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1. A War Correspondent.

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A War Correspondent.

(Madame von Riedesel.)

The "great men" who make history are not the most trustworthy chroniclers. Most of them are much given to lying. But the humble, the anonymous witnesses of great events may tell the truth.

A general might re-arrange or even falsify facts in his memoirs, for the sake of his own fame and glory. His wife, however - a passionate though sober and efficient personage - sees and remembers the simple things, the authentic things, the truth.

General John Burgoyne's Campaign in America was described, analysed, and judged by varied men of high standards and profound knowledge: by historians, military experts, English Tories, and American patriots. But "Gentleman Jonny Burgoyne" carried with him, quite unwittingly, a vigilant observer, whose precise testimony is more or less forgotten today.

The Baroness von Riedesel, the wife of a German general with the British army, was an indefatigable correspondent and kept her diary most conscientiously. She wrote almost daily accounts of what happened from the beginning of the campaign to the end of the long years of imprisonment. An American edition of her books, Letters and Memoirs relating to the War of American Independence and the Capture of the German Troops at Saratoga, was published in New York in 1828.

~~And German, and was widely read. A small edition of 500 was published in America, in 1923.~~

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~~I present two war-correspondents: a middle-aged German lady, and a young English officer.~~

~~MADAME VON RIEDESEL.~~

JOURNEY.

On May 4, 1776 Baroness Frederike Charlotte Louise von Riedesel left the little German town of Wolfenbuettel with her three little girls, Gustava four, Frederike two, and Caroline, only ten weeks old. "Good old Rockel" helped the baroness into the coach first, and she hugged the baby tightly to her breast as she watched him settle the little girls. Usually the children prattled incessantly in soft busy voices, but now they sat staring at their mother, almost not breathing. Madame von Riedesel was overcome with a feeling of apprehension. It wasn't too late to turn back

now. Was it right for her to take the children all the way to America? Rockel would give his life for her -- he had served her family for years -- and she had picked the serving-maids who were to follow in a carriage behind her own, with utmost caution. But only God knew what hazards they might encounter. Suddenly she remembered the conviction in the voice of the friend who had warned her that she and her children might be eaten by savages, "and that people in America lived upon horse-flesh and cats." Her mother, the widow of a minister of state, had also tried to dissuade her, finally, with authority, she forbade her to leave. The baroness had been firm. "I am very sorry to be obliged, for the first time in my life, willingly to disobey you . . . It is impossible for me to remain here, while the best, the fondest of husbands, has consented I should follow him . . . "

Half-smiling, she recalled the restrained jubilation of his letter when he wrote that the Duke of Brunswick had raised his rank from Colonel to major-general in charge of all the German troops in America . . . Of course, England's quarrel with her colonies was not the business of German sovereignties, but England's king and queen were both German, and the duke was right to help them. She was proud to think that the duke had been first among six German rulers to conclude a treaty with His Britannic Majesty for a corps of infantry men and unmounted dragoons. She was aware that some people said that the duke had sold his men

like cattle. It wasn't true! The colonists had been misled by a few wicked people, and it was right to help the English. It was right for England to pay, too - for the Duke of Brunswick was poor. He would have to give up his beloved Opera and the charming French corps de ballet, unless he received substantial aid from abroad. It couldn't be possible that men had been forced into the ranks, as people said. The baroness, for one, had never personally known of such a case . . . that kind of talk was not only scandalous: it was seditious!

Her darling Friedrich! Separation was painful and he could hardly bear it. He had written her every day while he was whipping the soldiers into shape before they left for England: he reported the most trivial details of his life on board ship from England to Canada, from Montreal to Quebec. It was as if no experience could have meaning until he shared it with his wife. Perhaps people thought them a little ridiculous, a woman of thirty, married fourteen years, the mother of three children . . . behaving like a love-sick young girl with her own husband. And her Friedrich had grown heavy, he was no longer a dashing young officer. .

"Love me . . . love me always," he wrote. "Preserve for my sake your precious health . . . " She had felt his longing for her in his letters, longing that was not just habit and loneliness, but like starvation. Nevertheless,

the suggestion that she follow him had come from her. He had been relieved, joyous, frightened. "I confess that I tremble when I think of it," he wrote. It was dangerous, the children might be sea-sick, she was a delicate lady. "A ship's company generally consists of filthy and coarse people, whose chief food is salt meat, half-done and scarcely eatable. The water, after a short time, becomes so foul and nauseous, that it is impossible to drink it."

Crossing to Dover, one of the sailors begged to hold Carolina. It was droll to watch him, a rough, black-whiskered mariner, as tender as a saint with the child. Gustava and Frederike played catch on the deck, bursting with laughter. Now there was no need to defend herself against the horror she had hidden from the children. An innkeeper had told her that the roads were full of highwaymen, that in a fortnight one hundred and thirty had been hanged. She had resolved not to travel through the woods after dark, but once, at twilight, when the horses were slowing down to a walk, an object hanging in the air struck her through the open window of the carriage. Madame von Riedesel pushed it away. Without looking, she knew by the chill in her heart that she had touched death. It was the body of a hanged man, and she had felt the woolen stockings. She must never think of it again . .

From Dover they went to London, and then to Bristol where the baroness was to meet Mrs. Foy, the American-born wife of an English captain. The general had arranged to have his wife cross the Atlantic with Mrs. Foy for a lady could not travel unaccompanied. But Mrs. Foy was gay and irresponsible, a flirtatious, silly woman, who could not, or would not make up her mind. Three or four months passed in Bristol, and the baroness was still there, in England, on the opposite side of the Atlantic.

Neither the baroness nor Rockel knew more than a few words of English, and she spent lonely hours weeping in her room. She was a good Hausfrau who understood the value of money, and she was being shamelessly exploited by innkeepers and coachmen and servants. She could not bear to be conspicuous, and people took her for a French woman, which she hated. Once, she walked down the street in a new calico dress trimmed with crisp green taffeta, waving a gay little fan - and a group of sailors, drunk and boisterous, minced after her. French whore . . they shouted . . French whore . . She had felt so beautiful in the dress! She had loved it so! Now it was hateful, and she had to give it to the cook . . .

If Mrs. Foy would not leave, she would take the children and the maids . . . and Rockel would look after all of them. But, she went to Portsmouth, only to be told that the season was too advanced, that she might find the St.

Lawrence frozen and the entrance to Quebec shut. She could do nothing but wait several more months. She cried at night, thinking of his letters. "Where are you now?" he wrote, "perhaps at sea, perhaps in great danger. Oh! I hope that God will soon end my anxieties, and grant me the happiness of holding you in my arms . . . "

But she had one very satisfying experience. The queen had expressed a desire to see her, and on January 1st. 1777 she presented herself at court. She had been told that the king kissed only Englishwomen and marchionesses, and suddenly, quite unexpectedly, he leaned down and touched her cheek with his lips. She could not help blushing scarlet. Remembering that she was a mother, the queen led her into the nursery and showed her the ten happy royal children. When Madame von Riedesel confessed that all her thoughts were bent on Canada, Her Majesty was impressed.

"Have you then no dread of the sea? I do not like it."

The little German woman could not keep her voice from quavering. "Nor do I, Madam. But as there is no other means of meeting my husband I shall cheerfully embark." -

It was spring again, April, almost a year since she had left Wolfenbuettel, and finally an old friend of her father's arranged her passage on one of his own merchantmen. The children were well, Mrs. Foy was prevailed upon to come, and at last . . . at last . . . as the wind filled the sails, as the gulls grew scarce in the rainy

sky, she could believe again in the words her husband had written shortly after his own departure. "God loves us too well to keep us long separated."

Two months later, as the merchantman sailed proudly up the St. Lawrence, Madame von Riedesel brought the children on deck to get their first glimpse of Quebec. The city was blurred and lovely in the misty, yellow sunlight, and as she stood trembling with her eyes and her heart on the new world, her baby in her arms, Gustava and Frederike clinging to her skirts, all the ships in the harbor roared a salute.

She looked eagerly from face to face, searching among the crowd of shouting, waving people on the dock. Her heart leaped . . . now . . . she couldn't wait any longer. The last week had been almost unendurable. But a canoe drew swiftly alongside of the ship, and a seaman, agile as a squirrel, clambered up a swinging ladder to the deck. She recognized the writing before she reached numbly for the letter. Her husband had been obliged to set out for St. John with General Burgoyne, and she would have to wait a few more days.

She couldn't, not now that she had crossed the ocean. He had left in February more than a year ago, had never even seen the baby. She would start after him the next day. The children would be rested enough . . .

The caloshes, which were used here, in place of coaches, looked too light to be safe, and her maids would have refused to go if Rockel had not travelled in their carriage with them. The children were delighted. Frederike laughed as the baroness tied her fast in one corner: she held Carolina in her lap -- still sound asleep -- They were going to see their father . . .

She met her husband at Chambly two days later, and they rushed weeping into each other's arms.

How worn he looked! Had he really missed her as much as she had missed him - all the nights she couldn't sleep? Had he really not known where she was for a long time - or if his letters reached her? How silly he had been to worry, it hadn't been bad crossing the Atlantic, not the way he thought. Oh, the children loved it on the sea, they were magnificent sailors, especially Carolina.

Only Gustave, the oldest one, recognized the father. She hugged him as if she would never let him go. But Frederike was afraid of his odd uniform and weary face. She clung to her mother, choked with sobbing: "No, no! this is an ugly papa! My papa is pretty!"

...Two aimless, impetuous, beautiful days - not to be fully comprehended until some emptier time! But he had to go. Burgoyne was expecting him at Montreal. She wanted to accompany him - : "Why not? Tell me, Friedrich! - why

not?" But he insisted she should go to Trois Rivière and wait there for him. "It's your duty, dear! Don't forget you are a soldier's wife."

What power and fascination it exercised upon him, this magic word, duty! His face became stiff, his voice was solemn and at the same time harsh, aggressive, when he mentioned duty. His humble wife felt a sudden pang while she watched this dreadful and mysterious transformation of his beloved, familiar features. 'Men are possessed by abstract ideas. Abstract ideas are noxious and confusing. They make life complicated. Life should be simple. My life is simple enough. The birth of a child, a disease, good weather, bad weather, food, and sleep: this is life. And love. I love him. This is my life and my duty, and nothing else. I am his wife, and I have a right to be with him. That's all, voilà tout, das ist alles ... I want to remain with him'.

She remembered some beautiful lines she once had found in an old book.

"Whithersoever your destinie shall dryve you, either by the furious waves of the oceane, or by the manifolde and horrible dangers of the lande, I will surely bear your company. There can be no peryll chaunce to me so terrible, nor any kynde of deathe so cruell, that shall be much easier for me to abyde, than to live so farre separate from you."

The baroness had copied these words in her diary.

INVASION.

In the middle of July the baroness and the three little

girls stopped at Ticonderoga on their way to Fort Edward where they were to meet the dear general. The soldiers occupying Ticonderoga could hardly wait to tell her the news. Had Madam von Riedesel heard? Burgoyne would be in Albany in a fortnight, there was no question of it. War with these farmers was child's play. How could they have expected to hold out against Europe's crack regiments? Burgoyne's men had captured Fort Ticonderoga without firing a shot. Gentleman Johnny knew what he was about, and he couldn't have abler generals than Phillipe and Fraser and her own husband. Think of it! The speed! July 1st, Burgoyne left Montreal with 8,000 men, moved them down Lake Champlain, and had them camped at Crown Point on the 5th. He merely surrounded the fort, and on the 6th. General St. Clair and his men scurried away like scared rabbits. But Madam von Riedesel, that was the strange thing. Only God knew how they got out . . . taking most of their supplies too . . . or where they went . . . with an army practically surrounding them. Burgoyne had sent Riedesel and Fraser in pursuit, but they couldn't even see the Americans in that wild country. They fought like Indians, the cowards, shooting from behind trees . . . and the British had lost a few men, not many . . . several hundred . . . mostly Brunswickers . . .

I beg your pardon, baroness. I didn't mean to frighten you. Your husband's safe. He's with the army now, moving down from Skeensborough to Fort Edward . . .

Indeed, she could get to him rapidly, now that the British were in control of Lake George. They were sending the heavy baggage and artillery down the lake to Fort George, and overland to Fort Edward, and the baroness could leave that very evening with one of the boats. From Fort George she could easily hire a vehicle to take her to Fort Edward. She'd probably get there before her husband.

Yes, it was good news, and Friedrich was safe. She could breathe again. Anxiety and fear lay always at the bottom of her heart, waiting to destroy her. It took all her courage, all her strength, to hide . . . and to survive them. Why couldn't Friedrich understand that it was easier to be with him no matter what happened, so long as she knew? In Trois Rivières, while she was being comfortably entertained by some charitable sisters from the convent of the Ursulines, every kind of death had lived in her mind. Had the children seen it in her face?

It was cool, sailing down Lake George, and she had a sudden delicious feeling of happiness . . .

The country was lovely at Fort Edward, curiously lethargic and peaceful. The troops loitered in the camp, sometimes drilling - but for the most part, fishing and tramping through the woods, waiting for Burgoyne's order to push on to Albany. The baroness wondered what he could be waiting for. There was no sign of the American army and

runners brought message after message that the enemy had fallen back, had crossed the Hudson, retreated as far as the Mohawk. This marching through a country that the inhabitants abandoned wasn't like war at all.

For almost a fortnight not a shot had been fired, yet her dear Friedrich was worried. He couldn't understand why Burgoyne had ordered the men to strip themselves of all but the barest necessities, and had sent the rest of the supplies back to the flotilla on Lake George. Of course, the army could advance rapidly with such light equipment, but then, they must hurry. Rations were already very low. What was keeping Burgoyne here? General von Riedesel was almost beside himself. They had had very little trouble occupying Fort Ticonderoga and Fort George - but they had gone on - and left almost no troops behind to protect the captured forts . . . a mere handful of men. The Americans could recapture them whenever they made up their minds. And that would mean that they were cut off from Canada.

Thinking about it later, the baroness couldn't remember when she had heard the first rumors of an enormous magazine of stores at Bennington on the northern frontier of New England. Everybody seemed to know of it. Hardly protected at all, there were horses enough for all the dismounted dragoons, horses to pull the heavy wagons filled with supplies, a great herd of fat cattle for meat, barns loaded with wheat and green vegetables. The soldiers were

hungry. One had only to look at them to know they had been living on smaller and smaller rations. One heard talk of nothing but Bennington. There was no chance of a battle. The stores were there for the taking.

Six hundred Brunswick dragoons were going, but not her husband. A captain would be enough. Still, that bright August morning, Madam von Riedesel rose early to watch them start. They were the pick of the Duke's troops, huge men over six feet tall. She followed them through the long grass, watching them disappear into the thick gloom of the forest. She stood waving at them, calling good-bye, as they plodded along in their heavy riding boots and huge spurs that caught in the underbrush; their ridiculous pig-tails and plumed hats, their dangling, useless sabers entangling them in the branches and brambles. So many of them were friends she had known since childhood.

Days passed -- and no word came. The men went about their tasks, but a pall of anxiety hung over the camp.

It was shocking that when the actual news of what had happened was brought back to camp, it was almost a relief. Burgoyne had been entirely misinformed. There had been a force of more than twenty-five hundred men protecting the reservoir at Bennington, and the Brunswick detachment had been annihilated in less than two hours.

The baroness marked the date in her diary, August 16,
1777 . . .

How much money would that mean for the duke at

35.00 a head - for her friends who would never again see the Elbe and the Weser, and the lovely valley of the Rhine? What if her Friedrich had gone with them? It was just an accident that he hadn't . - It was no accident but the Will of Providence. It was God who had spared her husband. He would not take him away from her, because He realized how much she loved him. She had no tears for the dead men, although she was not heartless. But she was realistic. Love is selfish. She was not interested in other women's men. Friedrich was safe: this was all she knew. She held him as one holds a thing, a possession.

Encircled by English and German troops the Riedesels lived in a red house in the midst of the woods, eating in the open air in good weather, laughing and playing with their children. Before he could move on Burgoyne was forced to wait almost a month for supplies from Lake George. In her elegant eighteenth century script Madam von Riedesel recorded serenely the happiness of days from which she excluded all terror of the future. "In consequence of the unfortunate engagement which took place at Bennington, I had the pleasure of seeing him (General von Riedesel) again on the 18th, of August from which day we passed three weeks in delightful tranquility." Here, for the first time, the little baroness tasted bear's meat, and she loved it.

The army began to move again on September 11th.,

and she pleaded to go. The general had a large calash built for her, and his wife, the children, two maids and Rockel jogged leisurely along, an hour's march behind the Royal troops. The soldier's spirits were high, and they sang as they passed " through boundless forests and magnificent tracts of land - abandoned by the inhabitants who fled to re-inforce the army of the American General Gates." On the 13th. the army crossed to the west bank of the Hudson, and then advanced slowly, a few miles a day, clearing roads and mending bridges.

On the 19th. at Freeman's Farm, a few miles south of Saratoga, the vanished American army sprang up suddenly out of the wilderness, in beaver caps and homespun, buckskin and moccasins, almost invisible in the autumn woods, silent as Indians, shooting from the tops of trees, from behind thickets, a great horde of men under General Gates and Benedict Arnold.

Back of the lines, all day long, the wounded and dying were brought to the house where the baroness and her children were staying. In every room one could hear the battle, the precise click of small guns, the explosive noise of cannon. The children huddled together quietly, shrinking against a wall as if it were a covert - feeling, not understanding the terror around them. The baroness moved among the wounded men speaking hesitantly in her broken English, more fluently in her comforting, homely, familiar German . . .

Her Friedrich drove the enemy back - at least they disappeared again into the country that lay below them. Where had they gone? How many were there? Albany was a word as remote as Samarkand or Bagdad . . .

At dawn the Royal Army moved again, bedraggled, shattered, weary - this time north, the wounded groaning on the carts that had carried the supplies -- a slow dull retreat, not very far, a few miles up the Hudson. The men talked softly to each other without resentment, with a melancholy, indifferent hopelessness. The Americans had attacked Ticonderoga and were holding it practically in a state of siege. It was impossible even to get to Fort George, and the flotilla on the lake between the two forts on which British supplies depended, was in the hands of the rebels. A rapid retreat to Canada was out of the question - they were marooned. How long could they hold out? What could they do?

The wind rose and it began to rain, great drops falling with light, separate, explosive sounds on the bright leaves that loosened here and there and drifted downward, a rain of leaves like flocks of red and yellow birds scattered by shot. There was a strong smell of balsam and rich earth, and the sounds of the rain mingled with the loud surge of the Hudson, with the sinking sound of heavy feet on the soggy earth, with the wooden creak of wheels turning . . . On the carts, the wounded no longer

groaned. They lay quietly, patiently, with closed eyes - sometimes one sobbed a little.

Night fell, and the men shrouded themselves in their tents, a fragile, nomad city, furtive as a conspiracy. Back of the lines, the baroness again moved into a house from which the inhabitants had fled, the rooms still redolent of the family which had lived there in leisure and peace.

General Riedesel was with the main body of the army which seemed to be engaged in " little skirmishes of small consequence". She could visit her husband every morning, eat her noon meal with him, from time to time he could come to her quarters for dinner. It wasn't really living together - she belonged with him, and no one could tell how long this would go on. She would have a house built for herself, a log cabin fashioned out of sweet-smelling pine. It would take only a few days to build, and then Friedrich would be with her where she could look after him properly.

If the troops could hold out, there was help coming. If the men could surmount their wretched submission, if they could be infused with enough spirit to break through the American lines surrounding them, they could meet the British squadron under General Clinton that had sailed up the Hudson as far as Kingston, destroying rebel stores,

and then march south again to Albany.

On October 7th. taking fifteen hundred men, Burgoyne decided to make a reconnaissance to Freeman's Farm, to determine whether or not the Americans could be attacked. The men moved swiftly through the dying fields, with a bitter, hostile courage. They went, not like an army, but like military men, marching wilfully together, each with farewells unsaid and unacknowledged, for that would have been a denial of faith. To confess meant the end, and so the men called to each other every now and then with brusque, jovial gayety. No one spoke of England or of Germany, of anything that had happened before the present march.

Madam von Riedesel took the children to see the cabin which was almost ready for occupancy, and the children poked here and there at the plaster stuffed between the logs to keep the wind out. It was a heavenly place, and the little girls shouted with delight.

But now they must be good children and stay with Lena, the maid. They must be little ladies and not wander away anywhere - for mother was going to be very busy this afternoon. In her room at the big house, papa was bringing the three other generals to dine, Burgoyne, Phillips and Fraser.

It would be a nice dinner though rations were scarce.

Rockel had brought in a large catch of trout, and she had managed to coax two hens from the commissary. Now they were roasting in the Dutch oven beside the fireplace in the kitchen. Bourgoyne was a gourmet, and she wanted the food to be particularly good . . .

She didn't like Burgoyne. He was a dissolute drunken man, too ready with flamboyant compliments which always seemed a little mocking. His shamelessness was disgraceful, taking his mistress with him openly wherever the army went. It was said that he had a wife at home whom he loved dearly. How could it be possible? But men were curious about such things - it was a good thing, in any case, she had come to America - although she couldn't imagine Friedrich with another woman ..

The table looked charming. There was beautiful china in the house, and real silver, and she had decorated the room with sprays of autumn leaves, the gayest she could find. What could be keeping the men? Friedrich was always prompt, and the roast would be ruined. From the window she could see considerable movement among the troops even at the back of the lines. There was a dense fog of black smoke over the distant woods, and the house suddenly shook with the low growl of cannon. The children were in the kitchen with Lena, and dinner or no dinner, she wanted them with her.

"Lena, bring the children to me . . . at once . . . do you hear?"

Were they English or American cannon? The large guns

had not arrived from the flotilla and besides the flotilla was now in the hands of the Americans. Dear God, let things turn out well this time!

At the edge of the clearing there was a bed of asters, dead now, hanging dismally on their blackened stalks. Out there, just appearing from the dark thicket, two men carefully, slowly, trundled a hand-barrow on which a man lay. It couldn't be . . . she threw a shawl over her shoulders and ran.

It was General Fraser, the young Earl of Balcarres, his clothes muddy and bleeding, his blue eyes already straining to penetrate the vast growing darkness. He had been shot through the bowels. Stronger than her breathless relief was a stifling sense of shame. She tried to wet her lips but her throat was dry. General Fraser looked at her as if he senses her feeling, and smiled reassuringly, almost humorously, through his pain. He tried to nod at the solemn-eyed children as they carried him into her room. He was a dear young man, and such a good soldier, her husband said.

There could be no help for General Fraser. She knew it at once. He moaned pitifully for water, but they could not give it to him - it would have been too agonizing. The guns roared all through the afternoon. The sun set, and they went on intermittently. In the evening her husband came in with Burgoyne. Burgoyne sat down beside the young Earl,

holding his hand, smoothing back the damp hair, weeping openly in front of her children, as she herself would never do. There was no need to ask about the battle. She had only to look at Friedrich's collapsed bewildered face. She knew that it meant disaster.

Gustave, Frederike, Carolina - they were asleep now, and they would forget. But the little baroness sat for hours watching the children, not daring to turn to her husband who was too bitterly humbled, " constantly afraid that my children would wake up and cry, and thus disturb the poor dying man, who often sent to beg my pardon for making me so much trouble."

Dawn came, and noon, and all day long the shooting went on sporadically - even at dusk when the entire body of generals gathered on a hill top for the obsequies for General Fraser. The gloom was lighted by sudden flares and cannon balls flew around and over the men. A thin drizzle of rain slanted down as the body was laid in its last resting place, as General Burgoyne spoke in a hesitant, deeply-moved voice, as the soldiers packed the supplies to take with them on the march, as they kindled fires in every direction and left their tents standing in a hopeless, childish effort to conceal their retreat.

Wearily, all night long, the army dragged through the woods, the baroness and her children and maids again in the

calash. Carolina and Gustava slept soundly, but Frederike began to cry in alarm, frightened of the mysterious woods, of the despairing silence of the marching men. Her mother pressed a handkerchief to her mouth.

At six in the morning Burgoyne ordered a halt. The soldiers lay down on the ground, too tired to mind the rain, and Baron von Riedesel slept on his wife's shoulder for three hours. Then the army started again, marching with the enemy in sight, the Indians scattering in all directions, making for home. Towards evening, at Saratoga, the men encamped . . .

Their one desolate hope of escape lay in a swift retreat to Fort Edward, and the baroness indignantly asked General Phillips why they did not continue while there was still time.

"Poor woman," he said, "I am amazed at you! Completely wet through, have you still the courage to wish to go further in this weather! Would that you were only our commanding general! He halts because he is tired, and intends to spend the night here and give us a supper!"

At two the next afternoon, the Americans reached them, and firing started. There was a deserted house on the Hudson, and seating herself and her three children in the calash, she made for it rapidly. As she reached the walk she saw five or six men with guns aimed at her on the oppo-

site side of the river, and involuntarily, she threw the children to the floor of the carriage and herself over them. At that instant the men fired, shattering the arm of a poor English soldier who rode behind to guard them.

The children screamed as she dragged them to the door. They took refuge in the cellar, and all day and night the house was battered by cannons pounding at the walls with deafening thuds. She laid herself down in a corner near a door, the children lying on the earth with their heads in her lap, crying. There was no use talking to them . . .

She wasn't frightened anymore. It was surprising how simple her life had become, merely something to guard. How much more entangled her life had been when she was sixteen and courted by all the young officers. She had been full of schemes, half-carried through, impulses that she regretted, vague, painful longing that she could not understand. But something happened to her heart the day she met Friedrich. They had been married before Christmas, on the 21st. of December, 1762. Could it be that long ago?

No girl ever had a lovelier wedding. She remembered the dancing peasants, the houses hung with banners, the parades of adjutants and officers in their gorgeous regalia galloping up and down the streets. Peasants and townspeople had come from all over Brunswick to her father's house, their arms laden with gifts. Duke Ferdinand, Prince Friedrich, all the notables, had their portraits painted,

life-size - to give her. They were hanging in the long hall at Wolfenbuettel - would she ever see them again? And just before her wedding the prettiest girls in Brunswick were chosen to pose for a picture representing the four seasons, and she - in a dress of palest green, her arms full of lilies-of-the-valley and violets, her head entwined with a wreath of delicate white flowers, the leaves tangling in her hair that hung pale and loosened to her waist - she, was spring.

Her eyes were growing used to the darkness and she began to distinguish the faces around her, her maids, a great many wounded soldiers, two strange women. Nobody spoke. Of what were they thinking, these silent, ghostly people?

The house shook as a cannon ball struck it again. Now, Gustava and Carolina slept, their tears dry on her hands beneath their eyelids. Only Frederike cried broken-heartedly. It was always Frederike, she was a haunted child. She must stop . . . but she would not.

One of the wounded officers offered to help her. He sat down on the ground beside the baroness. "Do you like kittens, baby kittens?"

The child did not answer.

He miaowed. You could almost see the dark grey woolly fur, the small pointed ears, the large, dark-pupiled eyes. Then he purred, a deep contented purr.

"Here's a baby lamb lost from its mother." He bleated woefully. The child's sobs subsided a little. She turned her sad little face to him. The cannons roared again. Frederike trembled violently, but did not cry.

He was a magician. He could be a dog, or a wolf, or a lion. He could be a hen laying an egg, or a rooster crowing in triumph. "May I take her? You must be very tired, Madam."

The little girl went trustfully to his arms, giggling and talking. Soon she slept, and the young officer's worn face was as peaceful as the child's.

The house was cannonaded from the opposite side in the morning, but the baroness was almost used to it. Enough murky light streaked in so that she could examine the cellar, three great musty rooms. Madam von Riedesel took charge. "I advised all to go out of the cellar for a little while during which time I would have it cleaned, as otherwise we would all be sick. They followed my suggestion, and I at once set many hands to work, which was in the highest degree necessary: for the women and children being afraid to venture forth, had soiled the whole cellar." The rooms were swept and fumigated by sprinkling vinegar on burning coals, and then the most dangerously wounded men were placed in one room, the women and children in another, and

all the rest in the third . . .

They lived in the cellar six days, in a buried world, quite accustomed to the dark. Water was scarce and could be brought in only at great risk, but the men stole out for they could not bear the moaning of the wounded. There was little food, and only the children were not hungry. Once, eleven cannon balls, one after the other, splintered through the house, and a soldier whose leg a surgeon was about to amputate had his other leg shot off in the middle of the operation. He died immediately! There was no time for despair. The baroness was aware of how stubbornly, in the bleakest circumstances, life persists.

On October 13th, Burgoyne agreed to treat with the enemy. On October 17, 1777 the British capitulated, and under command of their own officers, the troops marched through the American camp and laid down their arms.

PRISONERS OF WAR.

Madam von Riedesel was afraid that she might be treated rudely and contemptuously by the victorious Americans, and so the afternoon of the surrender when her husband sent for her she hardly lifted her eyes as she rode through the rebel camp to the officer's tents. The children had looked dazed when she first took them out of the cellar into the

light of day - their eyes had the blind look of new-born babies who can distinguish light but not objects, and she was surprised to find that she herself found the light of even this grey day too vast and overwhelming. She had a stunned feeling of complete emptiness, and when a gentle, oldish man came towards her, took the children out of the wagon and kissed them, and then helped her alight, she began to tremble.

"You mustn't be frightened", the man said half-apologetically. " I'm General Schuyler."

So this was the northern commander of the American troops! He was a gentleman. What had she expected? She felt the blood rising to her cheeks as if he had suddenly read her thoughts, and then she recovered herself enough to assure him that she could not be frightened of a man who was so tender with children.

At the tent of General Gates she found her husband and Burgoyne and Phillips chatting so amiably with Gates and Benedict Arnold that one might have thought they were old friends. They were going to dine together.

General Schuyler thought she might be unhappy, the only woman with so many men, and so he brought her and her children to his own tent where he had a feast set up for them. He had a kind of sparkle with children, a droll, delicate wit, and in no time he had them giggling and clustering around him. She found herself confiding in

in him, her enemy, and when he invited her and her family to visit at his home in Albany, where General Burgoyne would also be, she accepted at once . . .

Albany at last, but as prisoners-of-war! General Schuyler and his wife and daughters were so courteous that one would not have known there was a war between England and America. It was surprising that they could be so friendly with General Burgoyne " although he had - without any necessity it was said - caused their magnificently built houses to be burned. But they treated us as a people who knew how to forget their misfortunes in the losses of others."

They stayed three days, and she would have loved to stay longer. But they had to go to Boston. General Gates had promised that as soon as ships were sent for them, all the troops would be sent to England on condition of not serving against the Americans again in the Revolutionary War.

It was hard to keep her husband's spirits up. If she could have kept him from thinking of the defeat the journey from Albany would have been very pleasant.

How curious the Americans were! Some of their generals who accompanied the troops were shoemakers, and not at all loath to practice their trade. On days when the army stopped to rest they made boots for the officers, and did

not even mind mending the shoes of the common soldiers. Once she heard an English captain who had worn his boots into shreds offer an American general who had on a good pair, a guinea for them. The general immediately alighted from his horse, took the money, gave up his boots, and put on the badly worn ones of the officer! Of course, American money was worth almost nothing. But this was a new country!

The troops could not go into Boston. Something had happened. Congress could not agree on freeing the prisoners and they would have to wait. The soldiers were quartered in wretched barracks, no floors, not even a bit of straw to sleep on, no firewood, leaking ceiling through which the rain dripped . . . Even the Riedesels were billeted in a tiny room in the house of a farmer. Their maids had to sleep on the floor, and the men in the entry. It was filthy, and the farmer's family hated them.

And yet the general was enraged when they were ordered to Cambridge. It was to Boston that the ships were to come to take them back to England. Now everything was uncertain. Burgoyne had been stupid to take the word of General Gates. The baron paced back and forth in the tiny room, and his wife's heart ached for him.

Cambridge was a charming city, and they were lodged in a beautiful home which had formerly belonged to

Royalists. It was cheerful and comfortable during the long winter. She made friends with many American families, and they couldn't have been kinder. Spring came, and her garden was full of flowers, lilacs and phlox and hyacinths.

In June she gave a supper and ball in honor of her husband's fortieth birthday, and she invited all the generals and officers. She had the house and garden illuminated with tapers and the light fell softly on the hedge of climbing roses, white and pink and red. At dinner, her husband rose to toast the king and the Duke of Brunswick, and everyone sang God Save the King. Suddenly, the house was surrounded by angry Americans. In New England burning torches of pitch were placed on hilltops as signals for the minute men whenever there was danger, and every able-bodied man would instantly abandon whatever he was doing, grab his gun, and rush in the direction of the signal. The baroness had lighted her house so brightly, that the Americans had thought it was a signal, and that the prisoners were planning a mutiny. They excused themselves and went away as soon as they learned it was a party.

Madame Riedesel was a social success. Her house " was always full of English gentlemen", as she proudly noted in her diary. People liked her, she was popular and respected. One of her visitors of that period called her " the amiable, the accomplished, and dignified baroness." He also praised her " charming blue eyes, bedewed with tears at the

recital of her sufferings." She had " much embonpoint," - he added -, " and a handsome face."

Her husband, meanwhile, grew more and more gloomy. He spent most of his time by laboring on a Military Memoir, describing and analysing the Campaign of 1777. It was supposed to be his apology, his complete justification. He started his report with this significant statement:

"From the beginning of 1777, General Riedesel was never permitted to take part in the deliberations held on by the British generals in their counsels of war...., nor was he ever made acquainted with the instructions which General Burgoyne received from his government." All he could do, according to his own account, was " to execute, by all means, Burgoyne's orders with the utmost exactness." Burgoyne, therefore, was alone responsible for everything that happened. He, and nobody else, was to blame. I am innocent, assured the German general.

Riedesel apparently did not know, or did not want to know, that Burgoyne, for his part, was the victim of the English War Minister's confusion. When the General was on leave in London, in November 1776, he took the opportunity to present to King George III and the War Minister, Lord George Germaine, a plan for the American campaign of 1777. His idea was to march an army south from Montreal, another, east from Oswega, and a third north from New York, - all three to meet at Albany, cut New England off from the other states, and at the same time leave enough force behind to

protect Canada. The plan was approved. Burgoyne was put in command of the northern army and ordered to proceed to Albany to meet General Howe. But Howe knew nothing of it.

In December of the same year, General Howe, who was in New York with about 20,000 troops, wrote to Lord Germaine proposing another plan requiring an additional 30,000 men to operate against New England, New Jersey, and to hold the South. Germaine replied that the king thought highly of his plan, but had also suggested a diversion upon the coasts of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. This was the last letter Howe received from Germaine before he set out for Philadelphia the following summer.

As for Riedesel, he had, up to the last scene of the tragedy, sound and helpful ideas which were sneered at by conceited, irresponsible General Burgoyne. If things had gone as the German officer wanted, America would still belong to the British Empire.

In November 1783, the prisoners were ordered to Virginia. She felt a pang of regret at leaving her many new friends, the house she had grown to love. It would be hard travelling through the country again. The children were excited at the prospect. They exclaimed joyfully over the elegant English wagon and the wagon for provisions her husband had bought for them, and she pretended that they were all going to be gypsies. It was November now and it would take a long time to go.

8

They arrived in Virginia in the middle of February, 1779, having passed through Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland - 678 English miles in twelve weeks. It had been a hard journey. Most of the time the roads had been covered with a glaze of ice, and rain fell, and snow - and the wind was piercing. They often halted in the woods at midnight where the poor marching soldiers had to sleep without even straw to lie on, sheltering themselves as well as they could in the deep crevices of rocks and in dense thickets. The Riedesels slept in their covered wagon - but they could not really keep the children warm. When they woke up at night and cried, the baroness sang to them, German lieder, little French folk songs . . .

After the journey there was no longer any question in Madam von Riedesel's mind about the feeling of the American people to the mother country. During the trip she often recalled Burgoyne's naive hope of thousands of Royalists flocking to the king's colors. The Americans had not yet won the war - but they were no longer colonists. They were a nation.

Often people had not wanted to sell them provisions. One lady whom they begged to sell them anything at all - a few vegetables - a few eggs - had shouted at them hoarsely: " You shall not have a morsel of food. You have come to our land to kill us and lay waste our possessions. Now you

are our prisoners . . . " But when little Carolina who was now two and a half said she was hungry, the woman shamefacedly gave them whatever they wanted. In Virginia, only a day's journey from their destination, they had nothing left but tea, and the baroness begged food for the children from the farmers. They would not sell it to Dogs of Royalists. . .

At the home of a Colonel Howe, she heard his pretty fourteen year old daughter exclaim as she looked at the glowing coals: " Oh! if I had the king of England here, with what satisfaction I would cut his body in pieces, tear out his heart, dissect it, put it upon these coals and consume it."

The baroness looked at her with horror. " I am almost ashamed to belong to a sex that is capable of taking such pleasure."

The Riedesels were quartered at Colle, two hours ride from where the troops were stationed at Charlottesville, Virginia. They rented the home of an Italian, and when spring came they had the gardens and fields tilled and planted. How fertile the land was! The seeds seemed to sprout over-night, and the vegetables were delicious. They built an enclosure for wild turkeys, which were perfectly tame, and sometimes weighed over fifty pounds. In the spring

the great sleek birds flew away to the woods to hatch their eggs, and the baroness thought they were gone forever, but they came back later followed by an enormous flock of chicks.

They were in Virginia until August, miserable months, despite the rich plenty of the land. Her husband was alternately full of a muttering rage, or a silent, more terrible despair. At first he wrote outraged letters to the Americans about the troops who had been promised decent treatment. On their arrival, when it was still bitterly cold, the barracks at Charlottesville were rows of unfinished block houses, without plaster and no doors or windows. The prisoners had arrived later than they were expected, and meat for them had been stored in a vault in the earth with ashes instead of salt between the pieces. All the top layers were spoiled by the sun, and the men had often been obliged to throw away all their meat rations, though sometimes a piece could be saved by washing and salting and hanging it up in the sun. A number of the men sickened and died. The general could not sit back and watch his men starve: he was responsible for their well-being . . . But the troops worked hard preparing their quarters, and later a very pretty little town grew up with gardens and coops for poultry back of each barrack.

The baron was no longer the patient, placid man she had known: his temper was like the climate. He would sit

brooding in the great heat, writing and rewriting letters to Washington and Jefferson, pleading to be exchanged, waiting impatiently for answers, receiving courteous refusals. He blamed La Fayette, feeling that it was his influence on the American Congress which had induced them to break their word though they had solemnly vowed to allow the British troops to return to Europe.

The baroness recalled her meeting with La Fayette in Hartford, Connecticut on their way south. She had humiliated him, and she was glad. He had dined with the Riedesels and La Fayette had spoken nostalgically of England, of the kindness which the king had shown him. Madam von Riedesel had not been able to curb her tongue. How could he bring himself to accept the king's kindness when he was leaving to fight against him? La Fayette had the grace to look abashed. " It is true that such a thought passed through my mind one day when the king offered to show me his fleet. I answered that I hoped to see it someday: and then quietly retired, in order to escape from the embarrassment of being obliged to decline point-blank, the offer, should it be repeated . . . " Had he really been a spy as the people in England suspected?

In the middle of the summer the baron was overcome by the heat, and the Riedesels went to Frederick-Spring, a nearby spa. Here it was pleasant, and they made the acquaintance of General Washington's family, and of Madam Garal, a lovable woman, an ardent American patriot, but reasonable.

They went to country dances, and the baroness was amused. The languid Virginians loved dancing: on the slightest inducement, in a twinkling, they would leap up and dance about; if a reel were played for them " immediately the men catch hold of the women who then jump about as if they were possessed; but as soon as they are led back to their chairs they sit on them like blocks of wood."

At Frederick-Spring word came at last that Riedesel and General Phillips had permission to go to New York to be exchanged, and so while her husband returned to Colle to hand over the command of the German troops to Colonel Specht, the baroness took her children and set out in August 1779 for a visit at Madam Garal's home in Maryland, arranging to meet her husband later in Yorktown, Pennsylvania.

Her last impression of the South was one of tenderness and beauty. The Garal home was exquisitely furnished, the garden loveliest of all. " We ascended the vineyard by a winding path which led to the top of the hill. Between every vine a poplar rose and an amaranth grew." Before she left, she and Captain Freeman - an Englishman whom the general had sent with her to protect them - designed a temple in the garden for Madam Garal, adorning it with flowers and dedicating it to Friendship and Gratitude. " In this country it would be held a crime to refuse hospitality to a stranger."

New York had remained in the hands of the Royalists, and when the Riedesels settled there in the winter of 1779, they were loaded with kindnesses. The baroness now had many American friends whom she cherished deeply, but still it was good to be again among people whose cause was her own. Governor-General Tryon gave them his house for as long as they wanted to live there. General Patterson and Lord Cornwallis came to pay their respects. It was an honor for Madam von Riedesel, a German woman, to be chosen from among all the great ladies of the city to represent the queen at a ball celebrating Her Majesty's birthday, and though she was far advanced with child she "was obliged to open the ball with one of the generals by a formal minuet."

New York had avoided most of the direct ravages of war, but there was incredible suffering in the city. The baroness found that fifty dollars in English money couldn't feed her little family for two days - what must that have meant for the poor? Food could not be bought from the surrounding farmers no matter how the English entreated them. Feeling was as strong in the immediate vicinity of New York as it was all over the country. Finally, foraging parties were sent out, but the Americans buried their crops, hid their furniture in the forests, and the British found only deserted houses, empty barns and no cattle.

It was fortunate that Gustava and Frederike and Carolina were hardy youngsters for the winter was icy, and the Ried-

esels froze in the drafty Tryon mansion. Wood, if one could buy it, was ten pounds a cord, and they could find only enough to keep a meagre blaze in one of the fireplaces. At length, over-ruling many objections, a city official ordered some of the loveliest shade trees lining the streets of lower Manhattan to be cut down, and had the wood sent to the baroness " for it was better to spare a few trees than to have a family, who had served the king with so much zeal, suffer from want."

The city suffered not only privation- but disease. When the Riedesels first arrived a virulent epidemic of small-pox raged in New York, and General Clinton, who had been too tardy to help Burgoyne, hastened to offer them his country home where they could have the children inoculated against it. In March 1780, when the baroness, to her husband's mild chagrin, gave birth to another daughter, she noted in her diary that small-pox was a scourge again, and the alarmed general insisted on having little America inoculated too.

In the heat of summer a malignant fever swept the city, and in the Riedesel house alone, out of thirty people including the servants, only ten remained in good health. The sick had paroxysms of fever and ague, and Madam von Riedesel, who was nursing the baby, went from patient to patient for days, never lying down " except when giving the baby the breast."

And so life went, busily, exhaustingly. It marked the

handsome face of the baroness, it left its traces, she was not young anymore. When an old friend- General Loos, of the Hessian troops - saw her again, after many years, he exclaimed: " Ha ha ! - what have you done with your elegant figure, your brilliant complexion, and your pretty taper white hands? They are gone; but you have seen many countries, and on your return amidst your old friends, you will have much to narrate."

In the autumn of 1780 the Generals von Riedesel and Phillips were exchanged, though the rest of the troops captured at Saratoga remained prisoners for the duration of the war.

General Clinton gave the baron a command at Long Island, and he was happy again, and his heart was open to her. It was wonderful to have the new baby, America, so fat and healthy, so significant of all the new world had brought her of peril and survival and love . . .

RETURN

Their stay at Long Island was brief, and then the general was ordered to Canada where they remained until the summer of 1783 when news was received that the preliminaries of peace had been signed and that the troops might be sent back to Europe the same year. In the fall of 1782 the baroness bore another little girl, whom she called Canada. But Canada was a frail child, living only five months -

to the sorrow of the family, particularly Gustava who would not be comforted and became sick with grief. Madam von Riedesel had to be assured and reassured that her tiny Protestant daughter would be allowed to rest in peace in the Catholic graveyard in which she was buried before she would agree to leave for Europe.

His Britannic Majesty wished the Riedesels to have every comfort. A fine ship was given them on which to return. A cow and her calf were sent on board so that the children might have a constant supply of fresh milk: chickens and sheep and quantities of fresh vegetables were stored on the vessel: the upper deck was covered with earth and salad plants were set out.

In September 1783 they landed at Portsmouth.

The queen sent for them, and the Riedesels had tea with the Royal family in a sitting room before a bright fire. The princesses could not hear enough about their American adventure and kept crowding closer, interrupting each other with eager questions. The baroness had a bad cough and "Princess Sophia went herself and brought me a jelly made of black currants which she represented as a particularly good remedy and forced me to accept a jar full." The Prince of Wales came in and his younger sisters flocked around him, and he hugged them and danced them around. The king spoke to the baron in German, nodding and shaking his head and smiling, understanding all his difficulties ... Looking at

the fire and at the king, Madam von Riedesel suddenly recalled the daughter of Colonel Howe . . . I would tear out his heart, dissect it, put it upon these coals . . .

They had been gone from Wolfenbuettel over seven years, far too long for the children to remember it. Now little America stood up in the coach pressing her inquisitive little nose against the window, and it was Carolina's doll which slipped to the floor. Gustava and Frederike sat sedately. They were young ladies now. Rockel was returning with them, his hair snow-white, his eyes blurred with tears. In the fields they hay was stacked in tall, sweet-smelling mounds, and the farms looked peaceful. She was returning home and her Friedrich was with her. The carriage was rolling up to the gates of their ancient house, and she had a giddy feeling. Her husband would have to help her through the door for her happiness was much too great for her to bear. She must pray to God to thank Him for His protection in many dangers, for the preservation of her dear ones, for the increase of their number by little America . . .

The baroness lived to be sixty-two, blessing her husband's household with five more children of whom only one was a son. "It is perfectly amazing", she wrote in her

diary, "what mankind can endure, and what I also went through. But I was well and given a cheerful, happy temperament, which made me receive the smallest particle of hope with heartfelt joy."

War Correspondents.

The " great men" who make history are not the most trustworthy chroniclers. Most of them are much given to lying. But the humble, the anonymous witnesses of great events may tell the truth.

A general might re-arrange or even falsify facts in his memoirs, for the sake of his own fame and glory. His wife, however - a passionate though sober and efficient personage - sees and remembers the simple things, the authentic things, the truth.

A mighty leader and statesman is bound to overlook the minor features of life, dazed and spellbound by the chimera of his own historical importance. But an unknown little lieutenant who accompanies the mighty leader, may be a reliable observer. He understands the significance of insignificant things.

General John Burgoyne's Campaign in America was described, analysed, and judged by varied men of high standards and profound knowledge: by historians, military experts, poets, English Tories, and American patriots. But "Gentleman Jonny Burgoyne" carried with him, quite unwittingly, two vigilant observers, whose precise testimonies are more or less forgotten today. Lieutenant Thomas Anburey's "Travels through the Interior Parts of America" appeared in England in 1789, was translated into French and

and German, and was widely read. A small edition of 500 was published in America, in 1923.

The Baroness von Riedesel, the wife of a German general with the British army, was an indefatigable correspondent and kept her diary most conscientiously. She wrote almost daily accounts of what happened from the beginning of the campaign to the end of the long years of imprisonment. An American edition of her book, "Letters and Memoirs relating to the war of American Independence and the capture of the German Troops at Saratoga" was published in New York in 1828.

I present two war-correspondents: a middle-aged German lady, and a young English officer.

MADAME VON RIEDESEL.

JOURNEY.

On May 4, 1776 Baroness Frederike Charlotte Louise von Riedesel left the little German town of Wolfenbuettel with her three little girls, Gustava four, Frederike two, and Caroline, only ten weeks old. "Good old Rockel" helped the baroness into the coach first, and she hugged the baby tightly to her breast as she watched him settle the little girls. Usually the children prattled incessantly in soft busy voices, but now they sat staring at their mother, almost not breathing. Madame von Riedesel was overcome with a feeling of apprehension. It wasn't too late to turn back

now. Was it right for her to take the children all the way to America? Rockel would give his life for her -- he had served her family for years -- and she had picked the serving-maids who were to follow in a carriage behind her own, with utmost caution. But only God knew what hazards they might encounter. Suddenly she remembered the conviction in the voice of the friend who had warned her that she and her children might be eaten by savages, " and that people in America lived upon horse-flesh and cats." Her mother, the widow of a minister of state, had also tried to dissuade her, finally, with authority, she forbade her to leave. The baroness had been firm. "I am very sorry to be obliged, for the first time in my life, willingly to disobey you . . . It is impossible for me to remain here, while the best, the fondest of husbands, has consented I should follow him . . . "

Half-smiling, she recalled the restrained jubilation of his letter when he wrote that the Duke of Brunswick had raised his rank from Colonel to major-general in charge of all the German troops in America . . . Of course, England's quarrel with her colonies was not the business of German sovereignties, but England's king and queen were both German, and the duke was right to help them. She was proud to think that the duke had been first among six German rulers to conclude a treaty with His Britannic Majesty for a corps of infantry men and unmounted dragoons. She was aware that some people said that the duke had sold his men

like cattle. It wasn't true! The colonists had been misled by a few wicked people, and it was right to help the English. It was right for England to pay, too - for the Duke of Brunswick was poor. He would have to give up his beloved Opera and the charming French corps de ballet, unless he received substantial aid from abroad. It couldn't be possible that men had been forced into the ranks, as people said. The baroness, for one, had never personally known of such a case . . . that kind of talk was not only scandalous: it was seditious!

Her darling Friedrich! Separation was painful and he could hardly bear it. He had written her every day while he was whipping the soldiers into shape before they left for England: he reported the most trivial details of his life on board ship from England to Canada, from Montreal to Quebec. It was as if no experience could have meaning until he shared it with his wife. Perhaps people thought them a little ridiculous, a woman of thirty, married fourteen years, the mother of three children . . . behaving like a love-sick young girl with her own husband. And her Friedrich had grown heavy, he was no longer a dashing young officer. .

"Love me . . . love me always," he wrote. "Preserve for my sake your precious health . . . " She had felt his longing for her in his letters, longing that was not just habit and loneliness, but like starvation. Nevertheless,

the suggestion that she follow him had come from her. He had been relieved, joyous, frightened. " I confess that I tremble when I think of it," he wrote. It was dangerous, the children might be sea-sick, she was a delicate lady. "A ship's company generally consists of filthy and coarse people, whose chief food is salt meat, half-done and scarcely eatable. The water, after a short time, becomes so foul and nauseous, that it is impossible to drink it."

Crossing to Dover, one of the sailors begged to hold Carolina. It was droll to watch him, a rough, black-whiskered mariner, as tender as a saint with the child. Gustava and Frederike played catch on the deck, bursting with laughter. Now there was no need to defend herself against the horror she had hidden from the children. An innkeeper had told her that the roads were full of highwaymen, that in a fortnight one hundred and thirty had been hanged. She had resolved not to travel through the woods after dark, but once, at twilight, when the horses were slowing down to a walk, an object hanging in the air struck her through the open window of the carriage. Madame von Riedesel pushed it away. Without looking, she knew by the chill in her heart that she had touched death. It was the body of a hanged man, and she had felt the woolen stockings. She must never think of it again . .

From Dover they went to London, and then to Bristol where the baroness was to meet Mrs. Foy, the American-born wife of an English captain. The general had arranged to have his wife cross the Atlantic with Mrs. Foy for a lady could not travel unaccompanied. But Mrs. Foy was gay and irresponsible, a flirtatious, silly woman, who could not, or would not make up her mind. Three or four months passed in Bristol, and the baroness was still there, in England, on the opposite side of the Atlantic.

Neither the baroness nor Rockel knew more than a few words of English, and she spent lonely hours weeping in her room. She was a good Hausfrau who understood the value of money, and she was being shamelessly exploited by innkeepers and coachmen and servants. She could not bear to be conspicuous, and people took her for a French woman, which she hated. Once, she walked down the street in a new calico dress trimmed with crisp green taffeta, waving a gay little fan - and a group of sailors, drunk and boisterous, minced after her. French whore . . they shouted . . French whore . . She had felt so beautiful in the dress! She had loved it so! Now it was hateful, and she had to give it to the cook . . .

If Mrs. Foy would not leave, she would take the children and the maids . . . and Rockel would look after all of them. But, she went to Portsmouth, only to be told that the season was too advanced, that she might find the St.

Lawrence frozen and the entrance to Quebec shut. She could do nothing but wait several more months. She cried at night, thinking of his letters. "Where are you now?" he wrote, " perhaps at sea, perhaps in great danger. Oh! I hope that God will soon end my anxieties, and grant me the happiness of holding you in my arms . . . "

But she had one very satisfying experience. The queen had expressed a desire to see her, and on January 1st. 1777 she presented herself at court. She had been told that the king kissed only Englishwomen and marchionesses, and suddenly, quite unexpectedly, he leaned down and touched her cheek with his lips. She could not help blushing scarlet. Remembering that she was a mother, the queen led her into the nursery and showed her the ten happy royal children. When Madame von Riedesel confessed that all her thoughts were bent on Canada, Her Majesty was impressed.

"Have you then no dread of the sea? I do not like it."

The little German woman could not keep her voice from quavering. "Nor do I, Madam. But as there is no other means of meeting my husband I shall cheerfully embark." -

It was spring again, April, almost a year since she had left Wolfenbuettel, and finally an old friend of her father's arranged her passage on one of his own merchantmen. The children were well, Mrs. Foy was prevailed upon to come, and at last . . . at last . . . as the wind filled the sails, as the gulls grew scarce in the rainy

sky, she could believe again in the words her husband had written shortly after his own departure. "God loves us too well to keep us long separated."

Two months later, as the merchantman sailed proudly up the St. Lawrence, Madame von Riedesel brought the children on deck to get their first glimpse of Quebec. The city was blurred and lovely in the misty, yellow sunlight, and as she stood trembling with her eyes and her heart on the new world, her baby in her arms, Gustava and Frederike clinging to her skirts, all the ships in the harbor roared a salute.

She looked eagerly from face to face, searching among the crowd of shouting, waving people on the dock. Her heart leaped . . . now . . . she couldn't wait any longer. The last week had been almost unendurable. But a canoe drew swiftly alongside of the ship, and a seaman, agile as a squirrel, clambered up a swinging ladder to the deck. She recognized the writing before she reached numbly for the letter. Her husband had been obliged to set out for St. John with General Burgoyne, and she would have to wait a few more days.

She couldn't, not now that she had crossed the ocean. He had left in February more than a year ago, had never even seen the baby. She would start after him the next day. The children would be rested enough . . .

The caloshes, which were used here, in place of coaches, looked too light to be safe, and her maids would have refused to go if Rockel had not travelled in their carriage with them. The children were delighted. Frederike laughed as the baroness tied her fast in one corner: she held Carolina in her lap -- still sound asleep -- They were going to see their father . . .

She met her husband at Chambly two days later, and they rushed weeping into each other's arms.

How worn he looked! Had he really missed her as much as she had missed him - all the nights she couldn't sleep? Had he really not known where she was for a long time - or if his letters reached her? How silly he had been to worry, it hadn't been bad crossing the Atlantic, not the way he thought. Oh, the children loved it on the sea, they were magnificent sailors, especially Carolina.

Only Gustave³, the oldest one, recognized the father. She hugged him as if she would never let him go. But Frederike was afraid of his odd uniform and weary face. She clung to her mother, choked with sobbing: "No, no! this is an ugly papa! My papa is pretty!"

...Two aimless, impetuous, beautiful days - not to be fully comprehended until some emptier time! But he had to go. Burgoyne was expecting him at Montreal. She wanted to accompany him - : "Why not? Tell me, Friedrich! - why

not?" But he insisted she should go to Trois Rivières and wait there for him. "It's your duty, dear! Don't forget you are a soldier's wife."

What power and fascination it exercised upon him, this magic word, duty! His face became stiff, his voice was solemn and at the same time harsh, aggressive, when he mentioned duty. His humble wife felt a sudden pang while she watched this dreadful and mysterious transformation of his beloved, familiar features. 'Men are possessed by' abstract ideas. Abstract ideas are noxious and confusing. They make life complicated. Life should be simple. My life is simple enough. The birth of a child, a disease, good weather, bad weather, food, and sleep: this is life. And love. I love him. This is my life and my duty, and nothing else. I am his wife, and I have a right to be with him. That's all, voilà tout, das ist alles ... I want to remain with him'.

She remembered some beautiful lines she once had found in an old book.

"Withersoever your destinie shall dryve you, either by the furious waves of the oceane, or by the manifolde and horrible dangers of the lande, I will surely bear your company. There can be no peryll chaunce to me so terrible, nor any kynde of deathe so cruell, that shall be much easier for me to abyde, than to live so farre separate from you."

The baroness had copied these words in her diary.

INVASION.

In the middle of July the baroness and the three little

girls stopped at Ticonderoga on their way to Fort Edward where they were to meet the dear general. The soldiers occupying Ticonderoga could hardly wait to tell her the news. Had Madam von Riedesel heard? Burgoyne would be in Albany in a fortnight, there was no question of it. War with these farmers was child's play. How could they have expected to hold out against Europe's crack regiments? Burgoyne's men had captured Fort Ticonderoga without firing a shot. Gentleman Johnny knew what he was about, and he couldn't have abler generals than Phillipe and Fraser and her own husband. Think of it! The speed! July 1st, Burgoyne left Montreal with 8,000 men, moved them down Lake Champlain, and had them camped at Crown Point on the 5th. He merely surrounded the fort, and on the 6th. General St. Clair and his men scurried away like scared rabbits. But Madam von Riedesel, that was the strange thing. Only God knew how they got out . . . taking most of their supplies too . . . or where they went . . . with an army practically surrounding them. Burgoyne had sent Riedesel and Fraser in pursuit, but they couldn't even see the Americans in that wild country. They fought like Indians, the cowards, shooting from behind trees . . . and the British had lost a few men, not many . . . several hundred . . . mostly Brunswickers . . .

I beg your pardon, baroness. I didn't mean to frighten you. Your husband's safe. He's with the army now, moving down from Skeensborough to Fort Edward . . .

Indeed, she could get to him rapidly, now that the British were in control of Lake George. They were sending the heavy baggage and artillery down the lake to Fort George, and overland to Fort Edward, and the baroness could leave that very evening with one of the boats. From Fort George she could easily hire a vehicle to take her to Fort Edward. She'd probably get there before her husband.

Yes, it was good news, and Friedrich was safe. She could breathe again. Anxiety and fear lay always at the bottom of her heart, waiting to destroy her. It took all her courage, all her strength, to hide . . . and to survive them. Why couldn't Friedrich understand that it was easier to be with him no matter what happened, so long as she knew? In Trois Rivières, while she was being comfortably entertained by some charitable sisters from the convent of the Ursulines, every kind of death had lived in her mind. Had the children seen it in her face?

It was cool, sailing down Lake George, and she had a sudden delicious feeling of happiness . . .

The country was lovely at Fort Edward, curiously lethargic and peaceful. The troops loitered in the camp, sometimes drilling - but for the most part, fishing and tramping through the woods, waiting for Burgoyne's order to push on to Albany. The baroness wondered what he could be waiting for. There was no sign of the American army and

runners brought message after message that the enemy had fallen back, had crossed the Hudson, retreated as far as the Mohawk. This marching through a country that the inhabitants abandoned wasn't like war at all.

For almost a fortnight not a shot had been fired, yet her dear Friedrich was worried. He couldn't understand why Burgoyne had ordered the men to strip themselves of all but the barest necessities, and had sent the rest of the supplies back to the flotilla on Lake George. Of course, the army could advance rapidly with such light equipment, but then, they must hurry. Rations were already very low. What was keeping Burgoyne here? General von Riedesel was almost beside himself. They had had very little trouble occupying Fort Ticonderoga and Fort George - but they had gone on - and left almost no troops behind to protect the captured forts . . . a mere handful of men. The Americans could recapture them whenever they made up their minds. And that would mean that they were cut off from Canada.

Thinking about it later, the baroness couldn't remember when she had heard the first rumors of an enormous magazine of stores at Bennington on the northern frontier of New England. Everybody seemed to know of it. Hardly protected at all, there were horses enough for all the dismounted dragoons, horses to pull the heavy wagons filled with supplies, a great herd of fat cattle for meat, barns loaded with wheat and green vegetables. The soldiers were

hungry. One had only to look at them to know they had been living on smaller and smaller rations. One heard talk of nothing but Bennington. There was no chance of a battle. The stores were there for the taking.

Six hundred Brunswick dragoons were going, but not her husband. A captain would be enough. Still, that bright August morning, Madam von Riedesel rose early to watch them start. They were the pick of the Duke's troops, huge men over six feet tall. She followed them through the long grass, watching them disappear into the thick gloom of the forest. She stood waving at them, calling good-bye, as they plodded along in their heavy riding boots and huge spurs that caught in the underbrush; their ridiculous pig-tails and plumed hats, their dangling, useless sabers entangling them in the branches and brambles. So many of them were friends she had known since childhood.

Days passed -- and no word came. The men went about their tasks, but a pall of anxiety hung over the camp.

It was shocking that when the actual news of what had happened was brought back to camp, it was almost a relief. Burgoyne had been entirely misinformed. There had been a force of more than twenty-five hundred men protecting the reservoir at Bennington, and the Brunswick detachment had been annihilated in less than two hours.

The baroness marked the date in her diary, August 16,
1777 . . .

How much money would that mean for the duke at

\$ 35.00 a head - for her friends who would never again see the Elbe and the Weser, and the lovely valley of the Rhine? What if her Friedrich had gone with them? It was just an accident that he hadn't . - It was no accident but the Will of Providence. It was God who had spared her husband. He would not take him away from her, because He realized how much she loved him. She had no tears for the dead men, although she was not heartless. But she was realistic. Love is selfish. She was not interested in other women's men. Friedrich was safe: this was all she knew. She held him as one holds a thing, a possession.

Encircled by English and German troops the Riedesels lived in a red house in the midst of the woods, eating in the open air in good weather, laughing and playing with their children. Before he could move on Burgoyne was forced to wait almost a month for supplies from Lake George. In her elegant eighteenth century script Madam von Riedesel recorded serenely the happiness of days from which she excluded all terror of the future. "In consequence of the unfortunate engagement which took place at Bennington, I had the pleasure of seeing him (General von Riedesel) again on the 18th, of August from which day we passed three weeks in delightful tranquility." Here, for the first time, the little baroness tasted bear's meat, and she loved it.

The army began to move again on September 11th.,

and she pleaded to go. The general had a large calash built for her, and his wife, the children, two maids and Rockel jogged leisurely along, an hour's march behind the Royal troops. The soldier's spirits were high, and they sang as they passed " through boundless forests and magnificent tracts of land - abandoned by the inhabitants who fled to re-inforce the army of the American General Gates." On the 13th. the army crossed to the west bank of the Hudson, and then advanced slowly, a few miles a day, clearing roads and mending bridges.

On the 19th. at Freeman's Farm, a few miles south of Saratoga, the vanished American army sprang up suddenly out of the wilderness, in beaver caps and homespun, buckskin and moccasins, almost invisible in the autumn woods, silent as Indians, shooting from the tops of trees, from behind thickets, a great horde of men under General Gates and Benedict Arnold.

Back of the lines, all day long, the wounded and dying were brought to the house where the baroness and her children were staying. In every room one could hear the battle, the precise click of small guns, the explosive noise of cannon. The children huddled together quietly, shrinking against a wall as if it were a covert - feeling, not understanding the terror around them. The baroness moved among the wounded men speaking hesitantly in her broken English, more fluently in her comforting, homely, familiar German . . .

Her Friedrich drove the enemy back - at least they disappeared again into the country that lay below them. Where had they gone? How many were there? Albany was a word as remote as Samarkand or Bagdad . . .

At dawn the Royal Army moved again, bedraggled, shattered, weary - this time north, the wounded groaning on the carts that had carried the supplies -- a slow dull retreat, not very far, a few miles up the Hudson. The men talked softly to each other without resentment, with a melancholy, indifferent hopelessness. The Americans had attacked Ticonderoga and were holding it practically in a state of siege. It was impossible even to get to Fort George, and the flotilla on the lake between the two forts on which British supplies depended, was in the hands of the rebels. A rapid retreat to Canada was out of the question - they were marooned. How long could they hold out? What could they do?

The wind rose and it began to rain, great drops falling with light, separate, explosive sounds on the bright leaves that loosened here and there and drifted downward, a rain of leaves like flocks of red and yellow birds scattered by shot. There was a strong smell of balsam and rich earth, and the sounds of the rain mingled with the loud surge of the Hudson, with the sinking sound of heavy feet on the soggy earth, with the wooden creak of wheels turning . . . On the carts, the wounded no longer

groaned. They lay quietly, patiently, with closed eyes - sometimes one sobbed a little.

Night fell, and the men shrouded themselves in their tents, a fragile, nomad city, furtive as a conspiracy. Back of the lines, the baroness again moved into a house from which the inhabitants had fled, the rooms still redolent of the family which had lived there in leisure and peace.

General Riedesel was with the main body of the army which seemed to be engaged in " little skirmishes of small consequence". She could visit her husband every morning, eat her noon meal with him, from time to time he could come to her quarters for dinner. It wasn't really living together - she belonged with him, and no one could tell how long this would go on. She would have a house built for herself, a log cabin fashioned out of sweet-smelling pine. It would take only a few days to build, and then Friedrich would be with her where she could look after him properly.

If the troops could hold out, there was help coming. If the men could surmount their wretched submission, if they could be infused with enough spirit to break through the American lines surrounding them, they could meet the British squadron under General Clinton that had sailed up the Hudson as far as Kingston, destroying rebel stores,

and then march south again to Albany.

On October 7th. taking ~~fifteen~~ hundred men, Burgoyne decided to make a reconnaissance to Freeman's Farm, to determine whether or not the Americans could be attacked. The men moved swiftly through the dying fields, with a bitter, hostile courage. They went, not like an army, but like military men, marching wilfully together, each with farewells unsaid and unacknowledged, for that would have been a denial of faith. To confess meant the end, and so the men called to each other every now and then with brusque, jovial gayety. No one spoke of England or of Germany, of anything that had happened before the present march.

Madam von Riedesel took the children to see the cabin which was almost ready for occupancy, and the children poked here and there at the plaster stuffed between the logs to keep the wind out. It was a heavenly place, and the little girls shouted with delight.

But now they must be good children and stay with Lena, the maid. They must be little ladies and not wander away anywhere - for mother was going to be very busy this afternoon. In her room at the big house, papa was bringing the three other generals to dine, Burgoyne, Phillips and Fraser.

It would be a nice dinner though rations were scarce.

Rockel had brought in a large catch of trout, and she had managed to coax two hens from the commissary. Now they were roasting in the Dutch oven beside the fireplace in the kitchen. Bourgoyne was a gourmet, and she wanted the food to be particularly good . . .

She didn't like Burgoyne. He was a dissolute drunken man, too ready with flamboyant compliments which always seemed a little mocking. His shamelessness was disgraceful, taking his mistress with him openly wherever the army went. It was said that he had a wife at home whom he loved dearly. How could it be possible? But men were curious about such things - it was a good thing, in any case, she had come to America - although she couldn't imagine Friedrich with another woman ..

The table looked charming. There was beautiful china in the house, and real silver, and she had decorated the room with sprays of autumn leaves, the gayest she could find. What could be keeping the men? Friedrich was always prompt, and the roast would be ruined. From the window she could see considerable movement among the troops even at the back of the lines. There was a dense fog of black smoke over the distant woods, and the house suddenly shook with the low growl of cannon. The children were in the kitchen with Lena, and dinner or no dinner, she wanted them with her.

"Lena, bring the children to me . . . at once . . . do you hear?"

Were they English or American cannon? The large guns

had not arrived from the flotilla and besides the flotilla was now in the hands of the Americans. Dear God, let things turn out well this time!

At the edge of the clearing there was a bed of asters, dead now, hanging dismally on their blackened stalks. Out there, just appearing from the dark thicket, two men carefully, slowly, trundled a hand-barrow on which a man lay. It couldn't be . . . she threw a shawl over her shoulders and ran.

It was General Fraser, the young Earl of Balcarres, his clothes muddy and bleeding, his blue eyes already straining to penetrate the vast growing darkness. He had been shot through the bowels. Stronger than her breathless relief was a stifling sense of shame. She tried to wet her lips but her throat was dry. General Fraser looked at her as if he senses her feeling, and smiled reassuringly, almost humorously, through his pain. He tried to nod at the solemn-eyed children as they carried him into her room. He was a dear young man, and such a good soldier, her husband said.

There could be no help for General Fraser. She knew it at once. He moaned pitifully for water, but they could not give it to him - it would have been too agonizing. The guns roared all through the afternoon. The sun set, and they went on intermittently. In the evening her husband came in with Burgoyne. Burgoyne sat down beside the young Earl,

holding his hand, smoothing back the damp hair, weeping openly in front of her children, as she herself would never do. There was no need to ask about the battle. She had only to look at Friedrich's collapsed bewildered face. She knew that it meant disaster.

Gustave, Frederike, Carolina - they were asleep now, and they would forget. But the little baroness sat for hours watching the children, not daring to turn to her husband who was too bitterly humbled, " constantly afraid that my children would wake up and cry, and thus disturb the poor dying man, who often sent to beg my pardon for making me so much trouble."

Dawn came, and noon, and all day long the shooting went on sporadically - even at dusk when the entire body of generals gathered on a hill top for the obsequies for General Fraser. The gloom was lighted by sudden flares and cannon balls flew around and over the men. A thin drizzle of rain slanted down as the body was laid in its last resting place, as General Burgoyne spoke in a hesitant, deeply-moved voice, as the soldiers packed the supplies to take with them on the march, as they kindled fires in every direction and left their tents standing in a hopeless, childish effort to conceal their retreat.

Wearily, all night long, the army dragged through the woods, the baroness and her children and maids again in the

calash. Carolina and Gustava slept soundly, but Frederike began to cry in alarm, frightened of the mysterious woods, of the despairing silence of the marching men. Her mother pressed a handkerchief to her mouth.

At six in the morning Burgoyne ordered a halt. The soldiers lay down on the ground, too tired to mind the rain, and Baron von Riedesel slept on his wife's shoulder for three hours. Then the army started again, marching with the enemy in sight, the Indians scattering in all directions, making for home. Towards evening, at Saratoga, the men encamped . . .

Their one desolate hope of escape lay in a swift retreat to Fort Edward, and the baroness indignantly asked General Phillips why they did not continue while there was still time.

"Poor woman," he said, " I am amazed at you! Completely wet through, have you still the courage to wish to go further in this weather! Would that you were only our commanding general! He halts because he is tired, and intends to spend the night here and give us a supper!"

At two the next afternoon, the Americans reached them, and firing started. There was a deserted house on the Hudson, and seating herself and her three children in the calash, she made for it rapidly. As she reached the walk she saw five or six men with guns aimed at her on the oppo-

site side of the river, and involuntarily, she threw the children to the floor of the carriage and herself over them. At that instant the men fired, shattering the arm of a poor English soldier who rode behind to guard them.

The children screamed as she dragged them to the door. They took refuge in the cellar, and all day and night the house was battered by cannons pounding at the walls with deafening thuds. She laid herself down in a corner near a door, the children lying on the earth with their heads in her lap, crying. There was no use talking to them . . .

She wasn't frightened anymore. It was surprising how simple her life had become, merely something to guard. How much more entangled her life had been when she was sixteen and courted by all the young officers. She had been full of schemes, half-carried through, impulses that she regretted, vague, painful longing that she could not understand. But something happened to her heart the day she met Friedrich. They had been married before Christmas, on the 21st. of December, 1762. Could it be that long ago?

No girl ever had a lovelier wedding. She remembered the dancing peasants, the houses hung with banners, the parades of adjutants and officers in their gorgeous regalia galloping up and down the streets. Peasants and townspeople had come from all over Brunswick to her father's house, their arms laden with gifts. Duke Ferdinand, Prince Friedrich, all the notables, had their portraits painted,

life-size - to give her. They were hanging in the long hall at Wolfenbuettel - would she ever see them again? And just before her wedding the prettiest girls in Brunswick were chosen to pose for a picture representing the four seasons, and she - in a dress of palest green, her arms full of lilies-of-the-valley and violets, her head entwined with a wreath of delicate white flowers, the leaves tangling in her hair that hung pale and loosened to her waist - she, was spring.

Her eyes were growing used to the darkness and she began to distinguish the faces around her, her maids, a great many wounded soldiers, two strange women. Nobody spoke. Of what were they thinking, these silent, ghostly people?

The house shook as a cannon ball struck it again. Now, Gustava and Carolina slept, their tears dry on her hands beneath their eyelids. Only Frederike cried broken-heartedly. It was always Frederike, she was a haunted child. She must stop . . . but she would not.

One of the wounded officers offered to help her. He sat down on the ground beside the baroness. "Do you like kittens, baby kittens?"

The child did not answer.

He miaowed. You could almost see the dark grey woolly fur, the small pointed ears, the large, dark-pupiled eyes. Then he purred, a deep contented purr.

"Here's a baby lamb lost from it's mother." He bleated woefully. The child's sobs subsided a little. She turned her sad little face to him. The cannons roared again. Frederike trembled violently, but did not cry.

He was a magician. He could be a dog, or a wolf, or a lion. He could be a hen laying an egg, or a rooster crowing in triumph. "May I take her? You must be very tired, Madam."

The little girl went trustfully to his arms, giggling and talking. Soon she slept, and the young officer's worn face was as peaceful as the child's.

The house was cannonaded from the opposite side in the morning, but the baroness was almost used to it. Enough murky light streaked in so that she could examine the cellar, three great musty rooms. Madam von Riedesel took charge. "I advised all to go out of the cellar for a little while during which time I would have it cleaned, as otherwise we would all be sick. They followed my suggestion, and I at once set many hands to work, which was in the highest degree necessary: for the women and children being afraid to venture forth, had soiled the whole cellar." The rooms were swept and fumigated by sprinkling vinegar on burning coals, and then the most dangerously wounded men were placed in one room, the women and children in another, and

all the rest in the third . . .

They lived in the cellar six days, in a buried world, quite accustomed to the dark. Water was scarce and could be brought in only at great risk, but the men stole out for they could not bear the moaning of the wounded. There was little food, and only the children were not hungry. Once, eleven cannon balls, one after the other, splintered through the house, and a soldier whose leg a surgeon was about to amputate had his other leg shot off in the middle of the operation. He died immediately! There was no time for despair. The baroness was aware of how stubbornly, in the bleakest circumstances, life persists.

On October 13th. Burgoyne agreed to treat with the enemy. On October 17, 1777 the British capitulated, and under command of their own officers, the troops marched through the American camp and laid down their arms.

PRISONERS OF WAR.

Madam von Riedesel was afraid that she might be treated rudely and contemptuously by the victorious Americans, and so the afternoon of the surrender when her husband sent for her she hardly lifted her eyes as she rode through the rebel camp to the officer's tents. The children had looked dazed when she first took them out of the cellar into the

light of day - their eyes had the blind look of new-born babies who can distinguish light but not objects, and she was surprised to find that she herself found the light of even this grey day too vast and overwhelming. She had a stunned feeling of complete emptiness, and when a gentle, oldish man came towards her, took the children out of the wagon and kissed them, and then helped her alight, she began to tremble.

"You mustn't be frightened", the man said half-apologetically. " I'm General Schuyler."

So this was the northern commander of the American troops! He was a gentleman. What had she expected? She felt the blood rising to her cheeks as if he had suddenly read her thoughts, and then she recovered herself enough to assure him that she could not be frightened of a man who was so tender with children.

At the tent of General Gates she found her husband and Burgoyne and Phillips chatting so amiably with Gates and Benedict Arnold that one might have thought they were old friends. They were going to dine together.

General Schuyler thought she might be unhappy, the only woman with so many men, and so he brought her and her children to his own tent where he had a feast set up for them. He had a kind of sparkle with children, a droll, delicate wit, and in no time he had them giggling and clustering around him. She found herself confiding in

in him, her enemy, and when he invited her and her family to visit at his home in Albany, where General Burgoyne would also be, she accepted at once . . .

Albany at last, but as prisoners-of-war! General Schuyler and his wife and daughters were so courteous that one would not have known there was a war between England and America. It was surprising that they could be so friendly with General Burgoyne " although he had - without any necessity it was said - caused their magnificently built houses to be burned. But they treated us as a people who knew how to forget their misfortunes in the losses of others."

They stayed three days, and she would have loved to stay longer. But they had to go to Boston. General Gates had promised that as soon as ships were sent for them, all the troops would be sent to England on condition of not serving against the Americans again in the Revolutionary War.

It was hard to keep her husband's spirits up. If she could have kept him from thinking of the defeat the journey from Albany would have been very pleasant.

How curious the Americans were! Some of their generals who accompanied the troops were shoemakers, and not at all loath to practice their trade. On days when the army stopped to rest they made boots for the officers, and did

not even mind mending the shoes of the common soldiers. Once she heard an English captain who had worn his boots into shreds offer an American general who had on a good pair, a guinea for them. The general immediately alighted from his horse, took the money, gave up his boots, and put on the badly worn ones of the officer! Of course, American money was worth almost nothing. But this was a new country!

The troops could not go into Boston. Something had happened. Congress could not agree on freeing the prisoners and they would have to wait. The soldiers were quartered in wretched barracks, no floors, not even a bit of straw to sleep on, no firewood, leaking ceiling through which the rain dripped . . . Even the Riedesels were billeted in a tiny room in the house of a farmer. Their maids had to sleep on the floor, and the men in the entry. It was filthy, and the farmer's family hated them.

And yet the general was enraged when they were ordered to Cambridge. It was to Boston that the ships were to come to take them back to England. Now everything was uncertain. Burgoyne had been stupid to take the word of General Gates. The baron paced back and forth in the tiny room, and his wife's heart ached for him.

Cambridge was a charming city, and they were lodged in a beautiful home which had formerly belonged to

Royalists. It was cheerful and comfortable during the long winter. She made friends with many American families, and they couldn't have been kinder. Spring came, and her garden was full of flowers, lilacs and phlox and hyacinths.

In June she gave a supper and ball in honor of her husband's fortieth birthday, and she invited all the generals and officers. She had the house and garden illuminated with tapers and the light fell softly on the hedge of climbing roses, white and pink and red. At dinner, her husband rose to toast the king and the Duke of Brunswick, and everyone sang God Save the King. Suddenly, the house was surrounded by angry Americans. In New England burning torches of pitch were placed on hilltops as signals for the minute men whenever there was danger, and every able-bodied man would instantly abandon whatever he was doing, grab his gun, and rush in the direction of the signal. The baroness had lighted her house so brightly, that the Americans had thought it was a signal, and that the prisoners were planning a mutiny. They excused themselves and went away as soon as they learned it was a party.

Madame Riedesel was a social success. Her house " was always full of English gentlemen", as she proudly noted in her diary. People liked her, she was popular and respected. One of her visitors of that period called her " the amiable, the accomplished, and dignified baroness." He also praised her " charming blue eyes, bedewed with tears at the

recital of her sufferings." She had " much embonpoint," - he added -, " and a handsome face."

Her husband, meanwhile, grew more and more gloomy. He spent most of his time ~~by~~ laboring on a Military Memoir, describing and analysing the Campaign of 1777. It was supposed to be his apology, his complete justification. He started his report with this significant statement:

"From the beginning of 1777, General Riedesel was never permitted to take part in the deliberations held on by the British generals in their counsels of war...., nor was he ever made acquainted with the instructions which General Burgoyne received from his government." All he could do, according to his own account, was " to execute, by all means, Burgoyne's orders with the utmost exactness." Burgoyne, therefore, was alone responsible for everything that happened. He, and nobody else, was to blame. I am innocent, assured the German general.

Riedesel apparently did not know, or did not want to know, that Burgoyne, for his part, was the victim of the English War Minister's confusion. When the General was on leave in London, in November 1776, he took the opportunity to present to King George III and the War Minister, Lord George Germaine, a plan for the American campaign of 1777. His idea was to march an army south from Montreal, another, east from Oswega, and a third north from New York, - all three to meet at Albany, cut New England off from the other states, and at the same time leave enough force behind to

protect Canada. The plan was approved. Burgoyne was put in command of the northern army and ordered to proceed to Albany to meet General Howe. But Howe knew nothing of it.

In December of the same year, General Howe, who was in New York with about 20,000 troops, wrote to Lord Germaine proposing another plan requiring an additional 30,000 men to operate against New England, New Jersey, and to hold the South. Germaine replied that the king thought highly of his plan, but had also suggested a diversion upon the coasts of Massachusetts and New Hampshire. This was the last letter Howe received from Germaine before he set out for Philadelphia the following summer.

As for Riedesel, he had, up to the last scene of the tragedy, sound and helpful ideas which were sneered at by conceited, irresponsible General Burgoyne. If things had gone as the German officer wanted, America ^{might} still belong to the British Empire.

In November 1778, the prisoners were ordered to Virginia. She felt a pang of regret at leaving her many new friends, the house she had grown to love. It would be hard travelling through the country again. The children were excited at the prospect. They exclaimed joyfully over the elegant English wagon and the wagon for provisions her husband had bought for them, and she pretended that they were all going to be gypsies. It was November now and it would take a long time to go.

They arrived in Virginia in the middle of February, 1779, having passed through Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland - 678 English miles in twelve weeks. It had been a hard journey. Most of the time the roads had been covered with a glaze of ice, and rain fell, and snow - and the wind was piercing. They often halted in the woods at midnight where the poor marching soldiers had to sleep without even straw to lie on, sheltering themselves as well as they could in the deep crevices of rocks and in dense thickets. The Riedesels slept in their covered wagon - but they could not really keep the children warm. When they woke up at night and cried, the baroness sang to them, German lieder, little French folk songs . . .

After the journey there was no longer any question in Madam von Riedesel's mind about the feeling of the American people to the mother country. During the trip she often recalled Burgoyne's naive hope of thousands of Royalists flocking to the king's colors. The Americans had not yet won the war - but they were no longer colonists. They were a nation.

Often people had not wanted to sell them provisions. One lady whom they begged to sell them anything at all - a few vegetables - a few eggs - had shouted at them hoarsely: " You shall not have a morsel of food. You have come to our land to kill us and lay waste our possessions. Now you

are our prisoners . . . " But when little Carolina who was now two and a half said she was hungry, the woman shamefacedly gave them whatever they wanted. In Virginia, only a day's journey from their destination, they had nothing left but tea, and the baroness begged food for the children from the farmers. They would not sell it to Dogs of Royalists. . .

At the home of a Colonel Howe, she heard his pretty fourteen year old daughter exclaim as she looked at the glowing coals: " Oh! if I had the king of England here, with what satisfaction I would cut his body in pieces, tear out his heart, dissect it, put it upon these coals and consume it."

The baroness looked at her with horror. " I am almost ashamed to belong to a sex that is capable of taking such pleasure."

The Riedesels were quartered at Colle, two hours ride from where the troops were stationed at Charlottesville, Virginia. They rented the home of an Italian, and when spring came they had the gardens and fields tilled and planted. How fertile the land was! The seeds seemed to sprout over-night, and the vegetables were delicious. They built an enclosure for wild turkeys, which were perfectly tame, and sometimes weighed over fifty pounds. In the spring

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the great sleek birds flew away to the woods to hatch their eggs, and the baroness thought they were gone forever, but they came back later followed by an enormous flock of chicks.

They were in Virginia until August, miserable months, despite the rich plenty of the land. Her husband was alternately full of a muttering rage, or a silent, more terrible despair. At first he wrote outraged letters to the Americans about the troops who had been promised decent treatment. On their arrival, when it was still bitterly cold, the barracks at Charlottesville were rows of unfinished block houses, without plaster and no doors or windows. The prisoners had arrived later than they were expected, and meat for them had been stored in a vault in the earth with ashes instead of salt between the pieces. All the top layers were spoiled by the sun, and the men had often been obliged to throw away all their meat rations, though sometimes a piece could be saved by washing and salting and hanging it up in the sun. A number of the men sickened and died. The general could not sit back and watch his men starve: he was responsible for their well-being . . . But the troops worked hard preparing their quarters, and later a very pretty little town grew up with gardens and coops for poultry back of each barrack.

The baron was no longer the patient, placid man she had known: his temper was like the climate. He would sit

brooding in the great heat, writing and rewriting letters to Washington and Jefferson, pleading to be exchanged, waiting impatiently for answers, receiving courteous refusals. He blamed La Fayette, feeling that it was his influence on the American Congress which had induced them to break their word though they had solemnly vowed to allow the British troops to return to Europe.

The baroness recalled her meeting with La Fayette in Hartford, Connecticut on their way south. She had humiliated him, and she was glad. He had dined with the Riedesels and La Fayette had spoken nostalgically of England, of the kindness which the king had shown him. Madam von Riedesel had not been able to curb her tongue. How could he bring himself to accept the king's kindness when he was leaving to fight against him? La Fayette had the grace to look abashed. " It is true that such a thought passed through my mind one day when the king offered to show me his fleet. I answered that I hoped to see it someday: and then quietly retired, in order to escape from the embarrassment of being obliged to decline point-blank, the offer, should it be repeated . . . " Had he really been a spy as the people in England suspected?

In the middle of the summer the baron was overcome by the heat, and the Riedesels went to Frederick-Spring, a nearby spa. Here it was pleasant, and they made the acquaintance of General Washington's family, and of Madam Garal, a lovable woman, an ardent American patriot, but reasonable.

They went to country dances, and the baroness was amused. The languid Virginians loved dancing: on the slightest inducement, in a twinkling, they would leap up and dance about; if a reel were played for them " immediately the men catch hold of the women who then jump about as if they were possessed; but as soon as they are led back to their chairs they sit on them like blocks of wood."

At Frederick-Spring word came at last that Riedesel and General Phillips had permission to go to New York to be exchanged, and so while her husband returned to Colle to hand over the command of the German troops to Colonel Specht, the baroness took her children and set out in August 1779 for a visit at Madam Garal's home in Maryland, arranging to meet her husband later in Yorktown, Pennsylvania.

Her last impression of the South was one of tenderness and beauty. The Garal home was exquisitely furnished, the garden loveliest of all. " We ascended the vineyard by a winding path which led to the top of the hill. Between every vine a poplar rose and an amaranth grew." Before she left, she and Captain Freeman - an Englishman whom the general had sent with her to protect them - designed a temple in the garden for Madam Garal, adorning it with flowers and dedicating it to Friendship and Gratitude. " In this country it would be held a crime to refuse hospitality to a stranger."

New York had remained in the hands of the Royalists, and when the Riedesels settled there in the winter of 1779, they were loaded with kindnesses. The baroness now had many American friends whom she cherished deeply, but still it was good to be again among people whose cause was her own. Governor-General Tryon gave them his house for as long as they wanted to live there. General Patterson and Lord Cornwallis came to pay their respects. It was an honor for Madam von Riedesel, a German woman, to be chosen from among all the great ladies of the city to represent the queen at a ball celebrating Her Majesty's birthday, and though she was far advanced with child she "was obliged to open the ball with one of the generals by a formal minuet."

New York had avoided most of the direct ravages of war, but there was incredible suffering in the city. The baroness found that fifty dollars in English money couldn't feed her little family for two days - what must that have meant for the poor? Food could not be bought from the surrounding farmers no matter how the English entreated them. Feeling was as strong in the immediate vicinity of New York as it was all over the country. Finally, foraging parties were sent out, but the Americans buried their crops, hid their furniture in the forests, and the British found only deserted houses, empty barns and no cattle.

It was fortunate that Gustava and Frederike and Carolina were hardy youngsters for the winter was icy, and the Ried-

esels froze in the drafty Tryon mansion. Wood, if one could buy it, was ten pounds a cord, and they could find only enough to keep a meagre blaze in one of the fireplaces. At length, over-ruling many objections, a city official ordered some of the loveliest shade trees lining the streets of lower Manhattan to be cut down, and had the wood sent to the baroness " for it was better to spare a few trees than to have a family, who had served the king with so much zeal, suffer from want."

The city suffered not only privation- but disease. When the Riedesels first arrived a virulent epidemic of small-pox raged in New York, and General Clinton, who had been too tardy to help Burgoyne, hastened to offer them his country home where they could have the children inoculated against it. In March 1780, when the baroness, to her husband's mild chagrin, gave birth to another daughter, she noted in her diary that small-pox was a scourge again, and the alarmed general insisted on having little America inoculated too.

In the heat of summer a malignant fever swept the city, and in the Riedesel house alone, out of thirty people including the servants, only ten remained in good health. The sick had paroxysms of fever and ague, and Madam von Riedesel, who was nursing the baby, went from patient to patient for days, never lying down " except when giving the baby the breast."

And so life went, busily, exhaustingly. It marked the

handsome face of the baroness, it left its traces, she was not young anymore. When an old friend- General Loos, of the Hessian troops - saw her again, after many years, he exclaimed: " Ha ha ! - what have you done with your elegant figure, your brilliant complexion, and your pretty taper white hands? They are gone; but you have seen many countries, and on your return amidst your old friends, you will have much to narrate."

In the autumn of 1780 the Generals von Riedesel and Phillips were exchanged, though the rest of the troops captured at Saratoga remained prisoners for the duration of the war.

General Clinton gave the baron a command at Long Island, and he was happy again, and his heart was open to her. It was wonderful to have the new baby, America, so fat and healthy, so significant of all the new world had brought her of peril and survival and love . . .

RETURN

Their stay at Long Island was brief, and then the general was ordered to Canada where they remained until the summer of 1783 when news was received that the preliminaries of peace had been signed and that the troops might be sent back to Europe the same year. In the fall of 1782 the baroness bore another little girl, whom she called Canada. But Canada was a frail child, living only five months -

to the sorrow of the family, particularly Gustava who would not be comforted and became sick with grief. Madam von Riedesel had to be assured and reassured that her tiny Protestant daughter would be allowed to rest in peace in the Catholic graveyard in which she was buried before she would agree to leave for Europe.

His Britannic Majesty wished the Riedesels to have every comfort. A fine ship was given them on which to return. A cow and her calf were sent on board so that the children might have a constant supply of fresh milk: chickens and sheep and quantities of fresh vegetables were stored on the vessel: the upper deck was covered with earth and salad plants were set out.

In September 1783 they landed at Portsmouth.

The queen sent for them, and the Riedesels had tea with the Royal family in a sitting room before a bright fire. The princesses could not hear enough about their American adventure and kept crowding closer, interrupting each other with eager questions. The baroness had a bad cough and "Princess Sophia went herself and brought me a jelly made of black currants which she represented as a particularly good remedy and forced me to accept a jar full." The Prince of Wales came in and his younger sisters flocked around him, and he hugged them and danced them around. The king spoke to the baron in German, nodding and shaking his head and smiling, understanding all his difficulties ... Looking at

the fire and at the king, Madam von Riedesel suddenly recalled the daughter of Colonel Howe . . . I would tear out his heart, dissect it, put it upon these coals . . .

They had been gone from Wolfenbuettel over seven years, far too long for the children to remember it. Now little America stood up in the coach pressing her inquisitive little nose against the window, and it was Carolina's doll which slipped to the floor. Gustava and Frederike sat sedately. They were young ladies now. Rockel was returning with them, his hair snow-white, his eyes blurred with tears. In the fields they hay was stacked in tall, sweet-smelling mounds, and the farms looked peaceful. She was returning home and her Friedrich was with her. The carriage was rolling up to the gates of their ancient house, and she had a giddy feeling. Her husband would have to help her through the door for her happiness was much too great for her to bear. She must pray to God to thank Him for His protection in many dangers, for the preservation of her dear ones, for the increase of their number by little America . . .

The baroness lived to be sixty-two, blessing her husband's household with five more children of whom only one was a son. "It is perfectly amazing", she wrote in her

what mankind can endure, and what I also went
ugh. But I was well and given a cheerful, happy
temperament, which made me receive the smallest particle
of hope with heartfelt joy."