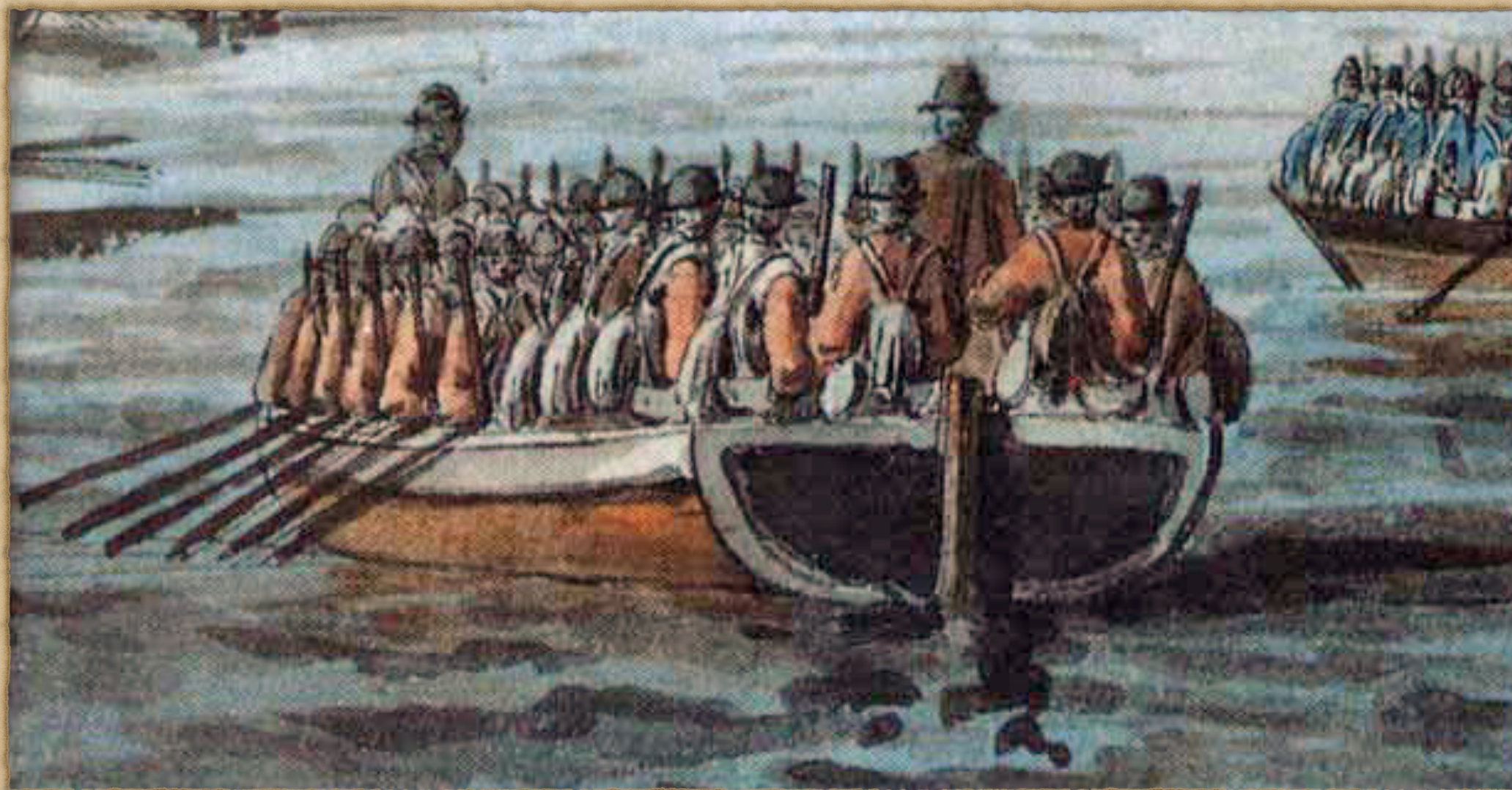




Occupied Portsmouth

1776-1779

Gloria Schmidt

Before the Occupation

1774 Census:
684 white males
685 white females
1,369 whites (90.5%)
21 Indians 1.5 %
122 Blacks 8.0%
1,512 total



Quakers, Farmers, White,
Feeding Newport

Farming Before Occupation

- ◆ Large number of sheep grazing on small and large farms.
- ◆ Exported hogs, cattle, sheep and corn Produced hogs
- ◆ Soil Good: Garden of New England
- ◆ Portsmouth always known for its farms.



Why British Invaded

- ◆ Naval Base: Newport - fine harbor
- ◆ Blockade and Control Shipping: Newport 5th largest port in colonies
- ◆ Staging Ground: Base for raids up and down coast



Portsmouth at Invasion

"There is a hill about 7 miles from Newport, and on the Eastern side of this Island called Quaker Hill, from there being a Quaker meeting-house on it, from whence there is a very fine view of all the N. part of the Island, and the beautiful bays and inlets, with the distant view of towns, farms, and cultivated lands intermixed with woods, together with the many views of the adjacent waters, contribute to make this, even at this bleak season of the year, the finest, most diversified, and extensive prospect I have seen in America." Diary of Frederick Mackenzie



Fortified Portsmouth



1. Windmill Hill (Butts Hill)
2. Bristol Ferry
3. Howland Bridge
4. Common Fence
5. Unmarked
6. Howland Neck
7. Quaker Hill
8. Arnold Point
9. McCurry (McCorrie Point) called Sandy Point in those days
10. Turkey Hill
11. Fogland Ferry (end of Glen Road)
12. Lopez Bay (Greenvale area)
13. Metcalf Bowler's House
14. Overings House (Prescott)
15. Layton (Lawton) Mill Creek
16. Black Point

What happened to Portsmouth's families?

- Lost their homes
- Some had to leave island - 10%
- Ferries not running
- Lack of freedom of motion
- Loss of trees and orchards
- Lost their livestock
- Lost every wagon and wooden farm tool



More Pain

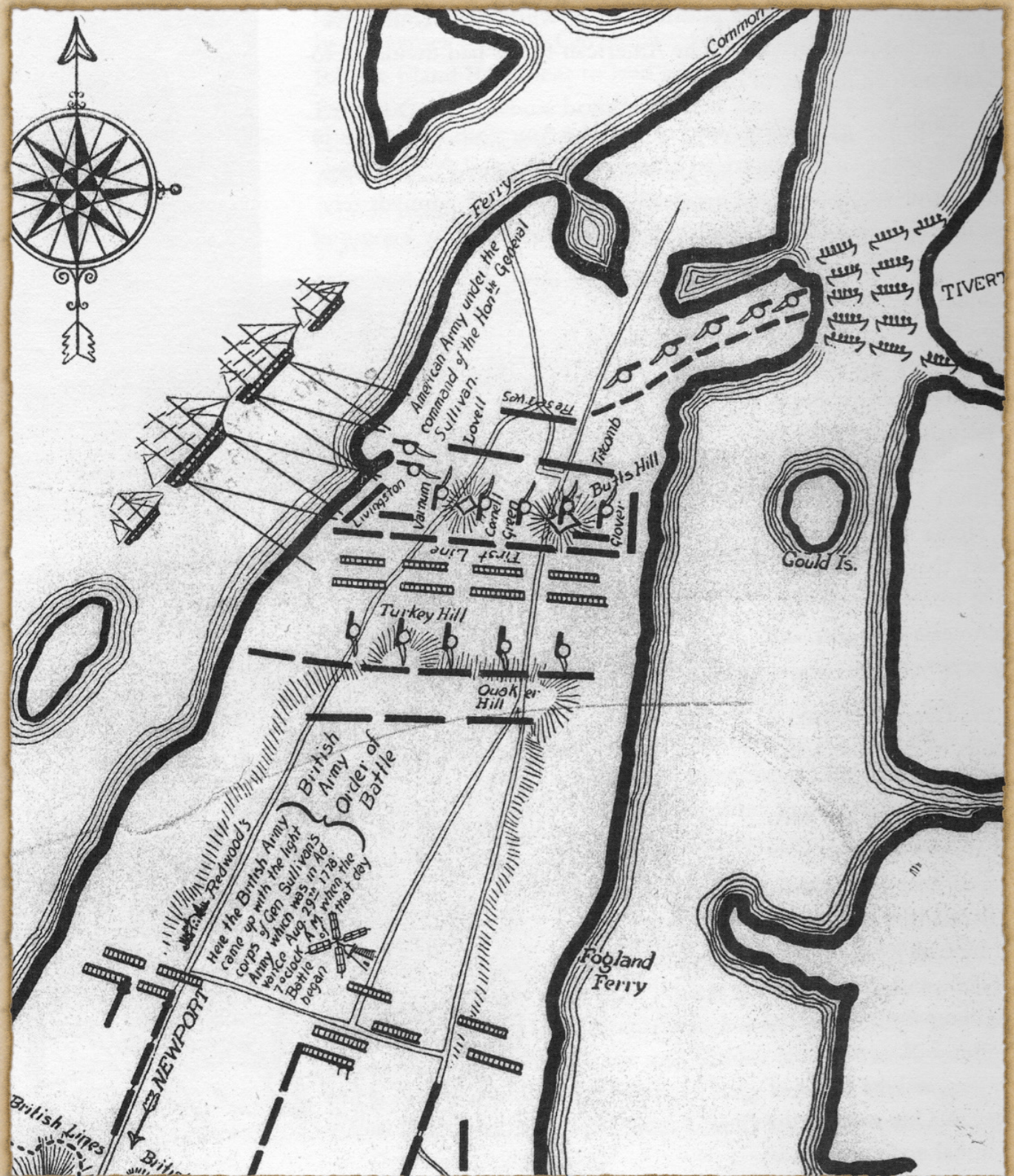
- ◆ Women shouldering responsibility
- ◆ Almost all Portsmouth Men served
- ◆ Impressed into service by the British to work on fortifications on Butts Hill and elsewhere.
- ◆ Filled in or salted just about every well – the source of water for families.



Throughout the war, British often sailed or rowed up inlets and raided coastal regions, burning and destroying supplies, granaries, and terrorizing patriot communities.

Battle of Rhode Island

All of
Portsmouth is a
Battlefield



Withstanding the Fury

- ◆ Seth Anthony Remembers
- ◆ Killings of Civilians
- ◆ Houses Destroyed



Counting the Losses

Heffernan - Binney

- ♦ 1 orchard five acres. 1 crib
1 cider press and mill 2 cows and one calf 1
mare
- ♦ 5 hogs
12 goats
14 forks
1 --jackass
1 ox cart
4 acres of corn
12 loads of hay
5 feather beds and bedding 4 bedsteads
1 desk
2 large chests

The Losses that Robt. Binney & Elizabeth Heffernan Met
with by the Brittons Portchmouth

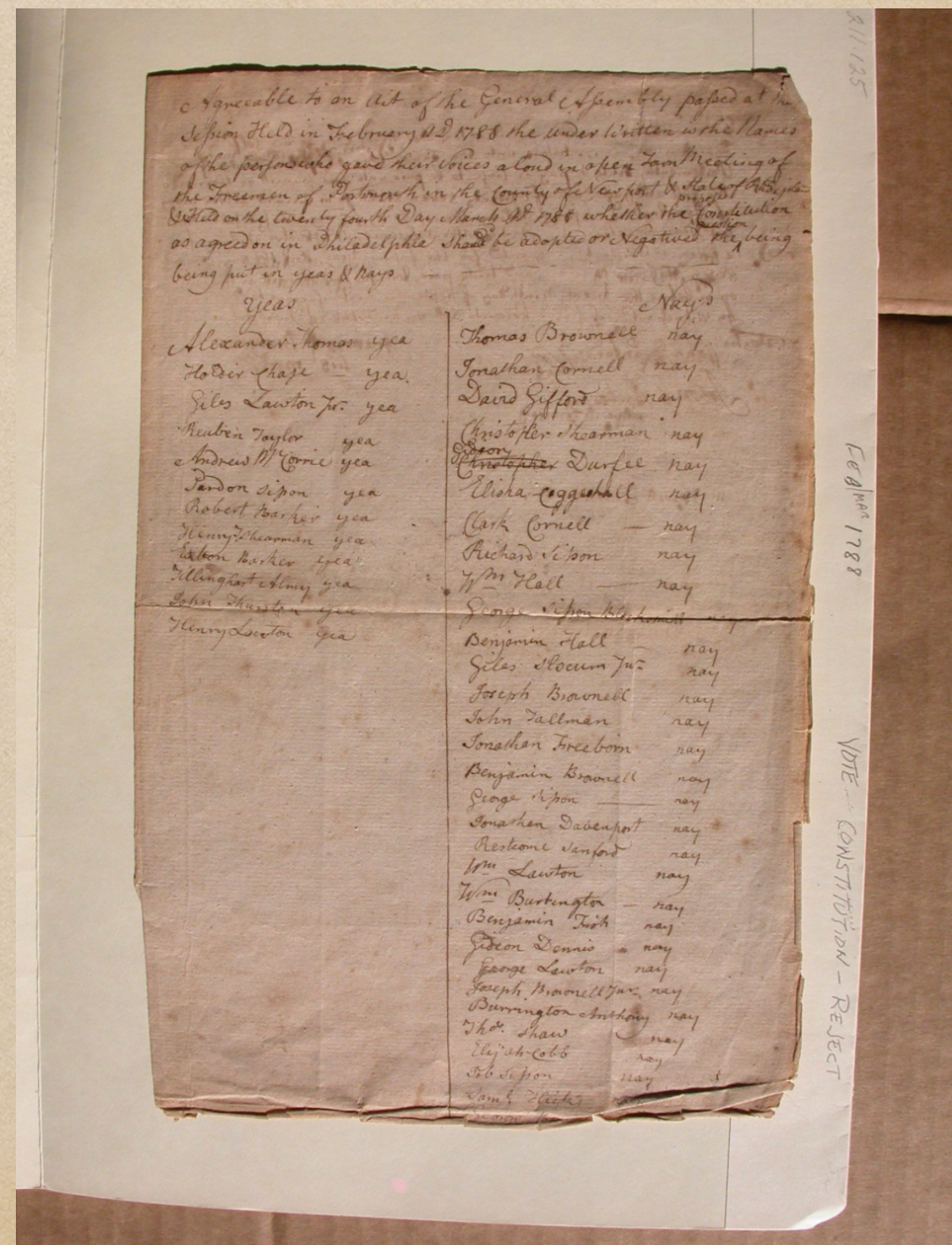
1 Orchard five Acres	_____
1 Crib	_____
1 Cider Press & mill	_____
2 Cows & 1 Calf	_____
1 Mare	_____
5 Hogs	_____
12 Goats	_____
14 Forks	_____
1 Thayer & Jacklin	_____
1 Ox Cart	_____
4 Acres of Corn	_____
12 Loads of Hay	_____
5 Feather Beds & Bedding	_____
4 Bedsteads	_____
1 Desk	_____
2 Cans of Doves	_____
2 Tables	_____
12 Chairs	_____
2 Kitchen Cates	_____

Recovery?

- ◆ No livestock, guns, farm tools, carts and wagons, wooden fencing, and in many without their homes.
- ◆ Firewood was scarce since the British had
- ◆ Farmers may have had their land, but no resources to farm
- ◆ In 1779 asking tax relief - didn't get it.

Portsmouth Votes "NO" on Constitution

- ◆ Preferred the decentralized Articles of Confederation
- ◆ Portsmouth military leaders Cook Wilcox, David Gifford and Burrington Anthony "no" votes.
- ◆ Heavy fines on Rhode Island trade with other states changed vote
- ◆ Portsmouth voted for the Constitution and Rhode Island finally became the thirteenth state in 1790.



- ◆ The 1790 census showed 1,560 residents - 1,512 in 1774
- ◆ 243 families and 19 slaves.
- ◆ Early 1800s dairy and grain farms were more important. Sheep raising became less important than it had been in early years.
- ◆ The occupation and post war concerns had changed the lot of the Portsmouth farmer.



“The inhabitants were greatly oppressed.”

—Entry in Portsmouth Town Records October 1779