

## **PENOBSCOT EXPEDITION**

### **Show & Tell**

**Christmas Booklet**

**“Bringing Home the American Revolution” 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**Essay**

**My ancestors in Revolution**

**Eleanor’s ancestors in Revolution**

### **Penobscot Expedition**

**Mid-Summer 1779**

**Purpose: to protect the coast from British Raids on shipping.**

**British were building a fort -Fort George- in Castine, ME, Penobscot Bay**

**A refuge for Tories and British privateers**

**Maine in 1779 was part of Massachusetts**

**I had 4 ancestors in this battle**

**3 in militia units**

**1 a ship captain**

### **Militias – what were they?**

**Every town & city had a militia organization**

**Supported by local taxes**

**Every able bodied man in town was a member**

**(they had to know how to fire a musket, & follow orders)**

**(better at first than the second)**

**One of my ancestors in the Penobscot Expedition was a lieutenant in the Warren, ME, militia – Lieutenant Alexander Kalloch.**

**He and his buddies every now and then spent an evening terrorizing their Tory neighbors. They would knock on the front door and the Tory family would exit the back door and spend the evening in the woods. But one Tory had a new idea. He opened the front door and handed Alex & his friends each a mug of rum. After a few rounds of that, they all forgot why they were there.**

**Most of the MA soldiers in the Penobscot Expedition were militia, about a thousand of them from towns along the coast.**

**The Expedition had over 30 ships, half of them troop carriers and the rest carrying supplies and equipped with one or several cannons. There were also three navy ships with whole rows of cannons.**

[slide 1]

My ancestor, Capt. Joseph Ingraham, had command of the smallest ship, called the Lincoln Galley. It had two large triangular Lateen sails and 4 long oars. It was fast and if the wind was weak you could still move along with the oars. So the Lincoln Galley was the chief "e mail" communication between Boston and the Expedition down in Penobscot Bay.

[slide 2]

(describe coast)

( Do you know why Mainers today call Maine "down" and Boston "up"?)

Because Maine is down-wind from Boston.

The prevailing wind is from the SW to the NE )

Dudley Saltonstall was commander of the Expedition.

Early in his career he was captain of a new naval frigate.

The first day he ran it aground!

But he had friends in high places.

2<sup>nd</sup> in command, of land troops, was Gen. Solomon Lovell

The battle lasted about 3 weeks so the Lincoln Galley likely had time for up to 3 trips to Boston & back.

Most of the time the Expedition just sat there. Lots of talk, very little action.

So the Lincoln Galley would sail to Boston.

(Gov.) "Has he attacked?"

(Ingraham) Well, the wind is wrong, it is too foggy" etc.

(Gov.) "Tell him to attack!"

And the Lincoln Galley would sail back.

Finally after a week or so, General Lovell landed the troops and they scaled the heights! (The fort pointed its cannons towards low land in the north. The 5 British ships were to the east. The heights were to the SW. They were so steep, soldiers had to pull themselves up bush and tree limb at a time, and stopping to fire their muskets at the British soldiers at the top firing at them! My 3 ancestors who scaled the heights all survived and were proud afterwards, that at least THEY had succeeded.

**Lovell probably could have captured the fort too if they had run after the retreating British. Instead Lovell had them dig in right at the top level area facing the fort.**

**He wanted Saltonstall to attack the British ships to the east first, to cover his flank. But Saltonstall never did. Too foggy perhaps!**

**And they weren't happy in Boston.**

**Of course the Penobscot Expedition was not secret. Word finally reached New York and the British Fleet there. And they sailed North!!**

**When the sails came over the horizon, there was Saltonstall and the American fleet in danger of being trapped and sunk. Saltonstall told his captains, flee further up the Bay. Beach or burn your ships. Don't let the British have them. They did not stay and fight.**

**I suspect Joseph Ingraham hid his little Lincoln Galley in some secret cove along the coast as he took a ship-full of college professors on a trip several years later to see an eclipse. (Though by the inventory of "spirits" in the cargo I'm not sure how much of the moon they actually saw.)**

**After he hid the Galley, Capt. Joseph and his future father-in-law, Jacob Keen walked home to Rockland together. As Joseph was a young bachelor and Jacob Keen had a house with a wife and 14 children, he invited Joseph home to dinner. He sat opposite the oldest of 14, very pretty Bradbury. Their eyes met, and a year later they were married. Our family story continued from there.**