

**Bixby Memorial Free Library
Special Collections**

Title: Bredenberg Papers	Accession #:
Dates: 1759-1969	Object ID #: 2013.036
Creator: Bredenberg, Oscar	Condition: Good
Provenance: Bredenberg, Oscar	Location: History Room
Language: English	Unit: Cart A; Case 6; Card catalog
Quantity: 4 boxes, 10 card file drawers	Shelf/Drawer: Shelf 1; Shelves 4-5

Description: Four boxes and 10 card file drawers of transcribed archival materials relating to Lake Champlain and its significance during the Revolutionary War and the surrounding time period.

Significance: This collection provides a considerable amount of documentary information about the Revolutionary War in and around Lake Champlain. Providing a comprehensive picture of military activities, the material highlights the strategic and commercial importance of Lake Champlain in the era. The documents were transcribed by Oscar Bredenberg from originals found in U.S. and Canadian archives. He then compiled much of the material by date, producing a useful and comprehensive chronological survey of battles and naval engagements in the Champlain Valley.

Historical note:

Oscar E. Bredenberg, a business manager and amateur historian, was born April 9, 1893, in Brooklyn, New York. He lived most of his life in Champlain, New York. A veteran of World War I, he married Blandine Sturtevant from Dixfield, Maine in 1919. They had two children, Robert and Elizabeth.

While still a teenager, Oscar started a ski manufacturing business at home with his brother, Henrick Bredenberg. As the business grew, making a brand of skis called Broadmount, Oscar left to take a job at the Sheridan Ironworks where his uncle Alfred Bredenberg was an engineer. Later becoming plant manager there, Oscar retired in 1958 after 49 Years with the company.

After retirement, he pursued his interest in the Revolutionary War, focusing on action around and on Lake Champlain in New York, Vermont, and Canada. During the summers of 1960-1961, he was part of a small group that excavated the sunken remains of the *Congress* in Arnold Bay, Vermont. His most important work was his research at archives in Canada and the United States, where he identified and transcribed all or portions of documents relevant to his subject. He also used published volumes of Revolutionary era documents to supplement his research. Compiling his transcriptions in chronological order, he created a documentary account of military activities in the Champlain Valley.

Bredenberg wrote articles based on his research. They appeared in publications of the Clinton County Historical Association and the Fort Ticonderoga Museum.

In the 1950s, he built a summer home at Block House Point, North Hero, Vermont. Historically, the site had a blockhouse that was used during negotiations between the representatives of the British government and the Republic of Vermont near the end of the Revolutionary War. Bredenberg designed the exterior of his house to look like the original blockhouse. The site also has an historical marker commemorating the British Government/Republic of Vermont meetings.

Oscar Bredenberg died February 19, 1970, and was buried in Champlain, New York.

Scope and Content:

The Oscar Bredenberg Papers highlight the strategic importance of Lake Champlain and the Champlain Valley during the Revolutionary War. The collection contains transcripts of complete and/or excerpts of documents relating to military activities on and around Lake Champlain in Vermont, New York, and Quebec. There are also a few original revolutionary era documents. The transcripts created by Bredenberg are mostly undated but are likely from the 1950s and 1960s when he did his research on the Revolutionary War. There are a handful of photocopies of original documents regarding the Odell Family. Some, but not all transcripts include references to where the original documents are located.

Using a variety of sources, Bredenberg was able to compile a complete picture of day-to-day action in the Champlain Valley during the war. His research included work in various collections at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., the George Washington papers, as well as historical maps at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., the Frederick Haldimand papers at the Library and Archives Canada, and collections of the Vermont Historical Society in Montpelier, Vt. In addition to these and other archives, Bredenberg used some published sources to compile his transcripts and notes regarding the Revolutionary War. Unfortunately, he was inconsistent and/or vague with citations. In many cases his sources are not identified or incomplete.

These papers are divided into 5 series: I. Naval action, Soldiers, and Spies, II. Day by Day Action, III. Significant Individuals and History of the Valley, IV. Publications, V. Index Cards. They are arranged largely in the same order as they were when given to the Bixby library. The papers have been removed from their original notebooks and placed in folders for preservation purposes.

Series I: Naval Action, Soldiers, and Spies

This series tells the story of the back-and-forth control of Lake Champlain. When the war began, the British occupied several forts along the lake, controlling the flow of ships and supplies. One of the first naval battles of the Revolutionary war, known as the Battle of Valcour, is documented in Bredenberg's carefully compiled transcripts, along with subsequent naval fights on the lake. Included is information about several ships, including British ships captured by colonial troops, the *Katherine*, which was renamed, *Liberty*, the *Betsy*, renamed Enterprise, and the *Royal Savage* among other vessels. It also contains transcripts of documents relating to Pliny Moore, a military officer and later founder Champlain, N.Y., as well as material on individual military pensioners, deserters, and loyalists.

Papers in this series were originally housed in Bredenberg's notebooks labelled A-U. They are available online [here](#).

Series II: Day by Day Action

This series contains a comprehensive account of day-by-day action in and around the Champlain Valley. It consists of Bredenberg's transcripts taken from documents such as letters and reports recording military and naval activities.

An index to this series is available in the index card series of the Bredenberg papers. Index entry references that begin with an X or XX refer to the material in this series.

Documents in this series were originally housed in Bredenberg's notebooks labelled 1-24. They are available in digital format [here](#).

Series III: Significant Individuals and History of the Valley

The material in this series focuses on individuals and local communities. Some of them supported the colonial cause while others were loyalists and acted as soldiers and/or spies for the British. There are

transcripts of documents relating to the *Liberty*, a naval vessel, as well as notes about the town of Skenesboro, now Whitehall, N.Y., and New York's Washington County. In addition this series contains photocopies and some tracings of historical maps of Lake Champlain.

Series IV: Publications

This series contains articles and short publications. Most pertain to topics of interest to Oscar Bredenberg including the Battle of Plattsburgh, N.Y. and the Civil War era raid at St. Albans, Vermont. Other publications give brief histories of the towns of Shaftsbury and Shelburne in Vermont, and Cumberland Head and Champlain in New York.

Series V: Index Cards

Bredenberg created a card index to personal names and places mentioned in the transcripts he made as well as in some published sources that he used in his research. Many of the index cards refer to a numbering system that he assigned to the transcripts. Using an X, XX, or Z preface, he numbered the pages by date. They correspond to the material arranged by date order in Boxes 1 and 2 of the collection. Other index card references use incomplete or obscure abbreviations.

Key Search Terms:

Bredenberg, Oscar
Champlain Valley—History
Canada—History—Revolution, 1775-1783
New York (State)—History--Revolution, 1775-1783
Vermont—History—Revolution, 1775-1783
United States—History—Revolution, 1775-1783
United States—History—Revolution, 1775-1783—Naval operations

Related Materials:

Bredenberg, Oscar, "The American Champlain Fleet, 1775-1777," Fort Ticonderoga, N.Y.: Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum, 1968.

Bredenberg, Oscar, "The Battle of Plattsburgh Bay" (Plattsburgh, NY: Clinton County Historical Association, 1978)

Bredenberg, Oscar, "A British View on the Battle of Valcour," North Country Notes, April 1963 issue (Clinton County Historical Association)

Bredenberg, Oscar, "Military Activities in the Champlain Valley after 1777," Champlain, N.Y.: Moorsfield Press. 1962

Leon Bushy Papers, Bixby Memorial Free Library, Vergennes, Vt. Contains some correspondence between Bushy and Bredenberg as well as notes and a narrative about the history of Monkton, Vermont by Oscar Bredenberg.

Oscar Bredenberg papers, digitized version of part of the collection available online, Bixby Memorial Free Library website, <https://bixbylibrary.org/notable-collections/bixby-librarys-oscar-bredenberg-collection/>

Inventory:

Series I: Naval Action, Soldiers, and Spies.

Contains transcripts of original source material about naval activities during the Revolutionary War in the Champlain Valley, presented in chronological order. Also has information about individual soldiers, pensioners, loyalists, and spies.

The material in Boxes 1, 2, and 3 is available in digital format at the [Bixby Memorial Free Library website](#).

Box 1

Material in this box is from Bredenberg's notebooks labeled A-U.

- Folder 1: 10/14/1776-12/13/1777
- Folder 2: 1778
- Folder 3: 1779-1780
- Folder 4: 1/1/1781-8/16/1781
- Folder 5: 8/16,1781-4/16/1782
- Folder 6: 4/16/1782-1/13/1783
- Folder 7: 1/15/1783-12/14/1784
- Folder 8: Royal Savage (ship) 1776-1778
- Folder 9: American and British vessels: Inflexible, Congress, Enterprise, Liberty, Jersey, and Trumbull
- Folder 10: Maps of Lake Champlain, includes photocopies and hand drawn/traced maps of portions of the lake and some plans of military posts along the lake
- Folder 11: Transcripts/excerpts of documents in the Colonial Office Records, Canada and from the Pliny Moor Papers, 1785-1814
- Folder 12: Revolutionary War pensions and deserters, includes typescripts of applications for pensions, 1775. Also contains information about Caldwell Manor in Quebec, a list of military buttons from Ft. Lennox, Quebec, and a published article about Von Steuben.
- Folder 13: Transcripts of journal entries from Hazen, Jessup, and the Siege of Quebec, McLane and Skenesborough (now called Whitehall), Journey to Canada through Lake Champlain, Josiah Holster, 1776-1777 (pages labeled Z89-Z176 and unnumbered)
- Folder 14: Letters and Correspondence of Bredenberg, 8/23-1962-7/23/1964 (pages labeled Q1-Q142)
- Folder 15: Point au Fer, transcripts/excerpts from various archives in Canada, 1775-1792. Also a typed summary, undated.
- Folder 16: Colonial Office Records, photocopies of transcripts, 1785-1811 (labeled x3-17-81-12-20-1883 (check page numbers))
- Folder 17: Loyalists, transcripts/excerpts regarding loyalists, , listed in alphabetical order by last name. Also a typed history of Loyal Block House, undated.
- Folder 18: Escape Routes, summary by Bredenberg and transcripts/excerpts, 2/10/1782-5/5/1790
- Folder 19: Audit Office Records regarding Jacob and Shadrack Ball, also brief bios of loyalists, listed alphabetically, and reference pages from Canada Public Records Audit Office 12, Loyalist Series.
- Folder 20: Raids of 1778, 1779, 1780, and 1781, typed article by Bredenberg
- Folder 21: Historical Monkton Notations, regarding early European settlers and the Revolutionary War around Monkton and Otter Creek, Vermont

Series II: Day by Day Action

Typescripts/excerpts/photocopies of documents from Canadian and American sources regarding the Revolutionary War around Lake Champlain, 1775-1782. Presented in chronological order.

The material in Boxes 1, 2, and 3 is available in digital format online at the [Bixby Memorial Free Library website](#).

Box 2

Material in this box is from Bredenberg's notebooks labeled 1-17

Folder 1:	6/1/1775 to 6/30/1775
Folder 2:	7/1/1775 to 8/31/1775 (some labeled x or xx)
Folder 3:	9/4/1775 to 12/25/1775 (a few labeled x or xx)
Folder 4:	1/1/1776 to 5/31/1776
Folder 5:	6/1/1776 to 6/30/1776
Folder 6:	7/1/1776 to 8/7/1776
Folder 7:	8/7/1776 to 9/30/1776
Folder 8:	10/1/1776 to 12/31/1776
Folder 9:	1/1/1777 to 5/31/1777
Folder 10:	6/1/1777 to 6/30/1777
Folder 11:	7/1/1777 to 8/31/1777
Folder 12:	9/1/1777 to 12/30/1777
Folder 13:	1/1/1778 to 7/15/1778
Folder 14:	7/17/1778 to 8/30/1778
Folder 15:	9/1/1778 to 12/31/1778
Folder 16:	1/1/1779 to 6/28/1779
Folder 17:	7/1/1779 to 12/30/1779

Box 3

Material in this box is from Bredenberg's notebooks labeled 18-36 and Genealogy 1-5

Folder 1:	1/1/1780 to 7/31/1780
Folder 2:	8/1/1780 to 10/31/1780
Folder 3:	11/1/1780 to 12/27/1780
Folder 4:	1/1/1781 to 5/15/1781
Folder 5:	5/16/1781 to 3/3/1782
Folder 6:	3/4/1782 to 5/31/1782
Folder 7:	6/1/1782 to 9/30/1782

Series III: Significant Individuals and History of the Valley

Folder 8:	Carlton's Journal, October-November 1778. Transcribed entries from the journal of Major Christopher Carleton regarding his expedition on Lake Champlain.
Folder 9:	Chazy, New York history, includes 2 manuscript chapters of a book by D.K. Martin
Folder 10:	De Miliere and French Plans to Conquer Canada in 1790s, paper by Bredenberg, 3 drafts, 1969
Folder 11:	Guy Johnson and the Provincials of Northern Department, notes by Bredenberg
Folder 12:	Edward Jessup, loyalist soldier in the King's army, notes by Bredenberg
Folder 13:	The Liberty, an American naval vessel, including a log from 1779 and a manuscript for a proposed book by Bredenberg, 1966.
Folder 14:	Lt. James Moody's narrative, 1776-1801, typed copy
Folder 15:	Loyalist Officers and Block House tales, handwritten notes by Bredenberg
Folder 16:	Otter River saga, a story about Otter Creek settlers' role during the war, written by Bredenberg, c.1964
Folder 17:	Royal Highland Regiment, the order book of Captain Stewart, 1759, typed copy
Folder 18:	Skenesboro (now called Whitehall), N.Y., typed copies of documents from the state audit office

- Folder 19: Washington County, Dr. Abbot's notes, and index to "Seven Books on Washington County," by Asa Fitch
- Folder 20: Descendants of Andrew Everest, typed excerpts from the book, *Descendants of Andrew Everest of York, Maine*
- Folder 21: Genealogies – Averill Family, Platt, Family, Joslyn Family, Kidder Family, Rogers Family
- Folder 22: Azariah Pritchard, a loyalist, typed excerpts from various sources
- Folder 23: Genealogies – Ebenezer Allen, Cameron Family, Campbell Family, Wing Family, typed notes from various sources
- Folder 24: Odell Family, including some original notarized documents dated 1807-1835.
- Folder 25: MacIntosh Family, Simon Metcalfe, typed notes from various sources
- Folder 26: Wing Family [material in this folder has not been digitized]

Box 4

This material has not been digitized

- Folder 1: Notes and descriptions of maps from the Library of Congress
- Folder 2: Photocopies of maps made 1762 to 1826 and undated, of Lake Champlain, Vermont, and New York from the Library of Congress and the Public Archives of Canada, copied in 1963. Also a copy of a speech dated February 1927 regarding the Battle of Lacolle Mill in 1814.
- Folder 3: Photocopies of maps of Lake Champlain, 1794 and undated
- Folder 4: Photocopies of Maps of Lake Champlain, 1775-1865
- Folder 5: North Hero Island and Isle La Motte, typed notes (labeled D293-D313)
- Folder 6: Typescripts regarding Pliny Moore (sometimes spelled Moor), Revolutionary War veteran and first European settler in Champlain, NY
- Folder 7: Typescript of Corbin & Moore Daybook #1, 1791, Business owned by Pliny Moore and his brother-in-law in Champlain, N.Y.
- Folder 8: Typescript of Corbin & Moore Daybook #1, continued
- Folder 9: Typescript of Corbin & Moore Daybook, 1792-1794
- Folder 10: Architectural planning documents, including material specifications and contracts regarding construction of St. John's Church, Champlain, NY, 1905. Also about funding for a stable, 1912.
- Folder 11: Documents regarding St. John's Church, 1874-1905
- Folder 12: Cards from Paster's Society, St. John's Assembly, City of Stockhol, Sweden, 1918-1920
- Folder 13: British raids into Vermont, 1778-1781. Includes typescripts and notes by Bredenberg and copies of letters from him requesting information.
- Folder 14: Haldeman Papers, handwritten notes by Bredenberg
- Folder 15: Haldimand Papers, 1782 to 1839. Photocopies of correspondence from the Frederick Haldimand papers. The letters are in French, some with English translations.

Series IV: Publications

- Folder 16: *Historical Souvenir of Vermont*, 1941
- Folder 17: *Historical Booklets*, nos. 1,4, 5, 6, 11, and 13, Ottawa, Canada: The Canadian Historical Association, 1962-1963
- Folder 18: *Three History Theses*, Ontario: Ontario Department of Public Records and Archives, 1961
- Folder 19: French Occupation of the Champlain Valley from 1609 to 1759, *Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society*, 1938
- Folder 20: *St. Alban's Raid*, October 19, 1864, Franklin County Savings Bank and Trust, undated
- Folder 21: *Historical Oration on Champlain Town*, Champlain, NY: Privately Printed, 1936
- Folder 22: *The Story of David Redding*, by John Spargo, Bennington, Vt: Bennington Historical Museum and Art Gallery, 1945
- Folder 23: *British Objectives at the Battle of Plattsburgh*, Champlain, NY: Moorsfield Press, 1960

- Folder 24: *History of the Cumberland Head*, by Bess Hagar Langworthy, Plattsburgh, NY: Clinton County Historical Association, 1961
- Folder 25: *A History of Phineas Whiteside and His Family*, By Ida Whiteside, n.p., n.d.
- Folder 26: *Plattsburgh Centennial Celebration*, Official Program, September 6-11, 1914, n.p., n.d.
- Folder 27: *State of New York: The Assembly*, Joseph F. Carlino, Speaker, c.1960
- Folder 28: *The Story of Shaftsbury, Vermont*, Shaftsbury, Vt: Town Republican Centennial Committee, 1954
- Folder 29: Retirement Plan, Sheridan Iron Works, c.19

Series V: Card Index

This series consists of index cards created by Bredenberg containing citations to his transcripts as well as published sources he used in his research. Employing his own abbreviations when citing sources on these cards, Bredenberg seems to have left us no complete record of all the documentary sources he consulted. However, the majority of references, using an X or XX before a date, refer to his chronological compilations found in Boxes 2 and 3 of this collection. There is an orange index card at the front of the first card drawer that lists his incomplete source information.

The key to Bredenberg's indexing system is also available [here](#).

Surveyed by: K. Ferris

Date: April 2024