

# TIMES OF WAR

## BATTLE ON THE RIVER

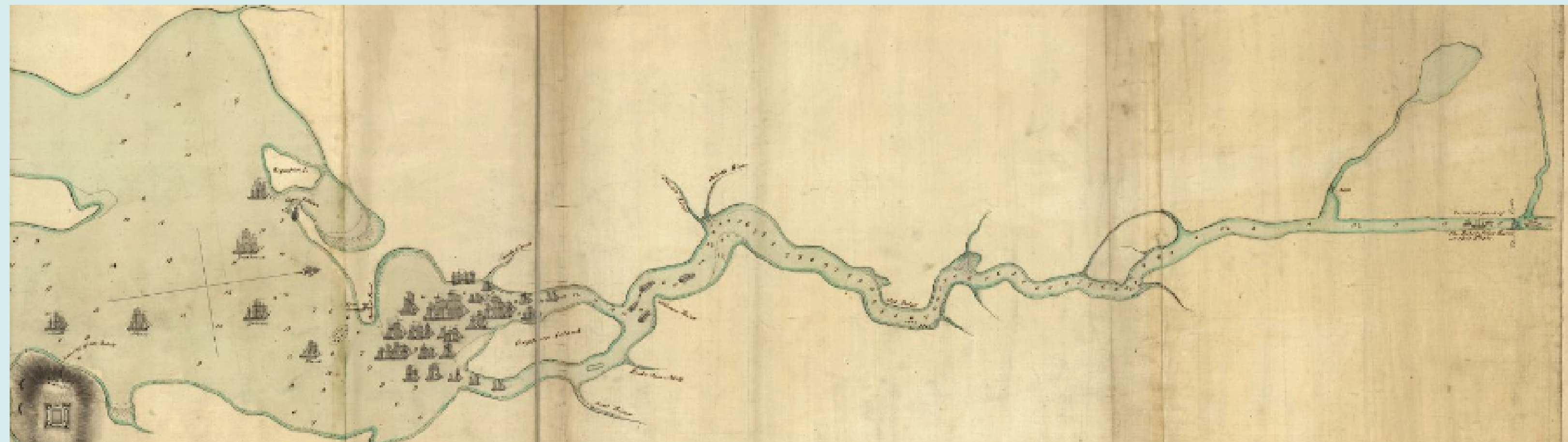


In 1779, the early settlers of Bucksport witnessed a devastating military defeat for the Americans during the Revolutionary War. A fleet of 44 warships and support vessels from the Continental Navy Fleet set out on a mission that was to become known as the Penobscot Expedition. The objective of the mission was to stop the British Army from strengthening their military presence at Fort George, an earthen fort the British had constructed at what is now known as Castine. Unfortunately, through a series of fateful events and decisions by the Expedition leaders, a ground assault to capture the British fort was unsuccessful, and the Americans were over-whelmed in an attack by British ships that extended all the way up the Penobscot River to the present city of Bangor.



At left is an artist's depiction of the storming and securing of high grounds near Fort George during the Penobscot Expedition. Bucksport native Captain Ebenezer Buck led the charge along with General Peleg Wadsworth and 400 American soldiers.

Below is a 1779 map drawn in the aftermath of the military operation on the Penobscot, documenting British and "Rebel" activity.



## CANNONS AT THE READY

In 1814, the British returned to the Penobscot River in the War of 1812, in pursuit of the *U.S.S. Adams*, a Continental Navy Ship beached for repairs at Hampden. That encounter generated a great concern that towns along the Penobscot were vulnerable to more attacks by enemy naval forces.

As a result, Fort Knox, the massive granite structure seen directly across from the river here, was constructed between 1844 and the 1860s. The fort was manned during the Civil War for defensive purposes and served as a training site for 600 Connecticut troops for a brief time during the Spanish-American War in 1898.

Today, Fort Knox, a State Historic Site and National Historic Landmark, attracts thousands of visitors each year and serves as one of the best preserved seacoast fortifications in the country. The Fort also serves as the gateway to the Penobscot Narrows Bridge Observatory located 440 feet above the river and offering a magnificent view.



A 10 inch Rodman cannon keeps a silent vigil as it guards the waterfront at Fort Knox.

## HISTORY LIVES ON

The Fort Knox State Historic Site and the Friends of Fort Knox organization host many special events each year.

Among those events are Civil War encampments, reenactments and cannon firings. Re-enactors depict camp life, discuss history, drill, skirmish, and occasionally have large mock battles. Visitors to these events are able to peer back into history to get a sense of what transpired during one of the bloodiest periods of American History.

The photo to the right shows smoke billowing from a cannon firing during a reenactment at Fort Knox. Other popular events include Fright at the Fort and Ghosts of Fort Knox Tours, both activities taking advantage of the dark and spooky passageways that lead deep into the fort's interior.

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