

REVOLUTIONARY DEFENCES
IN RHODE ISLAND



EDWARD FIELD

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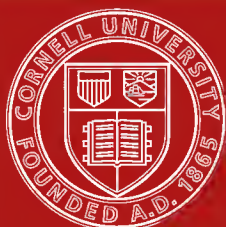
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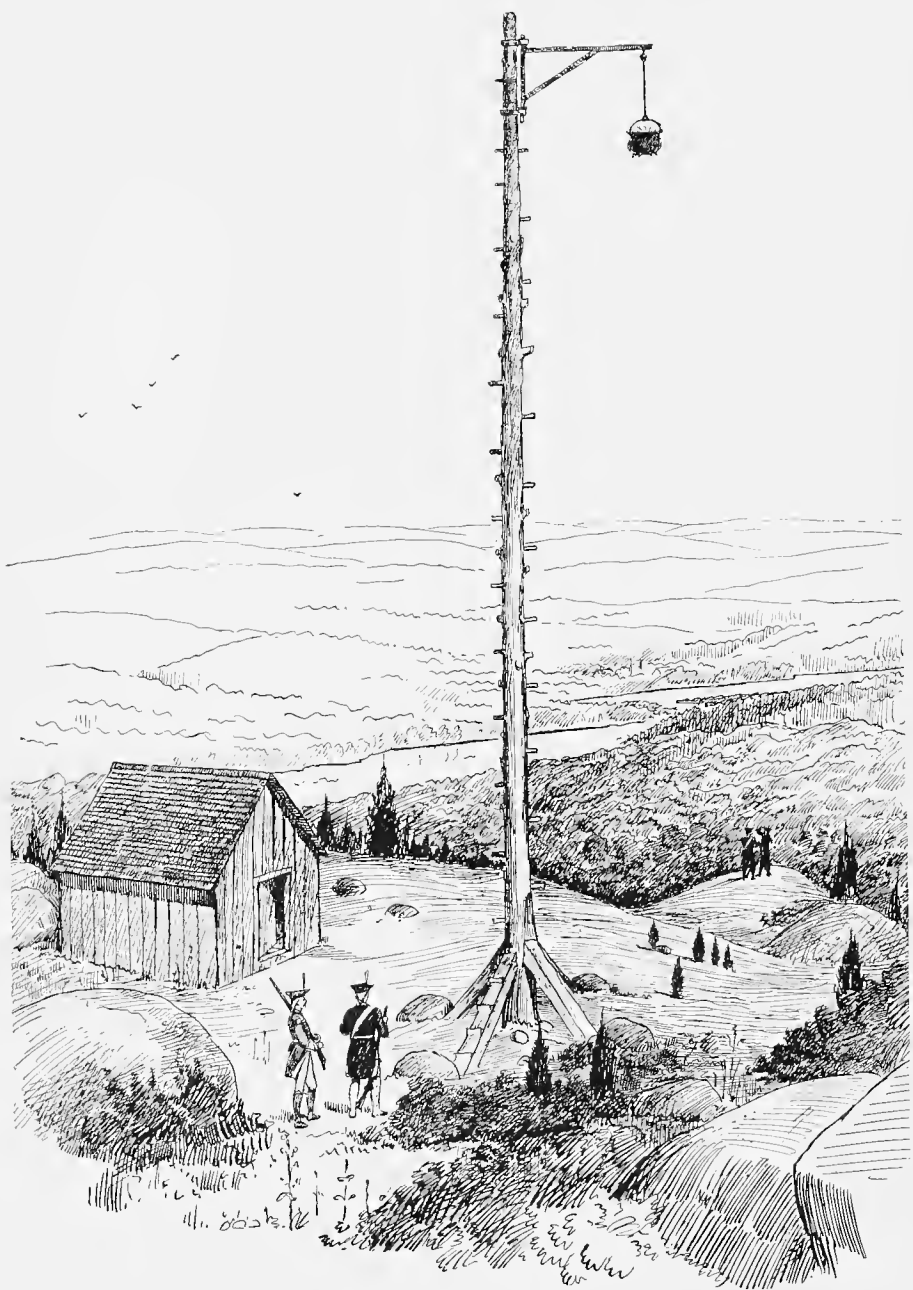
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REVOLUTIONARY DEFENCES

IN

RHODE ISLAND



PROVIDENCE BEACON

REVOLUTIONARY DEFENCES

IN

RHODE ISLAND

AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE FORTIFICATIONS
AND BEACONS ERRECTED DURING THE AMERICAN
REVOLUTION, WITH MUSTER ROLLS OF THE
COMPANIES STATIONED ALONG THE
SHORES OF NARRAGANSETT BAY

BY

EDWARD FIELD

AND PRESIDENT OF THE RHODE ISLAND SOCIETY OF THE
HONORS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

WITH MAPS, PLANS, AND ILLUSTRATIONS

PROVIDENCE, R.I.

PRESTON AND ROUNDS

1896

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To the Memory
OF
MY MOTHER

PREFACE.

THE history of the Revolutionary Defences in Rhode Island has occupied my leisure time at irregular intervals for several years past.

Some of the earlier results of my study of the subject were embodied in a paper which I read before the Rhode Island Historical Society on January 26, 1886, entitled, "Fortifications in and around Providence," and which was subsequently printed in the *Narragansett Historical Register*, No. 3, Vol. V. From this paper I have drawn largely for the material relating to the account of the Providence defences; but I have now added much that was then to me unknown, and have corrected errors then made.

The authorities for the statements herein made have been mostly derived from the *Rhode Island Colonial Records*, including both Bartlett's printed volumes and the printed schedules of the proceedings of the General Assembly during the Revolutionary period and the manuscript records of the *Council of War*. I have also derived much information from Cullum's *Fortification Defenses of Narragansett Bay*, Arnold's *History of Rhode Island*, the various printed town histories, and the town record books of Providence, East Greenwich, Warwick, Barrington, and Bristol; while the manuscript collections in the State Archives, the Rhode Island Historical Society, and the documentary possessions of the city of Providence have furnished me much new material. The muster rolls and company lists here printed have been carefully transcribed from the originals, and reference to the place where they may be found is given in each case.

In the study of the subject I have traversed the entire coast line of the state and

have examined and made plans of each one of the old earthworks now remaining, besides visiting most of the other historic places mentioned in the text. The plan of Fort Chastellux has been taken from Cullum's *Fortification Defenses of Narragansett Bay*, the Prospect Hill fort from Stone's *French Allies*, and Fort Liberty from a map of Newport made in 1776.

I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to my friend Norman M. Isham, Esquire, for his generous contribution to these pages, in making the drawings and the map of the State of Rhode Island, which form a part of the illustrations of this book.

I am also indebted to the Honorable Charles P. Bennett, Secretary of State, for the privilege of reproducing the map of the operations on Rhode Island, now in his custody, and to the Honorable George M. Carpenter, the Honorable Amos Perry, Librarian of the Rhode Island Historical Society, and to R. H. Tilley, Esquire, Librarian of the Newport Historical Society, for

the opportunity of using valuable manuscripts, interesting relics, and for many other kindnesses. The full-page photographs, with one exception, the Butt's Hill fort, are the work of Samuel B. Burnham, Esquire.

In presenting this account of the action of the men of Rhode Island in the great struggle for American independence, I have sought to bring together such facts as would add interest to these old works scattered along the seaboard, and to point out their location, that they may be easily identified by those who care to visit such historic spots.

E. F.

PROVIDENCE, R.I.,
May, 1896.

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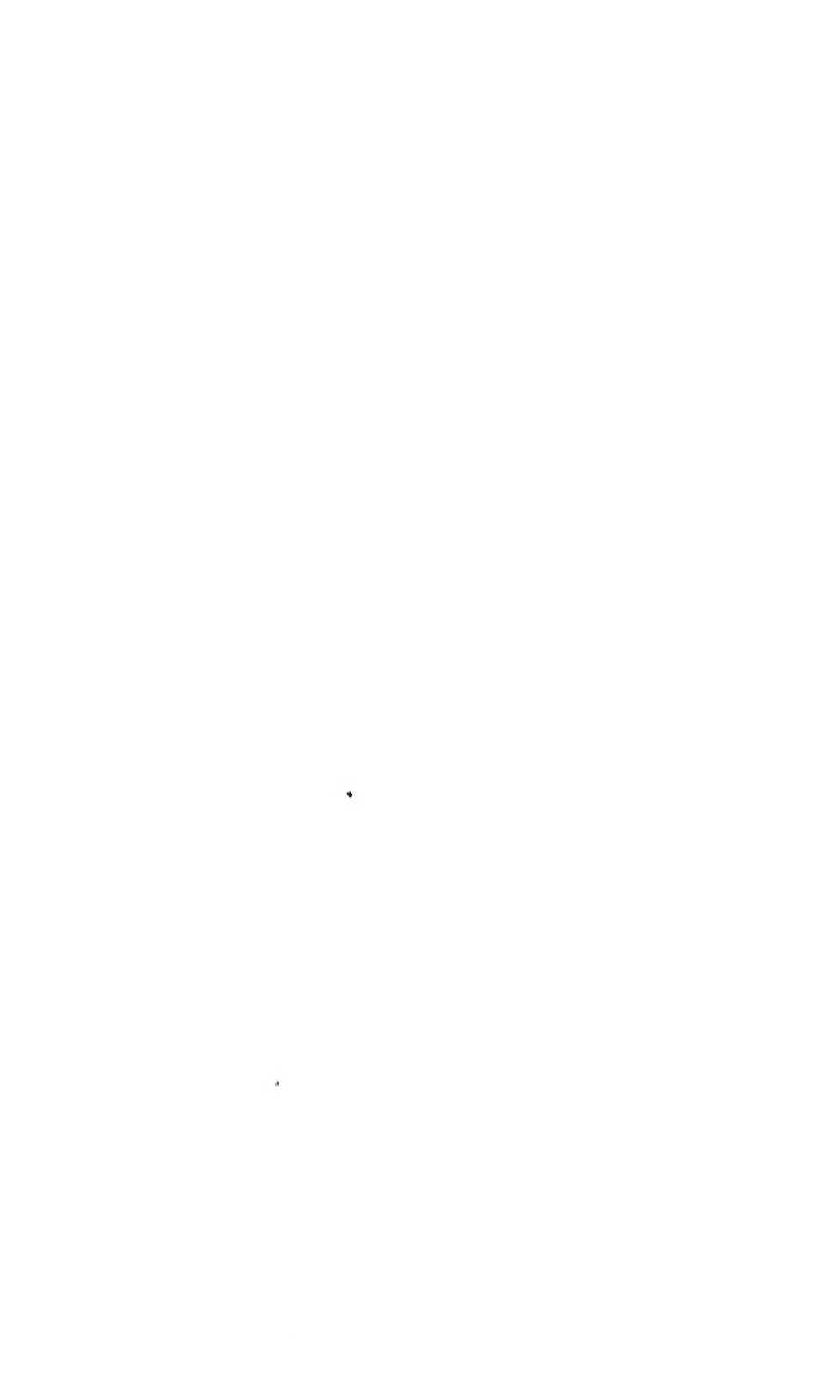
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REVOLUTIONARY DEFENCES IN RHODE ISLAND.

CHAPTER I.

The Military Forces in Rhode Island. — Army of Observation.
— Form of Enlistment. — List of Soldiers in Captain
Stephen Kimball's Company, Captain Jeremiah Olney's
Company, Captain Ethan Clarke's Company, Captain
Joseph Knight's Company, and Captain Simeon Thayer's
Company.

At the outbreak of the war of the Revolution, the active military force of Rhode Island consisted of the several companies of the Train Bands and of independent chartered military organizations bearing high-sounding names like the Kingstown Reds, North Providence Rangers, Scituate Hunters, Pawtuxet Rangers, Providence Grenadiers, Kentish Guards, and some others.

According to the standard of the times these companies were well equipped and

well disciplined. The officers were elected at stated times by the members of the companies and their choice communicated to the General Assembly, which body approving the choice, they were duly commissioned by the Governor. These officers were generally selected with due regard to their skill and ability, and were men of some prominence in the community in which they lived. Except such as had seen service in the previous wars, most of the soldiers' experience had been obtained at the general musters or trainings.

It is a fact that these trainings were more of a frolic than anything else. Training-day was a holiday, every one laid aside his work to witness the manœuvres of the troops, much jollification was indulged in, and much liquor drunk. The headquarters of the militia was usually at some one of the many taverns in the town, and the tavern-keeper always made provision for training-day by laying in an extra stock of liquors. It was customary for the newly elected officers to be generous in treating, not only the soldiers in the company, but every one else, and liquor was furnished in such overflowing abundance that some who

attended "training" took many more steps returning home than they had in coming. "We had our Training and Treating and the company was all here," wrote one tavern-keeper in his diary. Non-attendance at a training was met with a fine, and the money thus obtained was sometimes used to purchase powder for use in firing at a mark.

By a law of the colony, passed in 1774, each enlisted soldier was required to furnish himself "with a sufficient gun or fuzee" and a good bayonet for his gun. The equipments were therefore the soldier's own property and, so long as he furnished all that the law required, no question was raised as to type.

Immediately after the Concord and Lexington fight, the General Assembly of Rhode Island ordered an Army of Observation of fifteen hundred men to be raised "with all the expedition and despatch that the nature of the thing will admit of," and all the militia in the state was ordered to drill a half-day once in every fortnight. This Army of Observation, as it was politely called, was raised for the purpose of repelling any "insult or violence that may be offered to the inhabitants" by the fleets and armies which sur-

rounded them, — the fleets and armies of His Britannic Majesty. Those who entered the army did so by subscribing to this oath of enlistment: —

“ I, the subscriber, hereby solemnly engage and enlist myself as a soldier in His Majesty’s service, and in the pay of the colony of Rhode Island, for the preservation of the liberties of America, from the day of my enlistment, to the last day of December next, unless the service admit of a discharge sooner, which shall be at the discretion of the General Assembly; and I hereby promise to submit myself to all the orders and regulations of the army, and faithfully to observe and obey all such orders as I shall receive from time to time from my officers.”

This entire army was, therefore, enlisted in the King’s service, but it is quite certain that His Majesty did not experience great happiness in having this colonial contingent so promptly in the field, for its meaning was far different from what appeared on its face.

This was the beginning of Rhode Island’s contribution to the Continental Army, and during the whole struggle her contributions were both prompt and generous. It is unfortunate that so little is known of the make-

up of the companies included in this first body of troops to be raised in Rhode Island for the defence of American liberties. There are few records of the soldiers who were engaged in service during the year 1775; the state archives are bare, and what few muster and pay rolls are now to be found relating to this period, are mostly in private hands. The names of all the commissioned officers may be found in the Colonial Records, but the state's papers contain no lists of the non-commissioned officers and privates.

A persistent search among the depositories of such records has disclosed but four muster or pay rolls particularly identified with this year. Three of these companies were of the Army of Observation, while the fourth, Captain Joseph Knight's Company, was located in Scituate, and the period of service was for a time only a few days previous to the raising of the army, the roll being dated April 20, 1775. As these lists contain the names of those who were the first to enlist in the great struggle for independence, and as many of the names mentioned have been heretofore inaccessible, they are here given.

CAPTAIN STEPHEN KIMBALL'S COMPANY IN COLONEL DANIEL HITCHCOCK'S REGIMENT OF THE ARMY OF OBSERVATION, 1775.¹

Stephen Kimball, *Captain*.

Jonathan Smith, *Lieutenant*.

Nehemiah Angell, *Ensign*.

Nathan Olney	} <i>Sergeants</i> .
Timothy Hopkins	
Isaac Medbury	

William Arnold	} <i>Corporals</i> .
Othniel Arnold	
Philip Salsbury	

Thomas Bickford	Thomas Pearce
Jabez Arnold	Homes Perkins
Elisha Ormsbury	David Remock
Squire Bucklen	John Swain
Benjamin Arnold	Perrigreen Smith
Charles Brown	Israel Shippey
Solomon Burlingame	Thomas Thornton
Zachariah Basset	David Whitman
James Blancher	John Whitman
Joseph Bosworth	Joseph Williams
Amaziah Blackmar	John Walker
Benjamin Boss	Nathan Walker
Rufus Chapman	Jeremiah Wescot
Caleb Colgrove	Comfort Weatherhead

¹ Cowell's *Spirit of '76 in Rhode Island*, page 21: A copy of the original, certified by Benjamin Boss, is among the Military Papers of the Rhode Island Historical Society.

Zephaniah Coman	Ephrean Hopkins
Morris Corkern	James Wescot
Samuel Singleton	Jotham Hawkins
Jonathan Dolbey	Reuben Hines
William Edmans	Jeremiah Walling
Bethuel Curtis	Hezekiah Medbury
Abel Ford	Pain Hines
Joel Hopkins	Abel Hornton
Oliver Hopkins	Abram Jones

CAPTAIN JEREMIAH OLNEY'S FOURTH COMPANY IN
COLONEL DANIEL HITCHCOCK'S REGIMENT OF
THE ARMY OF OBSERVATION, 1775.¹

Jeremiah Olney, *Captain*.

Amos Jencks, *Lieutenant*.

Nehemiah Field, *Ensign*.

Holiman Potter, *First Sergeant*.

Thomas Knight, Jr., *Second Sergeant*.

Benjamin Wood *	} <i>Corporals</i> .
Silas Howard	
Naman Bishop	
Jere Burlingame	

John Phillips, * *Drummer*.

Nathan Waterman, *Fifer*.

¹ Cowell's *Spirit of '76 in Rhode Island*, page 20.

* The names thus marked are found on the list of Captain Joseph Knight's Scituate Company and may serve to indicate the town from which they enlisted when the Army of Observation was raised.

John Manchester *	Oliver Weeks
Collins Roberts *	Joseph Bennett *
Joseph Collins *	Stukely Westcott
David Knight *	Edward Daw
Obadiah Bridges	Christopher Collins *
Samuel Eldrich *	William King
Joseph Briggs *	Allen Briggs
Rufus Knight	Eleazer Clark
Nathan White	Peter Cappell
Eleazer Randall	Stukely Thornton *
Oliver Jencks	Elisha Sarle
Joel Whipple	Thomas Colvin, Jr.
Abel Aldrich	Solomon Dailey
Ichabod Richmond	John Booth
John Grant, Jr.	Thomas Sarle, Jr.
Stephen Edwards *	Benjamin Gorton
William Taylor, Jr.	William Edwards
William Jeffers	James Stone
Paskow Austin	Edward Bennett *
Simon Jeffers	Phillip Morris
Caleb Nichols	James Wood
John Fuller	Joseph Angell
Caleb Steere *	Waterman Randall
George King	Oliver Bisshop
Thomas Weaver	

CAPTAIN ETHAN CLARKE'S COMPANY, DECEMBER, 1775.¹Ethan Clarke, *Captain*.Thomas Cole, *Lieutenant*.Paul Harrington, *Ensign*.

Joshua Babcock	} <i>Sergeants</i> .
Henry Northrop	
Nicholas Clarke	

Jonathan Hazard	} <i>Corporals</i> .
Daniel Stafford	
David Remington	

Nathaniel Plumb, *Fifer*.Asa Clarke, *Drummer*.

Ebenezer Hill	James Shote
Robert Perigo	Lubius Lewis
George Tanner	Jonathan Lewis
John Gardner	Moses Roger
Arnold Coon	Samuel Bissell
William Watson	Amos Smith
John Popple	George Griffith
George Popple	William Harvey
James Bliven	Thomas Duglas
Jonathan Goodbed	Benedict Brown
Joshua Church	Daniel Scranton
Oliver Frink	Stephen Johnson
Walter Wordin	Nathan Whiting

¹ The roll of Captain Clarke's Company is in the custody of the Providence Record Commissioners, and is one of the "Warner Papers," so called; it has never before been printed.

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1775, to January 1, 1776, and the companies in which they were serving at the time Thayer's Company was detached.

Simeon Thayer, <i>Captain</i> .	
Lemuel Bailey, <i>First Lieutenant</i> .	Tew's Co.
William Humphrey, <i>Second Lieutenant</i> .	Aldrich's Co.
Thomas Page, <i>First Sergeant</i> .	Thayer's Co.
Thomas Ellis, <i>Second Sergeant</i> .	Thayer's Co.
Moses Bryant, <i>Third Sergeant</i> .	Field's Co.
Samuel Singleton, <i>Fourth Sergeant</i> .	Kimball's Co.
Moses Cockran, <i>First Corporal</i> .	Kimball's Co.
James Hayden, <i>Second Corporal</i> .	Thayer's Co.
Silas Wheeler, <i>Third Corporal</i> .	Field's Co.
Thomas Low, <i>Fourth Corporal</i> .	Thayer's Co.
Eleazer Thayer, <i>Private</i> .	Thayer's Co.
John Thompson,	" "
John Latham,	" Field's Co.
Elijah Fowler,	" Tew's Co.
John Bridges,	" C. Olney's Co.*
Moses Hemenway,	" Thayer's Co.
James Welch,	" Field's Co.
James Monk,	" Thayer's Co.
Silas Hooker,	" "
William Gouge,	" "
Jacob Good,	" "
John Robinson,	" "
Cornelius Higgarty,	" Field's Co.
Abraham Jones,	" Kimball's Co.†

* Dismissed.

† Discharged at Cambridge.

Pasco Austin,	<i>Private.</i>	J. Olney's Co.
Joseph Bosworth,	"	"
Manie O'Daniel,	"	Field's Co. †
Elijah Jones,	"	J. Olney's Co.
James Stone,	"	"
John Holley,	"	Talbot's Co.
John Cambridge,	"	Thayer's Co.
David Lawrence,	"	C. Olney's Co.

It will thus be seen that thirty-three of these men belonged to Rhode Island companies.

CHAPTER II.

Condition of the Army at Jamaica Plain. — Method of encouraging Enlistments. — Arms and Accoutrements. — Rules adopted for their Care. — Gun-makers and Bayonet-makers. — Powder and Saltpetre Mills erected.

THE Army of Observation was at once despatched to the seat of war at Boston, and went into camp at Jamaica Plain. Here Nathanael Greene, who had been elected Brigadier-General, assumed command.

He found his troops in commotion and disorder; but, through his skilful management and great personal influence, order was restored and a high grade of discipline thereafter maintained.

Notwithstanding the hurried way in which the Rhode Island brigade had been placed in the field, it was the best equipped force in the army. Chaplain William Emerson, of Concord, Mass., an observing man, who visited from time to time the various commands and made notes of what he observed, says, "the Rhode Islanders are furnished with tent equipage, and everything in the

most exact English style." With the discipline which Greene's personality inspired, and the completeness of its equipment, the Rhode Island division of the Continental Army was marked and noticeable.



PROVIDENCE GRENADIER'S HAT.

No complete uniform such as was worn by the Rhode Island troops has been found in the various collections in the state, but the uniform hat here represented was the kind worn by the independent company called the Providence Grenadiers, chartered in 1774, and one of the companies that assisted in the construction of the fort on Prospect Hill,

in Providence, in 1777. It is among the collection of the Rhode Island Historical Society. A similar hat, differently decorated, worn by the Newport Light Infantry, another independent company chartered about the same time, may be seen in the interesting collection of relics owned by the Newport Artillery. Nothing whatever is known of



BRITISH GRENADIER'S HAT.

the other Grenadiers' hat, but the symbols of royalty which adorn its front show plainly enough that it was once the property of a soldier of His Britannic Majesty. This also belongs to the Rhode Island Historical Society.

About the first of July the army from Rhode Island consisted of three regiments, comprising 107 officers and 1085 enlisted

men, — nearly the whole number that had been called for. It is within bounds to say that during the years of the war, every loyal able-bodied man in Rhode Island between the ages of sixteen and sixty, performed his share of military service, while there are instances where those even younger and older served faithfully in the army and in the coast-guard. Within the little state there was one hundred and thirty miles of coast and two navigable rivers; the British ships in the lower bay impeded navigation, and all of the seaport towns were subject to depredations by parties from these vessels. They landed all along the shore, drove off and killed the cattle belonging to the farmers, stole their produce, poultry, and other livestock, and when any resistance was offered even destroyed the homes of the country people.

One of the coast-guard stationed near the present village of Wickford said that one night he “counted five fires in various directions, which afterwards were ascertained to have been the burning of houses and barns by the enemy.” Every house, save one, on the island of Prudence was thus destroyed. A chain of these guards was kept up all

along the shore, made up of detachments from the several militia companies. It was not necessary at all times to keep a large body in this service, but from time to time the members of companies were summoned to make their appearance to perform "a tower of duty," or relieve others who had already served.

The inhabitants were continually on the watch against these attacks and forays, but when the British army landed at Newport the dangers were increased tenfold; every householder along the seaboard became a guard over his own home and fireside, and was often called upon to stand his watch over that of his neighbor. Soon after the three regiments were despatched to Boston, the work of raising troops was begun. Each town was enlisting its quota and making provision for putting them in the field, armed and equipped for active service. Early in the war, on the 30th of December, 1776, "the Committee of the Four New England States at their meeting in Providence," held for the purpose of "taking into consideration the bounties and allowances offered by Congress for enlisting the Continental battalions," found that in order to fill up the

quotas of the different states, it was necessary to offer some "encouragement to men to enlist," and they recommended to the several legislatures of the states that certain bounties be furnished. Rhode Island promptly voted to give an "additional bounty of £4 to the £6 heretofore allowed," and a blanket each year; to this the several towns in the state made liberal allowances. Besides the state bounty of one hundred silver dollars, Hopkinton voted to add "fifty bushels of Indian corn." In Woonsocket, in 1778, those who enlisted received from the town £35, in addition to the state bounty of £20, and were also furnished with "a uniform coat, 2 waist coats, 2 pairs of breeches, 3 shirts, 3 pairs stockings, 2 pairs shoes, 1 hunting shirt, and 1 pair of overalls." At another time, those who enlisted and furnished their own arms and accoutrements received a bounty of 48 shillings, while those who were without equipments received 36 shillings.

Woonsocket seems to have been generous indeed with her soldiers. The town of Westerly approached her soldiery in a different manner. She appealed to them in a

popular way, and voted "Three gallons of Rum to treat the soldiers enlisted and to encourage those that have a mind to enlist."

The method by which recruits were enlisted from Rhode Island into the Continental Army is illustrated by the plates. They refer to a special draft that was made on the state in the summer of 1780. The originals are preserved among the manuscripts belonging to the city of Providence.

In July, 1780, General Washington called upon the state of Rhode Island for six hundred and thirty able-bodied, effective men for three months' service, and the General Assembly forthwith ordered that number enlisted into the Continental Army. Each town was ordered to supply a certain number of men, the number which Providence was to furnish being forty-two.

On the 14th of July the entire number had been enlisted, of which William Phettiplace and Felix Holbrook were numbered 37 and 38 respectively. Three days before, these two men signed the prescribed form of enlistment paper, took the oath of engagement before a justice of the peace, and were mustered into service.

For thus enlisting they were entitled to a

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and found fit for service
named William Pettibone
son of Judge Voss

M. Roche District
11 July 1780 Personally appeared
and William Pettibone and took the
oath by Law

Before the James Knell Justice
11 July 1780 personally appeared
Felix Holbrook & took the oath
before the James Knell Justice

12 July 1780
and found fit for service
named Felix Holbrook

Sam Ward Clerk

bounty, which in this case was "fifty Spanish milled dollars," or "hard dollars," as they were sometimes called.

This bounty money was paid to the soldier by the town treasurer upon presentation of a certificate signed by one of the field-officers of the regiment to which the recruit had been assigned.



COLONEL BOWEN'S CARTRIDGE BOX.

From the records of Hopkinton a good idea of the style of the cartridge or cartouch boxes used by the Continentals is obtained; for it was provided that the cartridge boxes to be furnished the Hopkinton soldiers

“shall hold nine rounds each and made in good plain manner, the covering to be sheepskin and the flaps to be horseskin.” All of the cartridge boxes supplied to the Rhode Island troops were not like this, however. The writer has one, which formerly be-



COLONEL SHERBURNE'S CARTRIDGE BOX.

longed to a soldier in a Smithfield company, and which held seventeen cartridges.

The cartridge box belonging to Colonel Jabez Bowen, one of the most active men in Providence during the Revolution, is of the

regulation pattern of that period and held twenty-six cartridges.

The other is of a different character, made to buckle around the waist, not unlike the sportsman's cartridge belt of modern times; it is made of cloth, and trimmed with red and white braid. This was formerly the property of Colonel Henry Sherburne, commanding one of the Rhode Island regiments during the war. Some of the cartridges are yet remaining in it. The first belongs to the Rhode Island, while the latter belongs to the Newport Historical Society.

The guns with which the men were furnished were of various kinds, and were usually called firelocks. They were almost entirely flintlocks; for it was not until fifty years after the Revolution that the percussion lock came into general use, although invented in 1807. At a time when everything in the shape of a firearm was in demand, it is quite likely that some of the soldiers were equipped with the old matchlock and snaphaunce, the precursor of the flintlock. These guns were of many patterns and calibers; it was on this account that the town of Westerly voted "That the

store of lead now in the town be run into bullets for firearms of several sizes."

On the 6th of February, 1777, General Washington, from his headquarters at Morristown, wrote to Governor Cooke: —

"SIR:— As the arrival of a sufficient quantity of small arms from Europe, in time to arm the Continental troops, is a matter of great uncertainty, proper steps should be immediately taken in your state to collect all that can be purchased from private people.

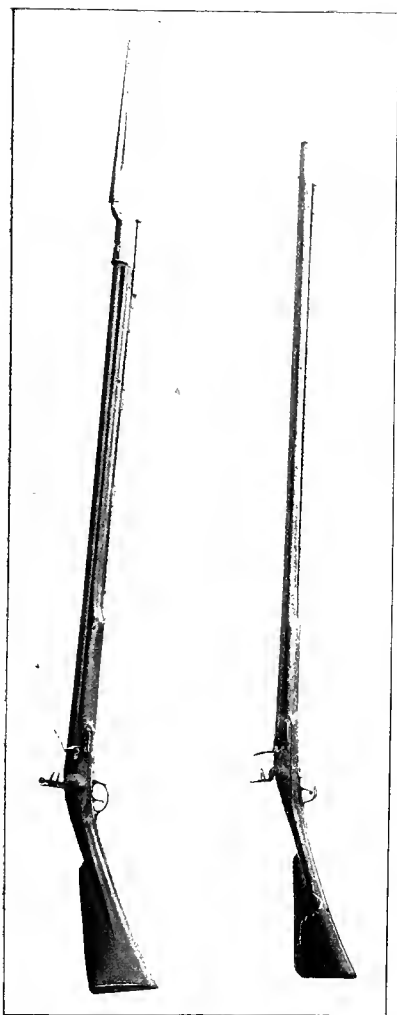
"The custom of hiring them for the campaign is attended with many bad consequences; the owners take little care of them, and carry them away and sell or change them, as they please.

"Particular attention should be paid to the quality of the firelock; no light trash arms should, on any account, be received in the public stores; if they are not substantial, both in lock and barrel, they should be thrown upon the hands of the commissary who purchased them.

"I have the honor to be, sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"GO. WASHINGTON."



ELBRIDGE GERRY'S WILLIAM ELLERY'S
GUN GUN

From the collection of the Newport Historical Society

The gun on the left in the illustration was owned by Elbridge Gerry, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence from Massachusetts, and has engraved upon the brass stock plate "E. Gerry, 1774," while the other was the property of William Ellery of Rhode Island, another signer of the Declaration, who left it in his will to his son. Both these historic relics are now in the possession of the Newport Historical Society, having been deposited there by grandsons of these distinguished patriots. They illustrate the type of firearms generally in use during the war, one being of the regulation musket pattern with bayonet attached, while the other, a much lighter arm, is usually called a "fowling-piece."

Anticipating the manner in which the troubles with the mother country would terminate, Jeremiah Hopkins of Coventry, as early as 1774, petitioned the General Assembly to grant him the benefit of a lottery for raising the sum of \$200, to purchase works and tools; for, as he states in his petition, "he sufficiently understands the business of a gunsmith, so as to make guns, or small arms, with advantage to himself, and to others, by whom guns are much wanted at

this time when they cannot be imported from Great Britain."

His petition was granted, and a committee appointed to see that his lottery was fairly conducted.

On September 12, 1775, Barnard Eddy, having been directed by a vote of the town of Providence to make a list of the men and arms, presented his report. It showed that there were 569 arms in the town, 502 of which belonged to the inhabitants, while 67 belonged to the public stock; by what Eddy called a "Roof Account" in this report, it appears that there were 600 men in the town. A year later another census of the "arms and men" was taken, showing 726 men and 497 arms. These proportions doubtless show the condition of the colony in this important munition of war. Early in 1775 the manufacture of firearms was commenced in Providence, and the archives of the city contain many of the bills rendered for those used in supplying the Providence companies. Elihu Peck made gun stocks, while Edward Martin, Stephen Jenckes, Thomas Bicknell, Prince Keene, and others made guns, bayonets, and ramrods. "20 gun barrels with bayonets and ramrods"

cost £28 or 28 shillings a set, while for "Stocking 30 guns," Elihu Peck's bill was £15-15-11.

Edward Martin's bill, rendered the town August 4, 1775, included the items:—

54 sts gun trimmings @ 6/	£16- 4
88 prs swivels @ 9/	3- 6
119 sets scabbard hooks & plates @ 5d	<u>2- 9-7</u>
	21-19-7

It is confidently believed that the arms thus supplied were "no light trash arms" either.

These guns when turned over to the town were carefully guarded, and the following rules were adopted regulating their use:—

"1. That the Town Arms & Accoutrements be Devided into three equal Divisions: to be lodged in the hands of three discreet men one in each District of the Town—Viz. above or near the Court House, below or near the bridge and at or near Muddy bridge in Weybosset Street.

"2nd. That they be by them respectively, safely kept, clean, & in good order, and not to be delivered out or lent on any occasion whatever but to the Order of some one of the Field Officers of the Providence

Batalion, or to the Order of their Superior Officers, to & for the use of Persons Inhabitants of the Town of Providence, on General Musters & Field Days of their Respective Companies — saving and Excepting Times of General Alarm — [when Necessity will not admit of being restrained by Rules]

“ 3rd. That Such Officers, to whose Order the Arms &c. shall be delivered out as aforesaid shall Immediately after the Occasion for them be over, cause the same to be returned, in good order as when delivered out, which shall discharge his said orders, and if any Arms or Accoutrements shall be missing & not returned, so many as are returned shall be indorsed on each order & the same shall remain in the hands of the Person who delivered out such Arms, and shall be his protection from any demand from the Town against him for any Arms & Accoutrements lost or missing as aforesaid, and be also security to the Town to demand & recover the Arms &c. or the value thereof from the drawer of the Order as aforesaid.

“ 4th. That on all General Alarms, upon Orders from the Officers in Chief Present, or in writing — Each person having the care of said Arms &c. shall distribute the same,

to the Officers of the several Military Companies in Providence, taking down the number delivered to each and if any remain after they are supplied to such Free Persons either White or Black, who he may know to belong to the Town of Providence and whom he may judge suitable to use them, taking their names down and what they receive — which Account rendered to the Town shall discharge him and make those charged with the receipt thereof liable to return them in good Order or Pay the Town the Full Expense & Value of Procuring others in their room — On Demand — unless the Town upon application shall think fit to remit the same or any part thereof.

“ 5th. And if any Person belonging to a Neighbouring Town should happen to be in this Town at the time of any Alarm — and there should be a surplussage of Arms after the Inhabitants are as aforesaid supplied — In such case the keepers thereof may deliver out the Arms &c. remaining to any persons of Character known to them requesting the same taking down their names &c. as aforesaid which shall render them liable to return them — or Pay the Town in case of loss — in Manner as the Inhabitants

of this Town are liable by the preceding Article.

“6th. That all Arms & Accoutrements which may suffer damage in The Actual Service of the Public, thro’ unavoidable accidents shall be repaired—at the Expense of the Town [notwithstanding any thing in the preceding rules] upon proper proof to the Town Treasurer.

“7th. That the Town Treasurer, shall prosecute all persons delinquent—and not conforming to the above regulations within six days, after information shall be given him thereof by the keepers of Arms respectively—and each Keeper of sd Arms is hereby enjoined to give information of such delinquent to the Treasurer, within two days after the time expires—in which such Arms &c. may be returned.

“PROVIDENCE, November 20th 1775.

“We the subscribers being appointed by the Town to procure a Number of Fire Arms & Accoutrements for Town Stock do report that we have Eighty Fire Arms & about One hundred Cartouch Boxes ready to deliver to the Town and a number of others which will be completed in a short time—we also agree-

able to the Order of the Town Report the within regulations for the same.

“And are the Towns Very Humble
Servants,

“Benj. Thurber, Jona. Arnold,

“Elihu Robinson, Paul Allen,

“David Lawrence, Jno. Mathewson.”

Nathan Miller of East Greenwich was an “Excellent Bayonet-maker” and when he was drafted to serve his turn in the guard at the Warwick Neck station, a general petition was sent from that town and “adjacent parts of Warwick” praying that he might be excused from this duty, and the reason given was that his services were “much wanted in the Country at Present” to make these important articles of warfare. This petition was duly considered, and by order of General Spencer he was excused.

So great was the demand for skilled labor in the manufacture of war material, that the General Assembly was frequently resorted to for legislation, exempting men thus employed from serving in the military force.

In 1776, George Tefft and Jeremiah Sheffield, members of the Kingstown Reds, one of the independent companies, were recommended to their officers to be excused from

duty, as they were then employed in "making and stocking guns," and about the same time John Wells and Waterman Williams, workmen at the paper mill, were also excused from service, for the reason, as the record says, that "the state will be deprived of cartridge paper, which is at present very much needed," if these men were taken from the mill and compelled to serve in the detachments on guard duty.

Many of the soldiers instead of cartridge boxes used powder-horns made from cows' horns, and many of these old relics are yet preserved, covered with quaint inscriptions and curious carvings made by their owner when in camp, at idle moments. The most interesting of these which has come to the writer's attention is in the collection of Revolutionary relics at Washington's headquarters at Valley Forge. It is not a Rhode Island relic, but was the work of a Connecticut soldier, and is thus inscribed: —

"JABEZ ROCKWELL

RIDGEBURY CONN

HIS HORN

made in camp at Valley Forge. It was first used at Monmouth, June 28, 1778; last used at Yorktown, 1781."

It has passed through most of the thrilling events of the war and now finds itself back again near the place where Jabez Rockwell fashioned it for use.

In Providence, Barrington, and other towns, men were specially appointed, charged with making the town's stock of powder up into cartridges.



WOODEN CANTEEN.

Another necessary equipment was the canteen; those used during the Revolution were of wood of various capacities, holding from a pint to two quarts; they are frequently met with nowadays, and are often marked

with the owner's initials and a date. In 1776, the town of East Greenwich voted to provide a sufficient number of "wooden canteens with lines to sling them with," for the soldiers enlisted to fill up the town's quotas.

The town of Warren appointed Henry Ormsbee to furnish its militia with camp furniture, mess pots, mess pails, mess bowls, narrow axes, and baggage wagons, and the state provided that the allowance to the soldiers in camp for provisions should be "one pound of bread, one pound of beef or pork, a half penny for vegetables, half a gill of rice, one pint of milk, one quart of beer per day, and one pint of molasses per week."

In 1775 fish, butter, vinegar, and soap were also provided at stated intervals, but this was in the early days of the struggle; three years later no such rations were to be had. The position of the troops had been shifted from the hospitable neighborhood of Boston to the bleak and barren hills at Valley Forge, and, says one, "a part of the army has been a week without any kind of flesh, and the rest three or four days," and Hamilton wrote to Clinton, "For some days past there has been little less than a famine in the camp."

Nor was this condition confined to any one locality, for Captain Asa Waterman, a deputy commissary of issues, wrote from Providence, May 3, 1779, to Commissary Peter Colt at Wethersfield, Conn. :—

“ This morning waited on Major-General Gates. He informed me the distressed condition this Department is in for want of Flour. The troops are very uneasy and constantly mutinizing for want of bread, and request I would do everything in my power to see them supplied. . . . The General further informs me he has rec'd intelligence of a number of troops embarking, which, by Information, is Destined for Newport, and if they arrive he must call in the Militia, and what he shall be able to do without Bread he can't tell.”

Each town was required to have an ammunition cart, and to furnish its share of blankets, stockings, and other articles of clothing. The demand for blankets was incessant, and officers were specially authorized to “ borrow or purchase ” all that they could, and were even directed by warrant from the Governor to take them from the homes of the inhabitants, but were required

to keep strict account of those thus taken, for which the state would be accountable.

Committees were appointed to take an account of the powder, arms, and ammunition throughout the colony, including private arms as well as those belonging to the public stock, and every man in the colony was ordered to equip himself completely. The old queen's arm, that had hung on the wall covered with dust and grime, was taken from its resting-place, cleaned, and brightened, and noted in the "list of arms fit for use." All was excitement and activity in the militia. "Not a day passes, Sundays excepted," says the *Providence Gazette*, "but some of the companies are under arms, so well convinced are the people that the complexion of the times renders a knowledge of the military art indispensably necessary." The Continental Army, when it took the field, was so curiously uniformed and equipped that it at once attracted the attention of the officers of the well-organized regiments that had been sent out from England, and caused them much amusement. "No regiment is properly uniformed or armed. Every man has a common gun," wrote one of the British officers.

Many of the commissioned officers in the American army were ignorant of military methods. They had hurriedly left the plough, shop, or forge to take the position to which they had been chosen in the militia, and what they knew of tactics and discipline was mostly acquired after they had entered the service. The British were "often astonished at the number of military books found in the knapsacks of the officers." One of these books, which was carried in the knapsacks of two Rhode Island officers, is yet preserved.¹

When the Barrington company took up its station in Boston in 1775, Thomas Allen was the captain and Viall Allen ensign. Neither had much, if any, military experience, and, like others, they proceeded at once to obtain a book to study up the art of war.

The work they purchased was entitled, *An Easy Plan of Discipline for a Militia*, by Timothy Pickering, Jr. It was "printed in Salem, New England," by Samuel and Ebenezer Hall, 1775, and was, doubtless, published to meet the demand then being

¹ The property of the Hon. Thomas W. Bicknell, of Providence, R.I.

made. On the stained fly-leaf there is written "Thomas & Viall Allen. Their Book Bought at Watertown, 1775." From this book Thomas Allen and Viall Allen obtained their first military knowledge. The excellent use they made of it is shown in the result; for the former rose to the rank of brigadier-general, while the latter obtained a captain's commission. The English and Hessian officers continually ridiculed the character of the officers in the Continental troops. Among them "are many so-called colonels, lieutenant-colonels, majors, and other officers, who, however, are nothing but mechanics, tailors, shoemakers, wigmakers, barbers, etc.," so wrote Colonel Von Heesingen, commanding a Hessian regiment. And all of this was, to a great extent, true. Nathanael Greene operated a forge; Stephen Olney was a farmer; Silas Talbot was a stonemason; Ezekiel Cornell was a mechanic; William Barton, a hatter. Notwithstanding this sarcasm, however, these critics found later that shoemakers, wigmakers, and barbers made good officers, and were, in the end, more successful than the output from the military schools of Europe.

With the raising of troops came the great

question of supplying them with the material necessary to maintain an army in the field. There was no depot of supplies from which the army could be equipped, and each state was left to its own resources.

In Rhode Island each town provided equipments for its quota, while the colony itself undertook to furnish the armament for its forts and batteries, powder, shot, lead, and flints.

Early in January, 1776, the firm of Jacob Greene and Company had supplied to the colony "six new double-fortified four-pound cannon with their carriages, together with one hundred and thirty round shot, six bags of grape shot, some sliding and bar shot, with ladles, rammers, sponges, worms, &c.," the whole valued at £100 sterling. The projectiles named in the list include nearly all of those used in heavy guns at that period. There was another, however, called a "carcasse," which was a shell filled with combustibles to be thrown in bombarding a town or against shipping. Many of these latter projectiles were used in the bombardment of Bristol. All of those shown in the group were probably discharged in the battle on Rhode Island in August, 1778. The

large shell was taken from the ground near the base of Bliss Hill, in Middletown, and was quite likely thrown from the American work on Honeyman's Hill, and fell without exploding. The bar shot on the right was dug up in Thames Street, Newport, while the other was taken from the water of Newport Harbor, directly in front of the North Battery (Fort Greene). The two sections of shot are what formed one end of a chain shot, two balls being connected with a short section of chain which was cast into the shot.

All of these, with the exception of that taken from the harbor, have been found in the earth around Newport, and are among the valuable collection of relics in the possession of the Newport Historical Society.

The most necessary munition of war was gunpowder, and, to encourage the manufacture of it, a premium of £30 was voted to any person who should erect a powder mill and manufacture five hundredweight of good powder. The ruins of one of these powder mills formerly stood near the Goddard or Waterman road in Johnston, not far from the little hamlet known as Cæsarville. The trench, which can now be seen crossing the road, serves approximately to identify the lo-



GROUP OF SHOT AND SHELL
From the collection of the Newport Historical Society

cation of this mill. This property was purchased of the state by Isaac Olney, and by him, in 1797, sold to William Goddard. The deeds of this transfer refer to it as "the lot on which the Powder Mill stood." It has been sometimes called the Mud Mill lot, and is perhaps better known by that name. A bounty of three shillings a pound was allowed on every pound of saltpetre made in the colony previous to August 26, 1776. But the manufacture of gunpowder was a new industry for the colony. Heretofore it had mostly been imported, the people depending largely on the other countries for their supply. These sources of obtaining it were now liable to be cut off, and, as it was not likely that the mills so hurriedly erected and equipped would be able to produce a quantity and quality that could be relied on, the colony agreed to purchase all the gunpowder imported before the first of April, 1777, at three shillings a pound.

Saltpetre mills were also built, one of which was in East Greenwich, and was operated by Richard Mathewson. It was located on what is now Division Street, near the old windmill grounds. This lot is even to-day known as the "saltpetre lot."

CHAPTER III.

The Providence Beacon. — Fox Hill Fort. — Rules and Regulations for its Conduct. — Trial of the Beacon. — Notice to the Country. — Master and Wardens of the Beacon. — Tonomy Hill, Scituate, and Cumberland Beacons. — Watch at Tower Hill.

THE news of the battle of Bunker Hill filled the inhabitants of Rhode Island with terror and alarm. A peaceful adjustment of the grievances of the colonies was now impossible. The blow had been struck; and if, before, diplomacy could have averted the impending storm, the time had passed for such a settlement.

The Continental Congress at this time had particularly urged upon the inhabitants of the seaport towns in the colonies, the necessity of strongly fortifying such ports and taking such other precautions as might be expedient; this had been promptly endorsed by the General Assembly of Rhode Island, on June 28, 1775.

The first act of precaution taken at Providence was the erection of a beacon to alarm

the country about, in case of the approach of an enemy. This action was taken at a town meeting held on July 3, 1775. A week later, a committee consisting of Joseph Brown, Joseph Bucklin, and Benjamin Thurber were appointed to "erect a beacon on the hill to the eastward of the town to alarm the country in case of an enemy's approach."

The hill selected for the location of this beacon was that now called Prospect or College Hill, and the spot was near what is now the corner of Prospect and Meeting streets. A beacon had been erected here more than a century before, in May, 1667, during the troublesome times with the Indians. This undertaking was commenced at once. The *Providence Gazette*, on July 29, 1775, informed its readers that "a beacon is now erecting on a very high hill in the town by order of the Honorable General Assembly. A watch is likewise kept on Tower Hill in case of any attempt by water from our savage enemies."

Great activity was going on in the various military companies in the colony, and the people were alive to the situation, and were diligently at work.

As early as January, 1775, Stephen Jenckes,

of North Providence, had supplied to several of the military companies muskets of his own manufacture, and by the middle of June, Mr. Paul Allen had made up the town stock of powder and lead into cartridges, agreeable to a vote of the town; these he was directed to deliver to such of the inhabitants as he thought would make a proper use of them, and to take a receipt for the number delivered. That these cartridges might not be wasted, a promise was exacted to return them on demand, if not used in the colony's service. Not more than seventeen cartridges for each firearm fit for use was to be delivered, and a fine of ninepence in lawful money was imposed for each missing cartridge at any ordered review.

On the 20th of July, 1775, news of a startling nature was received from Newport.

The British ships, under the command of Captain James Wallace, lay in a line of battle, with the intention of bombarding the town.

The greatest excitement prevailed throughout the colony. Two days later the British commander, probably realizing the importance of Newport as a rendezvous, abandoned this intention and withdrew his fleet.

At Providence the news of the departure of Wallace was gladly welcomed; for, had the British commander desired, nothing was in his way to prevent his vessels from sailing into the harbor and laying waste all within his reach, for the defences of the town were entirely inadequate to cope with the British ships.

Newport had been left unharmed, but no one knew how soon the fleet would return. In consequence of this proposed attack, the inhabitants of Providence resolved to take immediate action toward the town's further defence.

A town meeting was convened July 31, 1775, and the Hon. Nicholas Cooke chosen moderator; little business other than that appertaining to the defence of the town was transacted at this meeting.

Fortifications were ordered built on Fox Hill, at Fox Point, and intrenchments and breastworks were ordered "to be hove up between Field's and Sassafra's points of sufficient capacity to cover a body of men ordered there on any emergency."

Captain Nicholas Power was directed to superintend their construction, and was ordered to advise and consult with Captain

Esek Hopkins, Ambrose Page, Captain John Updike, Samuel Nightingale, Jr., Captain William Earle, and Captain Simon Smith, who were made a committee on the manner of building these fortifications. A battery of six 18-pounders was ordered to be located at the Fox Hill fort, and four cannon to be mounted as field-pieces.

This committee was also ordered to draw up a set of rules for the conduct of the Fox Point Battery, and this they did, presenting it to the town meeting, August 29, 1775, for its approval. It is a most remarkable military paper, and shows the crude way in which such affairs were managed in the early days of the Revolution. It is as follows:—

“Regulations of the Fox Point Battery
Drawn by Committee Presented to the
Town in Town Meeting August 29
1775,”

“Voted one capt E Hopkins be appointed
to commd the Battery at Fox Hill

“Voted one luft that Samuel Warner

“Voted one gunner Christopher Sheldon
“do 7 men to each gun Including offi-
cers that such be select'd from the town
Inhabits. as are acq'd with the use of

Cannon and doe not belong to Any of the Independt. Companys who Attending this Duty be excused from the Militia Duties.

- “ Voted that the Battery compy Appt a capt & gunner for Each Gun out of their compy.
- “ Voted that upon any person quitting the Battery compy the officers thereunto Belonging have power to select others as above said to keep their number complete
- “ Voted that two Persons be app'd to Guard said Battery on Day who shall attend there on morning to Relieve the Night watch and Tarry until the Evening watch is Sett.
- “ Voted that the Great Guns be No & Each persons name who belong to said Guns be Wrote on a Card & stuck on the Gun they may belong to that they may know where to repair in case of an Alarm — Vot'd that the Capt. Lieut & Gunner of said Battery have the Care of preparing & keeping the Stores Belonging Thereto in Good Order
- “ Voted that the Battery Compy Exercise their cannon once a month or oftener

to Perfect themselves in the use of Great Guns.

“It is recomended that 2 more 18 pounders be mounted at the Battery at Fox Hill.

“William Earle	} <i>Committee.”</i>
“Simon Smith	
“John Updike	
“Esek Hopkins	
“Ambrose Page	
“Saml Nightingale Jr)	

The location of the Fox Hill fort is shown on an old map of the town of Providence made by Daniel Anthony in 1803, but on account of the many changes that have from time to time been made in this vicinity its exact location is somewhat uncertain; but the square now bounded by Brook, Thompson, and Tockwotten streets covers the ground on which this important work was erected. A high bluff lay to the south of the fort; but this, like a greater portion of the hill, has been cut away to bring the streets in the district to grade. Nothing remains there to-day to remind us of the days of the Revolution.

The committee having in charge the erection of these defences appointed Captain

Samuel Warner to take charge of the Fox Hill fort upon its completion, with all its guns, stores, and material. The engine house, which stood next to the market house (City Building, where the Board of Trade is now located), partly over the water, and wherein was located one of the town's fire-engines, was ordered removed to the fort at Fox Hill to be used as a guard-house.

Meanwhile the beacon approached completion, and the committee under whose direction it had been built was ordered "to fire the same on Thursday the 17th day of August, at the setting of the sun, and that they procure one thousand handbills to be printed to advertise the country thereof, that proper observations may be made of the bearings of the beacon from different parts of the country, and that they notify the country that the beacon will not be fired at any time after August 17th, unless the town or some part of the colony should be attacked by an enemy, in which case the beacon will be fired and three cannon discharged to alarm the country that they may immediately repair to the town, duly equipped with arms and accoutrements."

These handbills were at once printed, and

widely scattered about the neighboring country. They read as follows:—

“ PROVIDENCE BEACON.

“ *The Town of Providence to the inhabitants of the towns adjacent:*

“ LOVING FRIENDS AND BRETHREN: In consequence of the recommendation of the Continental Congress that those seaport towns, which are principally exposed to the ravages and depredations of our common enemies, should be fortified and put into as good a state of defence as may be, which has also received the approbation of the legislature of this colony; besides a strong battery and intrenchments on the river, there has been lately erected on the greatest eminence in this town, A BEACON for the purpose of alarming the country whenever it shall become necessary in our defence, and as we doubt not of the readiness of our friends and brethren, both within and without this government, to give us every assistance in their power on such an occasion if timely apprized thereof. This is, therefore, to inform you that it is our urgent request that you all hold yourselves in readiness, and

whenever you see said BEACON on fire you immediately and without delay, with the best accoutrements, warlike weapons, and stores you have by you, repair to the town of Providence, there to receive from the military officers present such orders as may be given by the authority of this jurisdiction for our common safety and defence. In case of an alarm we intend to fire the BEACON, and also discharge cannon to notify all to look out for the BEACON. Be it observed and carefully remembered that the discharge of cannon *Alone* is not an alarm, but the firing of the BEACON itself, even without cannon, will be an alarm in all cases, excepting on Thursday, the 17th inst., at sunset, when the BEACON will be fired not as an alarm, but that all may ascertain its bearings and fix such ranges as may secure them from a false alarm, and that they may know where to look for it hereafter. Whenever you hear cannon look out for the BEACON."

This same notice was published in the *Gazette*, on August 12, in order to give additional warning of this trial.

At the time appointed the beacon was put to a test, and it was clearly demonstrated that it would serve the purpose for which it

had been built; for a letter, received by the publisher of the *Gazette*, stated that it was observed over a wide area of country, extending from Cambridge Hill to New London and Norwich, and from Newport to Pomfret. It is also stated that many of the inhabitants of the neighboring country, not understanding the nature of this signal fire, hurriedly left their homes and promptly repaired to Providence all armed and equipped, imagining that the town was about to be attacked by the enemy. The beacon itself was a simple affair, consisting of a spar or mast, some eighty odd feet in height, securely braced at the foundation; wooden pegs for steps, at regular intervals, enabled those managing it to ascend to the "kettle," which hung from an iron crane or mast-arm. This kettle was filled with inflammable stuff so as to produce a brilliant light.

The material of which the beacon was built is shown by the following bill, yet preserved among the documentary possessions of the city of Providence.

“ THE TOWN OF PROVIDENCE

To N. ANGELL, DR.

1775.

July 25 To 1 Spar for Beacon £2.8

Dld. Joseph Brown

[ENDORSEMENT.]

Pay the within Acc. to Nathan Angell it
being for the Use of the Town for the Beacon,

Two pounds Eight shillings

To James Arnold, Town Treasr.,

Joseph Brown,

Received the above,

PR. JAS. ANGELL.”

Solomon Drowne, Jr., writing to his brother
in Mendon, Mass., August 12, 1775, said: —

“ I herewith send you a handbill, published to be sent into the country for informing the inhabitants of our beacon, &c. The beacon-pole mast, or whatever you please, is raised on the hill, not very far above the powder house, nearly opposite the church; the top of it, I have heard said, is about eighty feet higher than the top of the new meeting-house steeple which, perhaps you have heard, is upwards of one hundred and eighty feet

from the ground. Judge what an extreme view it commands. If this reaches you before the 17th inst., I wish you would go up on the hill near your habitation at the time appointed, and direct your eye towards Providence, to descry, if possible, that light, on which one time, perhaps, our safety may in a considerable measure depend."

If William Drowne complied with his brother's request, he must have seen, from the green hills of Mendon, the glare of this watch-fire that August night. Mr. Joseph Brown was appointed to the office of "Master of the Beacon," and James Marvin, James Berry, James Wheaton, and Abimelech Riggs were "appointed Wardens to rig the kettle, &c. when orders are Given to alarm the country."

A house was constructed at the base of this beacon, wherein to store the combustibles, so as to be ready at a moment's warning.

Beacons were established on the high lands in other parts of the colony to further the spreading of news, in case of any unusual demonstration or attack by the enemy. Besides the Providence beacon there was a

similar one erected, on Tonomy Hill on the island of Rhode Island. A trial of this was made June 20, 1776, but no record is found regarding the arc of illumination.

Another was in Cumberland, on the hill now called Beacon Pole Hill; and a hole drilled in a rock, which caps the summit of the hill, is shown as the location of this signal. Yet another was on Chopmist Hill in Scituate. Here Squire Williams was stationed as a guard and keeper of the beacon during most of the time when the British were located within the borders of the state. It does not appear these latter signals were ever lighted.

In June, 1775, a post was established on Tower Hill in South Kingstown, for the purpose of giving "intelligence to the northern counties in case any squadron of ships should be seen off." Job Watson was appointed to this important station, with orders, that in case he should discover an enemy's fleet, to give immediate warning, whereupon the alarm companies in the northern counties were directed to immediately repair to Providence.

CHAPTER IV.

Intrenchments at Field's Point and Sassafras Point.—
Bombardment of Bristol.— John Howland's Narrative.—
Works at Kettle Point and Pawtuxet.— Fort Independ-
ence.— Cost of the Work.— Boom and Chain.— The
Redoubts on the Road to the Upper Ferry.

DURING the latter part of August, 1775, the British ships cruising about the bay threatened an attack on Providence, and the batteries in the harbor were manned, and the militia assembled under arms; the enemy, however, did not approach the town.

Before August 30, the fort at Fox Hill had been completed and was ready for service; on that day Thomas Gilman was stationed at the fort as a permanent guard. The works in the lower harbor, between Field's and Sassafras points had also been completed by the hard work of the townsmen. Solomon Drowne, in the letter to his brother, already referred to, says, regarding these latter defences:—

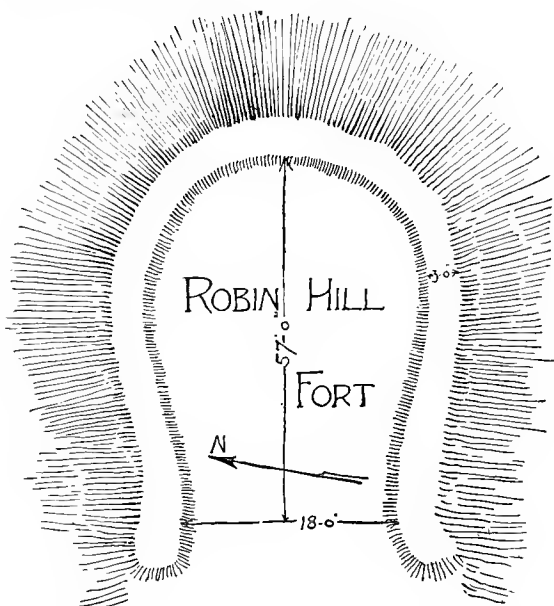
“ One day last week Mr. Compton, with one of the Light Infantry drummers and

two of the Cadet fifiers, went round to notify the sons of freedom who had the public good and safety at heart to repair to Hacker's wharf, with such implements as are useful in intrenching, where a boat was ready to take them on board and transport them to the shore between Sassafras and Field's Point. About sixty of us went in a packet, many had gone before, some in J. Brown's boat, &c., so when all had got there the number was not much short of 200. I don't know that ever I worked harder a day in my life before. With what had been done by a number that went the day before, we threw up a breast-work that extended near one quarter of a mile.

“A large quantity of bread was carried down, and several were off catching quahaugs, which were cooked for dinner *à la mode de Indian*.

“The channel runs at not a great distance from this shore so that when cousin Wallace comes up to fire our town, his men who work the ship can easily be picked down by small arms, from our intrenchment, which is designed principally

for musqueteers. However we have a little *twentyfication* growing at Fox Point, where six pretty lusty bulldogs are to be placed; perhaps this creature may grow into a fortification in time."



To further corroborate this the bill of William Compton, the town sergeant, which was rendered to the town about this time, contains this item:—

“August 2, to warning the town to work on fortifications, -4-0”



ROBIN HILL FORT, NEAR SASSAFRAS POINT, PROVIDENCE

The fort is on the hill at the left. The line of breastworks extended along the bluff sloping towards the water

The result of a portion of this labor by the inhabitants has been called Robin Hill Fort. It is still well preserved, and is located on the bluff overlooking the river, in the rear of the spot where the powder house once stood; southward from it was the line of intrenchments running along the edge of the bluff. Of these, however, there is little now remaining.

During the intervening time, until October, 1775, the town was not in great danger from an attack by the enemy, but the bombardment of Bristol, the 7th of this month, again aroused the townsmen to the dangers which might follow, if the British ships should continue up the river.

John Howland, of Providence, then a boy of eighteen years, belonged to one of the military companies which marched to Newport to protect that town from the depredations of Wallace. He was an eye-witness to this attack on Bristol, and in his reminiscences says:—

“No houses were burnt by Wallace, as he did not land any men, but kept up a severe cannonade; and from his bomb brig threw several shells among the

houses, which did but little damage. Of this transaction I was a witness, as Captain Tallman's Company of minutemen, to which I belonged, and Captain Power's Company were stationed on the Dudley and Bannister farms, not far from Newport. I saw Wallace with his fleet when they got under way between Cost Harbor and Gould Island, and as he sailed slowly up the river, we commenced our march in range with him. As it was our business to attack any men he might attempt to land, we kept even pace with him, till we arrived at Bristol Ferry, when one of his fleet grounded on the extreme northwest point of the island.

“Wallace with the rest of his squadron came, too, waiting for the tide to rise to float the grounded one. Several of our minutemen, without any orders of the officers, ran across the meadow, near as possible to the grounded vessel, and discharged their muskets at her.

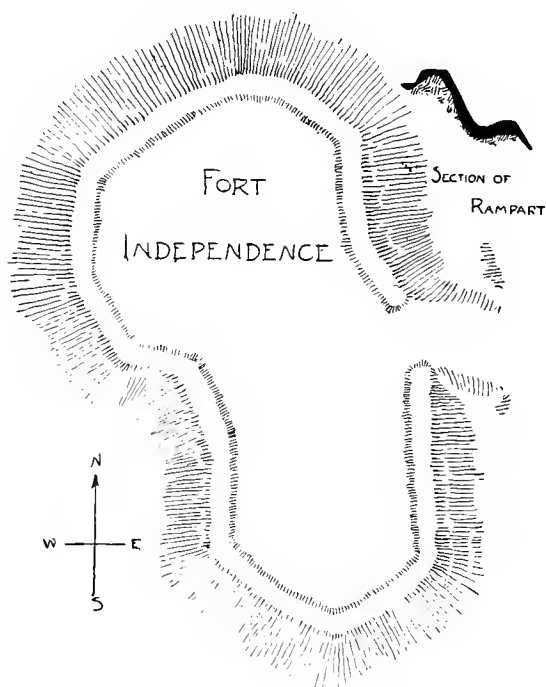
“Wallace then brought two of his largest ships to bear upon them and by repeated broadsides tore up the turf among them. They all began the retreat uphill to the road, and came tumbling

over the stone-wall among us. It was dark when the vessel floated, and Wallace stood with all his fleet for Bristol Harbor. We stood on the high ground near the ferry, and saw the flash of his guns, which appeared to be mostly discharged in broadsides; but such was the state of the air we could hear none of the report, though only four miles off. In Providence they were heard distinctly."

Howland made this statement to correct a story which had been published and extensively circulated, that on this occasion much damage was done to the town by the British ships. It was reserved to a later day for Bristol to suffer from the hands of the enemy.

Following this affair at Bristol, the works at Kettle Point and Pawtuxet were thrown up, batteries were located all along the seaboard, and permanent guards were established. Another fort was considered necessary for the safety of Providence; and at a town meeting held October 26, 1775, a committee was appointed, authorized "to direct where, and in what manner, fortifications shall be made upon the hill to the southward of the house of William Field." A

portion of this ancient dwelling is yet standing, although the land about it is materially changed; for what was then the garden and door-yard of William Field's house has been



dug away, to carry out the plan of the city's sewerage system.

The old house, the ancestral home of the Fields, of Pumgansett, yet remains to mark

the spot where Thomas Field builded more than two centuries ago. This committee evidently performed the duty required of them both promptly and faithfully; for, on the same day, it was voted "that the part of the town below the Gaol Lane (Meeting Street), on the east side of the river, be required by warrant from the town clerk, as usual, by beat of drum, to repair to-morrow morning at 8 o'clock, to Field's Point, to make proper fortifications there; to provide themselves with tools and provisions for the day, that the inhabitants capable of bearing arms, who dwell on the west side of the river, be required in the same manner to repair thither, for the same purpose, on Saturday next; and that the inhabitants of that part of the town to the northward of the Gaol Lane, be required, in the same manner, to repair thither for the same purpose on Monday next."

The fort built at this time was located on the high hill at Field's Point. This hill is a conspicuous point from the river and bay, and its flat top suggests the fort which even now crowns its height.

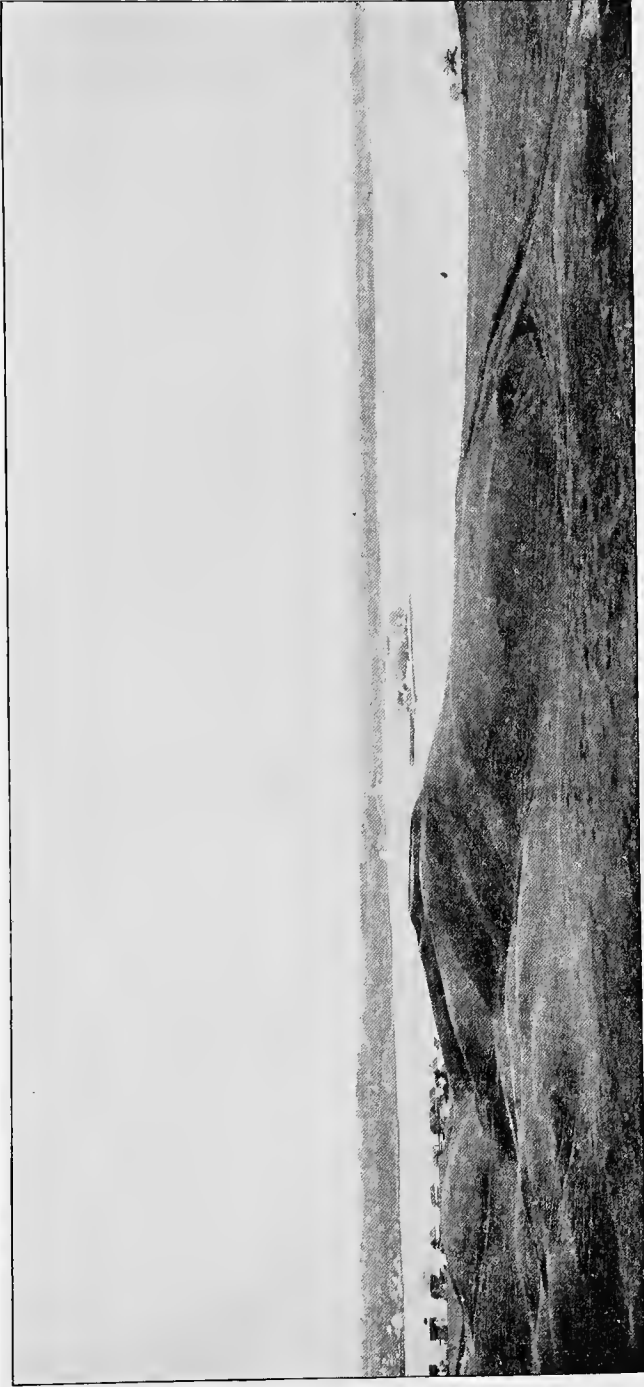
On the maps of this locality the fort is named Fort Independence, but no mention

of such a name is found on the records of this period. The name quite likely originated with some map-maker in later years. Fort Independence, so-called, is one hundred and ten feet long in its greatest length, and varies in width from fifty-three to sixty feet inside of the embankment. The construction of this fort was superintended by Captain Barnard Eddy, and his bill to the town for labor and material was made up of the following items:—

TOWN OF PROVIDENCE TO BARNARD EDDY

1775

November 20 to 1½ days work William Field & 2 hands & his team at 12s per day	0	18	0
to Boards & Other Stuff to mend Wheale Barers & mack hand Barers	0	8	0
to 7 Days Work by William Field attendance on the men at the fortification at 4/6 pr day	1	13	6
	<hr/>	2	19 6



FORT INDEPENDENCE, FIELD'S POINT, PROVIDENCE
Looking southerly from the chimney of the Sewerage Pumping Station

To 1 day of Joseph Eddy in going to Johnston for the Spars	0	4	6
to 24 days for myself from the 27 of October to 25 of November at 5s pr day	6	0	0
	<hr/>		
	9=	4=	0

Errors Excepted

BARNARD EDDY

to 7 Spars of Obediah Brown for the Boam	12	-	1
to 7 do of Samuel Winsor at 15s per ton 41 feet	-	15	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
	<hr/>		
	10	11	5 $\frac{1}{2}$

BARNARD EDDY

The last two charges in this bill suggest another means of protection which had been adopted, for these were for the boom and chain which was ordered stretched across the river at the Field's Point narrows to prevent any hostile vessel from entering the harbor. Captain John Updike was put in charge of preparing this obstruction, and was directed to "prepare a number of scows and proper combustible materials with chains of a suitable length to fasten them together to be used when necessary for the purpose of an-

noying any Enemy who may come against the Town by water." He was also instructed to procure an anchor with which to moor the boom and chain when it was placed in position.

For some unexplained reason, objections had been made to the situation of the guard-house and magazine at the Fox Hill fort, and the officers of the battery located there were authorized to remove them, if they thought necessary, to some safer place nearer the fort. They were also empowered to give direction "where and in what manner intrenchments shall be made to the northwest of the fort, for covering a body of men which may be placed there to oppose an enemy coming up the river."

That these intrenchments were thrown up, seems certain from the statement made by Mr. Thomas N. Sumner, a former resident of Providence, in a letter of reminiscences addressed to his daughter, dated Brookline, May 13, 1834, printed in Stone's *French Allies*, for he says:—

"I remember in addition two circular forts called redoubts south of the main fort on the hight of the hill one north and

one south of the powder house which stood on Powder House Lane. This lane was then the only road to what was called the upper ferry, now central bridge, I believe. It led by where Moses Brown now lives, or did live."

These works were long ago obliterated, but were probably not far from the present Angell Street, which was the road to the upper ferry.

Some idea of the expense attending the construction of the Fox Hill fort, maintaining a guard there and the cost of stores and provisions used when the Field's Point fort was built is shown by the following bill.

TOWN OF PROVIDENCE

TO NICHOLAS POWER DR

		£	s	d
1775				
Aug 16	To 148 $\frac{1}{4}$ days work for men building battery at Fox Hill, @ 3 shillings per day	22	4	9
	To paid Thos Gilman wages and billett for 3 mos guard at the battery from Aug 30 to Nov 30	9	15	0

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CHAPTER V.

Beacon Hill Fort. — General Spencer's Request. — Providence Companies detailed to work on Fortifications. — Fort Sullivan. — Hog Pen Point Fort. — Action of the Town of Rehoboth. — Defences in the War of 1812. — Fort William Henry.

THE news of the arrival of the British fleet at Newport produced the most intense excitement in Providence. A town meeting was immediately convened "by warrant on Sabbath Day morning, December 8th, 1776," and the following preamble and resolution adopted, Stephen Hopkins being moderator.

"Whereas a large body of the Enemy have arrived in the Narragansett Bay and it is probable soon intend to attack this Town, and in order that proper defence may be made it is Voted That the Hon.^{bl} Stephen Hopkins Esq., Col. Jonathan Arnold, Col. John Mathewson, Mr. Joseph Brown, Col. Barzillai Richmond, Col. Joseph Nightingale, Col. James Angell, and Mr. Sumner be and they are hereby appointed a Committee to Examine the most suitable places for Erect-

ing and making proper Batteries and intrenchments for the defence of the Public against the Enemy." They were directed to notify the Governor as soon as they had decided where such works should be built, that he might order the troops immediately to begin the work. It was further voted that every male inhabitant of sixteen years of age and upward assemble at the Court House Parade at three o'clock the same day, armed and equipped for active service.

And that Sabbath morning the inhabitants of Providence were aroused to the alarming situation of the colony, by hearing the town crier with his bell, and the town sergeant with his drum as they hurried through the streets of the town hoarsely announcing that the enemy was within the borders of the state and their homes and lives were in danger.

The utmost activity was now necessary to guard against any surprise or attack on the town. The militia was constantly on duty, and steps were taken to put the town in the best possible position for defence.

In May following, Captain Sumner laid before the town meeting held on the 5th of that month a "Plan of a Fort proper to be

erected for the Common Defence upon the Hill Eastward from the compact part of the Town." This plan had the hearty approval of General Spencer, and he asked the assistance of the town in pushing it to completion by the following letter:—

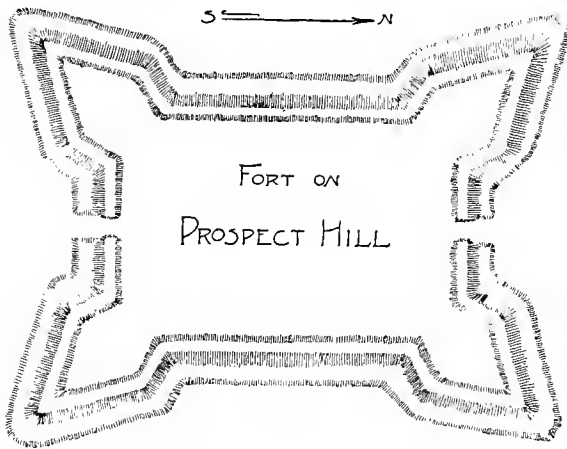
“PROVIDENCE, 13th May, 1777.

“SIR:—It having been represented to General Spencer that the inhabitants of this town were desirous that a fortress should be erected upon the College Hill, for their more secure and effectual defence against the common enemy, and great encouragement of the works, being speedily effected by the united aid and services of the inhabitants and the army, the General has been induced to protract, and caused to be laid the lines of a fort at that place, which being completed, would doubtless be greatly beneficial to the public. The work being now ready to proceed upon, the General hereby signifies that the services of the good people of the town would be very acceptable. It is to be wished that they would supply themselves with the necessary tools, &c.

“W. BISSELL, *A. D. Camp.*

“*By the General's Order.*”

The townsmen promptly passed a vote ordering the different military companies in the town to repair, on the sixteenth day of that month, to Beacon Hill, — another name for College Hill, — where the beacon had been already erected, to make fortifications.



The record of the town's order for this reads as follows: "That Capt. Barzillai Richmond's Company go upon duty to-morrow, Capt. Russell's the next day, Capt. Burrill's on Monday, Capt. Keene's on Tuesday, Capt. Snow's and the Grenadier Company on Wednesday, and that the captains keep lists of all persons who work and also those who

do not, and that the said companies begin on Thursday next week, and go through a second tower of duty in rotation, in the same manner, each person to furnish his own tools and provisions." The fortifications constructed at this time were on the brow of the hill, extending at some distance around the beacon.

Some years ago, portions of these works were visible, but the last vestige of them was destroyed to make way for the brick house at the corner of Congdon and Bowen streets. This fort was probably the only one in the town built from plans prepared before the work was commenced, the others being thrown up according to lines laid out on the ground at the time the work was done. The Prospect Hill or College Hill fort, says Stone, in his *French Allies*, was "three hundred by one hundred and fifty feet, within the parapet. It was surrounded by a fosse, or ditch, and was capable of mounting fifty-eight guns."

On the high land on the west side of the river, southerly from what was then called the road to Pawtuxet (now Broad Street), was a fort which bore the name Fort Sullivan.

While there is no recorded evidence to

show when it was built, the name given to it suggests that it was thrown up during the time when General John Sullivan was in command of this department, and that was in 1778.

It was probably the first of the Revolutionary defences to be obliterated; for in 1784, the owners of the property on which it was located, — Messrs. Barzillai Richmond, John Field, Daniel Snow, Joseph Snow, Joseph Snow, Jr., Daniel Snow, Jr., and Benoni Pearce, — desiring to improve this tract of land, caused a good part of the hill to be dug away, and used the material to fill in the low marshland along the river at its base. Through the land thus graded, streets were laid out, and dedicated to the public use. The square bounded by Broad, Foster, Chestnut, and Friendship streets includes the spot on which Fort Sullivan was built.

There was yet another fort in the harbor. It was not, however, in Rhode Island, but was built on territory so near that it has since, by a change in the state line, been brought within its borders. This is the work on Fort Hill, in East Providence.

In the days of the Revolution this land

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twenty-ninth day of April, 1776, unanimously voted that they would defend the said Town, and ordered that the inhabitants should work upon the Fortifications, upon the Penalty of paying *Three shillings per* day for each and every day's Neglect . . . and at another meeting held on the twenty-fifth of May, it was ordered that the Fines of the Delinquents should be collected by *William Davis*, and in case of Refusal he should distrain." With this preamble the town prayed for advice as to whether it had authority to make such an order and enforce it. The whole question was promptly settled; the General Assembly upholding the acts of the Newport town meeting.

Additional light is shed upon the doings of the people of Newport, by a memorial prepared in June, 1776, during the recess of the General Assembly, "by such of the Members as could be conveniently be immediately convened," to be sent to the Continental Congress, wherein it is stated that the inhabitants of Newport "assembled in a full town meeting and unanimously voted to work upon the necessary fortifications, and to defend the Town, and immediately entered upon it with Vigour. . . . Three

considerable works have been erected . . . and the Town of Newport is now capable of being defended against all the Frigates in the *British* Navy. Fortifications are also making at *Bristol Ferry* and on the East side of *Rhode Island*, which when completed will effectually secure a communication with the Continent, and enable us to defend that most valuable Island.”

But the confidence which the people of Newport had in the strength and value of these works to withstand “all the Frigates in the British Navy,” was destined to be shattered; for a few months later every one of them was occupied by the enemy, without a shot being fired to resist their capture. Besides this fort at Brenton’s Point, another work, which was called the North Battery, was built on the site of the present Fort Greene, at the end of Washington Street. To make room for this, the house of Daniel Austin, standing on the spot, was removed to another location; this work with the fort on Goat Island commanded the entrance to the harbor from the northward. Across on the island of Conanicut, a battery was established at the Dumplings, of eight 18-pound guns.

Early in the month of January, 1776, the

General Assembly ordered "that a number of men not exceeding fifty, be stationed at Warwick Neck, including the Artillery Company in Warwick; the remainder to be minutemen; that Col. John Waterman have the command, and appoint proper officers to act under him; that they continue there and be kept upon pay, until the enemy's fleet shall go down the river, and then be discharged, if his honor the Governor shall think proper.

"And that His Honor the Deputy Governor, General West, and Mr. Joseph Brown or either of them, be appointed to lay out such fortifications upon the said Neck as they shall think necessary; and that the troops be employed in erecting them, while continued there."

Colonel Waterman, who was assigned to the Warwick post, was a prominent man of that town, and active in the civil and military affairs of the colony. He was at this time a member of the town council of Warwick and Colonel of its militia, and had been a field-officer of the Kent County regiment since 1760. His military experience, however, had been limited to that obtained with the troops in the colony.

This action was taken on account of the British fleet of twelve sail coming up the river as far as Prudence Island and landing a large body of men. These vessels a few days later returned to their anchorage in Newport harbor. At this time artillery companies of two guns, with fourteen men to each gun, were formed in all the sea-board towns, and the greatest excitement prevailed. The next month Captain Thomas Gorton's Company of Warwick was ordered to report to Colonel John Waterman at the Warwick Neck fort, and Captain Josiah Gibb's Company was despatched to Quidnessett Neck to relieve a number of minute-men who had been occupying this station.

A watch-house was ordered to be built on Cranston Neck or Long Neck, now called Pawtuxet Neck, twelve feet long and eight feet wide, for the accommodations of the guard stationed at the fort. Here was located a battery of two 18-pound guns. Faint outlines of the works at Pawtuxet are still to be seen, although most of this fortification has been obliterated, to make room for the cottages now located on the Neck. The Warwick Neck fort has entirely disappeared.

The battery at Pawtuxet was on land owned by Captain Remington of that place. When the authorities took possession of his property to build this work, they tore down his fences and otherwise damaged his property, but the General Assembly subsequently made reparation by paying the amount which he claimed. This fort was under the command of Colonel Samuel Aborn and for a great part of the time was garrisoned by the Pawtuxet Rangers, another of the chartered independent military companies.

At first it was occupied by some of the Providence companies and was in April, 1777; for on the 19th of that month William Rhodes, William Wall, Samuel Chace, Jr., Paul Allen, Samuel Godfrey, Arthur Crawford, Lewis Peck, James Munro, James Hill, Gideon Crawford, Jr., Joseph Nightingale, Aaron White and William Russell, presented a petition to the town meeting of Providence, then in session, representing that they were "on Military Duty at Pawtuxet for the Defence of our Country," and protesting against the town's taking action on a question reflecting on the "Conduct of the Present Assessors of Rates" until they could be present. All of these men were members

of the Providence Company of Cadets commanded by Colonel Joseph Nightingale. On the sixth day of the next month the first division of the Pawtuxet Rangers was drafted to go on duty at the Neck, consisting of the following officers and enlisted men: ¹—

Benjamin Arnold, *Colonel*.
 James Sheldon, *Captain*.
 William Greene, *Clerk*.
 Elisha Carpenter, *Sergeant*.
 Stephen Fenner, *Sergeant*.

Privates.

Zuriel Waterman	John C. Greene
James Harris	Philip Arnold
John Randall	William Holdridge
Benjamin Babcock	Henry Randall
Benjamin Waterman	John Stone
Oliver Payn	Caleb Corpe
Rhodes Greene	William Greene
Charles Rhodes	David Barros
Samuel Perce	

This division was relieved by the second detachment composed of ²

Oliver Arnold, *Lieutenant-Colonel*.
 Sylvester Rhodes, *Major*.

¹ Rhode Island Historical Society Military Papers.

² *Ibid.*

and from time to time detachments of the minutemen or alarm companies in the county were ordered to report there for duty. The warrants issued for bringing in these detachments are as curious in their construction as they were effective in results. One of them reads thus:¹—

“WARWICK IN THE COUNTY OF KENT, &c.

“To Thomas Warner corporiel of the first Company or Train band in the above s'd Town Greeting by virtue of a warrant from the Colo you air hear by required to warn in the Second Division of said Compny a greabel to the draught maid from said company the sixth day of January 1777.

“N.B. to warn the said persons to appear with a good Gun bagunet Catrrix box blancket and nap sack and to Let each and every person now that if they doth not appear at hed Qorters in Warwick the eighth day of this instant at two of the clock after noon or an abel bodyed man in Each of the delinkqents sted they may depend that thay shall pay a fine as the Law of this Stait directs hear of fail not but maik a true return of your doings to Colo John Waterman at hid Qorters War-

¹ Warner Papers.

wick. Given under my hand in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy six.

“JOB RANDALL, *Captn.*

“A List of the Naimes of those that air to be Warnd,

Lieutenant James Arnold
 Ensign James Carder
 Sergeant Anthony Low
 Corporal Thos. Warner

Nathaniel Hackston	Christopher Vaughn
Stephen Low	Beriah Allen
Benjamin Battey	Barrit Allen
John Coal	Edward Gorton
Robert Bagnal	Mosis Lippitt
Jeremiah Westcott	Godfrey Greene

“WARWICK, february the 4th day 1777

“then warned those men that I was commanded
 THOMAS WARNER, *Corpril.*”

On the 7th of January the following men were ordered to report for duty at this post:¹—

Benjamin Bennett, Jr.	Richard Mathewson
Isaac Carr	Ichabod Smith

¹ Rhode Island Historical Society Military Papers.

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CHAPTER VII.

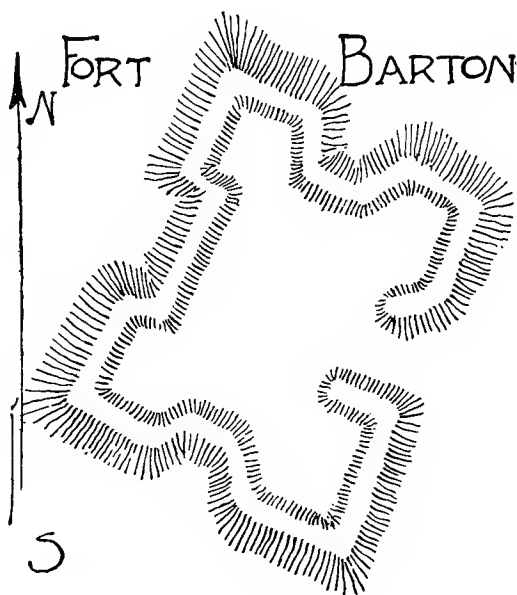
Fortifications ordered at Bristol Ferry and Howland's Ferry. — Fort Barton. — List of Officers and Men stationed at Howland's Ferry. — Coast-guards established. — Tonomy Hill Fort. — Fortifications at Bristol Harbor. — Alarm at Bristol. — List of Barrington Men appearing. — Fort Daniel. — List of Officers and Men located at East Greenwich. List of Captain John Whipple's Company on Rhode Island. — Kingstown Reds.

IN February, 1776, Deputy-Governor Bradford, William Ellery, John Mathewson, Henry Marchant, and Gideon Marchant were appointed a committee "to cause fortifications to be erected, as soon as possible, upon Rhode Island and at Bristol, sufficient to command and keep open a communication at Bristol Ferry." The troops stationed at Bristol and on Rhode Island were employed in this work. These fortifications were at each end of Bristol Ferry, and the one on the island can, even now, be easily distinguished.

Having made provision for keeping open this means of communication between the island and the mainland, the attention of the colony was then directed to taking care

of Howland's Ferry on the east side of the island.

About this time a communication had been received from the General Court of Massachusetts, signifying its willingness to



lend its assistance in the construction of a fort at Howland's Ferry. This aid was gratefully accepted; and William Bradford and Simeon Potter were appointed to confer with the Massachusetts authorities, and given

full power to carry into effect such plans as might be agreed upon. A fort was erected, commanding this ferry, on the high land at Tiverton, which has since borne the name of Fort Barton. Its outlines are even now well defined.

From December 1, 1777, to March 10, 1778, Captain Christopher Dyer's Company was stationed at Howland's Ferry, the company roll being made up of ¹

Christopher Dyer, *Captain*.

Barker Peckam, *First Lieutenant*.

Samuel Champlin, *Second Lieutenant*.

Randall Rice, *Ensign*.

Benoni Foster

Martin Child

Charles Hewit

Elisha Potter

William Smith

Clark Hopkins

Samuel Barker

Benjamin Hodg

Edmund Hewit, *Fifer*.

James Chappel, *Drummer*.

} *Sergeants*.

} *Corporals*.

Privates.

Caleb Tiffit

Eleazer Nichols

Hugh Osbond

Eli Lake

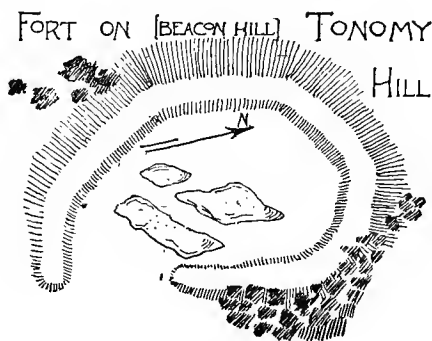
¹ Revolutionary Rolls, State Archives.

Charles McMillion	Job Chase
Joshua Davis	Edward Johnson
James Tannant	Leary Crandall
John Lewis	Benjamin Eagleston
Amos James	William Babcock
Stephen Charles	John Stanbury
Amos Drummer	Samuel Butten
Ebenezer Smith	John Smith
Thomas Chappel	Job Wait
Adam Cooper	Stephen Wheeler
James Ervin	Nathan Lewis
George Osbond	Samuel Babcock

In March, 1776, the committee that had been appointed by the General Assembly relative to the military defences of the colony made its report. Among the recommendations made by this body, it was provided,

“That one company be placed at Point Judith; one company at Boston Neck between Narrow River and the South Ferry; one company at Quonset Point in North Kingstown, one company at Pojack Point in North Kingstown and Potowomut Neck in Warwick, one company at Warwick Neck, half a company at Pawtuxet in Cranston (Pawtuxet Neck), one company at Barrington, two companies at Bristol, one company

at Bristol Ferry on Rhode Island side and one third of said company on Tiverton side, one company in Tiverton and Little Compton near Fogland Ferry, four companies and one half on the island of Jamestown," and seven companies with a company of artillery on the island of Rhode Island.



This committee also recommended that a fort be erected on Tonomy Hill by Colonel Putnam, "according to his best skill and judgement," and another on the Bristol side of Bristol Ferry "at the place selected by Col. Putnam."

The high land at the northern part of Newport is called Tonomy Hill, and consists of two spurs or hills, one of which—the highest—is now called Tonomy Hill, while the other is known as Beacon Hill.

Fortifications are still remaining on each. It was on the lower spur that the Tonomy Hill beacon was built in 1776, and hence its name.

The exact spot selected for the Bristol work is not known. A map of the operations on Rhode Island shows two works at this point, one on the high land north of where the lighthouse now stands, while another was nearer the water, under the hill. There is no evidence of them now to be seen.

When this report was presented to the General Assembly, it provoked some discussion, and before the recommendations therein were adopted some changes were made, and it was finally voted "that the company ordered to be stationed at Tiverton and Little Compton, near Fogland Ferry, be stationed in the said towns as Col. Thomas Church and Lieut. Col. John Cooke shall think proper, that the company ordered to be stationed at Quonset be stationed at Wickford; that the company stationed at the South Ferry, in South Kingstown, be so distributed as to guard as far as the north end of Boston neck; and that Capt. Job Pierce's company station be in Bristol."

This company was located at what was called the "mud battery," which consisted of a breastwork "high enough for a man standing on tiptoe to rest his piece on the top and take aim at the men or officers" on the decks of the enemy's vessels; it was located near the water's edge, a short distance west from the corner of Hope and Church streets, where St. Michael's Church now stands. Action had been taken by the town authorities at Bristol some months before the committee of the General Assembly made its report. On December 12, 1775, it was "voted, that some intrenchments be made near the harbor in this town to prevent the enemy from landing." William Bradford, Simeon Potter, Benjamin Bosworth, and Jeremy Ingraham were appointed a committee to build these works. They were constructed "along the shore, extending south from the foot of State Street, down as far as the foot of Burton Street, near Richmond's wharf. They were composed of a wall five feet high, built of turf and stones, filled up on the inside with loose earth and small stones." Included in this line of works was the "mud battery" previously referred to.

On the 1st of April, 1776, there was an alarm at Bristol occasioned by a report, which afterwards proved to be false, that the British fleet were entering the bay. It occasioned much anxiety, however, and urgent requests were made by Governor Cooke to General Washington for aid in protecting the state.

To this alarm the Barrington Infantry Company and the Artillery Company responded, the following roll showing the names of those who marched to Bristol on this occasion.

“BARRINGTON, April y^e 1 AD 1776.

“The following is a List of the Persons who Appeared on the Alarm at Bristol this day:¹—

Thomas Allen, *Captain*.
 Viqll Allen, *Lieutenant*.
 Daniel Kinicut, *Ensign*.
 Nathaniel Smith, *Sergeant*.
 George Salsbury, *Sergeant*.
 Benjamin Drown, Jr., *Corporal*.
 Nudigate Adams, *Corporal*.
 Josiah Humphrey, Jr., *Corporal*.

¹ Private manuscript belonging to Hon. Thomas W. Bicknell.

Thomas Grant, *Corporal*.

Samuel Short, *Drummer*.

Joseph V. Allen, *Fifer*.

Ebenezer Tiffany	Daniel Drown
Joshua Kent	John Sheldon
William Kelley	Jonathan Bosworth, Jr.
John Short, Jr.	James Goff
Amos Peck	Abiel Grant
Nathanel Clarke	Benjamin Marten
Samuel Barnes	Joseph Bullock
Samuel Adams	Samuel Marten
Josiah Bowen	Moses Horten
David Luther	William Andrews
John Watson	Benjamin Horten
Joshua Bicknell, Jr.	Edward Marten
William Harden	Ebenezer Grant
Samuel Conant	Simeon Titas

Artillery Comp^y.

Samuel Bosworth, *Captain*.

William Jones	} <i>Privets</i> .
Joseph Adams	
Nathanel Peck	
Samuel Viall	
Selvester Viall	

SOLOMON PECK, Jr., *Clk*.

Nath^l Smith & Jon'n Bosworth Jun Did Duty in
the Militia and are Reckoned with them.

PER T. ALLIN."

Across the bay at East Greenwich was another fort called Fort Daniel. This, says Wanton Casey of that town, who was one of the charter members of the Kentish Guards, was built by that organization "to prevent the boats from the British fleet getting into the harbor." It "had eight or ten guns mounted," and a guard was maintained here during the whole time that the British were encamped within the state. From the colony records it appears that nine guns were mounted at this fort. It was located on the high bank, near the entrance to East Greenwich harbor, about a quarter of a mile north of the present railroad station, nearly opposite Long Point.

Strictly speaking, it was not in the town of East Greenwich, but was in Warwick or, as the town records of East Greenwich say, "in the borders of Warwick." An aged citizen of the town who remembers seeing it, for it was long ago obliterated, says that "it was a straight breastwork with holes in it for the guns." It is stated that the guns formerly located there, upon the termination of hostilities, were shipped to West Point.

The Kentish Guards were located at Fort Daniel during most of the time that the

enemy was within the state. But on occasions of alarm, troops were hurriedly sent to all the towns on the seaboard, and on such occasions the force at Fort Daniel was increased by detachments from the different regiments.

The arrival of a British fleet, consisting of sixteen ships of war, off Newport in July, 1780, produced a season of alarm throughout the state. The forts and batteries along the shore were manned, and the several companies of militia in the state were despatched to support them.

It was not until the middle of the next month that the enemy's fleet withdrew.

During a portion of this time Captain Robert Rhodes' Company was stationed at East Greenwich; the company, when it responded to this alarm, consisted of: ¹—

Robert Rhodes, *Captain*.

Hopkins Cooke, *Lieutenant*.

Philip Whitman, *Ensign*.

Privates.

John Miller

Arnold Stafford

Thomas Sweet

Amos Kimball

Joseph Chase

William Gorton, Jr.

¹ Rhode Island Historical Society Military Papers.

Joseph Battey	Jesse Arnold
William Hall	James Aborn
Ephraim Weeden	Sylvester Rhodes
William Greene, son of Nathaniel	Nathan Westcott
Silas Spencer	Josiah Stone
Joseph Cornell	Edward Coddington
Yelverton Briggs	Joseph Brown
Job Comstock	Stephen Arnold
Thomas Spencer, son of Abner	William Matteson
Samuel Tarbox	Olney Baker
Ezekiel Warner	William Sayles
William Bailey	Daniel Fisk
Job Straight	James Miller
Thomas Reynolds	William Helm
	William Sweet, Jr.
	Remington Kinnon

About the first of March, 1781, the enemy having withdrawn from the neighborhood of Rhode Island, most of the troops that had been stationed at Newport and on the island were dismissed with the exception of about three hundred men, who were still continued doing guard duty.

Among this body of troops was the battalion of Providence and Kent counties, commanded by Brigadier-General Nathan Miller. One of the companies belonged in the town of Providence, and the roll of this company included the following officers and men:—

PAY ABSTRACT OF CAPTAIN JOHN WHIPPLE'S
COMPANY IN LIEUTENANT-COLONEL COMMAN-
DANT GEORGE PECK'S REGIMENT, DOING DUTY
ON RHODE ISLAND IN MARCH, 1781.¹

John Whipple, *Captain*.

Joseph Snow, Jr., *Lieutenant*.

Christopher Robinson, *Ensign*.

Benjamin Keen	} <i>Sergeants</i> .
Benjamin Keen, (Jr.)	
Jabez Gorham	
Charles Wheaton	

Ebenezer Foresight	} <i>Corporals</i> .
George Stainer	

William Larcher	} <i>Fifers</i> .
Benjamin Andrews	

Job Stone	} <i>Drummers</i> .
Stephen Corps	

Privates.

Jacob Field	Isaac Barker
Elijah Hewes	Joseph Salisbury
Daniel Brown	William Davis
Tilly M. Olney	John Field
Peter Field	Jeremiah Williams
Abner Keen	Zachariah Mathewson
George Brown	William Hutson
Tobias Brown	Timothy Berry

¹ Providence Town Papers No. 2526.

Joseph Whipple	Benjamin Low
John Burch	Prince Potter
John Sheldon	Asa Allen
Ruben Anthony	Oliver Brown
John Luther	William Turtelot
Elisha Calendar	George Young
John Gilson	William Sheldon
Simeon Hunt	William Verry
John Griffith	Bernon Tripe
Uriah Hopkins	Charles Cushing
David Libby	Elijah Walker
William Peck	John Russell
Jesse Jones	John Allen
Jeremiah Spears	Joseph Adams
William Shearburne	James Smith
David Tift	John Hawkes
Stephen Aplin	Levi Wilmoth
Isaac Mason	Joseph Basset
Ezekiel Burr	John Gonsolve
Micajah Bennet	Stephen Williams
John Teale	Luther Hawkins
Thomas Teale	Joseph Burke
Isaac Bartlett	

The amount due the soldiers according to this pay abstract was "One hundred thirteen pounds and eighteen shillings," which was ordered paid at a town meeting held in Providence, August 30, 1781.

At this time the French army and fleet were located at Newport and afforded with

these state troops ample protection to the colony in case of an attack.

A few weeks later, however, it was decided to withdraw the French forces from Rhode Island and attach them to the troops about to operate against New York. In order to transport the great quantity of guns, stores, and baggage, Rochambeau presented a petition to the General Assembly asking for the aid of the state in this work; in answer to his request, George Irish, Esq., was appointed a committee to attend to the matter as far as Bristol Ferry and was authorized to impress teams for the purpose; through his services this material was carted up to the north end of the island to Bristol Ferry, where it was put on boats and floated over to Bristol, where Nathaniel Fales, Esq., who had also been appointed a committee for a similar purpose, attended to its transportation to Providence where the army was to start on its march to the westward. In the midst of these preparations, and while the troops were under marching orders, it was reported that the enemy's fleet under Admiral Arbuthnot was off Block Island standing towards Newport.

A council of war was hastily summoned

and the order of departure somewhat modified.

The fleet was ordered to remain at Newport while the army was sent on its journey, but a detachment of five hundred men was left behind to form with a body of state troops a sufficiently strong force to resist any attack that might be made. Nearly the whole military force of the state had been dismissed, and the men had returned to their homes to get some rest after their arduous duties for a long period.

The General Assembly, therefore, then in session, deeming it "highly expedient that a body of troops completely armed and accoutred should be on the island of Rhode Island on or before Tuesday the 5th day of June, A.D. 1781, to be stationed at such places as the commander of that post shall deem necessary" for the safety and defence of the colony, promptly voted, "that the following independent companies, to wit: the Artillery of Providence, the Kentish Guards, the Kingstown Reds and the Pawtuxet Rangers, forthwith turn out one-half of the men belonging to their respective corps, to march to Newport, to be upon the ground by the said 5th day of June, there to do duty for

one month; that the men so furnished by the said independent companies be accounted to the towns to which they respectively belong, and be reckoned as so many men furnished towards their quota of five hundred men ordered to be raised at the present session, that the said independent companies be led by their own officers, that the town of Tiverton and Little Compton forthwith furnish one hundred and two men to be at Newport on the said 5th day of June." This force was under the command of M. de Choisy, a French officer, to whom was given the title "Brigadier of the forces to remain for the protection of the fleet and of the island."

Among this body was the independent company called the "Kingstown Reds." It seems to have been a very active organization, and is frequently referred to in the events which occurred within the state. Only one roll of this company has been found among the public records and that refers to the company in May, 1776. It is believed to be the only list extant and for that reason is here printed.

KINGSTOWN REDS, MAY, 1776.¹

John Gardiner, *Captain*.
 Thomas Potter, *First Lieutenant*.
 Rouse T. Helme, *Second Lieutenant*.
 Rowland Brown, *Ensign*.

Privates.

John Weight	Nathan Cotrelle
James Cottrell	Jeremiah Brown
Richard Gardiner	Henry Reynolds
Jeremiah Sheffil	Christopher Brown
John Rose	George Wilson
James Pearce	Caleb Waistcoat
John Petrill	Robert Helm
Allin James	John Weeden
James Rose	Lory Gardiner
James Helme, Jr.	John Tory
George Teft	David Duglass
Nathan Gardiner	James Tefft, 3d
Benjamin Perry	William C. Clarke
Walter Watson	Solomon Tefft
William Rodman	James Potter
Joseph Purkins	Nicholas Easton Gardiner
Frederick Gardiner	Allin Gardner
William Aplin	Ephraim Gardiner
Thomas Champlin	John Clarke, Jr.
William Dyer, Jr.	

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, State Archives.

The force at Newport was kept up until late in the summer and was augmented from time to time by drafts from the militia of the state.

Sergeant Job Whaley of Coventry was one of the men drafted on this service and years afterwards wrote an account of his military experiences during the war, in this he says: "Next tour in 1781 in August at Newport 20 days in Capt Allen Johnsons Company (East Greenwich) Col. T. Tillinghast & was present when the french fleet went out to join degras to go to Yorktown to take Cornwallis."

After the departure of the fleet the troops were withdrawn, and the events which transpired in Virginia a few weeks later put an end to the service which the militia of Rhode Island had for years been called upon to perform.

CHAPTER VIII.

Fort at Beaver Tail. — List of Officers and Men guarding the Charlestown Shore. — Story of the Wickford Gun. — Order for the Guard at Quonset. — Rum as a Mmunition of War. — Distribution of Cannon in the State. — Forts at Popasquash and Bullock's Points. — Table of Defences in Narragansett Bay. — Fortifications at Warren. — Colonel Israel Angell's Regiment stationed at Warren. — Roll of Captain Tew's Company.

IN May, 1776, a fort was ordered built "at Beaver Tail, on Conanicut, to contain six or eight heavy cannon," while a coast-guard was established at Point Judith, Seaconnet Point, Westerly at Watch Hill, Charlestown, at the South Ferry in South Kingstown, and at North Kingstown.

The commanding officers of the several military companies seldom noted on the muster-rolls the locality or station where the duty was performed; but from a roll of Captain Peleg Hoxsey's Company, in the state archives, it appears that the company was stationed on the Charlestown shore, August 10, 1777, and the following names are found upon it:¹ —

¹ Revolutionary Rolls, State Archives.

Peleg Hoxsey, *Captain*.
 William Gardner, *Lieutenant*.
 John Hall, *Sergeant*.
 Augustus Sunderland, *Sergeant*.
 Thomas Reynolds, *Corporal*.
 Job Johnson, *Corporal*.
 Henry Stanton, *Fifer*.

Privates.

Vernon Stanton	John Champlin
Uriah Harvey	Stephen Allin
Edward Greene	Daniel Saunders
John Wappy	Cary Clarke
Augustus Sanders	Benjamin Hall
Aaron Babcock	John Coon
William Coon	Roger Clarke
Paul Harvey	Simeon Crandall
Moses Kinyon	Arnold Wording
Joseph Sheffield	Silas Harvey
Henry Hazard	William Wording
James Wells	Stephen Wilcox
Silas Hall	George Austin
Samuel Greene	Gideon Crandall
Benjamin Millard	Theodate Johnson
Edward Clarke	Thomas Cross
Nathaniel Bendick	Asa Crandall
Thomas Barber	Samuel Elbert

In addition to ordering guards to be maintained at several places along the seaboard, the General Assembly ordered field-pieces

to be distributed to the several towns, for use in case of attack. By vote of that body, made in March, 1776, one of these field-pieces sent to South Kingstown was ordered transferred to North Kingstown. The wisdom of this was soon manifested. "The story of this old gun," says the historian of North Kingstown, "is as remarkable as it is interesting. It once saved Wickford from destruction; and again, as if to repay the debt, won great glory for the town, which originally loaned it. In 1777, a company was sent out in a barge, from the British fleet, to burn the village of Wickford, which was supposed to be undefended.

"They proceeded unmolested until they arrived at the mouth of the harbor, when, to their great surprise, the old gun, which had been stationed on the point where the lighthouse now stands, fired into them, killed one man, and caused them to hastily retrace their course. Soon after this occurrence, news came that a British man-of-war had grounded on Point Judith. Excitement ran high, and the old gun was again resorted to; but, upon examination, it was discovered that the Tories had spiked it.

"This difficulty was speedily removed.

Samuel Bissell drilled it out, and in a few hours, drawn by four oxen, it was on its way to the 'Point,' where it was mounted on the shore, behind the rocks; and, after a vigorous firing of a few minutes, the ship, which proved to be the *Syren*, a twenty-eight-gun frigate, surrendered, and her crew of a hundred and sixty-six officers and men were carried prisoners to Providence."

The guard at Quonset Point, where is now located the state's Military Camp Ground, was established, in 1779, by the following order:—

"EAST GREENWICH, 6th June 1779.

"ORDER:

"A sergeant and six privates are to go immediately to Quonset Point with their arms and accoutrements to remain there until Tuesday morning and then return. They are to take what provisions they have on hand with them.

"The sergeant will draw Twenty one gills of rum for himself and men for the Tower of Duty the sergeant will Take Directions from Col Dyer as to placing Sentries the whole of the Guard are to be out from 12 Till Day Break each night. The like number will go to the same

place on Tuesday afternoon and be Relieved in three days.”¹

Rum seems to have been more essential to this “Tower of Duty” than powder.

On the 18th of July, 1776, the committee appointed by the General Assembly “to ascertain the places for fixing the cannon belonging to the state” made its report, recommending that the twenty-seven cannon made at the Hope furnace “be mounted as soon as possible and placed as followeth” :—

- “ At Jamestown — Three twelve-pounders on field carriages.
- “ South Kingstown — Four, viz.: two eighteen-pounders, and two nine-pounders; all on field carriages.
- “ Warwick Neck — Two eighteen-pounders.
- “ Field’s Point — Three nine-pounders.
- “ On the opposite shore (Kettle Point) Two nine-pounders.
- “ Warren — Two nine-pounders.
- “ Bristol harbor — Two nine-pounders.
- “ Bristol Ferry — Five nine-pounders, viz.: one on the main, and four, on the island.

¹ Rhode Island Historical Society Military Papers.

“Howland's Ferry, on the main—Four nine-pounders. Twenty-seven in all.”

This committee also recommended that the cannon now in the state, in addition to those assigned at the places aforesaid, be distributed in the state in the following order:—

“Newport County: Five twenty-four-pounders, fourteen eighteen-pounders; twelve twelve-pounders; one nine-pounder, nine six-pounders; ten four-pounders; four three-pounders. Total, fifty-five.

“Providence County: Five eighteen-pounders; sixteen two, three, and four pounders, mounted on field carriages, for the several towns on the seacoast, and which lie now ready for them. Two three-pounders and two four-pounders, old and not mounted. Total twenty-five.

“Bristol County: One twenty-four-pounder; three eighteen-pounders; eleven three and four pounders. Total fifteen.

“Kent County: One nine-pounder, sixteen three, four, and six pounders. Total seventeen.”

This report was signed by William Bradford, John Brown, and Charles Holden, Jr., members of the committee.

It will thus be seen that the state had one hundred and thirty-nine cannon of various calibre to be located along the seaboard, with which to resist any attack from the enemy. But these were not all; there were a number of others located in King's County (the present Washington County), of which no account was taken, and these were scattered from Quidnessett Neck to Westerly. A battery was established on Barber's Height, a commanding eminence overlooking the bay in North Kingstown; two field-pieces were stationed "near the sea, on the land of Nathan Babcock 2d, Esq.," at Westerly, and a nine-pounder at Colonel James Noyes' Neck in the same town.

Before the close of the year 1776, the whole shore of Narragansett Bay was well protected. The order of the General Assembly, establishing artillery companies in all the seaboard towns, had been complied with, and for the protection of these batteries, breastworks had been thrown up at Barrington, Nayatt Point, Quidnessett, Wickford, Boston Neck, Watch Hill, Noyes' Neck, and

at Point Judith, while, besides the more formidable works already referred to, there was a battery at Popasquash Point, of six eighteen-pounders, and another substantial work at Bullock's Point. When and under whose direction these latter works were built, a persistent investigation has failed to discover. It is certain, however, that they had been thrown up before 1777.

According to Blaskowitz's Chart of Narragansett Bay, made in 1777, there existed the following forts and batteries which had been erected by the American forces:¹—

	GUNS.	CALIBRE.
Providence Fort	50	18 and 24 pds.
Popasquash Battery	6	18 pounders.
Bristol Fort	8	18 pounders.
Batteries at either end of Bristol Ferry	3	18 pounders.
Howland Ferry defenses	7	18 and 24 pds.
Fort Liberty, Goat Island, in Newport harbor	25	18 and 24 pds.
North Point Battery (site of present Fort Greene)	20	18 and 24 pds.
Dumplings Rock Battery	8	18 pounders.

A year later, in May, soon after the British attack on Warren, fortifications were erected

¹ Cullum's *Historical Sketch of the Fortification Defenses of Narragansett Bay*, Washington, 1884, page 10.

on Burr Hill, in that town, "upon the west end of the second hill from the north," and a guard was maintained here both night and day during the remainder of the war. Nothing remains to-day of these fortifications.

Colonel Israel Angell's Rhode Island Regiment of General Varnum's Brigade was located at Warren, from the summer of 1778 to the spring of 1779. This regiment consisted of nine companies, six of them being commanded by Captains William Tew, Coggeshall Olney, Stephen Olney, William Allen, Thomas Hughes, and William Humphries, while the other three were known as the Colonel's Company, the Lieutenant-Colonel's Company, and the Major's Company.

Captain William Tew's Company, in April, 1779, consisted of the following rank and file : —

William Tew, *Captain*.
Ebenezer Macomber, *Lieutenant*.
William Proctor, *Sergeant-Major*.
Nathan Whittlesey, *Quartermaster-Sergeant*.
William Davis, *Drum-Major*.
George Clark, *Fife-Major*.
William Pratt, *Sergeant*.
John Macomber, *Sergeant*.
Nathaniel Harris, *Sergeant*.

Knight Springer, *Drummer*.
 Reuben Smith, *Corporal*.
 Philip Justin, *Corporal*.
 Edward Easterbrooks, *Corporal*.

Privates.

Robert Allbrow	Reuben Macomber
Jonathan Briggs	Magnus Nice
Jotham Bemus	William Nichols
Asa Bowdish	William Parker, Sr.
Benjamin Blanchard	William Parker, Jr.
William Bennett	Abraham Rose
Edward Cole	William Salsbury
John Chadwick	Thomas Smith
Levi Cole	Michael Stafford
John Crandall	Amos Thurber
John Exceen	Reuben Thompson
Charles Gray	Darius Thurber
Stephen Hazard	John Usher
Jonathan Hill	Abial Weaver
Peleg Johnson	Samuel Jordan
Samuel Loring	

Full lists of the other companies in this regiment are among the Revolutionary rolls in the office of the Secretary of State.

CHAPTER IX.

Arrival of the British Fleet at Newport. — Governor Cooke's Letter to General Washington. — Evacuation of the Island of Rhode Island by the Americans. — British erect Additional Works. — Forts at Coddington's Point and Cove. — Loss of the *Spitfire*. — William Pearce loses his Cider. — The Owl's Nest. — Butt's Hill Fort. — Dumplings Battery. — Eldred's One-gun Battery. — The Battery at the Bonnet.

EARLY in December, 1776, Job Watson, from his watch tower on Tower Hill, saw far out on the ocean the dread object for which he had been watching so long. The news that a squadron of vessel was headed toward Narragansett Bay was hurriedly sent through the colony. The alarm companies assembled at their stations, and excitement ran high. On Saturday, the seventh day of December, "the British fleet of eleven vessels of war, convoying seventy transports, having on board six thousand troops," sailed into Narragansett Bay, up the west passage, around the north end of Conanicut Island, and anchored in Newport harbor.

As soon as the intelligence of the arrival of the British fleet, and their occupation of

the island of Rhode Island, reached Governor Cooke at Providence, he despatched a letter to General Washington, apprising him of the threatening situation in Narragansett Bay. It was dated at "Providence December 8 1776 Past 10 o'clock P.M." It had been a day of trouble and anxiety to the people of Rhode Island. Messengers had brought to the Governor the latest accounts of affairs on the island, and now, well into the night, he wrote:—

"SIR:— It is with great concern, I give you the disagreeable intelligence that the enemy with a fleet consisting of seventy-eight ships of war and transports, entered the harbor of Newport yesterday.

"We had about six hundred men upon Rhode Island, who were obliged to evacuate it, with the loss of about fifteen or twenty heavy cannon; having taken off the ammunition and stores, and the greatest part of the stock. The enemy have full possession of the island.

"I am informed by General West and Lieutenant Barron, of the Providence, that they landed this morning about eight o'clock, with eight thousand men, who

marched in three divisions; one towards Newport, the second towards Howland's Ferry and the third to Bristol Ferry; where they arrived time enough to fire upon the boats that brought over our last men, but without doing damage.

"I have sent repeated expresses to the Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut.

"The forces of the former are upon the march as I believe the latter are, also.

"In great haste

"I am your Excellency's most obedient
humble servant

"NICHOLAS COOKE."

Sunday morning, the troops, under the command of Sir Henry Clinton, disembarked, part of them landing at Long Wharf, in Newport, while the main body of the army landed at Greensdale, in Middletown, near the residence of the Hon. Nathanael Greene, a grandson of General Greene. The island of Rhode Island was now practically in the hands of the enemy. That Sunday night was devoted to excesses of the wildest kind, for the soldiers celebrated their first hours ashore in revelry and pillage.

Many of the islanders hurriedly left their

homes, taking only such personal effects as they could conveniently get together, while those who remained were subjected to all manner of abuse and insults, and were compelled to take into their homes the officers of the King's regiments. The arrival of the army produced the greatest consternation through the state; the fortifications along the shore were manned and strengthened, and the whole state "became a vast camp confronting the enemy."

The British at once commenced to strengthen the works which had fallen into their hands, and to build additional defences. A redoubt was thrown up on the east side of the island at Fogland Ferry, another on the west side of the island, on the south side of Lawton's Valley, while a formidable work was erected on Butt's Hill, near the north end of the island.

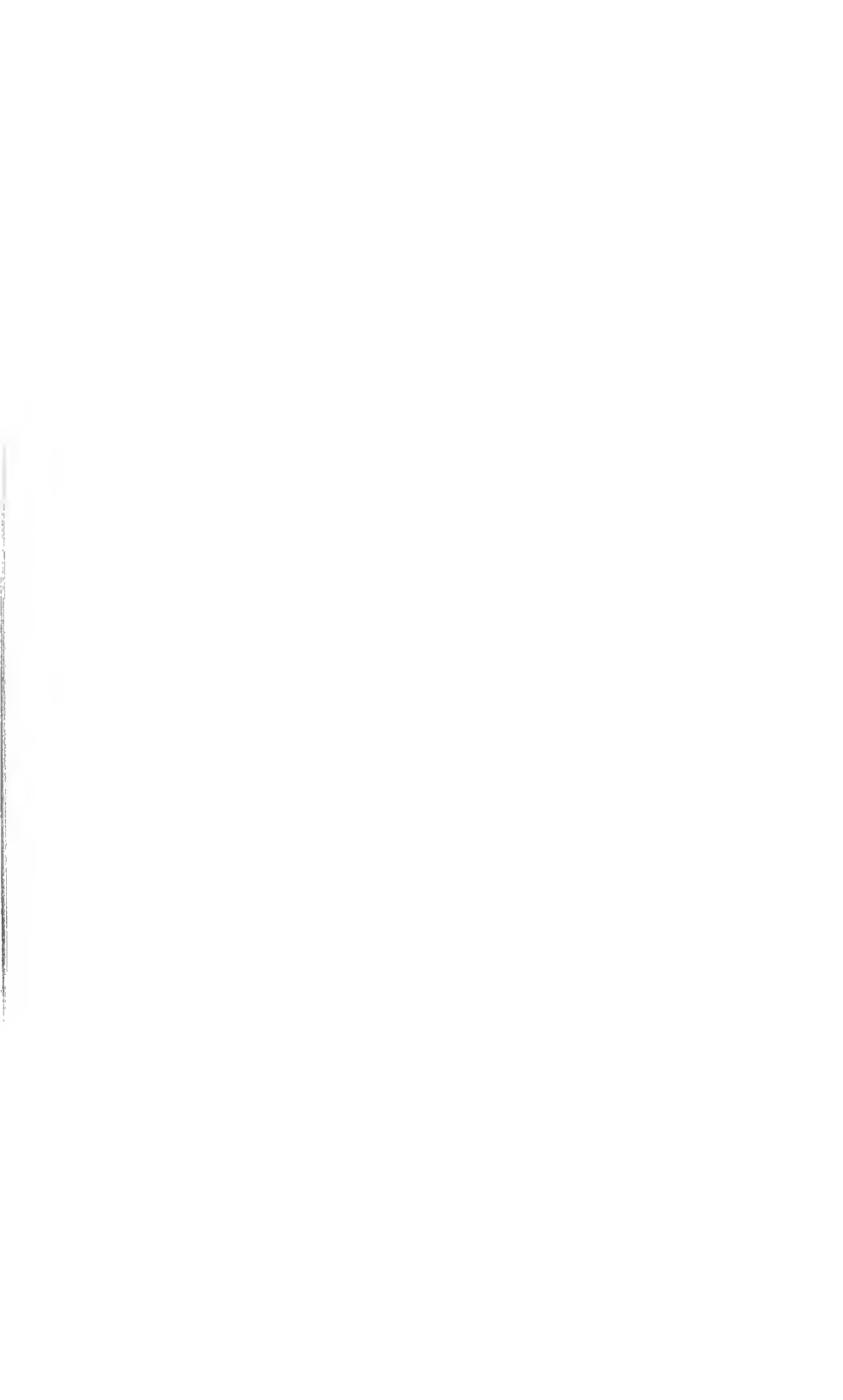
A part of the earthwork thrown up at Fogland Ferry, near the "Glen," may be seen on the Taylor farm, between McCurry's Point and Sandy Point, while on the west side of the island, on the Redwood farm, may be found the remains of the redoubt at Lawton's Valley.

Upon the completion of these, "they in-

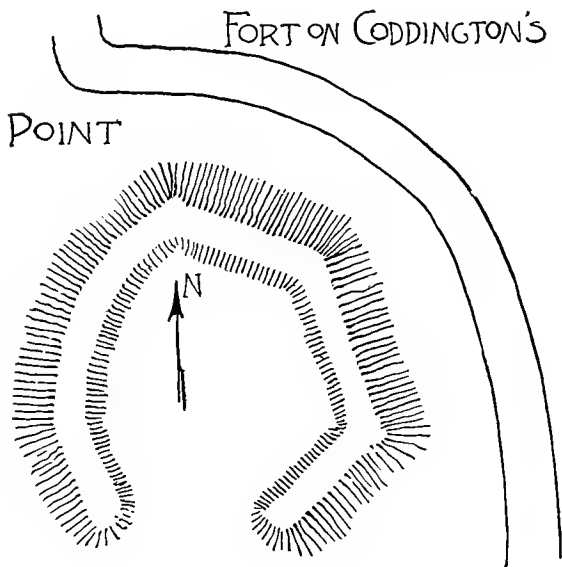


TONOMY HILL FORT AND OBSERVATORY, NEWFORT

From the south



trenched Newport with a strong, continuous line, which ran northerly along the crest of the height rising above the right bank of the inlet at Easton's Pond, then turned westerly towards Tonomy Hill, and continued



north of this height to Coddington's Cove." The forts which the American army was forced to abandon at Tonomy Hill were strengthened, and a heavy battery was erected at Coddington's Point. The works at the

most important positions along this line are yet well preserved.

The eastern terminus was at Bliss Hill at what is called Green End. This is in the town of Middletown, not far from the Newport city line, and directly opposite Honeyman's Hill, where on the 17th of August, 1778 the American army erected a fort in its advance on Newport, remains of which may yet be seen on the crest of the hill southerly from the Honeyman Hill road. The Bliss Hill fort is to-day in a remarkable state of preservation, and from its ramparts an extensive view of ocean and undulating country can be had, while Easton's Pond, the source of water supply for the city of Newport, lies at its base.

From this point the line of intrenchments ran northerly towards Coddington's Point. Within the past dozen years all have disappeared; portions of it in 1884 could be seen at the Van Rensselaer place, Collin's place, and Bailey's farm.

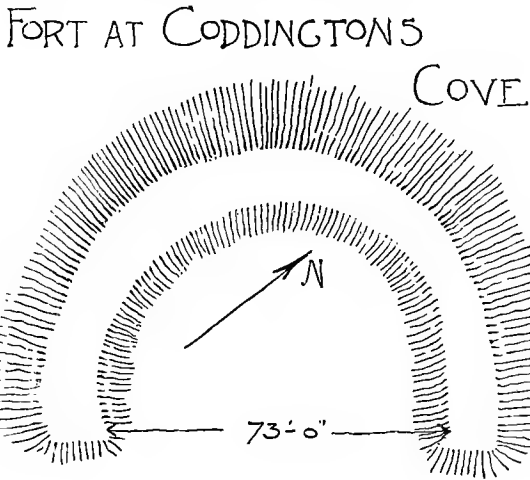
Continuing westward are Tonomy Hill and Beacon Hill, and the lines of the works there are clear and distinct. Tonomy Hill consists of huge boulders and outcroppings of conglomerate rock, making it a veritable



BLISS HILL FORT, GREEN END, MIDDLETOWN

Looking towards Honeyman's Hill

fortress. Its summit on the north, east, and west rises abruptly, while there is an easy ascent from the south, making a good road over which heavy guns could be hauled. A dense growth of cedars now cover these



hills. In the centre of Tonomy Hill fort there is an observatory which replaces an old one blown down many years ago, from which an extensive view of Newport and its harbor can be seen. Northwesterly from these hills faint indications of part of this outer line of intrenchments are still visible. This line terminated at a point near the

corner of Coddington Avenue and Maple Avenue, and here are the remains of an elliptical fort built by the British in 1778. Its proportions and formidable appearance are best seen by approaching it from Maple Avenue.

That in the best state of preservation, however, in this vicinity, is the Coddington's Point fort. Time has dealt leniently with this historic work, and, notwithstanding its exposed situation, even some of the points at which the guns were located may be easily identified.

On the east side of the island, at Barker's Hill, was a large redoubt, while near it was a smaller one erected "to guard the approach to the right of the British intrenchments." Throughout the southern end of the island other earthworks were constructed at advantageous points about the British lines; all these have now been obliterated.

Upon the commencement of the works on Honeyman's Hill, by the Americans, in August, 1778, the British at once began an inner line of intrenchments; these started near the foot of the present Narragansett Avenue at the "Cliffs," where a strong redoubt was constructed, and which formed



CODDINGTON'S POINT FORT, NEWPORT

From the south

the southern terminus; and from this point wound northerly, sweeping towards the North Battery on the harbor front, where it ended. A portion of the redoubt at the Cliffs was visible in 1884, when General Cullum made his investigations, but since then it has entirely disappeared. In the compact part of the city this line crossed Kay Street at a point near the estate of Mrs. Judge Gray, of Albany; and there may be seen even now, on the lawn of this place, a rise in the ground which marks the location of a part of this line.

The two armies did not come in contact with each other in a general engagement until August, 1778, when Sullivan's Expedition against the enemy took place. Skirmishes had occurred at several points on the bay side before this, and many attacks had been made by the British on unprotected houses, but it was not until this time that the engagement, which has been known as the battle of Rhode Island, took place.

There is preserved in the archives of the state of Rhode Island an old map which shows the details of the operations on Rhode Island during Sullivan's Expedition; it is without title, but is in substance the same

as another now in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society, which has the title "Map of the Military Operations in 1777-78 on Rhode Island." These maps show the location of the fleets and armies during these operations on the island, and thus become particularly valuable in identifying the various historic points in connection with the Revolutionary struggle in Rhode Island.

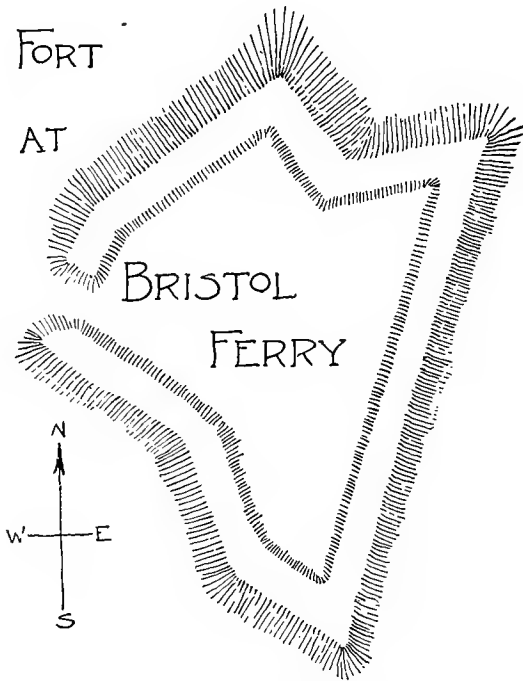
Taking this map for a guide, it is comparatively easy to identify nearly all of the historic places in the neighborhood.

Commencing at the north end of the island is Common Fence Point. Here, on the evening of the 13th of March, 1777, the row galley *Spitfire*, commanded by Captain Isaac Tyler, grounded in the night, or, as the entry in the records of the Council of War says, "struck the bottom." Near her at the time was the row galley *Washington*.

The captain of the *Spitfire* endeavored to get the assistance of the *Washington* to haul him off, but this aid was not forthcoming, on account of differences between the two commanders. When morning dawned, the position of the *Spitfire* was discovered

by one of the enemy's boats patrolling the bay.

The *Spitfire* had been abandoned, so that it was a comparatively easy task to take pos-



session of her. This was done, and as it was difficult to float her, she was set on fire.

The responsibility for this loss was made the subject of a searching investigation by

the Council of War. Next, south of the point, is the Portsmouth side of the ferry from the island to Bristol; it is called Bristol Ferry. Here, on the high land near the Stoddard place, a few rods south of the Bristol Ferry House, in a field off from the road to Stone Bridge, the outlines of the Bristol Ferry fort may still be seen. The plough has done much to obliterate this work, for the land on which it is located has been under cultivation for many years. It was erected, in 1776, by the troops stationed here in conjunction with those at the other end of the ferry.

When the British took possession of Newport, the fort at Bristol Ferry was evacuated; near it was the home of William Pearce, and here some of the officers of the regiment were quartered. In Mr. Pearce's cellar was a quantity of fine cider, six barrels in all. This fact seems to have been well known to the soldiers; for, when they left the island, they carried away with them Mr. Pearce's cider. For this depletion of his stock, this gentleman promptly presented his bill to the General Assembly, and that body honored it by payment in full.

To the east of the ferry fort is Stone

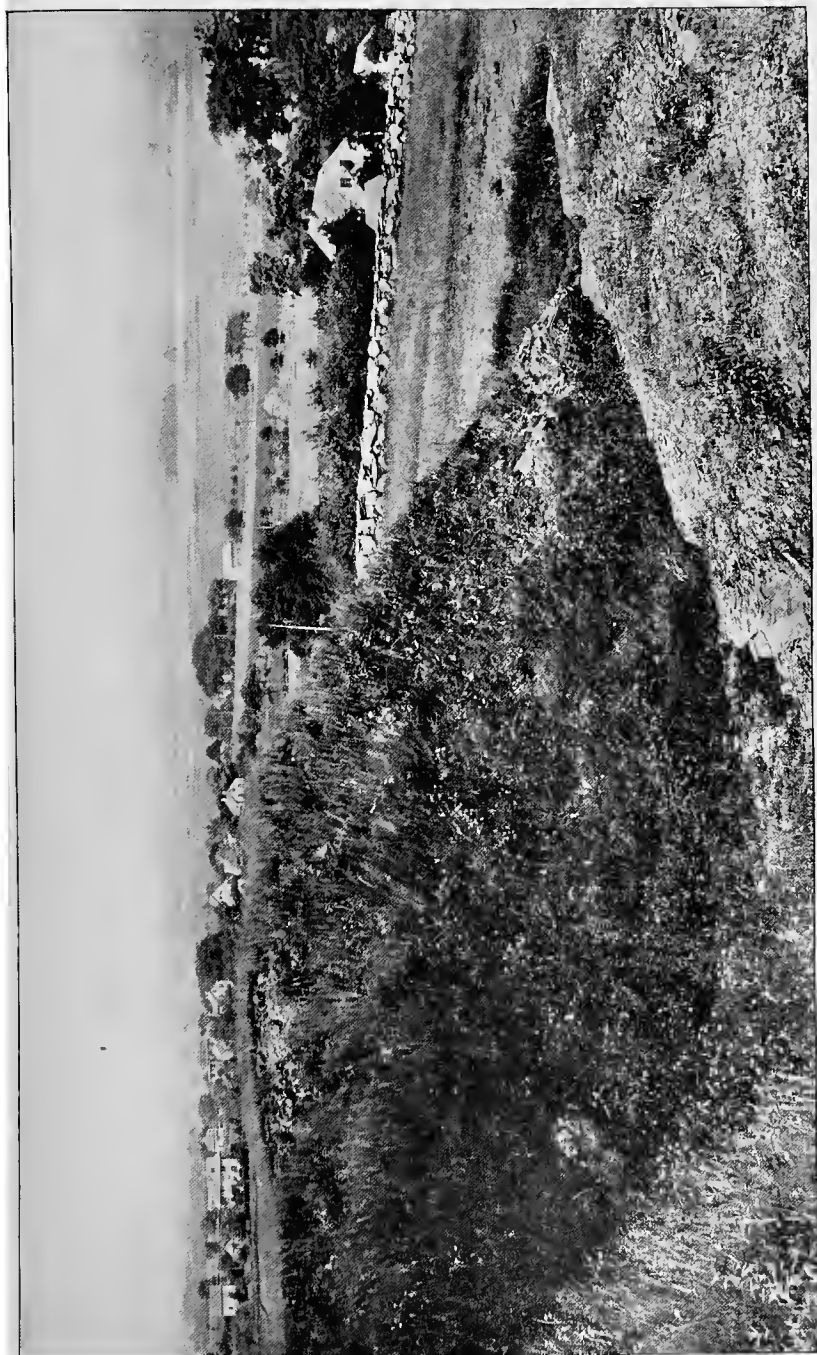
Bridge, where Howland's Ferry was formerly located. On the neck of land forming the western approach to this ferry, the main body of the American army in Sullivan's Expedition landed on August 9, 1778, "beginning half after 6 o'clock A.M.," and from this point they embarked when they retreated from the island, on "the 30th in the evening." This movement of the Continentals was covered by the fort on Tiverton Heights, called Fort Barton, and another on Gould Island called the "Owl's nest." Gould Island is the little wooded island south of Stone Bridge. Fort Barton was so called in honor of Colonel William Barton, of the Rhode Island Line. It is in Tiverton, at the top of the terraced hill which rises from the stage-road leading to Little Compton, and is reached by following the road leading east by Stone Bridge Cottage. From its ramparts one of the most picturesque views of Narragansett Bay, Conannet River, and the island of Rhode Island can be obtained. Continuing southward, on the island, is Butt's Hill, approached by a cross-road called Sprague Lane, connecting the two main highways, the East and West roads.

On March 24, 1777, Colonel Stanton wrote to Governor Cooke: "The enemy on Rhode Island are indefatigable in fortifying the eminences on the north part of the island, particularly Butt's Hill."

The centre work at this point is by far the most imposing and best preserved of those at the north end of the island.

The embankments and ditch, with traces of ravelins, are even now well preserved. In 1848, the ruts made by the heavy wheels of the cannon, says Lossing, were then clearly visible. This fort was constructed on a rocky ledge, which has done much to preserve its ancient appearance. Nothing remains of the other fortifications which were a part of the Butt's Hill system.

All of these were built by the British in March, 1777, and were occupied successively by the British and American armies during the operations on Rhode Island. Here the American army encamped on the night of the 28th of August, 1778; in front of these works the army made its stand the next day; and from here the retreat was made August 29, 1778. In November, 1780, after the evacuation of Newport and the island by the enemy, Butt's Hill fort and the



A CORNER OF BUTT'S HILL FORT, PORTSMOUTH

Looking towards Tiverton Heights

other forts were garrisoned by the French army.

In October, 1861, the Butt's Hill fort was occupied for one night by a detachment of Battery F, First Rhode Island Light Artillery, while on a recruiting expedition. Here they had a drill, and the men obtained their first experience in firing solid shot from this old earthwork.

Still farther southward are Turkey Hill and Quaker Hill, the former to the westward, the latter to the eastward of Butt's Hill. Between these three hills is a low stretch of country, rising gently toward the north and south. In this valley most of the fighting took place, and the main loss to both armies was sustained, in the battle which took place in August, 1778. The works on Turkey Hill and Quaker Hill are no longer visible.

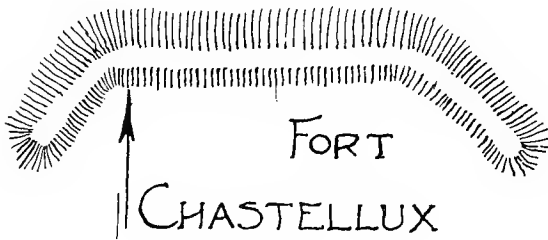
The land here has been cultivated for many years, and the industrious island farmer has not allowed sentiment to interfere with his crops.

Continuing southward were the forts and intrenchments hitherto referred to in and around Newport.

When the American army again occupied

this territory, additional works were built and those already existing were strengthened. A work was built on Coaster's Island, and another on Rose Island, armed with forty pieces of heavy artillery.

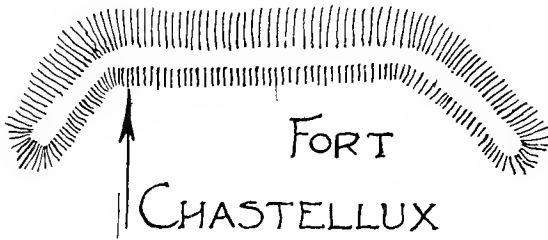
In 1781, a battery was erected on Hallidon Hill, "as this height commanded at short artillery range all the batteries at Brenton's Point and on Goat Island."



This fort was first called Fort Chastellux "after the Chevalier de Chastellux, one of Rochambeau's *Mareschaux des Camps*;" after the Revolution it was called Fort Harrison, being on the Harrison farm; and later it was called "Fort Denham, from some local association." General Cullum, in his work previously referred to, says that in 1884 a portion of this fort was situated in front of the Thorp cottage (between Berkley and

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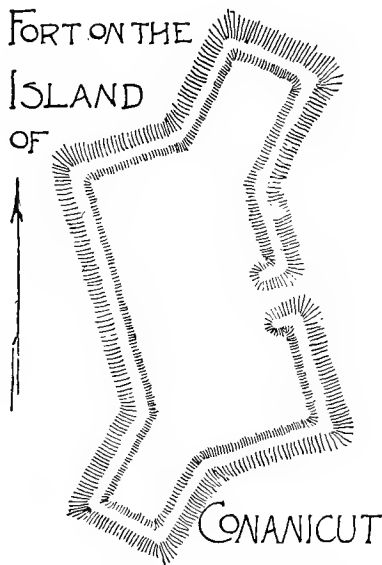
King streets), while yet another work was visible on the "Ocean drive" near the southwest extremity of the island, toward Castle Hill; both have since disappeared.

To the west of Newport on Conanicut, was located, in 1777, the Dumplings Rock battery, having an armament of eight eighteen-pound guns.

No vestige of this remains. The present old ruin called Fort Dumplings, and the Dumplings tower, is of later construction, it being built between the years 1798 and 1800. At that time, a new system of works for the protection of Narragansett Bay was projected, among which was the Dumplings fort. The construction of this system was placed under the supervision of Major Louis Tousard, a Frenchman, who had served gallantly with the American army during the Revolution, losing an arm at the action of Butt's Hill. This fort is often alluded to as a relic of the Revolution, and to correct this mistaken idea, this reference to it is made. South of the Dumplings tower, toward Beaver Tail, was another fort, which has since disappeared; while to the north toward Beaver Head on the west side of the island was another. This is yet well preserved.

and is situated on the Clarke farm; these completed the defences on Conanicut.

Perhaps, however, it would be an injustice to omit from the Conanicut defences, mention of "Eldred's one-gun battery"; for it



appears to have been of some consequence, after all.

On the Eldred farm on the east side of Conanicut lived Farmer Eldred, a patriot of the purest type. On his farm there was a great rock on the high land overlooking the

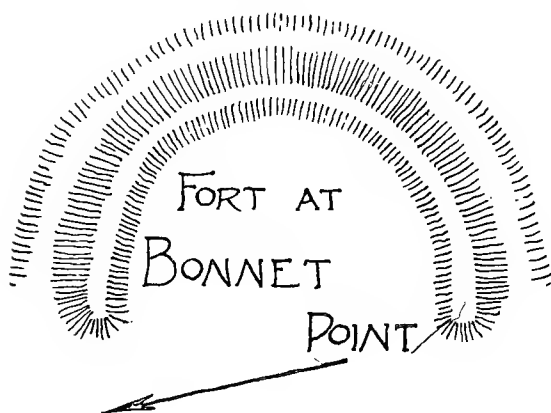
water; here Farmer Eldred planted one of the guns taken from the fort on the island. From time to time the patriotic old farmer would amuse himself by firing a shot at the British vessels as they passed up and down the east passage.

One day he was fortunate enough to put a ball through the mainsail of one of the enemy's ships. This little pleasantry, on the part of Farmer Eldred, was not relished by the Britisher; a boat was lowered, and a force sent ashore to dislodge the company, which it was supposed occupied the station, and spike the gun. Upon seeing the boat lowered, Mr. Eldred quickly hid himself in the swamp on his farm, and when the boat's party arrived on the spot nothing was found but the gun mounted in the cleft of the rock. This they spiked, but the company they expected to capture had vanished as completely as though swallowed up by the earth. This was Eldred's one-gun battery.

All these works on Conanicut were occupied by the British, from the time they landed at Newport, in December, 1776, until the 8th of August, 1778, but on this date, in anticipation of the occupancy of the island by the French, the British forces spiked the

guns, destroyed the magazines, abandoned the works, and retreated to Newport.

Across the west passage on the mainland in South Kingstown, at what is called Bonnet Point, was an earthwork called the Bonnet battery; this was thrown up during the years 1777 and 1778, about the time the forts on Conanicut were built. It was an elliptical



work and can be seen there to-day. It was continuously occupied by Rhode Island troops.

The form of the fort at the Bonnet has, undoubtedly, been much changed since it was erected during the Revolution. Twice since that time has it been rebuilt and occu-

pie for the defence of the state. During the War of 1812 a battery was located here; and during the Civil War, when it was reported that the Confederate cruiser, *Alabama*, was off the coast, it was again strengthened, and an artillery company located here for some weeks.

So far as a careful study of the records and authorities relating to the Revolutionary period will disclose, the various forts and means of defence,¹ here described, are all that were erected on Rhode Island soil during the struggle for American independence.

During the war, on occasions of alarm, artillery companies were stationed at many points along the shore, and simple breastworks were thrown up to cover the guns, but they are hardly to be considered as fortifications.

While many of these works have entirely disappeared, there are yet enough left to recall those stirring days when a foreign foe menaced the Narragansett's shores, and our fathers fought for liberty.

¹ An account of the naval defences is purposely omitted.

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