

*A Guide to*  
**LOUDOUN**  
*— in the —*  
**American Revolution**

LOUDOUN COUNTY  
**VIRGINIA**<sub>250</sub>  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION



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*The Loudoun County Virginia250 Committee*  
**Commemorating America's Semiquincentennial**

# A Guide to LOUDOUN in the AMERICAN REVOLUTION

*for the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of American Independence*



Loudoun County Virginia250 Committee

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The generous financial support of  
the Van Huyck-Chockley Family Foundation  
made the printing of this publication possible.

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*The Loudoun County Virginia250 Committee is  
comprised of representatives from Loudoun's  
historical sites and organizations working with  
county and town staffs, libraries,  
schools, and parks.*

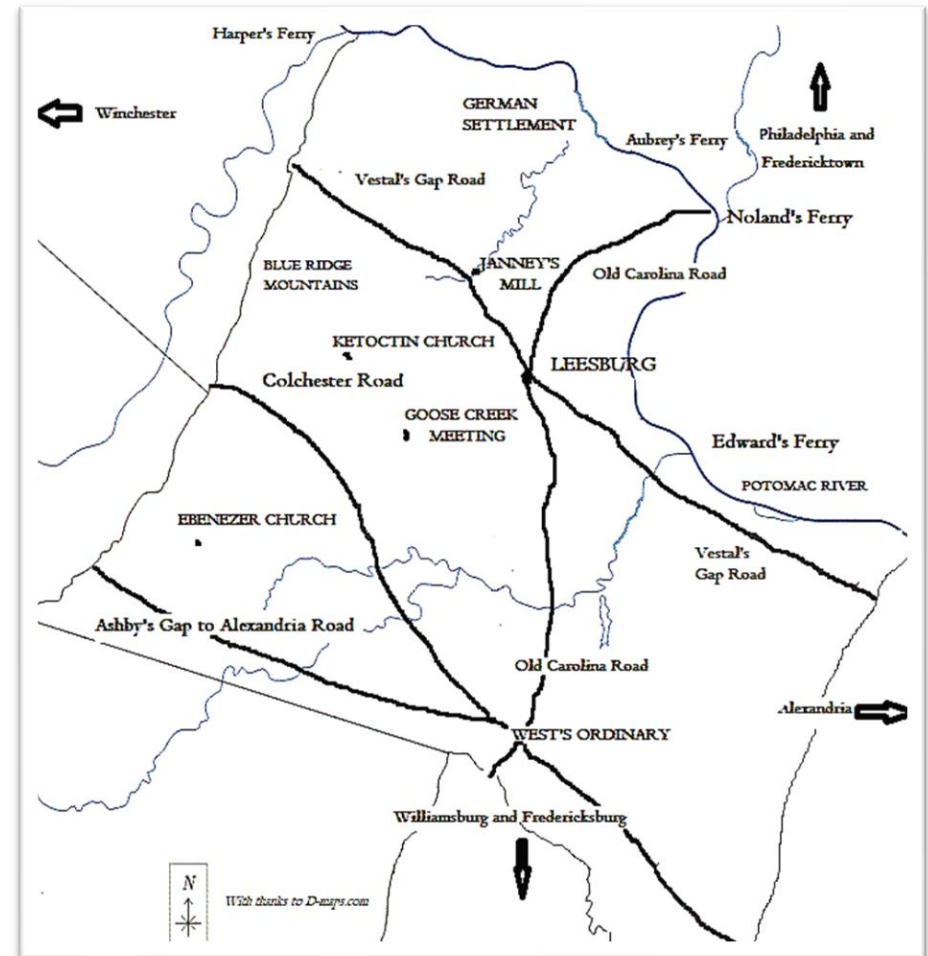
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Loudoun County, Virginia 1775-1781  
during the American Revolution

*showing key villages, towns, settlements, roads, and ferries*

Map by Richard Gillespie

using outline map of Loudoun courtesy of D-Maps.com

**COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Close-up of the Revolutionary War Statue on the Loudoun County Courthouse grounds, Leesburg, Virginia**

## I. Introduction: Loudoun and the Virginia250

### *Greetings from your Loudoun County American Revolution Semiquincentennial Commemoration (VA250) team!*

As we approach the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the creation of the United States and the Revolution that led to it, the Virginia General Assembly has established the **Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission (“VA250”)** to guide the commemoration and examination of its ongoing story and impact. The Commission asked each county and city in the Commonwealth to create a committee to further these aims at the local level. Loudoun County's committee, formed in 2022, was officially recognized by the Loudoun Board of Supervisors in May 2023 becoming one of Virginia's first. The Loudoun County VA250 Committee is made up of representatives of historical and preservation organizations, museums, libraries, historic sites, Loudoun County Public Schools, Visit Loudoun, interested incorporated towns, and many others working together to design appropriate programming, educational materials, and signage, leaving a legacy to help the American Revolution in Loudoun be better understood. It is the committee's joint hope to leave Loudoun's citizens, students, and visitors with a greater understanding of Loudoun's past and a deeper investment in its future.

**You will notice on the cover of this guide** is a sculpture that sits on the lawn of the Loudoun County Courthouse in Leesburg. It depicts a Loudoun family during the Revolutionary War—a man with his musket going off to fight, a woman and child staying at home to run the farm to feed our army and the population. An idea launched during our commemoration of the Revolutionary Era fifty years ago—the 1976 “Bicentennial”—this statue was completed and dedicated far more recently, in 2015. In 1976, we had just come through a contentious era. The Vietnam War, the Civil Rights movement, youth rebellion, the Watergate scandal, and more had left America divided and exhausted. The lengthy citizen-led campaign to leave a memorial to the American Revolution resulted in this statue of not just a heroic man, but his family as well. In a

time of contention, it was meant to expand and unite us. Along with this effort, the Bicentennial left us a legacy of academic and local efforts—new books on the Revolution as well as our local history, new films, historic sites newly preserved, new museums and exhibits, and in general, offerings that reenergized our interest in history and broadened our perspective immensely.

**Now with the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**, America has evolved. The Loudoun County of the 2020s is ten times the size it was in 1976, and our population demographics are substantially different than they were. Our sensibilities are different. As we look at the past, our *questions* about it are different. We wonder now about the British and wartime loyalist perspective. We yearn to know far more about those *not* included in that statue on the courthouse grounds. What about Loudoun's 1776 enslaved population? How many were here, where were they, and what was their experience? What had happened to the original Native American population that once was here, one we can know of by archaeological remains? Was *everyone* a Protestant Christian then? In 1976, *historians* were beginning to seriously delve into these questions. Fifty years later, the *average curious American* wonders about them—a different sensibility. We've approached this guide with these modern questions—and more—in mind.

**Most of us studied the American Revolution in school.** But it was necessarily a short, rapid overview. This commemoration will allow us all a chance to further our personal understanding of the founding of our country. The Loudoun VA250 Committee hopes that by providing this guide along with many programs and activities, residents and visitors will learn about the Revolution by viewing it on a *local* level. We'll gain a better appreciation of our county's long multicultural past, its divisions and problems, its victories and failures, its abundance and beauty, its *essence*.

**The American Revolution was *more* than an eight-year war.** Years in the brewing, it was an evolution—a *revolution*—of *ideas*. The ideas that laid the foundation for a new nation based on the ideals of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness were formed, articulated, and put into motion right here in Virginia. And if Virginia's story is America's, so too is Loudoun's.

## II. Loudoun on the Eve of the American Revolution

1. **The first arriving European colonists found a landscape that had been shaped by Native Americans for 10,000 years.** The archaeological evidence was everywhere but concentrated along the Potomac and major creeks that fed into it. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, most northern Virginia Native Americans had belonged to one of two large cultural and linguistic groups. The Manahoac, a Siouyan speaking tribe, were centered on the upper Rappahannock River ranging north to the Potomac. The Doeg and the Piscataway, Algonkian speaking people from Virginia and Maryland tidewater migrated up to the Loudoun area in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the face of pressure from European settlers coming into the Tidewater. The Siouyan and Algonkian speaking groups both had grown corn, beans, squash, and other crops in permanent villages along the region's rivers and creeks while hunting and fishing the lands around them. Their arrowheads and other artifacts are still found.

**Indigenous peoples were forced west** beyond the Shenandoah Valley by the 1722 Treaty of Albany. The last native Americans here—Piscataways—had been settled near the Virginia shore of the Potomac at Conoy (Heater's) Island, just down river from Point of Rocks. It was a *fortified* settlement to protect against incursion by other native Americans. They may have been here as late as 1722.

**A handful of English arrived in the vicinity of today's Leesburg shortly after the treaty, followed by German settlers** coming from Maryland and Pennsylvania, crossing the Potomac into Northern Loudoun about 1731. They were soon followed by a number of English Quakers settling in the central Loudoun Valley near today's Waterford and Purcellville. Plantations worked by enslaved Africans and indentured servants were established by Tidewater Virginians in eastern Loudoun along the Rt. 15 corridor.

Loudoun had settlers enough to become a Virginia county by the French & Indian War, becoming a county in 1757. With a county seat and new courthouse in the purpose-built town of Leesburg, the county was named for John Campbell, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Loudoun. He was a Scot, at the time serving as the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in North America, protecting settlers against French & Indian attacks. At the time, he was considered a savior.

2. **By 1774 Loudoun's population** reached some 14,000 people, exploding after the French & Indian War ended in 1763. Crowded Virginia was poised to explode over the Appalachian Mountains after the war, but the new Crown policy—the Proclamation of 1763—prevented expansion west for the time being. Pressure built.

3. **Loudoun in 1774 was overwhelmingly rural or forested.** There was one incorporated town, Leesburg (about 500 people), one village, Janney's Mill (later renamed Waterford) with about 150 people, and save for a few intersections with taverns, the other 95% of Loudoun's 1775 population lived on farms.

4. **Slavery had made inroads in Loudoun.** The enslaved African population in Loudoun would jump from some 1100 in 1766 to over 5,000 in 1810. By 1774 on the eve of the Revolution, the number of enslaved people was likely about 1500, or a little over 10% of the total population. Most of these people were in eastern Loudoun, a bit bigger than today because from the county's founding until 1798, Loudoun stretched six miles further east to Difficult Run (now in Fairfax). Those enslaved people were largely on tobacco farms. In western Loudoun, dominant German, and Quaker populations largely eschewed slave ownership in the early days. Just beginning was the growth of white families buying and enslaving people for small farms.

5. **A significant number of Loudoun's population were recently arrived *indentured servants*,** white, unfree, in servitude for up to seven years to pay off their passage to America. Most indentured servants lived in Leesburg, eastern Loudoun, and the Old Carolina Road corridor (think roughly today's Route 15). Also, some convicts transported to North America were brought to Loudoun.

6. **Loudoun doubled its population in the decade before the American Revolution.** It is important to remember that from 1764-74, Great Britain went through severely tough economic times leading to a mass-migration to America. Clearly, many came to temperate, accepting, fertile Loudoun. Demographic changes and unsettled conditions fueled by this enormous 133% population growth left Loudoun in an explosive situation should radical Parliamentary changes in American policy come during that decade and impact the economy. *And this is what happened.*

7. **Colonial Loudoun was ethnically and religiously diverse.** A hallmark of Loudoun was its diversity as a part of the western Piedmont or as historians now like to call it, the "Southern Backcountry." Settled both by immigrants pushing west in search of land due to overpopulation in Tidewater as well as south by a similar situation in Pennsylvania, eastern Loudoun came to be largely Tidewater English (Church of England) while western Loudoun drew settlers from Philadelphia, *the* immigrant port. With Pennsylvania only able to settle its southeastern corner due to Native American pushback—only to the Appalachians—overflow went across the Delaware River into western New Jersey or across the colonial border into central and western Maryland, then into Virginia's Shenandoah Valley as well as the Loudoun Valley. The ethnic diversity that resulted was complemented by *religious* diversity. This meant that the vast majority of Loudoun's settlers paid taxes to the Church of England rather than to their chosen church. While allowed to *practice* their own Christian faiths in Virginia, they could not have "churches"—only 'meetinghouses.' They had to worship with windows closed and were not allowed steeples or church bells on these meetinghouses.

Settlers in Loudoun County by 1774 thus included:

- **English settlers, Church of England:** Largely located in eastern Loudoun and along the Route 15 corridor where absentee landlords ruled the roost. Enslaved and indentured servants worked on these large farms. This group expanded in the 1780s into the Middleburg/southwestern Loudoun area. Having come up from the Northern Neck plantations where overfarming of tobacco led to declining soil productivity, they repeated the pattern here.
- **English settlers, Baptist:** Largely located in Western Loudoun, especially the central and southern Loudoun Valley, these were independent, poorer folk converting to a new religion seeking to escape the gentry's control. Notice Ebenezer Church (1765) and the antecedent of today's Kettoctin Church (1751) built there.
- **English settlers, Methodist:** Initially, a religion of the southern backcountry and the frontier, there were enough around Leesburg to build one of the nation's earliest Methodist churches here by 1770. Methodists often were middle class townsmen.

- **English settlers, Quaker:** Settling in the central Loudoun Valley, ultimately there were enough to grow four Friends' Meetings—Goose Creek at today's Lincoln (1765) and Fairfax at today's Waterford (1768) were the earliest. Quakers arrived in Loudoun in 1733 from Philadelphia and the five agricultural counties surrounding the city. They largely grew or milled grain.
- **German settlers, German (Calvinist) Reformed**—Arriving as early as 1731 from the Palatine region (along the Moselle/Rhine rivers), they settled just across the Potomac near Dutchman's Creek northwest of Lovettsville, then spread out, setting up small farms for grain production and especially livestock grazing.
- **German settlers, Lutheran**—Arriving in large numbers shortly after the Evangelical Reformed, they also came from the Palatine regions. By the 1760s, they had settled from the Potomac south to the Quaker settlements near Waterford and Hillsboro—the Catoctin Valley—as well as Between the Hills south of Harpers Ferry.
- **Scots-Irish settlers**—These independent settlers established small farms along the Blue Ridge southwest of Harpers Ferry and here and there throughout. If they joined a church, it was likely Baptist or Methodist, one of the new free-thinking independent churches that, largely free of the gentry, catered to social mobility.
- **Scottish settlers, Presbyterians**—Mostly come up from the port of Alexandria, they were a mercantile set and tended to move to towns (like Leesburg or Janney's Mill) where they frequently opened a mercantile enterprise like a tavern, store, shop, or mill.
- **West-Africans**—Captured, enslaved, and sold in a variety of kingdoms in the central west African coast, they were brought in chains to the West Indies or Atlantic ports to be sold to the highest bidder. Thus, many came to Virginia. Coming from Senegal to Angola—including the kingdoms of Senegal, Gambia, Upper Guinea, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Benin, and Biafra—these diverse groups of African peoples brought a variety of religious and spiritual traditions including **Orisha** (the oldest stratum of religion rooted in the native religion of Yoruba people), **Islam** (a significant portion of the African continent had been converted by the 9th century), and **Christianity** (which had come to them from

contact with Portuguese missionaries since the 1400s). By the 1770s, some were brought to their Virginia enslaver's churches. But privately, they often practiced their own religion—a hybrid of Christianity with traditions that came from West African faiths.

By the 1770s, a small number of the enslaved people here had been freed. Restricted by laws, they endured while creating community.

**8. Loudoun and the Southern Backcountry generally was a pluralistic free-thinking society.** Loudoun had settlers from multiple nations, practicing multiple faiths. They lived cheek by jowl with people of other cultures and religious beliefs. It was not a "melting pot" but more of a "patchwork quilt" in which bits and pieces of each faith and culture rubbed off on others through interaction. Many of these settlers were 'self-made' and were willing to take risks to advance. They tended to ignore traditional churches and institutions where they could. When the Church of England or the royal colonial government or Parliament got too much in their way, they became unnerved, unruly, and suspicious. They did not wish to be dominated in their economic mobility by the Tidewater gentry or a distant Parliament. Of course, neither did the upwardly mobile Tidewater gentry who had taken the risk to move from society out to Virginia's frontier!

**9. The economy of Loudoun was shifting.** *Initially*, Loudoun had two economies: (1) a grain and livestock economy of western Loudoun's farmers living on small owned or leased plots—largely a subsistence economy, and (2) a cash crop tobacco economy of eastern Loudoun's large farms heavily owned by absentee landlords and worked by the enslaved and indentured servants. The tobacco crop was shipped to London and later to Scottish ports.

**By 1775, things were *changing***—in several significant ways.

*-First*, the subsistence economy was being replaced by a new trade economy, helped along by the growth of Scots-dominated Alexandria with their Scottish connections to Leesburg. Grain and livestock were being taken on the four-day trek east to our closest major port—via a road approximately today's Route 7.

*-Second*, the tobacco economy was waning. The price of tobacco was falling as more areas grew it. The productivity of the soil in the eastern Piedmont was declining due to the thirst of

tobacco for nutrients, which were never replaced by use of fertilizer or through crop rotations (as was done by the smaller farmers of the Loudoun Valley). The gentry of eastern Loudoun and the western Piedmont was just beginning to shift to raising grain like their western Loudoun counterparts. This grain economy will pick up steam when Loudoun becomes an important breadbasket for America during the Revolution. This economy will continue after the Revolution with Loudoun as a milling giant.

**10. Loudoun's key transportation routes in 1775** were unpaved, maintained-by-the-parish roads that led to ports and ferries on the Potomac, some quite old, established prior to European settlement as trails by Indigenous peoples. They included:

• ***The ancient north-south Old Carolina Road bisected Loudoun and provided access to the ferries across the Potomac including:***

**-Edwards Ferry**, located where Goose Creek flows into the Potomac. Allowed access to the Maryland port of Georgetown.

**-Clapham's Ferry**, at the location of today's (currently inoperative) White's Ferry. Allowed access to port of Georgetown.

**-Noland's Ferry**, northeast of today's Lucketts, was the largest and most important ferry because it allowed access to Fredericktown, Annapolis, Baltimore, and crucially, Philadelphia.

**-Aubrey's Ferry**, smaller than Noland's, similarly crossed to Maryland at the Point of Rocks providing access to the north.

• ***Three roads headed east to the Potomac Ports:***

**-The old Mountain or "Colchester" Road** followed the route of today's Snickersville Turnpike from southeastern Loudoun to Snicker's Gap in the Blue Ridge at today's Bluemont. It was gradually falling out of favor by 1775 because the new town of Alexandria was replacing the older, smaller downriver port of Colchester as a trans-Atlantic shipping port.

**-Today's Route 50** existed in simple form but did not *really* take off until it was paved just after 1800 when capital was raised to build the Little River Turnpike and the Ashby's Gap Turnpike.

**-The Vestal's Gap Road** from Alexandria to Winchester came to Leesburg through the plains of eastern Loudoun, went over the mountain to Janney's Mill (Waterford), on to The Gap in the Short

Hill (today's Hillsboro), on west over the Blue Ridge at Vestal's (Key's) Gap to Charles Town, then to Middleway and on to Winchester. Hamilton, Purcellville, and Round Hill did not exist.

**11. Many Loudouners who were free did not own the land they farmed.** We often speak of having gotten a land *patent*—a lease—from Lord Fairfax or others such as the Earl of Tankerville (the latter in the Lovettsville-Taylorstown area) and paying an annual rent (often a quitrent, 20% of crop/ livestock sales value) to the landlord. Some German settlers of northern Loudoun had been given "*Three Lifetime Leases*"—a lease that could be renewed by your son and grandson but not thereafter without a new patent. Accustomed to this in the German kingdoms and principalities along the Rhine, it was a way to encourage settlement by the hard-working German-speaking newcomers. However, many Germans had *no* leases and merely squatted, putting them in an unsettled situation. Note: Quitrents were due Christmas Day in gold/silver.

**This system was in many ways a repeat of Europe's feudal system.** When it became difficult for small renting farmers to pay the expected rent in hard cash with the beginning of the American Revolution, this long-held system would be put to a harsh test. One thing was sure: Loudouners, like most Americans, were not known for patience or toleration of illogical things long done.

**Loudoun clearly was an evolving, diverse society a half century in,** particularly after the decade of massive population growth that had followed the French and Indian War. While there was a sprinkling of the Virginia Tidewater aristocracy investing here (and they dominated office-holding in the county), there were larger numbers of non-gentry, come for a better opportunity. *And they were becoming increasingly restless. A volatile situation!*

### III. Support for the American Revolution in Loudoun

**With the American Revolution, there were simmering resentments that came into play.** For example, the Church of England was resented by most Loudouners, who were Quaker, Lutheran, Evangelical Reformed, Presbyterian, or of the two

fastest-growing faiths, Methodist and Baptist. As now, interference in their lives was resented. Things imposed from afar—especially from far-away London (Parliament)—were resented. Heretofore, it had been the tradition of Parliament to allow "salutary neglect" of enforcement of pesky trade laws; local self-government had been allowed to take care of things in distant America. *Until 1763.*

**One might assume the landed gentry would be conservative** in their views—and they largely *were* on Virginia issues. But they were heavily invested in land speculation in the Ohio Valley. King George III's Proclamation of 1763 barred settlement beyond the Appalachians, hitting them hard. The new taxation, aimed at the middle and upper classes, largely, likewise struck hard. New Parliamentary policies worked to wrest control of Royal Governors into Parliament's hands. In Virginia, the House of Burgesses held power of the purse over the Governor, providing a check on his power. Losing this was of great concern. So, it was both the middle and upper classes that provided emerging patriot leaders in Loudoun. This forged alliance would be critical to independence.

**Scottish merchants** (in or near Leesburg in particular) tended toward conservatism, and some were supportive of Parliament rather than the rebellious alternative—they were *new* and uneasy, after all—but largely, they were concerned with keeping things on an even keel economically which was better for business. They saw a revolution as a threat. They were viewed with suspicion.

**Quakers**, so influential in western Loudoun, tended to steer clear of politics as much as possible. But they abhorred war and fractiousness, accordingly, avoiding the taking of sides in this dispute. Because war was at the heart of this American Revolution, Quakers largely did not endear themselves to the patriot cause because they strove to avoid fighting as well as paying the militia tax (essentially, a war tax). Those involving themselves in the war could expect to be "read out of Meeting," meaning that they would be dismissed from their congregation.

**German settlers** tended to keep to themselves, but surprisingly, became significantly involved in fighting for the patriot cause when the war came. A number of those who fought are buried near Lovettsville. We are busy researching these patriots today.

**Methodists**, largely from the rising middle class, also became involved, but mostly because of their mercantile leanings. New British policies had heavily disrupted American commerce as it had been known and hurt them economically, angering them.

**It was rebellious Baptists who became the fighting backbone** of the Revolution in Loudoun. One Baptist preacher, Reverend John Marks of Ketocin Church northwest of what is now Purcellville, was bringing in as many as 500 congregants to his outdoor services where he preached avid support for the patriot cause. His son, Captain Isaiah Marks, was inspired to join the Continental Army, becoming one of the heroes of the Revolution. He is buried there in the Ketocin churchyard.

**If one were leaning towards loyalist ("Tory") sentiments, it was clear in Loudoun that it would be for the best—and safest—to keep one's mouth shut.** This was the Southern Backcountry after all; "don't buck the crowd!" English observer, Nicholas Cresswell (enjoying a college graduation trip to America!) got stranded in Leesburg when the Revolution descended. He would comment archly in his journal, "The Happy fruits of Independence"—"the populace are grown so insolent, if you do not tacitly submit to every insult or imposition they think proper, they immediately call you a Tory and think that if you have that stigma upon your character they have a right, nay, even take it to be a meritorious act to knock your brains out . . ." A farmer named Nixon on Woodburn Farm southwest of Leesburg *did* quietly make *his* sentiments known for posterity by engraving "IHMN" in the lintel over his barn door ("*In His Majesty's Name . . .*"). It is still there.

**Research continues on enslaved and free Africans of the time.** Many actively looked to freedom—if they did, they had to choose between fleeing to distant Royal forces or joining the Continental Army, hoping their effort would be rewarded with freedom.

#### IV. How Loudoun's Physical Geography and Location Impacted its Revolutionary Experience

**Loudoun's fertile western portion**, the Loudoun Valley, will make it a crucial part of "the breadbasket of the Revolution"

growing wheat and other grains to feed both the army and the populace. Even Quakers, against war generally, will play key roles here. Because the county was inland from Virginia's coast and navigable portions of the Potomac (ships could come only as far as the port of Alexandria on the Virginia side, Georgetown on the Maryland side), the county's militia would be sent *downriver* when British naval ships headed up the Potomac threatening key towns.

**Being a major colonial thoroughfare**, the north-south Old Carolina Road was used to bring part of Washington's Army south during the Yorktown campaign of 1781 (crossing at Noland's Ferry and coming through Leesburg in June). It was used earlier to ferry prisoners taken at the 1777 Battle of Saratoga in New York south to Charlottesville to a prisoner-of-war camp. Prisoners were also transported across Loudoun after the Siege of Yorktown. Some were marched west across Ashby's Gap to Winchester, while others were taken north, crossing at Noland's Ferry to Maryland. Small numbers of prisoners were held in Leesburg occasionally throughout the conflict.

**There were, however, no battles or skirmishes here**, unlike the later Civil War. Our landmarks are subtle. Explore this guide for tour suggestions of where to visit to see our *local* war experience.

Of course, Virginia has the most important single battlefield of the American Revolution at Yorktown. It features Williamsburg, where the key decisions of protest were made by Virginia's colonial government, including the momentous decision to declare independence. And of course, it is Virginia where the homes of so many prominent Revolutionary Era Virginians are located—including those of Washington, Jefferson, Henry, Mason, and Monroe. All their homes are preserved and well worth a visit.

#### V. Loudouners' Role in the Revolutionary War

##### The military.

With Virginia joining the rebellion against the crown, she called on Virginians for military service during the war. Some volunteered for or were called up by the state for service in Washington's

Continental Army. Most Virginia men were involved in the local militia, which would be called on numerous times when the emergency of British troops or fleet approaching Virginia arose. Crucially, Loudoun's militia was involved in the Yorktown campaign of 1781. Loudoun's total number of men who served either with Washington or in the militia totaled 1,746—the highest in Virginia. Yet Loudoun's key service was strategic but non-military—the production of food (mostly grain) for the fledgling United States. Those fighting for Britain are unaccounted for.

**Continental Army regiments that saw Loudouners include:**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Regiment, Continental Army
- 8<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regiment, Continental Army
- 5<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regiment, Continental Army
- Georgia Battalion
- Gist's Regiment
- Grayson's Regiment (sometimes referred to as the 16<sup>th</sup> VA)
- There was also the Loudoun Independent Company in the Revolution's opening months, later becoming Minutemen
- And Loudoun's wartime militia companies, called for short-term service as emergencies arose

### Loudoun's Civilians

**An agricultural county, Loudoun experienced the Revolution most heavily on the farm.** Grain was crucial to feed the Army, the populace, and even when it could be exported or sent to feed other colonies. This kept local farm families very busy and kept demand high. When a man enlisted, his family, his wife, parents, children, all felt the loss of his labor strongly. Those in the Continental Army were away for as many as eight years! Even when the militia was called up to defend the Commonwealth, the family had to continue to run the farm. Drives were orchestrated to raise funds and firewood for families with soldiers away.

**There were also key shortages**, especially of salt and hard currency resulting in massive inflation. Some women and their families followed the men into the army, serving as laundresses, nurses, and in other non-combatant roles. They received pay and

rations from the army for these services. There were enslaved people, too, vital to agricultural production throughout the war.

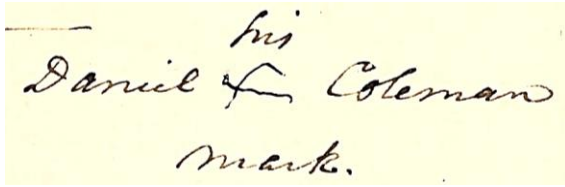
**It is clear that the fortunes of war intensely rose or plunged morale here at home.** When news arrived in Loudoun of the Christmas 1776 venture by Washington crossing the Delaware with his victories at Trenton and Princeton, English diarist Nicholas Cresswell observed in his journal, "*News that Washington ha[s] taken 760 Hessian prisoners at Trenton in the Jerseys . . . The minds of the people are much altered. A few days ago they had given up the cause for lost. Their late success has turned the scale and now they are all liberty mad again. Their Recruiting parties could not get a man . . . no longer since than last week, and now the men are coming in by companies . . .*"

### Loudoun's Enslaved Population.

**Loudoun's enslaved people faced a difficult choice.** Royal Governor Dunmore issued a proclamation in November 1775 offering *freedom* to “any enslaved or indentured person belonging to a rebel household” willing to fight for the Crown. Complicating things for the enslaved in Loudoun considering taking this chance was the mere *distance* to Lord Dunmore's royal forces based in Norfolk at the time, later at Gwynn's Island near the mouth of the Rappahannock—nowhere near. Occasional raids by British land or sea forces and the 1781 invasion of Virginia by now-British General Benedict Arnold via the James River still presented no easy way to join them—again, there is the *distance* factor. Of the approximately 2,000 men, women, and children joining Lord Dunmore here in Virginia, no Loudouners have yet to be identified, likely a result of the aforementioned distance factor. Surviving Black loyalists were evacuated to Nova Scotia after the war.

**Most enslaved people in Loudoun farmed, helping provide the necessities for Washington's Army.** *But some enslaved people actually served in the Continental Army*, including in combat roles. Additionally, some white officers brought along enslaved servants. Enslaved people and free Black people also served as substitutes for men called up to militia or Continental Army service as the war progressed.

Mark of Loudoun  
Continental Army veteran  
Daniel Coleman, an African  
American freeman applying  
for a pension at age 93. He  
fought at Yorktown.  
[COURTESY LOUDOUN  
COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE]

A handwritten signature on a yellowed piece of paper. The signature reads "Daniel Coleman" in cursive, with "his" written above it and "mark." written below it.

Some historians point to Lord Dunmore's 1775 proclamatory offer of freedom to enslaved people who would join him beneath the royal standard as a turning point in Virginia of any hope for emancipation as a goal of the Revolutionary movement here. Those fighting for independence would now fight to retain slave property out of fear of the potential prompted by Dunmore's proclamation for a massive insurrection by enslaved people.

## VI. Some Key Loudoun Players During the Revolution

**Reverend John Marks** was born in Pennsylvania in 1716, but like many others moved south to Loudoun in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Western Loudoun had many of the new Baptist sect, mostly rural, often tenants, and typically dissatisfied by the domination of the Church of England. An outspoken supporter of the revolutionary cause, from his pulpit at Ketocin Baptist Church John Marks encouraged his congregation to support Washington's Army. At mass meetings held at Ketocin, the how and why of the patriot cause was plumbed. These were even attended by delegations from the German settlement of northwest Loudoun. Moved by his vigorous preaching, several of his sons went on to serve with the Continental Army including **Captain Isaiah Marks**, wounded at Monmouth Courthouse in 1778, yet still serving until the end of the war. Capt. Marks walked home when the Continental Army was disbanded in the late fall of 1784. Arriving just in time for Christmas, he was dead by January 1785, never marrying, having a family, or seeing the fruits of his labors. He is buried at Ketocin Church in the graveyard that surrounds it, his grave well-marked.

**John Champe** grew up near Aldie and enlisted in the cavalry early in the war. He was later transferred to Lee's Partisan Legion, a unit formed for special operations against the British.

In 1780, Champe was personally chosen by General Washington for a daring mission to capture the former American general and now traitor Benedict Arnold at New York City. Champe's plans were disrupted when Arnold was sent by the British to invade Virginia. Although he ultimately failed to catch Arnold, Champe was nevertheless hailed as a spy and Revolutionary hero. There is a little-known monument to him in a field west of Aldie.

**Charles West** was the son of a prominent northern Virginia landowner and tavernkeeper. In the 1760s he took over running the family ordinary (tavern) at the intersection of the Carolina and Colchester Roads, near Aldie—West's Ordinary. George Washington frequented it during his surveying career and the two men became close friends. During the War for Independence, West raised one of the first companies of Minutemen, who became soldiers of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Regiment. He served as their Captain. West's Loudouners fought with Washington in some of the most famous battles of the war, including the Battle of Brandywine.

**Leven Powell** served on Loudoun County's Committee of Safety, helping to direct local resistance to Britain in the years leading up to the Revolution. With the war, he received a commission as the Lieutenant Colonel of Grayson's Additional Continental Regiment (the 16<sup>th</sup> Virginia), which included many men from Loudoun and nearby counties. Becoming extremely ill at Valley Forge, he had to return to Virginia. In the late 1780s, he founded Middleburg.

**Anthony Wayne** was one of George Washington's most active generals. For much of the war he commanded the Pennsylvania Line, and in the spring of 1781, he marched over 1,000 of his men southward across Virginia to reinforce Lafayette resisting the invasion of the new Commonwealth by British troops under Lord Cornwallis. Wayne and his soldiers crossed the Potomac into Loudoun at Noland's Ferry, passed through Leesburg, then continued south along the Old Carolina Road. A marked remnant of their route on the original roadway exists at Mt. Zion Historic Park east of Aldie which you can still walk.

**James Monroe**, as a William & Mary student, helped seize the Royal Governor's palace in June of 1776. He enlisted with the 3<sup>rd</sup>

Virginia Regiment, serving between 1776 and 1778. At the Battle of Trenton, he was one of the officers leading the advance troops across the Delaware River and into Trenton, where he was badly wounded in the fighting. He was a key officer in 1778 at the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse. Retiring from the military in 1778, he served in various political roles on the state and national level. Serving as President of the United States from 1817 to 1825, he worked to unite the country in memory of the Revolutionary generation. He became famous for his Monroe Doctrine governing U.S. foreign policy in the western hemisphere. During his second term, he developed his country house, Oak Hill, south of Leesburg, where he retired from the White House.

**Francis Peyton** was a northern Virginia planter who took a leading role in Revolutionary politics during the 1770s. He served on the Loudoun Committee of Safety and in 1774 was chosen to lead the freeholders meeting at Leesburg to draft the Loudoun Resolves. Written in response to the British occupation of Boston, the Resolves emphasized Loudoun County's commitment to supporting the colonial cause. Peyton also represented Loudoun County at the Virginia Conventions and in the House of Delegates.

**Josiah Clapham** was active in local politics as well as serving as an officer in the County militia. He played a role in drafting the Loudoun Resolves and served on the Committee of Safety. Since Clapham owned the crossing at Noland's Ferry and maintained a supply depot for the army there, he was crucial to the war effort.

**Daniel Coleman** was a free African American man who enlisted in the Continental Army over in Maryland in 1781, serving at the siege of Yorktown. He was discharged in Loudoun in late 1781. At the age of 93 and unable to work, he filed a claim at the Loudoun courthouse to prove he served during the war and could receive a Revolutionary War pension. The application is still archived at the Loudoun County Clerk's Office.

**Marquis de Lafayette** is one of the most famous heroes of the American Revolution. As a teenager this French nobleman came to America and pledged his life to the cause of liberty. He passed through Loudoun in early 1781 with troops heading south to

defend Virginia from British invasion. In August 1825 he returned to Loudoun during his nationwide tour and was grandly received in Leesburg alongside President John Quincy Adams and former President James Monroe.

**Nicholas Cresswell** came to Virginia from his native England in 1774 and was best known for keeping a candid diary of his travels in America. After travelling to the Ohio River (to see *buffalo!*) he returned back east to find the colonies at war with Great Britain. Suspected of being a spy, he was placed under close confinement in Leesburg. His diary—still in print—is one of the best period sources for information on Loudoun in the Revolutionary era. Having just graduated college, Cresswell gave us an eye to British loyalist attitudes—and the saucy life of a college-age Englishman.

**General Daniel Morgan** would become a key leader of riflemen in George Washington's Continental Army, playing a decisive role in the battles of Saratoga and Cowpens. Western Loudouners were recruited often into this regiment. He lived in Clarke County after the Revolutionary War. He was a well-known wagoner beforehand.

**Baroness Riedesel** was the wife of Baron Friedrich Riedesel, a German officer in British service. She and her young children shared in the hardships of the Saratoga Campaign, where her husband was captured along with the rest of the British Army. The Baroness traveled with these British/German prisoners to camps in the Shenandoah Valley. Crossing the Potomac at Noland's Ferry, she wrote of the beautiful, wild scenery as she crossed Loudoun.

**James Cleveland** was a former overseer for George Washington who came to fame in November 1775 by urging Loudoun's many tenant farmers to strike. Perhaps as many as a third of Loudoun's free farmers did not own the land they farmed, leasing it from the likes of Lord Fairfax or the Earl of Tankerville, huge property owners in Loudoun. The farmers joining Cleveland were protesting the fact that paying rents due on Christmas Day in gold or silver was an impossibility with trade cut off from Britain by the war. They were also refusing to pay the new militia tax so long as officers were paid so much more than enlisted soldiers. The unrest continued until early spring 1776, settled for the moment by a mix

of intimidation and accommodation from Loudoun's Committee of Safety. Some feared this rising a warning.

**Peter Muhlenberg** hailed from Dunmore County, Virginia (renamed Shenandoah County once the war began given Governor Dunmore's proclamation of rebellion) but had a huge impact on Loudouners in the German settlements. A Lutheran pastor ordained in the Anglican Church as required in Virginia, he preached well beyond his Woodstock, Virginia church. In January 1776 at Woodstock, he preached "*To everything there is a season*" from Ecclesiastes, removed his pastoral robes to reveal a military uniform, and within a short time raised nearly 300 Virginian Germans for the American cause, the nucleus of the 8<sup>th</sup> Virginia Regiment of the Continental Army. Inspiring other Virginia Germans—including from Loudoun—to join he became one of the best-known generals in Washington's Army.

## VII. Chronology of the Revolutionary Era in Loudoun

**1722**—Native Americans forced to leave Loudoun with the Treaty of Albany, opening the area to European settlement.

**1731**—the first permanent European settlers arrive in Loudoun.

**1754**—Loudoun has some 6,000 new residents, both Black and white. The French & Indian War begins on the western frontier over competing claims by New France, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

**1755**—French-led Native American attacks explode in the nearby Shenandoah Valley; refugees stream to the Great Road-Carolina Road crossroads to establish a tent camp they name "Georgetown".

**1757**—Loudoun County is created out of western Fairfax to provide for a more local county militia to protect residents. The new county is proudly named for the Commander of His Majesty's Forces in North America, John Campbell, the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Loudoun.

**1762**—Leesburg, the former refugee camp called Georgetown, is incorporated as a town, and becomes Loudoun's new county seat.

**1763**—France is defeated, surrendering New France to Great Britain. King George III issues the Proclamation of 1763 limiting American expansion west of the Alleghenies due to "Indian unrest", infuriating Virginians including George Washington, who have land claims in the Ohio Valley. Land pressure grows here.

**1765**—To pay war debts and station 10,000 troops here to keep the peace, Parliament passes the Stamp Act, a tax on whatever uses paper (books, legal documents, newspapers, and more), the first time Parliament has clearly taxed Americans. Used to taxation only by their own colony where they are represented in their own assemblies, Americans are furious—and suspicious. Massive protests—some violent—and boycotts of British goods result.

**1766**—Widespread American protest leads Parliament to withdraw the Stamp Act. But the Declaratory Act is simultaneously passed, maintaining Parliament's right to "*legislate in all cases whatsoever*" which leaves colonists confused as to whether they had won!

**1767**—Townshend Duties on paper, paint, lead, glass, and tea going to America are passed by Parliament to replace the Stamp Act. Massive American protests and boycotts (of tea!) follow.

**1768**—British troops are sent to occupy restive Boston due to the protests over the Townshend Duties as Loudoun watches.

**1770**—Boston Massacre by British troops. Crispus Attucks, African American whaler and sailor, becomes the first casualty.

**1772**—Loudoun's pluralistic population numbers nearly 14,000.

**1773**—Inter-county inter-colonial Committees of Correspondence are created—this is Virginia's idea—to share news and ideas of colonial resistance. Parliament passes the Tea Act reducing tea prices, selling only to appointed loyalist merchants while retaining the tea tax. Americans work to ensure British East India Company tea is not unloaded with help of interconnecting Committees of Correspondence. Tea is turned back at Charleston, Philadelphia, and later New York. But at Boston, with British troops to unload it, the tea must be thrown into the harbor before they can. This "Boston Tea Party" electrifies the eastern seaboard. *Now what?*

**1774**—Parliament closes the Port of Boston, sends the Royal Navy and thousands more British troops to occupy the city, and the Massachusetts ancient representative government is disbanded. The western frontier is given to the formerly French province of Quebec, nullifying Virginians' land claims. Loudouners meet at the courthouse and pass the Loudoun Resolves on June 14<sup>th</sup> vehemently protesting these actions. The First Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia in September. By the end of the year, an extra-legal Loudoun Independent Militia is formed.

**1775**—March 23rd the Third Virginia Convention votes to arm the colony in defense of Virginia Rights. News of the violent events at Lexington & Concord arrives from Alexandria on April 28<sup>th</sup>. *War has started*. Minutemen are formed in Virginia to supplement the militia; Virginia provides its first regiments to the Continental Army to be led by George Washington. One company under Capt. Charles West is from Loudoun. Washington's Army lays siege to Boston with help from Virginia and Maryland riflemen. Royal Governor Dunmore declares the colonists in revolt and invites the enslaved population to rally around the royal standard in exchange for their freedom on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Virginians win their first major fight at the Battle of Great Bridge outside Norfolk on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

**1776**—The year begins with the "Tenants Revolt" led by James Cleveland. Tenant farmers' rents are due in gold or silver at the end of 1775; they refuse to pay them pending changes in the system, inferring they will not fight for the Patriot cause otherwise. This is settled peacefully. Virginia declares its independence in May and begins to set up a new government. The united colonies declare their independence in July in Philadelphia. On August 12th, the Declaration is read at the courthouse in Leesburg. Loudouners fight in Washington's Army at Long Island and Harlem Heights; New York City nevertheless falls to the British forces. Loudouners join Washington in crossing the Delaware and defeat the British at Trenton New Jersey over Christmas. Future President James Monroe is badly wounded but saved by an enslaved man born in Prince William. Local militia and Minutemen units expand and regularly drill at the courthouse despite a shortage of weapons.

**1777**—Local "Tories" (loyal to the Crown) have learned to be silent or be arrested or beaten at the behest of the Loudoun Committee of Safety. Quakers (who don't believe in war) refuse to pay the militia tax, angering many. Salt shortages and massive inflation make the population restive. Loudouners in Washington's Continental Army play major roles in the Battle of Brandywine southwest of Philadelphia in September, saving Washington's Continental Army from full-scale disaster although Philadelphia still falls to the British. Americans win the crucial Battle of Saratoga in upstate New York preventing British forces from splitting America in two and winning France's support going forward. British prisoners-of-war including many of their Hessian allies are marched through Leesburg on the way to a POW camp at Charlottesville. Loudoun's farmers help the region become the "Breadbasket of the Revolution"; women and children play an outside role in keeping the farms going while many men are away.

**1778**—Loudouners spend a miserable winter with Washington's Army at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Later Loudoun resident and future fifth President Colonel James Monroe helps win the crucial Battle of Monmouth Courthouse, New Jersey. Loudoun hero Captain Isaiah Marks is seriously wounded there but stays on.

**1778-80**—The war turns south to Georgia and South Carolina; Charleston falls. Fortunes seem grim; draft and militia taxes put heavy pressure on Loudoun in addition to regular militia call-ups to defend Alexandria when British naval vessels come upriver.

**1779**—General Henry Clinton, in command of British forces in North America and based at New York City, issues the "Freedom and a Farm" proclamation bringing large numbers of enslaved people to the Crown. Farmland is to be seized from the Patriots. At the end of the war, however, that land is reclaimed by the Patriots.

**1780-81**—Loudoun Continental Army Sergeant John Champe is given a special mission by George Washington to capture the former American-general-turned-traitor Benedict Arnold at New York City but Arnold sails with the British Army to Virginia to attack Richmond with Champe in tow. This foils the plan. Champe nonetheless becomes an American hero.

**1781**—Theatre of War shifts to Virginia with invasion along the James River by British General Benedict Arnold in January. Part of Washington's Army under General Anthony Wayne is dispatched in the spring to help General Lafayette stave off Arnold's invasion. They cross the Potomac at Noland's Ferry and use the Old Carolina Road to march through Loudoun. British General Lord Cornwallis moves his army from North Carolina to Virginia's Peninsula at Yorktown in the late spring. Loudoun's militia is called up for the emergency as soldiers from the Continental Army march south from New York. Americans together with French allies lay siege to Yorktown until General Cornwallis surrenders some 7,000 soldiers on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Part of Cornwallis' defeated army is marched up through Fauquier to Ashby's Gap to a prisoner-of-war camp over the Blue Ridge at Winchester, skirting Loudoun. Others are marched through Loudoun into Maryland.

**1782**—Loyalist property is being seized in Virginia in the wake of the perceived end to the fighting.

**1783**—Treaty of Paris is signed in September ending the war. The Treaty mandates Loyalist property be returned. But will it be?

**1784**—Loudouners in Washington's Continental Army are kept at Newburgh, New York until November. They arrive home at the end of the year. Loudoun hero Capt. Isaiah Marks dies just weeks after arriving home having served 8 years in the Continental Army.

**1786**—Thomas Jefferson's Statute on Religious Freedom is passed by Virginia's General Assembly. In Loudoun, Lutherans, German Reformed, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Quakers rejoice.

## VIII. RESOURCES to use during the Virginia250

### Places to visit:

#### **In Virginia:**

- Colonial Williamsburg
- Yorktown Battlefield
- The American Revolution Museum at Yorktown
- Jamestown Settlement

- Mount Vernon (home of General Washington)
- Scotchtown in Hanover County (home of Patrick Henry)
- Monticello (home of Thomas Jefferson)
- Gunston Hall (home of George Mason)

#### **In Loudoun:**

-Leesburg and Waterford have a number of Revolutionary Era buildings. They are the two population centers of the time. Others dot the landscape. Two **downloadable digital resources** have been prepared for your touring use during the 250 that will help you on explore Loudoun's Revolutionary War Era landscape:

#### 1. "**Loudoun County's Revolutionary Landscape**":

A story map prepared by Thomas Balch Library of History & Genealogy teaming with the Virginia Piedmont Heritage Area. It takes you to a half-dozen key Loudoun Revolutionary Era "must-sees":

[storvmaps.arcgis.com/stories/9028461e55c745b78d56a9744cca8094](https://www.storvmaps.arcgis.com/stories/9028461e55c745b78d56a9744cca8094)

#### 2. "**Loudoun County in the Revolutionary War**":

A walking tour of Leesburg's Revolutionary Era sites coupled with a driving tour of sites in the county:

<https://www.piedmontheritage.org/s/LoudounintheRevolutionforONLINEposting.pdf>

#### **Books to Read to update understanding of the Revolution:**

Robert Allison. *The American Revolution: A Concise History*. (2011)

Rick Atkinson. *The British Are Coming*. (2019)

Bernard Bailyn. *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*. Fiftieth Anniversary Edition. (2017)

Karen Cook Bell. *Running from Bondage*. (2021)

Carol Berkin. *Revolutionary Mothers: Women in the Struggle for America's Independence*. (2005)

Ira Berlin and Ronald Hoffmann. *Slavery and Freedom in the Age of the American Revolution*. (1983)

- H. W. Brands. *Our First Civil War: Patriots and Loyalists in the American Revolution*. (2021)
- T. H. Breen. *The Will of the People: The Revolutionary Birth of America*. (2019)
- Nick Bunker. *An Empire on the Edge: How Britain Came to Fight America*. (2014)
- Ron Chernow. *Washington: A Life*. (2010)
- Benjamin Carp. *Defiance of the Patriots: The Boston Tea Party and the Making of America*. (2010)
- Mary Louise Clifford. *From Slavery to Freetown: Black Loyalists after the American Revolution*. (2006)
- Eric Jay Dolin. *Rebels at Sea: Privateering in the American Revolution*. (2022)
- Joseph Ellis. *The Cause: The American Revolution and Its Discontents*. (2021)
- David Hackett Fischer. *Paul Revere's Ride*. (1994)
- Eric Foner. *The Story of American Freedom*. (1998)
- William Fowler. *American Crisis: George Washington and the Dangerous Two Years After Yorktown, 1781-1783*. (2011)
- Allen Gilbert. *Black Patriots and Loyalists: Fighting for Emancipation in the War for Independence*. (2012)
- Eliga Gould. *The Persistence of Empire: British Political Culture in the Age of the American Revolution*. (2000)
- Robert Graves. *Sergeant Lamb's America*. (1940)
- Robert Ewell Greene. *Black Courage, 1775-1783: Documentation of the Black Participation in the American Revolution*. (1984)
- Joan Gunderson. *To be Useful to the World: Women in Revolutionary America*. (2006)
- Robert A. Gross. *The Minutemen and Their World*. (2022)
- Christopher Hibbert. *Redcoats and Rebels: The American Revolution Through British Eyes*. (1990)
- Maya Jasanoff. *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World*. (2011)
- Sidney and Emma Kaplan. *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution*. (1989)
- Richard Ketchum. *Saratoga: Turning Point of America's Revolutionary War*. (1997)
- Jill Lepore. *The Story of America: Essays on Origins*. (2012)
- Joyce Malcolm. *The Times That Try Men's Souls: The Adams, the Quincys, and the Battle for Loyalty in the American Revolution*. (2003)
- Joseph Plumb Martin. *Narrative of a Revolutionary Soldier: The Narrative of Joseph Plumb Martin*. (2006)
- David McCullough. *1776*. (2006)
- Marla Miller. *Betsy Ross and the Making of America*. (2010)
- Gary Nash. *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America*. (2006)
- Mary Beth Norton. *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800*. (1980)
- Mary Beth Norton. *1774: The Long Year of Revolution*. (2020)
- Thomas Paine. *Common Sense*. (1776, republished since)
- Nathaniel Philbrick. *Bunker Hill: A City, A Siege, A Revolution*. (2013)
- Nathaniel Philbrick. *Valiant Ambition: George Washington, Benedict Arnold, and the Fate of the American Revolution*. (2016)
- Kevin Phillips. *1775: A Good Year for Revolution*. (2012)
- Benjamin Quarles. *The Negro in the American Revolution*. (1973)

Ray Raphael. *The First American Revolution: Before Lexington and Concord*. (1990, 2002)

Ray Raphael with Marie Raphael. *The Spirit of '74: How the American Revolution Began*. (2015)

John U. Rees. *They Were Good Soldiers: African-Americans Serving in the Continental Army, 1775-1783*. (2019)

Stacy Schiff. *The Revolutionary Samuel Adams*. (2022)

Alan Taylor. *American Revolutions: A Continental History, 1750-1804*. (2021)

Phillip Thomas Tucker. *Brothers in Liberty: The Forgotten Story of the Free Black Haitians who Fought for American Independence*. (2023)

Judith Van Buskirk. *Standing in their Own Light: African-American Patriots in the American Revolution*. (2017)

Alfred Young. *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party*. (1999)

Alfred Young, Gary Nash, Ray Raphael. *Revolutionary Founders: Rebels, Radicals, & Reformers in the Making of a Nation*. (2011)

***Our thanks for book suggestions to Jayne Gordon and Alicia Cohen***

### **Books to zero in on Revolutionary Virginia:**

Michael Cecere. *Williamsburg at War: Virginia's Colonial Capital in the Revolutionary War*. (2023)

Michael Cecere. *In This Time of Extreme Danger: Northern Virginia in the American Revolution*. (2007)

Michael Cecere. *The Invasion of Virginia, 1781*. (2017)

Woody Holton. *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors and Slaves in the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia*. (1999).

Michael A. McDonnell. *The Politics of War: Race, Class, and Conflict in Revolutionary Virginia*. (2012).

John Selby. *The Revolution in Virginia, 1775-1783*. (1988)

### **And always a resource on Loudoun:**

Charles Poland. *From Frontier to Suburbia: Loudoun County Virginia, One of America's Fastest Growing Counties*. (2024)  
This was a Bicentennial project, updated regularly ever since.

### **Books for kids to read on the American Revolution**

The Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia has an annual kids' summer reading list we particularly like. Visit [www.amrevmuseum.org/learn-and-explore/read-the-revolution](http://www.amrevmuseum.org/learn-and-explore/read-the-revolution). Their staff, well-versed in working with school groups and homeschoolers, suggests these four books:

1. Janis Herbert. *The American Revolution for Kids*. Surprisingly Virginia-centric, this works very nicely with children ages 6-11.
2. Stuart Murray. *Eyewitness American Revolution*. Lots of eyewitness accounts, good pictures, and graphics and lots of fun facts, good for later projects! Best for ages 9-12 years old.
3. Anne Rockwell. *A Spy Called James: The True Story of James Lafayette, Revolutionary War Double Agent*. Virginia-centric, this is the story of an enslaved man who spied for George Washington then still had to fight for his personal freedom. Best for ages 7-11.
4. Lauren Tarshis. *I survived the American Revolution*. A boy is caught in the middle of a Revolutionary War battlefield! Takes place in New York City and surrounds. Best for ages 8-12.

### **Videos to view with your family during the Virginia250:**

Ken Burns' *The American Revolution*. (2025; 6-part PBS mini-series, will likely premier then be additionally broadcast during the 250).

*Black Patriots, Heroes of the Revolution*. (2020; History Channel film available at Loudoun County Public Libraries; use Kanopy)

*Ben Franklin's World*. (Colonial Williamsburg Podcast)

*The Revolution*. (2006; 13-part History Channel mini-series)

## **Websites to visit focusing on Virginia and Loudoun:**

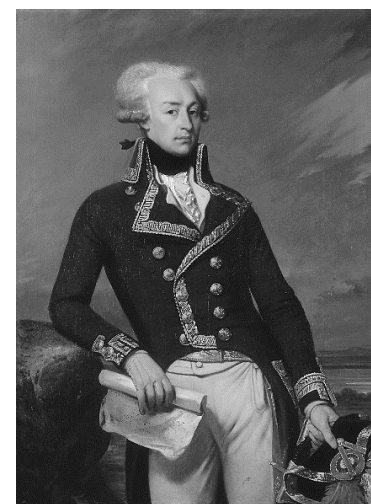
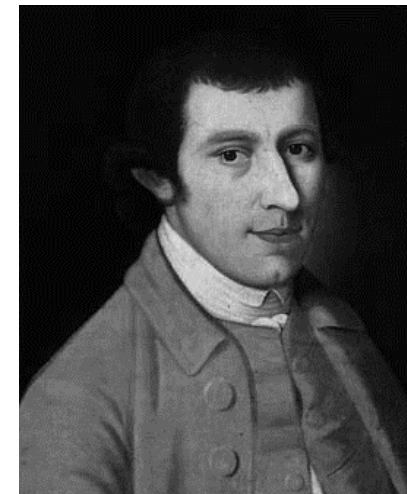
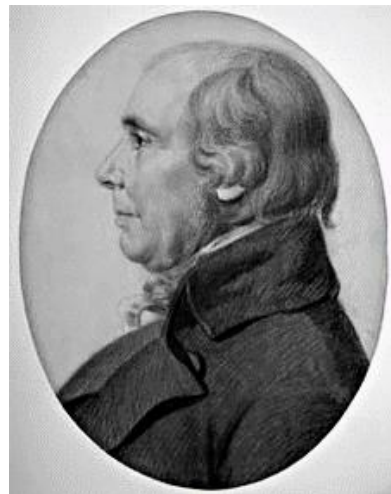
- Loudoun VA250: [\*\*loudoun.gov/5889/Loudoun-Virginia-250\*\*](http://loudoun.gov/5889/Loudoun-Virginia-250)
- Concerning the establishment of the Virginia250 Committee: [\*\*law.lis.virginia.gov/vacodefull/title30/chapter66/\*\*](http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacodefull/title30/chapter66/)
- Statewide calendar of events: [\*\*va250.org\*\*](http://va250.org)
- The Loudoun County Board of Supervisor's 250 Resolution: [\*\*loudoun.gov/loudounva250\*\*](http://loudoun.gov/loudounva250)
- Upcoming Loudoun 250 events on Visit Loudoun's website: [\*\*visitloudoun.org/loudoun250/\*\*](http://visitloudoun.org/loudoun250/)
- Historic sites to visit for the American Revolution in Virginia: [\*\*virginia.org/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/the-american-revolution/\*\*](http://virginia.org/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/the-american-revolution/)
- The Thomas Balch Library of History and Genealogy (Loudoun collections & online research information): [\*\*leesburgva.gov/departments/thomas-balch-library\*\*](http://leesburgva.gov/departments/thomas-balch-library)
- American Ancestors: [\*\*americanancestors.org\*\*](http://americanancestors.org)
- Black Loyalists in Nova Scotia: [\*\*archives.Novascotia.ca/africans/results/?Search=&SearchList1=2\*\*](http://archives.Novascotia.ca/africans/results/?Search=&SearchList1=2)
- Patriots of Color Archive, Museum of the American Revolution: [\*\*amrevmuseum.org/patriots-of-color-archive-black-and-indigenous-soldiers-in-the-revolutionary-war\*\*](http://amrevmuseum.org/patriots-of-color-archive-black-and-indigenous-soldiers-in-the-revolutionary-war)
- Aldie Mill / NOVA Parks: [\*\*novaparks.com/parks/aldie-mill-historic-park\*\*](http://novaparks.com/parks/aldie-mill-historic-park)
- The George C. Marshall International Center: [\*\*https://www.georgecmarshall.org/dodona\*\*](https://www.georgecmarshall.org/dodona)
- Historic Leesburg Walking Tours: [\*\*leesburgva.gov/visitors/walking-tours\*\*](http://leesburgva.gov/visitors/walking-tours)
- Leesburg Historic District: [\*\*va250.org/placestovisit-detail/?id=673\*\*](http://va250.org/placestovisit-detail/?id=673)

- Loudoun County history topics: [\*\*loudounhistory.org\*\*](http://loudounhistory.org)
- Loudoun County Historic Records & Deed Research: [\*\*loudoun.gov/2165/Historic-Records-Deed-Research\*\*](http://loudoun.gov/2165/Historic-Records-Deed-Research)  
(Search for "Little Gems", see *Events, Research Tips & Exhibits*)
- The Loudoun Museum: [\*\*loudounmuseum.org\*\*](http://loudounmuseum.org)
- The Loudoun Heritage Farm Museum: [\*\*heritagefarmmuseum.org\*\*](http://heritagefarmmuseum.org)
- Loudoun County Historic Cemeteries and Burial Grounds: [\*\*loudoungis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a1dd82ddca764a52a336d6d675e35d9f\*\*](http://loudoungis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a1dd82ddca764a52a336d6d675e35d9f)
- The Loudoun 1725 Gravel Grinder – Scenic bike ride along historic gravel roads in lush Loudoun County: [\*\*ex2adventures.com/cycling/loudoun-1725-gravel-grinder/\*\*](http://ex2adventures.com/cycling/loudoun-1725-gravel-grinder/)
- The Lovettsville Historical Society & Museum: [\*\*lovettsvillehistoricalsociety.org\*\*](http://lovettsvillehistoricalsociety.org)
- Morven Park Calendar of Events: [\*\*morvenpark.org/about/calendarofevents.html\*\*](http://morvenpark.org/about/calendarofevents.html)
- Daughters of the American Revolution Websites:  
National site: [\*\*dar.org\*\*](http://dar.org)  
Virginia site: [\*\*virginiadar.org\*\*](http://virginiadar.org)
- Oatlands: [\*\*oatlands.org\*\*](http://oatlands.org)
- Sgt. Major John Champe Chapter Sons of the American Revolution: [\*\*johnchampe-sar.org/\*\*](http://johnchampe-sar.org/)
- Temple Hall Regional Park: [\*\*novaparks.com/parks/temple-hall-farm-regional-park\*\*](http://novaparks.com/parks/temple-hall-farm-regional-park)
- The Waterford Foundation: [\*\*waterfordfoundation.org\*\*](http://waterfordfoundation.org)
- Virginia Piedmont Heritage Area historic driving tours and scavenger hunts in Loudoun:  
[\*\*piedmontheritage.org/driving-tours\*\*](http://piedmontheritage.org/driving-tours)  
[\*\*piedmontheritage.org/scavenger-hunts\*\*](http://piedmontheritage.org/scavenger-hunts)

## IX. Ways *You* Can Participate during the Virginia250:

1. **Introduce the story of *your* family's journey to freedom** to your kids. Share those fabulous tales your family has saved up!
2. **Watch Ken Burns 6-part series *The American Revolution*** when it airs and talk about it with family and friends. And READ!
3. **Read the Declaration of Independence.** Next 4<sup>th</sup> of July, attend one of the public Declaration readings in Loudoun—there are usually three or more in various places in the county, all free.
4. **Visit Colonial Williamsburg** and interact with the Nation Builders—Washington, Jefferson, Patrick Henry, George Mason, the Marquis de Lafayette. Then go to the nearby American Revolution Museum at Yorktown and the 1781 Yorktown Battlefield (in Colonial National Historical Park). Great for kids!
5. **Visit Virginia historic sites** to learn the story of the American Revolution—Washington's Mount Vernon, Jefferson's Monticello, Patrick Henry's Scotchtown and Red Hill, George Mason's Gunston Hall, and here in Loudoun, James Monroe's Oak Hill (when it opens!). Also see Old Town Alexandria, Fredericksburg, and St. John's Church in Richmond where Patrick Henry gave his "Give me Liberty or give me death!" speech on the eve of war.
6. **Take an American Revolution walking tour of your county seat, Leesburg.** A detailed walking (and driving) tour can be downloaded for free at: [piedmontheritage.org/driving-tours](http://piedmontheritage.org/driving-tours)
7. **Do the pilgrimage to Independence Hall** and other nation-building sites in Philadelphia. Visit the sites that tell the story of the birth of the Revolution at Boston, Lexington, and Concord.
8. **Attend special programs and lectures on the Revolution** in Loudoun offered by the Loudoun Virginia250 and its partners including the Lovettsville Historical Society, Loudoun Museum, Loudoun Heritage Farm Museum, Thomas Balch Library of History and Genealogy, Virginia Piedmont Heritage Area, and others.  
We list official events at: [va250.org/localevents/Loudoun](http://va250.org/localevents/Loudoun).

## X. A Sampling of Loudoun PEOPLE in the Revolution:



**TOP LEFT: Leven Powell**—served on Loudoun Committee of Safety, officer in Washington's Continental Army. Served with other Loudouners at Valley Forge.

**TOP RIGHT: Nicholas Cresswell**—recent English college graduate and diarist arriving in Loudoun in late 1774; critical observer of the Loudoun scene.

**BOTTOM LEFT: General Anthony Wayne**—led troops across the Potomac at Noland's Ferry on the Old Carolina Road through Loudoun in June 1781 to assist Lafayette confronting Benedict Arnold's troops here in Virginia.

**BOTTOM RIGHT: The Marquis de Lafayette** arrived from France to assist the American cause in 1777 becoming a general. He revisited Loudoun in 1825.

**XI. A Sampling of Loudoun PLACES in the Revolution:**



Loudoun's Courthouse Square in Leesburg (above) saw the 1774 drawing up of the Loudoun Resolves and the later drilling of the militia during the Revolution. The current courthouse is the third on the site, dating to 1894. There is a monument and signage to the Revolution here on the courthouse grounds.



**THE ESCAPE OF SERGEANT CHAMPE.**

In the endeavour to carry out Washington's plan to capture Arnold and to save the life of the traitors victim, the gallant Major Andre, 1780.

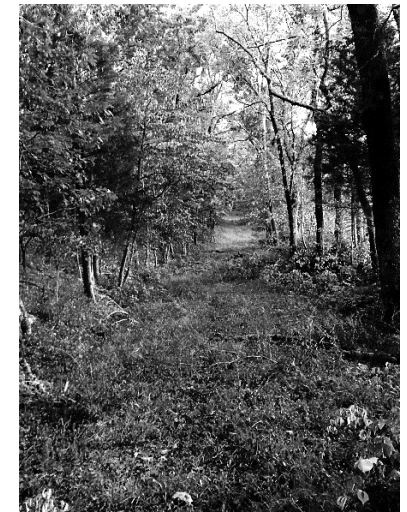


**Sergeant John Champe** (top) was Loudoun's certifiable war hero. As an American spy, he tried to corner and capture the former American officer and traitor Benedict Arnold in early 1781. A small stone monument marks the site of his home west of Aldie.



**Col. James Monroe** (above) served with Washington, was wounded at Trenton, was a hero at Monmouth Courthouse, and ultimately became our Fifth President. He built Oak Hill near Aldie, retiring there in 1825.

**Loudoun Revolutionary war militiaman** (at right)— Revolutionary War historian Travis Shaw models the fighting kit of a Loudoun militiaman during the conflict. The militia was called up for service on a number of occasions to protect Virginia. Loudoun had a very large militia, one of the largest in Virginia. Most farmed for the cause when not called.



**Grave of Capt. Isaiah Marks at Kectoctin Church** (above left) Joining the Continental Army in 1776, wounded at Monmouth Courthouse in 1778, he nevertheless, fought to the end, returning home in late 1784, dying a month later. Loudoun had 1,746 men fight in the Revolutionary War for the patriot cause.

**Old Carolina Road trace** (above left) used by Anthony Wayne's men in June of 1781 racing to Lafayette's aid visible at Mt. Zion Historic Park east of Aldie.



**Fairfax Friends Meeting at Waterford.** Quakers were a significant force in Loudoun during the Revolutionary era. They did not believe in war and stayed out of this one, refusing to pay the militia tax or respond to any draft making them grossly unpopular. Quakers had settled a good deal of western Loudoun. Today, Waterford is a restored historic village, an effort of many years.



**McCabe's Ordinary** in Leesburg was the first to hear news of the Lexington alarm brought by an express rider from Alexandria nine days after the opening shots of April 19, 1775. "*Bloody Butchery by British Troops!*" was what the carried broadside reported. Loudouners would be eager to respond in kind.

## *RESOLVED . . .*

*"Resolved,* That it is beneath the dignity of free men to submit to any tax not imposed on them in the usual manner, by representatives of their own choosing.

*"Resolved,* That we will, with our lives and fortunes, assist and support . . . every part of North America that may fall under the immediate hand of oppression, until a redress of all our grievances shall be procured, and our common liberties established on a permanent foundation.

*June 14, 1774—Loudoun freeholders, at the courthouse in Leesburg, in response to Parliament's Coercive Acts*

## *We Hold These Truths to be self-evident:*

That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,

That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

*The Declaration of Independence of the United States of America  
by delegates from the thirteen united states—July 4, 1776*