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Front Cover: Jäger, 2nd Company, Hessen-Cassel Feldjäger Corps, 1776-1777. Painting by Don Troiani. Courtesy of the artist.

Back Cover: This missive, in the junior author's document collection, is addressed to territorial *Oberjägermeister* Johann Friedrich Carl von Schott (1732-1789). Dated Hessen-Darmstadt, 6 February 1777, it was written by an unidentified landlord (*Grundherr*). The signature is illegible. At the time, von Schott was stationed at Idstein, nowadays a fresh air resort in the high hills of the Taunus range due north of Wiesbaden in the contemporary state of Rhein-Hessen. The locale then lay within the confines of the Principality of Nassau. (Land was evidently sub-entfeoffed to lesser-ranking noble dynasties based in other territorial states.) The von Schotts, for their part, belonged to the free imperial knightly estate. Some of its later progeny were granted the title of *Freiherr* by the elector of Hesse in the "explosion of honors" (the term of Lawrence Stone) that especially characterized the nineteenth century. Managing hunting preserves and forested terrain was, it seems, the clan's special vocation. See Ernst Heinrich Kneschke, Vol. VIII, *Neues Deutsches Adelslexicon* (Leipzig: Friedrich Voigt's Buchhandlung, 1868), pp. 328-329. The letter is a sharply worded complaint about non-payment of wages to jägers and their consequent refusal to cut and supply firewood to the manor of Sonnenberg's poor, suffering peasants ("meine Leute") during the depths of the "raw" winter season.