

Flohr, Georg, Grégoire Binois, Thomas Tricot, Edern Hirstein, and Daniel Fischer. *Account of the Land and Sea Expedition in America of the Acclaimed Deux- Ponts Regiment from 1780 to 1784 Annotated Edition*. Edited by Isabelle Laboulais. Translated by Albert Schreiber. Strasbourg, France: Andre Malrauz Multimedia Library, 1787.

The journal “Account of the Land and Sea Expedition in America of the Acclaimed Deux-Ponts Regiment from 1780 to 1784” by Georg Flohr is a fantastic window into the experience of the Royal Deux Pont Regiment doing their time in America during the American Revolution. Contained within Flohr’s account of the war are stories full of detail and humanity. Events such as a meeting with a native delegation that contained a German or his account of the storming of redoubt number 9 at Yorktown. No story is more personal compelling than the one used for this analysis, the story of families reuniting and fathers reunited with sons. As the German peasant Gergor Flohr marched through the American capital with the Royal Deux-ponts, a set of Germans in French service, met kin thousands of miles away from their homeland of Germany. To understand the story a set of questions still need to be asked: why did he write the story , is it true, who is Flohr, and what other research can be done to understand this story.

The entry in Flohr’s journal tells a story of the German experience. While marching through the city of Philadelphia on parade members of the Deux-ponts saw relatives that they recognized. After they established camp, possibly hundreds of people came to meet them in an assembly that was similar to a festival. During this festival the soldiers met family members they had not seen for years and some even met long lost fathers. The fact that families reunited during a military campaign touches on a few aspects of Philadelphia and German at the time. The city of Philadelphia seemed to have a large population of Germans from Palatine-Zweibrucken or in the surrounding area. This locality is due to the Deux-Pont regiment being from that area of German.

Also this source shows how that area of Germans was, this being one where fathers had to make the choice to leave their families and for many families to leave and come to a new land.

The man who wrote the journal's background also needs to be known. Georg Flohr who was a private soldier as a chasseur or light infantry in the Royal Deux-ponts regiment during the American Revolution.¹ During his foyay in American while enlisted in the French expeditionary forces in America he chose to record what he saw and what he did. According to the journal itself, it states that it was written in "Strasbourg on the 5th of June in the year 1787" nearly six years after the events accounted, but still is very specific down to the details of numbers of men and miles marched. During the foreword to the journal, he says "the present description of America as I have scrupulously noted day after day during the war opposing England and American colonies"² telling in his own words how it was written. As for why it was written and annotated version of the text suggests why it was written "hypothesizing that Flohr was asked to write his manuscript by a "superior."³ So his accounts where most likely read recorded in a set of notes and a diary or journal then later he may have been asked to use his notes to write a whole account of experience in a memoir-style similar to officers at the time.⁴ Flohr's account does differ from the officer class of memoirs since he was the lowest rank of soldier in the French army being a private, so his account varies since it is from the average man's perspective.

¹ Georg Flohr et al., *Account of the Land and Sea Expedition in America of the Acclaimed Deux- Ponts Regiment from 1780 to 1784 Annotated Edition*, ed. Isabelle Laboulais, trans. Albert Schreiber (Strasbourg, France: Andre Malrauz Multimedia Library, 1787). 12

² Ibid, 52

³ Ibid, 52

⁴ Ibid, 13

There are still lingering questions with the source and some more steps to verification of the details within. Connection with other primary sources could tell if that the events took place. Fortunately for the account of Baron Ludwig von Closen in his journal he records that “The soldiers of the Royal Deux-Ponts regiment found many relatives in Philadelphia, who came to see them in camp.”⁵ This other primary source confirms that the story as Flohr tells it that this extraordinary story did happen. It is interesting to note that in the Closen account of this event it is a sentence in a large entry with more of the focus of the interest of the ladies of Philadelphia on Duc Du Lauzan and his hussars while in Flohr it is the entry. The source states that a “hird of the regiment found relatives, meaning over 300 men in the regiment found in Philadelphia that question is much more difficult to answer. ⁶That would involve searching the immigration information of the early 18th century to find out who exactly these people were. At the end of the day, the exact names of those involved does not matter. What does matter is that this story speaks about families reunited thousands of miles away from their homeland. A human story connecting the actions of one regiment marching through America had an effect on so many people's lives.

One can imagine being not seeing one's father for possible decades, then while marching through a city in America while in formation seeing in the crowd a long lost father and being reunited after years apart. This story details one of the human experiences by the Royal Duex-Pont regiment's experience in American and the effect on the people. Fortunately this story is true and did affect the lives of hundreds if not thousands of Germans in Philadelphia and

⁵ Baron Ludwig Von Closen, *Revolutionary Journal of Baron Ludwig Von Closen, 1780-1783*, trans. Evekyn M Acomb (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1958)..120

⁶ Flohr 125

the Royal Deux-Ponts. With other accounts of the story, it makes sure that the event did happen and how that can relate to a larger story on the Duex-ponts.

Bibliography

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“I hereby declare upon my word of honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this work.” Nathan Schultz

Account of the Land and Sea Expedition in America of the Acclaimed Deux-Ponts Regiment from 1780 to 1784.

Written in Strasbourg on the 5th of June in the year 1787 by Georg Flohr.

Entry September 3rd 1781

While we were approaching the city of Philadelphia, we met a crowd of German inhabitants of the town, compatriots, who wanted to see us, having heard that the Royal Deux-Ponts regiment was there. It is true that many compatriots were found in our ranks, and it can be said that a third of the regiment found a compatriot, among them many found a brother or sister who they had not seen for many years, having been separated during their youth, when one of them came to this new land here. In the same way more than one soldier found his father etc. These fathers, who had abandoned their children in Europe many years ago, had taken refuge in this country because they were Ruined.

We made our camp less than 15 minutes from the town. In less than half an hour we saw such a crowd that it was as if a large annual fair were being held in front of the camp, and there was the same number of people inside the tents, one being with his brother, the other with his sister, the third with some friends. The 4th was a rest day. The crowds were even bigger