
Frederika Baroness Riedesel

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Mrs
Angelina Vernon de Redwood
nee de Massey

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FREDERIKA BARONESS RIEDESEL.

BY LINA SINNICKSON.

[The wife of the general in command of the Brunswick and Hessian troops hired by the king of England for the purpose of conquering her revolted colonies in America, would from this fact alone interest us. When there is added to this the pleasure of knowing that the lady actually followed to this continent her husband, on the "voyage of duty," as she herself calls it, and being the gifted daughter of a distinguished soldier, adapted herself to circumstances and such society as the vicissitudes of war allowed, and became the friend of such men of Revolutionary fame as Washington and Schuyler, there seems a special reason for presenting a sketch of this bright, observing woman, taken from her letters. One almost regrets that Fate decreed such a lovable and charming woman to be on the "other side" in that struggle for so great a cause as American independence. However, time changes the face of many things in the course of events, and it was in the Riedesel house in Leipzigerstrasse, Berlin, now the War Office, that it was decided, a few years ago, that a German should be the commander of the allied forces sent to China, and the American troops were among those under this command.]

Frederika von Massow, afterwards Baroness Riedesel, was born in 1746 in Brandenburg, in Germany. Her father, von Massow, was commissioned by Frederick II, governing president of the allied army, and acting as commissary in chief was obliged to remain a long time at the

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theatre of war, and not wishing to be separated from his family, had them domiciled near him. Though he himself seems to have been a genial gentleman and his wife an amiable and hospitable lady, it is evident that the beautiful and lovely daughters, not only by their grace and unaffected manners drew many young officers to their house, but even bewitched the older and more experienced generals.

Frederika or Fritschen—as she was known among her family—met in this way the young cavalry captain Baron Riedesel, to whom, after the various and adverse circumstances due to the war permitted, she was married when she was little more than sixteen years old.

From her portrait, painted by the celebrated Tischbein, she looks very much the smart demoiselle of the court of Versailles, with a slim and tapering waist, and decked out in all the loveliness of silk and lace so dear to the feminine heart; from what is said of her from the very earliest time she seemed to have been possessed of innumerable charms as well as good looks. That she was a most noble, devoted and intelligent wife and mother is attested not only in her own life and letters, but by those of her husband and children. The child-like faith in Providence, which led her to leave a luxurious home and powerful friends, and follow her husband across a pathless sea into a strange land, then almost a wilderness, for the sake of sharing with him his trials and hardships, affords an example well worth study and admiration. Nor can one read such touching records of devoted, conjugal love, chastened and sanctified by an unaffected religious experience, without the consciousness of a high ideal of faith and duty.

On the twenty-first of December 1762 she was married at Neuhaus, when her popularity and the esteem in which her young husband was held by the Duke Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Brunswick, seem to have made of it, for the whole town and garrison, a gala day.

This was an age of war and warfare, for shortly after the few short years of respite from the hostile strife of the

Seven Years War in Europe, the American Revolution carried Baron Riedesel to this country as Major General of the Brunswick troops, and hither his young wife and her three little girls soon followed him. On the sixteenth of April, 1777, in the man-of-war *Blonde*, they set sail from Bristol, in England, for America, and on the eleventh of June they landed safely at Quebec after the tribulations of crossing in a sailing ship. Nevertheless, brave and busy, (for her children and all her servants were seasick) Baroness Riedesel writes of many things she was able to accomplish besides the care of her little family on this long voyage; embroidering nightcaps and purses, and making many useful additions to her children's wardrobe. With a throbbing heart she finds herself at the haven of her desire, and though her beloved husband could not be there to meet her upon her arrival, with delight she wrote, "It is a ravishing sight to see the shores at this place!" The great cataract of Montmorency, the surrounding mountains, are described in her letters, and with interest she notices and describes the quaint caps and cloaks, the costumes of patrician and peasant in the town.

Her husband, unable to meet her, wrote her, with that depth of feeling common to most Germans, "You are welcome my dear Angel, to the Canadian continent!" and from this time on they both kept a diary of how they spent their days, so each should know what the other was doing when they were separated. These diaries, in the form of letters, not only give a graphic picture of stirring occurrences, but paint, also, with much breadth and spirit the men and women of those days.

From Canada, where Baroness Riedesel joined her husband some three or four days after her landing, having journeyed to reach him finally by caleche and canoe, she tells an amusing and typical story of her driver, "They are everlastingly talking to their horses; when they were not lashing them or singing, they cried "Allons, mon prince! Pour mon general!", oftener however they said, "Fi-donc,

Madame!" this last the Baroness thought designed for her, and asked, "Plait-il?" "Oh," replied the fellow, "ce n'est que mon cheval, la petite coquine!" Leaving their caleche they took to a canoe in which, she said, "we were obliged with considerable trouble to preserve our exact equilibrium!"

In meeting with her husband her joy was beyond all description and after but two happy days together they were obliged to part again for a time. General Riedesel departing with his troops against the enemy, left his wife much cast down, a stranger in a strange land, but she soon settled herself and her little ones in the convent of the Ursulines at Quebec, where her liveliness and good sense assisted her to make friends with the nuns, among whom she found some very lovely persons, and she again appears to keep herself as busily engaged as ever with the children, sewing and reading.

The end of the summer General Burgoyne gave General Riedesel permission to have his wife and children with him and they accordingly spent a few weeks very pleasantly at Red House, General Burgoyne's headquarters, the site in earlier days of a fort and in a part of the country now in New York state.

Then hostilities began in earnest, and the American Army, which at the end of June counted but four or five thousand strong, had now by the beginning of July, increased to between fourteen and twenty thousand men. To the Germans the mode of war in which they were engaged was entirely new and temptations to desert were in themselves very great.

The spirited and honourable character of General Riedesel, however, was just the one to cope with such trials and they were soon settled. The Baroness and the little girls were at last with the General on the very scene of action, along the banks of the Hudson river, with the British, and meeting with skirmishes or small engagements, of all of which, and of such councils of war as were

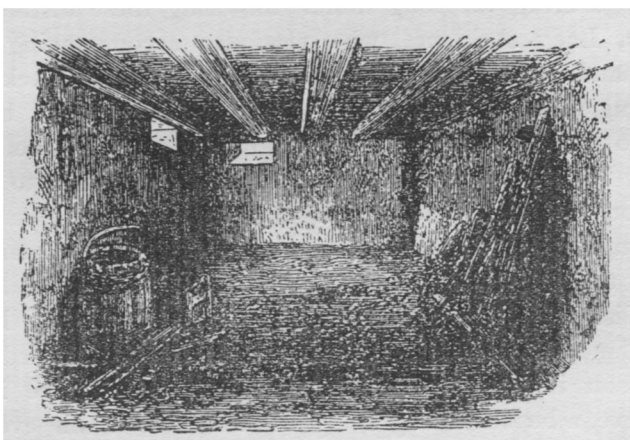
held among the British generals, and of the propositions and arrangements suggested and planned by them, Baroness Riedesel has written faithfully and clearly in her letters, which are invaluable indeed as history, to us, to-day.

Besides all this Frederika von Riedesel with her ready energy was ever relieving and comforting the sick, the wounded and the dying.

Going with the army in her caleche in which were safely tucked away her children and servants, she never fails to note the place and people she met, and of the Americans she says, "though it cost us dearly, every one of them was a soldier by nature, and the thought of fighting for their Fatherland and their freedom inspired them with still greater courage." On the seventh of October the fighting seems to have been more serious than ever, and after the death of General Frazer, and with her own husband constantly in mortal danger, even this brave woman cannot but write on hearing the terrible cannonading, "I was more dead than alive," and no wonder, for she, in her kindness and thoughtfulness for others, particularly her adored husband, was often exposed to the utmost risks herself. During the long march following these distressing days, Lady Ackland, who was also accompanying her husband, was advised by Baroness Riedesel, Ackland having fallen into the hands of the Americans and being ill, to return to him, that she might make herself useful to him in his present situation. After yielding to the Baroness's solicitations and having sent a messenger, through his adjutant, begging General Burgoyne's permission to leave the camp, his consent was obtained. The English chaplain Mr. Brudenel accompanied Lady Ackland, bearing a flag of truce together they crossed the Hudson in a small boat to the enemy. "There is, I believe, a beautiful engraving in existence, of this event," Baroness Riedesel writes, but better than this print, is the gallant answer which General Gates returned by chaplain



**PRESENT (1867) APPEARANCE OF THE HOUSE, IN THE CELLAR OF WHICH
BARONESS RIEDESEL STAYED DURING THE CANNONADE.**



THE CELLAR.

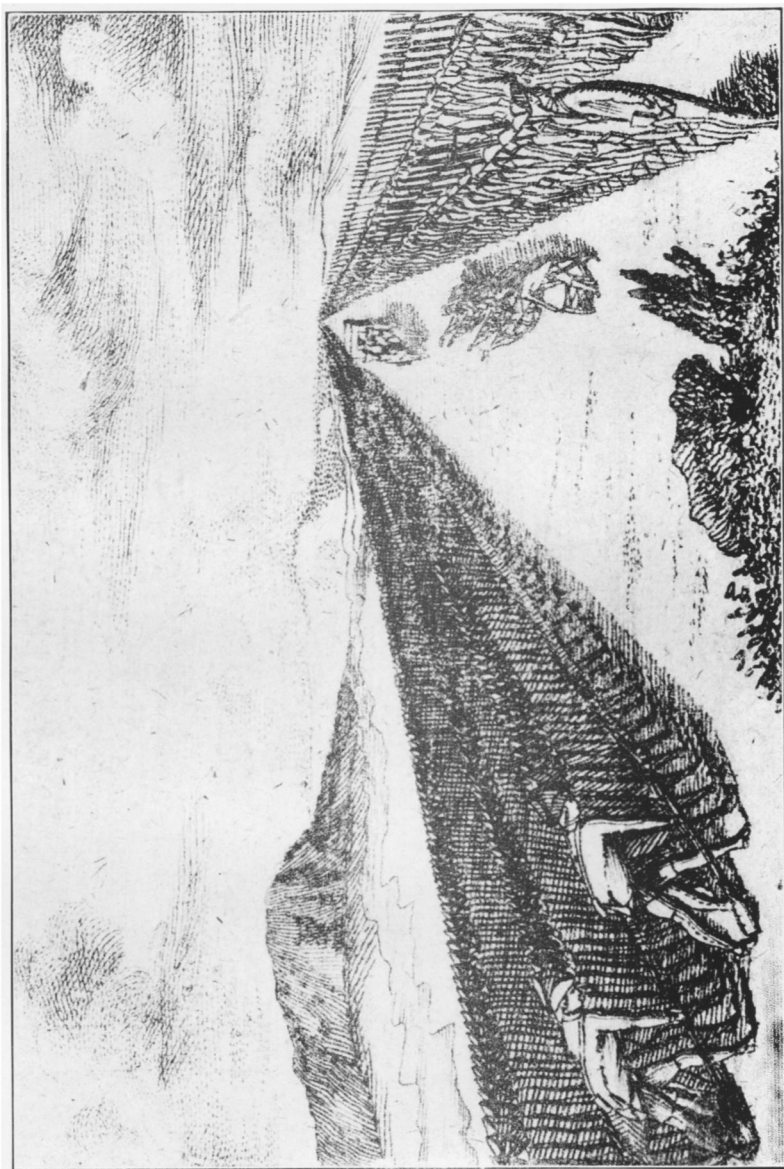
Brudenel, to the letter General Burgoyne had sent this American general by Lady Ackland, recommending her to his protection.

Upon seeing Lady Ackland safely dispatched, Baroness Riedesel and her family moved on with the army in its painful march, through wind and weather, the savages, as she calls the Indians, who were fighting with their army, having lost all courage and gone in every direction to their homes; and on the 9th of October toward evening they came at last to Saratoga. Wet to the skin, and with not a place in which to change her clothing, she undressed her children and before a good fire they laid themselves down together on some straw. General Phillips, who is described by his contemporaries as an honourable, just and upright man, is said to have wished this courageous woman might have been their commanding general, rather than the unpopular (even among many of the English) Burgoyne, who in order to cover his retreat, caused the beautiful houses and mills belonging to General Schuyler to be burned.

Great misery and disorder prevailed in the army, and in a house in which this accomplished and dignified woman sought shelter for herself and her children, she aided and assisted in the most sensible and direct way those poor, frightened, ill and wounded creatures, acting the part of an Angel-of-comfort among the sufferers, and ready to perform every friendly service, even such from which the tender mind of a woman might recoil. Those poor distracted ones obeying her more readily than their superior officers.

The exposed position in which the British were placed was not to last much longer, and on the 17th of October they capitulated. The generals waited upon the American General-in-chief, Gates, and the troops laid down their arms and surrendered themselves prisoners of war. The Baroness was sent for by her husband to come to him with their children; she therefore obeyed and in the passage through the American camp, observed with great satisfaction, that no one cast scornful glances at them. On the contrary,

they all greeted her, even showing compassion on their countenances at seeing a mother with her little children in such a position. She rather feared coming into the enemy's camp, the situation being something entirely new to her, however when approaching the tents, a noble looking man came toward her, and taking the children out of the caleche, embraced and kissed them, and then with tears in his eyes helped her to alight. "You tremble," said he to the Baroness, "fear nothing." Upon which she replied, "no, for you are so kind, and have been so tender toward my children, that it has inspired me with courage." He then led them to the tent of General Gates, with whom they found generals Burgoyne and Phillips. "You may dismiss all your apprehensions, for your sufferings are at an end," said General Burgoyne to her, to which she answered, "I should be acting very wrongly to have any more anxiety, when our chief has none." After even more kindness from the same gentleman who had first met her, she learned that he was the American general Schuyler, who, when they had finished dining, invited them to take up their residence at his house in Albany. They accepted, and immediately set out on their journey of some two days to reach that place. When they arrived in Albany, where they had so often longed to be, but came not as they had supposed they should, as victors, they were received in the most friendly fashion by the good General Schuyler and his wife and daughters, who showed them the most marked courtesy, as well as General Burgoyne, although he had caused without any necessity their magnificent house to be burned. "But," she writes, "they treated us as people who knew how to forget their losses in the misfortune of others." Even General Burgoyne was deeply moved at their magnanimity, and said to General Schuyler, "is it to me, who have done you so much injury, that you show so much kindness!" After some days with the Schuylers they set out for Boston, both families seemingly very reluctant to part from the other. At last they arrived, with their American guard at Boston,



THE SURRENDER OF BURGOYNE'S ARMY

(See Foot Note)

from which town, after some three weeks stay, they were removed to Cambridge, and were lodged, writes the Baroness, in one of the most beautiful houses of the place. "Never," she writes, "had I chanced upon such an agreeable situation." Here Baroness Riedesel and those of the captives who were with them, entertained and were entertained, and though they found themselves surrounded by many most violent patriots, on the whole they received kindness from the Americans and the prisoners sought by every means to show their gratitude.

As winter approached they were sent to Virginia. It was in November of the year 1778 that the Baroness with her children, her husband, and the army, again made a long weary journey, going from Cambridge to Virginia over almost impassable roads, and through storm and tempest, and though they met with kindness from the American officers, the jeers and rudeness of over zealous patriots were disgraceful.

Breaking the journey at Hartford, in the Province of Connecticut, they there met La Fayette, whom they seem to have found very agreeable indeed, and at Fishkill where they crossed the Hudson, Washington and his staff arrived. The great man seems to have impressed them well, and a Brunswick officer speaking of the General on this occasion, naively said: "that it is a pity a man of his character and talents is a rebel to his king."

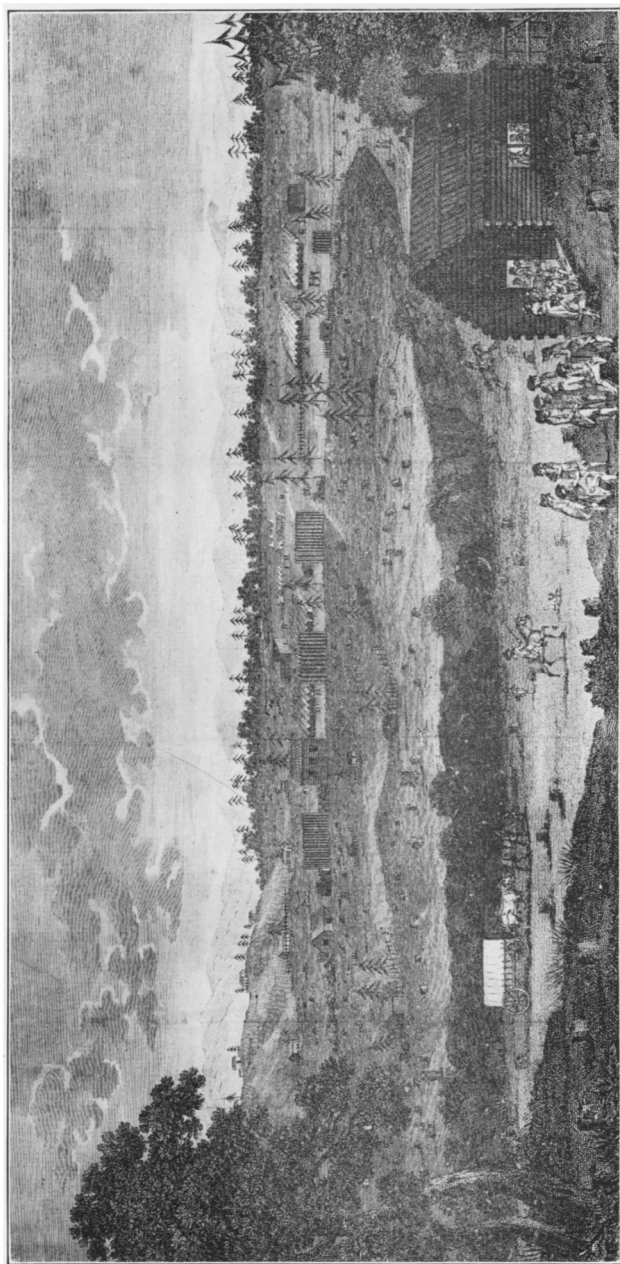
In February of the new year 1779 their destination was reached, after travelling some twelve weeks and making a journey of 678 English miles. At Colle near Charlottesville in Virginia, these captives of war were now settled for a time and there General Riedesel had built for his family a large house, at a cost of a hundred guineas. "It was exceedingly pretty," wrote the Baroness, however they never lived in it, as the heat in summer bothered them a good deal and General Riedesel having had a sun stroke, they repaired for a short time to Frederick-spring for the use of the baths there, and while here met General Washington's

family and a Madame "Garel",¹ who though an ardent patriot was a reasonable and most lovable woman. She and Baroness Riedesel became great friends, spending their afternoons together, when Captain Geismar would play the violin and the Baroness sang Italian airs, which gave all great pleasure. One day while thus engaged, a countryman, from whom they had endeavored by many kind words to obtain fresh butter, came in upon them. As the Americans generally are fond of music, he listened attentively, and when the Baroness had finished, asked her to sing once more. She asked him sportively what he would give her for it? saying she did nothing gratis. "Two pounds of butter," he at once answered. The idea pleased her so well, that she began to sing. "Play another one," said he, as soon as she had finished that, "but something lively." At length she sang so much, that the next morning he brought her four or five pounds of the coveted butter. He also had his wife with him. Thus she succeeded in winning their affection and from this time forth lacked for nothing. The best of the joke was, that the good soul actually believed the Baroness wished to be paid for singing, and wondered much when she paid them for the butter which they supposed they had already sold.

The Baroness describes the dancing of the negroes, as she saw it in the south, and the Virginia reel of the gentry; describes also the landed proprietors and their slaves as they existed at that time, and enjoys the beauty of the country, though wild and rugged, as it then was.

During their sojourn at these baths, General Riedesel received news that he and General Phillips with their adjutants were to go to New York in order to be exchanged. Madame Garel then invited them to visit her at her country seat, in the Province of Maryland, on their way north. The picture of charming hospitality they there

¹ Garel—as Baroness Riedesel writes, in reality Carroll. The lady having been a Mrs. Carroll of the well known and distinguished Carrolls of Carrollton in Maryland.



CAMP OF THE CONVENTION ARMY, NEAR CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA.

found awaiting them is given with the truest appreciation by the Baroness.

"I had advised Madame Garel of my arrival," she writes, "and she sent a man on horseback to meet me. After I had passed through a very pretty hamlet, inhabited by pure negroes—each of whom had his garden, and understood some handicraft—we drove through a large court-yard, to a very beautiful house, where the whole family received us with a joyful welcome. The family consisted of an old father-in-law, eighty-four years of age, of a sprightly humour and the most extreme neatness, upon whose venerable countenance, appeared happy contentment; four perfectly lovely grandchildren; and their kind, beloved mother, our amiable hostess. We were served upon silver, and entertained, not, it is true, with much display, but with taste. Nothing was wanting for comfort. She said to me that, as she hoped I would remain with her a long time, she had received me as if I belonged to the family.

"The garden was magnificent; and on the following day, she drove us out to show us the vineyard, which was splendid, and displayed great taste, in fact exceeding my expectations. First we went through a great fruit garden. Then we ascended the vineyard by a winding path, which led to the top of the hill. Between every two vines, a poplar-rose and an amaranth grew. The effect of this arrangement was to give a magnificent appearance to every part of the vineyard, to one looking down from the top, such a one, indeed, that for beauty, I have not found its equal in any part of America which I have seen. The husband of Madame Garel had traveled abroad, and gathered these ideas of the laying out of grounds in England and in France. In other respects he was not very lovable, but rather brusque and niggardly, and not at all suited to his wife, who, although she never showed it by outward signs, nevertheless did not appear to be happy. Her father-in-law she loved very much.

"Not far from this estate was a town, called Baltimore,

which they told me was very pretty, and inhabited by many amiable families. We received a visit from an intimate friend of our hostess. Both these women reminded me of Rousseau's Heloise and her friend, and the old father of the husband of Heloise. Madame was as full of tender feeling as she, and would, I believe, have gladly had a St. Preux for a husband. We arranged for her a temple adorned with flowers. The lovely agreeable Madame Garel is now dead; and her family, but especially her children, have met with a great loss. We remained here eight or ten days, and our parting was very sad. They supplied us with provisions of the best quality, enough to last for a long time. We however, did not need them, as the royalist, through friendly feeling, and the others through custom, welcomed us kindly and furnished us with everything needful for sustenance. In this country it would be held a crime to refuse hospitality to a traveler."

From Maryland into Pennsylvania, where they stopped at Yorktown and Bethlehem, in that beautiful country settled by the Moravians, and on to Elizabethtown, in the Province of New Jersey and so near to New York they journeyed, counting on the happiness, now almost at hand, awaiting them there, but only to be disappointed, for at Elizabethtown they received a letter with an order to return south again, as the Congress had refused to ratify the exchange. Shattered as the Baroness's hopes now were, she did not allow her courage to fail her, and took this news as collectedly as the bravest, although she was ill and suffering, expecting soon to give birth to a child. They returned to Bethlehem, where after a residence of six weeks, they received permission to go to New York again. They passed through Elizabethtown for the second time, where they were most kindly received, and there embarked on the Hudson river and reached New York late in the evening. Here, by the greatest kindness and delicacy, they were installed in the very elegant town house of General Tryon, who had bidden his servants not to tell the

Baroness where she had been taken, for fear she would not accept of this gift. (This house subsequently and until late years was the site of the Bank of New York.) This noble-minded man, however, in order to avoid their thanks, crossed over to Long Island where he had a provisional command.

All her wishes were anticipated, and her one fear was lest she (when the truth reached her,) should abuse so much hospitality and kindness. Everything at that time was at the highest price. Many articles of food could not be obtained at all, and others were so dear as to exhaust the means of the wealthiest, who hitherto had kept up their six courses, their side services, and a great deal of fish, flesh and fowl, as was then in fashion. While here the small-pox raged violently, and having been offered a house, an hour's ride out of the town, by General Clinton, they removed there, and had the children inoculated with the small-pox—"an operation," writes Baroness Riedesel, "which would have been dangerous to have performed in the city."

On their return to New York she found the dwelling, which had been built for them, at the expense of the British nation, finished and fitted throughout with mahogany furniture. The expense this would occasion frightened her, as she had already received the greatest possible kindness and courtesy from the English. They, in fact, overwhelmed them with distinguished marks of sincere friendship, for which they were in a great measure, to thank General Phillips, who in New York was very much beloved, and was so strong a friend to them, that it was declared that whatever was done for the Riedesels, would flatter him more than if done for himself.

As the birthday of the Queen of England approached, they wished to celebrate the day with a great fete; and it was the general wish, partly to please General Phillips and partly to make the Baroness forget her own sufferings, to confer on her the distinguished honour of being queen of

the ball. At length the great day arrived, and the Baroness, representing the queen, had the pleasure of having the whole company assembled introduced to her. At six in the afternoon she was obliged to drive in a carriage seated opposite two generals, to the ball, where they were received with kettle-drums and trumpets, and at supper to sit under a canopy, and drink the first toast. So much touched was the Baroness by all the marks of friendship she received that although extremely tired, in order to show her gratitude she remained as long as possible, even till two in the morning.

Not only on this occasion, but during her whole sojourn in New York, the Riedesels were loaded with so much kindness, that they passed the winter very pleasantly, with the exception of suffering intensely with the cold. In vain did Sir Henry Clinton issue proclamations to the farmers of Long Island to send in their wood. The demand for fuel could not be supplied, and the Baroness Riedesel, the caressed of all the army, suffered severely in that inclement winter.

Orders were given to cut down some of the trees in the great avenue in front of the city. This was probably the present Wall street, but all the principal highways were adorned at this period with luxuriant shade trees. A traveler at this time visiting New York describes the chief streets as being all planted with magnificent trees, which in summer gave them a fine appearance, and during the excessive heat afforded a cooling shade. Therefore, as can be imagined, many protested at such proceedings as felling these town trees, and chief among them to object was the Baroness Riedesel, who in spite of such dire need as she felt for the wood, objected much to such considerable damage as the cutting down of them would entail.

About this time, an old acquaintance, who had known the Baroness in her girlhood, the Hessian General Loos, came to New York. Upon meeting her again he exclaimed, "Why! what has become of your slender waist,

your beautiful complexion and your fair white hands? They are gone, but in their stead you have seen many lands; and when you return home you will be called upon by this one and that one of your acquaintance to relate your adventures, and perhaps, the very next instant, those very ladies who first asked you, will out of envy, declare your narrative wearisome, and while playing with their fans, will say, 'The woman can talk of nothing but America.''' As the Baroness knew it was his custom to speak the plain truth, with her charming amiability, she thanked him for his warning, promising to guard herself against the weakness of constantly talking of this journey, into which fault she felt she easily might fall. On her side, however, she counseled him, that when with other women, he should also guard himself against speaking of the perishability of their charms, as he might find many who would not take it as good naturedly as she had.

The seventh day of March 1780 a daughter was born to the Riedesels who, it had already been arranged were the child a boy, should be christened Americus, but being a girl, they immediately called America.

The rest of the winter seems to have been passed agreeably in spite of no little anxiety on the part of the Baroness for fear the children or her husband should contract the small-pox, as the latter was far from being in robust health after all the exposures that the war and the climate had subjected him to.

General Sir Henry Clinton invited them to spend the summer at his country seat, a delightful residence, having a most beautiful situation, orchard and meadows and the Hudson river running directly in front of the house. Everything was placed at their disposal, including fruits of the most delicious flavor, more indeed than they could eat so that their servants also feasted on peaches even to satiety, and their horses, which roamed through the orchards, eagerly ate fruits off the trees, disdaining that on the ground, which they had gathered to give to the pigs to

fatten them. Peaches, apricots and other fruits were raised here without espaliers and had trunks as thick as those of ordinary trees.

"Not far from us," writes the Baroness, "were the Hell-gates, which are dangerous breakers for the ships to pass through up the river. We often saw ships in danger, but only one was wrecked and went to pieces during our stay at this place."

General Clinton came often to visit them, sometimes accompanied by only one aid-de-camp. On one of these occasions, he had with him the unfortunate—as he afterwards became—Major André, who the day after, set out upon the fatal expedition, in which he was captured as a spy. "It was very sad," wrote the Baroness, "that this pre-eminently excellent young man should have fallen a victim to his zeal and his kind heart, which led him to undertake such a precarious errand instead of leaving it to older and known officers to whom properly the duty belonged, but whom on that very account (as they would be more exposed to danger), he wished to save."

They remained the entire summer of 1780, upon this lovely estate. Two Miss Robinsons came to share their loneliness, and enliven their company, but a fortnight previous to the Riedesels return to the city, news of the arrival of a ship from England bringing over the latest fashions, took these ladies back again to town. On the Baroness's return to the city she scarcely recognized them in their odd and actually laughable garb, which a very pretty woman, just over from England, had imposed upon them and other New York ladies. The taste for fashionable frivolity and display seems to have been totally unaffected by the privations of the gloomy winter which followed.

In the autumn of 1780 General Riedesel and General Phillips were finally exchanged; and by the spring of 1781, General Riedesel having been given a command on Long Island, we find them settled there in a house where again they were fortunate in having a magnificent prospect,



Friedrich

though in danger of constantly attempted surprises by the Americans in order to take prisoners. Every evening they could see from their windows the city of New York lighted up and its reflection in the water. They could also hear the beating of the drums, and if everything was particularly still, even the calls of the sentinels. Another day a fleet of thirty ships approached under full sail, and anchored between them and the city.

Among the troops under General Riedesel's command at this place were the English light dragoons who evidently loved their commander and his wife exceedingly, and on one occasion when the English officers had been dining with them, her husband said that he would accompany them back to their camp, whereupon they very politely begged the Baroness to go with the party. She accepted, seated herself in a carriage, and reached the camp in advance of them. Much to her surprise she was greeted with military honours, even to the beating of drums which quite confused her, so that she remarked to an officer that this was not suitable to her, and that German women were not accustomed to such distinctions. But he at once answered that their whole corps could not sufficiently honor the wife of a general who, as their commanding officer, had treated them with so much kindness; and more than all this, they would never forget what she had done for their comrades at Saratoga.

The time of their departure was very uncertain, and as the health of General Riedesel did not improve, and moreover his presence was necessary to that portion of his corps which had remained behind in Canada, General Clinton was finally induced to send him thither, although he loved him so much that he parted from him with regret. This friendship continued between them—although separated—until death; and the Riedesel family continued for more than one generation to keep up a friendly intercourse with succeeding generations of Clintons.

About this time they also parted from General Phillips,

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who was sent on an expedition to Carolina. The parting on both sides was painful, and as this excellent man died there, they never beheld him again.

Their departure was at last determined for the month of July; accordingly they set sail and after a most distressing voyage, with illness, fogs and all kinds of mishaps reached Quebec.

Arriving in the middle of September in Canada and making friends at once with the generally difficult English Lieutenant General Haldimand, who with great friendliness deplores that no fit dwelling was ready for them at Sorel upon their arrival, but points out to the Baroness that this post is of such considerable importance, that he knew of no one so capable of filling it as her husband. Such appreciation of her spouse easily won Baroness Riedesel and we soon find her delighting in a house built for them, which was in readiness for their reception on Christmas-eve, and there they celebrated that blessed holiday and ate an English Christmas pie.

"Upon the walls pretty paper hangings were pasted," writes the Baroness, "and we really had quite a spruce residence. We had a large dining-room, and near by, a pretty room for my husband, close to which was our sleeping apartment: then came a little nursery, to which was attached a small closet also prettily fitted up especially for our eldest daughter; and last of all a large and beautiful parlor, which we used as a sitting room. The entry resembled more a fine apartment. Along its sides were benches, and in it stood a great stove, from which strong pipes extended to the ceiling and heated the whole house."

Thus they lived most comfortably and never seem to have suffered from the cold, or the severity of the Canadian winters. What they missed in society by being at Sorel, they made up for by visits of five and six weeks at a time at Quebec, and soon we find the intrepid Baroness embarked upon a journey to Montreal, going by sledge along the frozen St. Lawrence to spend a week there.

As the season for planting came round her husband converted the large patch of ground round their house at Sorel into a productive garden, in which he planted twelve hundred fruit trees and a few vegetables, and made this garden not only ornamental, but useful. Everything grew splendidly; and in the evening they amused themselves picking cucumbers, which the Baroness pickled, German fashion, and made presents of to her Canadian friends. In fact, they lived upon a magnificent farm, keeping cows, a large number of fowls, and Virginia pigs, funny little, black, short-legged things. The Baroness made her own butter, and felt truly this was the promised land. They made the acquaintance of the cranberry at this time, which the Indians called *ottocas*, and which to-day are sold in the markets at Montreal by this name. The soldiers also had their gardens attached to their barracks, her husband giving them seeds. There was considerable rivalry among these fellows as to which could prepare the best meal. They divided regularly with one another all their work, as some worked in the garden; some did the cooking; some kept the barracks clean; others again went out into the forest and cut wood, and each company went fishing in turn, and all were so considerate as to send some of the fish which they caught to the Baroness. In this way they had fish two and three times a week. Notwithstanding all this, all looked wistfully toward their native land.

While in Canada there was another daughter born to the Riedesels, whom they called Canada, but who they were destined to lose, and the beloved little one was buried in Sorel. In order to dissipate their sorrow, General Haldimand, in the summer of 1783, begged his friends to visit him in Quebec. They had, however, when the invitation came, just heard of the death of General Riedesel's father, and this, very naturally, made them long more than ever to return to Europe. The Baroness also wished very much to see her own dear mother, brothers and sisters once more. Had it not been for this homesickness, they would have been

perfectly contented in Canada; for the climate agreed well with them all, and they were beloved by, and on a very pleasant footing with the people. News had been received that as the preliminaries of peace had already been signed, their troops would, perhaps, be sent back to Europe that year. General Haldimand also, very much wished to return to England, and had gone so far as to solicit his recall. They often formed plans to make the return voyage together. One day when at his house, walking together in the garden, a number of vessels arrived in the harbour, and among others, a very beautiful ship anchored at the foot of the mountain. General Haldimand said, "Those are certainly the vessels that are to take your troops back to Europe. Perhaps we *shall* make the journey together."

Two days afterwards, he called upon the Baroness, and with tears in his eyes told her they must separate. "You are to go, but I must remain. I shall miss you very much. I have found in your entire family friends such as are seldom met with. I had hoped we should have returned together but the King has ordered it otherwise and I must obey him. Meanwhile I have myself examined the ship that was chosen for you, and finding it unsafe and not as good as I wish for you, I have assumed the responsibility of hiring and having it put in proper order, for the occupation of yourself and your family, the one we admired from my garden. Now go and look at it, and order it fitted up for your comfort exactly as you wish. Your husband is about to go to Sorel, and it would be well for you to accompany him thither to make all necessary arrangements for your voyage, but you must return here soon and give me your company for the little time that will remain to you before your departure." He then left her deeply moved. She started immediately for Sorel, and upon finishing the necessary packing returned to Quebec, prepared to set sail as soon as their ship was ready for them.

On their departure, General Riedesel sent to the good General Haldimand his favorite mare, with her beautiful

foal; and in return he sent the Baroness a magnificent muff and tippet of sable, to remind them of the land where they had so long resided.

Two days before their departure, the English officers paid them the attention—in a comedy which they gave twice a week,—of giving at the end of the performance, a truly touching song, expressive of their regret at the departure of their troops; and closing with thanking General Riedesel for his kind treatment of each one of them, and with wishing them a prosperous journey.

After her husband had seen to the embarkation of the troops, they took dinner and tea with General Haldimand; after which he escorted them to the ship, where they took a right hearty but sad farewell of him, and several others who had showed them friendliness.

It was the middle of August when they set out on their return journey home, and they arrived at Portsmouth about the middle of the following September. "Our hearts were very light as we stepped upon the land," wrote the Baroness to her mother, "and I thanked God for the happy reunion of us all, and especially for having preserved my husband to me." They almost immediately set out for London where they were presented to their majesties, who received them with extraordinary graciousness. They, surrounded by the princesses, their daughters, all seated before the chimney-fire, the queen, the princesses and Baroness Riedesel forming a half circle, her husband, with the King, standing in the centre close to the fire while tea and cakes were passed round. His Majesty said to the Baroness that he had followed her everywhere and often inquired after her and always heard with delight that she was well, contented and beloved by everyone. About nine o'clock in the evening the Prince of Wales came in. His young sisters flocked round him and he embraced them and danced them about. In short the royal family had such a peculiar gift for removing all restraint that one could readily imagine himself to be in a cheerful circle of his own station in life.

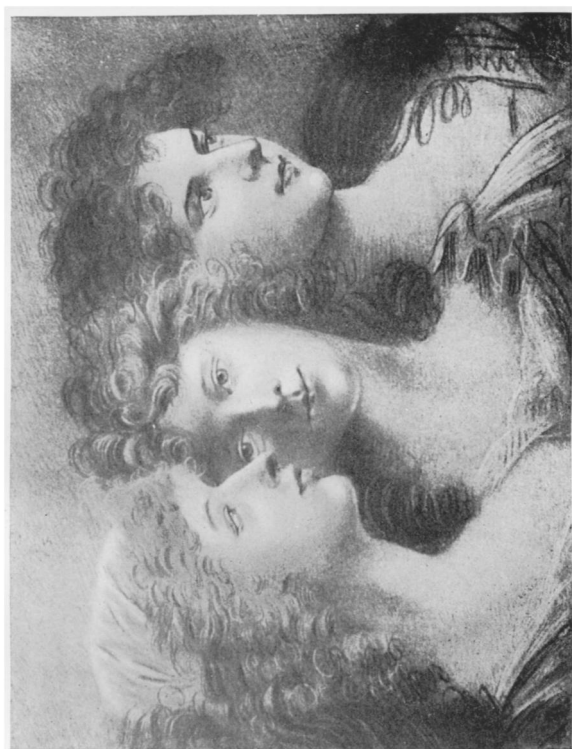
During her short sojourn in London at this time the Baroness had the pleasure of meeting Lord North and Mr. Fox; she also made some trips to the surrounding country and to become better acquainted with London and its vicinity went to see the most note-worthy objects of interest.

The news that the fleet that was to take them to Germany was in sailing trim, hurried them away and having made a great journey (for those days), they were soon safely landed once again in Germany. They remained a day in Stade where they had landed, and from there the Baroness, directed by her beloved husband as ever, went on to Wolfenbittel.

Here she found the family mansion in the same order as she had left it on her departure for America. Good friends had come expressly to do this for their reception and also prepared a capital supper; after refreshing themselves with it, Baroness Riedesel retired to rest with a feeling of hearty and sincere thanks to God for having preserved her through so many and manifold dangers, but especially for His having so graciously watched over all her family, and, she writes, "for the precious gift of my little daughter America."

About a week afterward she had the great satisfaction of seeing her husband with his own troops, pass through the city. "But it is beyond my power to describe my emotions, at beholding my beloved, upright husband, who, the whole time had lived solely for his duty, and who had constantly been so unwearied in helping and assisting, as far as possible those who had been entrusted to him—standing, with tears of joy in his eyes, in the midst of his soldiers, who in turn were surrounded by a joyous and sorrowful crowd of fathers, mothers, wives, children, sisters and friends—all pressing round him to see again their loved ones."

The following day they went to Brunswick, where they dined at court and met again, after this long separation many friends. "Welches eine grosse Freude, aber



THE DAUGHTERS OF BARONESS RIEFSEL
AMERICA, AFTERWARDS COUNTESS BERNSDORF
FREDERIK, AFTERWARDS COUNTESS REGEN
AUGUSTA, AFTERWARDS PRINCESS REUSS

zugleich eine Gemüthsbewegung in mir erregte, die mich bis ins Innerste erschütterte.”¹

Again in Germany, in the adored Fatherland, and better still, once more in her own home, Baroness Riedesel enjoyed a respite from the alarms of war for four happy years, when her husband was advanced to the rank of Lieutenant General, and was sent to Holland to support the cause of the Stadtholder; after which he returned to Lauterbach, the ancestral castle and “Landgut” of the Riedesels in Hesse.

In 1794 he was appointed commandant of the city of Brunswick, and died there in 1800. Baroness Riedesel survived her husband eight years, and after a most happy life, idolized by all her family, and especially her nine children and a host of friends, she died at Berlin, on the 29th of March, 1808, at the age of sixty-two. She rests by the side of her beloved consort in the family vault at Lauterbach. Her only son, George, died in 1854, at Buchwald in Silesia, the home of her gifted and distinguished daughter, Frederika, who had accompanied her mother in all her wanderings in America, and who as Countess Reden was one of the most celebrated women of her day, on warm terms of friendship with the prominent men of the time; and after her death the king of Prussia, Frederick William, caused a beautiful monument to be erected to her memory. Baroness Riedesel's son left but one daughter, with whom this branch of the Riedesel family died out. America became the Countess Bernsdorf, and was, like all her wonderful mother's daughters, a delightful woman.

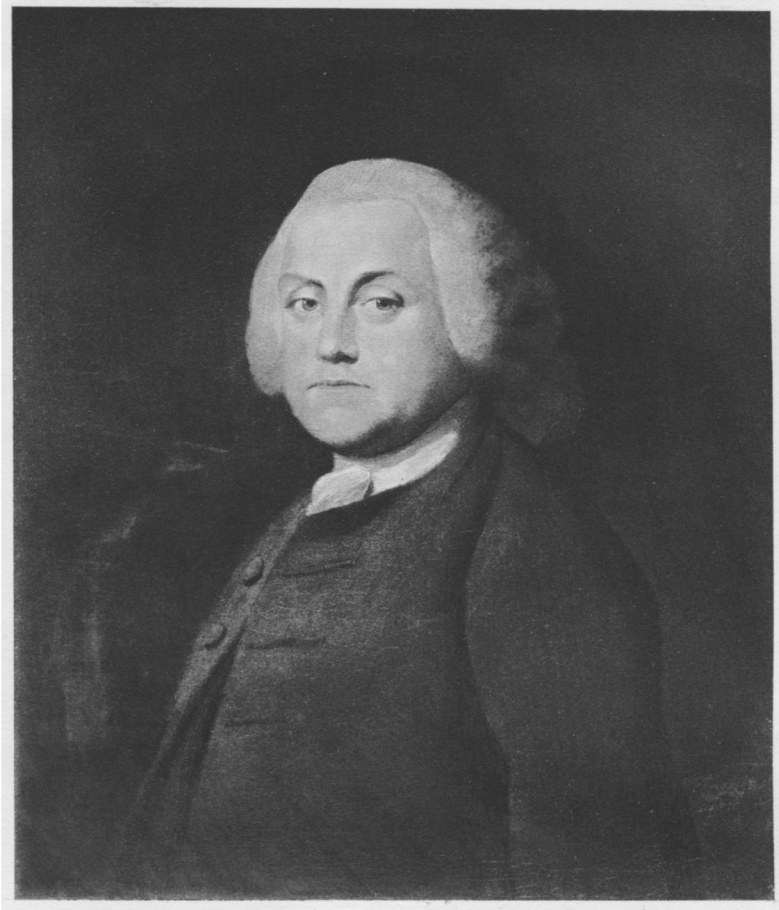
With Montaigne, “As for the tales I borrow, I charge them upon the conscience of those from whom I have them.”

Whatever may have been General Burgoyne's reputation or Baroness Riedesel's opinion of him, we know that this country and the public in general considered him an

¹ This was great joy; but excited in me, at the same time, emotions which moved my innermost soul.

accomplished gentleman, and a gallant officer. And of a war, which it is easy to suppose, would necessarily bear the stamp of the strongest animosities, the most incensed passions, and a depth of feeling peculiar to civil dissensions, it is a proud thing, indeed, to read that not only humanity, but urbanity, kindness, and genuine sympathy, were shown to the captives, and to have it in documentary evidence as agreeable as that with which the Baroness Riedesel in her experience presents it.

Des Neueröfenten Bilder Saal vol. xvii, published in Nürnberg, Germany in 1782, contains an article on the "English-American war", covering the period from 1776 to 1780. The following is a translation of the account of the capitulation of Burgoyne's army to Gates, and a reproduction of the quaint etching which illustrates the text. "Upon the day after the terms of capitulation had been agreed upon, and the documents signed and exchanged, the whole army, at the appointed hour marched out from camp with bands playing and colors flying, to the plain designated for the surrender. At the same time the whole American army was ordered out by Genl. Gates and drawn up opposite their late foes, and the order given for them to 'about face' and remain in that position until the surrender was completed. Even the twenty-four companies of Grenadiers, who were paraded at the same time and place, had to obey the same order and lower their colors, so that the Royal troops might not have any witnesses to this scene of their humiliation. Even General Gates did not wish to be a witness to this sad scene, and closed the curtain of his carriage until all was over; which extraordinary action and noble consideration, gained for him the esteem and admiration of the whole English army."



Benjamin Franklin

*From the original portrait painted from life
by Benjamin Wilson in 1759 and taken from
Franklin's house in Philadelphia, July 1778 by
Major André and restored to the Nation April 1906,
by Earl Grey Governor General of Canada*