

# Heritage Auto Tour of the W3R through Rhode Island

## Historical Overview

In 1780 July a squadron of transports and ships of the line delivered some 5,500 men of the French Expeditionary Force (FEF) in Newport RI. In 1781 June they marched west to New York to join the U.S Continentals and go south to Yorktown. Consider the economic benefit to Newport from housing and provisioning the French troops, then follow their footsteps north to Providence and then west to CT.

When the French came north in 1782 they retraced the route to Providence but rather than continuing to Newport they went to Boston, where they embarked for the Caribbean Islands.

See our Web site <[www.w3r-us.org](http://www.w3r-us.org)> for a more detailed history of the arrival and stay in Newport RI, the march via Providence to CT, and the return north and march through RI to MA.

**Note:** This auto route follows or parallels the historic route, providing as much contact as possible with the sort of scenery that the allied soldiers would have seen in 1781-83.



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W3R Heritage Auto Tour of Rhode Island Auto Cue Sheet Name: W3R-RI-all/2002-06-30	Goal GPS in WGS84
#1: <b>REINFORCEMENTS Pawtucket to Providence:</b> Start at City Hall in Pawtucket (Roosevelt St. and Exchange St.)	N41-52.758; W071-22.864
Continue on Rt 1 to Providence. At the RI School of Design take a right on college St, which becomes Westminster and passes near the Post Office.	N41-49.453; W071-24.559
#2: <b>WATER ROUTE Newport to Providence by ship:</b> The water route was taken by some of the French troops in 1781. If someone can drive your car to Providence you can take the fast passenger ferry (no cars allowed), which leaves from Perroti Park in Newport (Washington and Long Warf St.)	N41-29.354; W071-19.231
The ferry docks at the Point St. Landing in Providence (on the west side of the river, south-side of the Rt 1 bridge).	N41-48.992; W071-24.260
Go west on Rt 1 one block, go right on Eddy St 0.6 miles and left on Post Office St. to the Post Office.	N41-49.453; W071-24.559
#3: <b>BAGGAGE TRAIN Newport to Providence by land:</b> Start at the Colony House (Old State House) (Bull St. and Broadway)	N41-29.501; W071-18.678
	<== look for these signs in Newport and along the W3R in Rhode Island from Newport to the RI / CT state line,
Take Broadway north 1.2 miles until it merges with Rt 114. Follow this 12 miles over the Bristol Bridge. Continue on Rt 114 through Warren and Barrington to East Providence, where after about 12 miles it ends at Rt 6.	N41-48.652; W071-21.215
Take a left onto Rt 6 and follow it 1.3 miles and merge with I-195 west to go over the bridge. Shortly thereafter take the exit to Rt 44 north and after 0.4 miles go left on College St. After two blocks this becomes Westminster St. and passes the Post Office.	N41-49.453; W071-24.559
#4: <b>WEST: All go from Providence to CT:</b> Start at the Post Office Custom House (near Kennedy Plaza) in Providence.	N41-49.453; W071-24.559
Take Westminster St SW 0.4 miles, turn right onto Empire St, after three blocks turn left onto Broadway and follow this 1.4 miles where it ends at Westminster St.	N41-48.988; W071-26.506
Continue two blocks and bear left on Rt 14. Follow Rt 14 (Plainfield St); after 3.8 miles it passes under I-295. After 4.3 miles more the present-day road curves right, but the old road went straight and downhill beneath the present reservoir.	N41-47.024; W071-35.415

Continue on Rt 14 across the causeway and around the end of the reservoir for 4.0 miles, where it turns left. After 0.7 miles turn left on Rt 12 and go 2.3 miles to Old Plainfield Pike (just before the Pottersville Fire Station). Turn right on this road, which is the continuation of the old road after it comes out of the reservoir. This road passes several homes that were here in 1781, including (at 1.7 miles) one of several taverns owned by Mr. Waterman. This one is where Rochambeau spent the night during his several trips to meet with Washington in CT.	N41-45.290; W071-39.703
Continuing on 2.6 miles Old Plainfield Pike crosses Route 102 and becomes Route 14. After 5.7 miles you cross into CT and the road splits. Take the left branch, which is Rt 14A.	N41-41.897; W071-47.310
To follow the route north re-trace the same route in reverse to Providence, then re-trace the route of the reinforcements in reverse.	

### Other Revolutionary-Era Sites

-- Fort Adams State Park near Newport has the CONTINENTAL SLOOP PROVIDENCE, a reproduction of the 10-gun, 110-foot-tall topsail sloop. This was the first ship commissioned by the Continental Navy and the first command of John Paul Jones.

-- The Revolutionary War headquarters of French Admiral de Ternay (until his death in Newport) was HUNTER HOUSE. This is located near the Goat Island Causeway in Newport. It was built in 1748 and has famous Townsend-Goddard furniture, silver and portraits of the period.

-- The ARTILLERY COMPANY OF NEWPORT (part of the Rhode Island Militia) was chartered in 1741 and is the nation's oldest military organization in continuous service under its original charter. Their MILITARY MUSEUM contains a fine collection of historic weaponry.

-- The Newport Stamp Act Riot of 1765 occurred in Washington Square, near the WANTON-LYMAN-HAZARD HOUSE. This home, built in 1675, is the oldest restored house in Newport and has housed colonial governors, Tories, and patriots.

-- The WHITE HORSE TAVERN in Newport was built in 1673. It is the oldest operating tavern in America.

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### Food and Lodging near the W3R

For restaurants and tourism attraction near Newport see <[www.eatinri.com/rihouse/newport.htm](http://www.eatinri.com/rihouse/newport.htm)>