Journal of Ensign Nathaniel Morgan, April 21 to Dec. 11, 1775

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Morgan, Nathaniel, "Journal of Ensign Nathaniel Morgan, April 21 to Dec. 11, 1775" (1879). Primary Sources. Paper 18.
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JOURNAL
of
ENSIGN NATHANIEL MORGAN
April 21 to Dec. 11, 1775
ITEMS OF THE SIEGE OF BOSTON FROM THE ROXBURY SIDE
April the 21, 1775. Then I listed and went to Boston the first alarm, and returned the [ ] of the same, and listed the 7 day of May into the Colony's service for 7 months.

June the 5th. Then we set out for Newlondon and returned the 20th day June. Set out and marched for Boston the 22 day of the same, and arrived there 25th day of June, which was Sunday, and pitched our tents the same day and received 250 guns or more, tho' it did no damage except burn one house and our people fired 2 guns and one of them killed 4 men in the spot.

Main guard one.

June the 30th. This day there was a man drummed out of camp [for] saying the general was a damned tory.

June the 31st. This day there was another man whipt 20 stripes for desertion from Captain Mot's company as he was marching to his station. The man's name that was punished was Thomas Clark.

July the 4th, 1775. General Washington who is Chief of Connecticut forces arrived here this day. General Nathaniel Spencer who is second general he belongs to East Haddam [Haddam].

And upon guard to Brookline.

July the 6th. This day there was a man sentenced to be whipped 39 lashes, which is executed, for desertion from Capt. Gale's company.

July the 6th. Josiah Kory was groggy this day and put under guard, but made a confession and came out [on] paying a fine of 6 shillings.

July the 8th. This day there was one man drowned at Cambridge as he went in to wash himself and could not swim and drowned immediately. Last night our people
went to set the guard house on fire where the regulars encamped and was insulted [assaulted] by the regulars. Very warm for some time before break of day but prosecuted our design without receiving any damage at all. This day Bennomy Robins was put under guard for talking saucy ["Safy"] to our Capt. and was released on his confession [of] his fault. This day there came a messenger out of Boston to have some relieve for the poor.

July the 9. There is happened this day our Coll. called for all the sergeants in the regiment, and gave orders that every man turn out to divine service or have his name returned to the Coll.

July the 10. This day there was four men listed out of every company in the regiment to go on an expedition [for some whale boats to Waymouth, which they found on shore in a grove of timber hid from the regulars, which our people carried to shore and went to an island named Long Island, and there they took 19 prisoners and about 7 oxen and 8 cows and one horse and 4 hogs and a great quantity of house[hold] stuff. Capt. Cleft was the 2d in command that went. They got upwards of 40 boars and returned the 12th day without receiving any damage.

Brookline guard.

July the 13. This day our people took down the bell from the meeting house and took out the glass and pews for fear of having them burnt.

July the 13. This day there was 2 men called for out of a company to go and intrench against George's tavern, and there was another company went down to fire the regulars at the same time and did so, and the regulars returned the fire [with] but 2 cannon and killed one man—he was from Suffield—and hurt no man more.

July the 14. There was 5 men went to Dorchester for the rest of the whale boats and I went with them.

And I was a member of a court martial [at] Capt. Spier's marquee.

July the 18. This day the drums beat to arms about 12 clock, and went to our alarm post where we are to be in the day of battle.

July the 20. This day we went to our alarm post at 2 clock in the morning. This day our people burnt the light house. This day there was a man drowned at Brookline.

July the 21. This day at 5 o'clock there was a man shot through the left side and died soon. It was done through an accident. His name was Stephen Burden of Mendham in this province.

July the 24. This day there was 14 sail of regulars went out somewhere, but where I can't tell yet.

July the 25. This day the regiments waited upon General Ward into town. There was a court martial held at Capt. Cleft's marquee. I was a member. The men was tried for swearing and fined one shilling apiece.

July the 26 day. Yesterday the regulars fired 2 cannon from their breastwork, but did no damage.

July the 27 day, 1775. A rainy day. I was upon the main guard and there was a regular did run away last night from the regular company which inform us that there is 6000 men in Boston.

July the 30. This day there was 4 men called out a company for some private expedition. The men that
went was Thomas Kegwin, Benony Robbins, Benjamin Irish, Samuel Thompson. Capt. Cleft went 2[d] commander and they expect to be gone 3 days.

July the 31. This day the men came back from the private expedition all safe but one man that was shot. Our men took and killed 52 prisoners* and plundered the house and then set it on fire and burnt it with several more buildings but was insulted [assaulted] warmly for some time and set a man of war's tender on fire and barges.

William Gale was confined and was tried with a court martial† and was found guilty [of] defaming the adjutant much. Sentenced to make a confession at the head of the regiment, then to be discharged from the army the 7 day of August.

August the 1 day, 1775. This day the floating battery set our and came up against the breastwork, and she fired upon the breastwork and our men returned the fires upon them several times and she returned back, did no damage, and then our men fired from the fort 3 times 24 pound, and the first they fired went into the town and the next went to where they was intrenched and the next went into their barrack and they fired one and stopped, and they have fired a great deal upon one another at Cambridge.

August the 2 day. I was upon fatigue, and the 6 day I was upon the main guard and very still time now.

August the 8 day. This day we hear there is 10 men of war or transports came into New London the 6 day.

* That is, killed and captured 52 men.
† See ante, pp. 84, 89.
September 11, 1775. This day our people took five prisoners from the regulars. Informs that the regulars will be called home soon. The way that these regulars came away was one of them set out to run away and he took a canoe and intended to land on Dochester, and when the enemy discovered the man going away there was four men and a sergeant took a boat and went after the man, and the wind and tide being with them so strong that they could not go back and so became an easy prey to our people, and now they are confined.

September the 11 day. I set out for Boston and arrived there the 12 day.

September the 15 day. A.D. 1775. Last night there was a regular come out of Boston.

September the 16 day. A.D. 1775. The regulars fired 2 bombs and six cannon did no damage, and we gave them 8 or 10 and killed one regular and wounded five more.

September the 17, A.D. 1775. The regulars fired 2 bombs and six cannon, did no damage, and we gave them 8 or 10 and killed one regular and wounded five more.

September the 18. This day they fired 52 cannon and bombs upon our men to work upon the Neck where they was building breastworks.

September the 19 day. I was upon works and they fired 12 cannon upon us and they came close to us.

September the 20 day. And it rained very hard in the forenoon and they was very still this day.

September the 21 day, A.D. 1775. This day they fired 16 or 18 cannon and bombs, and one of the bombs fell into the fort but did no damage.

September the 22 day, A.D. This day they fired from all parts but fired nothing but powder.

September the 23 day, A.D. The regulars fired one hundred and eight cannon in the forenoon upon Roxbury and upon the fort and did no damage and our people gave them 8 cannon.

September the 25 day, A.D. 1775. I was upon the main guard, and it was very still times, and I took [horse?].

September the 29 day. At night there was two regulars come out to Roxbury.

September the 30 day. I was upon main guard and the regulars fired 39 cannon upon us but did no damage.

October the 1 day, A.D. 1775. The regulars fired upon our men when they was going down upon picket 6 guns, but did no damage.

October the 4. Our regiment was free from duty because we mustered by muster master general.
October the 6. Elish Cageston had discharge, and the regulars fired ninety odd of cannon upon Roxbury and shot one man arm off and three cows, and they were fired all in an hour. And the same day I was upon regiment court martial. One of the prisoners was Peter Bourn was fined for shooting his gun o’ wild two shillings and six pence, and the other was one Pollie drum major and he was brought before the court and he was found guilty of burning powder and making a stir in the camps and was fined five shillings.

October the 7 day. At night there was a regular come out of Boston.

October the 8 day. At night there was a regular come out of Boston, and he says there was another regular set out to swim out from Boston Common and the other one swim so near the floating battery they see him and they catch him.

The 9 day I see one of the riflemen whipped 39 stripes and was drummed out of the camps, 55 drummers and 60 fifers.

October the 10 day, A.D. 1775. I was upon main guard and it was very still times, and it was supposed that General Gage set out for home.

October the 11 day. At night 9 o’clock it begun to rain and thunder, and a remarkable storm of thunder and rain it was.

October the 16 day, A.D. 1775. I was upon the main guard and it was very still times.

October the 17 day, A.D. 1775. At night they come from Cambridge with their floating battery, and they fired upon the common, and they split their cannon and it killed two men and wound[ed] 6 more our men.

October the 21 day, A.D. 1775. I went upon main guard and it was a rainy day and it was very still times. The night before there was a regular come out of Boston.

October the 26 day, A.D. 1775. I was upon fatigue.

October the 30 day, A.D. 1775. At night I was upon picket.

November the 4 day, A.D. 1775. At night I was upon picket, and there was a regular or two, our sentry spied them and they hailed them and they did not answer, and they fired upon them and we fired 12 or 14 guns at them.

November the 5 day. The regulars did fire from all their ships, for it was powder plot day.

November the 6 day, A.D. 1775. I was upon a regimental court martial upon one Plars belonging to Capt. Ely’s company, was brought before us and found guilty of choking and cursing, and was fined one shilling and for choking he was to confess to the man that he choked.

November 9 day. The regulars went on Pigment Pint to get some cattle, but they got defeated and went back, and they wounded three or four out men and took one of the riflemen.

November the 11 day. At night I was upon picket.

November the 15 day, 1775. At night there was three regulars come out from Boston.

November the 16 day, 1775. At night I was upon picket.

November the 23 day, A.D. 1775. I was upon duty tearing down barns.
December the 2 day. I was upon main guard.
December the 10 day. I was upon main guard.
December the 11 day. I set out for home about 2 o'clock, and I got to Mands and the next night we got to Lev. Edmon.