

# The German Ancestry of Mary Ulmer of Waldoborough and Lincolnville

---

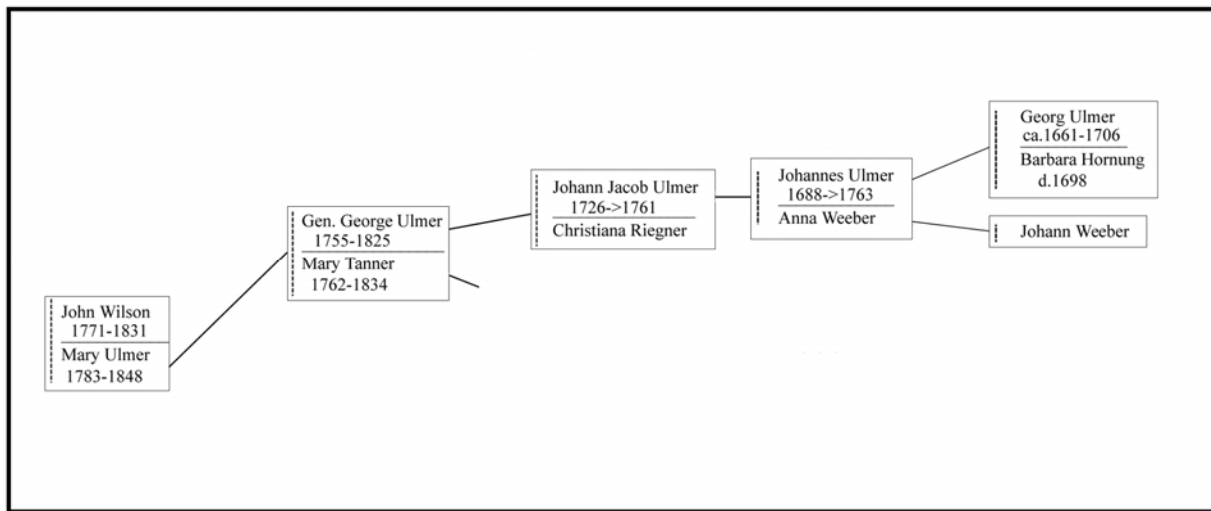
**John Ulmer** (ca. 1680-after 1755)

The story of the Ulmer Family in America can be traced to John (Johannes) Ulmer, a schoolmaster from Württemberg. The son of Georg Ulmer, a "turner" (lathe artist) from Altstadt and Alheim near Ulm, he served as a quartermaster sargeant in 1710, and later as a drummer, in Capt. Göck's Company of the Baden-Durlach Infantry. By 1733 he had taken a position as Schoolmaster in Enzberg.

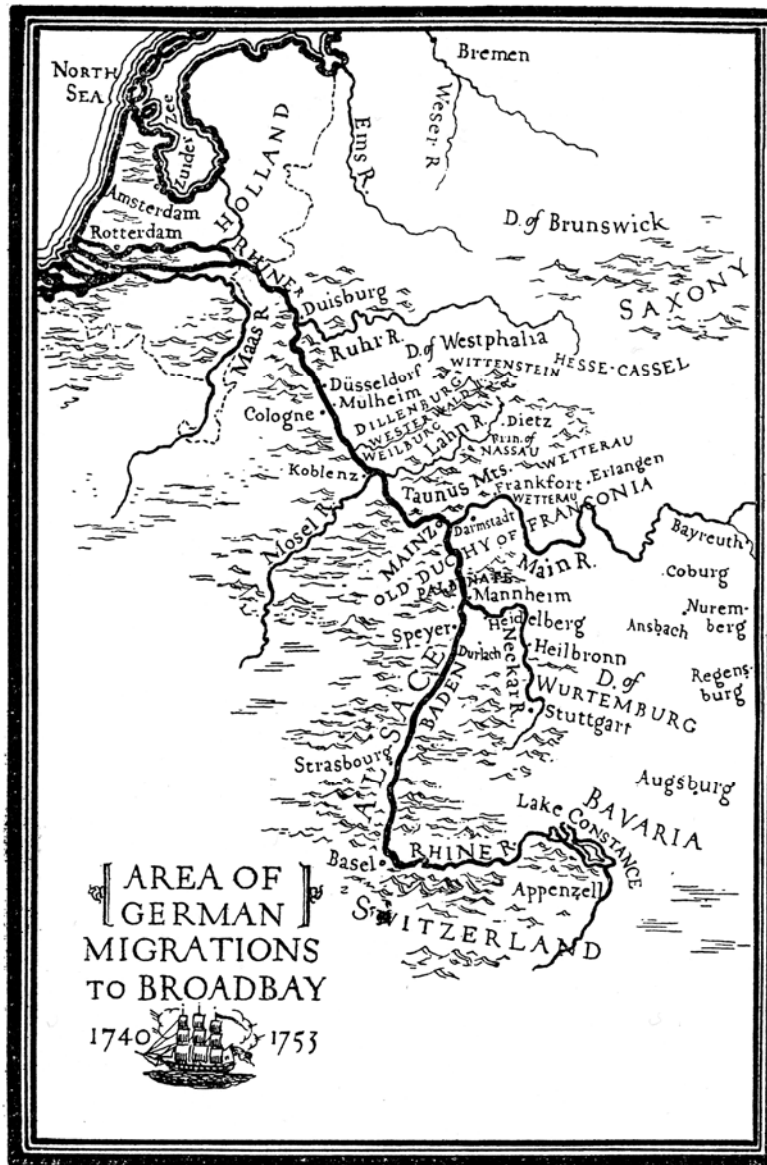
Johannes Ulmer emigrated to America in 1742 with his wife, Anna Margaretha Weeber, his 16-year-old son, John Jacob Ulmer, his six-year-old son, John (Johannes) Ulmer, and his four daughters, Catharina Barbara (29), Sedonia Elisabeth (19), Maria Magdalena (4) and Johanna Jacobina(2). The circumstances of their move provide an interesting glimpse into the early

settlement of New England, particularly since the Ulmers were German and not English. The motivating forces were religious and economic difficulties in Germany, on the one hand, and the energetic activities of an American promoter named Samuel Waldo on the other.

*Mary Wilson  
 Daughter of George and  
 Mary Ulmer of  
 Lincolnton*



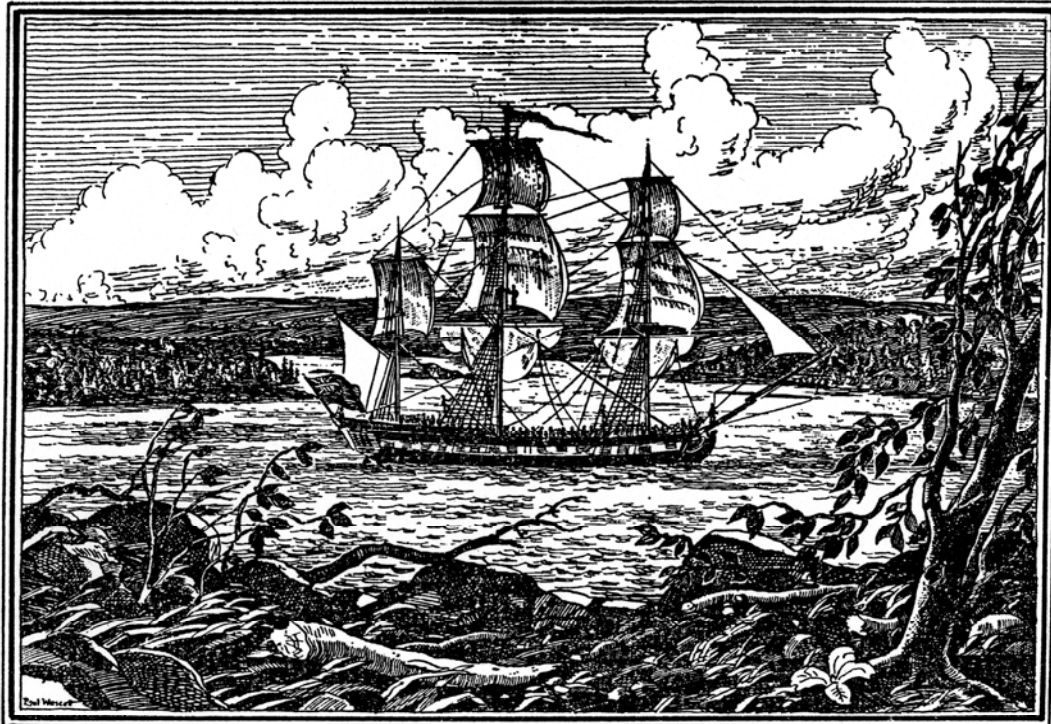
**German ancestors of Mary Ulmer**



Samuel Waldo (1695-1759) was a third-generation Boston merchant, aristocrat, capitalist and politician. He apparently began as a wine merchant, selling also butter, other food products and the occasional black slave, but finally settled into trading exclusively in rum, fish and lumber. During the last 30 years of his life, land speculation on a large scale became his chief interest, especially in his efforts to develop the Maine seacoast between the Penobscot and Medomak Rivers.

The most permanent settlement in the area was made primarily by German Protestants from the Rhine Valley, seeking economic betterment and religious freedom. Germany at the time was still in shambles from the disastrous Thirty Years War and its aftermath, making the

New World wilderness seem quite inviting by comparison. The British government took the view that Englishmen were more needed in their own homeland, and that Germans and other unfortunate folk could just as well help populate the colonies, provided that they were Protestant and unfriendly to France and Spain. The Queen of England even circulated pamphlets in Germany propagandizing on the advantages of the New World. Agents were sent out to sign up emigrants by any means possible (they became known as *Seelenverkäufer*, or "soul sellers").

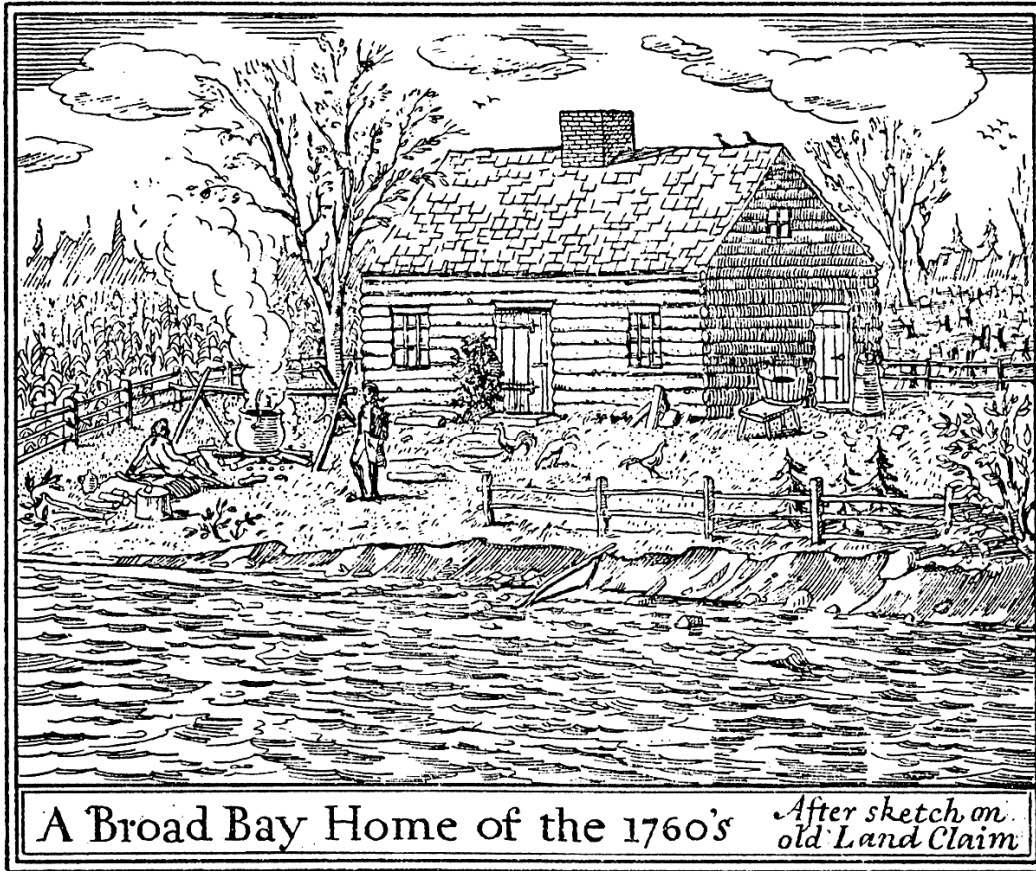


Arrival of the ship *Lydia*, under Capt. James Abercrombie, at Broad Bay (later Waldoboro), carrying the first colonists in September 1742. Passengers included:

**Johannes Ulmer** (53) from Enzberg, Germany  
*wife* Anna Margaretha Weeber (42)  
*dau.* Catharina Barbara Ulmer (29)  
*dau.* Sedonia Elisabeth Ulmer (19)  
*son* Johann Jacob Ulmer (16)  
*son* Johannes Ulmer (6)  
*dau.* Maria Magdalena Ulmer (4)  
*dau.* Johanna Jacobina Ulmer (2)

The trip across the Atlantic was brutal, even in relation to the hardships of home, and mortality rates among the Germans often exceeded a third or more of the passengers. One ship which docked in Philadelphia in 1738 had left Europe carrying 400 passengers, only 105 of

whom remained alive. (In contrast, all 102 Pilgrims on the *Mayflower* had survived the trip.) Colonel Waldo circulated his own pamphlets in Germany, and it is even thought that he diverted ships bound for Philadelphia through bribery, so as to have their passengers disembarked near his own properties in Maine.



The first group of German settlers arrived in the Broad Bay (later Waldborough) area in 1742, as a result of Waldo blandishments in Germany. More than 200 Palatinate and Württemberg residents, mostly middle-class Lutherans, had signed on to settle on Waldo's grant. The group included a theologian, a physician, an engineer/surveyor, and also a schoolmaster named John Ulmer, our direct ancestor. The group assembled initially in Mannheim in the Rhenish Palatinate, then proceeded in large boats down the Rhine to Rotterdam, but had to wait for eight weeks in Mühlheim while Waldo's agents arranged for a ship. During this time 40 or 50 colonists turned back for home or chose other routes to America. Finally the main group boarded the *Lydia*, a square-rigged three-master, under command of Captain James Abercrombie, and departed from Deal, England on August 18, 1742. Little is known of the specific details of the Atlantic passage, but it required 38 days, arriving in Marblehead, Massachusetts on September 24. The ship was not overcrowded, so most passengers probably arrived in good health.

In Marblehead the passengers were treated to a sort of "state reception" by Governor Shirley, members of the General Court, and Col. Waldo, who encouraged them to write happy letters to their relatives at home urging them to come over in the following season. After being wined, dined and entertained, and after dispatching their letters back home, the colonists reboarded the *Lydia* and were taken to Broad Bay where a somewhat different reception awaited them. There was no town, no church, and no buildings ready for accommodation. There was only wilderness, with the occasional small cabin by the riverside. The colonists and their freight were unloaded at Trowbridge's Point, and they were left to fend for themselves.

Fortunately Waldo had provisioned them well during the stopover at Marblehead, so they were ready to dig in for the winter at Broad Bay. The colonists had brought little of their own supplies, being allowed only a single wooden chest each; it contained clothes, a little bedding, family records from the Old Country, a Bible, a Prayer or Hymn Book, a copy of Arndt's *Das Wahre Christentum* ("The Far Reaches of Christendom"), the Augsburg Confession of Faith, and Luther's Catechism (if they were Lutherans) or the Heidelberg Catechism (if they were Reformed Church). Luckily the colonists were also blessed with a full eight weeks of unseasonably mild weather in which to construct log cabins before winter set in. Waldo deposited with them additional food supplies before ice closed the river for the winter. In the spring of 1743, after a snowy winter, they proceeded anew, developing a successful and happy settlement.

John Ulmer, as mentioned above, arrived in Maine in 1742 aboard the *Lydia* and became a prominent citizen in the newly founded community of Waldoborough. He was accompanied by his 16-year-old son, John Jacob Ulmer, and his 6-year-old son, John Ulmer. As mentioned, his second wife, Anna Margaretha Weeber, "a woman of Swabian descent," accompanied him, along with four of his daughters.

Ulmer had brought with him letters of commendation from the Mayor, Minister, Judge and State Procurator of his home town, all of whom thought highly of him. Only the last of these documents seems to have survived; a translation is quoted in Stahl (1956):

I, John William Fischer, State Procurator and Master of the Cellar, Entzberg community, Cloister Maulbronn in the Dutchy of Würtemberg, attest, so everybody may see, or wherever this is read; that the bearer of this, John Ulmer, schoolmaster here by the help of God, resolved with his kin to migrate to New England and quit Würtemberg. If, as his superior, besides the testimonials given by the Minister, Mayor and Judge, by special affection, I wish to attest to his possession of excellent conduct and merit, apart; that during ten years he fulfilled his offices and services so diligently, uncomplainingly, and with a zealous spirit, that his true teaching, kept honorable, and his discipline renowned throughout the whole world; that the youths of the school at all times flourished and grew in the Divine word and grace, sufficiently brought forth, and the seed sown in sour wheat and with great patience and complaisance not only got to be blossoms, but splendid fruit also and on account of the twigs [fine conception of his teaching]

he planted, the scholars as well as the parents, besides the church and school visitations, at his leaving laid before him a handsome gratitude as well as the assurance that in a lifetime he should not be forgotten. Not less has he made himself useful in the ascis [excise] and tax service, and other occupations of penmanship. To me he was honest, and what I ordered him to do and trusted him with, he did with facility and integrity; he was honest to the heller [penny], and his uprightness will be an everlasting glory to him, and it is painful to lose this honesty, fine without exception, out of the Commune entrusted to me. Since there is no means to prevent him from his intention, I wish from the bottom of my heart that this undertaking may be to a prosperous and joyful end and future fortune, for the good works he left us, his faithfulness, his unadulterated doctrine, his good and God fearing laudable life and fine morals and conduct, cannot bring after them anything bad, but the good God will bring him and his, where he shall find bread again. I recommend, therefore, the aforesaid John Ulmer my past true school servant, to everybody, and beg that whoever may help him, may do so considering his good conduct, and this fine testimony, also to show him good will and assist him kindly in his welfare, accompanied with the assurance that whatever is entrusted to him will bear good fruit. As a true statement, I have not only attested this with my own hand, but have put my seal of office thereon. So done the 4th of May 1742, State of Procurator and Master of the Cellar.

[signed] FISCHER

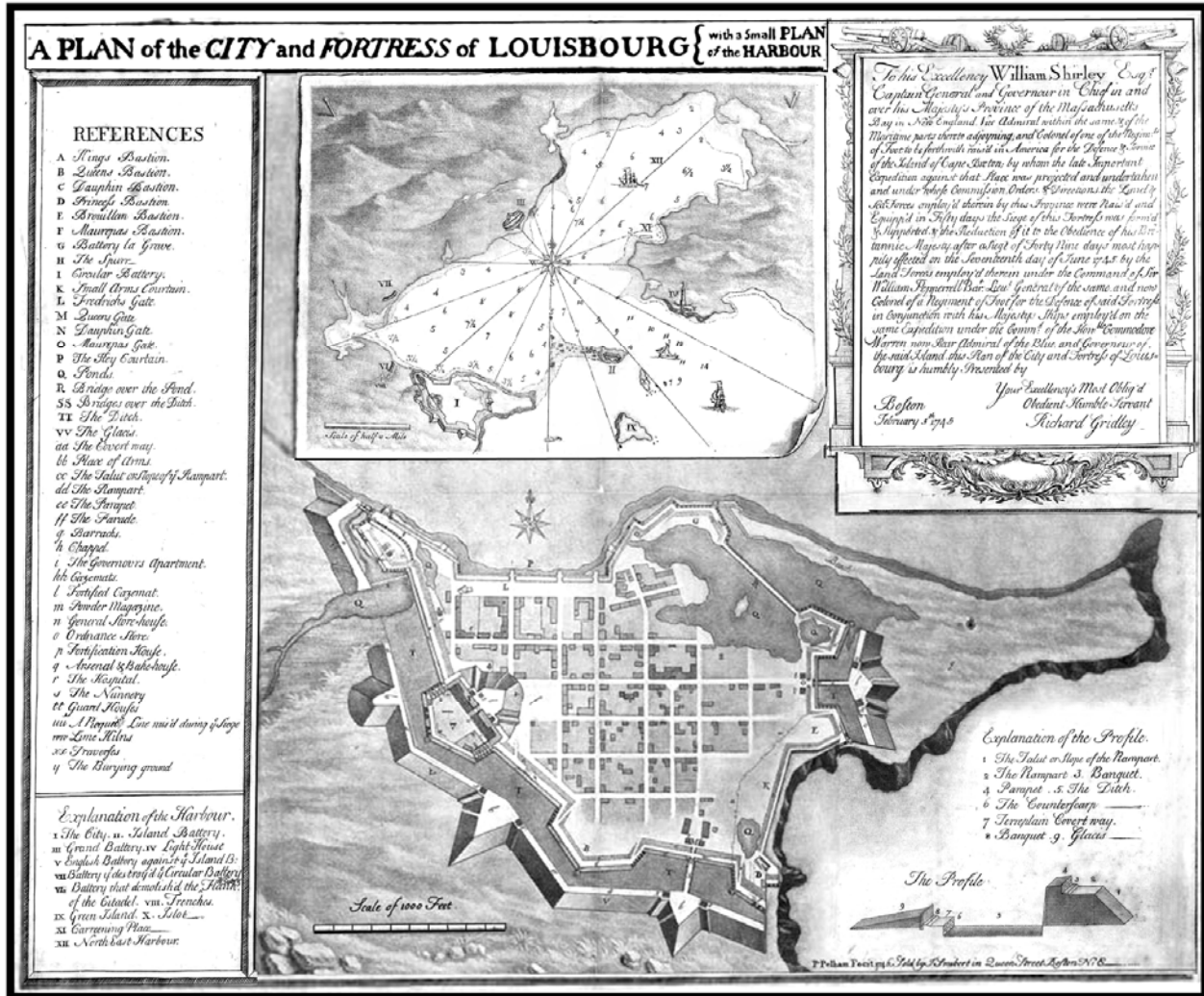
Fischer mentions "occupations of penmanship," and surviving examples of Ulmer's writing do show a fine hand, which he taught to his children and grandchildren in Maine. Stahl writes:

The little schooling there was in these years set the pattern of education at Broad Bay for many years to come. It was casual in character and few children received its benefits, since children old enough to go to school were old enough to work, and this the most of them did from daybreak to nightfall the four seasons through. John Ulmer, however, did unquestionably look after the education of his own children and grandchildren. There was no evidence of illiteracy in this family, for in such leisure as he had he gathered them around him in his own cabin with a few other children from the neighborhood, and here there was reading, spelling, simple arithmetic, and above all penmanship. This art is mentioned in the Procurator's testimonial and it was one in which Ulmer took especial pride. In consequence it survived as a tradition in the Ulmer family down into the third generation, the signatures and letters of the grandchildren being models of penmanship of exquisite beauty.

The Germans who arrived on the *Lydia* laid the foundations for the town of Broad Bay, later called Waldoboro. John Ulmer was a leading man in civil, military and ecclesiastical affairs of the young settlement. He became the town's first schoolmaster, and also its preacher in 1743. Stahl describes him as "a brave, resourceful, competent, and highly intelligent man with a

saving sense of humor." As it happens, he was also the town's first shipbuilder, having built in 1771 a brig of 150 tons which was called the *Yankee Hero*.

In 1744 France declared war on England and her American colonies in the third phase of the French and Indian War, known to historians as King George's War. Within a few days men from Broad Bay were organizing for defense against attacks from the north by France's Indian allies. John Ulmer prepared a list of the men in the colony who were old enough to fight. For several years the colonies had to contend with the guerilla warfare waged so skillfully by tribes such as the Wewenocs, Arasagunticocks, Androscoggins, Kennebecs, Penobscots and Norridgewocks. Governor Shirley in Boston placed a bounty on Indians as follows: £100 for the scalp of a male Indian 12 years old or older, £50 for the scalp of a male Indian child under 12 or a female of any age, and £5 for a captive. (Scalping is a practice which originated with the New England colonists and was subsequently picked up by the Indians.)



Fortress of Louisbourg, 1745



In 1745 an expedition made up entirely of colonial troops left Maine with their families and headed north to mount an assault on the great French fortress of Louisburg at Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. This fort was the major French stronghold in the New World, admirably situated for intercepting English vessels headed for her colonies on the new England coast, and for serving as a base of operations for overland attacks. It also served to protect French fisheries on the Atlantic Coast, and was a standing threat to New England fishermen attempting to work the rich northern waters.

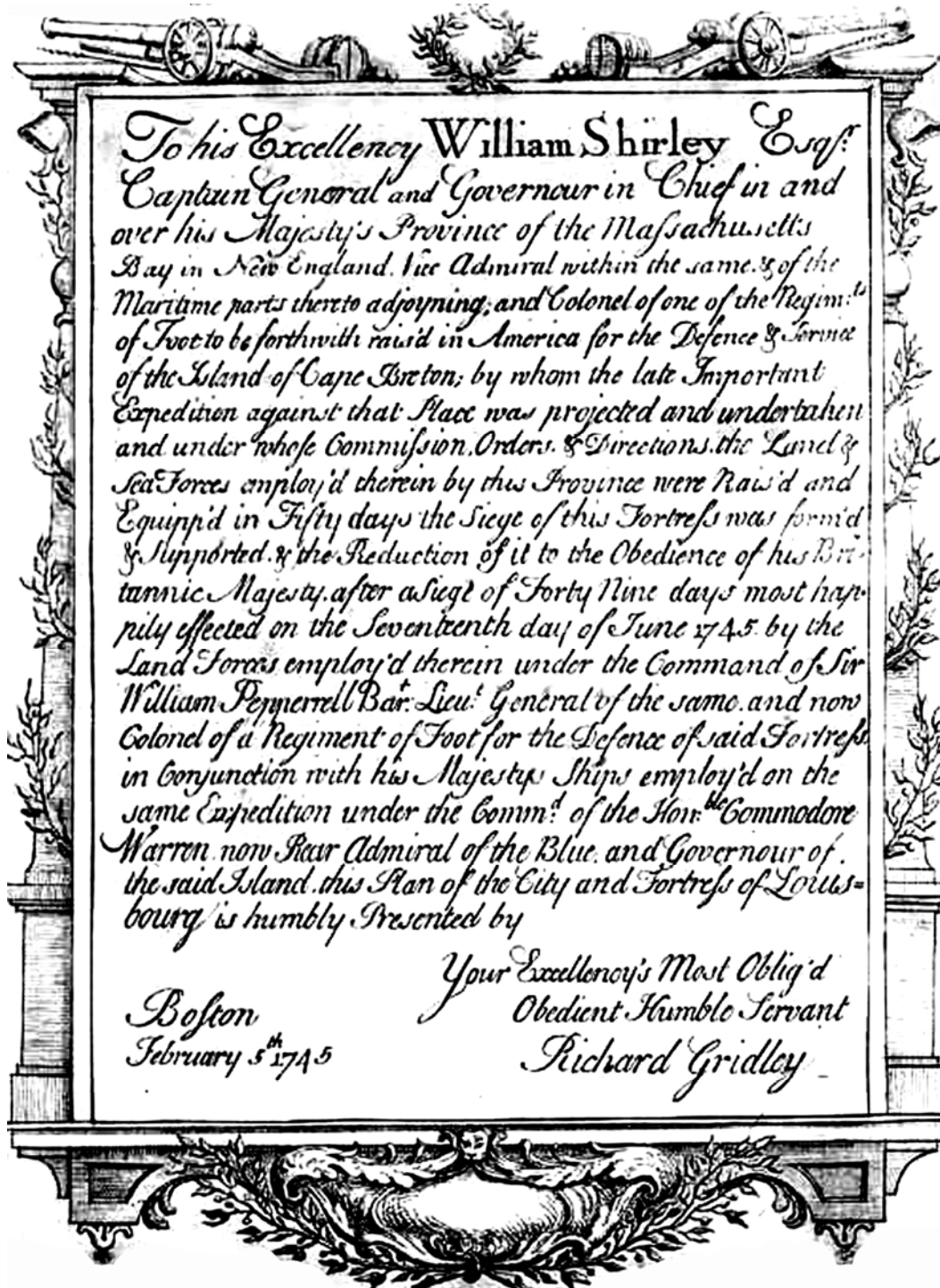
France had designed Louisburg to be her strongest fortress in America; and it was, indeed, an elaborate feat of French engineering. Construction work had begun in 1720 and was completed in 1733, at a total cost of \$60,000,000 (in 1996 dollars). Even the King of France began to wonder whether its streets were "paved with gold." The wall around the complex measured two miles long on the landward side, surrounded by a moat 80 feet wide. Within the thick walls were embrasures for 148 cannons, and another 30 cannons were mounted in fortifications at the mouth of the harbor. In 1745 the garrison was manned by 2,000 regulars, while the town built *within* the walls of the fort contained another 4,000 people. This was the structure that the colonials laid siege to.

Colonel Waldo led a regiment of 1,290 men from Maine (including John Ulmer), which joined up with other colonial forces under the command of Col. William Pepperell to make a total assault force of about 3,600. On April 30, 1745, General Waldo's regiment established the first beachhead on Cape Breton Island about 4 miles from the fortress, and the battle began. On the night of May 2, John Ulmer led the Broad Bayers in a successful attack on an arsenal northeast of the harbor, taking control of great stores of military and naval supplies. Skirmishes and battles raged on for weeks; Finally, on June 15, Fort Commander Duchambon asked for an armistice, and on the 17th the colonials entered Louisburg through the southwest gate. The impossible had been accomplished.

The British gave Louisburg back to the French in 1749 as part of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chappell, over the strenuous objections of the Colonials, who had to capture it once again by siege in 1758. This time the massive fortifications were blown up, in 1760, and the imported cut stone which had been used in the original construction of the fortress, with its stone ramparts nearly 40 feet high, was recycled for use in buildings around the province, many of them still standing today.

Unfortunately John Ulmer and the Broad Bayers, most of the undefended settlement back home at Broad Bay was destroyed by Indian raids, and it was not until 1748 that most of the families had returned and rebuilt their town. On October 20, 1752, a meeting was held with representatives of the local Indian tribes, and a final peace agreement was worked out. Six hogsheads of bread and six barrels of pork were distributed among the Indians to put them in a receptive mood, and then the Commissioners did their best to satisfy the Indians on all points of concern to them. It was agreed that the Europeans would all abide by "Drummer's Treaty," which had specified that the English could inhabit land as far inland as the seawater flowed at

high tide, and the Indian would have the rest. Presents were distributed, belts of wampum delivered, and an ox was given to the Indians for a feast. The ratification of the agreement was witnessed by 32 people including John Ulmer.



John Ulmer was the leader of the German colony at Broad Bay, and served as Lutheran lay minister and Sunday School teacher for at least 20 years. For many years before the construction of the first church in 1772, worship services were devout but decidedly informal, taking place in houses, fields and garrisons. It was recorded by one congegant that, while preaching before a small group in his cabin one Sunday morning, John Ulmer happened to look out his window and saw that hogs had gotten into his garden. The sermon was suspended for a moment while he shouted to his son [translated]: "Thunder and lightning, Jacob! There are those damned hogs in the vegetable patch! A thousand devils! Get going, drive them out and fix that fence!"

Ulmer is said to have had a good sense of humor. According to one storty, he visited the town of Pemaquid during the late days of the war, arriving at a river crossing just opposite the town at nightfall. From the darkness he hailed some people on the opposite shore to come across in a boat and ferry him to the town side. They called out asking him who he was, and Ulmer gave his name followed by such a long string of German titles that they assumed there must be a whole group of dignitaries on the bank, and were disappointed to get there and find only one person claiming all those titles and honors!

John Ulmer settled originally on Lot no. 4, and when his son (John Jr.) came of age was allotted Lot no. 5, the farm directly adjacent to the south. His son Jacob received Lot no. 15. These early lots are still plainly marked by the stone fences built as the land was cleared for farming.

### **Johann Jacob "John Jr." Ulmer (1726-after1761)**

John Ulmer Jr., eldest son of John Ulmer, married Christiana Riegner in Broad Bay [later called Waldoboro] around 1748, and a son, Philip, was born to him in Waldoboro in 1751. Philip became a Captain in the Continental Army from 1775 until the end of the war. He later served as the first town clerk of Lincolnville. His second son, George, was born in Broad Bay in 1755. Philip and George were his only children,

In 1790, John Ulmer Jr. followed in his son George's footsteps and moved to Shore Village, later to be known as Rockland. He settled on a tract of land between what is now Old County Road and the bay shore. There he entered the shipbuilding and lime-burning businesses with his son George sometime before 1800, employing many of the skilled German carpenters in the community. Their company launched the first ships from Rockland harbor, carrying lumber and kegs of lime to ports in Massachusetts and farther south. As the lime business increased, larger and more numerous ships were constructed. By 1810 other local residents had also taken up shipbuilding

**George Ulmer (1755-1825)**

George Ulmer, son of John Ulmer Jr., was born in Broad Bay [Waldoboro] in 1755. The following is an excerpt from his obituary, which appeared in the *Hancock Gazette and Penobscot Patriot* newspaper, January 11, 1826 (renamed the *Republic Journal* in 1829 and still being published in Belfast, Maine, as of 1953):

General Ulmer, whose death we recently announced, was born in the town of Waldoborough, Maine on the 25th of February 1755 of German parents. His father [actually his great-great grandfather or before] was a native of Ulm and his mother of some place in Suabia and emigrated to this country before the taking of Louisburg, at the capture of which his father and two uncles were present. During the early life of General Ulmer there were no schools in or near Waldoboro and the English language was not yet spoken. [But, as mentioned, there was significant home schooling in the Ulmer family.

George Ulmer's military career may have been inspired by an early dislike of the British stemming from an incident in 1775. From his obituary (*Hancock Gazette*, 1826):

In his 20th year, while on a fishing voyage, the vessel in which he sailed was captured by the frigate *Lively*, and the vessel and crew carried into Boston, then in possession of the British. He made his escape from the frigate into the town and over the Charles River to the American lines, at the imminent hazard of his life, and then enlisted into the American army and continued until the close of the war--being with Montgomery at Quebec, at Ticonderoga, at the capture of Burgoyne, at the defeat upon Rhode Island, and at the battles of Brandywine and Monmouth. At the time of his enlistment he was not able to read or write; but obtained considerable proficiency in learning in his leisure hours during the war. He was married in Rhode Island while a private. After the close of the Revolutionary struggle, he removed to Ducktrap in this county and at one time by lumbering and merchandise obtained a handsome property and obtained much distinction and popularity.

A chronology of George Ulmer's Revolutionary War service, based on information from his obituary and from *Massachusetts Soldiers and Sailors*, is as follows:

The original enlistment records for George Ulmer no longer appear to exist, perhaps having been destroyed during the war. But, according to the above obituary, he enlisted near Boston immediately upon his escape from the British when he was still just 19 years old ("in his 20<sup>th</sup> year"), that is, between 25 February 1754 and 25 February 1755. His first assignment was to a group of 400 Massachusetts volunteers under the command of Benedict Arnold, who led them on a mission westward through the Massachusetts wilderness into New York.

Fort Ticonderoga, about 100 miles north of Albany, New York, is situated strategically between Lake George and Lake Champlain. It overlooks the major fur-trading route through the

Hudson River Valley from the Canadian border. A few days after the battles of Lexington and Concord took place, the American commanders in Cambridge decided that Fort Ticonderoga must be taken, not just for its strategic position, but also because there were many cannons and mortars there which were needed for the defense of Boston. Benedict Arnold volunteered his group of 400 men from Massachusetts (including the young George Ulmer) to march on the fort. Along the way they met and joined forces with Ethan Allen and his 175 Green Mountain Boys from Vermont, as well as Col. James Easton and his 40 men from Castleton, Vermont.

In the early morning hours of May 10, 1775, in the first official action of the Revolutionary War, the Americans under Allen and Arnold entered the sleeping fort and took all 83 British soldiers and two officers captive without firing a shot.

George Ulmer remained with the forces occupying Fort Ticonderoga, while Benedict Arnold and some of the other Massachusetts men arranged to transport the cannon back to Boston. In late August of 1775, Gen. Philip Schuyler led the troops (including Ulmer) from their headquarters at Fort Ticonderoga up Lake Champlain and captured Fort Chambly and St. Johns on October 19. Illness forced him to turn over his command to Gen. Richard Montgomery, who then proceeded to capture Montreal on November 11, 1775.

Two months earlier, George Washington had sent Benedict Arnold and his men to capture Quebec City by way of the Kennebeck and Chaudiere Rivers in Maine, but by the time they finally arrived they were so weakened by the hard march, sickness and desertion that Arnold had to wait for Montgomery before attacking Quebec City. Their combined assault was launched at 4 a.m. on December 31, 1775, in the middle of a snowstorm. Though courageous, the attack failed; Montgomery was killed by a point-blank blast of grape-shot from a hidden British position, and Arnold was severely wounded in the leg. Many of their troops were killed or taken prisoner, and the remaining troops (including George Ulmer), confused and blinded by the snow, were forced to retreat. Arnold and Montgomery's successor, David Wooster, regrouped the scattered troops and continued the siege until spring, when British reinforcements arrived and pushed the Americans back to Lake Champlain.

George Ulmer served out the next couple of years, probably as part of the forces defending Boston. He then re-enlisted in Salem, Massachusetts for a three-year term beginning on 18 January 1777. He was assigned to Capt. Abraham Hunt's company, which was part of Col. John Patterson's regiment of Massachusetts volunteers. The group was mustered in a couple of weeks later in Boston, on February 2. Then, on 17 May 1777, Abraham Hunt's company was attached to Col. Joseph Vose's regiment, later named the First Massachusetts Bay regiment.

I have not been able to determine exactly where and under whom Col. Vose's regiment was then deployed, but they were involved in the complicated Battle of Brandywine on 11 September 1777. To give a feeling for the battle, even though we don't know which part of it involved George Ulmer, a few paragraphs about it are presented below, extracted from *The War Times Journal* (1997-1998).

This battle took place under field commanders George Washington and (for the British) Lt. Gen. Sir William Howe. The British commander had spent the first part of the summer campaign of 1777 in New Jersey, trying to lure Washington into the open for a major engagement that would finally wipe out the main American army while Lieutenant-General John Burgoyne's northern expedition severed New England from the rest of the colonies. Washington's stubborn refusal to risk a major engagement forced the British commander to find another means of forcing battle, and on July 8 he began embarking his 16,500 men on board his brother Admiral Richard Howe's armada at Sandy Hook, New Jersey. General Howe's intention was to sail via the Delaware Bay to the Delaware River, threatening Philadelphia and preventing Washington from reinforcing Major-General Horatio Gates' northern army against Burgoyne. In the process he might force the pitched battle he had sought unsuccessfully in New Jersey.

Howe decided to enter the Chesapeake Bay, landing at the northernmost point possible and approaching Philadelphia overland. The Americans were meanwhile kept guessing about Howe's destination. Unexpected as the landing was, the American main army, numbering roughly 16,000 men, was not in a bad position to contain it. Marching from positions along the Neshaminy Creek in Pennsylvania, the Americans passed through Philadelphia to Darby, Pennsylvania, reaching Wilmington, Delaware just as the British commenced landing. Morale among the Continental troops was high, as John Adams and others who watched them march through Philadelphia attested. Though lacking the smartness of professional soldiers they were, Adams noted, "extremely well armed, pretty well clothed, and tolerably disciplined."

The British moved forward on September 3 in two divisions, one commanded by the Hessian Lieutenant-General Baron Wilhelm Knyphausen and the other by Major-General Earl Charles Cornwallis. The two columns converged at what is now Glasgow, Delaware, whereupon Cornwallis's division took the lead on the road leading north. Here they met an advance guard of Brigadier-General William Maxwell's light infantry, which had been sent forward to observe and if possible harass the British advance. After a brief, running engagement ending at Cooch's Bridge a short distance north, Maxwell's men were driven off and Howe settled down to rest his troops.

Chad's Ford, where the American army now took up positions, was at the point where the Nottingham Road crossed the Brandywine Creek on the route from Kennett Square to Philadelphia. It was the last natural line of defense before the Schuylkill River, which could be forded at so many points that it was practically indefensible. The Brandywine, a shallow (knee to waist-high) but fast-flowing creek, was fordable at a comparatively small number of places that could, so it seemed, be covered fairly easily. At Chad's Ford, really made up of two fords about 450 feet apart, the creek was 150 feet wide and commanded by heights on either side. The surrounding area was characterized by thick forests and irregular but low hills surrounded by prosperous farms, meadows and orchards.

As dawn broke on the morning of September 11th, Sir William Howe was in the process of dividing his army. At six o'clock, Knyphausen marched with 6,800 men along the Nottingham Road directly toward Chad's Ford. His mission was to engage Washington's attention while Howe marched at five o'clock with 8,200 men northeast from Kennett Square up the Great Valley Road, turned east across the Brandywine at Trimble's and Jeffries' fords, and then proceeded south around the American right flank. A dense fog cover initially shielded Howe's march. Knyphausen's Tory vanguard of the Queen's Rangers and Major Patrick Ferguson's Riflemen advanced only three miles before running into Maxwell's outposts near Welch's Tavern.

The Americans took advantage of the numerous defiles and woods along the road, as Sergeant Thomas Sullivan of the British 49th Footsoldiers wrote, to keep up "a running fire, mixed with regular volleys for 5 miles, and they still retreating to their main posts, until they got almost in gun shot of the Ford. "At the hills before Chad's Ford, Maxwell's men unleashed an ambushade from wooded and marshy ground on either side of the road, taking the Tories by surprise and leaving "nearly half of the two corps . . . either killed or wounded," according to a Hessian witness. "All the woods were full of enemy troops," wrote the Hessian Major Carl Leopold Baurmeister, shouting "Hurrah" at the work their musketry had done among the Tories.

Proctor's artillery on the other side of the Brandywine was now firing on the British as well, shredding trees but doing little real damage due to poor siting. Some of Greene's men splashed across the creek to support Maxwell, who began building breastworks on a hill overlooking the road on Knyphausen's right. The Hessian general rallied the Tories and ordered Ferguson's riflemen to take position behind a house on his right. He also dispatched the 28th and 49th Footsoldiers along with two heavy and two light artillery pieces to an elevation behind them. The British cannon promptly began pummeling the American breastwork, which apparently mounted nothing more than a couple of light field pieces.

From that point on the battle became too complicated to recount briefly here, the tide of battle ebbing and flowing, and much hinging on the quality of intelligence received from scouts on both sides. In the end, however, the Americans were forced to retreat.

Lieutenant James McMichael of the 13th Pennsylvania Continental Regiment wrote that "this day for a severe and successive engagement exceeded all I ever saw." The casualties reflected the bitterness with which it was fought. The official British casualty figure was 89 killed and 488 wounded, but was probably slightly higher. The American losses have never been conclusively ascertained, but are estimated at 1,100, including 200 killed, 500 wounded and 400 captured [and George Ulmer, wherever he was, no doubt counted himself lucky to have survived]. The battle had clearly been an American defeat, and was to lead to the loss of Philadelphia on September 26. The Americans, however, were beaten but

not broken; they knew very well that in general they had stood up well to the professional British soldiers. It was not without reason that Washington wrote John Hancock from Chester shortly after midnight: "Notwithstanding the misfortune of the day, I am happy to find the troops in good spirits; and I hope another time we shall compensate for the losses now sustained."

By early October, George Ulmer and the rest of Col. Vose's regiment had been attached to the brigade commanded by Brigadier Gen. John Glover (known as Glover's Brigade), part of Maj. Gen. Benjamin Lincoln's Division. This division was known as the "Right Wing of the Army"; the "Left Wing of the Army" was commanded by Benedict Arnold. These two divisions, plus the cavalry corps, the artillery corps and Daniel Morgan's corps, constituted the army under the command of Major General Horatio Gates on October 7, 1777. And, of course, Gates was under the command of George Washington.

Gen. Burgoyne's British army numbered 6,682 men on Sept. 8, 1777, when it prepared to cross the Hudson River into Saratoga. Gen. Horatio Gates' American Army, known as the Northern Army, reported 8,300 men on Sept. 7. By Oct. 7, the day of the Second Battle of Saratoga, the American Army ranks had swelled to 11,000 as militia units and 150 Oneida and Tuscarora Indians came in as reinforcements. Militia regiments from Massachusetts, New York and New Hampshire joined Gates' army. These include 10 militia regiments from Albany County, eight from Massachusetts and two from New Hampshire.

Glover and his brigade (with George Ulmer) were involved in harassing actions against General Burgoyne's army. Before the Battle of Freeman's Farm, Glover's brigade, consisting of four Massachusetts Continental regiments, received an augmentation of three battalions of New York militia. While the men in all these units were generally fighting for the same cause, and certainly expected to work together, their relations were less than cordial.

Although they were not involved in the major conflicts around Freeman's Farm, Glover's brigade prevented a breakout attempt by the British on October 9, 1777. On October 8, Burgoyne had little choice but to withdraw his beleaguered, hungry, and threadbare army eight miles north to Saratoga (present-day Schuylerville). Arriving at the village in the night of the 9<sup>th</sup>, Burgoyne made the fateful decision to remain and fortify defensive positions, hoping in vain for assistance from other British forces at Fort Ticonderoga and Clinton's from New York. Gates' army, having belatedly pursued Burgoyne's force, arrived at Saratoga later the next day.

Burgoyne's army was soon surrounded and a full-scale siege of the British forces' positions began. After days of bombarding, skirmishing, and shooting, Burgoyne decided to seek favorable terms for surrender. Running out of food and supplies of every kind, and at the same time insisting upon surrendering upon his own terms, Burgoyne dragged the negotiations out over many days. After a series of lengthy councils of war in which he sought his officers' opinions and advice, Burgoyne finally agreed to a "convention" between himself and Gates on October 16. By the time of Burgoyne's surrender, Gates had nearly 20,000 men surrounding the British. The formal ceremony between the generals occurred on October 17. Following the surrender, Glover and his brigade were put in charge of marching 5,700 British and Hessian POWs back to Cambridge.



After escorting Burgoyne's captive army to Cambridge, George Ulmer and the other soldiers of Glover's brigade joined the rest of George Washington's forces at Valley Forge for the long winter. At Valley Forge today there is a large granite monument with a brass plaque dedicated to Glover's Brigade, which included Ulmer's First Massachusetts Infantry Regiment under Col. Vose, along with three other regiments. On 2 March 1778, while still encamped at Valley Forge, George Ulmer was promoted to the rank of Sergeant by Col. Vose, and his pay was increased to \$8/month.

Finally, on June 18, 1778, they broke camp at Valley Forge and marched toward Monmouth, New Jersey to engage the British forces under Gen. Sir Henry Clinton. It was to be one of the largest battles of the American Revolution. On June 24, Washington called a council of war to establish a strategy of battle against Clinton; the council agreed to avoid a major confrontation with General Clinton, and instead to send a small number of Patriot troops to harass the enemy's right and left flanks. Then, when Washington arrived at nearby Englishtown on the morning of June 28, he ordered his generals to attack the British. General Charles Lee, who had been opposed to an all-out engagement with the British, was reluctant to attack, but he and his advance force were drawn into battle by British forces. In the confusion, Lee ordered his troops to retreat. Angered, General Washington, directed Lee and "Mad" Anthony Wayne to fight a delaying action, while he took command of the Continental troops and organized them in a defensive position. For the rest of the day, the two armies clashed in the oppressive heat, finally withdrawing after 5 o' clock from exhaustion.

Washington planned to resume the battle on the next day, but General Clinton and his men slipped away, undetected by Washington's army, shortly after midnight. Neither side emerged a clear winner of the battle, but the American soldiers had proved themselves as a professional fighting force.

By November of 1778 Glover's brigade and Vose's regiment had been posted to the American-held city of Providence, Rhode Island, and enjoyed some much-needed rest and recuperation. For some months they protected the city in relative calm while, in their off-duty hours, they were able to enjoy what the city had to offer. However, their rest came to an end in the summer of 1778 when Glover's brigade became involved in the ill-fated campaign to take Newport Rhode Island, from the British. What was supposed to be a cooperative venture with the French fleet and army turned into another amphibious retreat. Glover's brigade did the fighting while others did the rowing, as they halted a furious British advance. This would be Glover's last active campaign. He was assigned to set up fortifications around Providence, Rhode Island. He and his troops remained there until the summer of 1779, when the British pulled out of nearby Newport.

Once again with nothing else to occupy his time, George Ulmer acquired a tutor and learned to read, while also becoming involved to some extent in the local social life. He met a local woman named Mary "Polly" Tanner, and courted her; they were married in a military ceremony in Providence on 24 June 1779. At the end of that year, Ulmer and the rest of Col. Vose's regiment were reassigned to Capt. Green's company, and on 18 January 1780 George Ulmer was discharged, after having completed his term of enlistment.

Considering his extensive service and experience, the Continental Army offered George Ulmer the rank of 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant if he would re-enlist. Ulmer took their offer and re-enlisted for a term covering only the rest of the year on 25 March 1780, after having enjoyed something over two months of civilian life with his new wife, probably living with her family. Ulmer was appointed Adjutant and given an assignment closer to home with Capt. Archibald McAllister's company, attached to Lt. Col. Prime's regiment under Gen. Peleg Wadsworth at Camden, Maine.

George Ulmer was discharged once again on Christmas Eve, 1780, and probably returned to Waldoborough with his wife. It was probably at this time that he and his brother Philip set up quarters in the Ducktrap area, and constructed log cabins for their families. A little over four months later he re-enlisted on 10 May 1781 for a term covering the remainder of that year, and was assigned once more as an Adjutant to Capt. Jordan Parker's company, Col. Samuel Cobb's regiment, in Georgetown, Maine. He was then discharged on 1 December 1781. At some time during that year his first child, Sarah "Sally" Ulmer, was born to his wife Mary in Ducktrap.

On March 13, 1782, George Ulmer re-enlisted for the last time, at the rank of Capt. in Col. James Hunter's company. He was discharged nine months later, on 20 November 1782, and rejoined his wife in Ducktrap. These repeated re-enlistments during peacetime carried promotions and pay increases which were no doubt Ulmer's sole motivation. He now had the respectable title of captain (which he continued to use in civilian life) and had saved enough money to establish a modest homestead in an area with definite possibilities for the future.

"Ducktrap" (an area then referred to as the "Ducktrap Plantation," owned by Gen. Waldo's son-in-law, Henry Knox), not yet officially a town, was on the Ducktrap River where it widened out into an enclosed tidal basin ["The Trap"] before emptying through a narrow gap into Penobscot Bay. The Ducktrap, so the story goes, was so named because trees originally grew right up to the edge and, when ducks would land on the water at high tide, in moulting season, they did not have enough space to take off again, so the local Indians could pick them off easily with bow and arrow. Other settlers, mostly poor farmers from southern New England, carved out farms in the area as well, and ultimately had to pay off Gen. Knox despite their crushing poverty.

The various quotations which follow, unless otherwise referenced, are taken from the historical research of Alan Taylor (1985, 1990, 2000). Taylor (1985) described George Ulmer's rise to economic prominence in the Ducktrap/Lincolntonville community :

At the close of the Revolutionary War in 1783 George and Philip Ulmer looked about for their own main chance, their own strategic combination of timber, waterpower, and access to the sea. The brothers found such a spot just north of Camden on Penobscot Bay at Ducktrap; there they found a small but snug harbor perfect for wood sloops and lumber schooners and several promising mill seats along the stream emptying into the harbor and stretching back into the richly timbered interior. Several squatters had already taken up occupation beside the harbor and back into the watershed but they lacked the capital necessary to develop the site; for modest sums the Ulmers bought them out. The brothers then ran their own survey lines around the land embracing the entire basin. By 1785 the stream

had four operating sawmills with “lumber round them to supply for twenty years.” All of that lumber would have to be cut at the Ulmers’ mills and shipped from the wharves in their compact harbor.

George Ulmer and his brother Philip developed a special relationship with Gen. Knox, proprietary owner of all land in the area under a 17<sup>th</sup>-century land grant, and were the privileged gentry of the small community. When Knox’s rights to the land were reasserted following the war, he chose the local leading citizens, the Ulmer brothers, to represent him. All other settlers were restricted from buying more than 200 acres of Gen. Knox’s proprietary lands, but George Ulmer, as his land agent, was allowed (along with his brother Philip) to buy up their existing holdings and much more at only a half to a third of their market value. George’s share amounted to nearly 3,000 acres, paid for only with a promissory note and a mortgage.

The original settlers of Ducktrap, now Lincolnton, raised rye, corn, barley, beans and potatoes. In the autumn when livestock was slaughtered they had beef and pork to eat, as well as any game and fish they might have time to catch. Still, the long winters were a hardship, and many families ran out of food stores and livestock feed by early spring and had to slaughter draft oxen and milk cows. The Ulmers, however, fared much better.

The exact location of George Ulmer's original log cabin at Ducktrap is not known. However, their first child, Sarah, was born there in 1781. Their second child, Mary Ulmer (later to marry John Wilson of Tattenhall) was born in 1783 back in Waldoboro, perhaps while on a visit or simply to have the help of family. Their third and fourth children, Susanna and George, were born in Ducktrap in 1785 and 1787, and a son whose name is unknown was born to them in 1789 and probably died in infancy. Tragically, it was also in 1789 that daughter Susanna ("Sukey") died by drowning in the Ducktrap stream.

Around 1788 George expanded his operations to include property in Shore Village, now known as Rockland, Maine, at a time when it was little more than an unbroken forest area. He built a house (his second residence, retaining his original house in Ducktrap) between the Meadows and Lermond's Cove, and eventually became a large landowner there too. In 1789 he was the first to open the limestone quarries which later became famous there, and he built a lime furnace for burning the limestone into lime [the main component of mortar before the invention of gypsum-based cement]. His father moved over from Broad Bay to join him by 1790, and together they developed a business in lime-burning, shipbuilding and merchandizing. They opened stores on what became known as Ulmer's Block in Shore Village, selling and trading [literally] in dry goods, hardware, salt, sugar, molasses, yard goods, tinware, farming implements, axes, saws, iron kettles, tea, tobacco, and any other goods they could transport on their schooners.

The unpopularity of Henry Knox as everyone’s proprietary landlord was often expressed against his representative, George Ulmer. In January of 1789, George Ulmer rode into Waldoborough, his birthplace, and found a large body of very unhappy people waiting for him. The Waldoborough settlers, like those in the Ducktrap area, were not at all happy with the Ulmers for siding with Knox in support of his claim on the old pre-Revolutionary land patents of his family. “They told him that he was the enemy of the people, and that he should not be

allowed to leave Waldoborough alive.” However, the remarkable force of Ulmer’s personality prevailed; he staunchly defended his stand and escaped without harm. When Knox heard of this incident, he wrote to his friend, William Molineaux of Camden, “I am glad to hear from you of the firmness of Capt. Ulmer. We must cultivate the two brothers.”



Gravestone of Susanna "Sukey" Ulmer (here spelled "Suckey")(1785-1789), daughter of George Ulmer and Mary Tanner, drowned in the Ducktrap River.



**Gen. Henry Knox**

In 1792 a newcomer arrived in the area, Samuel Ely. Ely, a clergyman, was a fiery agitator who began inciting the settlers against Henry Knox, urging them to drive away Knox's land surveyors and to attack those in their midst, including the Ulmer brothers, who had served as Knox's representatives. In February 1793 George Ulmer became fed up with Ely's seditious activities and struck him publicly, challenging him to a duel. Ely declined, then organized a group of settlers who tore down the Umers' milldam on the Ducktrap River with axes and crowbars. In 1795 Ely and his thugs made plans to burn down Gen. Knox's house and those of his supporters, but a warrant from Boston for his arrest sent him into hiding. Without Ely's toxic influence the opposition crumbled and Ulmer prevailed; the settlers began to talk more reasonably of their desire for civil order rather than their willingness to fight the proprietary landholders, and within a short time all was tranquil among the people.

Some resentment nevertheless lingered against George Ulmer and Henry Knox. In July and again in September of 1796, saboteurs snuck into the small harbor under cover of darkness and cast off booms restraining large quantities of spars which George Ulmer had been storing for Gen. Knox, allowing the lumber to float off into the bay. Ely had furtively returned in September of 1796 and recruited 82 men to burn Knox's house and many others, rob the stores, burn the goods before their owners' faces, poison their cattle, and commit other acts of destruction. Fortunately George Ulmer was able to arrest one of the plotters, Harris Ransom,

who had boarded with Ely's family in March 1797; Ransom confessed to the plot without naming other names, and was sent off to the jail in Castine. With his evil plans exposed, Ely disappeared, never to return.

Living conditions at that time, even for the successful Ulmers, were spartan. In 1794 a French traveler passing through the area, the Duc de La Rochefoucauld Liancourt, was appalled by the local conditions. He wrote:

They are universally poor, [and] the habitations are everywhere poor, low huts. Everywhere you find a dirty, dark-colored rye-meal, and that not in sufficient quantity. In short, in all of America, the province of Maine is the place that afforded me the worst accomodations...the condition of human life in that place is extremely wretched. [And,] save for the brothers Ulmer, we found none who could be said to be even moderately intelligent.

Even George Ulmer's lifestyle was disappointing to the Duke, who was offered only "a poor supper, and an indifferent night's lodging with Captain Ulmer who...continues to live in a miserable log house without suitable supplies of bread, rum, sugar or even meat."

Within just two years, however, George Ulmer had built a much more comfortable life for himself in Ducktrap. A traveling missionary named Paul Coffin, who visited Ulmer and his wife in 1796, wrote:

Here you look to sea and behold a 700-acre island with many others. The Fox Islands are about 30 in number. The vessels, as at Belfast, are always passing each way within the islands. The Squire and his comely wife treated me with a liberal hospitality. We had bloated eels, pigeons, fresh mackerel, cucumbers, wine, etc.

George Ulmer, now prosperous from his various businesses, built a beautiful new home in Ducktrap ca. 1797 which still stands overlooking the Ducktrap River. It has 14 rooms and two indoor bathrooms, quite a lavish design for those days. He was Hancock County's richest man, and Lincolnvile's wealthiest citizen. The 1798 Federal Direct Tax Return for Lincolnvile shows that he owned 1900 acres of land valued at nearly \$4400, and a home valued at \$1200, making him Lincolnvile's leading landowner and wealthiest taxpayer. This was at a time when a man's daily wage might be no more than 50 cents. As it turns out, George Ulmer was the one who collected that tax, having been appointed by Gen. Knox as official collector of the Federal Direct Tax of 1798 for Ducktrap, Northport and Belfast.

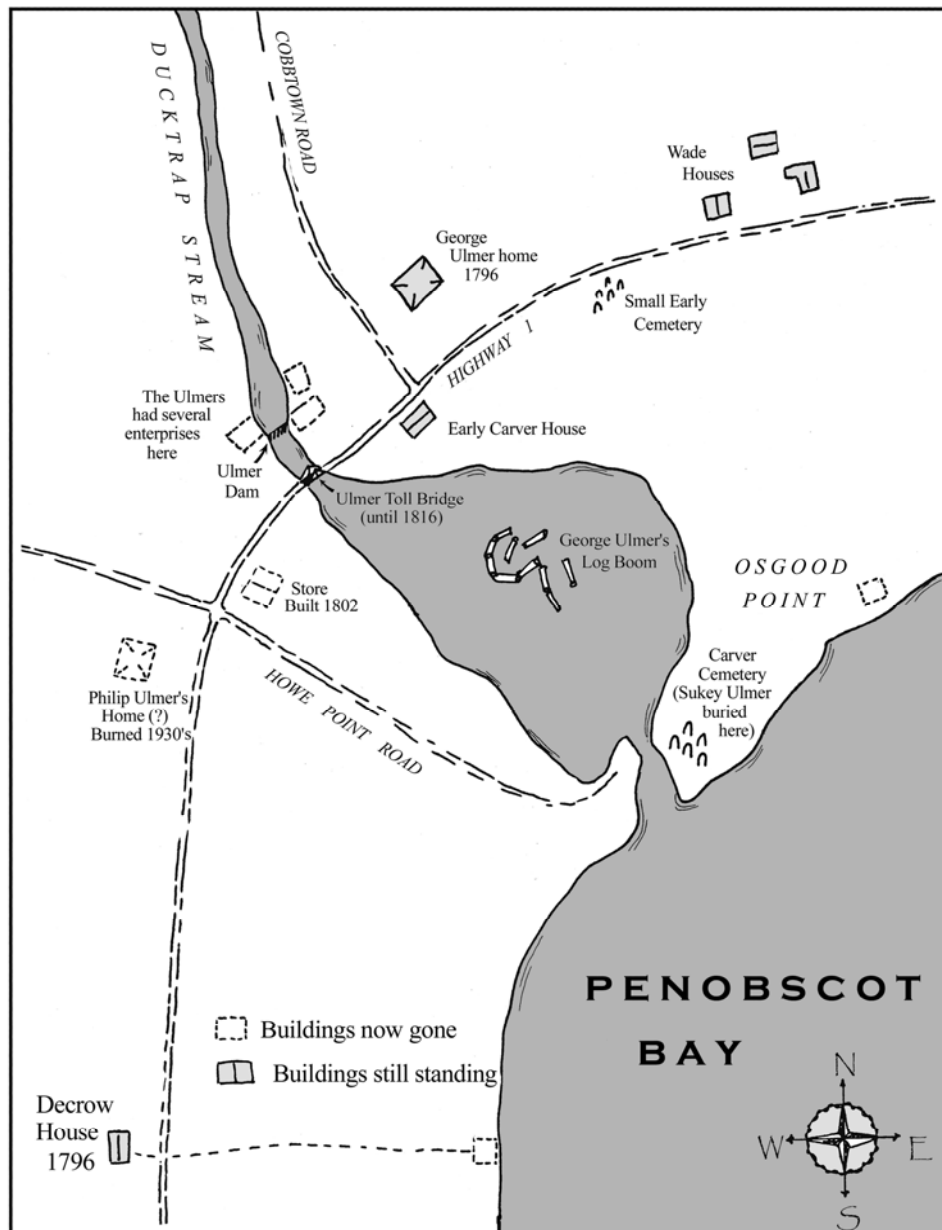
Only George's older brother Philip came close to his level of prosperity (with 1024 acres valued at nearly \$2800 plus a house worth \$800); Philip had built a house nearly as large as George's on the west side of the trap; it is thought to have burned down in 1930. However, George Ulmer had also made himself unpopular, as Gen. Knox's local agent, by pressuring the poverty-stricken settlers to pay Gen. Knox for their land, land which many of them thought they were entitled to from their military service.



The house built by Gen. George Ulmer in 1801. It is situated on the east side of the Ducktrap River in Lincolnville, Maine, and has 14 rooms with two baths.



The brothers suffered a serious loss in 1797, when two vessels with full cargoes were lost at sea, total value £1600. Then, in 1798, a carpenter working in George's mansion-house left a fire unattended; it spread to his shavings and within an hour had consumed the entire structure, along with George's account books, promissory notes from debtors, stock of provisions for the winter, furniture and clothing. Then, in late 1801, Ulmer had a falling out with Gen. Knox and resigned as his land agent, thus also losing the benefit of Knox's political patronage. George rebuilt his mansion, but his brother Philip had suffered too many losses to continue in business with him; Philip dissolved their partnership and sold out his half to a newly arrived entrepreneur named Samuel Austin Whitney.



Ducktrap Settlement (now Lincolnville), Maine in the late 1700's

(Modified from O'Brien, 1994)



George Ulmer was a prominent member of the Masonic Lodge in early Maine. Barbara F. Dyer, a Camden historian, writes:

The earliest record of Amity Lodge, dating from 1799, contains information about the "Proceedings of the petitioners for a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons in the town of Cambden {spelled that way at the time}, prior to their obtaining their Charter from the Grand Lodge." The original record had been made by John Hathaway (Camden's first lawyer) and secretary of the preliminary organization. At a meeting in Camden on Jan. 2, 1799, the following familiar names were recorded: George Ulmer, Philip Ulmer, Thursting Whiting, Samuel Wilde, Ephraim Snow, Benjamin Cushing, Joshua Adams, Simon Barrett, Edward Payson, Bela Jacobs, William Gregory, Hezekiah Prince, Martin Howe, Josiah Dillingham, Thomas Shea and John Hathaway. For those in the know about local history, those are names from the settling of the towns of Lincolnville, Camden, Hope and Rockland, St George and Owls Head.

The group voted that the Lodge be located in Camden, near Megunticook Harbor, and Philip Ulmer was elected the master. Two years later the charter had been received, but the first name "Federal Lodge" had been changed by the Grand Lodge (maybe it appeared too political) to "Amity Lodge, No. 6." They held the meeting of the new Lodge in the Benjamin Palmer Hall of the Bay View Hotel, once located on part of the now Village Green, next to the Chestnut Street Baptist Church. Because everyone had to travel so far, and sometimes through forest, they decided to hold the meeting on or before the full moon. That custom remained in effect for at least the first 170 years or so. Lodges that met on or before the full moon, were called moon lodges.

The 15 masons whose names appear on the charter probably need little description to those who have studied history of our area. Gen. George Ulmer and his brother, Capt. Philip Ulmer settled at "Ducktrap" before [actually right after] the Revolutionary War. They were of German decent. George had been Major General of the militia and Philip had been Captain of a Calvary company Gen. Ulmer had command of troops in Camden and later "Clam Cove" or Glen Cove. A story is told of him walking from Camden Harbor to Castine and back on the ice to bring with him a young Warren man who had been captured by the British. That had to be one of the coldest winters on record for salt water to freeze that solid.

Although relative calm prevailed in the shore communities, some unrest continued to fester in the backcountry, and Henry Knox's surveyors were repeated ambushed and intimidated. In early June of 1801, George Ulmer himself toured the backcountry "to warn the inhabitants of their impending ruin if they dared attack Henry Knox's surveyors again." Oblivious to such threats, a party of armed men in Davistown briefly siezed Ulmer and issued their own threat, that he would be murdered if he ventured into that area again. Ulmer was released and returned to Ducktrap, but took the warning seriously. When it came time for the survey party to set out again two weeks later, he surprised Knox by saying that the demands of his business affairs were such that he "cannot be in the woods myself until the business is fully accomplished." Knox had

to get another agent to head that dangerous survey party, which was indeed ambushed and suffered casualties two days later.

By late 1801, however, all the disagreements among the local inhabitants and Gen. Knox over land had finally been settled. Land surveys were completed, and in 1802 Lincolnville was officially incorporated as a town. The first town meeting of the citizens of Lincolnville was held at John Calderwood's house on 20 Sept 1802. Philip Ulmer acted as moderator. Jacob Ulmer, George's nephew (Philip's son), was appointed the first Town Clerk (1802-1805; followed in that position by John Wilson). George Ulmer, Philip Ulmer and Abner Milliken were chosen to frame a code of laws for the town. Meetings continued to be held in schoolhouses and private residences throughout the town for the next several years.

On June 24, 1802, George Ulmer and his associates were authorized by an act of the Massachusetts House of Representatives to construct a toll bridge over the Ducktrap River. Construction began on June 18, 1804, and was completed on October 1, at the then-substantial cost of \$2143. Ulmer then charged all travelers, including the local townsfolk, a toll to cross the bridge, and he fenced off the only possible fording area along the river so as to make the use of his bridge essential and unavoidable to all.

In 1803, George Ulmer's daughter Mary married a newcomer to the area, John Wilson. The exact date of Wilson's arrival in Lincolnville, and whether he had already established himself as a merchant there by 1803, is unknown, but he possessed a significant amount of money and was waiting for the right opportunity to invest it. George presented Mary with a Bible (published that same year in Philadelphia) in which the family records of several generations of Wilson's were subsequently kept.

George Ulmer enjoyed positions of influence and somehow always managed to escape suffering too badly for his privileged relationship with Gen. Knox. In the 1805 race for the Massachusetts state senate George Ulmer defeated Gen. David Cobb, a close friend of Henry Knox. Backcountry voters apparently felt that Cobb was much more closely connected to Knox, and so they therefore preferred Ulmer.

In 1807 the Ulmer toll bridge (as well as the Ulmer and Whitney's mill and much stockpiled lumber) was carried away by a flood, and had to be reconstructed at a cost of \$1605. George Ulmer petitioned the government for aid, with the implied promise that he would exempt the local citizenry thereafter from paying the toll to cross the bridge. He received the requested aid in the form of a grant of land along the river, but after the bridge had been rebuilt he did not rescind the tolls as promised. The river then flooded a second time, causing more damage than George's finances could stand. Taylor (1985) wrote of the consequences:

In the spring of 1807 George Ulmer and [Samuel] Whitney suffered \$6,000 in damages when a spring freshet carried away their bridge, mills and lumber. They rebuilt in time to suffer \$5,000 more in damages in December 1807 when a second flash flood destroyed their complex. Whitney weathered the crisis but Ulmer was obliged to sell out to his son-in-law, the recently arrived English merchant John Wilson.

The two newcomers, Wilson and Whitney, also took over [the Ulmers'] places atop Lincolnville's economic hierarchy. The 1815 Federal Direct Tax list for Hancock County reveals Whitney to have been the town's wealthiest man, with holdings worth \$6264. Wilson ranked third at \$4502. Philip Ulmer had slipped to 53<sup>rd</sup>, and George Ulmer no longer possessed any assessable property in Lincolnville [having sold his mansion-house, probably to John Wilson].

In 1807 Governor James Sullivan rewarded George Ulmer's political loyalty to the Jeffersonians with the county's most coveted positions: county sheriff and militia major general. Thereafter George Ulmer was entitled to go by the titles of "Squire" and "General." In the years immediately following the sale of his properties, George Ulmer lived in Lincolnville while continuing to serve as County sheriff and general of the local militia. Apparently, however, George Ulmer did not sell his interest in the toll bridge to John Wilson along with his other holdings, and continued for some years to extract a small income thereby from the local populace who had to use it. Eventually the townspeople, chafing under the toll, raised an outcry in the courts, beginning with a petition by George's own brother, Philip, and another by John Wilson in 1816, cosigned by 76 other citizens of Lincolnville. Finally George Ulmer gave in, after having collected a total of over \$2000 in tolls; he rescinded further tolls for local citizens, and the citizens then withdrew their petitions against him.

Joseph Miller (1876) described George Ulmer as follows:

He engaged quite largely in the lumbering business. In the valley of Ducktrap stream there were at that time large quantities of pine and other lumber extending to Greene Plantation, now the town of Belmont. On the early plans of the town large tracts of land were marked "George Ulmer." While he was in the lumber business, he was one of the most noted and prominent men, in the vigor of his life, in this section. He served as Senator in the Legislature of Massachusetts, before Maine became a State; was Sheriff of Hancock county before the county of Waldo was established, and commanded a military force at Eastport in the War of 1812.

He was not an educated man, considered in the strict line of scholarship, but a man of great self-reliance and remarkable colloquial gifts; this gave him an advantage and a prominence, in many cases, over others who were superior to him in educational acquirements, but destitute of his particular gifts. Dr. Dodge of Thomaston, an educated man and of high standing in his profession, once gave Gen. Ulmer a sharp retort in the Legislature of Massachusetts of which they were both members. They were antagonists on some special matter under consideration; Ulmer led off in one of his off-hand bombastic speeches, in which he cut into Dodge's position considerably. When the gentleman [Ulmer] sat down, Dodge rose to reply. He said he had seen in his day a great many men who could not tell as much as they knew, but he had never before seen one who could tell so much *more* than he knew as Gen. Ulmer.

In any group or assembly of men Gen. Ulmer was personally conspicuous-tall, broad shouldered and somewhat corpulent; always having the air of a

military man. His holiday dress was always of the military style, as long as he lived.

As the War of 1812 loomed, George Ulmer, having lost virtually all of his properties and businesses as well as his seat in the legislature, turned his attention to the possibility of rejoining the military. Joshua M. Smith gave some interesting insight into the political situation at that time, in his 1998 lecture before the Castine, Maine Historical Society: "The Trials and Tribulations of Fort Madison":

Two parties dominated American politics in this period. After 1801, the Republican Party, headed by President Thomas Jefferson, controlled the federal government. Republicans were strongly interested in the common man, especially the farmer. The Federalist Party opposed the Republicans, and favored commercial interests, especially seaboard merchants. The Federalists were strong in coastal states like Massachusetts-- and Maine until 1820 was a part of the Bay State. Castine, as a seaport and a shiretown, was a bastion of Federalism: its merchants, lawyers, and judges strongly identified with the Federalist elite in Boston. During the War of 1812, Maine Federalists stubbornly opposed the war effort, engaging in [smuggling and other] activities that at the very least bordered on treason.

George Ulmer was a staunch Republican who had nothing left to lose from the embargo. In April of 1812 the Federalists were returned to power in the Massachusetts government and, because of his political preference, Ulmer had been forced to resign as militia major general by Governor Strong. By July of 1812 he was in dire financial straits when he wrote to his political mentor, William King of Bath, Maine: "I am now really under the necessity of going into the Army or Navy to keep out of prison [for debt] or something worse." King lobbied President James Madison on Ulmer's behalf, resulting in Ulmer's appointment as colonel in charge of his own group of volunteers. It was then that he was given command of the least desirable post on the entire border (Eastport). Taylor (2000) wrote:

When war actually came, Governor Strong used every effort to hinder the federal government's war program. Strong ignored the June 22 request for Massachusetts militia to man coastal forts, including the three companies slated for Castine's battery. In addition, he replaced Hancock County's Republican militia general, George Ulmer of Lincolnville, with an officer less enthusiastic about the war. The national government countered by making Ulmer the colonel of a regiment of U.S. Volunteers. Ulmer personally recruited this unit [which included his son-in-law, John Wilson] primarily in Hancock [then including Lincolnville] and Washington Counties, making sure that its officers were almost all Republicans. That proved offensive to area Federalists, as did the unit's mission, which was to stop the huge smuggling trade. The pettiness did not stop there; Ulmer reported that Federalist militia officers actively discouraged men from enlisting in his unit. The town of Castine went even further than that. In a town meeting, Castine publicly discouraged its citizens from enlisting in the U.S. Army.

By early January 1813 the detached militia were replaced. Fort Madison became a temporary depot for companies belonging to Ulmer's Regiment of U.S.

Volunteers. Several companies stopped at Fort Madison on their way to Eastport and Michias. They found a chilly reception in Castine. Not only was the war unpopular, but these troops were heavily involved in suppressing the smuggling trade in which Castine merchants had been active for some time. Area traders responded by either refusing to sell provisions to the troops, or by selling to them an extortionate price.

The fort at Castine was permanently manned by Ulmer's volunteers on January 8, 1813. Ulmer sent a company under the command of Captain Joseph Westcott of Penobscot to take over. Upon his arrival at the fort, Westcott found it possessed no bunks, straw for mattresses, or blankets for his men. Local merchants refused to extend credit to Westcott so he could feed his troops. In February Westcott undertook the arduous trip to Eastport to report to Ulmer and attempt to solve his supply problems. It was to no avail; the supply situation remained dismal through the first half of 1813. Meanwhile, Hancock County Federalists reaffirmed their opposition to the "ruinous war."

Taylor (2000) gives more information on the difficulties endured by George Ulmer following his posting to Eastport:

Late in 1812 [George] Ulmer took command of the most godforsaken post on the American border with British-held Canada: Eastport, which lay at the eastern edge of the District of Maine, then part of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (and the United States of America). The American command planned no offensive operations on the northeastern frontier because of British naval supremacy in the Bay of Fundy. That supremacy put it in the power of British forces to sieze Eastport, a lightly fortified island town, virtually at will. As a result, the American command was willing to invest in Eastport's defense only those men and resources which it was prepared ultimately to sacrifice. They included George Ulmer.

This unhappy posting for Ulmer was no doubt the work of Federalists, especially Governor Strong who, as mentioned, had tried once to take Ulmer out of the war, but had been circumvented by his own superiors through the reappointment of Ulmer to head his own group of volunteers. Taylor's (1985, 2000) account continues:

When Ulmer arrived in December of 1812 he found a military nightmare because the Federal Government regarded Eastport as a lost cause and because the local people worked to undermine Ulmer's command. The barracks were two tenements that he deemed "scarcely fit for cattle." They had been rented from a local landlord, who charged an exorbitant price because he otherwise could have employed the structures in the lucrative business of warehousing smuggled goods. There were few and only miserable provisions to eat. The local commissary was the leading local smuggler, a merchant named Benjamin Bartlett, who led a thinly-veiled local campaign to drive Ulmer mad. Bartlett provoked the troops to near mutiny by assuring them "that the government don't allow them good provisions—and will not pay for any but bad."

Sometimes no provisions at all reached the troops because the shippers recognized that there was more money to be made by smuggling the barrels of food across the border to the British. Ulmer fumed, "Thus the troops must suffer, while the enemy are furnished with their provisions by traitors." Nor was any clothing forthcoming for Ulmer's ragged men. Infuriated, he threatened to resign, [but instead] He obtained for his men firewood, hospital stores, bedding straw, camp kettles, coats and blankets on his own credit.

The locals proved adept at frustrating Ulmer's every attempt to suppress their smuggling. In early March of 1813 Ulmer's men seized the schooner *Polly* belonging to Benjamin Bartlett and laden with cargo worth \$40,000. However, Bartlett's friend, Eastport customs inspector Lemuel Trescott, came to the rescue by interceding to claim the vessel for the customs house. Thereby Trescott prevented Ulmer and his volunteers from receiving any prize money. The intervention also enabled Bartlett to cut his losses by repurchasing the schooner at public auction for a reduced price, while receiving from Trescott the informers' share of the prize money.

In April 1813 the local smugglers fabricated a number of trumped up debt suits against Ulmer and the local sheriff promptly arrested the Colonel for debt, packing him off to the Washington County jail in distant Machias! [It is remarkable that local authorities could get away with doing this to a military commander engaged in a war!] From behind bars Ulmer wrote: "I hate to fight Americans, [but] we have no other real enemies on this frontier."

Ulmer couldn't even count on support from his superiors. Ulmer issued a sensible order forbidding all communications with the British side except under a flag of truce authorized by himself. However, the Secretary of War, John Armstrong, rescinded the order. Although he had been charged with the task of combatting the rampant smuggling activities in Eastport, his superiors could not bring themselves to grant him the authority to accomplish that task.. Even his political patron and Maine's leading Republican, William King of Bath, "was himself secretly but heavily involved in illegal commerce with the British." The local Federalist press made the most of every news item, saying that Ulmer's efforts foreshadowed the onset of marshal law. Too much of New England's economy depended upon continued trade. And, paradoxically, even the Federal Government, having lost the vote to authorize an increase in taxes during wartime, could not afford to pursue the war without the continuing income from customs revenues—which, of course, would cease if Ulmer succeeded in restraining all smuggling activity. Consequently Ulmer found himself in the untenable position of being charged with a task at which no one could afford to see him succeed. Taylor (1985, 2000) continues:

In Ulmer's absence [following his arrest], discipline dissolved among the leaderless volunteers, while the smugglers had a free hand in their trade. Released a month later, Ulmer returned to find that Eastport remained "filled with speculators, spies and smugglers." Ulmer's mood was not improved by the Secretary of War's thinly disguised scheme to let the volunteers wither away. Armstrong commissioned three of Ulmer's officers into a new regular regiment and instructed them to commence recruiting among Ulmer's men. Their promises

of bonuses and immediate furloughs steadily siphoned off Ulmer's volunteers. ...In exasperation, Ulmer arrested Captain Simmons, one of the three officers, as an example to the other two to cease and desist in their recruiting.

The accumulated humiliations and frustrations drove the Colonel to distraction. His wife, Mary Tanner, joined him in Eastport, but her growing infirmities and near-blindness only added to his mounting depression. He began to drink heavily and to act erratically. His accounting practices grew ever more careless and slipshod, leaving him vulnerable to charges of embezzlement.

Led by Capt. Sherman Leland, his subordinate officers secretly wrote to the district commander, General Thomas H. Cushing, seeking Ulmer's removal: "He drinks so hard and there is such wildness and inconsistency in his orders and conduct that he has become perfectly contemptible in the sight of his troops." In August of 1813 the district commander dispatched an aide to Eastport. After a hasty investigation, the aide exercised his authority to relieve Ulmer of command and to place him under house arrest. Recalling the heroic death of General Zebulon Pike at York, Canada that spring, Ulmer gloomily lamented, "...Would to God I had been a companion of General Pike and have shared his fate. I am, it seems, about to receive the rewards of my patriotism, and satisfaction for my exertions while on the lines."

Denied a copy of the charges against him, George Ulmer remained in Eastport under arrest until December 17, 1813, when he was summarily discharged from the service. He demanded and got a military court of inquiry, held at Portland on May 30, 1814, which cleared him of the six counts of embezzling pay, rations and weapons. They found him "literally guilty" of arresting Capt. Simmons, and of mishandling an incident of mass insubordination, but found no evidence of criminality. The War Department even released his back pay and refunded his expenses incurred in personally supplying the impoverished men under his command, but declined to restore his commission.

Despite his frustrating and maddening experiences at Eastport, George Ulmer's character as a true patriot never shined brighter. He never once gave in to the temptation to cooperate with the smugglers in their selfishly corrupt and treasonous activities, even though doing so could no doubt have made him a rich man again through bribes and kick-backs. He stubbornly stuck to his principles and remained true to his country when nearly everyone around him had betrayed or abandoned him. Although he was honored for generations thereafter primarily for his Revolutionary War service (from which no equally detailed account of his personal experiences survives), he should be admired as much for his honorable service during the War of 1812, under the most trying and discouraging circumstances.

Following the war, George Ulmer retired to modest quarters a few miles south of Lincolnton, since he no longer owned his mansion overlooking the bay. He appears on the 1820 census for Thomaston in Lincoln County, living with his wife and one slave to help care for her. (His son, George Ulmer (or perhaps it was his nephew of the same name) was living at that time nextdoor to John Wilson in Lincolnton.) He nevertheless still made himself available for duties in Lincolnton insofar as his deteriorating health would allow. In 1820 he accepted a contract from the town to construct a town hall – for a total cost of \$495. It was thereafter

resolved that all town meetings would be held in the new building, and that it should also be open to all religious denominations for use as a place of public worship.

George and Mary Ulmer's retirement years were far from prosperous, and they must have subsisted to a large extent on help supplied by their children. O'Brien (1994) wrote:

By 1818 George Ulmer was applying for a pension from his Revolutionary War service. Ulmer listed himself as a laborer "which I am unable to pursue by reason of my age and trouble with the rheumatism and cramp so that I have not been able to do any hard work for several years." He listed the following personal property:

- 1 Hog
- 1 Grindstone, \$2.50
- 1 Dining Table and 4 chairs
- 1 note held against Isaac Ulmer, \$25
- 1 Pot
- 1 Teakettle
- 1 Demand against Martin Ulmer, \$15
- Other articles for cooking etc., \$6
- I am indebted to Capt. Wm. Norward & others upwards of \$200

In January of 1823 his two namesake grandsons provided for George Ulmer as part of a transaction involving the sale of John Wilson's former Kendall Creek property with sawmill and gristmill. It had been sold by John Wilson to Noah Miller in 1817, then sold by Miller to George Ulmer Russ in 1820, then sold by Russ to George Ulmer Wilson in 1823. The latter sales agreement states: **"It is hereby understood that my Grandfather George Ulmer, and my Grandmother Mary [Tanner] Ulmer shall have the use of the Grist mill, and Saw mill together with all machinery on the dams, or in the mills, with the use of as much land as they choose to improve during their lives."** Whether George and Mary actually lived on the property of just derived a modest income from the mills is unknown.

His obituary, cited above, concludes as follows:

He was repeatedly chosen Representative and Senator by the General Court of Mass. and was appointed by the General Legislature, Major General of the 10th [Militia] Division; and by Governor Sullivan, Sheriff of Hancock Co. Upon the declaration of the late war [1812], he resigned the office of Sheriff for one more congenial with his early habits and accepted the command of Col. of the U.S. volunteers and was stationed at Eastport. Since the peace he was a Senator in the first legislature of Maine, but the infirmities of age had for several years confined him to private life and for the most part to his own room. He was a distinguished Mason and for many years presided over the Lodges of this district.





Gravestone of Gen. George Ulmer (1755-1825)  
Mountain View Cemetery, Camden, Maine

In reviewing the life of General Ulmer, the first thing that strikes one is the extraordinary vigor of intellect which under the discouragements of early poverty and ignorance, could enable him to arrive at a point of so much distinction; for no man possessed the confidence of those around him in a higher degree; and was more frequently rewarded by the testimonies of public regard.

As a legislator during the meridian of life, it has been said, he surprised all by the powers of a natural and happy eloquence, and exhibited all the appearances of one who, to strong powers of mind had united the advantages of a polished education.

He was a decided Republican, of a most benevolent and philanthropic disposition and extended hospitality to all around him in days of prosperity; and at all times exhibited to the rich and poor, the manners of a gentleman.

General Ulmer died at his home on Christmas Day of 1825, and was buried at the little cemetery at Lincolnville. He had served as the first District Deputy of the Masons, and consequently when the Masonic Lodge of which he was a member was 100 years old they received permission to move the remains of General Ulmer and his wife to Mountain Cemetery at Camden, Maine. The inscription on his monument reads:

Under this stone is deposited all that was mortal of the Hon. Geo. Ulmer, Esq., who died Dec. 23rd 1825, aged 70 years. He was a valiant soldier of that band of heroes who achieved their country's independence. An intrepid general, a wise legislator & an upright Magistrate. Reader, like him, be ever ready to defend the rights of your country.

Following George Ulmer's death his widow, Mary Tanner Ulmer, moved in with John and Mary Wilson on the Kendall Creek property, and she is listed with them on the 1830 census. She died on 23 June 1848, and was buried beside her husband in the Lincolnville cemetery (and later moved with him to Camden).

Gen. George Ulmer was not forgotten by his descendants. In many instances children have since been given Ulmer as a middle name in his honor, in many different branches of the family, right up into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.