

**Aldie Mill**

Colored by:

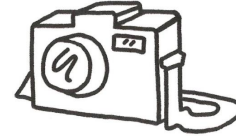


## MHAA Family Activity!

### Aldie Mill

39401 John S. Mosby Highway  
Aldie VA 20105

Historic Grist Mills & Museum  
Skirmish site, grinding on weekends



Send us a photo of yourself on site and a copy of your completed colored picture—we'll put you on our website! Send to [info@mosbyheritagearea.org](mailto:info@mosbyheritagearea.org).

### A Bit of Poetry--on a Very Old Mill . . .

**My wheels still go round and round**  
As they have for two hundred years.  
I am the spring that creates community--  
The middleman between nature and my people.

For the water that grows the wheat  
Also turns the millstone.  
The cornerstone which grinds  
The wheat into flour . . . into bread.

The Little River's careful fingers turn  
My wheels and cogs.  
My insides, like a clock,  
Ticking rhythmically day after day--  
Mechanical and methodical--  
Always changing with the season.

I do stop sometimes.  
And on those days,  
No one hears the squeaking of metal,  
the grinding of stones on corn,  
Or the pitter patter of water falling.  
But soon the miller returns with work,  
And round my wheels go once more.



#### How Does It Work?

Do you see the big mill wheel out back? How do the big wheels *outside* turn the mill wheels *inside*? If the water is flowing, why not throw a tiny stick in beyond the water wheels and follow it along the path—see where it goes. Have you found the path by the parking lot that leads to the river and the old stone bridge? The mill and bridge were here during the Civil War. What do you think the “S” shapes on the side of the buildings are for?

### What Happened Here?

**There's a hole in the Bull Run mountains here:** Aldie Gap. From here west to the Blue Ridge mountains, folks used to grow grain—corn, wheat, rye, oats, barley. The first toll road in Virginia was built from this mill on Little River through the gap east to the seaport of Alexandria on the Potomac. The big mill was built at the same time—from 1807-09—so that the grain from the farms in this Loudoun Valley could be ground here, then shipped in barrels on wagon trains to Alexandria, to be shipped all over the world to feed people. The smaller mill ground farmers' grain just how they wanted to take home to feed their livestock.

The water was dammed up on the west side of the village, then fed down to the mill by a *headrace*—which you can still see. The two big “overshot” mill wheels turn by the weight of the water, and could power three floors of machinery so that all the milling work was done by machine—200 years ago! The downstream water wheel still powers the mill wheels, and on weekends in spring, summer, and fall, if there's water enough, we do grinding demonstrations so you can see how it was done.

On March 2, 1863, Mosby's Rangers attacked 50 troopers of the 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Cavalry having a coffee break out front and captured most of them.