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# The Thomas Balch Chronicle

The Newsletter of Friends of the Thomas Balch Library of the Town of Leesburg, Virginia  
A Library for History and Genealogy

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## Loudoun's Coat of Arms by James P. Lucier

John Campbell, fourth Earl of Loudoun, never set foot in Loudoun County, and that may be the reason why the county fathers adopted his motto, "I Byde My Tyme," and his coat of arms as the official emblem of the County. For the powerful Lord Loudoun, one of the most powerful men in Scotland, was also the most important man in the American colonies for a brief span of a few months in 1757 and 1758.

Loudoun County, struggling with the fates in order to be born, was created precisely in that window of opportunity.

Harrison Williams tells the story in his *Legends of Loudoun*, that happy little book which should be by the bedside of every aspiring would-be Loudouner. In the early 1700s, what is now called Loudoun was but the backwoods of Fairfax County, with scarcely enough settlers to raise chimney smoke to the sky. But by 1748, so many families had poured into the west that Truro Parish, then coextensive with Fairfax

County, was divided by the General Assembly in two with everything west of Difficult Run to be known as Cameron Parish. In the days when church and state formed a symbiotic whole, that religious division foretold a similar division in the political sphere. Sure enough, by 1754, the parishioners of Cameron Parish petitioned the Assembly for the erection of a new county. The Assembly gave its approval, but the Council vetoed the measure. In the next Assembly, approval was also denied. The bigwigs of eastern Fairfax (and they did wear big wigs then) were not about to allow the backwoodsmen to have power and influence with their own representation in the Assembly.

What happened next? Politics having reared its ugly head, counter-politics was brought into play. Yes, Virginia, shocking though it may seem to the

tender sensibilities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, politics did exist in the General Assembly in the old days. That's where Lord Loudoun was brought into the picture, if not into the county.

During the French and Indian War, the disastrous defeat in 1755 of General Edward Braddock at Fort DuQuesne, now Pittsburgh, led the American colonists to call for help to the Motherland. King George II appointed Lord Loudoun, his favorite, a hero of the battle of Culloden, to lead the 60<sup>th</sup> Royal American Regiment. On Feb. 17,

1756 he was appointed General and Commander-in-Chief of the colony of Virginia. A few months later, he was elevated to be Lieutenant-General of all British forces in North America, a post which virtually made him Governor-General.

It was at this point, according to Harrison, that the weary promoters of the new county got the idea of naming it after Lord Loudoun. In 1757, they presented an Act for Dividing the County of Fairfax which stated that "All that part thereof, lying above Difficult Run... shall be one distinct county, and called and known by the name of Loudoun." That did the trick. Even the bigwigs of Fairfax knew that it would be im-

politic to give an affront to the most powerful man in America. Objections were dropped, and the county was born.

If only the opponents of the new county had held out for a few more months, there would have been no necessity to placate the mighty Lord. His military ineptitude led to a terrible defeat at the hands of the French in the Hudson Valley, and he was recalled home in 1758 before he could visit his namesake county. Loudoun never married and had no children. He bided his time in his mighty ancestral seat, Loudoun Castle, which passed into the hands of collateral descendents and burned to a hulk when a chimney fire got out of control on Christmas, 1941.

Now fast forward to 1966, when the roar of the developers' bulldozers working in Fairfax seemed like the disturbing rumble of distant thun-



*Continued on page 2*

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der, and eminent citizens of Loudoun were attempting to raise the consciousness of the citizens of Loudoun as to the unique history, beauty and treasure of the Loudoun landscape. In the minutes of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors for July 5, 1966, we find the following:

“Mr. Huntington Harris presented a letter and requested actions to the Supervisors relative to adopting the Earl of Loudoun’s Coat of Arms as the County Seal. Mr. Harris said the total cost would be about \$1,000, half of which had already been contributed.

“Upon motion of Mr. Arnold, seconded by Mr. Leach and passed unanimously, the Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County, Virginia, hereby approves the request of Mr. Huntington Harris, and lends its support to having the Coat of Arms of the Earl of Loudoun adopted as a County Seal or Emblem, and will contribute \$100 toward expenses incurred in the process.”

Of course, no Board of Supervisors can just decide on its own to use just anybody’s coat of arms. The warrant to use the coat of arms had to be approved by the College of Arms in London. In the days when knights in battle were covered head to toe in steel, it was important to know the identity of your opponent, and it was also important that nobody appear in false colors. Therefore, a coat of arms had to be registered and approved by experts, called heralds, in a cen-

tral body, the College of Arms, just as a trademark is registered today.

The College of Arms still exists in a splendid mansion in London about two blocks south of St. Paul’s Cathedral. One enters through a wrought iron gateway, tipped in gold leaf. Inside, the great entrance hall is set up as a courtroom, with a high judicial bench, and a box for the defendant., for it is a crime to misappropriate a coat of arms and use it falsely. However a visitor a few years ago was told that the last trial was held in 1927.

Thus it was to the College of Arms that Huntington Harris went to obtain the warrant of use, and to have the arms redrawn in the form now used by Loudoun County. That’s why there were “expenses”— for the heraldic fees. The explanation of the seal, as translated more or less from the archaic heraldic description, is as follows: A shield divided into eight parts, alternately red and ermine; a crest of one red eagle with two necks displayed in front of a flame of gold fire; supporters: on the right, an armed man bearing a pick on his shoulder; on the left, a lady, richly attired with a scroll in her left hand. Motto above the crest: I BYDE MY TYME. Recorded in the Public Register of All Arms and Bearings in Scotland, circa 1672. Unfortunately, the mystery of what all these strange symbols mean may have disappeared with the passing of the fourth earl, if even he knew.

## **Some New Acquisitions at Thomas Balch Library – Summer 2006**

*A Genealogist’s Guide to Discovering Your Immigrant Ancestors* by Sharon Carma

*A Good Gene Pool of the Eastern Shore*  
by Robert Johnson

*Abraham Lincoln’s Execution* by John Griffin

*Back When : The Story of Historic New Market*  
by Joseph Seng

*Caroline County, VA, Lost Marriage Register*  
by Kimberly Campbell

*Census of the Blackfeet, Montana,* by Jeff Bowen

*Civil War Collector’s Encyclopedia,* v. 1 & 2 combined, and v. 3, 4, 5 combined  
by Francis Lord – newest edition

*Directory of Scots in Carolinas*  
by David Dobson

*French/Indian War from Scottish Sources*  
by David Dobson

*Genealogical Abstracts from Brunswick Herald – 1899–1902,* by Pat Duncan

*Hanging Captain Gordon* by Ron Soodalter

*Huguenots in France & America* by Hannah Lee

*King of the Delawares–Teedyuscung*  
by Anthony Wallace

*Lincoln & the Sioux Uprising* by Hank Cox

*Marriage/Death Notices from Alexandria, Virginia, Newspapers* by Wesley Pippenger

*New Jersey Biographical & Genealogical Notes,*  
by William Nelson

*Our State Alabama* by Marilyn Culpepper

*The Blessed Place of Freedom* by Dean Mahin

*The Covenant With Black America* by Tavis Smiley

*To Rescue My Native Land* by Kurt Hackemer

*Incidents Concerning Society of Friends* by Joseph Walton

*Mongrel Virginians* by Arthur Estabrook

*John Brown, Abolitionist* by David Reynolds

*Leesburg Presbyterian Church Historic Cemetery*  
by Jonathan Adcock

*Reconstructed Census 1774-1810, Berkeley, Virginia*  
by Max Grove

*This Was Teggie: A Tribute to an Extraordinary Dog*  
by R. W. Blake

*Ordeal of Thomas Hutchinson* by Bernard Bailyn

*Letters from Lee’s Army* by Susan Blackford

*The Hidden Half of the Family* by Christina Schaefer

*Notes on the Descendants of John Hackley*  
by Woodford Hackley

*The Black West* by William Katz

*Order of Battle--American Expeditionary Forces*  
Center/Military History

*William Fitzhugh and His Chesapeake World*  
by William Fitzhugh

## Book Review

### ***In the Watchfires: The Loudoun County Emancipation Association, 1890-1971***

**Elaine E. Thompson.**

**Leesburg, Virginia: Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, 2005.**

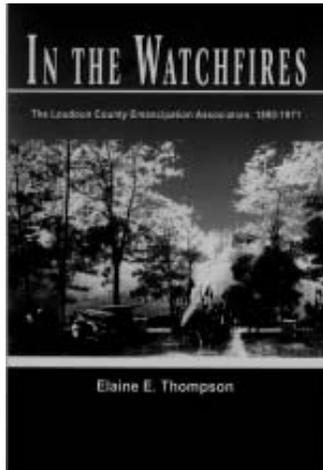
The dramatic struggle at Antietam that occurred on September 17, 1862 is almost universally known in the United States. President Lincoln used what he regarded as a victory for Federal forces to issue his famous Emancipation Proclamation only five days later. That document is seminal in the history of race relations in the United States. Far less is known about the quiet struggle that took place in subsequent years to win not just emancipation but legal equality for African-Americans. Elaine Thompson's *In the Watchfires* vividly describes a portion of that struggle in our own community.

The central vehicle of her narrative is the Loudoun County Emancipation Association that the author describes as "the first African American controlled county-wide organization in Loudoun." When it was legally incorporated in 1909 the Association described its purpose as being "to establish a bond of union among persons of the Negro race; to provide for the celebration of the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September as Emancipation Day or the Day of Freedom; to cultivate good fellowship; to work for the betterment of the race, educationally, morally, and materially."

And celebrate they did. Beginning modestly in the black community in Hamilton, the Emancipation Day observances burgeoned into an annual event attracting thousands from across the County and elsewhere. In fact, Ms. Thompson recalls, the W&OD railroad was obliged to add extra coaches to its services to handle the crowds. The Association soon acquired property in Purcellville and there built a "tabernacle" with a seating capacity of 1,200. In the years after World War One the place was packed not only with crowds eager to hear stirring speeches but to witness the annual parade (featuring the all-black 10<sup>th</sup> Horse Cavalry brigade) and to sample the culinary prowess of local homemakers.

This extraordinary public event took place against a background of Jim Crow era segregation and oppression. Ironically, as that burden was lifted from the community in the post-World War Two period, the vitality of the Emancipation Association slackened until it was finally obliged to dissolve legally in 1971. From its creation in 1890 until that concluding moment, however, the Loudoun County Emancipation Association compiled a proud record of what the author terms "subversive resistance" to racial injustice. Since the local press of the period carefully avoided mention of the Association's achievements, the community is deeply obliged to Ms. Thompson for producing this stirring chronicle.

*Douglas W. Foard, Lovettsville*



## **New and Renewing Members**

Mrs. James D. Bartlett  
Betty Bauer  
Jinsie Bingham  
Brenda S. Butler  
David & Alice Calhoun  
Thomas & Julia Cannon  
Terri A. Coleman  
Brenda & Andy Douglass  
Donald Dove  
Dr. John & Mrs. Carolyn Hall  
Mark Herring  
Christine Lanphere  
James & Mary Grace Lucier  
Janet MacDonald Manthos  
J. Terence & Sarah McCracken  
Jane G. Packard  
Joseph & Romaine Perritte  
Ann Schneider  
Al Van Huyck  
Patricia G. Ward  
Carol White  
Russell & Hilda Wingerd

## **Beatitudes of a Family Genealogist**

Blessed are the great-grandfathers, who saved embarkation and citizenship papers, for they tell **WHEN** they came.

Blessed are the great-grandmothers, who hoarded newspaper clippings and old letters, for they tell the **STORY** of their time.

Blessed are the grandfathers, who filled every legal document, for these provide the **PROOF**.

Blessed are the grandmothers, who preserved family Bibles and diaries, for these are our **HERITAGE**.

Blessed are fathers, who elect officials that answer letters of inquiry, for—to some—the **ONLY LINK** to the past.

Blessed are mothers, who relate family **TRADITIONS** and **LEGENDS** to the family, for one of her children will surely remember.

Blessed are relatives, who fill in family sheets with extra data, for to them we owe our **FAMILY HISTORY**.

Blessed is any family, whose members strive for the **PRESERVATION** of **RECORDS**, for this is a labor of love.

Blessed are the children who will never say, "Grandma, you told that old story twice today."

*Wilma Mauk*

## Long Ago: Leesburg

As we look forward to the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Loudoun County we are going to have a series of short articles from Loudoun's past. The first of these is from "Historical Collections of Virginia; A Collection of the Most Interesting Facts, Traditions, Biographical Sketches, Anecdotes, etc.," by Henry Howe, published in 1845. Of Leesburg he had this to say:

"Leesburg, the county-seat, lies in the northern part of the county, 34 miles NW of Washington, 153 miles N of Richmond. It was named from the Lee family, who were among the early settlers of the county: it was established in September 1758, in the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of the reign of George II. Mr. Nicholas Minor, who owned 60 acres around the courthouse, had then laid it off into streets and lots, some of which, at the passage of the act, had been built upon. The act constituted the Hon. Philip Ludwell Lee, Esq., Thomas Mason, Esq., Francis Lightfoot Lee, James Hamilton, Nicholas Minor, Josias Clapham, Aeneas Campbell, John Hugh, Francis Hague, and William West, gentleman, trustees for the town. Leesburg is well and compactly built, its streets are well paved, and it is supplied with fine water, conducted into the town in pipes from a neighboring spring at the base of a mountain. It contains the county buildings, 1 Presbyterian, 1 Episcopalian, and 1 Methodist church, a bank, a very handsome academy recently erected, 1 newspaper printing-office, and a population of about 1500. During the French and Indian war, Braddock's army passed through here. Traces of the road cut by them are still discernable, about a mile south of the village. Braddock remained in Leesburg several days; the house he occupied (now down) stood in Loudoun Street. Washington, who was here, also put up in that portion of the town."

The population of Loudoun County in 1840 was 20,431: whites 13,840, slaves 5,273, and free colored 1,318.

Gail Adams



c. 1840 Engraving looking north from the corner of Market and King Streets, the center of Leesburg. To the right is the courthouse that later burned and was rebuilt.

## Calendar of Events 2006 -- continued

**Sunday, Nov. 5 - 2-4 pm**

**Fairfield Plantation--Window to the Past** -- David Brown, author, anthropologist and archaeologist.

Fairfield, also known as Carter's Creek, is the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century ancestral home of one of colonial Virginia's largest landholding and politically influential families, the Burwells. This National Register and Virginia Historic Landmark property encompasses a complete cross section of Gloucester County's history and serves as a powerful symbol of the county's rich heritage as it prepares for the celebration of Jamestown's founding in 2007. Brown has also conducted archaeological research on Warner Hall Plantation. Some of the most recognized names in American history are direct descendents of the original owner, Augustine Warner – George Washington, Robert E. Lee, and Meriwether Lewis. Copies of *Warner Hall: Story of A Great Plantation*, co-authored by David Brown and Thane Harpole (2005), will be available for purchase.

**Sunday, Nov. 12 - 1-3 pm**

**Thomas Balch Library History Awards** -- Advisory Commissioners of Thomas Balch Library will present the fourteenth annual Thomas Balch Library History Awards. This event honors individuals who have made significant contributions to preserving Loudoun's past through collection of county documents and memorabilia, preservation of historic landmarks, visual arts, writing, and long-time commitment to local history organizations.

**Sunday, Nov. 19 - 2-4 pm**

**The Scottish Highlands: Europe's Last Wilderness** -- Margaret Morton is a deputy editor with *Leesburg Today*, where she has worked as a journalist for 15 years. She has known the Highlands of Scotland since 1957 as a student at the University of Edinburgh. Her presentation on The Highlands will focus on some of the main aspects of its history – and the region's current revival due to North Sea oil, its attraction as a tourist center, and its ability to lure new residents through increased technology and communications.

**Sunday, Dec. 3 - 1-3 pm**

**One Day in the War of 1812- Author Talk and Book Signing** - Carole Herrick will speak about her research on the War of 1812, in preparation for her current publication, *August 24, 1814 - Washington in Flames*. This is an account of the British burning the City of Washington, the sacking of the City of Alexandria and the escapes of Dolley and James Madison into Northern Virginia. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.

## The Manager's View

We recently welcomed a new staff member. Lauren E. Post, Library Reference Specialist, though currently residing in WV, is originally from Fairfax County and received an undergraduate degree in American Studies from Rutgers and an MLIS from University of Texas–Austin. She has held a number of positions in academic, legal and business libraries, working most recently for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and The Library Corporation (library automation software). Lauren will manage Visual Collections and coordinate reference services. When visiting the library, please take a moment to welcome her to the community.

Our informational brochure has just been revised to reflect recent elections and changes in town leadership. This new and improved brochure includes our mission statement and an historical note in addition to providing descriptive information on our holdings. Copies are available at the library.

With the forthcoming commemoration of Jamestown's founding in 2007, the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Loudoun County (2007), and Leesburg (2008), programs at the library over the next several years will relate to and focus on historical developments in Virginia, Loudoun County and Leesburg. These programs will also reflect interests expressed by library users

## From the Friends

Willard. Nokes Mountain. Short Hill.

What these words have in common is that they were all names of thriving African American communities in Loudoun County. Just like its dairy-farms and grist mills, many of Loudoun's original black communities have either disappeared or been paved over.

However, for those who seek them out, there are still signs of these once flourishing communities. Many of the original churches and schools still stand, and groups like the Black History Committee of the Friends of Thomas Balch Library actively ensure that Loudoun's black history is collected, preserved, and promoted.

From publications such as *Essence of a People*, Volumes I and II and more recently *In The Watchfires*, to oral history collections, archival research, and even films, such as a recent documentary on the remembrances of Wilson Townsend, Jr., members of the Black History Committee dedicate their time and passion to bringing Loudoun's black history to the fore for all to enjoy.

Like any committee, their work is as good as their network, and so making new connections is an important part of getting the word out. The Friends encourage your participation at monthly meetings of the Black History Committee, or at any of our other committee meetings. You can even come by simply to watch, listen, and learn.

Fortunately for Loudoun, black history is reinventing itself as the county continues to grow and diversify, and new generations of African Americans make their contributions to Loudoun's landscape. And as long as history is being made, there is value in coming together with others who share an interest in celebrating and promoting the past.

*Cheryl Sadowski*

during our bi-annual survey.

The Second Annual "Signatures of Loudoun" Design Excellence Program was held July 18, 2006. Sponsored by the Loudoun County Design Cabinet, a volunteer group of architects, designers, and interested community members, the program identifies outstanding projects and designs throughout the county. The nine winning projects of 2006 were announced during a presentation to the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors. An expanded awards ceremony and reception followed at the Leesburg offices of Burnett & Williams. Thomas Balch Library was honored to receive a Signatures of Loudoun Award in the category of Makeovers. The award recognized the Town of Leesburg's outstanding efforts in historic renovation and for preserving a piece of Loudoun's unique history. On July 25 the Town Council recognized Thomas Balch Library for the extraordinary efforts associated with its renovation and for receiving the Signatures of Loudoun 2006 Award for the Makeover Category.

We look forward to seeing you at some of our many exciting programs this fall.

*Alexandra S. Gressitt*

### A Reminder to Friends of the Thomas Balch Library

**Be sure to renew your membership.  
Check your label for your renewal date,  
and enlist your friends, too.**

### Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc. invite you to join us!

**Yes!** I wish to join the Friends and to play an important role in supporting the collections and programs of Thomas Balch Library.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Individual \$ 20.00

Family \$ 25.00

Student/Senior \$ 15.00

Business/

Professional \$ 35.00

Patron \$ 50.00

Sustaining \$100.00

Benefactor \$250.00

Please forward with your check to:

Friends of the Thomas Balch Library, Inc

P.O. Box 2184 Leesburg, VA 20177

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## Calendar of Events 2006

**Monday, Sept. 25, 7:00 pm**

**Clerk's Office Tour, Loudoun County Courthouse Historical Records** -- John Fishback, Historic Records Manager for Loudoun County, will lead a tour of the Clerk's Office. Learn where to look for records of births, deaths, marriages, and deeds, and how to use these records in research. **Please meet at Thomas Balch Library at 6:45 pm.** No one is permitted to enter restricted areas of the Clerk's Office after 7:00 pm.

**Sunday, Oct. 8, 2-4 pm**

**The Dairy Industry in Loudoun County: Author Talk and Book Signing** -- William H. Harrison will discuss *The Story of Loudoun's Dairy Industry*, a book heco-wrote about the history of dairy farming in the county. Following the Civil War, the dairy industry in Loudoun County was critical to the recovery of the local economy. By 1951 Loudoun County ranked first in the state for the number of its dairy farms and cows. Pressured by growing expenses and development, in 2006 only one dairy farm remained in business. Copies of the book will be available for purchase at the event.

**Saturday, Oct. 21, 1-3 pm**

**Researching Census Records While Keeping Your Sense of Humor** -- LaVonne Markham and Jinx Hartung take the mystery out of online census research, demonstrate directly on a big screen how to research census records from the Internet, and provide a healthy dose of humor relating tales of their adventures in genealogy.

**Wednesday, Oct. 25, 7:00 pm**

**A Tour Through Hallowed Ground: Author Talk and Book Signing** -- David Lillard joins Beth Erickson to talk about his new book, *Journey Through Hallowed Ground: A Travel Guide*. The book's release coincides with the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, and provides help in creating itineraries that will appeal to all interests. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.

**Saturday, Nov. 4, 1-3 pm**

**Lewis and Clark: After the Expedition** -- Annie Hulen will talk about the aftermath of the Voyage of Discovery, following the lives of William Clark, Meriwether Lewis, the men who accompanied them, and of course, Sacajawea. Using a family quilt, she will focus on why it took a hundred years for the Expedition to be generally known, and will address the intrigue of Lewis's death and Thomas Jefferson's reaction.

**\*\*\*Please turn to page four to learn about additional exciting programs\*\*\***

Programs sponsored by Thomas Balch Library are held in the downstairs meeting room and are free unless otherwise noted.

Due to limited seating we recommend registering in advance by calling 703/737-7195.