 1893) are solid older histories based upon extensive use of primary materials. *Hessische Truppen im Amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg* (Marburg, 1972-76) is a computer print-out of the records of the soldiers from Hesse-Cassel and Waldeck and enables statistical calculations to be made.

Several good diaries of German soldiers are available in English. Johann Carl Buettner's *Narrative* (New York, 1971) first appeared in Germany in the 1830's. Buettner is valuable for only a few instances, because he wrote so late in life that much of the narrative is garbled. The *Journal of Du Roi the Elder* (New York, 1911) is a good, detailed account by an officer who took part in the Saratoga Campaign and looked upon America favorably. Johann Ewald's *Diary of the American War* (New Haven, 1979) is the best book by a soldier in the Revolution. He reports with the detail of the professional soldier and is reliable in his judgements.
Johann Heinrichs (Hinrichs) "Extracts from the Letter Book...

Finally, Stone also edited the *Journal of Captain Pausch* (New York, 1971), a lively account of the Hanau artillery in the Saratoga Campaign.

Several secondary works are of particular interest. Horst Dippel's *Germany and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, 1977) is quite comprehensive concerning the impact of the Revolution on Germany. Sylvia Frey's *The British Soldier in America* (Texas, 1981) provides some data on the social composition of the British Army. Stephan F. Gradish's "The German Mercenaries in North America During the American Revolution: A Case Study" (Canadian *Journal of History*, 1969) credits German troops with saving Canada for Britain.

Friedrich Kapp's *Der Soldatenhandel deutscher Fürsten nach Amerika* (Berlin, 1874) is a study of the German soldier trade written by a liberal who fled to America in 1848. Although still valuable, it pictures the German princes as money-hungry despots with no refining graces. Ernst Kipping's excellent *The Hessian View of America* (Monmouth Beach, 1971) is based on his translations of many primary sources.

Piers Mackesy's *The War for America* (Cambridge, 1965) is the best study of the British war machine and its international conflicts in the 1770's and 1780's. Johannes Schwalm, *The*
Hessian (Millersville, 1976) is a solid family history of one Hessian's contribution to American life. Finally, Erhard Stadtler's *Die Anspach-Bayreuther Truppen im Amerikanischen Unabhängigkeitskrieg* (Nurnberg, 1955) is a fine study of one state's soldiers during the American Revolution.
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Unpublished sources:

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Preussisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, Hessen Kabinettsministerium.

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Geschichtsverein zu Hanau.

Landesbibliothek Kassel, Ms. Hass. 40, 80, and Fol.

Historischer Verein für Mittelfranken.

From the New York Public Library:

The Bancroft Collection.

Other:

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(Albert von Pfister), The Voyage of the First Hessian Army from Portsmouth to New York, New York, 1915.


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Secondary Works:


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Friedrich Kapp, *Der Soldatenhandel deutscher Fürsten nach Amerika*, Berlin, 1874.


Martin Lezius, *Deutscher Kämpfer fur fremde Fahnen*, Berlin, 1934.


Clifford Neal Smith, *Muster Rolls and Prisoner-of-War Lists in American Archival Collections Pertaining to the German Mercenary Troops Who Served with the British Forces during the American Revolution*, 3 vols, DeKalb, 1974-76.


