

## Appendix E

*The following text covers relevant sources on the Battle of Rhode Island, both primary and secondary. The sources were studied and summarized below by Allyson Boucher.*

### Bibliographic Essay

#### *Primary Sources*

Primary sources are the root of historical research in that they offer a firsthand account of the experience. There are several documents, journals, and first-hand accounts from the Battle of Rhode Island in 1778 that still survive. Below are listed a select few sources and information from each respective source.

Field, Edward, transcribed from original manuscript. *Diary of Colonel Israel Angell: 1778-1781, Commanding the Second Rhode Island Continental Regiment during the American Revolution*. Providence: Preston and Rounds Company, 1899.

Background on Angell:

Israel Angell was a fifth generation descendant of Thomas Angell, who had come to Providence with Roger Williams. He was born in North Providence on August 24, 1740, the son of Oliver and Naomi (Smith) Angell. Colonel Angell participated in battles of the Brandywine and Red Bank, and was with the army during winter of 1777-78 at Valley Forge. After the Battle of Monmouth, his regiment sent to RI to unite with General Sullivan in operations in Newport RI. He retired from the army on January 1, 1781.

Angell's diary begins August 20, 1778 – his regiment had been encamped at Tiverton RI, forming part of the force under General John Sullivan, engaging in operations against British—and ends September 23, 1778, when he left due to sickness.

Events noted in diary related to the Battle of Rhode Island:

On August 20, Angell marched with detachment of 500 men as a covering party at 5pm; French fleet not yet heard of “spread great consternation in the army.” The next day there was heavy fire between the armies. News on August 22 that the French Admiral Comte D’Estaing arrived off Beavertail, but after fog and storm they “left us in a most Rascally manner and will be the Event God only knows,” as Angell said. On August 24 and 25, the British and American armies continued exchange of cannonade and bombing. Colonel Livingston, Major Huntingdon and their teams proceeded to lower works to get off cannon and mortar as they decided on retreat. On August 27, one ensign, John Viol, and fourteen men were taken prisoner by the British troops. At eight o’clock at night on August 28, Angell was ordered to strike tents and march to north end of island by the commander of the Continental Army, General John Sullivan; orders countermanded and were then ordered to tarry on the ground until further orders. On retreat, repulsed enemy troops two or three troops. American troops took control of Butts Hill; Hessian troops had severe attack on Americans, but they suffered more casualties. Sullivan received word from Washington that British ships were on their way from New York to Newport. Angell and his troops completed their retreat around three in the morning on August 31 from Aquidneck Island to Howland’s Ferry and then on to Warren.

*Mrs. Mary Almy Journal: Siege of Newport, R.I. August 1778.* Newport Historical Magazine, 17-36.

Mrs. Mary Almy was an innkeeper who had British Loyalist sympathies. In her journal, she describes her experience during the battle to her husband.

On July 29, Mrs. Almy hears news of the French fleet of eleven ships in the harbor. The next few days she describes not much happening in harbor, but hears news of French ships going up Conanicut passage on August 2. All the businesses in town are closed as talk of preparations to sink French ships is spread. Confusion among people in Newport as to when battle will start, and Mrs. Almy send her six children to be with her relatives away from inn. Mrs. Almy notes her distress and anxiety at the approaching confrontation between ships. She says that “everybody [in the town] turns politician forming and planning schemes for Lord [British

General William] Howe, to make this naughty French Count [Comte D'Estaing] repent his having joined the subject to rebel against the true and lawful Sovereign.” British and French fleets engage in sea fight. There is a violent storm from August 11-12. Mrs. Almy speaks of her loneliness and the quiet around town. On August 20, she learns that the French fleet was in bad condition and had left. According to news from Mrs. Almy, British General Robert Pigot gave orders to British and Hessian troops to follow American troops by day. She learns on August 24 that American troops had retreated; British troops began to decamp in the morning.

### ***Secondary Sources***

Secondary Sources are just as important in research, providing context and various interpretations from historians. Below are select secondary sources and summary of information on each (in alphabetical order).

Abbass, D.K., PhD. *Rhode Island in the Revolution: Big Happenings in the Smallest Colony*.

Available from the Rhode Island Marine Archaeology Project. USDI National Park Service. American Battlefield Protection Program.

### Part I: A Chronology of the War in Rhode Island

#### I-H: Siege of Newport – August 14-18, 1778

Aug 14- Two American battalions encamped south of Quaker Hill—200 Americans seen on East Road, but British fire drove them off. RI Governor William Greene gave more supplies of powder.

August 15 – Americans began move south toward Newport: General Sullivan at head with 200 troops; John Laurens and Silas Talbot in command of next light infantry units; followed by main, Nathanael Greene with Varnum’s brigade and Gen. Whipple’s NH militia. Americans headquartered at Oakland Farm, to north of East Main Road, and took note of British positions from Honeyman’s Hill.

August 16- American encampment began to build fortifications on Honeyman’s Hill and one on hill near Redwood’s. Americans efforts focused on creating earthworks and trenches

along Honeyman's Hill to east of Newport. Nathaniel Greene wrote to wife on August 16 that they were within two miles of Newport and would begin approach that night. Americans opened 6 batteries with connected trenches down the slope of the hill.

Aug 17- British fired 2 shots at new works – they continued to build defenses.

Aug 18- British troops fired cannons at American batteries (no. 2 and 3) but did little damage.

Aug 19- British captured American sentry who gave information; after weather cleared, British fired on American gallery; Americans were advanced far enough that their cannon fire could reach any part of British line, so British drew back their positions.

Pigot had sent word to Clinton in NY that they might not be able to hold off Americans; had asked for transports to evacuate Newport and might have to surrender. There were criticisms of Americans of position in marshy ground on eastern side of Newport. French had planned to take position north of the city. British responded by reinforcing defenses; continuous cannonade between British and American troops.

The majority of American militiamen had only enlisted in July for three weeks. American troops had trouble keeping men as well as maintaining supplies in Rhode Island. American troops had decreased from 10,000 to 5,000 members.

After storm in mid-August, rest of British fleet under Howe had returned to NY for repairs. French fleet returned to RI area at the top of Narragansett Bay on Aug 20. Comte D'Estaing knew his damaged ships would not be able to defend against rest of British ships arriving from New York.

On August 20, General Sullivan sent Lafayette and Greene to French ship Languedoc to protest D'Estaing's departure, in which they gave full written argument of reasons for French to stay in Rhode Island. They argued that it was essential to alliance to defend island, however Lafayette refused to sign because of French loyalties. Lafayette later protested Sullivan's behavior in letters to Washington. Greene and Sullivan wrote letters to Washington—aware of potential damage of friction between French and American officers. By September 3, Sullivan wrote to Washington that tensions were resolved.

The French left Narragansett Bay on August 22, heading towards Sakonnet River, the same day, Howe and Brits left NY.

On August 23, American troops fired from all batteries against enemy. The next morning, British attack on Potter's Chimney, but one killed and two captured; also crossed Easton's Beach and burned Easton's house.

On August 24 and 25, Americans and British continued to build batteries and exchange fire. Americans ceased construction of trenches/batteries on August 26. Sullivan called another council, decided to hold American position until reinforcements because of their decrease in army numbers. At that point, the number of troops had diminished from 7000 to 4000 men. Rhode Island Governor Greene said that the state was not able to send any more troops.

#### Battle of RI – Aug 29-31, 1778

The heaviest fighting in Rhode Island occurred as Americans were retreating to the northern end of Aquidneck Island. American General Greene commanded right wing on West main road, and General Glover commanded left wing on East main road. Americans had pitched tents early in morning on August 29 on Butts hill. Greene's regiment with Major Samuel Ward Jr., including 100 black soldiers held redoubt near shore on right wing.

As British advanced on land, their ships (the Sphnyx, the Vigilant, and the Spitfire) took up position between Prudence Island and American right. Captain von Malsberg saw Laurens advanced party and engaged in first confrontation of battle on West Main Road. Laurens retreated, taking up position near Turkey Hill. Von Lossberg and his troops joined and drove Americans from Turkey Hill. Retreating Americans ambushed Noltenius' Chasseurs and continued push until they reached the edges of General Greene's troops. Smith pursued American Livingston's troops, but the British had not sent an advanced party; Americans at Union Street ambushed them.

Sullivan sent reinforcements down East Main Road. The fighting continued as they moved further north of the island. American troops, with reinforcements, engaged British and Hessian troops at Quaker Hill. British ships bombed from Bristol. American Major Ward in command of "Colored Regiment"; they engaged with General Von Lossberg and his Hessian troops. Hessian troops could not withstand the number of Americans and withdrew to top of Turkey Hill. Cannonade and fighting continued into the night.

The number of fatalities in that part of the battle was low. Sullivan's troops: 30 killed, 137 wounded, and 44 missing. British and Hessian troops: 38 killed, 210 wounded, and 44 missing. British and American armies remained in positions on August 30 and continued exchange of artillery.

Sullivan received letter from Washington that British ships were on their way from New York to Rhode Island. He called council of war, and decided to retreat to the forts at Tiverton. On the night of August 30, the main part of the American army reached Tiverton, and three hours later the rest of army had left Aquidneck Island. British returned to original positions (from July) on Conanicut and Aquidneck Islands. On August 31, Sullivan wrote complete report of Battle of Rhode Island for Washington.

Conway, Stephen R. *The British Isles and the War of American Independence*. "Chapter 2: War of American Independence, 1775-83." Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Source on background of Battle of Rhode Island:

General William Howe – head of old Boston garrison—began operations in the lower Hudson River Valley of New York. The town of Newport, Rhode Island seized at end of 1776 by British. The July 1776 Declaration of Independence made it more likely for Americans to receive foreign aid. The war became from 1778 on – a global conflict – French and other allies for Americans. D'Estaing unable to force a decisive action to maintain blockade of New York. The following month, D'Estaing won Newport, and came close to compelling surrender of British garrison with cooperation of French fleet, Continental troops and local New England militia. British believed that French and Americans were unnatural allies (Catholic monarchs and Protestant republicans). Conclusion: entry of France changed course of American war, especially because of naval forces.

Dearden, Paul F. *Rhode Island Campaign of 1778*. Providence: Published for the Rhode Island Publications Society by the Rhode Island Bicentennial Foundation, 1980.

On August 11, General Sullivan's army numbered 10,122 men (not including 500-600 NH volunteers). Sullivan believed his army was strong enough without the French troops so gave orders to march the next morning, August 12. However, a storm ravaged Aquidneck Island and forced the American troops to stop advance. Both the British and American armies became sick from weather and some died from exposure.

After a few days, Sullivan gave orders to move on the morning of August 15. On August 15 at two in the afternoon the American troops reached Honeyman's Hill; they pitched tents and began to station advanced posts. Their position on hill and area (which had been selected by the Continental Congress on July 25) was poor because it gave the British a height advantage; there were also marshy conditions on the ground.

British General Pigot had opened bombardment from August 16-17 on Sullivan's troops. Sullivan had many men desert throughout the Battle of Rhode Island. He had to ask for more troops from the other New England militias; RI sent remaining half of its militiamen to Aquidneck Island. From date of August 18, Americans began construction work of five-gun battery at their position at Honeyman's Hill. Pigot continued work of strengthening the British line; starting August 10, troops cut down trees and set down across Green End line to Tomini Hill. They continued to build defense line from Easton's Beach to pond. On August 16, Hessian General Von Lossberg stationed in front of little Tomini with seamen troops and 2 six pounders. On August 19, Sullivan's troops launched cannonade on British line, which forced them to move back their encampment; Americans had also been hit, with two wounded and one dead.

On August 20, Comte D'Estaing returned to waters close to Newport, but gave word to American troops that he would continue to Boston for repairs. The Americans Generals on Aquidneck Island were upset at D'Estaing's departure. Sullivan, Greene, and Hancock met and wrote document that stated they had only agreed to battle in RI because of promise of French aid, and without their aid the Americans would be abandoned and likely have to retreat. The generals' protest of French actions was given to General Heath to give to D'Estaing and French troops when they arrived in Boston. Lafayette upset by American proclamations against French.

On August 23, Americans has two more batteries, engaged British all day; Sullivan's troops: 8,174 men, which kept dwindling each day.

Hancock left army to go to Boston. American soldiers at scene wrote in diaries about how French had betrayed them by leaving for Boston.

On Aug 20, Lieutenant Stanhope sent word to troops of RI of D'Estaing's return to Boston area.

British General Howe led his ships for Newport on August 25. On his way to RI, Howe was met by *Galatea* (a British ship), which informed him D'Estaing had left Newport area, so Howe set off for Boston. Howe arrived in Boston on August 30, two days behind arrival of French.

General Sullivan asked commanders (Washington) for course of action for American troops. General John Glover suggested move to the northern end of the island so ferries to mainland could be secured; other generals agreed. Nathanael Greene disagreed, thought a force of 300 men in small boats led by John Laurens should land on the right flank of the British lines and carry through to guards on Easton's Beach.

On August 24, Sullivan received word from Washington that Howe was assembling a hundred ships on Long Island, so it was decided that the colonials would be more secure at northern tip where they could await the return of D'Estaing's fleet. Sullivan again asked for reinforcements from other New England regiments. According to letters from Governor William Greene, 60 men left on mainland to guard Providence.

On August 25, British bombarded Sullivan's troops for an hour and a half; colonial troops fired only a few shots with little guns. Pigot suspected that Americans expected to retreat; he sent out reconnaissance patrols on August 26.

On August 27 at 2pm, Howe's ships *Sphnyx*, *Vigilant*, and *Nautilus* anchored in Newport. Pigot expected reinforcement from British commander Clinton. Clinton arrived with 4000 troops, hoping to cut off Sullivan and move against Providence. On night of August 27, Lafayette left for Boston.

Greene and American troops formed right wing and took West Road, and Glover and left wing moved towards East Road. Advanced troops were drawn off Pigot's line and reached Butts Hill.

Sullivan's works of around 5-6000 formed defensive line facing Newport. Pigot's informant Captain MacKenzie told of American withdrawal (realignment).

Smith marched against Quaker Hill and West Road; Captain von Malsberg and Captain Noltenius with Hessian troops marched against Laurens on East Road. Germans forced Americans back in skirmishes near Laurens' main flank. Pigot sent troops to aid Smith. Laurens

and his men fell back after push from von Lossberg, which was able to storm from three sides. Laurens was then forced to retreat to Turkey Hill and fall back to the main army near Sullivan.

Concealed Americans in cornfield sent volley on Brit. Nolt's line. British and Hessian troops came for both sides and attempted to cut through middle as Laurens troops retiring back against walls. Smith faded; Hessians restocked; Livingston received recruits from Sullivan.

Major Tousard, member of Lafayette's military family, had horse blown from him and his right arm severed against British artillery.

McBurney, Christian M. *The Rhode Island Campaign*. Yardley: Westholme Publishing, 2011.

The French ships arrived the afternoon of August 20 in Narragansett Bay. The American camp rejoiced at their arrival. However, winds kept them from entering Newport harbor that day.

French commander of their ship *Senegal*, Ensign Joseph Comte de Cambis, gave news to the Americans on Aquidneck Island that the French fleet will go up to Boston to repair its damages after the storm of August 11-13. Several American officers, including Nathanael Greene, Marquis de Lafayette, and Colonel John Langdon, were sent to the French fleet to ask the Admiral D'Estaing to change his decision to leave. D'Estaing replied to their request that the French were leaving for reasons of self-preservation.

On August 21, the French fleet left Rhode Island waters. Americans were still upset by their departure. Sullivan wrote letter in objection, "Protest of the General Officers on Rhode Island," listing nine arguments for the French to stay, which was also signed by Nathanael Greene and several officers. The American protest slightly soured the French-American relations, as the French felt insulted by the American reaction.

On the island, Americans continued to extend trenches and new batteries. General Pigot's British troops fired on American troops at work. American commanders had considered retreat, but decided to dig in until the British reinforcements arrived. Sullivan issued plans for quick withdrawal if necessary, especially because they were losing large number of troops. Sullivan noted large decrease in American troops numbers, mostly due to desertion, from 11,000 to 8,800 between August 15 and August 24. Major Eyre and carpenters were instructed to put up gun platforms on the northern end of island. Colonel John Crane's cannon was also moved to north

to Butts Hill. Volunteers from Salem, Massachusetts were given orders to have boats ready at Howland's and Bristol Ferries. Also, as a cautionary step all unnecessary baggage was to be transported off of island.

The night of August 26, there was exchange of fire; however, the next day Americans began to move their front line cannon.

Three ships of British navy spotted; they were a 20 gun frigate *Sphnyyx*, 14 gun sloop *Nautilus*, and 20 gun armed vessel *Vigilant*. The arrival of the ships brought the news that Clinton was gathering about 4,300 reinforcements at Long Island to bring to Rhode Island.

Greene created plan to attack British lines with 5,000 soldiers, including 300 men led by John Laurens to surprise British redoubt. Sullivan also discussed moving to top of Butts Hill. Lafayette went up to Boston to ask for repaired French ships to return to RI. On August 28, Sullivan ultimately decided that all units should all fall back to defensive positions around Butts Hill.

Sullivan's army next goal, along with defense and retreat, was to protect Howland's Ferry to be able to leave island. Sullivan split troops in valley below Butts Hill, so that their front line of defense stretched across island. The 1<sup>st</sup> RI regiment held position on right wing commanded by Nathanael Greene, from Butts Hill to Durfee's Hill. West Road blocked by Laurens and Major Silas Talbot and Lieutenant Colonel Louis de Fleury, and East Road blocked by Colonel Henry Beekman Livingston, with a detachment of 250 men of army's picket under Colonel Nathaniel Wade.

On August 29, British Major Frederich Mackenzie spotted withdrawal of Sullivan's troops, and Pigot gave orders to attack. Pigot assembled British, Hessian, and Loyalist troops (about 5,700 soldiers and artillerymen), and then ordered 3 columns to go after Sullivan mid-retreat. Major General Friedrich Wilhelm von Lossberg led 1,000 men up West Road. Brigadier General Francis Smith led central column of 1,100 men. Major General Richard Prescott, Pigot's right hand man, led troops up East Road. Hessian commander von Lossberg attacked Laurens from 3 sides; Americans were outnumbered and withdrew with Hessian after them. Von der Malsburg came to Hessian assistance. Laurens advance troops fell to below Turkey Hill as Hessians continued to move forward towards them. Sullivan ordered Laurens back to main lines; Von Lossburg assaulted again, and Laurens retreated again and eventually led to ground west of Butts Hill. Pigot ordered prescott's troops to reinforce General Smith on East Road.

There were 3,700 Brit regiments facing 3,900 American front line and advance troops. Livingston's troops headed north to Quaker Hill after seeing British Captain Thomas Coore's companies. British troops led by Smith and Campbell did not send out advance troops and were ambushed by American Colonel Nathaniel Wade at Middle Road. Once they recovered, they followed after Wade and Livingston's troops on East Road. Americans troops were able to check the advance of the British troops.

Sullivan sent Colonel John Trumbull to order Wigglesworth's Regiment back to main line. Hessian von Huyn regiment had been approaching towards them. Smith's senior commanders on East Road prepared their troops (1100 men) for attack on Americans (900 men) on that end. Major Mackenzie was given information that morning that troops withdrew from Quaker's Hill.

According to American accounts, their retreat went smoothly and orderly. British troops continued to advance within range of American cannon. From Quaker's hilltop British General Smith could see positions from Butts Hill to American right wing that showed that they had not caught up with army. They obeyed Pigot's orders not to bring on general engagement, especially because British troops guarding Newport were not available. Smith withdrew his infantry to Quaker Hill and bombard Glover's troops from above, but it had no effect.

At 10am, von Lossberg's troops just arriving at Turkey Hill with main American positions at Durfee and Butts Hill. Nathanael Greene and his troops were on that end; they held key position of Artillery Redoubt (1/2 mile southwest of Butts Hill); the walls could be used for use for protection held by Major Samuel Ward's 1<sup>st</sup> RI regimen. Von der Malsburg charged redoubt but regiment repelled them. Then under orders from von Lossberg tried assault again on American right wing. Small squadron of British ships assisted on assault by shelling rear. British Captain Alexander Graeme abandoned efforts after receiving cannonballs from Bristol battery. After his firing from Brit ships lessened, Von Lossberg directed another assault on Americans – 2<sup>nd</sup> RI regiment was sent in to help 1<sup>st</sup> RI regiment and able to help fight.

American cannon fire continued to hurt Hessian troops. They still pressed forward against Americans with 1200 men forcing American retreat. Fighting for Greene's troops included 1600 men although many fired long range still effective because of number and coming from downhill (Butts hill to Durfee hill). The Hessians therefore became cut off with Americans on all sides. Greene called for MA militia to attack Hessian troops' rear. By 3:30 pm, fighting

on that side had ended – German troops retreated to Turkey Hill. Sullivan decided against general attack – sought to get army of island. British had gained land, but Americans had responded well to attacks and inflicted more casualties – British/Hessian/Loyalist 260: 38 killed, 210 wounded, and 12 missing; American 211 casualties: 30/137/44.

McBurney, Christian. *Spies in Revolutionary Rhode Island*. Charleston: The History Press, 2014.

As with the rest of the Revolutionary War, spies played a role in Rhode Island campaign. Sullivan reversed sentence of whipping given by court martial panel against Mansfield Allen. American spies on Aquidneck Island did not use real names. General Sullivan received one fairly accurate report of British troop defense positions from an American spy. In September 1778, Marquis de Lafayette attempted to set up an American spy network that would infiltrate the British in Newport; also, sent fake deserter and other disguised American officer. Efforts by colonials to root out Tories may have hampered British spy efforts.

Murray, Thomas Hamilton. “John Sullivan and the Battle of Rhode Island: a Sketch of the Former and a Description of the Latter.” American-Irish Historical Society. 1902.

According to Murray, Americans had withstood and repelled successive attacks. They made an effect on British forces, in which they had lost one-fifth their entire force in action. The British had taken possession of Newport, Rhode Island in December 1776. It was General George Washington’s plan to have Americans take hold of island. General John Sullivan was appointed to succeed Major General Spencer by Congress.

On June 19, Congress based on the request of Sullivan and Governor Greene, returned Rhode Island troops to the state for defense, and the navy to prepare three ships for defense of Providence, Warren, and Taunton rivers; meanwhile the British interrupted preparations and burned several houses in Bristol.

The arrival of the French fleet in New York caused the British prepare for attack. On July 29, 1778, the French fleet under Comte D’Estaing arrived, including twelve ships of the line, four frigates and a corvette with 4,000 troops. He had meeting with Sullivan that decided two ships of the frigate were to take position and cut off retreat of enemy’s vessels in bay.

British realized plan and ran four ships aground to burn them, and later destroyed smaller vessels to prevent being taken by French. D'Estaing changed mind, embarked troops forgoing arrangements with Sullivan and went to give battle to Howe's fleet; Sullivan and Lafayette were shocked. Storm the night of August 12 scattered fleets; French had engaged some smaller British ships but because of ships' damages went to Boston for repairs.

Sullivan then sent away all materials not needed at main lines. On August 28, he held council that they would move to north end of island and fortify camps. Enemy and American troops would fire back and forth throughout the day. According to Sullivan the troops showed great spirit when engaged and "the brigades of the first line, Varnum's, Glover's, Cornell's, and Greene's, behaved with great firmness. Major-General Greene who commanded in the attack on the right, did himself the highest honor by the judgment and bravery exhibited in the action."

Losses – Americans: 211 (killed, wounded, missing); British: 1023

Stevens, John Austin. An Address delivered in Newport: The French in Rhode Island, Newport in the Revolutionary Period, 1778-1782.

Comte D'Estaing had sought to engage British with his fleet at New York, but they had already left, so his French fleet then sailed for Newport.

Washington directed Sullivan to apply for five thousand men from New England militias, and then said to divide the troops into divisions in Rhode Island under command of Marquis de Lafayette and General Greene.

On July 29, they appeared off Brenton's Ledge- detached frigates to East and West Passages, also cut off British retreat because of shallow waters. On August 5, French frigates holding western passage anchored in middle channel. Four British frigates were run ashore on RI and burned as they neared Tonomy Hill. Eight vessels sunk and thirteen burned, and at same time, British scattered over island burning houses and destroying land.

General Sullivan and D'Estaing met to discuss plan of action. On August 8, Sullivan said he planned to cross from mainland to island with troops. D'Estaing then forced his troops in middle passage; they had heavy fire from British, then British destroyed two remaining vessels. D'Estaing and troops began landing after fog lifted the next day, and then began their organization and drills.

British troops led by General Pigot came from north of island and posted on Bannister's Hill and across Tonomy Hill.

Joint attack of Americans and French was scheduled to take place on August 10, with D'Estaing landing about 4,000 troops; Sullivan's troops began crossing at Fogland Ferry at north end of island (with around 10,000 troops). Sullivan occupied deserted British post and then pushed down island with Colonel Livingston to within a mile of Pigot's line of defense.

British commander General Howe sailed towards Newport and engaged with D'Estaing. That night, August 11, there was a great storm that damaged the ships. On August 13, French fleet separated and Languedoc badly damaged; also, attacked at sunset by one of British ships. Both fleets suffered great damages.

Lafayette informed D'Estaing that British Admiral Byron was on way to support British troops in RI, so therefore French would be significantly outnumbered. The French fleet set sail the next day as it was decided that French should go up to Boston where repairs to ships could be made.

Schroder, Walter K. *The Hessian Occupation of Newport and Rhode Island: 1776-1779*.

Westminster: Heritage Books, 2005.

General John Sullivan ordered the troops to move to the northern tip of island after the unexpected withdrawal of the French fleet to Boston.

Lieutenant Freidrich McKenzie observed American movements on morning of August 29 and gave information to General Pigot. Hessian troops ordered to move forward to Irish's Redoubt with 2,000 men including light infantry. Major General Von Lossberg was in overall command of the Hessian troops; he led advance troops along West Road to attack at any opportunity. The British 38<sup>th</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> Regiments, along with 22<sup>nd</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> Regiments as flanking companies, under Major General Prescott, pursued along East Road.

Hessian Captain Von der Malsberg spotted American Colonel John Laurens at rear of Sullivan's army. Hessians engaged American troops, back and forth, with a few wounded on each side; Americans withdrew.

There was also a skirmish between Colonel Campbell's 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment and American troops, under Colonel Henry Beekman Livingston, near Union Street and East Road. There were

many dead and wounded, especially due to ambush from behind stonewalls by the Americans; then Americans quickly withdrew.

The Ansbach-Bayreuth troops, which were other German troops, continued push to north of island. Sullivan's troops withdrew to artillery redoubt and Windmill Hill (or Butts Hill). However, the Hessians were able to advance more swiftly than the American commanders thought. There were several smaller engagements along Turkey Hill. There was a shortage of ammunition on the British side, which slowed Hessian advance and gave the Americans a chance to strengthen defensive positions and fire muskets.

During the night of August 29 and 30, troops maintained positions while some American troops moved to Howland's Ferry. Pigot then decided to wait out American movements, but American evacuation of island had been completed by morning and his search parties in area found nothing.

Walker, Anthony. *So Few the Brave: Rhode Island Continentals, 1775-1783*. Seafield Press. Newport, Rhode Island, 1981.

The Rhode Island General Assembly voted that every able-bodied negro, mulatto and Indian slave could enlist for duration of Revolutionary war with the same wages as free men. Christopher Greene led the 1st Rhode Island Regiment, and Varnum led the 2nd Rhode Island Regiment. On August 1, the Rhode Island called its militia, which was composed of six regiments of 3,000 soldiers. General Washington sent his most trusted generals to work with General John Sullivan, Lafayette and Nathanael Greene. The French Admiral D'Estaing and Sullivan made plans for Rhode Island. On August 8, French would enter Narragansett Bay; on August 9-10, they would ferry Sullivan's ships to east shore of Aquidneck Island, and French soldiers and marines would, at the same time, land on west shore and then their combined forces would attack British. The American troops were able to successfully land, but the British ships on horizon upset D'Estaing plan. A severe storm struck Aug 11-12, that led the French fleet to leave on August 20 for Boston for repairs.

The American troops' strength declined after departure of French. After word that British troops were expecting reinforcements from New York for their 7,000 men, American

commanders decided to withdraw. The night of August 28-29, Americans withdrew to north of island.

Sullivan positioned troops to cover island as they withdrew to north. British General Pigot ordered his forces to pursue the Americans, but to avoid a general engagement. Brigadier General Smith marched along east road with regiments, and Major Lossberg with Hessian troops moved along western road towards Turkey Hill.

American troops led by Laurens fired on advanced British troops, and the British suffered casualties and stopped; Laurens continued uphill. British on East Road came under fire from American troops led by Livingston, who were also able to move to higher ground. General Sullivan on hearing firing, he ordered a regiment forward and for advanced troops to return to mainline. British troops had swept before them, but held to order of no general engagement. The men on both sides were tired from heat exhaustion.

General Nathanael Greene and Varnum were on Butts Hill. They saw Hessian advance in valley and sent the 2<sup>nd</sup> Rhode Island Regiment for reinforcements of the artillery redoubt. Hessian General Lossberg urged troops forward from his view on Turkey Hill, at one point they had more than one thousand troops to attack redoubt. Greene and Varnum committed troops to saving redoubt. Cannon fire came from both sides of hill; however, most of firing was at long range. Sullivan reported for army: 211 soldier killed, wounded, or missing; Pigot reported: 260 British, Hessian and Tory casualties. Greene, Laurens and other commanders recommended assault on enemy on hills, but Sullivan rejected. The night of August 29-30, the two sides remained in place and shot long range artillery fire. The night of August 30-31, Sullivan quietly removed troops from island via boats to Tiverton and Bristol; many of regiments returned to their homes around New England.

***More sources for information on the Revolutionary War in Rhode Island:***

*Rhode Island: Historical Tracts.* Providence: S.S. Rider.

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Summary: "Orderly" book kept by or for Major Gibbs (1778 August 8-28). Orders from headquarters at Tiverton (R.I.) and Newport (R.I.) concern securing provisions, shelter, and ammunition. Included in the volume is information about courts martial, and the organization of troops and detachments.

Notes: George C. Mason produced six known unique "Extra Illustrated" editions of his published book, *Reminiscences of Newport*. There are original manuscripts and engravings carefully interspersed and bound in with the text, sometimes illustrative of the text they accompany, sometimes seemingly unrelated to the text but relevant to the history of Newport, R.I. The Redwood Library holds three editions of one volume each and one set in two volumes. Institutions known to hold other versions are the Rhode Island Historical Society, in six volumes, and the New York Public Library. <https://archive.org/details/reminiscencesofn01mason>

"Frederick Mackenzie papers, 1760-1783."

Abstract: The Frederick Mackenzie papers contain military documents and several bound volumes relating to numerous aspects of British army administration during the American Revolutionary War. These include returns of casualties, provisions, vacancies, and ordnance for various regiments, as well as scattered orders and memoranda on army policies.

Howard M Chapin; Grolier Club. *Gazette française: a facsimile reprint of a newspaper, printed at Newport on the printing press of the French fleet in American waters during the Revolutionary War*. New York: Grolier Club, 1926.

*Journal with an Account of the Battle of Newport: fragments, 1778, July 29--1781, Dec. 31.*

Notes: All inquiries regarding this collection should be directed to Norris Foundation Curator of American Historical Manuscripts.

*Letters from British Army Officers Regarding Revolutionary War Battles in Newport, R.I. Edinburgh Advertiser Extraordinary, Oct. 19, 1778*. Edinburgh: James Donaldson, 1778.

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