



## THE LAST NAVAL BATTLE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The last naval battle of the American Revolutionary War took place off the coast of Cape Canaveral on March 10, 1783. The fight began when three British ships sighted two Continental Navy ships, the *Alliance* commanded by Captain John Barry and the *Duc De Lauzun* commanded by Captain John Green sailing northward along the coast of Florida. The *Alliance*, a 36-gun frigate, and the *Duc De Lauzun*, a 20-gun ship, were loaded with 72,000 Spanish silver dollars they were bringing from Havana, Cuba to Philadelphia to support the Continental Army. One of the British ships, the HMS *Sybil*, a 28-gun frigate, commanded by Captain James Vashon, chased the *Alliance* and *Duc De Lauzun* to the south. The HMS *Sybil* fired first, exchanging shots with the slower *Duc De Lauzun*. Then in a daring strategy Captain John Barry aboard the *Alliance* reversed his course, and while under fire, waited until the HMS *Sybil* was close. When the British ship was alongside he returned fire to the broadside with greater number of cannon. The battle lasted less than an hour, when the HMS *Sybil*, outgunned and badly damaged, broke off from the battle and fled. The *Alliance* and *Duc De Lauzun* then continued on their mission at dawn on March 11, 1783.

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