

Publication Number: M207

Publication Title: Papers of Hermann von Boyen, ca. 1787-1848

Date Published: 1952

## PAPERS OF HERMANN VON BOYER, CA. 1787-1848

### Introduction

The records reproduced in this microfilm publication consist of papers of Herman von Boyen, an officer of the Prussian Army during the Napoleonic Wars, a leader of the military reform movement, and twice War Minister of Prussia. The paper binders and folders in which these documents are filed bear the imprint of the Heeresarchiv at Potsdam, which was the custodian of the collection. Some folders also bear the earlier label of the Geheimes Archiv des Kriegsministeriums or of the Kriegs Archiv des Grossen Generalstabes; these institutions appear to have been the previous repositories for parts of the Reichsarchiv; in 1936, however, it was separated from the Reichsarchiv, and all military records and related materials in the legal custody of the latter were transferred to it.

During the military operations in Germany in 1945 the documents reproduced in this microfilm publication came into the possession of the United States armed forces. In 1947 the War Department transferred them to the National Archives, where they constitute part of a body of records designated as Record Group 242, World War II Collection of Seized Enemy Records.

Herman von Boyen was born at Kreuzberg, East Prussia, on June 23, 1771, and died at Berlin on February 15, 1848. He saw early service as a staff officer in Poland, 1794-96, and soon became widely known as a military writer. After the Peace of Tilsit he was made a member of the Commission for Military Reorganization, under the presidency of General von Scharnhorst, and was appointed to the Prussian Ministry of War. In these positions he worked for the replacement of the old militia system by general compulsory military service. In 1812 he resigned and went to Russia, but he returned in the following year to fight in the War of Liberation. At the beginning of 1814 he became Minister of War; soon afterward he introduced the law of September 3, 1814, which established compulsory military service and set up the Landwehr. In 1819 he retired. He reentered military service as a general of infantry in 1840 after the accession of Frederick William IV, and in 1841 he was made Minister of War for the second time. In 1847 he again retired, with the rank of field marshal. At the time of his death he was serving as governor of the Berlin veterans' hospital.

This collection of Von Boyen's private and official papers consists chiefly of correspondence, memoranda, manuscript studies of military and political subjects, tables of organization and distribution of the Prussian Army, and records containing data relating to the military budget. The papers concern such topics as the organization and training of reserve units (the Landwehr), plans for the defense of various Prussian provinces, regulations on uniforms, the welfare of disabled veterans, the principles of warfare, and the military organization of the Prussian State.

A register of the Von Boyen papers prepared by the Heeresarchiv is reproduced on Roll 1 of this microfilm publication. The documents have been microfilmed in accordance with the original sequence of items (Stücke) established by the Heeresarchiv. Many of the documents listed in the register were, however, missing from the collection when it was received by the National Archives. The following items are not present:

Part A

Stücke 2, fascicles 1, 4  
Stücke 3, fascicles 2, 3  
Stücke 4, fascicles 6, 7, 8, 16, 18  
Stücke 5, 7, 8

Par B

Stücke 2a, fascicles 1, 2, 4  
Stücke 3a-8a, and 11a-13a

Part C

Stücke 1, 83, 109, 110

The table of contents, showing the distribution of the Stücke and describing briefly the contents of each roll, is reproduced on each of the 12 rolls of this microfilm publication.

Besides Von Boyen's papers there are in Record Group 242 in the National Archives about 68 linear feet of other records formerly in the Heeresarchiv at Potsdam. These include the papers of such outstanding German military figures as August von Gneisenau, 1760-1831; Wilhelm Groener, 1867-1939 (reproduced as Microscopy 137); Helmuth von Moltke, 1800-1891; Albrecht von Roon, 1803-79; Gerhard von Scharnhorst, 1755-1813; Alfred von Schlieffen, 1833-1913; and Hans von Seeckt, 1866-1936 (Microscopy 132). Included among the papers of Von Gneisenau are letters received from Von Boyen that are not duplicated in the papers reproduced on this microcopy. In this same record group there is also a collection of German military documents, 1679-1935 (Microscopy 129), that appears to have been prepared by the Hitler government as an exhibit for propaganda purposes.

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Roll    Description

1        Heeresarchiv register (Repertorium) of the Von Boyen papers

Part A, Stücke 1, Stücke 2 (fascicles 2, 3, 5-15): Studies and memoranda on early experiences, including the Polish campaign, 1794-98; studies on military punishment, infantry tactics, the development of military science, and related topics, 1797-1805; instructions for fortress commandments, 1809; notes on the occupation of Saxony, 1813-14, on the military organization of Prussia, and on army organization, 1814-15; correspondence with Russian generals in France, 1814,

and observations on the disposition of troops in France, 1815; a treatise on the campaign of 1815 in the Netherlands; Von Boyen's letter of resignation, 1819; and notes on Poland and the Polish question, 1830-41

- 2 Part A, Stücke 3 (fascicles 1, 4, 5), Stücke 4 (fascicles 1-5, 9-15, 17, 19-21): Various military studies, 1806-19; a collection of military ordinances and instructions, 1812-18; memoranda and correspondence relating to diplomatic negotiations in Paris, 1815, and to the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1818; drafts of proposals for alliances involving Prussia, 1818-19; correspondence on the status of the fortress of Mainz, 1816-19, and with Chancellor von Hardenberg, General von Müffling, and the Duke of Wellington, 1818-19; copies of cabinet orders and ministerial reports, 1816-17; and a rough draft of Von Boyen's "Statement of the Principles of the Old and Present Prussian Military Constitutions," 1817
- 3 Part A, Stücke 4 (fascicle 22), Stücke 6 (fascicles 1-3): Correspondence with Von Hardenberg, General von Müffling, and General von Wolzogen on German affairs, 1817-19; memoranda by Von Boyen on minor political and military matters arising during his tenure as Minister of War, 1816-19; and studies by Von Boyen relating to a constitution for Prussia, 1817
- 4 Part A, Stücke 6 (fascicles 4-14): Cabinet orders and memoranda of various ministers, including Von Boyen, 1819; essays on political, economic, and social questions (chiefly updated); notes, memoranda, and other records relating to the Estates question, 1842-47; and an essay on "Causes of the Present Discontent," written after the July Revolution of 1830 in France
- 5 Part A, Stücke 9 (fascicles 1-11): Treatises and notes by Von Boyen on strategy, military history, the martial spirit, training, the principles of warfare, and similar military subjects and on the fortification and defense of various Prussian territories, ca. 1795-1805
- 6 Part B, Stücke 1a (fascicles 1-2); Stücke 2a (fascicle 3); Part C, Stücke 2-13: Manuscript essays and notes by Von Boyen on military, political, moral, and scientific subjects, 1787-1800; copies of cabinet orders of Frederick the Great to General Buddenbrook, 1770-82; letters from Von Gneisenau to Von Boyen, 1815, 1825-27; abstract of Alexander I's constitution for Russia, 1819; an account of the Turko-Egyptian campaign of 1839; and other notes and studies on matters relating to the Prussian Army and War Ministry, concerning especially the organization of the Landwehr, 1814-19
- 7 Part C, Stücke 14-29: Correspondence and notes relating to the Landwehr, 1816-19; various materials concerning the organization and history of the Prussian Army, 1786-1819; and correspondence and memoranda pertaining to the obligation to military service, including the compulsory military service law of September 3, 1814, and its administration, 1809-19

- 8 Part C, Stücke 30-52: Various materials concerning such military matters as reviews of troops, officers, schools, and the education of the officer corps, military administration, artillery and small arms, and fortress constructions, 1816-19; observations on the army of the Germanic Confederation and its Prussian contingent, ca. 1830; and records pertaining to military accounts, the military budget, officers' pay, and military supply and procurement, 1806-19
- 9 Part C, Stücke 53-79: Notes, memoranda, and other documents relating to the provisioning, clothing, and equipment of the army; the remount service; the arming and equipment of the Landwehr; the treatment and welfare of disabled officers and men; the system of military justice; the promotion of officers; the mobilization of the army; proposed service regulations; and other topics, 1814-41
- 10 Part C, Stücke 80-82, 84-96: Plans for the defense of the Mittelmark and the Kurmark, 1813; correspondence between Von Boyen and Captain von Goschitsky, 1816-47; an inventory of captured property brought to Berlin from Paris, 1816; an account of the campaign around Trier, August-September 1794; miscellaneous documents, 1780-92; military account books, 1818; and a statement of the military budget, 1806-07
- 11 Part C, Stücke 97, 98: Military budget and list of persons receiving salaries and pensions for the year 1818; and a statement of the military budget for the year 1842
- 12 Part C, Stücke 99-108: Von Boyen's "Statement of the Principles of the Old and the Present Prussian Military Constitutions," 1817; lists showing the distribution of units of the Prussian, French, Austrian, Westphalian, and Saxon armies, 1811; Von Kalckreuth's Instructions on cavalry tactics, 1788-92; tactical plans and orders of battle, 1794-99; Von Grolman's plan for the defense of the area between the Elbe and Memel, 1817; letters and memoranda on the defense of the eastern border and other subjects by Von Boyen, Von Treskow, Von Prillet, Von Grolman, Von Borstell, Von Rauch, Von Valentini, Von Hake, Du Moulin, Von Thielmann, Von Thile, Von Thümen, Von Hünenbein, and Von Ribbentrop, 1815-27; and strength reports of invalid companies and veterans' sections, 1844-46