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# R H O D E I S L A N D H I S T O R Y

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*Nature added drama to the siege of Newport in August,  
1778, when a gale struck the battling English and French  
fleets. This graphic detail from an illustration in  
Marine Militaire . . . by Ozanne the elder, portrays the  
result of a naval encounter of that period.*



*Peddy (Leonard) Bowen was the second wife of Jabez Bowen, town councilman and deputy during the period covered in the statistical analysis of "Democracy in Revolutionary Rhode Island." Although her marriage in 1810 was well past the years under study, her fashionable finery offers a clue to the tastes and means of the top ten per cent of Providence's wealthy men, as represented by one of the most prominent of them.*

*Portrait in John Brown House, gift of Mrs. John F. Muller.*

## Democracy in Revolutionary Rhode Island:

### A Statistical Analysis

by Joel A. Cohen, Ph.D.\*

Historians have long been perturbed with the problems which surround the meaning of the word democracy. Recent research by scholars of early American history seems to indicate that there existed in revolutionary America a middle-class democracy. The purpose of this article is to take exception to this conclusion at least in so far as it relates to one particular state. By an examination of Rhode Island and with the utilization of a heretofore neglected statistical approach one will have, perhaps, a better procedure for discovering just what kind of democracy existed in the revolutionary era.

In February 1773 Chief Justice Horsmanden of New York, who was a member of the King's Commission to investigate the sinking of the armed schooner *Gaspee*, sent some of his observations to the Earl of Dartmouth. Horsmanden wrote of his activities in Rhode Island and was quick to rail against the colony's independent nature. He even suggested that Connecticut and Rhode Island be united as a Royal Colony and thus the two would be closer to the authority of the Crown, but despite this suggestion his most vitriolic comments were reserved for the Rhode Island government. "My Lord, as to the Government (if it deserves that name) it is a down-right Democracy . . ."<sup>1</sup>

While Horsmanden may have believed that his remarks on the government of Rhode Island were original, they were far from that. As early as May 19-21, 1647, a general meeting of delegates from the colony's four autonomous towns was held at Portsmouth to draw up a scheme of government for the colony agreeable to the March 17, 1643-4, patent granted to Roger Williams by Parliament. At the outset it was asserted "that the major parte of the Colonie was

present" and thus the Assembly had full authority to act. The Charter of 1644 was soon accepted and the business of establishing an organized body politic with appropriate laws commenced. In this process it was agreed "that the forme of Government established in *Providence Plantations* is DEMOCRATICALL; that is to say, a Government held by ye free and voluntarie consent of all, or the greater parte of the free Inhabitants."<sup>2</sup> Thus it was that the first colony-wide government in Rhode Island declared its democratic nature.

After the restoration of Charles II, Rhode Islanders found themselves in the anomalous position of a colony whose charter was granted by a group of men inimical to the Crown. Therefore, a new patent had to be obtained if the colony were to maintain its former rights and privileges. John Clarke, the colony's agent in England, worked towards this end and on July 8, 1663, the King granted a new charter to the Governor and Company of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

This charter of 1663 incorporated the colony and gave Rhode Islanders the right "to hold forth a livelie experiment," in civil government "with a full libertie in religious concernements;" thus they were allowed and, in certain respects, encouraged towards self-government. The Governor and Company were granted all powers of government which "bee not contrary and repugnant unto, butt, as neare as may bee, agreeable to the laws of this our realme of England, considering the nature and constitutione of the place and people there;" and the inhabitants of the colony were to have the same privileges, liberties and rights "as if they, and every one of them, were borne within the realme

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1 Chief Justice Horsmanden to the Earl of Dartmouth, New York, February 20, 1773, *Gaspee Papers*, 1772-73, p. 117, R.I. Archives.

2 John Russell Bartlett, ed., *Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, in New England*, 10v. (Providence, 1856-1865), I, 147, 156, hereafter cited as Bartlett.



Under the charter of 1663, the freemen of the colony determined policy through elections. Adorned with a portrait of Charles II, the original charter is in a vault of the State House in Providence.

Photograph by Leo. P. Reardon.

of England.<sup>3</sup> In essence, the new charter reaffirmed the 1644 patent and gave to Rhode Islanders a virtual *carte blanche* for independent action.

According to the charter the major powers of government were vested in the Governor, Deputy Governor, ten Assistants and a House of Deputies [Newport was allowed six deputies, Providence, Portsmouth and Warwick were allowed four; and all of the other towns were allotted two each]. Thus the greatest control was in the possession of the legislative branch — the General Assembly. Since the freemen elected the Governor, Deputy Governor and Assistants annually during the first Wednesday in May, and the Deputies twice a year, it would appear that in theory, at least, it was the freemen who decided colony policy because it was they who controlled the composition of the General Assembly.

By the time of the Revolution, the property requirements which enabled a male adult to exercise the freemen's right to suffrage had traveled a long but rather liberal road. Prior to 1663 it was the town exclusively which decided whether a man was or was not admitted as a freeman, but after that date it became the Assembly's duty to establish the necessary regulatory legislation. In Rhode Island the property qualifications for voting were never very restrictive. For example, in 1729 the requirement was that an adult male, twenty-one or above, had to own real estate valued at £200 or which could earn a rent of £10 per year. Although these figures appear high, the colony was notorious for its frequent emissions of bills of credit and thus money was rather cheap. Of course,

if a man was the oldest son of a freeman, and at least twenty-one years old, he too could vote by virtue of his father's freehold. Later, in 1746, the General Assembly raised the property valuation to £400 because it believed that there were too many people who were being made freemen with too little property.<sup>4</sup>

Even the £400 requirement for freemanship did not seriously impair the number entitled to the franchise. In fact, it has been shown that in 1757 in the five towns of Cumberland, Gloucester, Little Compton, Providence and Smithfield "from seventy-five to eighty-four per cent (average 79%) of the ratable polls (adult males) owned enough real property to permit them to vote."<sup>5</sup>

By 1775 money had become more stable and the qualifications for admitting adult males to freemanship had changed again, but still it was the freemen in the towns who were granted the authority to admit applicants provided they met the colony-wide rules and regulations. Basically, the major colony law was that individuals be "really and truly possessed, in their own proper Right, of a Real Estate, within this Colony, to the full Value of Forty Pounds, or which shall rent for Forty Shillings *per Annum*," or be "the eldest Son of such a Freeholder." Of course, there were other minor rules and procedures to enforce and activate the above but none of these would significantly affect the number of men who could be admitted as freemen.<sup>6</sup>

In August 1772 the General Assembly voted a colony tax of £12,000 and stated that all male inhabitants who were twenty-one years old or over, excepting ministers, were to pay a poll tax.<sup>7</sup> From this point on it can be stated that all ratable polls were synonymous with

3 Bartlett, II, 4-5, 9, 18.

4 David S. Lovejoy, *Rhode Island Politics and the American Revolution, 1760-1776* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1958), p. 16.

5 *ibid.* This writer rechecked Lovejoy's calculations [Ratemakers Reports, 1757, R.I. Archives] and concluded that they were essentially correct.

6 *Acts and Laws of the English Colony of Rhode-Island and Providence-Plantations, in New England, in America* [Newport, 1767], pp. 78-82.

7 Rhode Island Colony Records, MS., IX, 8, R.I. Archives.

8 For his 1757 calculations Lovejoy merely contended that these two groups were practically equal. Lovejoy, p. 16.

9 Coventry Valuation List, 1778, Town Clerk's Office. This list and those which follow are the only true valuations in existence for the Revolution.

10 Exeter Valuation List, 1778, RIHS Library.

11 Gloucester Valuation List, 1778, Town Clerk's Office.

12 Richmond Valuation List, August 1782, Town Clerk's Office.

13 South Kingstown Valuation List, July 1778, Town Clerk's Office.

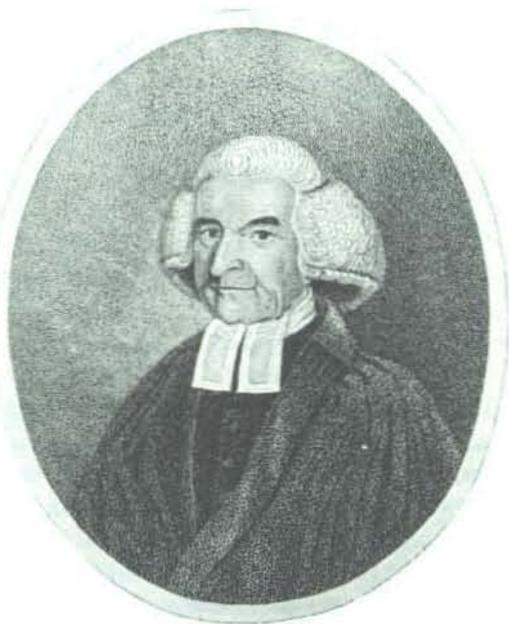
adult males over twenty-one.<sup>8</sup> With this fact in mind it is possible to get a fairly good idea of the number of adult males in Rhode Island during the Revolution who had the minimum property requirement to vote. A careful study of the extant property valuations of estates and ratable polls requested by the General Assembly in 1778 reveals that seventy-six per cent of the adult males could vote in Coventry,<sup>9</sup> sixty-five per cent in Exeter,<sup>10</sup> and seventy-one per cent in Gloucester<sup>11</sup> (average 71%). However, if one includes the valuation lists for Richmond (79%)<sup>12</sup> and South Kingstown (77%)<sup>13</sup> which do not distinguish ratable polls or whether the property valued is real, personal or both, then the average number eligible for freemanship becomes seventy-four per cent. Admittedly these valuations are from country towns<sup>14</sup> but their results agree in essence with the conclusions from the 1757 lists. All in all, while these figures do not prove that the majority of adult men in Rhode Island were freemen, they do indicate that there was no legal obstacle in their path if they wanted to vote. In addition, there is no evidence to indicate that the right to vote was legally or extralegally prohibited and in theory most adult males could exercise their right to the suffrage.

By the time of the Revolution it would appear that the Rhode Island government was as democratic as Chief Justice Horsmanden said it was. At least in a political sense it was; that is, the colony was practically independent from London, self-governing, representative, had frequent elections and had a liberally based suffrage. These circumstances, then, help to explain why there was little need or desire for an internal democratic revolution between 1775 and 1784.<sup>15</sup> One question nevertheless remains; what kind of democracy was it? The answer to this question lies in an examination of the way Rhode Islanders used their right to vote.

Before going further it will be well to take note of recent opinions concerning the meaning of democracy. One historian, Robert E. Brown, has stated rather

*Among the ministers exempted from paying the poll tax of 1772 was the famed Ezra Stiles, then pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Newport.*

*Engraving by S. Hill from The Life of Ezra Stiles by Abiel Holmes (Boston, 1798).*



persuasively that democracy in eighteenth-century America was a "middle-class representative democracy."<sup>16</sup> Another, Jackson Turner Main, has argued that in the revolutionary period, 1763-1788, there was very little social change; and, to a large extent, there existed a kind of middle-class democracy.<sup>17</sup> In essence, then, Brown and Main are in agreement.<sup>18</sup> More recently, Main has expanded his findings in an article on the democratization of the legislatures during the American Revolution. Using the same methodology as in his book, Main establishes categories of wealth for all of the colonies and concludes that during the Revolution there were more people of "moderate" means (worth between £500 and £2,000) than "well-to-do" (worth from £2,000 to £5,000) or

14 There are some valuation lists for Providence during this period in the RIHS Library, but a careful examination indicated that the ratable polls were grossly undervalued and, therefore, these lists were useless for this study. There are no valuation lists for Newport during the Revolution.

15 For further amplification of this point see the writer's thesis, "Rhode Island and the American Revolution: A Selective Socio-Political Analysis" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of History, University of Connecticut, 1967).

16 Robert E. Brown, *Middle-Class Democracy and the Revolution in Massachusetts, 1691-1780* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1955); Robert E. and B. Katherine Brown, *Virginia, 1705-1786: Democracy or Aristocracy?* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1964).

17 Jackson Turner Main, *The Social Structure of Revolutionary America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965).

18 For further proof of this see the review by Robert E. Brown of Jackson Turner Main's *The Social Structure of Revolutionary America* in *The Journal of American History*, LIII (June 1966), 112-113.

"wealthy [worth above £5,000] who were elected to the various state legislatures. Admittedly, Main points out that Connecticut and Rhode Island were exceptions to this pattern and that government by the people existed in these two regions prior to the Revolution.<sup>19</sup> For Rhode Island, however, this is true only if one accepts the methodology and rather arbitrary divisions of wealth which Main has created.

Instead of establishing categories of wealth designed to encompass the populace of all thirteen states, it would seem to make more sense to judge each community separately and in relation to its own particular affluence and population. Wealth and class distinctions, therefore, should be relative to a specific area and not established on an average for all of the states. Suppose, for example, that a resident of Providence with a valuation of £1,800 was among the top ten per cent of the rich of that town; according to Main's categories, he would still only be considered of moderate means. Thus, it would appear that Main's conception of class divisions based on wealth needs revision.

Delineating categories of wealth for Rhode Island is difficult because only three towns, Coventry, Exeter and Glocester, have accurate valuations in existence for the 1775-1784 period. There are, however, tax records available for eleven other regions throughout the state, including Newport and Providence. Therefore, one can establish class distinctions based on affluence for all fourteen towns.<sup>20</sup> The procedure for doing this was to arrange in ascending order of magnitude each tax or valuation report for these communities and then the twentieth, fortieth, sixtieth, eightieth and ninetieth percentiles were determined. Any person whose valuation or tax fell in the range from the first to the twentieth percentile was listed as being in Group 1. Those between the twenty-first and fortieth were in Group 2, and those from forty-one to sixty were in Group 3. If there is a middle-class, statistically, it would have to be Group 3 because it is

in the middle range from the forty-first to the sixtieth percentile. People in Group 4 were between the sixty-first and eightieth percentile. The wealthier elements constituted Group 5 and were between eighty-one and one hundred. In addition, the very wealthy were those in Group 5 whose relative position placed them in the top ten per cent of the town's rich and they were designated with an asterisk (e.g., 5\*),<sup>21</sup>

Once the statistical method is utilized it becomes easier to understand Rhode Island democracy during the revolutionary era. This can be accomplished by taking note of which groups were elected by the populace in these fourteen communities to the major town offices of Councilman and Deputy.<sup>22</sup> Admittedly, only people for whom there was information available could be used; and, when this was done, sixty per cent of the men chosen as Town Councilmen from 1775 to 1784 were in Group 5 and can be considered as the wealthier element. Moreover, thirty per cent were in Group 4. Thus, ninety per cent of the Town Councilors were in the upper forty per cent of their communities' wealth. Additionally, thirty per cent of all Councilmen qualify as being very wealthy: that is, members of Group 5\*. The people elected to the General Assembly present a similar picture. Sixty-seven per cent of the Deputies fall into Group 5 and twenty-one per cent in Group 4. At the same time, forty-seven per cent can be classified as being in Group 5\*.

There is one problem which the above calculations do not account for and that is the fact that many Councilmen often served as representatives to the Assembly. Therefore, they are counted both as Councilors and as Deputies. In order to correct this, both offices were considered together and each individual office holder was listed only once. Thus, sixty-two per cent of the elected town leaders were in Group 5, twenty-seven per cent in Group 4, and only eight per cent in the so-called middle-class, Group 3. Furthermore, thirty-nine per cent of these officials were in Group 5\*, the very wealthy category.<sup>23</sup>

19 Jackson Turner Main, "Government by the People: The American Revolution and the Democratization of the Legislatures," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, XXIII (July 1966), 391-407.

20 The towns for which there are usable records available are Coventry, Cumberland, East Greenwich, Exeter, Glocester, Newport, North Providence, Portsmouth, Providence, Richmond, Scituate, South Kingstown, Tiverton and Warren. A 1780 tax list for North Kingstown

was recently discovered by Professor William D. Metz among the Beriah Brown Papers, RIHS Library. Its information has not been incorporated here because the North Kingstown town records are incomplete. What is available, however, does not alter the conclusions presented.

21 The tables containing the information for this and the following paragraphs are given alphabetically by towns in the Appendix.

With these figures in hand, it seems quite obvious that democracy in Rhode Island during the American Revolution was not a middle-class democracy. The state may have been politically democratic, but this does not mean that it was a popularly oriented democracy. It appears instead to have been a kind of eighteenth-century Whig democracy which was controlled by those who had "a stake in society."<sup>24</sup>

Admittedly, the argument presented here has its limitations, especially when one recognizes that factors other than wealth must be considered in any complete understanding of this subject. The point, nevertheless, is clear. Historians must turn their attention to a detailed study of the individual states and towns in order to better comprehend the meaning and significance of democracy.<sup>25</sup> Hopefully, more scholars will utilize in their works a combination of collective biography and quantitative analysis in dealing with this problem. When such studies are completed they will undoubtedly show that revolutionary America was far from a "middle-class representative democracy."

#### APPENDIX

The purpose of the following tables, which are given alphabetically by towns, is to show the relative wealth of the major elected officials for the fourteen Rhode Island communities which have usable valuation or tax records still in existence for the period 1775-1784. Three towns, Coventry, Exeter and Glocester, have exact evaluations for their citizenry while the other eleven have tax reports which are available. In the first column of each table is a list of the Town Councilmen and Deputies who served from 1775 through 1784. Each town annually elected six Town Councilmen and twice a year voted for two Deputies to represent them at the General Assembly. According to the charter of 1663, however, Newport was allowed six representatives while Portsmouth and Providence each had four. Therefore, there would be more Deputies for these three regions. In addition, many of the Town

Councilmen were representatives to the General Assembly and while the letter D beside a Councilman's name will indicate that he served in the House of Deputies, it will be well to note that he will also be listed with the other representatives.

Column two is titled "Terms in Office" and needs very little explanation. The Town Councilman's position was held for one year while the Deputies had two terms per year. In other words, for the period 1775 through 1784 the maximum number of terms for a Councilman would be ten and for a Deputy it would be twenty. A minus sign indicates that a man did not complete one of his terms in office and a plus sign is designed to show that that person finished someone else's unexpired period.

The third column of each table lists the valuation or tax paid by the individual officeholders, and the fourth column presents this information in percentile groups which indicate the relative wealth of the electors and the elected. In certain cases there is no information available and this is shown by the letters NIA. Accordingly, each valuation or tax report was arranged in ascending order of magnitude and then the twentieth, fortieth, sixtieth, eightieth and ninetieth percentiles were arrived at. In this way categories of wealth were established for each of the fourteen towns. Anyone whose tax or valuation fell in the range from the first to the twentieth percentile was labeled as being in Group 1. Those who fell between twenty-one and forty were in Group 2, and those between forty-one and sixty were in Group 3. Most of the elected officials, however, were in Groups 4, 5 and 5\*. Group 4 consists of those whose valuation or tax was between the sixty-first and eightieth percentile and Group 5 between the eighty-first and hundredth percentile. In addition, those in Group 5 whose relative position placed them in the top ten per cent of the wealth were labeled with an asterisk. Thus, the following tables give a great deal of insight into the relationship between wealth and officeholding from 1775 through 1784.

22 While election winners are recorded, there is limited information available on the total number of persons who participated in the voting.

23 For further statistical details on a town by town basis see the footnotes for each of the tables in the Appendix.

24 For a most provocative analysis of this idea, to which this writer acknowledges his debt, see J. R. Pole,

"Historians and the Problem of Early American Democracy," *The American Historical Review*, LXVII [April 1962], 626-646. Also see Richard B. Morris, "Class Struggle and the American Revolution," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, XIX [January 1962], 3-29.

25 For a pioneer study in this direction see Charles S. Grant, *Democracy in the Connecticut Frontier Town of Kent* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1961].

Table 1

COVENTRY — TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Valuation <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Bowen, Israel	D 5	£ 2188.3	5*
Brayton, Francis, jr.	4	395.0	4
Bucklin, David	D 1	990.6	5*
Burlingame, William	D 7	1190.6	5*
Fenner, Jeremiah	D 2	1173.10	5*
Gibbs, Josiah	1	901.11	5*
Green, Nathaniel	3	270.14	4
Greene, Increase	2+	735.0	5
Greene, Job, jr.	1	NIA	•
Greene, John (James' son)	D 3	489.1	4
Greene, John (Thomas' son)	D 3	1468.3	5*
Johnson, Isaac	D 2	609.10	5
Johnson, Obadiah	4-	313.11	4
King, Ebenezer	3+	348.15	4
Manchester, Joseph	2	303.0	4
Matteson, Jonathan	3	914.15	5*
Matteson, Joseph (Joseph's son)	D 2	382.8	4
Matteson, Thomas	1	1018.15	5*
Roberts, James	3	757.11	5
Roy, William	3	284.18	4
Stafford, Thomas	1-	431.6	4
Stone, William	2	566.16	5
Wall, Samuel	1	479.17	4
Westcot, Ephraim	D 1	1385.13	5*
<b>Deputies</b>			
Bowen, Ichabod	1	893.10	5*
Bowen, Israel	3	2188.3	5*
Brayton, David	1	735.16	5
Bucklin, David	2	990.6	5*
Burlingame, William	5	1190.6	5*
Fenner, Jeremiah	4	1173.10	5*
Greene, Elishue	1	NIA	•
Greene, John (James' son)	1	489.1	4
Greene, John (Thomas' son)	1	1468.3	5*
Greene, Nathaniel, jr.	1-	NIA	•
Johnson, Isaac	4	609.10	5
Matteson, Joseph (Joseph's son)	1	382.8	4
Potter, Stephen	6	633.10	5
Rice, John	3	1601.1	5*
Westcot, Ephraim	8	1385.13	5*

Table 2

CUMBERLAND — TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Arnold, Amos	1	£ 9.16	4
Ballou, Levi	D 8	14.15	5
Ballou, Reuben	3	8.0	4
Bartlet, John	4	17.15	5*
Darling, Peter	D 3	9.13	4
Dexter, James	3	11.0	5
Jenks, Daniel	2	16.10	5*
Jenks, David	1	16.10	5*
Joslen, Thomas	2	11.0	5
Lapham, John	D 8	7.12	4
Lovett, James	D 1	16.0	5*
Raze, Joseph, jr.	4	12.10	5
Shapardson, Nathaniel	D 2	11.5	5
Sheldon, Roger	2	7.10	4
Sprague, Gideon	1	15.0	5*
Staples, Nathan	2	13.10	5
Tillinghast, Joseph	1-	9.12	4
Waterman, Elisha	D 3	25.0	5*
Weatherhead, Enoch	2	7.15	4
Whipple, Amos	1	3.15	2
Whipple, Samuel	2	NIA	•
Whipple, Simon	1+	13.0	5
Whipple, Stephen	1	21.0	5*
Wilkinson, Joab	1	7.15	4
Wilkinson, Nedabiah	1	10.10	4
<b>Deputies</b>			
Angell, Thomas	1	6.15	3
Ballou, Levi	1	14.15	5
Bartlet, Rufus	1	22.0	5*
Carpenter, Jotham	1	20.0	5*
Darling, Peter	1	9.13	4
Dexter, John	11	2.18	2
Fisk, John	1	20.10	5*
Lapham, John	2	7.12	4
Lovett, James	3	16.0	5*
Peck, George	2	15.0	5*
Shapardson, Nathaniel	7	11.5	5
Sheldon, William	1	10.10	4
Waterman, Elisha	2	25.0	5*
Whipple, Jeremiah	6	36.0	5*

1 Coventry Valuation List, 1778, Town Clerk's Office. There were 285 ratable polls listed and the lowest was valued at £0 and the highest at £9104.14.

2 According to this table, only thirty people held the major elective offices in Coventry. Therefore, excluding the three for whom there is no information available, 63% were in Group 5 and 37% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 41% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

1 Cumberland Town Tax (£2000), August 1780, Town Clerk's Office. There were 278 ratable polls listed and the lowest tax was £1.0 and the highest was £36.0.

2 According to this table, only thirty-three people held the major elective offices in Cumberland. Therefore, excluding the one person for whom there is no information available, 59% were in Group 5 and 31% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 38% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

Table 3

EAST GREENWICH—TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Aldrich, Thomas	1	£ 41.8	5*
Arnold, Oliver	2	13.5	4
Davis, Mumford	D 2	2.16	2
Greene, Charles	1	12.15	4
Greene, Silvester	1	9.10	4
Greene, William (Nathaniel's son)	1	36.12	5*
Hall, Abial	9	33.10	5*
Johnson, Allen	D 5	17.10	5
Langford, John	2	30.15	5*
Mathewson, Richard	5	23.12	5
Mumford, Gideon	3	10.17	4
Pearce, Job	1	12.6	4
Pearce, Preserved	D 9	12.12	4
Pearce, William	1	19.17	5
Place, Thomas, jr.	3	11.2	4
Spencer, William, jr.	2	10.2	4
Spencer, William (Walter's son)	1	24.2	5
Tillinghast, Benjamin	D 3	48.2	5*
Tillinghast, George	1	53.8	5*
Tillinghast, Thomas	D 3	44.18	5*
Vaughn, Christopher	1	21.15	5
Vaughn, Robert	2	37.9	5*
<b>Deputies</b>			
Crary, Archibald	10	17.10	5
Comstock, Job	6	12.14	4
Davis, Mumford	1	2.16	2
Gardner, Job	2	85.8	5*
Johnson, Allen	2	17.10	5
Pearce, Preserved	2	12.12	4
Shipper, Thomas	1	17.10	5
Spencer, Rufus	1+	52.1	5*
Tillinghast, Benjamin	8	48.2	5*
Tillinghast, Thomas	7-	44.18	5*

Table 4

EXETER—TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Valuation <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Bates, Jonathan, jr.	D 2	£ 79.17	2
Braman, Soloman	3	687.13	5
Champlin, Christopher	1	394.14	4
Champlin, John	6+	726.10	5
Crandal, Robert	1-	NIA	*
Dawley, Michael	D 4+	1641.2	5*
Gardner, Nicholas (George's son)	1	1627.17	5*
Gorton, Samuel	1	543.11	5
Greene, Joseph	2-	NIA	*
Hall, William	2	271.18	4
Herrington, Henry	1	NIA	*
Kinyon, Phineis	1+	470.19	4
Peirce, George	D 4	808.12	5*
Potter, William	1+	418.8	4
Sherman, Eber	2	431.5	4
Sunderlin, Daniel	D 4	854.11	5*
Sweet, John	4	501.18	5
Tillinghast, Stukley	1	874.11	5*
Wightman, Stephen	D 2	285.7	4
Willcox, Abraham	6	482.12	4
Willcox, Hopson	D 1	1478.6	5*
Willcox, Jeffry	D 1	122.8	3
Willcox, Job	1-	880.9	5*
Willcox, Thomas	D 8-	470.2	4
<b>Deputies</b>			
Bates, Jonathan, jr.	1	79.17	2
Chapman, John	8	735.3	5*
Dawley, Michael	1	1641.2	5*
Gardner, Nicholas, jr.	2-	88.3	2
Peirce, George	6	808.12	5*
Sunderlin, Daniel	1	854.11	5*
Tillinghast, Pardon	5+	893.9	5*
Wightman, Stephen	1	285.7	4
Willcox, Hopson	1	1478.6	5*
Willcox, Jeffry	11	122.8	3
Willcox, Job, jr.	2	171.0	3
Willcox, Thomas	3	470.2	4

1 East Greenwich Town Tax (£3000), June 1780, Town Clerk's Office. There were 291 taxes listed and the lowest tax was £0.12 and the highest was £118.12.

2 According to this table, only twenty-seven people held the major elective offices in East Greenwich. Therefore, there were 63% in Group 5 and 33% in Group 4. Furthermore, 37% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

1 Exeter Valuation List, 1778, RIHS Library. There were 314 ratable polls listed and the lowest was valued at £0.6 and the highest at £4137.10.

2 According to this table, only twenty-eight people held the major elective offices in Exeter. Therefore, excluding the three for whom there is no information available, 52% were in Group 5 and 32% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 36% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

Table 5  
GLOUCESTER — TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Valuation <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>	Deputies	Terms in Office	Valuation <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Bartlet, Elisha	D 1	£ 1315.1	5*	Arnold, Caleb	2	857.4	5*
Brown, Elisha	4	942.10	5*	Bartlet, Elisha	1	1315.1	5*
Brown, Jesse	2	407.6	4	Brown, Chad	2	867.2	5*
Harris, Jonathan	4	775.15	5	Burlingame, David	2	467.12	4
Hawkins, Elijah	D 6	587.2	5	Cook, Israel	1	1138.12	5*
Hopkins, Zebedee, jr.	3	1036.0	5*	Cooper, Moses	1	4232.2	5*
Owen, Solomon	1	1735.16	5*	Hawkins, Elijah	1	587.2	5
Smith, John	D 6	889.2	5*	Kimball, Asa	2	1208.2	5*
Smith, John (Benjamin's son)	D 4	1214.12	5*	Mason, Reuben	1	522.5	4
Steere, Jonah	6	346.12	4	Owen, David	8	1417.9	5*
Steere, Richard	D 10	3967.4	5*	Smith, John	3	889.2	5*
Wells, John	1	792.14	5	Smith, John (Benjamin's son)	1	1214.12	5*
Whipple, Enoch	D 5	2160.5	5*	Smith, Simon	3	2450.0	5*
Williams, Silas	D 3	1212.12	5*	Steere, Richard	2	3967.4	5*
Willmarth, Timothy	D 3	1482.2	5*	Steere, Stephen	4	1381.13	5*
Winsor, Stephen	D 1	726.19	5	Whipple, Enoch	1	2160.5	5*
				Williams, Silas	2	1212.12	5*
				Willmarth, Timothy	1	1482.2	5*
				Winsor, Stephen	2	726.19	5



Deputy Moses Cooper was, for many years, Justice of the Peace of Gloucester (now spelled Glocester) in the county of Providence.

Certificate from the Moses Cooper Papers, RIHS Library.

1 Gloucester Valuation List, 1778, Town Clerk's Office. There were 449 ratable polls listed and the lowest was valued at £0.15 and the highest at £4232.2.

2 According to this table, only twenty-six people held the major elective offices in Gloucester. Therefore, there were 85% in Group 5 and 15% in Group 4. Furthermore, 69% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth. Gloucester, of all the towns considered, had the highest percentage of wealthy persons serving in the major town offices.

Table 6  
NEWPORT—TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Almy, Benjamin	D 1	£ 0.18.1	4
Barker, Peleg	1	0.14.6	4
Buckmaster, George	5	0.14.6	4
Crooke, Robert	4	0. 7.3	3
Freebody, Thomas	D 5	0.16.11	4
Holloway, Daniel	D 5	0. 9.8	4
Langley, William	1	1. 9.0	5
Otis, Jonathan	1	NIA	•
Pitman, John	6	0.14.6	4
Read, William	2	NIA	•
Richardson, Ebenezer	2	0. 7.3	3
Sears, George	D 2	0. 7.3	3
Southwick, Solomon	1	0.12.1	4
Taggart, William	D 1	0.12.1	4
Taylor, Robert	D 5	0. 7.3	3

Deputies	Terms in Terms	Valuation <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Almy, Benjamin	1	0.18.1	4
Anthony, Joseph	2	NIA	•
Belcher, Joseph	4	NIA	•
Borden, William	3	0. 7.3	3
Carpenter, James	1	1.16.3	5*
Champlin, George	2	NIA	•
Channing, William	6	1. 4.2	5
Clarke, Jeremiah	1	1.16.3	5*
Clarke, Peleg	1	1. 4.2	5
Collins, John	1	4.16.8	5*
Crooke, Charles W.	1	NIA	•
Easton, Job	3	0. 4.10	2
Ellery, Christopher	5-	0.14.6	4
Ellery, William	1	0.16.11	4
Elliott, Robert	3	NIA	•
Fowler, Samuel	1	3. 0.5	5*
Freebody, Thomas	6	0.16.11	4
Gardner, Caleb	5	4.16.8	5*
Hazard, George	3	3. 0.5	5*
Holloway, Daniel	2	0. 9.8	4
Marchant, Henry	2	NIA	•
Mason, Daniel	2	1.16.3	5*
Mumford, Paul	1	NIA	•
Rummerill, Thomas	10	NIA	•
Sears, George	2	0. 7.3	3
Sherburne, Henry	2	NIA	•
Stevens, Robert	3	1. 4.2	5
Taggart, William	6	0.12.1	4
Tanner, John	3	NIA	•
Taylor, Nicholas	3	1.16.3	5*
Taylor, Robert	1	0. 7.3	3
Tillinghast, Nicholas P.	2	0.14.6	4
Topham, John	6	0.12.1	4
Tripp, William	2	1. 4.2	5
Wanton, Gideon	5-	0. 7.3	3
Wanton, John G.	3	0.14.6	4
Wanton, John (Gideon's son)	1	NIA	•
Ward, Henry	3	NIA	•
Waterhouse, Timothy	2	0. 7.3	3
Wyatt, Lemuel	2	NIA	•



Newport's Colony House was the meeting place of the General Assembly at intervals during the period under study.

Detail of drawing by G. Wall in *The History . . . of the United States of America* edited by John Howard Hinton (London and New York, n.d.).

<sup>1</sup> Newport Town Tax (£350), January 1782, Newport Historical Society. There were 463 taxes listed and the lowest one was for £0.2.5 and the highest was £8.5.7.

<sup>2</sup> The information on Town Councilmen and Deputies in this table is irregular because of the British occupation and because the town became a city in 1784. Accordingly, there were forty-nine people who held the major elective offices in Newport. Therefore, excluding the fifteen persons for whom there is no information available, 38% were in Group 5 and 38% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 24% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

Table 7

NORTH PROVIDENCE—TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Angell, Enoch	5	£ 0.17.5	5
Bagley, William	7+	0. 4.10	3
Comstock, John	1	0.10.0	4
Hopkins, Esek	D 9	2. 0.0	5*
Jenks, Caleb	5	0. 4.0	3
Jenks, Jonathan, jr.	D 2-	1. 1.0	5
Jenks, Stephen	10	0.12.0	4
Olney, Charles	1	0.19.6	5
Olney, Stephen	2+	3. 0.0	5*
Olney, Thomas	D 4	0.15.0	5
Shepard, Benjamin	D 1	NIA	•
Smith, Edward	5	3. 6.0	5*
Whipple, Benjamin, jr.	4-	0.14.0	5
Whipple, Jabez	2+	0. 7.6	3
Whipple, Thomas	D 2-	0.16.9	5
<b>Deputies</b>			
Angell, Hope	2	0. 7.0	3
Esten, Esek	1	1. 0.0	5
Hopkins, Esek	17-	2. 0.0	5*
Jenks, John	11	4. 2.0	5*
Jenks, Jonathan, jr.	1	1. 1.0	5
Olney, Job	1-	NIA	•
Olney, Joseph	4	1. 6.0	5*
Olney, Thomas	3	0.15.0	5
Shepard, Benjamin	1	NIA	•
Whipple, Thomas	0+	0.16.9	5



This likeness of Captain Stephen Olney, war hero and town councilman of North Providence, is a portion of a portrait copied from a bank note of 1822.

- 1 North Providence Continental Tax (£92.2.3), April 1782, RIHS Library. There were 157 resident taxpayers listed and the lowest tax was £0.0.6 and the highest was £4.2.0.
- 2 According to this table, only twenty people held the major elective offices in North Providence. Therefore, excluding the two for whom there is no information available, 67% were in Group 5 and 11% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 28% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

Table 8

PORTSMOUTH—TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Allen, James	1	NIA	•
Allin, George	1	NIA	•
Anthony, Burrington	D 3	£ 5.0	3
Anthony, William, jr.	D 4	7.11	4
Brownell, George	1	NIA	•
Chace, Holder	D 1	21.0	5*
Cornell, George	D 2	7.10	4
Cornell, Walter	1	NIA	•
Freeborn, Jonathan	D 1	10.10	5
Gifford, David	D 6	8.0	4
Hall, George	1	11.0	5
Hall, William	1	11.15	5
Lawton, Giles, jr.	2	4.15	2
Potter, Thomas	3	5.0	3
Shearman, Joseph	2	8.5	4
Shearman, Thomas	D 7	6.15	4
Sisson, George	3	9.0	4
Taylor, Ruben	1	NIA	•
Thomas, Alexander	D 2	5.0	3
Thomas, Joseph, jr.	1	5.10	3
Wales, Peter T.	D 3	6.8	3
Willcocks, John, jr.	1	0.0	1
<b>Deputies</b>			
Anthony, Burrington	3	5.0	3
Anthony, William, jr.	7	7.11	4
Bowler, Metcalf	8	NIA	•
Brownell, Joseph	1	7.10	4
Chace, Holder	2	21.0	5*
Coddington, John	1	NIA	•
Cornell, Clark	1	5.15	3
Cornell, George	1	7.10	4
Cornell, Jonathan	1	7.15	4
Cundall, Joseph	2	19.5	5*
Durfee, Job	2	10.10	5
Freeborn, Jonathan	2	10.10	5
Gifford, David	6	8.0	4
Hall, Benjamin	1	7.15	4
Lawton, Robert	7	5.0	3
Shearman, John	2	12.0	5
Shearman, Thomas	1	6.15	4
Thomas, Alexander	8	5.0	3
Thurston, John	5	13.0	5*
Wales, Peter T.	1	6.8	3

- 1 Portsmouth State Tax (£1500), April 1780, Town Clerk's Office. There were 214 taxpayers listed and the lowest tax was £0.0 and the highest was £25.0.
- 2 The information on the Town Councilmen and Deputies in this table is irregular because of the British occupation. Accordingly, there were thirty-three people who held the major elective offices in Portsmouth. Therefore, excluding the seven persons for whom there is no information available, 31% were in Group 5 and 35% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 12% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

Citizens of Providence showed their appreciation of John Brown's acumen by electing him to the General Assembly nine times during the years 1775 to 1784. This 1803 auction notice is evidence of the wide-ranging commercial enterprise that built his reputation as well as his wealth.

Broadside on deposit by Mr. Norman Herreshoff, RIHS Library.

## Sales of valuable RUSSIA GOODS.

By Order of the Executors to the Will of the Honourable  
**JOHN BROWN, Esq;** deceased,

On Thursday the 15th of December next, at the Stores on  
India-Point, will be Sold, at public Auction (without Re-  
serve) the entire Cargo of the Ship *General Washington*,  
*William Smith*, Master, from Russia, consisting of

- 130 Tons of St. Peterburgh clean Hemp
  - 130 Tons of new Sable Iron
  - 25 Tons of old Sable Iron
  - 5 Tons of best afforded square Iron
  - 2 Tons of Sheet Iron
  - 100 Pieces of Ravens Duck
  - 300 Bolts of best heavy Duck
  - 2 best Down Beds
  - 2 Half Down Ditto
  - 6 Feather Beds
  - 1 Cask of Hinglafs
  - 1 Bale of Tickings
  - 75 Pieces of best broad bleached Fleems
  - 5 or 6 Tons of Cordage afforded, in Lots to suit Purchasers
- Sales to begin at 9 o'Clock, A. M. The Conditions will  
be liberal.



Also, at 12 o'Clock on the same  
Day, the remarkable fine fast-  
sailing Ship *GENERAL WASHING-  
TON*, Burthen 360 Tons per  
Register, but will flow 600 Tons.  
She is coppered to her loaded  
Water-Line, has two Suits of  
Sails, is well found in every Re-  
spect, and could be put to Sea  
at very small Expence.

**HEZEKIAH SABIN, jun.**  
*Attorney to the Executors of*  
*John Brown, Esq;*

Providence, November 29, 1803.

Printed by J. CARTER.

Table 9

PROVIDENCE—TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Allen, Paul	D	£ 5. 1.6	5*
Andrews, Zephaniah		1. 8.8	5
Atwell, Amos	D	2.15.0	5*
Bowen, Jabez	D	6. 4.6	5*
Butler, Samuel		2.18.2	5*
Cahoone, Daniel		1- 1.12.0	5
Cushing, Benjamin, jr.		4 3.18.6	5*
Fenner, Arthur, jr.		4+ 0.11.6	3
Jackson, Richard		2 NIA	*
Lawrence, David		2 2. 8.0	5
Man, Benjamin		0+ 0.16.0	4
Mason, Aaron		2 2.15.3	5*
Mathewson, John	D	3 6.12.6	5*
Pearce, Benoni	D	2 1. 2.6	4
Power, Nicholas		1 3.18.0	5*
Robinson, Elihu	D	1 0.12.0	3
Sheldon, Christopher		8 1.10.0	5
Sweeting, Job		2- 2.15.0	5*
Taylor, George		2- NIA	*
Thompson, Ebenezer	D	4 1.16.0	5
Thurber, Benjamin		1 1.11.6	5
Thurber, Edward		1+ 3.10.0	5*
Wall, William		1 6.12.6	5*
Wheaton, Nathaniel		2 2. 0.0	5
<b>Deputies</b>			
Allen, Paul		6 5. 1.6	5*
Arnold, Jonathan		3+ 2. 1.0	5
Arnold, Welcome		9 10. 2.3	5*
Atwell, Amos		1 2.15.0	5*
Barton, William		1 0.13.2	4
Bowen, Jabez		1 6. 4.6	5*
Brown, John		9 46.15.3	5*
Brown, Joseph		4 11.13.6	5*
Clarke, John Innes		1 20. 4.6	5*
Foster, Theodore		8+ 1. 5.6	4
Greene, Thomas		1 1. 5.0	4
Hopkins, Stephen		3- 2. 4.6	5
Howell, David		3- 2. 1.0	5
Jenckes, John		4 3.18.0	5*
Jenkins, Thomas		2- 9. 6.9	5*
Keene, Charles		5 2.19.8	5*
Mathewson, John		2 6.12.6	5*
Nightingale, Joseph		2 20. 4.6	5*
Pearce, Benoni		1 1. 2.6	4
Rhodes, William		1 1.11.0	5
Robinson, Elihu		1 0.12.0	3
Sessions, Darius		1- 2.11.0	5*
Smith, John		9 2. 5.6	5
Thompson, Ebenezer		1+ 1.16.0	5
Udpike, John		2 1. 5.6	4

1 Providence Town Tax (£735.6.2), June 1780, RIHS Library. There were 654 taxpayers listed and the lowest tax was £0.0.9 and the highest was £46.15.3.

2 According to this table, only forty-two people held the major elective offices in Providence. Therefore, excluding

the two for whom there is no information available, 80% were in Group 5 and 15% were in Group 4.

Furthermore, 50% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth. Providence, of all the towns considered, had the second highest percentage of wealthy persons serving in the major town offices.

Table 10

RICHMOND — TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen		Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Bailey, Richard	D	1	NIA	•
Bailey, Richard, jr.	D	5-	£ 37.19	5*
Barber, Caleb		3	40.1	5*
Boss, Peter		1	19.12	4
Clarke, Peter		2	13.8	4
Clarke, Samuel	D	4	26.9	5
Clarke, Simeon, jr.	D	7	23.13	5
Perry, Edward	D	9	50.19	5*
Potter, David		4+	23.3	5
Rogers, Stephen		2	20.1	4
Stanton, Robert	D	4	42.12	5*
Tefft, Thomas	D	4	20.8	4
Tefft, William	D	2	55.0	5*
Webb, George	D	7	28.14	5
Woodmansee, Joseph		5	8.14	3
<b>Deputies</b>				
Bailey, Richard		5-	NIA	•
Bailey, Richard, jr.		1+	37.19	5*
Clarke, Christopher		1	7.6	3
Clarke, Samuel		2	26.9	5
Clarke, Simeon, jr.		4	23.13	5
James, Thomas		2	20.7	4
Kinyon, Nathan		1	16.4	4
Maxson, Jonathan		2	10.18	3
Perry, Edward		4	50.19	5*
Stanton, Robert		8	42.12	5*
Tefft, Benjamin		1	20.19	4
Tefft, Joseph		3	52.13	5*
Tefft, Samuel		1	31.16	5
Tefft, Thomas		1	20.8	4
Tefft, William		3	55.0	5*
Webb, George		1	28.14	5
Woodmansee, Joseph, jr.		1	15.3	4

Table 11

SCITUATE — TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen		Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Aldrich, James		2	£ 15.10	5
Bates, Nathan		1	21.15	5*
Colwell, Christopher		1-	14.0	5
Colvin, Josiah		1	12.15	4
Cook, Peter		2	18.13	5
Cornell, Gideon		3	30.5	5*
Fisk, Peleg		2+	30.10	5*
Harris, Charles		1	60.10	5*
Harris, Gideon		1	3.0	2
Hill, Thomas		0+	14.5	5
Hopkins, Rufus	D	9	NIA	•
Hopkins, Timothy	D	3	20.10	5*
Kimball, Stephen		8	19.15	5
Knight, Joseph		5	13.8	5
Phillips, Nathaniel		1	10.16	4
Potter, Christopher	D	4	8.13	4
Ralph, Nathan		3	52.10	5*
Salisbury, Thomas		1	19.0	5
Tyler, William		1-	18.0	5
Weatherhead, Joseph		1	NIA	•
Wells, James		4	12.8	4
Westcot, Oliver		4	23.10	5*
William, James		2	8.15	4
<b>Deputies</b>				
Cornell, Ezekiel		1	30.5	5*
Harris, Asahele		1	24.13	5*
Hopkins, Rufus		9	NIA	•
Hopkins, Timothy		3	20.10	5*
Potter, Christopher		9	8.13	4
Randall, Job		2	53.10	5*
Rhodes, William		5	30.0	5*
West, William		8	90.10	5*
Williams, John		2	9.0	4

1 Richmond Town Tax (£3000), August 1780, Town Clerk's Office. There were 227 taxes listed and the lowest was £0.17 and the highest was £56.10.

2 According to this table, only twenty-three people held the major elective offices in Richmond. Therefore, excluding the one person for whom there is no information available, 50% were in Group 5 and 36% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 27% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

1 Scituate State Tax (£6391.18), January 1780, Town Clerk's Office. There were 688 taxes listed and the lowest was £0.10 and the highest was £103.0.

2 According to this table, only twenty-nine people held the major elective offices in Scituate. Therefore, excluding the two for whom there is no information available, 74% were in Group 5 and 22% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 44% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

**Table 12**  
SOUTH KINGSTOWN — TOWN COUNCILMEN AND  
DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Babcock, George	4+	£ 42. 6.3	5*
Brown, George	D 2-	69.10.6	5*
Case, Imanuel	D 2	34. 3.2	5
Clark, Gideon	6+	31. 8.7	5
Congdon, Samuel	1	75. 0.4	5*
Curtis, Samuel	1	5.17.3	4
Gardner, Caleb	2-	50. 9.6	5*
Hazard, Enoch	D 3	62.11.7	5*
Peckham, Benjamin	D 3-	42. 6.3	5*
Peckham, George H.	1	NIA	•
Perry, Freeman	1+	9.13.3	4
Perry, James	2-	NIA	•
Perry, Samuel	4+	8. 6.1	4
Pollock, William Wilson	1	3.13.0	3
Potter, Robert	D 1-	18.13.0	5
Robinson, Sylvester	1-	57. 5.7	5*
Rodman, Samuel	0+	NIA	•
Segar, Samuel	D 3	42. 6.5	5*
Shearman, Daniel, Jr.	2	68.14.3	5*
Shearman, James	2-	32.15.10	5
Shelden, John	0+	6. 8.2	4
Tefft, George	5	25. 7.4	5
Tefft, Samuel	5-	7.15.2	4
Watson, Jeffry	9	39.12.10	5
Watson, Job	D 2-	106. 5.6	5*
<b>Deputies</b>			
Babcock, Samuel	6	40.19.1	5
Brown, George	2	69.10.6	5*
Brown, Rowland	2	9.13.4	4
Case, Imanuel	2	34. 3.2	5
Hazard, Carder	1	53. 3.11	5*
Hazard, Enoch	3-	62.11.7	5*
Helme, Rowse J.	14	2.17.3	3
Peckham, Benjamin	1	42. 6.3	5*
Potter, John	2	182. 7.1	5*
Potter, Robert	1	18.13.0	5
Potter, Samuel J.	3	3. 3.0	3
Robinson, John	1-	NIA	•
Rodman, Daniel	1	NIA	•
Segar, Samuel	2	42. 6.5	5*
Watson, Job	1	106. 5.6	5*

**Table 13**  
TIVERTON — TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Bowen, John	1	£ 4.18.0	5*
Briggs, Nathaniel	D 2	11. 2.0	5*
Cook, William	D 4-	2.10.0	4
Cory, Philip	1	4.16.6	5*
Devol, Gilbert	D 4+	1. 9.0	4
Gray, Edward	D 1-	NIA	•
Gray, Pardon	2	11.10.0	5*
Jenks, Benjamin	4	2. 1.0	4
Perry, Pearce	4	6.14.0	5*
Sanford, William	9	1.19.0	4
Sherman, Joseph	D 3	7. 5.0	5*
Simmons, Moses	3	0.19.6	3
Stafford, John	3	3.12.0	5
Taber, Earle	1	0.10.0	2
Taber, Joseph (Esq.)	4+	3. 3.0	5
Taber, Joseph (Deacon)	9	3. 3.0	5
Westgate, George	5	1.15.6	4
<b>Deputies</b>			
Almy, Gideon	2	5. 0.0	5*
Bailey, Lemuel	2	2.16.0	5
Briggs, Nathaniel	4	11. 2.0	5*
Cook, John	4	13. 5.6	5*
Cook, William	4-	2.10.0	4
Cory, Thomas	7	21.10.0	5*
Devol, Gilbert	3+	1. 9.0	4
Durfee, William	1-	NIA	•
Gray, Edward	1-	NIA	•
Howland, Benjamin	7+	3. 3.0	5
Manchester, Gilbert	1-	1. 2.0	4
Manchester, Isaac	3	6.18.0	5*
Sherman, Joseph	2	7. 5.0	5*

1 South Kingstown State Tax (£7164.14.6), March 1779, Town Clerk's Office. There were 481 resident taxpayers listed and the lowest tax was £0.11.0 and the highest was £182.7.1.

2 According to this table, only thirty-three people held the major elective offices in South Kingstown. Therefore, excluding the five for whom no information is available, 68% were in Group 5 and 21% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 43% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

1 Tiverton State Tax (£707.[13.4]), August 1784, RIHS Library. There were 365 resident taxpayers listed, and the lowest tax was £0.1.0 and the highest was £22.11.8.

2 According to this table, only twenty-five people held the major elective offices in Tiverton. Therefore, excluding the two people for whom there is no information available, 65% were in Group 5 and 26% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 43% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

Table 14

WARREN — TOWN COUNCILMEN AND DEPUTIES, 1775-1784

Town Councilmen	Terms in Office	Tax Paid <sup>1</sup>	Percentile Group <sup>2</sup>
Barton, David	3	£ 2.11.5½	5
Bowen, Smith	2	6. 0.6	5*
Carr, Robert	D 9	1.12.3½	5
Cole, Benjamin	6	5.16.3	5*
Cole, Daniel	4	5.10.11½	5*
Cole, Ebenezer	6	2.12.6	5
Cole, Thomas	1	1. 0.7½	4
Cornel, Gideon	1	NIA	•
Kinnicutt, Shubael	7	0.18.6	4
Miller, Barnard	1	5. 1.4½	5*
Miller, James	D 1	1.12.3½	5
Miller, William T.	D 4	1.18.8½	5
Pears, Samuel	6	1.11.3	4
Saunders, Jacob	9	0.18.6	4
<b>Deputies</b>			
Carr, Robert	4	1.12.3½	5
Child, Cromel	12	3.13.9	5*
Child, John	3	6. 6.10½	5*
Child, Sylvester	4	6.17.6	5*
Collins, Charles	1	2. 7.2½	5
Luther, Martin	1	7. 8.1½	5*
Miller, James	2	1.12.3½	5
Miller, William T.	1	1.18.8½	5
Miller, Nathan	11	8. 9.4½	5*



This handsome mantel adorns one room of the house that General Nathan Miller of Warren built in 1789. The noted General not only served his town as deputy but was also elected to represent Rhode Island in Congress in 1786.

Photograph reproduced from Pencil Points.

- 1 Warren State Tax (£260.16), June 1781, RIHS Library. There were 203 taxes listed and the lowest was £0.1½ and the highest was £12.18.7½.
- 2 According to this table, only twenty people were elected to the major offices in Warren. Therefore, excluding the one for whom there was no information available, 79% were in Group 5 and 21% were in Group 4. Furthermore, 47% were in the top ten per cent of the town's wealth.

## The Siege of Newport:

### Inauspicious Dawn of Alliance

On December 8, 1776, Sir Henry Clinton, acting under orders from Sir William Howe, commander-in-chief of Britain's North American army, seized the island of Rhode Island with six thousand British and Hessian troops. In Howe's view, Rhode Island offered an advantageous position to the British. There they would be a threat to the surrounding territory while simultaneously they would hold an excellent defensive position. In addition, the town of Newport offered a fine harbor for the British fleet which could both raid and blockade the coast from Boston to New York from such a base, and Howe's brother, Richard, commander of the British naval forces in America, strongly favored its capture.<sup>1</sup>

At the urging of the Rhode Island General Assembly and the Continental Congress, General Joseph Spencer of Connecticut, whom Washington had placed in command of the American forces in Rhode Island, made an abortive attempt to recapture Newport in October of 1777.<sup>2</sup> As a result of Spencer's ineffective action both the Rhode Island Assembly and the Congress investigated his conduct. Though he was exonerated, the Congress accepted the humiliated Spencer's resignation on January 13, 1778.<sup>3</sup>

Spencer was formally succeeded by Major General John Sullivan on April 18.<sup>4</sup> The hardships of war had impaired Sullivan's health and Washington dispatched the New Hampshire general to Rhode Island in the belief that no great exertion would be required of him.<sup>5</sup>

by Paul F. Dearden\*

Despite the fact that he had gained a relatively tranquil post, Sullivan began to contemplate an attack upon the British garrison.<sup>6</sup> In response, Brigadier General Robert Pigot, a veteran of Bunker Hill, commanding the British occupation troops, determined to take the offensive in an effort to force Sullivan off balance and prevent the American from striking a blow against the island.<sup>7</sup> Thus, British raiding parties struck at Bristol and Warren on May 25 and at Tiverton on May 31.<sup>8</sup>

While Pigot's efforts produced the desired effect and Rhode Island was compelled to call for aid from her sister states, events occurring elsewhere were soon to produce a decisive shift in circumstances.<sup>9</sup> On February 6, 1778, France and the United States signed the treaties of amity and commerce, and rather than risk a major naval engagement with Britain in European waters, the French ministry determined to make a decisive seizure of an overseas theater.<sup>10</sup> As a result, Charles Hector Theodat, Comte d'Estaing, a former army officer turned admiral and a favorite of the royal family, was dispatched to America from Toulon on April 13 with a fleet of twelve ships of the line and four frigates.<sup>11</sup> Finally, Britain responded to France's initiative and Vice-Admiral John Byron (grandfather of the famous, or infamous, poet) put to sea with thirteen ships in pursuit of the French fleet on June 9.<sup>12</sup>

After arriving off the Delaware Capes on July 8, where he had hoped to intercept Richard Howe's fleet

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1 Press Macksey, *The War for America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 115; William B. Wilcox, *Portrait of a General: Sir Henry Clinton* (New York: Random House, 1964), p. 118.

2 J. R. Bartlett, ed., *The Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*, 10v. (Providence, 1856-1865), VIII, 155; W. C. Ford, ed., *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 34v. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1904-1937), VIII, 661-662.

3 Benjamin Cowell, *The Spirit of '76 in Rhode Island* (Boston: A. J. Wright, Printer, 1850), p. 250; William R. Staples, *Rhode Island in the Continental Congress* (Providence: Providence Press Co., 1870), p. 174; Ford, X, 47.

4 Otis G. Hammond, ed., *Letters and Papers of Major-General John Sullivan*, 3v. (Concord: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1930-1939), 2:34.

5 Hammond, 2:27; J. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The Writings of George Washington*, 39v. (Washington, D.C. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931-1944), XI, 57-58.

6 Hammond, 2:50.

7 Sir Henry Clinton, *The American Rebellion: Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative of his Campaigns, 1775-1782*, ed. by William B. Wilcox (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 102.

8 Frederick Mackenzie, *The Diary of Frederick Mackenzie, Giving a Daily Narrative of his Military Services as an Officer of the Regiment of Royal Welsh Fusilliers During the Years 1775-1781 in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York*, 2v. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1930), I, 285-290; Hammond, 2:57-63.

9 Governor Greene to Henry Marchant, June 2, 1778, printed in Staples, p. 183.

10 Macksey, pp. 190-191.

11 Wilcox, p. 216; William Heath, *Heath's Memoirs of the American War*, ed. by R. R. Wilson (New York, 1904), p. 200; Mackenzie, II, 342; Christopher Ward, *The War of the Revolution*, ed. by J. R. Alden, 2v. (New York: Macmillan Co., 1952), II, 587.

12 Macksey, pp. 198-202.

evacuating Philadelphia, d'Estaing sailed for New York the following day.<sup>13</sup> There Washington hoped that the French fleet would attack Howe's vessels and open the way to capture of the British stronghold by the American army.<sup>14</sup>

On June 11, Congress wrote to Washington suggesting that d'Estaing's force should be used against either New York or Rhode Island.<sup>15</sup> This communication reached Washington almost a week later, on July 17.<sup>16</sup> That day the Commander-in-Chief made the first preparations for an alternate plan of action, which may well have been proposed to him by Nathanael Greene.<sup>17</sup> Washington wrote Sullivan in Rhode Island instructing him to apply to the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, in Washington's name, in order to compose an army of five thousand men. Sullivan was also ordered to procure pilots who were familiar with Narragansett Bay, gather provisions, and collect boats

for a possible descent upon Pigot's command. If the French turned toward Rhode Island, then Sullivan was to be ready; if not, his preparations for an attack on Newport might distract the enemy and throw the British off their guard at New York. In conclusion Washington ended his dispatch with a polite rap at the Rhode Island commander, stating that, "As I have heard from you but once or twice since your arrival at Rhode Island, I am much at a loss for situation of matters in that quarter. Be pleased therefore to inform me in your answer to this."<sup>18</sup>

The following day, July 18, Washington sent Alexander Hamilton to d'Estaing with a proposal for an attack on Newport. On July 19, Colonel John Laurens, a South Carolinian, educated in England and Geneva, the son of Continental Congress President Henry Laurens, a former aide to Washington, and veteran of Brandywine, wounded at Germantown and Monmouth,



Painting, courtesy National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, England.

Some idea of the strength of British forces holding Newport at the time of the siege may be gained from this portion of a picture by Robert Clevely, marine artist of that time. It shows the occupation of Rhode Island by Sir Henry Clinton on December 8, 1776.

13 Ward, II, 587; Douglas Southall Freeman, *George Washington*, 5v. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), V, 48-49.

14 Dudley W. Knox, *The Naval Genius of George Washington* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1932), p. 46.

15 Edmund Cody Burnett, ed., *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress*, 8v. (Washington, D.C.: The Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1921-1936), III, 324-325.

16 Freeman, V, 50.

returned from a previous embassy to d'Estaing with word that the Admiral was already considering such a course of action, as passage across Sandy Hook seemed unnegotiable. D'Estaing was therefore willing to accept the American plan.<sup>19</sup>

Clinton's thoughts also turned to the Rhode Island garrison. As the French still lay off New York, he dispatched reinforcements to Newport in the belief that should it be attacked, they would enable Pigot to hold out, at least until the fleets of Byron and Howe could combine and sail to his relief.<sup>20</sup> On July 15, five provision ships and about two thousand troops commanded by Major-General Richard Prescott arrived at Newport.<sup>21</sup> By coincidence Prescott, who had been captured by Colonel William Barton the year before, was now to oppose John Sullivan, the man for whom he had been exchanged following the capture of Sullivan at Long Island.<sup>22</sup>

Sullivan received Washington's letter of July 17 on the 24th. On the same day Colonel Laurens brought word from the Commander-in-Chief that d'Estaing's fleet was on its way to Rhode Island and authorizing Sullivan to raise as many men as he thought necessary to make a successful attack upon Newport.<sup>23</sup> On July 22 the Continental brigades of James Varnum, a prominent Rhode Island patriot who had seen little combat despite his long service, and John Glover of Massachusetts, a veteran of savage fighting in Washington's New York and New Jersey campaigns and whose troops had ferried Washington across the Delaware in 1776, were ordered by Washington to march to Rhode Island.<sup>24</sup> As commander of this force, Washington appointed the Marquis de Lafayette, who had arrived in the colonies the year before.<sup>25</sup>

Lafayette was delighted with the prospect of his new assignment, for d'Estaing, a distant relation of the

Marquis, had offered him command of the French troops which he had on board, thus presenting Lafayette with the prospect of being the first commander to lead a joint Franco-American unit and with the honor that such a distinction would bring.<sup>26</sup> He wrote Sullivan that, "Nothing can give me more pleasure than to go under your orders . . . the actions we will fight together will be extremely pleasant and agreeable to me . . . for God's sake, my dear friend, don't begin anything before we arrive."<sup>27</sup>

D'Estaing's fleet weighed anchor for Newport on July 23.<sup>28</sup> Three days later, on July 26, Pigot learned of d'Estaing's departure from New York and Clinton informed him that Newport would probably be the next target.<sup>29</sup> All the while Pigot had been preparing to receive the suspected enemy blow by strengthening his fortifications and the batteries guarding the entrance to the harbor.<sup>30</sup> He also sank a number of transports between Conanicut and Rose Island, in an attempt to block the Middle Channel.<sup>31</sup> The British frigates there were instructed that, should it become necessary to prevent their capture by the French fleet, they were to be run aground and burned.<sup>32</sup>

John Sullivan, the general who had been defeated in successive engagements at Staten Island, Brandywine, and Germantown, was to lead the first Franco-American force to go into battle. On July 23, Nathanael Greene wrote to Sullivan from White Plains congratulating him and stating that, "The expedition you are going on against Newport I think cannot fail of success."<sup>33</sup> Greene also warned Sullivan against failure. "Everything depends almost upon the success of this expedition. Your friends are anxious, your enemies are watching. *I charge you to be victorious.*"<sup>34</sup> If Sullivan was responsible for another failure, it might well mark the termination of his military career, and further

17 Freeman, V, 50, 20; Theodore Thayer, *Nathanael Greene; Strategist of the American Revolution* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1960), p. 251.

18 Hammond, 2:89-90.

19 Freeman, V, 50-51.

20 Clinton, p. 100.

21 Mackenzie, I, 309-310.

22 Freeman, IV, 217, 96n.

23 Hammond, 2:108.

24 Freeman, V, 51.

25 Louis Gottschalk, *Lafayette*, 5v. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937-1969), II, 240.

26 Gottschalk, II, 327, 240-241.

27 Hammond, 2:102.

28 Freeman, V, 51, 28n.

29 Mackenzie, II, 317.

30 Mackenzie, II, 315-316.

31 Major-General Robert Pigot's Report to Sir Henry Clinton, printed in *The Battle of Rhode Island, Rhode Island Historical Tracts*, No. 6 (Providence: S. S. Rider, 1878), 84.

32 Mackenzie, II, 316.

33 Hammond, 2:103.

34 Hammond, 2:104.

diminish his reputation which had already come under severe attack.<sup>35</sup> Sullivan busied himself raising men and supplies while awaiting the arrival of d'Estaing.<sup>36</sup> By July 23 he was predicting that his army would number nearly twelve thousand men.<sup>37</sup>

On July 27, Washington wrote to Sullivan informing him that Nathanael Greene was being sent to join the expedition in his native state, thus fulfilling Greene's wish to participate.<sup>38</sup> Sullivan was to create two divisions, one commanded by Lafayette, the other by Greene. In each of them the two Continental brigades, then marching north with Lafayette, were to be spread among the militia in an effort to improve the not always reliable performance of the volunteers.<sup>39</sup>

Greene left White Plains for Providence on July 28, but not as the commander of the army gathering there.<sup>40</sup> Sullivan was to lead the expedition which Washington believed could end the war by capturing Pigot's army.<sup>41</sup> While Washington may have maintained military etiquette by not appointing Greene to supersede Sullivan, he also made one of his worst decisions as Commander-in-Chief.

With Nathanael's arrival the Greene family was well represented in the events being set in motion, for his cousin, Christopher, who had marched with Arnold to Quebec and distinguished himself in the defense of Fort Mercer, was already present in the state. There he was engaged in recruiting what was referred to as a "colored" regiment composed of slaves, free negroes, mulattoes and Indians. Slaves purchased by the state for service in the unit were promised their freedom at the end of their period of service, which was to be for the duration of the war.<sup>42</sup>

On July 29, d'Estaing's fleet arrived off Narragansett Bay, and the two allied commanders now began to formulate their course of action.<sup>43</sup> Sullivan believed that his army should land on the eastern side of the

island and then move south to attack the fortifications protecting Newport itself, by-passing the British works on the north. The French would anchor between Conanicut and the Island of Rhode Island in the Middle Channel. From there the French troops on board the ships could make a diversionary pretense at landing, giving the Americans an opportunity to reach the island and strike for Newport. The fleet could then land its troops for an attack on the Newport fortifications, bombard the shore, and prevent the British on Conanicut from reaching Rhode Island. With the fleet in the Middle Channel, possible support from New York would be held from entering the bay and the allies could then destroy the enemy forces elsewhere on the island in a final mop-up operation.<sup>44</sup>

The French Admiral disagreed with Sullivan's proposal that his fleet should wait in the Middle Channel for American action. D'Estaing also desired to seize Conanicut as a base of operations for his troops, rather than simply hold the British there. He was also anxious to get on with the invasion of Rhode Island for he knew that an English fleet had followed him across the Atlantic and might soon be upon him.<sup>45</sup> On July 30, d'Estaing's ships moved towards Newport harbor, and Pigot evacuated Conanicut, fearing that his troops then might be cut off and trapped.<sup>46</sup> The allied difference over how to deal with Conanicut had now been solved.

At one o'clock in the afternoon, two French frigates posted in Seconnet passage began to move towards Fogland Ferry. Fearing capture, the British burned their ships located on the eastern side of the island. As the fires heated their still loaded cannons, and the flames found their magazines, the bay was filled with the tearing crash of explosions.<sup>47</sup>

Having marched nearly two hundred miles in thirteen days, Lafayette's troops entered Providence on August 3, much to the excitement of the citizenry.<sup>48</sup>

35 Charles P. Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution: John Sullivan of New Hampshire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), pp. 85-86; \_\_\_\_\_, "John Sullivan: Luckless Irishman," in George Athan Billias, ed., *George Washington's Generals* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1964), p. 139.

36 Hammond, 2:105-119.

37 Asa Waterman, Letter, July 23, 1778, to [?], Rhode Island State Archives, Papers of Asa Waterman, Rhode Island Revolutionary War Deputy Commissioner, 1775-1781.

38 Hammond, 2:103.

39 Fitzpatrick, XII, 237-238.

40 George W. Greene, *Life of Nathanael Greene, Major-General in the Army of the Revolution*, 3v. [New York, 1867-1871], II, 108.

*A map of part of Rhode Island shows the positions of the American and British armies during the action on the 29th of August in 1778.*

*Detail of map drawn by S. Lewis and engraved by Benjamin Jones, from The Life of George Washington by John Marshall. (Philadelphia, 1807).*

41 Fitzpatrick, XII, 488.

42 Bartlett, VIII, 358-360.

43 Mackenzie, II, 319.

44 Hammond, 3:640-644.

45 Hammond, 2:151-152.

46 Mackenzie, II, 320-321.

47 *ibid.*, 321.

48 Gottschalk, II, 244.



On the following day Lafayette, representing Sullivan, boarded d'Estaing's flagship, the *Languedoc*, to confer on the final plan of attack.<sup>49</sup> Sullivan, as before, advocated that the Americans strike first on the west, following which the four thousand French troops of d'Estaing's force would cross from Conanicut and make their assault on the east.<sup>50</sup>

D'Estaing countered with the suggestion that both forces attack simultaneously, and posited his belief that Lafayette might lead the French land forces and a portion of the American army as well, thereby coordinating the action of the national forces.<sup>51</sup> Colonel Laurens believed that Lafayette had influenced the Admiral to tailor his scheme so that the Marquis might occupy a celebrated position in the endeavor.<sup>52</sup> Greene and Sullivan also registered disapproval of Lafayette's arrangements, and Lafayette pouted to d'Estaing that the Americans desired that the French take "a humiliating secondary part." D'Estaing, however, pressed the point and Sullivan relented.<sup>53</sup> The Americans were now to land at Howland's Ferry and the French near Dyer's Island.<sup>54</sup>

On August 3, Pigot received word from New York that Howe would sail to his relief.<sup>55</sup> Howe, reinforced by two ships of the line, one of them from Byron's squadron, had thirteen ships of the line, mounting 772 guns, with which to oppose d'Estaing's twelve, mounting 846 pieces.<sup>56</sup> On August 6, Howe sailed for Rhode Island and Clinton prepared a relief force of four thousand men.<sup>57</sup> In the meantime, Pigot withdrew all but two of his guns from the northern end of the island, as a preliminary to concentrating his forces around Newport. The island's horses and cattle, with the exception of one cow for the subsistence of each family, were driven within the lines. Carriages and wagons were gathered up, as were entrenching tools. The Negro population was also sent within the defenses.<sup>58</sup>

On August 5, two of d'Estaing's ships moved up Narragansett Passage and rounded the northern tip of Conanicut. This movement caused the British to

*Major-General the Marquis de Lafayette.*

*Print from the Magazine of American History, December 1878.*



destroy their ships anchored in the Middle Channel. The sound of exploding ships once again reverberated across the bay and the wind-borne embers of the wrecks endangered the very safety of Newport.<sup>59</sup> Thus was destroyed a naval force which Washington had hoped could be captured intact.<sup>60</sup> With the British ships destroyed, the Americans now began landing on the western coast and plundering the homes of Royalists.<sup>61</sup>

The allied attack was set for the morning of August 10.<sup>62</sup> At three o'clock on the afternoon of August 8, the French fleet, led by d'Estaing's flagship, ran past the British batteries at Newport and Goat Island, with the ships' guns blasting at the enemy emplacements which spewed forth an eruption of fire and smoke in reception. Though the British scored a number of hits on the fleet, they suffered no casualties

49 *ibid.*

50 Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, p. 92.

51 Hammond, 2:172-174.

52 William G. Simms, ed., *The Army Correspondence of Colonel John Laurens in the Years 1777-1778: Now First Printed from Original Letters to his Father, Henry Laurens, President of the Congress, with a Memoir by William Gilmore Simms* (New York: for W. G. Simms, 1867), pp. 217-218.

53 Gottschalk, II, 246-248.

54 Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, pp. 93-94.

55 Mackenzie, II, 326-327.

56 Clinton, p. 101, 4n; Wilcox, p. 244, 5n.

57 Clinton, p. 101.

58 Mackenzie, II, 328-329.

59 *ibid.*; Mrs. Amory's "Journal," quoted in Thomas C. Amory, "The Siege of Newport," *The Rhode Island Historical Magazine*, V (1884-1885), 10.

60 Fitzpatrick, XII, 280.

*Colonel John Laurens of South Carolina.*

From *The Army Correspondence of Colonel John Laurens . . . 1777-8*  
published by the *Bradford Club* (New York, 1867).



themselves in an action which lasted an hour and a quarter. Following the exchange, the fleet anchored off the Conanicut shore near Gould Island.<sup>63</sup>

Pigot now gave orders to burn all structures within artillery range of his works protecting the town, and about twenty buildings were destroyed. That evening, he withdrew his troops from the northern end of the island, fearing that an attack below them would cut them off from the lines about Newport.<sup>64</sup> Now his entire 6,706-man army was concentrated in a strong defensive position.<sup>65</sup>

Learning of Pigot's evacuation of the northern forts, Sullivan dispatched his army across from Tiverton on the morning of August 9, in order to capture the works at Butt's and Quaker Hills lest Pigot decide to reverse his move. In so doing Sullivan crossed to the island

without waiting for d'Estaing's troops to land, as had been agreed upon, and without informing the French admiral of his action.<sup>66</sup> Despite the fact that d'Estaing later expressed approval, and even praise, of Sullivan for his response to changing circumstances, the immediate reaction of the French was hardly a positive one.<sup>67</sup> John Laurens reported that the French officers "talked like women disputing precedence in a country dance, instead of men engaged in pursuing the common interest of two great nations."<sup>68</sup> Nevertheless, d'Estaing prepared to land his men and aid the Americans.<sup>69</sup> His arrangements were soon cut short. At noon Admiral Howe arrived off the entrance of the bay.<sup>70</sup>

D'Estaing feared that if he remained in the channel Howe might occupy Conanicut and place the French fleet in a crossfire between there and Newport. Neither could d'Estaing afford to be blockaded in the harbor, for then he could not provide protection to the French West Indies.<sup>71</sup> Moreover, if Howe attacked d'Estaing in the bay, Howe's ships would be more maneuverable than d'Estaing's larger ones.<sup>72</sup> It may well be that d'Estaing gambled on defeating Howe's squadron before it could be joined by that of Byron and the British could gain a clear superiority. The French admiral, therefore, decided to fight a naval engagement with Howe, and he so notified Sullivan. He also promised to return to Rhode Island and finish the work of taking Newport. To protect Sullivan's communications with the mainland, d'Estaing detached three of his ships which were to be stationed in Seconnet passage.<sup>73</sup> On August 10, the wind shifted to the north, giving d'Estaing the weather gauge and enabling him to drive down the Channel towards Howe.<sup>74</sup>

At about 8:30 in the morning the French ships came within range of Pigot's batteries and once again they thundered at one another, as the French sought to re-emerge from the Channel. While the British guns frequently found their targets, many of the fleet's shots soared over the batteries, plunging into the town.<sup>75</sup> The British emerged from the contest unscathed, but the effect of their fire was pointed up by the French

61 Max von Eelking, "Military Operations in Rhode Island: The Siege of Newport," in *Rhode Island Historical Tracts*, 6:43.

62 Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, p. 95.

63 Mackenzie, II, 338-339.

64 *ibid.*, 339-340.

65 *ibid.*, 346.

66 Hammond, 2:198-199.

67 Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, p. 96.

68 Simms, p. 220.

69 Gottschalk, II, 249.

70 Mackenzie, II, 341.

71 Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, p. 96.

72 Gottschalk, II, 249.

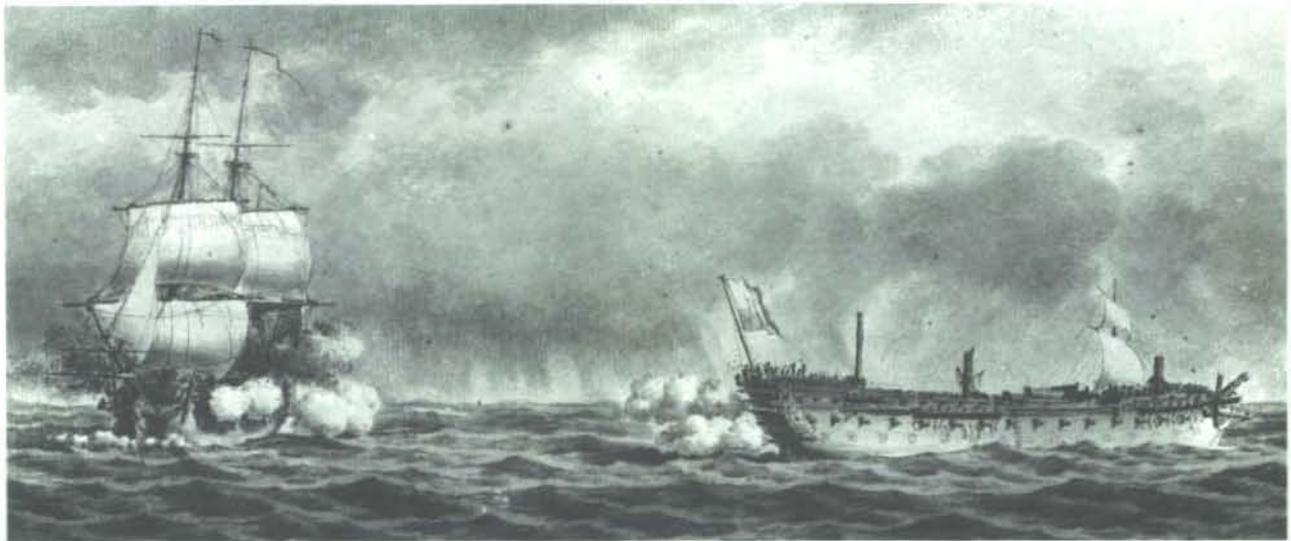
73 *ibid.*; Mackenzie, II, 346.

74 Mackenzie, II, 344.

75 *ibid.*, 344-345.

On the evening of August 13, d'Estaing's flagship, the *Languedoc*, dismasted by the storm, was set upon by the English vessel, *Renown*. This record of the encounter was made by Pierre Ozanne, official artist of the French fleet.

Detail of a sepia wash drawing, reproduced from the collections of the Library of Congress.



dead which were washed up on the beaches of Rhode Island.<sup>76</sup> Once past the batteries the French fleet "crowded all the sail . . ." it "could set . . . and stood directly for the British Fleet."<sup>77</sup>

For Howe to give battle he would have to tack against the wind. Thus he refused and sailed to the south with the wind, and the French, at his back. Howe could only hope that he might eventually gain the weather gauge and then close with the French under more favorable circumstances.<sup>78</sup> All that day and the next the two fleets maneuvered for position.<sup>79</sup> On the second day Howe had just succeeded in gaining the weather gauge when a tremendous storm struck, scattering both fleets.<sup>80</sup> The gale continued until the afternoon of August 13. That evening d'Estaing's *Languedoc*, dismasted and rudderless, was set upon in an abortive attack by the British 50-gun ship, *Renown*.<sup>81</sup>

On the morning of the 14th, the *Languedoc* was rejoined by the still unified portion of the fleet. That afternoon the French captured the English ship *Thunder Bomb*. At 9 o'clock that night the fleet rescued the *Marseilles*, which had lost her foremast and bowsprit, by putting to flight the British ship *Preston* and another vessel which was closing in for an attack.<sup>82</sup> The following day d'Estaing's squadron captured the *Senegal*, mounting 16 guns. Two days later the *César* returned to the fleet.<sup>83</sup> The *César*, carrying 74 guns, had engaged the British *Isis*, mounting 50, and received the worst of the action.<sup>84</sup> This encounter had cost the *César* nearly sixty dead and one hundred wounded, among whom was her captain, who lost his arm.<sup>85</sup>

Both fleets had suffered from the storm, and as d'Estaing limped back to Rhode Island and Sullivan, Howe made his way to New York for repairs.<sup>86</sup> On

76 *ibid.*, 345; von Eelking, 48.

77 Mackenzie, II, 345.

78 Ward, II, 591.

79 Frank Moore, comp., *Diary of the American Revolution*, 2v. (New York: C. Scribner, 1860), II, 84-85.

80 Wilcox, 246.

81 Moore, II, 86; Ward, II, 591.

82 Moore, II, 86; Ward, II, 591.

83 Moore, II, 86.

84 Ward, II, 591.

85 Heath, p. 204.

86 Ward, II, 591.

87 Wilcox, p. 247.

88 Hammond, 2:191-192.

89 Heath, p. 202.

90 *ibid.*, pp. 202-203; Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, p. 94.

91 Hammond, 2:197.

August 18th the French brushed by part of Byron's fleet, bound for Manhattan.<sup>87</sup>

While the struggle for control of the sea was taking place, Sullivan's troops remained on Rhode Island and continued to grow in number.<sup>88</sup> On August 10, John Hancock, now seeking to display his martial skills, left home to take command of his state's militia.<sup>89</sup> By August 11, Sullivan's army numbered 10,122 men, exclusive of some New Hampshire volunteers, among whom were Sullivan's brothers James and Eben, and some other corps.<sup>90</sup> The general was apparently not greatly impressed by the quality of his volunteers, writing that they were a "disarranged chaos of militia."<sup>91</sup> Lafayette's aide, the Chevalier de Pontgibaud, went even further. He declared that the volunteers "looked like a flock of ducks in cross-belts . . . I guessed that these warriors were more anxious to eat up our supplies than to make a close acquaintance with the enemy . . ."<sup>92</sup>

Sullivan believed that his army was sufficiently strong to begin operations without the French and on August 11 he issued marching orders for 6 o'clock the following morning.<sup>93</sup> That night the same storm which struck the fleets, began on the island and raged all through the 12th and 13th. The storm tore down tents in the British camp, drenching the troops and their equipment.<sup>94</sup>

Sullivan was forced to postpone his advance, most of his camp's tents were levelled, and his ammunition was almost totally destroyed. His men were forced to lie on the ground as the rain and the wind beat down upon them, and some succumbed to the weather. If the British attacked he would be forced to rely on the bayonet, as would the enemy, for firelocks did not function in the rain. Sullivan frankly doubted the ability of his militia to withstand a rush of cold steel and, with Seconnet passage churning, his line of retreat was cut off. To Washington he wrote, "To retreat is impossible; therefore we must conquer or perish."<sup>95</sup> Greene, too, believed that the army was then in peril,

should the British make a concentrated attack.<sup>96</sup> On the 12th, Pigot considered precisely such a measure but, apparently expecting the return of Howe and the relief of the garrison, he rejected it.<sup>97</sup>

Still mindful of his need for success, Sullivan wrote to Governor Greene of Rhode Island stating that if the expedition failed, ". . . I wish you & your assembly to witness for my Character against a Censorious world who will take pleasure to Blast my Reputation for being unsuccessful Even though they know it to be unavoidable."<sup>98</sup>

When the storm cleared on August 14, Sullivan gave orders for his army to move forward the next day at 6:00 a.m.<sup>99</sup> On the 15th, the army marched south, with Varnum's column taking the West Road and Glover the East, with Ezekiel Cornell and Christopher Greene between them.<sup>100</sup> At the head of the army, pioneers, drafted from the ranks, levelled the fences and walls blocking the troops' advance.<sup>101</sup> By 2 o'clock the Americans reached the vicinity of Honeyman's Hill, which faced the right of the British lines, encamped there,<sup>102</sup> and stationed advanced posts.<sup>103</sup>

Sullivan had made a poor choice of ground from which to begin the siege. The British defensive line, built on the heights surrounding Newport, stretched, on the right, in a northwesterly direction, from Easton's Beach to Easton's Pond and Green End. From there it curved to the west and Tonomy Hill.<sup>104</sup> That part of the line which faced Sullivan and Honeyman's Hill lay from Easton's Pond to Green End. At the base of the ridges of the two hills is a ravine in which is situated Easton's Pond and its tributary, plus a section of marshy ground.

Digging trenches on the face of Honeyman's and extending them downhill to approach the enemy meant that the besiegers had to contend with plunging fire from the British artillery at Green End.<sup>105</sup> To take the British line by storm would mean charging down Honeyman's Hill and crossing the water-sogged ravine under plunging enemy cannon shot, and then ascending

92 Charles A. Moré, *The Chevalier de Pontgibaud, a French Volunteer*, trans. and ed. by Robert B. Douglas (New York: J. W. Bonton, 1897), pp. 66-67.

93 General Orders and Orderly Book of a Part of the Army under General Sullivan, August 11, 1778, RIHS Library.

94 Mackenzie, II, 349-352.

95 Hammond, 2:205-207.

96 Thayer, p. 254.

97 Mackenzie, II, 350.

98 Hammond, 2:203-204.

99 General Orders, August 14, 1778.

100 Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, pp. 99-100.

101 General Orders, August 11, 1778.

102 Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, p. 100.

103 Mackenzie, II, 353.

104 *ibid.*, 323.

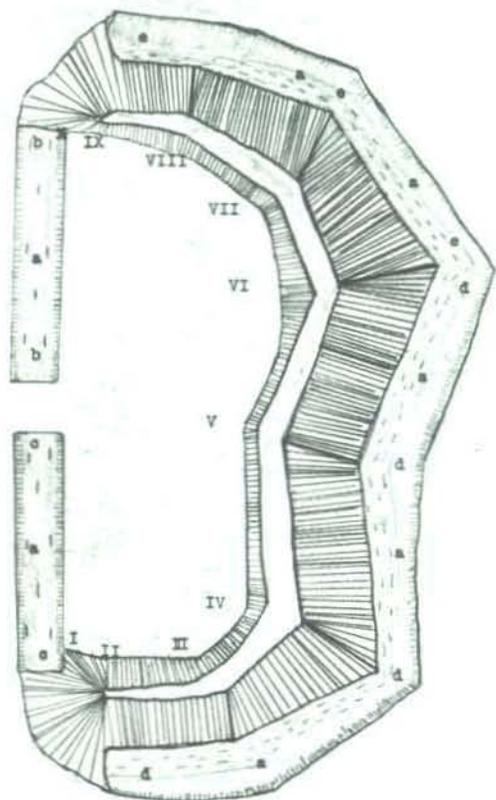
105 G. W. Cullum, *Fortification Defenses of Narragansett Bay* (Washington, D.C., 1884), p. 14.

106 *ibid.*

107 *ibid.*

Green End Fort was surrounded by a protective ditch as indicated by *a*, with differences in depth. At *b*, it was two and a half feet deep; at *c*, three feet; at *d*, five feet; and at *e*, seven feet in depth. The stations, indicated by Roman numerals, also varied greatly in height.

Adapted from Eugene P. King, "British Fortifications in Middletown, Rhode Island," MS., RIHS Library.



nearer on that side, but the more they advance with their approaches, the more our ground commands them. We are strong there . . ."114

The American batteries were completed by the morning of August 19 and at approximately 8:00 a.m. Sullivan's artillery commenced a cannonade of the British lines, forcing Pigot to remove his army's

encampment farther back from his fortifications.<sup>115</sup> As the American approaches crept forward on August 20, the crippled French fleet returned to Rhode Island's waters.<sup>116</sup> D'Estaing informed Sullivan of his intention to put in at Boston for repairs. Furthermore, the instructions of the French government had stipulated that he seek the shelter of Boston harbor should he expect to be confronted by a fleet superior to his own, and d'Estaing was now fearful of a juncture of Howe and Byron.<sup>117</sup>

Sullivan implored the Admiral to remain for twenty-four hours and complete the conquest of the island.<sup>118</sup> Greene concurred in Sullivan's judgment, and cursed that "the devil has got into the fleet."<sup>119</sup> D'Estaing was not as certain of such an easy success, however. As he later wrote Washington, "It was . . . difficult to persuade oneself that about six thousand men well entrenched and with a fort before which they had dug trenches could be taken either in twenty-four hours or in two days."<sup>120</sup> After a long conference with Lafayette and Nathanael Greene, d'Estaing put the question to a council of his captains who unanimously voted to sail for Boston.<sup>121</sup>

The French did not simply propose to abandon their allies, however. D'Estaing offered to aid in the evacuation of the American army to the mainland, but Sullivan declined to leave.<sup>122</sup> Early the next morning, August 22, the French fleet departed.<sup>123</sup> That day Howe once again put to sea to relieve Rhode Island, after spending only four days in repairing his vessels. Clinton remained behind, still preparing his transports.<sup>124</sup>

Howe, rather than putting in at Rhode Island, raising the siege and cutting off Sullivan's line of retreat, followed d'Estaing to Boston. When he finally arrived there on September 1, the French had so fortified the harbor that Howe deemed it impracticable to attack.<sup>125</sup>

On the 22nd, after the French departure from Narragansett Bay, Sullivan called a council of his officers at which a letter of remonstrance was drawn up and signed by the Americans in the hope of moving d'Estaing to return.<sup>126</sup> In the document Sullivan asserted that the Americans had undertaken the Rhode Island campaign only because of the promised

118 Hammond, 2:219.

119 Greene, II, 120.

120 Estaing and Washington, p. 9.

121 Gottschalk, II, 252.

122 *ibid.*

123 Mackenzie, II, 367; Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, p. 102.

124 Wilcox, pp. 247-248.

125 Heath, p. 205; Macksey, p. 219.

126 Thayer, p. 225.

aid of the French, and that his army had been needlessly abandoned. He also maintained that d'Estaing's abandonment of the expedition would be "derogatory to the honor of France, contrary to the intentions of His Most Christian Majesty, and the interest of his nation, and destructive in the highest degree to the welfare of the United States of America, and highly injurious to the alliance formed between the two nations."<sup>127</sup>

Lafayette was incensed when he was called upon to sign the letter, and refused to do so. To d'Estaing he wrote in a rather melodramatic vein, "every word which hereafter will be pronounced I shall expect to be the very one I shall feel called upon to avenge."<sup>128</sup>

Laurens was dispatched by ship to overtake the French fleet and deliver the council's protest. Failing to catch up with d'Estaing, Laurens returned on the 23rd and the message was forwarded to General Heath in Boston.<sup>129</sup>

That day the Americans opened two more batteries, one of 5 guns and another of 7. All four positions engaged the British defenders in a day-long bombardment.<sup>130</sup> Yet now Sullivan had only 8,174 men, nearly 7,000 of whom were militia, with which to capture Pigot's heavily entrenched army.<sup>131</sup> Thus the American commander turned to his generals for advice on what measures the army should take.<sup>132</sup>

General John Glover proposed that the siege be continued in the same manner, but he pointed out that if this were done the forts at the northern end of the island and the ferries to the mainland should be secured, lest the arrival of British reinforcements necessitate a withdrawal.<sup>133</sup> Greene thought an assault with the present force would be disastrous.<sup>134</sup> Instead he and Glover proposed a more likely scheme, and apparently Laurens concurred with them.<sup>135</sup> In their view, a force of three hundred men, led by Laurens, would capture the redoubt guarding Easton's Beach. With this accomplished a portion of the army would then attack and turn the enemy's left flank by way of the beach. Once this had been done a breach would

exist in the British lines around the town, allowing the rest of the army on Honeyman's Hill to pour through the enemy defenses.<sup>136</sup>

This idea died when it became evident that the army lacked the strength to carry out such a maneuver.<sup>137</sup> Since the departure of d'Estaing's fleet, Sullivan's force had declined markedly. As Greene wrote to Washington, "It struck such a panic among the militia and volunteers that they began to desert in shoals. The fleet no sooner set sail than they began to be alarmed for their safety. This misfortune damped the hopes of our army . . ."<sup>138</sup> By August 24, Sullivan was moved to state in general orders that "it is with grate Grief & astonishment, the Genl finds that grate numbers of Volinteers are about to quit the Island at this Time & to give to america a Lasting Proof of their Want of firmness and Bravery."<sup>139</sup>

One of those who left Sullivan was John Hancock, who asserted that his efforts in Boston might be of service to d'Estaing. At Hancock's request, Lafayette furnished him with a letter of introduction to the Admiral in which Lafayette referred to the Bostonian as a "living Brutus." But privately, Lafayette wrote d'Estaing that Hancock's decision might well have been motivated by his "little eagerness for English bullets."<sup>140</sup>

In general orders, issued August 24, Sullivan gave vent to his resentment of d'Estaing's action by proclaiming:

*The General cannot help lamenting the sudden and unexpected departure of the French fleet, as he finds it has a tendency to discourage some who placed great dependence upon the assistance of it, though he can by no means suppose the army or any part of it endangered by this movement. He yet hopes the event will prove America able to procure that by her own arms, which her allies refuse to assist in obtaining.*<sup>141</sup>

Of this statement Greene said that "It opened the mouthes of the army in very clamourous strains."<sup>142</sup> To Washington he wrote that "People censure the Admiral with great freedom, and many are impudent

127 Hammond, 2:243-246.

128 Gottschalk, II, 255.

129 *ibid.*, 255-256; Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, pp. 103-104.

130 Mackenzie, II, 367-369.

131 Hammond, 2:219-220.

132 George Athan Billias, *General John Glover and his Marblehead Mariners* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), pp. 168-169.

133 Hammond, 2:261-262.

134 *ibid.*, 253-254.

135 Greene, II, 126.

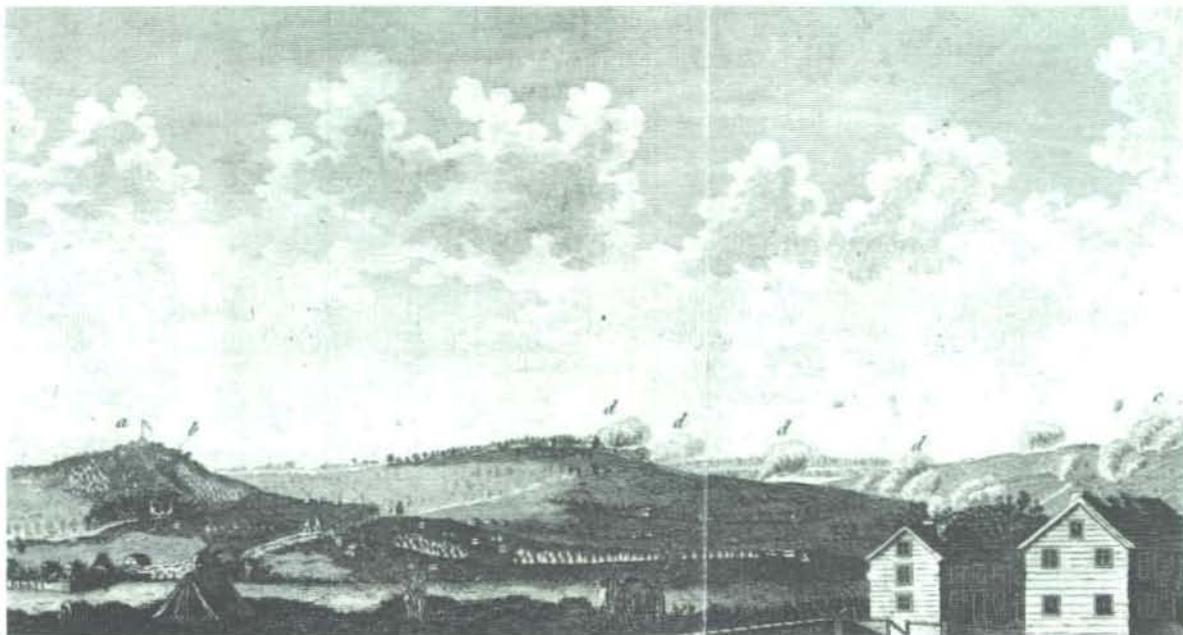
136 Hammond, II, 253-254, 261-262; Greene, II, 126.

137 *ibid.*

138 *ibid.*, 125.

139 *An Original Orderly Book of a Division of the Rhode Island Troops . . . Under General John Sullivan during the Operations in Rhode Island from May 20, 1778 to February 12, 1779* [August 24, 1778], RIHS Library.

This British view of the action of August 25th "taken from Mr. Brindley's House" appeared in the February, 1779, issue of the *English Gentleman's Magazine*. No key was printed for the letters that dot the sky, nor was Mr. Brindley identified further.



enough to reproach the nation through the Admiral."<sup>143</sup> Yet despite the inadvisability of Sullivan's words, sentiment against the French already existed within the American army. Israel Angell, a colonel in the Second Rhode Island Regiment, noted in his diary on August 23 that "the french fleet . . . left us in a most Rascally manner and what will be the Event God only knows."<sup>144</sup>

Lafayette bitterly protested Sullivan's words and drew an apology from his commander, although for a time a rumor circulated that Lafayette had challenged Sullivan to a duel. Sullivan also promised to try and repair some of the damage his order had done.<sup>145</sup>

To Washington, Lafayette wrote "I am more upon a warlike footing in the American lines than when I came near the British lines at Newport."<sup>146</sup> But Greene, playing the diplomat, tried to calm Lafayette's wounded national pride.<sup>147</sup>

On the 26th, Sullivan carried out his promise to the Marquis. That day his general orders read:

*It having been supposed by some Persons that by the Orders of the 24th Inst. the Commander in Chief meant to insinuate that the departure of the French Fleet was owing to a fixed determination not to assist in the present enterprise — As the General would not wish to give the least colour for ungenerous and illiberal minds*

140 Gottschalk, II, 257.

141 Hammond, 3:645; General Orders, August 24, 1778; Original Orderly Book, August 24, 1778.

142 Greene, II, 127.

143 *ibid.*

144 Israel Angell, *The Diary of Israel Angell*, ed. by

Edward Field (Providence: Preston and Rounds Co., 1899), p. 4.

145 Gottschalk, II, 259.

146 Jared Sparks, ed., *Correspondence of the American Revolution: Being Letters of Eminent Men to George Washington*, 4v. (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1853), II, 185.

147 Gottschalk, II, 259.

*Major General John Sullivan.*

Engraving from the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, April, 1853.



to make such unfair interpretations, he thinks it necessary to say that as he could not determine whether the Removal of the Fleet was absolutely necessary or not and therefore did not mean to censure an act which the Admirals orders might render absolutely necessary — He however hopes that the Speedy return of the Fleet will show their attention and regard to the Alliance formed between us and add to the obligations the Americans are already under to the French nation. However mortifying the Departure of the Fleet was to us at such a time of expectations we ought not too suddenly Censure the movement, or for an act of any kind to forget the aid and Protection which had been

offered by the French since the Commencement of the present Contest.<sup>148</sup>

In the evening Sullivan received word from Washington that the British Navy might be heading for Newport.<sup>149</sup> Sullivan had by now determined to remove his army to the northern end of the island and there await the return of d'Estaing and the renewal of the siege.<sup>150</sup> During the night he withdrew his artillery from the works on the lower part of Honeyman's Hill.<sup>151</sup> On August 25, the British bombarded the rebel works for an hour and a half. In return the Americans fired only a few shots and, while they strengthened their trenches, they did not continue to push them toward the enemy line.<sup>152</sup>

The next day Pigot observed that Sullivan had discontinued his approaches. But reconnaissance patrols brought in prisoners with conflicting information and he could not be certain whether Sullivan intended to withdraw or make an attempt to storm the British position.<sup>153</sup> In the morning three of Howe's frigates put in at Newport and Pigot learned that Howe was on his way to Boston, but he was assured that reinforcements could be expected from Clinton momentarily.<sup>154</sup>

Clinton, with four thousand troops, finally sailed to the relief of Pigot on August 27.<sup>155</sup> His plan involved more than the mere lifting of the siege. Sir Henry hoped to run up Narragansett Passage and interdict Sullivan's line of retreat to the mainland by seizing Bristol Neck and blocking Howland's Ferry with his warships. Sullivan's army would then be trapped on Rhode Island and either captured or destroyed.<sup>156</sup> With this done Clinton could then move against Providence. The weather, however, delayed Clinton's progress and for three days his ships had to sail against contrary winds.<sup>157</sup> As the British danger drew closer, Sullivan remained inactive in his works on Honeyman's Hill.<sup>158</sup> On the 27th of August, Lafayette, at the request of his fellow officers, left for Boston in order to determine what d'Estaing's intentions were. Riding all that night,

148 Glover's Orderly Book, quoted in Freeman, V, 71, 143n.

149 Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, p. 104.

150 *ibid.*

151 Angell, p. 5.

152 Mackenzie, II, 372.

153 Pigot to Clinton, 88-89.

154 Mackenzie, II, 378.

155 Wilcox, p. 250.

156 Clinton, p. 103.

157 Wilcox, p. 250.

158 Mackenzie, II, 377-380.

159 Gottschalk, II, 262-263.

160 *Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society* [Providence, 1867], VI, 216-217.

161 *ibid.*

162 Hammond, 2:275.

163 *ibid.*, 281-282.

164 Angell, p. 8.

165 Hammond, 2:282.

166 *ibid.*

Admiral Charles Hector Theodat, Comte d'Estaing.

Engraving after a painting by F. Sablet.



Lafayette covered the seventy miles to Boston in only seven hours.<sup>159</sup>

Meanwhile, writing what may have been the most ill-advised statement of the campaign, Governor Greene, at the behest of the Council of War, informed Sullivan on August 28 that it would be impossible for Rhode Island to send more troops to the island. As his reason Greene stated that "Some guards are necessary for our extensive shores, having on them a most valuable stock with large quantities of cheese, and the people in danger of being taken out of their beds by small parties."<sup>160</sup> The Governor then generously suggested that Sullivan seek his reinforcements "from

the neighboring States."<sup>161</sup> Desertions among the militia had so depleted Sullivan's army that by now it probably numbered about seven thousand men.<sup>162</sup>

Finally, on August 28, a council of officers decided to retreat to the abandoned British fortifications to the north.<sup>163</sup> That night the army received orders to break camp and by midnight the advanced pickets, facing Pigot's army, were drawn off.<sup>164</sup> By 2:00 a.m. the Americans had reached Butt's Hill Fort and its line of works. There they pitched their tents.<sup>165</sup> Sullivan's troops now formed a defensive line facing Newport which stretched from the eastern shore on the left, to the western shore on the right, with Butt's Hill forming the center.<sup>166</sup> On the left, with Quaker Hill to his front, was Glover.<sup>167</sup> In the center was Christopher Greene, temporarily detached from his regiment in order to lead a brigade.<sup>168</sup> Commanding the right wing was James Varnum.<sup>169</sup> Holding the redoubt on the shore, which anchored the right wing, was Christopher Greene's regiment which included about one hundred Negroes, now led by Major Samuel Ward.<sup>170</sup> Posted to the southward, three miles in front of the army, were skirmishers. Those blocking the West Road were under Colonel John Laurens, while Colonel Henry Livingston held the East Road in front of Quaker Hill.<sup>171</sup>

As the dawn cast its orange-red streaks of light over Honeyman's Hill the British saw the empty American trenches and the large open space that had been the rebel campsite.<sup>172</sup> Informed of Sullivan's withdrawal, Pigot chose to hamper the American retreat.<sup>173</sup> At 6:30 a.m. Brigadier-General Smith marched toward Quaker Hill by the East Road with the 22nd and 33rd Regiments, together with the Flank Companies of the 38th and 54th. On the West Road, Major-General Lossberg, leading two Hessian Anspach Battalions and the Hessian Chasseurs, advanced toward Laurens.<sup>174</sup> Lest the American retreat prove a ruse, Pigot remained in the British lines with three regiments, prepared to check a possible assault.<sup>175</sup>

Overconfident, Smith failed to send out flanking

167 Billias, *General John Glover*, p. 170.

168 *ibid.*; Edward Martin Stone, *Our French Allies* (Providence: Providence Press Co., 1884), p. 85.

169 Paul C. Carlson, "James Mitchell Varnum and the American Revolution" (unpublished essay for Professor Willard Wallace in partial fulfillment of M.A., Wesleyan University, 1965), p. 35.

170 Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, 1964), p. 31; Sidney Smith

Rider, *An Historical Inquiry Concerning the Attempt to Raise a Regiment of Slaves by Rhode Island During the War of the Revolution*, *Rhode Island Historical Tracts*, No. 10 (Providence: S. S. Rider, 1880), 22; Stone, p. 85.

171 Hammond, 2:282.

172 Mackenzie, II, 380-381.

173 Pigot to Clinton, 90.

174 Mackenzie, II, 381.

175 *ibid.*

parties or an advance guard. At 7 o'clock, as Smith's troops approached the windmill near Quaker Hill, Livingston's men sprang up behind a stone wall and a crashing volley of musketry ripped through the British ranks.<sup>176</sup> At almost the same moment Lossberg collided with Laurens in an explosion of gunfire.<sup>177</sup> Slowly the American detachments gave ground.<sup>178</sup> To reinforce them, Sullivan sent them each a regiment, but with the stipulation that once Laurens and Livingston had been rescued, all the troops were to fall back on the main army's line.<sup>179</sup> Pigot, too, strengthened his forces by dispatching two more regiments to each of the columns.<sup>180</sup>

With Smith reinforced, Livingston was forced to retreat and his men came pouring down the slope of Quaker Hill into the American lines with the British troops in close pursuit.<sup>181</sup> As Smith's troops rushed at the American defenses, Glover met them with massed musketry and artillery fire, forcing them to fall back to the top of Quaker Hill.<sup>182</sup> Smith decided against a renewal of his assault and from Quaker and Turkey Hills the British began an artillery bombardment of Glover's sector at 9:00 a.m. but failed to dislodge him from his position.<sup>183</sup>

At about 10 o'clock Pigot began to shift his attack to Varnum's wing of the army, now commanded by Nathanael Greene, and with two frigates and a pair of smaller vessels the British began to cannonade the redoubt occupied by Major Ward.<sup>184</sup> All that day skirmishing raged continuously along the length of the American line. Then, at 2:00 p.m. the British and Hessians advanced in strength toward Ward's redoubt. Greene threw four regiments against the advancing enemy, but failed to halt their attack. Greene then reinforced his line with two regiments of Continental troops and a brigade of militia. In addition, Sullivan sent Livingston to Greene's aid.<sup>185</sup> After two hours of fighting and three charges the enemy finally withdrew to Turkey Hill.<sup>186</sup>

Seeking a complete victory, Sullivan considered assaulting the British line on Quaker and Turkey Hills,

but decided against such an action. His men had neither eaten nor slept since his abandonment of the siege lines before Newport. In addition, the enemy held a strong position studded with twenty pieces of artillery. An assault would expose him to their fire as he crossed the large open plain between Butt's Hill and the British-held slopes.<sup>187</sup> Towards evening an attempt was made to cut off and surround the Hessian Chasseurs who held an exposed position on the British left, but reinforcements rushed to the Chasseurs' support forced the Americans to retreat.<sup>188</sup> The battle, at length, came to a close with a cannonade which lasted until nightfall.<sup>189</sup>

Sullivan's casualties were 30 dead, 137 wounded, and 44 missing.<sup>190</sup> The British had 38 killed, 210 wounded, and 12 missing.<sup>191</sup> Sullivan and his officers now favored a retreat to the mainland.<sup>192</sup> Their decision was reinforced by a letter from Washington which arrived at Sullivan's camp on the morning of August 30. In it Washington warned Sullivan that an English fleet was heading for Rhode Island.<sup>193</sup> During that day the two armies remained in their positions, exchanging artillery fire and an occasional musket shot.<sup>194</sup> Sullivan's army moved its supplies and baggage to the mainland, and the General had redoubts constructed and tents pitched in sight of the British in order to cover his intentions.<sup>195</sup> Yet, the enemy was not so easily deceived for the removal of supplies attracted their attention.<sup>196</sup>

In a general order issued on the 30th, Sullivan attacked a rumor that the Negro troops in the redoubt had failed to perform their duty in the battle of the previous day. He stated that "upon inquiry from Major Ward & Sundry other officers who were with them in action—there is not the lest foundation for sensure."<sup>197</sup> In fact, Greene's Regiment had suffered the loss of 2 dead, 9 wounded, and 11 missing.<sup>198</sup> At 6:00 p.m. Sullivan gave the order to retreat from the island.<sup>199</sup>

While the retreat was in progress, Lafayette returned from his fruitless mission to Boston, with the report that d'Estaing's fleet would not return, but that the Admiral had offered to march his troops overland to the support of the Americans.<sup>200</sup> Lafayette then took

176 Greene, II, 130; Mackenzie, II, 382.

177 Greene, II, 131.

178 *ibid.*

179 Hammond, 2:282.

180 Mackenzie, II, 381.

181 *ibid.*, 382.

182 Billias, *General John Glover*, pp. 171-172.

183 Mackenzie, II, 382-383; Hammond, 2:283.

184 *ibid.*; Mackenzie, II, 383.

185 Greene, II, 131-132.

186 von Eelking, 59-61.

187 Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, p. 107.

188 Pigot to Clinton, 91.

189 Hammond, 2:283-284.

190 *ibid.*, 287.

191 Pigot to Clinton, 93.

192 Hammond, 2:287.

A corner of Butt's Hill Fort looks toward Tiverton Heights where Fort Barton was to protect the Sullivan forces leaving the island by way of Howland's Ferry, now Stone Bridge.

Photograph from State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations: A History, edited by Edward Field (Boston and Syracuse, 1902).



command of the pickets covering the retreat, and was among the last to leave the island.<sup>201</sup> Leaving by Howland's Ferry, where the retreating army was covered by Fort Barton on Tiverton Heights, and by way of Bristol Ferry, the American evacuation of Rhode Island was completed by 3 o'clock on the morning of August 31.<sup>202</sup>

Their retreat would not have been a peaceful or easy one had it not been for the doubts of Major-General Prescott. With Pigot falling ill on August 30th, Prescott had come to Quaker Hill to take command of the advanced position. As Sullivan's army crossed Seconnet Channel, Prescott was informed at 10:00 p.m. that the sound of the rebels' boats had been heard. While desiring to attack the retreating army and take it in the rear, he declined to act, for he had received no orders to move against Sullivan's force should it

retreat, and the ground which he would have to assault would be unfavorable to him. In the end Prescott refused to risk failure and possible censure.<sup>203</sup>

On September 1, Clinton landed at Newport, too late to catch his quarry.<sup>204</sup> Sir Henry's arrival, however, did not bring Pigot either praise or reward for his successful defense of the island. Instead, Clinton criticized his subordinate for attacking the enemy on the 29th and for remaining on the field during the night instead of returning to the lines around Newport. In Clinton's view Pigot had risked a possible successful American counterattack and the loss of the island.<sup>205</sup>

Clinton departed for New York on September 4, leaving his troops and ships under command of General Charles Grey, of "Paoli Massacre" fame, with instructions to raid the New England coast. Two days later Grey raided New Bedford and Fairhaven in

193 Whittemore, *A General of the Revolution*, p. 107; Fitzpatrick, XII, 368-369.

194 Angell, p. 9.

195 Hammond, 2:287.

196 Mackenzie, II, 386.

197 Original Orderly Book, August 24, 1778.

198 Quarles, p. 81.

199 Hammond, 2:287.

200 Gottschalk, II, 266; Sparks, II, 199.

201 Gottschalk, II, 266.

202 Edward Field, *Revolutionary Defences in Rhode Island* [Providence: Preston and Rounds, 1896], p. 139; Pigot to Clinton, 92; Angell, p. 11.

203 Mackenzie, II, 387-388.

204 *ibid.*, 389.

205 *ibid.*, 391.

206 *ibid.*, 392; Clinton, pp. 103-104.

Massachusetts. There he captured Fort Phoenix which guarded the entrance to the Acushnet River. In eighteen hours Grey destroyed nearly one hundred ships, most of which were privateers, and burned nearly forty warehouses filled with produce and naval stores. From here Grey sailed to Martha's Vineyard where, on September 8, he destroyed a number of boats and a salt work, confiscated the inhabitants' arms, and seized 300 oxen and 10,000 sheep.<sup>206</sup>

Despite the fact that Sullivan had been compelled to withdraw from Rhode Island and the object of his campaign was defeated, the Congress formally voted thanks to Sullivan's army over the objection of some members, and proclaimed the action of August 29 to be a victory<sup>207</sup>. Although it had voted Sullivan its thanks, Congress was fully cognizant of the strains which Sullivan's actions had placed upon the alliance. On August 28, it had ordered that the contents of the various documents criticizing d'Estaing be kept secret and it enjoined Washington to prevent his officers from making the dispute a public one. The Congress also voted to communicate the protests of the army to Conrad Alexandre Gerard, the French minister at Philadelphia.<sup>208</sup> In a secret dispatch to Vergennes, Louis XVI's First Minister, Gerard acidly noted that "Unfortunately, this is a land of hotheads."<sup>209</sup>

In Rhode Island, Nathanael Greene prevailed upon the state legislature not to read Sullivan's censures against d'Estaing, and attempted to allay the differences between the Allies.<sup>210</sup> Appreciating Greene's efforts, d'Estaing responded that "It is from you and what you are, that it is doubtless suitable and flattering to judge of the respectable and amiable qualities of the American general officers whom I have not the honor of knowing . . ."<sup>211</sup>

From Philadelphia, Henry Marchant wrote Governor Greene:

*I hope that . . . we may in some good measure suppress observations upon the conduct of others, which may do us no good, but may do harm. Besides, prudence will teach us always to put the most favor-*

*able Constructions upon the conduct and opinions of others, and we may sometimes doubt at least whether or no we are not mistaken ourselves. Your Excellency, I presume, will see my meaning. Whether all things considered, it was a right measure in the French fleet going out after the English fleet, and whether the going out the second time was advisable, are points not the most easily to be determined. It is politic, however, that we should be delicate upon the point, if we would not gratify our enemies, the Tories especially. This is certain, that no man could possibly express more uneasiness on that occasion than the French Minister. And whether the Count's conduct was the most prudent or not, the goodness of his intentions cannot be doubted. The friendship of his royal Master most assuredly cannot, and we may depend upon a vigor of conduct that will show his royal resolution to make good his ground, and to anticipate our wishes and expectations in him.<sup>212</sup>*

Indeed, Britain and her adherents took a great deal of comfort in the Allied disharmony inspired by the Rhode Island campaign. Sir Robert Keith wrote Clinton that d'Estaing had done more to disillusion the Americans and "hasten an accomodation than almost any man I know."<sup>213</sup> The Tory paper, Rivington's *Royal Gazette*, took pleasure in the printing of a satire on October 3, entitled, "Yankee Doodle's Expedition to Rhode Island":

*From Lewis, Monsieur Gerard came,  
To Congress in this town, sir,  
They bowed to him, and he to them,  
And then they all sat down, sir.  
Begar, said Monsieur, one grand coup  
You shall bientot behold, sir;  
This was believed as gospel true,  
And Jonathan felt bold, sir.  
So Yankee Doodle did forget  
The sound of British drum, sir,  
How oft it made him quake and sweat,  
In spite of Yankee rum, sir.  
He took his wallet on his back,*

207 Ford, XII, 894.

208 *ibid.*, 848-849.

209 Stone, p. 78.

210 Greene, II, 505-506.

211 *ibid.*, 466.

212 Henry Marchant to Governor Greene, September 6, 1778, printed in Staples, p. 199.

213 Wilcox, p. 249.

214 Henry Steele Commager and Richard B. Morris, eds., *The Spirit of 'Seventy-Six: The Story of the American Revolution as Told by Participants* [New York: Harper and Row, 1967], pp. 721-722.

His rifle on his shoulder,  
 And veowed Rhode Island to attack  
 Before he was much older.  
 In dread array their tattered crew  
 Advanced with colors spread, sir.  
 Their fifes played Yankee doodle, doo,  
 King Hancock at their head, sir . . .  
 They swore they'd make bold Pigot squeak,  
 So did their good ally, sir,  
 And take him prisoner in a week,  
 But that was all my eye, sir.  
 As Jonathan so much desired  
 To shine in martial story,  
 D'Estaing with politesse retired,  
 To leave him all the glory.  
 He left him what was better yet  
 At least it was more use, sir,  
 He left him for a quick retreat,  
 A very good excuse, sir . . .  
 Another cause with these combined,  
 To throw him in the dumps, sir,  
 For Clinton's name alarmed his mind  
 And made him stir his stumps, sir.<sup>214</sup>

While Hancock, Greene, and General Horatio Gates strove to lessen tension, another galling incident took place.<sup>215</sup> On September 9 a mob attacked a bakery in Boston which d'Estaing had established to supply his fleet. In the affray two French officers were wounded and, six days later, one of them, the Chevalier de St. Sauveur, died.<sup>216</sup> Greene reported to Washington that the incident had been inspired by troops belonging to the Convention Army of Burgoyne, then being held prisoners at Boston, and British seamen serving aboard American Privateers.<sup>217</sup> Washington relayed this information to d'Estaing along with his condolences.<sup>218</sup> D'Estaing concealed whatever bitterness he may have felt and wrote that "we accused fate only."<sup>219</sup> In a gesture of friendship the Massachusetts House of Delegates voted to place a monument over St. Sauveur's grave, a resolve which was at length carried out on May 24, 1917.<sup>220</sup>

In November 1778, d'Estaing and his fleet, which had been dubbed the "Heroes of Flight" by disappointed Americans, sailed from Boston for operations in the Caribbean.<sup>221</sup> D'Estaing's presence in the North was not completely without effect, however. Although the Allies had failed to take either New York or Rhode Island, the French fleet's appearance in the Atlantic had prevented Clinton and Howe from taking offensive action for two months and delayed the dispatching of the British expedition to the West Indies until November. All this had been done by a mere sixteen ships.<sup>222</sup> The abandonment of the Rhode Island campaign was followed by a stalemate in the Northern and middle Atlantic states. In 1779 both Washington and Clinton began to shift their major emphasis to the South in an effort to reach a final decision.

By October 1779, d'Estaing was once again off the American coast, and Clinton had no desire to repeat the previous year's events. Thus, in October he ordered the evacuation of Rhode Island.<sup>223</sup> In 1780, the French began to use Newport as a harbor for their ships and a disembarkation point for Rochambeau's troops. Clinton was thereby given reason to regret his decision and twice, in 1780 and 1781, he formulated plans to retake the island but was prevented from acting by troop requirements elsewhere.<sup>224</sup>

D'Estaing's expedition left behind it an inheritance of resentment to which Rochambeau fell heir. Fortunately Rochambeau was enough of a diplomat, as well as a soldier, to overcome the difficulties which lay in his path, and with his cooperation Washington was able to win the crucial Yorktown campaign.<sup>225</sup> But, perhaps even most important to the restoration of amicable relations was the realization on the part of the American leadership that the Revolution could not succeed without French financial and military support, a fact which became increasingly evident as the War for Independence dragged on in the years following the Newport campaign.

215 Freeman, V, 75-76.

216 *ibid.*; Heath, p. 206.

217 Greene, II, 143-144.

218 Estaing and Washington, p. 49.

219 *ibid.*, p. 14.

220 Mark M. Boatner, *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution* [New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1966], p. 794.

221 John C. Miller, *Triumph of Freedom: 1775-1783* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1948), pp. 330-331.

222 Wilcox, pp. 257-258.

223 *ibid.*, pp. 291-292.

224 *ibid.*, pp. 325-346, 416-421.

225 Arnold Whitridge, *Rochambeau* [New York: Macmillan, 1965], pp. 72, 87-88.

## Rhode Island Colonial Records

by Charles W. Farnham, F.A.S.G., C.G.\*

While Rhode Island and Providence Plantations is the smallest state, it holds a genealogical importance out of proportion to size. The impact of Rhode Islanders in the colonial period was felt particularly in the New York, Vermont and New Hampshire settlements, although there were removals to New Jersey and Pennsylvania during the 1600s. The result has been that many people scattered throughout the nation need to turn to Rhode Island records to trace their early ancestors.

The purpose of this paper will be to present genealogical sources in the state, apart from printed genealogies dealing with Rhode Island families and the books of Rhode Island records available in most genealogical libraries. The primary source of this information is the genealogical library of The Rhode Island Historical Society in Providence, with its wealth of family genealogical manuscripts, collections compiled by deceased genealogists, its Providence Town Papers, its church records and gravestone collections from many parts of the state. Similar treasures may be found in the Newport Historical Society library and in the genealogical section of Westerly Public Library.

For those unfamiliar with the formation of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, the official title of the state, it may be of interest to dwell briefly on its early background. Providence, the first town, and capital of the state, was founded in 1636 by Roger Williams and five other dissenters, expatriates from the Puritan community at Salem, Massachusetts.

A group of religious liberals led by John Clarke, William Coddington and Ann Hutchinson were refugees, having followed the Rev. Mr. Wheelwright. What is now Portsmouth on the northern shore of Aquidneck (the island of Rhode Island) was settled in 1638. Dissent among this group caused William Coddington and others to withdraw to the southern

end of the island to form Newport in 1639. This division was short-lived, and the two colonies joined, with each retaining local government.

In 1643 Samuel Gorton, who had come to Portsmouth in 1635, became involved in a controversy with the Coddington group and was persuaded by Roger Williams to settle in Shawomet (later the town of Warwick), adjoining Providence on the south. No action was taken by the settlers as a town until 1647. At that time the four towns joined under the Earl of Warwick's charter, with each town maintained as a separate entity but responsible to the central government. Each town kept its own deeds, probate, town council and town meeting records, and as new towns were formed, the same procedure was retained. The law for recording births, marriages and deaths was adopted in 1647. Other towns followed although, without penalty stated for disobeying the law, many residents paid no heed.

These vital records up until 1850 were gathered by the late James N. Arnold and published by the state in 1883. Inevitably, some copying errors appear in the volumes. This is understandable because Mr. Arnold was assisted in copying town records by persons unskilled in such a task. Handwriting in the original records was difficult to decipher. Sometimes the writing was misinterpreted because the workers were not accustomed to the ancient script. Often the town clerks had little education and recorded their own versions of the names of immigrants who appeared before them. The final hazard came when the handwritten vital records were placed before the printers, who on occasion contributed to errors. Vital records of the town of Little Compton were made from a book prepared by a town clerk who in many instances added to the records without documentation. The result has been

\*Mr. Farnham, member of the Society's library committee, presented this paper at the World Conference on Records and Genealogical Seminar, Salt Lake City, Utah, August 5-8, 1969.

*Manuscript gravestone collections in the library of The Rhode Island Historical Society are supplemented by Allen Ludwig's photographs of New England gravestone carvings. A stone in North Burial Ground, Providence, is inscribed with an old Rhode Island family name.*

that while in the main Arnold's famous vital records of the state are correct, the errors that crept in have been widely accepted and appear in genealogies throughout the country.

Rhode Island has only five counties, each of which supports a variety of cities, townships, villages and hamlets, as follows:

**Bristol County**, incorporated 17 February 1746/47, with county limits as at present. Originally the county consisted of two towns, Bristol and Warren. In June 1770, Warren was divided and Barrington was incorporated. County offices are in Bristol.

**Kent County**, incorporated 11 June 1750, taken from Providence County. Incorporated with the same county limits as at present, with the same towns except that West Warwick was formed from Warwick in 1913. County offices are in East Greenwich.

**Newport County**, incorporated 22 June 1703 as Rhode Island County. On 16 June 1729, incorporated as Newport County and included then Newport, Portsmouth, Jamestown and New Shoreham. New Shoreham (Block Island) joined Washington County in 1963. County offices are in Newport.

**Providence County**, originally incorporated 22 June 1703 as County of Providence Plantations, and included the present territory of Providence, Kent and Washington Counties, excepting the present towns of Cumberland, Pawtucket and East Providence. The name was changed to Providence County 16 June 1729. The Providence County Courthouse is in Providence.

**Washington County**, originally called Narragansett County. Named King's Province 20 March 1654. Boundaries established 21 May 1669. Incorporated in June 1729 as King's County, with three towns of South Kingstown, North Kingstown and Westerly, the same territory as at present. Name changed to Washington County 29 October 1791. The town of New Shoreham was added to Washington County 17 September 1963. County offices are in Wakefield, with county court sessions in West Kingstown.

#### PROVIDENCE COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOURCES

Early probates are on file in the probate office, City Hall, Providence. The indices list some depositions of Revolutionary War pensioners' widows which include surviving members of families. Probate, town council, and town meeting records for the town of Johnston, which was set off from Providence, have been retained in the Providence office, but land evidence may be found in the Johnston town hall. The vault of the city clerk has town council and town meeting records from the 1730s. These are not indexed, but the town council books are especially well worth searching because they contain much genealogical information not found elsewhere. In the colonial period one of the duties of the council was to keep on the watch for strangers who came to town, to see that they either bought property or gave bond from their last legal residence, lest they become a financial burden to the



town. Often these "warnings out" gave not only the newcomer's name but where he was born, the places where he had previously lived, and the names of his family. Town meeting records listed election of town officers. Poor of the town were mentioned, and sometimes new inhabitants were named.

The Rhode Island Archives is in the State House, Providence. Of genealogical importance is an index of thousands of names which appear on petitions to the General Assembly. These petitions have been carefully preserved, under the direction of the late Miss Mary Quinn, and are readily accessible for examination. Here also are Rhode Island General Assembly records, lists of those accepted as freemen of the town, a 1777 military census of those capable of bearing arms, and a collection of names of Revolutionary War soldiers. Among the records are some of the earliest court proceedings and the first record book of the Island of Rhode Island. This book contains the Compact made and signed before the signers left to found Portsmouth. At one time it was discovered that colonial records for the town of West Greenwich were badly neglected, and they were placed in state custody. Probate and town council records have remained in the Archives but some of the land evidence has been returned to the West Greenwich town office.

The Superior Court clerk's office in Providence County Courthouse has original papers of lower court cases dating from 1730 to about 1818. For the most part these cases deal with simple debt suits, but an occasional suit over land can be a genealogical bonanza, with relationships spelled out in depositions to the court. A limited group of researchers are allowed to examine them. The court maintains an index of the suits which lists only the year and the month of the court term. These papers are filed in long metal boxes and one must patiently examine each suit among the hundred or more for each term to find the case wanted. In the same vault are records of the Superior Court of Common Pleas and Court of Common Pleas for the town of Bristol from June 1772 to January 1806, plus some miscellaneous papers. One wall of the vault on the fourth floor of the courthouse houses early lower

court records of the town of South Kingstown. Unfortunately, no index to these cases is available. The boxes are filed by year and court term, but are not in any specific order.

The North Burial Ground is the oldest cemetery of Providence. A manuscript at Rhode Island Historical Society has records of many of the early gravestones, some of which are now too ancient to be read. Records in the cemetery office do not start until 1895. Purchasers of lots from 1834 are listed in *Early Records of the Town of Providence*, vols. 18-19. Swan Point Cemetery was laid out many years later, but many gravestones, as in North Burial Ground, have been transferred there from early family burial years. The Swan Point office has kept excellent records of all burials and their burial cards sometimes contain data not to be found in vital records. Particularly of interest are large number of graves removed to both cemeteries from "Proprietors" and "West" burial grounds. Their former pleasant sites are now a crosspiece of city highways.

Elmwood Public Library has one genealogical source which should not be overlooked. The late James N. Arnold had collected thousands of gravestone records in the state from family burial grounds between 1880 and 1900. An index to the names is maintained in a cabinet at the library and the burial records are in folders nearby. These records are of exceptional value because many of the gravestones have crumbled or have been destroyed since the time their inscriptions were copied by Mr. Arnold. The story is told that before his death Mr. Arnold had a falling out with an executive of The Rhode Island Historical Society. He was so angered that he left instructions that his gravestones collection should go to Elmwood Public Library and under no circumstances should it be transferred to the Historical Society. Besides his gravestone collection Mr. Arnold contributed folders on some Rhode Island families and some vital records not included in his printed records.

The Providence Public Library has a small genealogical section but of chief value is a Rhode Island index with references to Rhode Island families, clippings and

*Miss Nellie Potter's collection of genealogical notes given to The Rhode Island Historical Society contains a wealth of informal photographs taken around the turn of the century. Rocky Point, Warwick, is the scene of the busload of*



miscellaneous material. The John Carter Brown Library at Brown University presently houses a collection of prime genealogical significance. Here are gathered New England Friends' Meeting records, some beginning in 1676. These were formerly kept at Moses Brown School in Providence, a Quaker institution. At present these records are not open to public inspection, but research can be done through the custodian of the records with payment of an hourly fee. Three-fifths of the Friends' records have already been microfilmed. A typed guide to all the records is to be published eventually. The collection also includes private papers of Moses Brown, noted Quaker, dealing with Friends' matters.

The Rhode Island Historical Society, organized in 1822, now has two homes. The John Brown House built in 1786, visited by Washington in 1790, and for years the library, now is a museum boasting a fine collection of colonial furniture and artifacts. The genealogical and historical library is now located about three blocks to the east. The library is noted for its extensive collection of genealogies, family manuscript material, early Providence documents, and papers of historical significance. One could spend months

*merrymakers. The old house is the home of the first town clerk of Scituate, once located on Gleaner Chapel Road in North Scituate.*



examining collections without discovering all of the library's treasures. Since many of the genealogies can be found in libraries throughout the country, I will dwell only on the larger collections housed exclusively here.

One of the finest collections, the Providence Town Papers, came from Providence City Hall. They consist of original town records of all kinds, dating from 1640 to the early 1800s, all mounted and bound. The papers are indexed by subject matter. Also included are the so-called Guild papers of Richard Brown (1676-1774), Justice of Peace in Providence for over 50 years. The latter, some including genealogical information, were found in a trunk in Richard Brown's brick house, built ca. 1700 and still standing on the grounds of Butler Hospital. More of these papers are still in the custody of a descendant, Howard Guild of Greenfield, Mass., and are kept in his summer home in Fitzwilliam, N. H.

Perhaps the best known of the genealogical collections is that of the late Louise Prosser Bates, a professional genealogist. It consists of her notes on families of the state which are written on poor quality paper. The paper now crumbles at the touch and is in such disarray that the collection has lost much of its

value. An index was made, unfortunately in Roman numerals, another drawback. An extensive genealogical collection of the late Ruth Story Devereux Eddy covering families from many parts of the state, a recent gift to the society, is more modern and easier to use. The notes of the late Miss Nellie Potter provide much family information, particularly on those who lived in the Foster and Scituate areas. Of interest for those seeking data on Providence County families is the Clarence Brown material dealing mainly with descendants of Chad Brown of Providence. Information on each family is written on large cards and many include abstracts of wills and land evidence.

Providence Custom House Papers occupy a sizeable section in the library stacks. They are an important genealogical source because they cover the years of the state as a major port. The papers of Theodore Foster (1752-1828), town clerk for many years, include family genealogies and historical sketches. Here also are the papers of Moses Brown, Quaker philanthropist and wealthy merchant. Volume four of the papers includes genealogies of Rhode Island families with biographical material.

Another important group of three volumes is that compiled by Peleg Pierce. Two volumes offer generous abstracts of land evidence and probate for early North Kingstown and the third volume has much genealogical data. A name index was completed by the late John H. Wells. Dr. Frank Calef compiled manuscript volumes listing Mayflower descendants and another group dealing with descendants of Roger Williams. He also copied early gravestones of North Burial Ground. Since many of these stones are no longer readable, the records have great value. An index is provided.

Since shipping held great importance in the colonial economy, many youths of the state followed the sea. The library has a card catalog of the Register of Seamen's Protection, starting about 1790, which lists the age, complexion, place of birth and date of certification of the applicant. Cards are dated, and sometimes provide the only clue to the birth date of an ancestor. Among the oldest possessions is the Capt.

Arthur Fenner collection with material dating from the 1600s to 1821. These papers include manuscript genealogies and original documents. The Tillinghast papers (1752-1828) are also of interest, as are the papers of Dr. Solomon Drowne (1753-1834), arranged by his son, William Drowne.

Six books are filled with the genealogical findings of the late Rev. James Pierce Root. Most of his notes, however, are in pencil and difficult to decipher. The Anthony Tarbox Briggs collection provides much genealogical material on families of the towns of West Greenwich, Exeter and Coventry, with some gravestone records. Nine boxes are filled with data on Capt. Randall Holden descendants. Two boxes contain genealogical manuscripts by the late Benjamin F. Wilbour of Little Compton. Clippings on the Andrews family of Rhode Island are also on the shelves. Other collections of family material by William H. Chapin and data on Greene families are available, as are 17 volumes filled with envelopes of family data by the late Georgiana Guild, professional genealogist.

It should be emphasized that while large collections have been mentioned, the library contains many bound manuscript genealogies of which none others exist. John O. Austin's *Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island* is a prime source of information on families of the state and is widely known. The library has a handwritten book of additional family material by Mr. Austin, the workbook for a second volume, which includes some families not touched in his printed volume. Dexter Asylum papers list names of many persons who were born in the colonial period. The library has an impressive collection of Bible records, logbooks, old maps and portraits.

Rhode Island census records for 1747-1754, 1774, and 1790 are printed and generally available, but the library owns MS copies of censuses for 1782, 1800, 1810, 1820, 1850, 1860, 1865, and 1880. Censuses for 1830 and 1840 are available on microfilm. The late John H. Wells made a great contribution to the Historical Society by indexing the 1850 and 1860 census records by surnames and by supplying complete names in the 1865 census.

Many of the people named were born in colonial days.

Early newspapers of Providence and Newport have been microfilmed and many gravestone records for the state are also available on film. Rhode Island D.A.R. chapters have donated yearly manuscript volumes filled with probate, town council and cemetery records gathered by members. These must be used with care because of members' unfamiliarity with interpreting the ancient script of the records. Among church records available are the complete early proceedings of the First Congregational Church of Providence.

Before discussing records in town offices, I should emphasize that nowadays it is fruitless to write to town clerks, enclosing a stamped return envelope, requesting genealogical information. Years ago some clerks were obliging, but today their offices are busy places and the clerks have neither the time nor the inclination to respond to inquiries. The clerk in one town office showed me a drawer filled with letters to the clerk who preceded her which had been untouched, although some letters contained checks. The best way to obtain information is through personal visits to town halls or through qualified researchers in the state.

#### PROVIDENCE COUNTY TOWN RECORDS

**North Providence**, taken from Providence and incorporated 13 June 1765. A small portion was reunited with Providence 29 June 1767 and 28 March 1873. The town was divided 27 March 1874, with a portion annexed to the city of Providence and a part annexed to Pawtucket. Records for the colonial period are in the clerk's office at Pawtucket City Hall. Land evidence is fully indexed, with dates of transactions, and there is a probate index. Town council and town meeting volumes are unindexed.

**Cranston**, taken from Providence and incorporated 14 June 1754. Offices are in Cranston City Hall. Records in the city clerk's office have been well kept, with land evidence books easily available. Probate books are indexed, and some of the town council records have indices.

**Cumberland**, one of five towns received from

Massachusetts by royal decree. Until incorporated in Rhode Island it was known as Attleboro Gore. It was annexed to Providence County 17 February 1746/47. A portion of Cumberland was incorporated as the town of Woonsocket 31 January 1867. Records are at the town office in Lincoln. Land evidence and probate records are excellently maintained, with complete indices. Town council records are available, but are unindexed.

**Smithfield**, taken from Providence and incorporated 20 February 1730/31. Land evidence, probate, town council and town meeting records for the colonial period are in Central Falls city clerk's office. A manuscript in the office has an index for probate and town council records for early volumes. Grantee and grantor indices are in alphabetical order, with listings by years.

**Glocester**, taken from Providence and incorporated 20 February 1730/31. The town office is in Chepachet. Land evidence is complete, but the index books are time-consuming. Deeds are listed alphabetically by the first letter only and should be followed through to the end because one is apt to find deeds for the earliest years recorded at the end of the listings. Probate and town council books are complete, but there is no index for the council records. The town of Burrillville was set off from Glocester 17 November 1806 and town offices are in Harrisville.

**Scituate**, taken from Providence and incorporated 20 February 1730/31. The town office is in North Scituate. Records are well kept here. Land evidence indices include the year of each transaction. Council and town meeting books are available but are not indexed.

**Foster**, taken from Scituate and incorporated 24 August 1781. The clerk's office is in the village of Foster Center. Records are complete and well organized since the new vault was built, but it takes time to find what is desired. Since the Foster area prior to 1781 was a part of Scituate, the records of the parent town should not be overlooked.

**Johnston**, taken from Providence and incorporated 6 March 1759. Land evidence is found at the Johnston

town clerk's office. Grantor and grantee indices are complete. Early town council, town meeting and probate records have been retained at the Providence City Hall probate office.

#### KENT COUNTY TOWN RECORDS

**Warwick.** The first action of the inhabitants as a town was in 1647. City Hall is located in Apponaug, ancient Indian center. Land evidence at the clerk's office is complete and probate is on file. There are major gaps in the town council books. About 1900 an historian "borrowed" Warwick books in writing a Rhode Island history. He died in Connecticut, and his widow turned the books over to Connecticut State Library. They were subsequently returned to Rhode Island Historical Society. The books were copies of the originals, but there are a number of original miscellaneous papers in boxes.

**Coventry,** taken from Warwick and incorporated 21 August 1741. Town offices are in the village of Anthony. All town records after the separation from Warwick are on file. Land evidence indices are difficult to follow because of an unusual system adopted at a time when salesmen were taking in town clerks with "new" systems.

**East Greenwich,** incorporated 31 October 1677. The name was changed to Dedford 23 June 1688 but the original name was restored the following year. Town offices are in East Greenwich. All records are well preserved. In Kent County Courthouse, also in East Greenwich, some original papers of suits filed in the lower court may be found.

**West Greenwich,** taken from East Greenwich and incorporated 6 April 1741. Probate, town council and some land evidence are in the Archives of State House, Providence.

#### WASHINGTON COUNTY TOWN RECORDS

**North Kingstown,** incorporated 28 October 1674. First settlement in 1641. Incorporated in 1674 under name of Kings Towne with incorporation reaffirmed in 1679. Name was changed to Rochester 23 June 1686 but was restored to Kings Towne the following year. Kings Towne was divided into North Kingstown and South Kingstown in February 1722/23. North Kingstown

offices are in the village of Wickford. A fire many years ago damaged all of the town books. They have since been repaired and a great deal can still be learned from them. Vital records of the town suffered serious damage, but the greater part of land evidence is intact.

**Exeter,** taken from North Kingstown and incorporated 8 March 1742/43. Records in the small town hall are difficult to search because the books are kept in a vault and there is little space available for searching them.

**South Kingstown.** As Pettaquamscutt it was settled 20 January 1657/58. Incorporated 22 February 1723. Town offices are in the village of Wakefield. Records are well kept here and well organized for ease of research. A town clerk about 1900 apparently was interested in genealogy of the old families and some of his notes and letters have been kept in the town clerk's office.

**Westerly,** incorporated 14 May 1669 as the fifth town of the colony with the original name of Misquamicut. The name was changed to Haversham 23 June 1686 but restored to Westerly in 1689. Town offices are in Westerly. Town official records are complete, but their arrangement makes it difficult for the searcher unfamiliar with the office. The Westerly Public Library maintains a genealogical section with an excellent collection of genealogies and records which touch on local families. Of special interest is the collection of manuscript material on the Kenyon and Champlin families, all carefully arranged through the efforts of Mrs. Dorothy W. Benson. Other genealogical data include voluminous correspondence used by Nellie Willard Johnson for her *Descendants of Robert Burdick of Rhode Island* (1937); a Peleg Barber scrapbook; Bliven family deeds, wills and genealogical charts; Peckham family material; W. P. Bentley sources, with notes on local families; Reginald Peck workbooks and scrapbook; Maxson family documents, letters and papers; York family papers; Stillman family notebooks; Chester family letters and notes; and numerous family Bibles, old ledgers and scrapbooks.

**Charlestown,** taken from Westerly and incorporated 22 August 1738. Town offices are located on a country road. Records are intact, but poorly arranged.

**Richmond**, taken from Charlestown and incorporated 18 August 1747. Town offices are in a new building at the junction of two country roads. Two books of Richmond were destroyed by fire years ago. It is not easy to search the records here.

**Hopkinton**, taken from Westerly and incorporated 19 March 1757. Records are in town office and the cramped quarters of the vault make searching difficult. Of special interest in the clerk's office is a beautifully inlaid grandfather's clock made in England and bearing the date 1730, its brass works still keeping accurate time.

**New Shoreham**, incorporated 6 November 1672. Purchased and occupied April 1661. Admitted to the colony as Block Island 4 May 1664. When incorporated in 1672 its name was changed to New Shoreham. It had been a part of Newport County until 17 September 1963 when it was joined to Washington County. Records in the town office on the island.

#### NEWPORT COUNTY TOWN RECORDS

**Newport**, settled in 1639, incorporated as a city 1 June 1784 with the city charter repealed three years later. City incorporated the second time 6 May 1853. City hall located in Newport. The records of Newport were carried to New York by the Tory town clerk when the British left Newport in 1779. The vessel on which they were taken was sunk in the harbor. Later the ship was raised and the records returned to Newport. Salt water damaged most of the records. Although they have been cleaned and mounted on silk, some of them are almost unreadable.

The Newport Historical Society, organized in 1853, has 15,000 books and 1,700 manuscript volumes of log books, Custom House papers and mercantile records, as well as 60,000 loose manuscripts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The most important collection of manuscript material is that of Dr. Henry B. Turner, who was a medical doctor and also president of the Historical Society. As he called on a patient, he inquired if the home owner had a family Bible. He copied these records, saving a great deal of material which otherwise would have been unknown. He also recorded extensive cemetery gravestones of Newport.

Many tombstones exist only in his records, time and vandalism having taken their toll. Friends' Meeting records for Newport County are part of the Library's treasures. These have been microfilmed and are available in Salt Lake City. The library maintains a card file of available early probate and land evidence which is helpful to searchers. It also has a gift index of *Boston Transcript* genealogical columns.

**Middletown**, taken from Newport and incorporated 16 June 1743. Records at the town hall are complete. Mrs. Oliver W. Cushman of Newport performed a valuable service by abstracting four volumes of Middletown wills, which were printed in the July and October 1968 issues of the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*.

**Portsmouth**, settled in 1638. Its Indian name was Pocasset. The name Portsmouth was confirmed for the town in 1640. The earliest records of the town have been printed in book form. Records at the town hall are in good condition.

**Jamestown**. The island was incorporated 30 October 1678. Its Indian name was Conanicut. All records are on file in the town hall, well arranged for ease of use.

**Little Compton**, incorporated 27 January 1746/47, was one of the five towns received from Massachusetts pursuant to royal decree of 28 May 1746. Annexed to Newport County 17 February 1746/47, the area had been incorporated by the Plymouth Colony in 1682. Its Indian name was Seaconnet. Records at the town hall have been well preserved. The late Benjamin F. Wilbour spent many years in collecting and publishing material on Little Compton families. Of great value was his listing of Little Compton cemetery inscriptions which were published in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, starting in the July 1961 issue and concluding in the July issue a year later. Volume one of *The Wildbores in America*, compiled by Mr. Wilbour and John Reid Wilbor (1933), contains much information on Little Compton families allied with the Wildbores.

**Tiverton**, incorporated by the Province of Massachusetts in 1694, was one of the five towns received from Massachusetts by royal decree and was incorporated as a town 26 January 1746/47 when it was

annexed to Newport County. The town office is an excellent example of an efficient operation, with easy access to records and ample space for searching them.

**New Shoreham**, originally a part of Newport County but since 1963 joined to Washington County. See Washington County towns.

#### BRISTOL COUNTY TOWN RECORDS

**Bristol**, incorporated by Plymouth County 28 October 1681. By royal decree 28 May 1746, the eastern boundary was settled and the jurisdiction of the colony established over the territory embraced in the towns of Bristol, Barrington, Tiverton, Little Compton and Cumberland. A portion of Bristol was annexed to Warren 30 May 1870. Records after the incorporation of the town are in the town hall and are well kept. A card index of probate is helpful in searching probate books. As said before, lower court records for the same years may be found in the Superior Court clerk's office in Providence County Courthouse.

*Original papers of lower court cases dating from 1730 to 1818 are to be found in the Providence County Court House. Designed to conform to the style of Colonial rooftops, the unique hillside building has a fifth floor entrance on Benefit Street as well as this one on South Main. The old Market House at left is a landmark mentioned in records, newspapers, manuscripts and diaries from 1771 to the present day.*

**Warren**, incorporated 27 January 1746/47. The territory of the town of Warren at this time included the present towns of Swansea and Rehoboth in Massachusetts. Land evidence for the areas of Barrington and the parts of Swansea and Rehoboth prior to 1746 can be found at the Bristol County, Massachusetts, court house in Taunton, Massachusetts. Land evidence, town council, town meeting and probate records at the town office in Warren are well maintained.

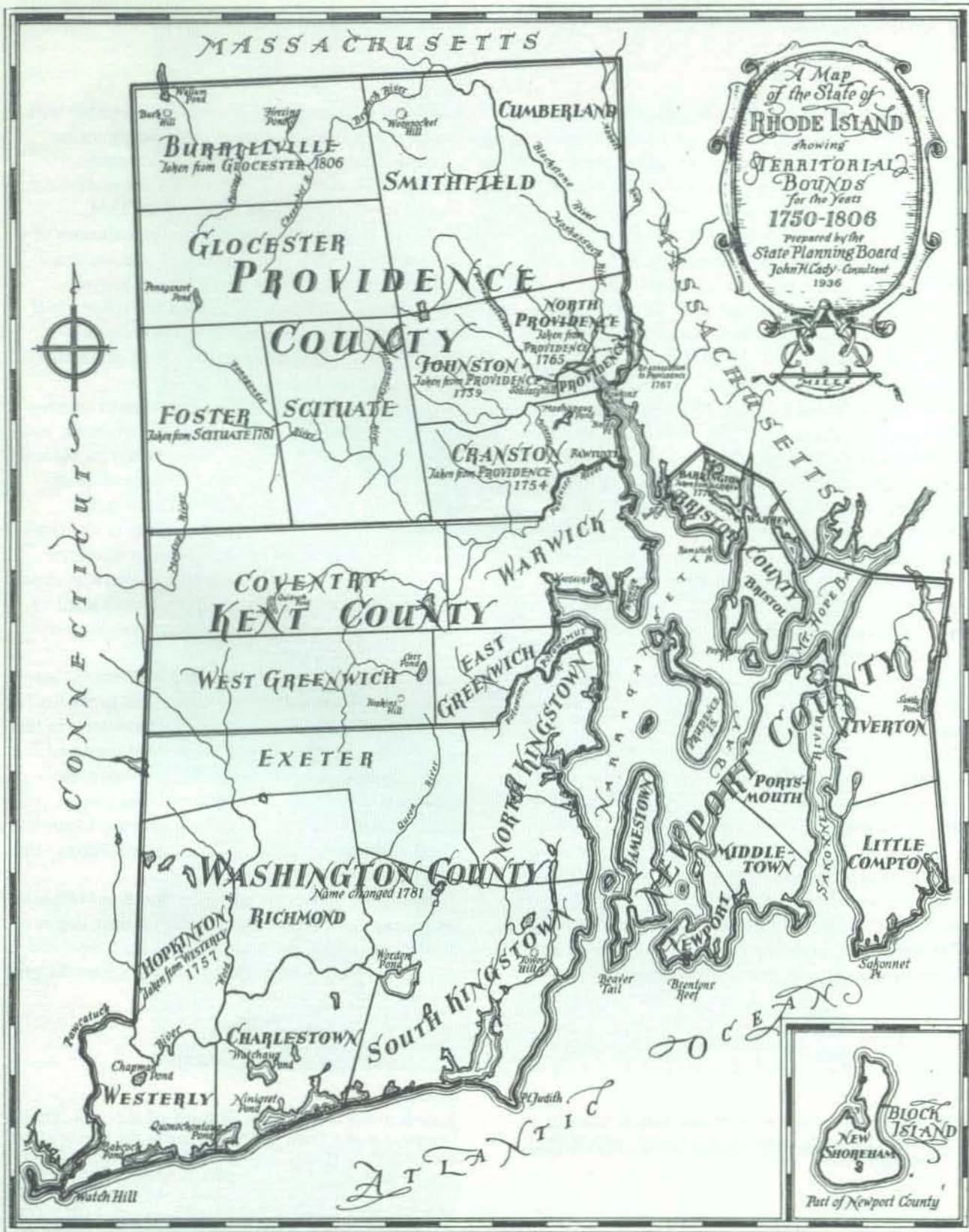
**Barrington**, taken from Swansea and incorporated as a town by Massachusetts 18 November 1717, transferred to Rhode Island by royal decree 28 May 1746. Parts of Swansea and Rehoboth were added to Barrington on the north and east by the new boundary line and its name changed to Warren 27 January 1746/47. Barrington was taken from Warren and incorporated as a separate town 16 June 1770. Its Indian name was Sowams.

For those who plan a personal search of town records of Rhode Island it would be well to inquire about office hours. Some of the smaller offices close for the luncheon period and a few have Saturday morning or one evening session for the convenience of townspeople.

Taken as a whole, Rhode Island has good reason to be proud of its preservation of colonial records. There have been relatively few losses by fire and most towns have displayed interest in protecting their records.

*Photograph by Laurence E. Tilley.*





A Map of the State of  
**RHODE ISLAND**  
 showing  
**TERRITORIAL BOUNDS**  
 for the Years  
**1750-1806**  
 Prepared by the  
 State Planning Board  
 John H. Cady - Consultant  
 1936

**BLOCK ISLAND**  
 NEW SHOREHAM  
 Part of Newport County

## Crane's Rhode Island Company of Artillery-1775

by Thomas I. Abernethy\*

The Rhode Island Army of Observation which joined the siege of Boston in May 1775 included a company of artillery with four brass fieldpieces, under command of Major John Crane. During that year this company operated independently, not as part of Colonel Richard Gridley's regiment, but such of its personnel as continued in service into 1776 were merged into a new artillery regiment under Colonel Henry Knox.

Crane's company grew out of the United Train of Artillery of Providence, Rhode Island, chartered in December 1774 as a result of a petition which had forty-nine signatures. In April 1775, following another petition of sixty-seven signers, including fourteen who had signed the original petition, the United Train of Artillery and the Company of Fusileers were merged into a single organization under the name United Company of the Train of Artillery in the Town of Providence. Its officers were Colonel Daniel Tillinghast, Lieutenant-Colonel Daniel Hitchcock, Major John Crane, Captain Levi Hall, and it was apparently intended to be part of a regiment in which Tillinghast and Hitchcock were senior officers.

It is evident that the company which went with the Army of Observation was not the United Company itself, but a unit which included at least some of its members, since on 30 September 1775 the United Company, in Providence, elected new officers to succeed those who were out of the state. One of the officers replaced was Major John Crane, who resigned his commission in the organization on 30 October.

Until now, it appears that no list has existed of the membership of the artillery company which joined the Army of Observation. Records in the Rhode Island Archives show the officers of the company were Captain John Crane, Captain-Lieutenant Joseph Balch, a first lieutenant, a second lieutenant, and a lieutenant-

fireworker whose names are not given, together with two sergeants, two bombardiers, and four gunners.

In his *Historical Sketch of the Organization, Administration, Materiel and Tactics of the Artillery, United States Army* (Washington, D.C., 1884), William E. Birkhimer states that the organization of a company was as follows: one major, one captain, three lieutenants with no distinction as to grade, two sergeants, four corporals, two bombardiers, four gunners, four musicians, seventy-four matrosses (privates), and one conductor, for a total of ninety-six officers and men.

There were no rosters of Crane's company or other indications of who its members might have been, and searches elsewhere proved fruitless, except for surmises which might be made from a knowledge of other associations. For example, included among the signatures on the petition for the merger of the two Providence companies are the names of Ebenezer Stevens, Jotham Drury, and John Chandler, who appear in 1776 as officers in Colonel Henry Knox's artillery regiment. These might be assumed to have been in Crane's company.

A development entirely unconnected with the search for a roster of Major Crane's company led to the finding of the desired information. The writer's interest in the artillery units of the Revolutionary War stemmed originally from the fact that his late wife's great-grandfather, Nathaniel Stoddard of Hingham, Massachusetts, had served in Colonel John Crane's Third Continental Artillery Regiment, enlisting at the time of its organization early in 1777.

Among the photostats of papers found in Nathaniel Stoddard's file at the National Archives were copies of two receipts given by him to Major John Crane, the first dated 1 November 1775 at Roxbury, acknowledging

\*Mr. Abernethy, of Westfield, Massachusetts, notes in this paper his deep interest in the artillery units of the Continental Army.

### Sources

Records of the United Train of Artillery and of the United Company of the Train of Artillery are in the Rhode Island Archives, State House, Providence. Subsequent service of various members of the company is from monthly muster rolls of companies in Knox's, Crane's, and Lamb's regiments, Massachusetts Archives, State House, Boston. Later service of Joseph Balch and Massachusetts residence of several of the men from *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors of the Revolutionary War*. 17v. (Boston, 1896-1908).



*On parade, a lieutenant in the Rhode Island Train of Artillery, 1775, wore this uniform. His leather cap is ornamented with the familiar anchor, above it the motto, "For Our Country" and below the Latin "In te, Domine speramus." The original water color was painted by Charles M. Lefferts for his volume, *Uniforms of the American, British, French, and German Armies in the War of the American Revolution* . . . (New York, 1926).*

*Courtesy of The New-York Historical Society, New York City.*

Gold, blue and red brighten the flag carried by the United Company of the Train of Artillery under the command of Major John Crane. Blue stars, anchor and cannon stand out against a gold ground. The warning serpent is gold and blue

with the legend below in gold letters on red. The ribbon carrying the motto, "In God we hope," is blue.

Flag in the possession of The Rhode Island Historical Society.



receipt of two pounds four shillings as pay for September, the second dated 12 February 1776 at Roxbury for six pounds twelve shillings, pay in full for October, November, and December 1775. There seemed to be no basis for this service, since an affidavit prepared by Nathaniel Stoddard in 1818 as part of his pension application made no mention of such an enlistment. In the light of present knowledge one might guess that this service was not reported because it was

in the Army of the United Colonies, not in the Continental establishment.

This clue of the two receipts was not pursued in any way for a number of years. Eventually the thought occurred that if the setting in which the receipts were found became known, this might throw some light on the service for which the pay was given. An exchange of letters with the National Archives brought the information that these two receipts were part of a

collection of some 212 other receipts given to Major John Crane by "various soldiers of unnamed organizations" and were available on microfilm as part of Roll No. 134, Microcopy No. 246.

That roll proved to be a gold mine. Several items are of special interest. There is a statement that Colonel Crane paid out in 1775 and 1776 the sum of \$3,145.55 as "cash paid the Rhode Island Company of Artillery for September, October, November and December."

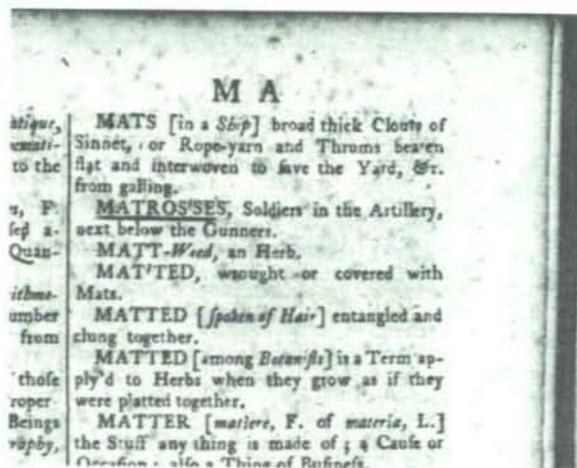
There is the collection of receipts noted above, for pay in full for various periods within the last four months of 1775, paid in three general periods of time—a long list dated 1 November 1775 covering pay for September; a second dated 30 and 31 December 1775 covering, in most instances, pay for October; and a third, spread over several dates in February and March 1776, covering generally pay for November and December but in some instances for all four months. By this time many of the men had left the service and some of the money was collected by other persons on behalf of absent soldiers.

There is a list of men who were paid but for whom no receipts were available. The person then making the "audit" entered the opinion that, despite lack of receipts, all but four of these had apparently been paid fully. Finally, there is a statement from Colonel Crane that he could also attest that he had actually paid these four men.

The various items above are not recorded on the microfilm in the sequence presented here and the receipts, numbered and given several together on a single sheet, are not filmed in the correct sequence of sheets, but the whole series of entries leaves no doubt in the writer's mind that these are not receipts given to Major Crane by soldiers of unknown organizations for some unspecified service, but are from the members of his Rhode Island Company of Artillery for their pay in the last four months of 1775.

From this collection of receipts and statements it is possible to reconstruct a roster of Major Crane's company. It must be understood that this cannot be the exact membership as it departed from Providence. Several of the men, like Nathaniel Stoddard, are known

An Universal English Dictionary by N. Bailey (London, 1759), price, six shillings, defines a word that appears in Major John Crane's roster.



to have been Massachusetts residents. Monthly returns of the company, elsewhere recorded, show a strength varying slightly from ninety-seven in August to ninety-five in December; it would appear that there was some attrition in the unit from time to time and that these vacancies were filled by new men from the vicinity of Boston. Except in these few cases, however, the names are undoubtedly those of men who came with the original company.

Furthermore, since the exact pay per month for each individual is specified, and since Birkhimer has given the number in each grade, it is possible to assume that an arrangement of names in order of amount of pay will give the rank of various individuals, except in cases where pay may have been the same for more than one grade, of which there are two instances. Six men received an amount which would make them either corporals or bombardiers. Birkhimer gives a company four corporals and two bombardiers in that order. Crane's monthly returns, however, list bombardiers ahead of corporals. It is impossible, therefore, to determine in this manner which of the six men were

in which group. Similarly matrosses (privates) and musicians were given the same pay, and in the following list two only of four musicians have been identified by name, as these are found in similar positions in later units. With these limitations, a roster of Major Crane's company is presented as follows:

Major	<i>John Crane</i>	
Captain	<i>Joseph Balch</i>	
Lieutenants	<i>Jotham Drury</i> <i>Isaac Morse</i> <i>Ebenezer Stevens</i>	
Conductor	<i>James Gardner</i>	
Sergeants	<i>John Allen</i> <i>Asa Rawson</i>	
Corporals and Bombardiers	<i>Elijah Babbitt</i> <i>Benajah Carpenter</i> <i>John Chandler</i>	<i>David Cook</i> <i>Isaiah Simmons</i> <i>John Slewman</i>
Gunners	<i>Samuel Doggett</i> <i>Jeremiah Freeman</i> <i>Simeon Martin</i> <i>Jacob Williams</i>	
Drummer	<i>Jacob Muckley</i>	
Fifer	<i>Samuel Mellus</i>	
Matrosses and 2 musicians other than 2 above		

<i>Ebenezer Allen</i>	<i>Thomas Chaffee</i>
<i>Squier Andruss</i>	<i>Daniel Cobb</i>
<i>Darius Antram</i>	<i>Benajah Cole</i>
<i>John Baker</i>	<i>Daniel Conney</i>
<i>John Beers</i>	<i>Nicholas Cozzens</i>
<i>Benjamin Bickford</i>	<i>William Crow</i>
<i>Joseph Bickford</i>	<i>Solomon Daley</i>
<i>James Bishop</i>	<i>Thomas Justin Davis</i>
<i>Oliver Bishop</i>	<i>William Downe</i>
<i>Ebenezer Bosworth</i>	<i>Payn Downs</i>
<i>Joel Bradford</i>	<i>Nathaniel Elliott</i>
<i>Silvanus Bramen</i>	<i>Daniel Fisk</i>
<i>Benjamin Brown</i>	<i>Gideon Franklin</i>
<i>Obadiah Brown</i>	<i>Ephriam Gale</i>
<i>Moses Bundy</i>	<i>Nathan Gale</i>
<i>John Burlingame</i>	<i>Eliphalet Gaylord</i>
<i>John Campbell</i>	<i>Nathaniel Glover</i>
<i>Robert Carver</i>	<i>Joshua Green</i>

<i>Andrew Greene</i>	<i>John Proud</i>
<i>John Harris</i>	<i>Charles Prow</i>
<i>Elisha Harvey</i>	<i>Samuel Reed</i>
<i>Cornelius Havens</i>	<i>Christopher Robinson</i>
<i>Lemuel Horton</i>	<i>Phillip Rose</i>
<i>Nathaniel House</i>	<i>Thomas Saben</i>
<i>Squier How</i>	<i>Elisha Sarle (or Soule)</i>
<i>Daniel Hudson</i>	<i>Abraham Smith</i>
<i>Isaac Jacobs</i>	<i>Samuel Spicer</i>
<i>Reuben Jager</i>	<i>Moses Stevens</i>
<i>Hezekiah Lane</i>	<i>Nathaniel Stoddard</i>
<i>Ebenezer Leonard</i>	<i>Uriah Stone</i>
<i>Frederick Lincoln</i>	<i>John Taylor</i>
<i>John Lindsey</i>	<i>Reuben Thorp</i>
<i>James McCulley</i>	<i>Jno. Thurman</i>
<i>Joseph Mason</i>	<i>Edman Tillson</i>
<i>Fra. Meruzen<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Samuel Walker</i>
<i>Jesse Perry</i>	<i>Charles Ward</i>
<i>William Phillips</i>	<i>Samuel Ward</i>
<i>Isaac Pitman</i>	<i>Gideon Westiok<sup>2</sup></i>
<i>Christopher Prayday</i>	<i>Joseph Whitaker</i>
<i>Isaac Proud</i>	

Further research throws some light on the later service of a number of these men. John Crane became the first major of the new artillery regiment under Colonel Henry Knox and, when the artillery was expanded in 1777, he was promoted to colonel and given command of the Third Continental Regiment which inherited a considerable share of the personnel of the Knox organization. Joseph Balch is found in 1776 as a captain in Colonel Thomas Crafts' artillery regiment organized for the continued defense of Boston. Jotham Drury and Ebenezer Stevens each commanded a company in the new Continental regiment. Drury was later a captain in Crane's regiment. Stevens commanded an independent corps of artillery in the Northern Department in 1777 and in 1778 became lieutenant-colonel of Colonel John Lamb's Second Continental Regiment. James Gardner was conductor and quartermaster with the two companies of Knox's regiment which were detached for service in the Northern Department in 1776 and was later adjutant in Crane's regiment.

1 This name was difficult to decipher on each of three receipts involved and may have been quite different from what is given here. We cannot be sure that we have correctly read every signature.

2 Another difficult signature. This might well have been "Westcott" or some similar name.

A roster for November 1776, when Stevens' company was serving in the vicinity of Fort Ticonderoga, includes the following names from the old Rhode Island company:

Captain	<i>Ebenezer Stevens</i>
Captain-Lieutenant	<i>Asa Rawson</i> <sup>3</sup>
First Lieutenant	<i>David Cook</i> <sup>4</sup>
Second Lieutenant	<i>Isaiah Simmons</i>
Third Lieutenant	<i>Samuel Doggett</i>
Sergeants	<i>John Baker</i> <i>Robert Carver</i> <i>Thomas Chaffee</i> <i>Samuel Walker</i>
Corporals	<i>Isaac Jacobs</i> <i>James McCulley</i>
Bombardiers	<i>Nathaniel Elliott</i> <i>Andrew Greene</i> <i>Nathaniel House</i> <i>Squier How</i> <i>Elisha Soule</i>
Drummer	<i>Jacob Muckley</i>

Jotham Drury's company remained with the rest of Knox's regiment during 1776 and, while no rosters of the companies have yet been located, it is known that the following men were in this company:

Captain	<i>Jotham Drury</i>
Captain-Lieutenant	<i>Benajah Carpenter</i> <sup>5</sup>
First Lieutenant	<i>John Slewman</i>
Second Lieutenants	<i>John Chandler</i> <i>Jeremiah Freeman</i>
Sergeants	<i>John Harris</i> <i>Elisha Harvey</i>

Captain Drury later commanded a company in Crane's regiment, and at that time it included men who had served in the Rhode Island company and who might be assumed to have stayed with it during the year it was a part of the Knox regiment. They were:

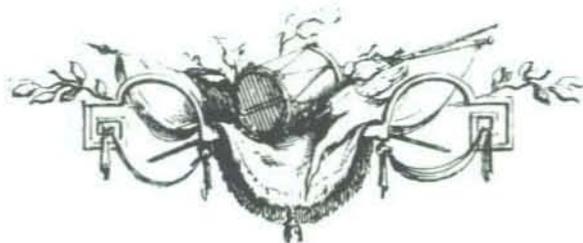
Regimental Fife Major	<i>Samuel Mellus</i>
Sergeants	<i>Payn Downs</i> <i>Phillip Rose</i>
Bombardiers	<i>Nicholas Cozzens</i> <i>Joseph Whitaker</i>

From Captain Drury's company, above, John Slewman became a company commander and John Harris a second lieutenant in Crane's Third Continental artillery, while Elisha Harvey served as a second lieutenant there and later in Colonel Lamb's regiment.

Also, in Captain Winthrop Sargent's company in the Crane regiment in 1777 were Sergeants William Crow and Reuben Jager, who were perhaps in Drury's company in the preceding year.

Among these men, Payn Downs was listed as coming from Shrewsbury, Nicholas Cozzens from Charlestown, and Reuben Jager from Framingham. They may originally have been Rhode Island men, enlisting to fill a quota from a Massachusetts town or, like Nathaniel Stoddard of Hingham, Massachusetts men filling vacancies in the original Rhode Island company.

In all, some thirty-five members of the Rhode Island Company of Artillery who were present at the siege of Boston in the latter part of 1775 are known to have continued in the artillery. There may have been others. The total amount of service compiled by these men, almost all Rhode Islanders, is not inconsiderable.



3 Died 2 August 1776 at Fort George.

4 Lieutenant Cook served later as a captain in Crane's regiment.

5 Killed at the Battle of Long Island, 27 August 1776.

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\*Mr. Conlon is Reference Librarian, The Rhode Island Historical Society.

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## Director's Newsletter

In recent years the Society has prided itself on the breadth of its collecting scope and the concept of library and museum materials as complementary media depicting the life of our state. Where other historical agencies have chosen to pursue either library or museum acquisitions, we attempt to develop both. Events of recent months, we feel, have illustrated the wisdom of this approach.

As the result of some very generous gestures on the part of descendants of John Brown, our knowledge of his house, his life, and his world has increased many-fold. This winter Mr. Henry A. L. Brown deposited at our library over ninety volumes which had been in the library of John Francis, son-in-law of John Brown. Also deposited was Francis' copy of the Robert Sayer map of the United States (London, 1790) and about fifty letters from John Brown to members of his family and to the firm of Willing & Francis, Philadelphia. This was the largest number of John Brown letters to have come to our attention for many years. Among the Francis books were two additional numbered volumes from James Brown's library, the bulk of which Mr. Norman Herreshoff had deposited with us last summer. We were extremely pleased and much appreciated Henry Brown's great kindness, but the deluge of Brown material was yet to come.

In successive months this spring, Norman Herreshoff of Bristol continued to add to the James Brown and John Brown libraries, already on deposit, which number over three hundred eighteenth-century books, and also to deposit two of the original John Brown House beds; a Rhode Island Windsor chair with John Brown's name carved on it; a dressing table; a painted eighteenth-century chest of drawers; a great quantity of various remains of eighteenth-century bed-hangings, curtains, bed covers, and other textiles; and a spectacular plaster cast of the profile of George Washington in an oval plaster frame. Next in several installments came about one hundred letters of John Brown and much James Brown material. The letters cover a variety of subjects including John Brown's business, his views as a

Federalist congressman, and his family. It is in the last area that we have learned most about John Brown who, for the first time, in his letters to his daughter and son, emerges as a father and person of some warmth. We have not yet begun to read through all the details of this material, but already we have found important new insights about Rhode Island's reluctance to join the Union in 1789, some interesting details about John Brown's chariot, and an extremely important inventory of the books in James Brown's library.

Any one of these accessions and deposits would be cause for celebration and congratulation but, taken together, they represent a major step for the Society, and we are indeed indebted to Mr. Herreshoff for his confidence in us and for his great foresight in collecting and preserving these materials over the years. It is particularly gratifying to have them arrive as the rooms in John Brown House are restored. At this point, under John Kirk's advice and the supervision of the house committee, nearly all the rooms on two floors have had original paint color restored and furniture contents installed. Restoration of windows in the dining room and in one of the upstairs bedrooms has begun to suggest the cube-like shape of the original house. We hope to continue this process with further steps next winter. Additional information about the original furnishings of the house is likely to come to light this summer. Miss Wendy Cooper, formerly our museum assistant and now a graduate student at Winterthur, will be researching the contents of the house as part of her degree program.

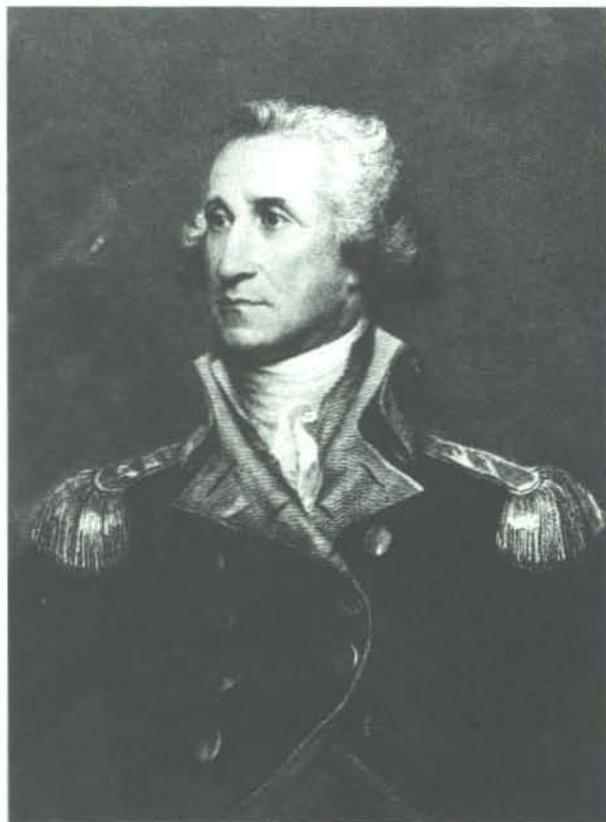
The first half of the anonymous grant in honor of David Patten, to construct a manuscript reading room and to air-condition the Library, has been received. The plans are nearly completed and ready. The room will contain Mr. Patten's manuscripts and writings about Rhode Island's political scene in the first part of this century as well as his picturesque tales of "S'cunnet."

We have counted it a successful year when we have been able to add one or two Rhode Island imprints to our shelves. Since we have the most complete collection

*George Washington's likeness is portrayed in this handsome plaque now hanging in John Brown House. A similarity may be seen between this high relief in plaster and an engraving from a Trumbull portrait of the early 1790s.*



*Engraving by A. B. Durand from a portrait by Trumbull in The National Portrait Gallery of Distinguished Americans, 1834.*



of these fruits of Rhode Island's presses from 1727 to 1800, it is becoming more difficult to find any we do not have. The recent gift by Mr. J. Benjamin Nevin of nearly half a hundred scarce Rhode Island broadsides is a great occasion for the Society. Not only are his some of the best copies we have seen but, in several instances, the only known examples.

Some important contracts signed this spring will result in other important additions. An agreement has been reached with the New England Yearly Meeting of Friends to have its archives moved from the John Carter

Brown Library and housed in our Library. This collection, rich in Rhode Island material, will be available to genealogists, scholars and historians; in a single step it makes our Library an important center for the study of Quakerism in New England. Gift agreements have also been reached with two of the three Rhode Island commercial television stations giving us title to their films deposited in our new film archive.

Not all our time this winter and spring has been spent in acquiring new things. A great deal of effort by our catalogers, Mr. Shipton, Mr. Goodyear, Mrs. Tilley,



Miss Hildreth, Mrs. Monahan, and Mrs. Kennedy, has been given to materials already in hand. Steps have been taken with our paintings, under Mr. Goodyear's supervision, to have long-needed restoration and cleaning accomplished. Through the continuing generosity of the Society of Daughters of Founders and Patriots nearly fourteen volumes of Moses Brown Papers have been restored to date. Fungus and mildew in the Almy & Brown Papers awaits sufficient funding to be removed. The Feke portrait of the Rev. John Callender is back from the restorer as is a surprisingly fine portrait of Thomas Cranston which Mr. Goodyear thinks may have been done by Joseph Blackburn. An attempt will be made to air-condition the attic of John Brown House, where our paintings are stored, in order not to defeat the restoration and cleaning process by subjecting our holdings to wide fluctuations of heat and humidity.

Also, as part of reviewing the total program and holdings of the Society, members of the staff have visited and viewed our possessions on loan in various places throughout the state. After several discussions by the Museum Committee, some objects have been recalled. The various historic sites owned by the Society, the Jireh Bull House, the Great Swamp Site, Devil's Foot Rock, and Queen's Fort, have similarly been visited. On the whole they appear safe and in good condition.

In a variety of ways the staff, representing the Society, has furthered the cause of Rhode Island history by participating in programs of the League of Rhode Island Historical Societies, in helping to plan the state's celebration of the Revolutionary Bicentennial, and in supplying the research needs of projects of the Rhode Island Historic Preservation Commission, the Historic American Buildings Survey, and the effort to establish the park at India Point. Through such participation we trust we serve the wishes of the Society's membership as well as fulfill the intentions of our founders of being central and indispensable to projects of history and preservation in our state.

By almost any standard our lecture series on Victorian Taste, sponsored jointly with the Providence Preservation Society, has gone well. Next fall the Lecture Committee will offer a series of fresh perspectives on Rhode Island history conducted by Prof. Norman Smith of Rhode Island College and, in the following spring, Frank Goodyear will present a series on American painting.

With this first issue of the twenty-ninth volume of *Rhode Island History* we welcome our new editor, Dr. Joel A. Cohen, Assistant Professor of History at the University of Rhode Island.

*Recently cleaned, this portrait of Thomas Cranston (1710-1785) of Newport, for a long time mis-attributed to the artist John Singleton Copley, is now thought to be the work of Joseph Blackburn, an English-trained portraitist who came to Newport in 1754 via Bermuda. It was during Blackburn's two-year sojourn in Newport that the portrait of Thomas Cranston and those of many other prominent Newport residents were probably completed. Blackburn's knowledge of the current vogue in courtly dress and in fashionable poses, as well as his light and graceful style, was held in high regard by Newporters and immediately won him numerous commissions. With the mysterious disappearance of Robert Feke from Newport about 1751, Blackburn had a virtual monopoly on fashionable portrait commissions from 1754 to 1756 when he removed to Boston. This painting, now hanging in the entrance hall of John Brown House, adds an important dimension to the Society's collection of eighteenth-century Rhode Island portraits.*

## The Rhode Island Historical Society

### *One Hundred and Forty-eighth Annual Meeting*

The one hundred and forty-eighth Annual Meeting of The Rhode Island Historical Society was held Sunday, January 18, 1970, at 3:30 p.m., in the Library, 121 Hope Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02906.

President Bradford F. Swan called the meeting to order. The minutes of the previous Annual Meeting were approved. Mrs. Phineas Sprague, chairman of the nominating committee, presented its list of officers and committee members to serve until the next annual meeting. Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously voted that said slate of officers, committee chairmen and members be duly elected.

Mr. Swan, re-elected president, reported on the fund raised in memory of the late John Hazard Wells which has been used to install glass-enclosed bookcases on each side of the fireplace in the Library, a fitting tribute to Mr. Wells' long service to the Society.

Restoration of John Brown House is within sight of completion. More original furniture has been received and the Society is attempting to acquire a Newport piece which was originally in the house. Approximately \$1,000 more is needed to complete the purchase which, the president stressed, would be an important addition.

Mr. Swan pointed out that the Library had never been in better hands with a better staff. He commented upon the recent acquisition of a contemporary copy of a letter written by Roger Williams to his brother Robert concerning the burning of Providence. Fire and burglary alarm systems have been installed in the Library and John Brown House. A spring lecture series has been scheduled.

Finally the president took great pride in reporting that, through the donation of an anonymous fund of \$40,000, a manuscript reading room in the Library would be completed in honor of David Patten, the *Providence Journal* editor famous for his "S'cunnet" stories. With over one million manuscripts, the Library building will have to be air-conditioned, and this will undoubtedly require additional funds.

Mr. Swan then presented the Society's new director, Albert T. Klyberg, who introduced Frank Goodyear, who is cataloging paintings, prints and drawings under a grant to the Society from the Rhode Island Foundation; Nathaniel N. Shipton, curator of manuscripts, and Mrs. Thomas Kennedy, assistant to the director, and thanked them for helping him get started in his new post. Mr. Klyberg also acknowledged the assistance of volunteer workers Mr. Joseph K. Ott, Mr. A. Richmond Peirce, Jr., Mrs. Philip Davis, Miss Louise Douglas, and Mrs. C. K. Rathbone.

In his first report as director, Mr. Klyberg traced the study of local history from the formation of historical societies in this country at the end of the eighteenth century under the leadership of gentlemen scholars to the activities of today's professional historians drawn largely from colleges and universities. He discussed various needs and opportunities for further research in Rhode Island history.

Mr. Klyberg then introduced Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Karr, who showed old films of Rhode Island and downtown Providence which they have assembled and organized from

the film archives of the Society. Mr. Karr is working for his Ph.D. in Physics at Brown and Mrs. Karr is teaching at Providence College. They are active in several film organizations and have volunteered to assemble and organize the Society's collection of film on the history and life of the state. Mrs. Karr explained how film was obtained from Rhode Island television stations and she then introduced Mr. Russell Searles, who has a film collection starting about 1920 which he plans to donate to the Society. Mrs. Karr also noted that at one time there had been several motion picture companies located in Providence.

President Swan thanked Mr. and Mrs. Karr and Mr. Searles for their fine presentation. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
FRANK L. HINCKLEY, JR.  
Secretary

## The Rhode Island Historical Society

### *Necrology List 1969*

Dr. Sedgwick S. Adams  
Lt. Col. Howard V. Allen  
Mr. Philip R. Arnold  
Mr. J. Whitney Bowen  
Mr. Richard LeBaron Bowen  
Mr. Wendell S. Brown  
Mr. William H. Cady  
Mr. Russell I. Capwell  
Mme. Avis Bliven Charbonnel  
Mr. Herbert Douglass Dane  
Mrs. Harriett Dorrance  
Mr. Edwin F. Drew  
Mrs. M. Cross Edgren  
Mrs. Robert H. I. Goddard  
Mr. James Grassick, Jr.  
Mrs. Paul J. Grimes  
Dr. William T. Hastings  
Mrs. E. Harris Howard, Jr.  
Mr. Joseph Janas  
Miss Grace Leonard  
Mrs. Norman A. MacColl  
Mr. Forest B. Morgan  
Mr. Harold B. Tanner  
Mrs. Harold B. Tanner  
Mr. Frank Weston  
Miss Ruth W. Whitaker  
Mr. William W. White  
Miss Hope E. Willis  
Professor J. Walter Wilson  
Mr. Frederick W. York

## The Rhode Island Historical Society

Statement of General Fund—Receipts and Expenditures  
Year ended June 30, 1969

## RECEIPTS:

Dues		\$31,009.35	
Contributions:			
General	\$ 440.00		
Corporate	300.00		
Gifts and bequests	<u>3,448.81</u>	4,188.81	
State of Rhode Island		21,000.00	
State of Rhode Island— microfilm		671.39	
City of Providence		2,000.00	
Patriotic societies		280.00	
Admission income		1,248.35	
Outside services		1,494.04	
Special lectures		1,735.93	
Miscellaneous		1,199.53	
Transfers from other funds for current operations:			
Consolidated endow- ment income	50,031.83		
Restricted fund income	<u>3,280.31</u>	<u>53,312.14</u>	\$118,139.54

## EXPENDITURES:

Salaries		58,050.14
Pension		9,379.20
Social security taxes		2,513.69
Director's discretionary fund		968.35
Supplies		1,926.47
Rugs		284.40
Telephone		1,082.14
Promotion		528.22
Membership		1,855.12
Library		5,108.72
Quaker material purchases		1,981.30
Museum		5,955.94
Lectures		1,797.93
Publications		4,474.51
Heat, light, and housekeeping		4,170.51
Grounds		3,484.41
Buildings		4,417.46
Insurance		2,144.41
Group insurance and Blue Cross		1,749.60
Special insurance		905.00
Microfilm:		
State	671.39	
Other	<u>2,975.42</u>	3,646.81
Professional fees		2,755.81
Miscellaneous		922.59
Equipment		2,139.11
Provision for John Brown House fence painting and repair		<u>500.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		122,741.84
EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER REVENUES		<u>(\$ 4,602.30)</u>

**The Rhode Island Historical Society  
Officers and Committee Members  
elected at the 148th Annual Meeting to serve  
until the Annual Meeting in 1971**

Bradford F. Swan, *president*  
Bayard Ewing, *vice president*  
Mrs. George E. Downing,  
*vice president*  
Frank L. Hinckley, Jr., *secretary*  
Mrs. Norman T. Bolles,  
*assistant secretary*  
Townes M. Harris, Jr., *treasurer*  
Duncan Hunter Mauran,  
*assistant treasurer*

## FINANCE

Bayard Ewing, *chairman*  
Foster B. Davis, Jr.  
Michael P. Metcalf  
John Simmen  
Charles C. Horton

## GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS

William N. Davis, *chairman*  
H. Cushman Anthony  
Clifford S. Gustafson  
Harold Ingram, Jr.  
Thomas M. Sneddon  
Mrs. Carl W. Haffenreffer

## JOHN BROWN HOUSE

Mrs. George E. Downing, *chairman*  
Winslow Ames  
Mrs. John A. Gwynne  
Norman Herreshoff  
Frank Mauran, III

## LECTURE

Joseph K. Ott, *chairman*  
Dr. Marguerite Appleton  
Richard B. Harrington  
Mrs. Clifford P. Monahan  
Mrs. Phineas Sprague

## MEMBERSHIP

Patrick T. Conley, *chairman*  
Mrs. J. Emery Long  
Mrs. S. Bradford Tingley  
Walter R. Martin  
Matthew J. Smith

## MUSEUM

Mrs. Charles Robinson, Jr., *chairman*  
Winslow Ames  
Bayard Ewing  
Norman Herreshoff  
Joseph K. Ott

## PUBLICATIONS

Stuart C. Sherman, *chairman*  
Henry L. P. Beckwith, Jr.  
Mrs. Philip Davis  
Wendell Garrett  
Norman W. Smith

## LIBRARY

Thomas R. Adams, *chairman*  
Malcolm G. Chace, III  
Joel A. Cohen  
Charles W. Farnham  
Albert E. Lownes

## AUDIT

John H. Drury, *chairman*  
F. Morris Cochran  
Robert H. Goff

The Executive Board is composed of the officers; chairmen of the standing committees; members at large: Norman T. Bolles, George C. Davis, Walter R. Martin; the director; and Elliott E. Andrews, state librarian, *ex officio*.



*In the interest of Rhode Island history, beyond the activities of the Society, the Director addresses representatives from the original thirteen colonies at the Old Colony House in Newport during a recent conference to develop plans for the American Revolution Bicentennial. Governor Frank Licht is seated on the judge's bench at left. Below him, State Representative George McDonald, Chairman of the Rhode Island Commission to plan the Bicentennial, conducts the meeting.*

*Photograph, courtesy Rhode Island Development Council.*