

1781. Rev. Dr. Samuel Hopkins.

See above, p. 89. The letter is quoted from Dr. Stiles's Diary (upon which see p. 72), in Dr. Edwards A. Parks's *Memoir of Hopkins*, Boston, 1854, p. 107.

"New Haven, 1781. Received a letter from Rev. Mr. Hopkins, dated Newport, January 26; wherein he says, speaking of the state of religion there, 'Every thing is dark and discouraging here, with respect to the all-important interest. The people in general are going from bad to worse, and I now see no way for my continuing here longer than till spring. Neither your people nor mine are disposed to attend public worship constantly, except a few individuals. There is but little encouragement to preach, where there is so little attention, and so very little concern about any thing invisible.'"

1781. Baron Cromot Dubourg.

Cromot Dubourg (1756-1836), entered the French army when twelve, and upon Rochambeau's departure for America was permitted to join the expedition as aid-de-camp. He won some distinction before Yorktown, but upon his return to France devoted his fortunes to those of Royalty, and joined the ranks of the emigrés. He was so fortunate as to be remembered by the restored Bourbons, and was made honorary *maréchal de camp*. Balch says, in his "French in

America" (1895), II. 91, that Dubourg left an unpublished diary of his first campaign in America, in 1781, of which the original has been lost or mislaid. This extract is taken from a text in the *Magazine of American History*, IV. 209, entitled "Diary of a French Officer, 1781 (presumed to be that of Baron Cromot du Bourg, Aid to Rochambeau), from an unpublished Manuscript in the possession of C. Fiske Harris, of Providence, R. I."

May 9, In the morning I left my resting place for Newport at a very early hour. The country seemed to me less wooded but as little improved as the town; as a whole it is not inhabited. The villages are immense. They are some four or five miles in extent and even more and the houses scattered. I passed through Bristol which was formerly quite a commercial town; that was before the war, for it has felt this scourge severely. When the English withdrew they burned more than three-fourths of the houses and they have not yet been rebuilt. I at last crossed Bristol Ferry which separates Rhode Island from the Continent. The arm of the sea is about a mile wide. I am now arrived at Newport and propose to examine the country with a little more care.

(Side Note). Some of the villages appear to me to be from 15 to 20 miles long.

I arrived at Newport the 9th May, 1781, as I have just said, and my first care, after having performed the duties which my service required, was to study the country in which I found myself.

Rhode Island is in its extreme length at most fifteen miles, and the widest part of the Island five.

It must have been one of the most pleasing spots in

the world before the war, since notwithstanding the disasters it has suffered, some of its houses destroyed, and all its woods cut down, the Island is still a charming residence.

The Island is very much cut up, that is all the land belonging to the different proprietors is enclosed by walls of stone piled one upon another or by wooden fences. There are some farms in which barley and other grains grow admirably. Great quantities of Turkey grain, otherwise called maize, are grown here. There are, as in Normandy, extensive orchards and the country bears about the same fruits as those of France. If it were cultivated as our provinces are the productions would be much greater, the soil being very good and the grass superb. It is cut by numerous small streams. The inhabitants are inactive and consequently not laborious.

(Side Note). The measure is here as well as on the Continent by miles as in England—three miles make a league.

There is very little game on the Island, some partridge rather larger than our own, some sea fowl and birds of passage, but there are neither hare nor rabbits nor wild beasts. The birds differ a little from our own—part of the wings of the black bird is red. There is a kind of heron the plumage of which is tinged with various blue—a bird which is called the Widow, the body of which as well as the breast is black, but the head of a very handsome yellow and a part of the wings of the same color. There are Cardinal birds of the same size as the black bird but almost entirely red. The crows are of a smaller kind than ours.

There are cows, pigs and sheep precisely as in France. There are also numbers of geese and turkeys of the same kind as our own; the horses are generally quite good although in less variety than I had sup-

posed, the English having introduced their breed here as well as on the main land. They are extremely dear, a horse which would be worth 20 loises in France, will here bring 40 or 50 at least. Their great merit is in being excellent leapers, being early trained. They have all the gait which we term the amble, of which it is extremely difficult to break them.

The coast of the Island abounds in fish. The cod is very abundant, some sturgeon, great quantities of mackerel, shad, black fish and many varieties of shell fish.

I found the army in the best possible condition, very few sick and the troops in splendid order.

The Island seemed to me to be so fortified that a landing was no way to be feared, at least if one should be made no ill result need be feared from it.

Newport is the only town on the Island, there being besides but a few scattered buildings to which the name of farm houses is given. Three-fourths of these houses are small farms.

There are but two streets of any consequence in the town. It is well built and quite pretty; it must be quite commercial and therefore much more prosperous before the war.

The Fort is to the south west of the town and of considerable size. The troops encamped last year in front of the town to the south west; the camp extends from the south east of the Town almost to the north of it. In front of the port to the south west of the town, a half a mile distant, is Goat Island, upon which there is a battery of eight pieces of twenty-four, which defend the entrance to the Harbor; to the south west of Goat Island the Brenton battery of twelve pieces of twenty-four and four twelve inch mortars, the fire of which crosses that of the vessels in the harbor. The Brenton battery is a half mile from Goat Island.

About three quarters of a mile to the north west of

Goat Island is the Battery of Rose Island of twenty pieces of thirty-six and four mortars of twelve inches upon which the right of the vessels rests ; it defends not only the entrance of the Harbor but reaches everything that might pass it.

The battery of Brenton's Point, of which I have just spoken, is about one and a quarter miles by sea to the south west of the town ; all along the coast to the south west of Brenton's point there are several guard posts and some redoubts which also defend the entrance to the Harbor. To the north west of the town is Coasters Island where there is a battery of three pieces of cannon. It is about three quarters of a mile from the town and a quarter from the coast. This battery commands that part of the entrenched camp which lies to the north of its position.

There are several Guard posts scattered along the coasts with Redoubts at the places where it would be possible for an enemy to land, so that should a descent be effected the smallness of the Island would allow of the troops being moved in a very short time to its centre, there to defend themselves, and they would there have the advantage of the entrenched camp, from which it would be, by reason of its situation, extremely difficult to dislodge them.

As for the Harbor, it seemed to me from the position of the batteries and the range of fire of our Vessels that if they were attacked it would be absolutely impossible for the enemy to force an entrance. .

1781. Abbé Claude C. Robin.

The Abbé Robin was a chaplain in Rochambeau's army. He was among the most entertaining of the