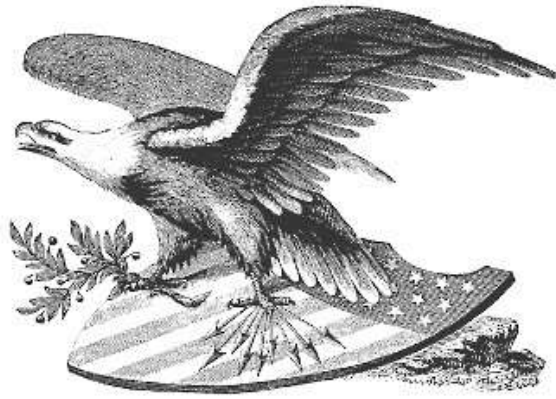


OUR AMERICAN  
REVOLUTION  
ANCESTORS

Byle



## INTRODUCTION

The American Revolution was a transformative political movement in the latter half of the eighteenth century that led to the founding of the United States of America in 1776 and the end of British rule over the Thirteen Colonies. During this period, the colonies mounted a successful rebellion against Great Britain in the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), culminating in the Declaration of Independence and eventual victory with critical support from France. The French government, military, and navy provided essential financial assistance as well as direct military and naval aid to the American cause.

Beyond its military and political dimensions, the Revolution ushered in significant intellectual and social change within early American society. Republican ideals gained prominence, prompting vigorous debates in several states regarding the nature and scope of democratic governance. The transition toward republicanism, alongside the gradual expansion of democratic principles, disrupted traditional social hierarchies and helped establish the foundational values that continue to shape American political culture.

The origins of the Revolutionary era can be traced to 1763, following Britain's victory over France in the French and Indian War, which eliminated the primary external threat to the colonies. In the war's aftermath, Britain imposed a series of taxes that colonists widely viewed as unjust. Escalating tensions—marked by protests, particularly in Boston, and the subsequent deployment of British troops—led to the outbreak of armed conflict in 1775. The signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 marked a pivotal turning point, and the conflict ultimately concluded with the Treaty of Paris in 1783, which formally recognized the United States as an independent nation.

This publication does not aim to provide a comprehensive history of the American Revolution. Rather, it presents the biographies of four ancestors who contributed to the Revolutionary War effort: Colonel Nicholas Lewis, Lieutenant Hudson Martin, Dr. Thomas Walker, and Private William T. Duggins.



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## Colonel Nicholas Lewis (1734-1808)

Nicholas Lewis was born on January 19, 1734, at "Belvoir" in Louisa County, Virginia. He was the second son of Colonel Robert Lewis and Jane Meriwether. His father, Robert Lewis (born in 1702 at Warner Hall in Gloucester County), was the son of Colonel John Lewis and Elizabeth Warner. Robert married Jane Meriwether in 1725, and together they had eleven children.

### Siblings of Nicholas Lewis:

- John Lewis (1725-1787), of Halifax, Virginia; later died in Caswell County, North Carolina
- Jane Lewis (1726/27-c.1794), of New Kent County, Virginia; later died in Pittsylvania County, Virginia
- **Nicholas Lewis** (1734-1808), of Louisa and Albemarle Counties, Virginia
- William Lewis (c.1730-1779), of Albemarle County, Virginia
- Charles Lewis (1730-1779), of Louisa and Albemarle Counties, Virginia
- Mary Lewis (c.1735-1812), of Albemarle County, Virginia
- Mildred Lewis (1737-c.1825), of Albemarle County, Virginia
- Robert Lewis (1738-1780), of Halifax, Virginia; later died in North Carolina
- Ann Lewis (c.1742-c.1769), of Albemarle County, Virginia; later died in Spotsylvania County, Virginia
- Sarah Lewis (born 1748), of Albemarle County, Virginia
- Elizabeth Lewis (1750-1833), of Hanover County, Virginia

In 1735, Nicholas Lewis's grandfather, Nicholas Meriwether, received land grants from King George III totaling about 19,000 acres in Albemarle County, near present-day Charlottesville. One tract of about 1,020 acres lay west of the Rivanna River, in what is now the Locust Grove and Belmont areas. This property became known as "The Farm" because it was one of the few cleared areas within an otherwise untouched forest.



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## LINEAGE *from* COL. NICHOLAS LEWIS

9. Col. Nicholas Lewis  
m. Mary Walker
8. Jane Walker Lewis  
m. Hudson Martin
7. Mary Walker Martin  
m. Thurston Dickinson
6. Francis Elizabeth Dickinson  
m. John Duggins
5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins  
m. James Henry Smith
4. Laura Ann Smith  
m. Peter Christen Jensen
3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen  
m. Wilhelm August Heineman
2. Peter Edward Heineman  
m. Doris Jean Crum
1. Peter Lea Heineman



*The Farm stands on a 1020- acre tract acquired by Nicholas Meriwether in 1735 and later owned by Col.*

*Nicholas Lewis, uncle of Meriwether Lewis. A building on the property likely served as headquarters for British Col. Banastre Tarleton briefly in June 1781. In 1825, Charlottesville lawyer and later University of Virginia law professor, John A. G. Davis purchased a portion of the original tract and engage Thomas Jefferson's workmen to design and build this house. It is considered one of the best surviving examples of Jeffersonian residential architecture. Maj. Gen.*

*George A. Custer occupied the house as his headquarters for a brief time in March 1865.*

A principal residence and several outbuildings were originally constructed at "The Farm" on a hill overlooking the Rivanna River to the east. This first house was destroyed by fire after a few decades. In 1762, Nicholas Lewis, grandson of Nicholas Meriwether, inherited the property and, around 1770, built a new main house, also oriented toward the river. Contemporary descriptions portray it as an elegant estate, enhanced by gardens of roses, ornamental shrubs, and fruit trees. The structure may have been erected on or near the foundations of the earlier dwelling. Records from the Mutual Assurance Society of Virginia (1805) likely describe this house as a two-story wooden building measuring approximately 48 feet in length and 22 feet in width.

The 1770 residence was constructed using pit-sawn timber and traditional mortise-and-tenon joinery. During the Revolutionary War, British Colonel Banastre Tarleton used the house as his headquarters when he arrived in Charlottesville in 1781 in an unsuccessful attempt to capture Thomas Jefferson. Although Jefferson escaped, Tarleton did capture Daniel Boone, then serving as a member of the Virginia legislature, and held him at the Lewis home. Jefferson himself was a frequent visitor to the property and often passed through it while traveling to Charlottesville to oversee the construction of the University of Virginia. A natural spring, located a short distance south of the house, provided a reliable water source.

In 1825, Charlottesville attorney and later University of Virginia law professor John A. G. Davis acquired part of the original tract and commissioned builders associated with Thomas Jefferson to design and construct a new residence on the site. This home is regarded as one of the finest surviving examples of Jeffersonian residential architecture. In March 1865, during the Civil War, Major General George A. Custer briefly used the house as his headquarters.

Today, the only remaining structure from "The Farm" is the former kitchen, or cook's house. It now stands within a residential neighborhood along Twelfth Street, still surrounded by mature hardwood trees and retaining its distant view of Monticello.



Nicholas Lewis married Mary "Capt. Molly" Walker in 1758. Mary was born in 1742 at Castle Hill and was the daughter of Dr. Thomas Walker and Mildred Thornton Meriwether. (Dr. Walker is discussed later in this publication.)

### **Their children included:**

- **Jane Walker Lewis** (1757-1838)
- Mildred Walker Lewis (1761-1814)
- Thomas Walker Lewis (1763-1807), born at Locust Grove, Albemarle County, Virginia
- Mary Lewis (born 1765)
- Nicholas Meriwether Lewis (1767-1818)
- Elizabeth Lewis (1769-1842), who married William Douglas Meriwether in 1788
- Alice Thornton Lewis (born 1771, died young)
- Robert Warner Lewis (born 1774)
- Frances T. Lewis (born 1776, died young)
- John P. Lewis (born 1778, died young)
- Charles Lewis (born 1783, died young)
- Margaret Lewis (born 1785 at "The Farm," Albemarle County, Virginia), who later married Charles Lewis Thomas

In July 1775, Virginia's royal governor fled the colony, leaving it without an executive leader. In response, the colonial assembly reorganized itself as a Provincial Convention and created a governing body known as the Committee of Safety, composed of eleven members, including Colonel Nicholas Lewis.

The Committee of Safety effectively served as Virginia's temporary government. It was responsible for enforcing the Convention's decisions, organizing and supplying the military, appointing officers, and managing public funds for the war effort. The committee also held significant authority: it acted as commander-in-chief of Virginia's forces, oversaw military courts, and could detain or punish individuals suspected of supporting the British. No death sentence from a court-martial could be carried out without its approval.

Although the committee had broad powers, Virginia did not experience the same level of military crisis as some other colonies. Much of its work involved organizing militia forces, supplying troops, and responding to limited British activity, particularly raids led by Lord Dunmore. The majority of Virginians supported the revolutionary cause, so the committee's authority was generally accepted without major resistance.

One of its most controversial actions occurred in 1776, when it ordered residents of Princess Anne and Norfolk Counties to move inland. This was intended to prevent local Loyalists (Tories) from aiding British forces along the coast. The policy caused significant hardship, including loss of property and disruption of families. After protests and reconsideration, the order was

modified and eventually repealed for most residents, though known Loyalists were still required to relocate.

The Committee of Safety remained in place until Virginia adopted a new constitution in 1776 and established a formal government with an elected governor and council, at which point the committee was dissolved.

Colonel Nicholas Lewis's specific military record is limited, but he is noted as having commanded a militia regiment during the 1776 campaign against the Cherokee. At that time, some Cherokee groups, encouraged by British agents, attacked frontier settlements. In response, Virginia and neighboring colonies organized a large militia force that destroyed Cherokee towns, crops, and supplies, forcing many to flee and ultimately leading to peace treaties in 1777. As part of these agreements, the Cherokee ceded millions of acres of land.

A later account by Thomas Jefferson praised Nicholas Lewis for both his leadership and personal character. He described Lewis as brave, fair, and widely respected, often chosen to settle disputes within his community. Jefferson also noted that Lewis served as guardian to Meriwether Lewis after the death of his father, reflecting the trust placed in him by those who knew him.

Colonel Nicholas Lewis died on December 8, 1808, at the age of 74. He was buried on his property in a cemetery located on a hill overlooking the river. His wife, Mary, died on February 9, 1824, at the age of 81.



The Sons of the American Revolution (SAR), formally known as the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (NSSAR), is a federally chartered, nonprofit patriotic organization dedicated to preserving the ideals on which the United States was founded. Established on April 30, 1889, in New York City and now headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, the society seeks to uphold the institutions of American freedom by promoting patriotism, respect for national symbols, the value of American citizenship, and the unifying principle of *e pluribus unum*. Membership is open to male descendants of individuals who served in the American Revolutionary War or otherwise contributed to securing American independence. Through educational initiatives and civic advocacy, the SAR works to perpetuate American traditions, safeguard the United States Constitution, and commemorate foundational principles, playing a key role in the official recognition of Constitution Day, Flag Day, and Bill of Rights Day. With members throughout the United States and in several countries abroad, the organization maintains an international presence while remaining distinct from the earlier Sons of the Revolution, from which it diverged due to differing views on organizational structure and governance.



## Dr. Thomas Walker, Jr. (1715-1794)

Thomas Walker was born on January 15, 1715, in King and Queen County, Virginia. He was the son of Major Thomas Walker and Susannah Peachy. The Walker family had come to Virginia from Staffordshire, England around 1650, early in the colony's history.

Walker's father was an active public figure. He served as a representative from Gloucester County in the Colonial Assembly in 1662. A year later, he claimed to have planted 70,000 mulberry trees to support silk production in the colony. After verification by a committee, he was rewarded in 1667 with 20,000 pounds of tobacco for his efforts.

Dr. Thomas Walker later became an important explorer of early America. In 1750, he led an expedition into the western frontier and crossed what is now known as the Cumberland Gap, which he called "Cave Gap," on April 17 of that year. He is often credited with helping open the way to Kentucky for future settlers. However, Native Americans had lived in and traveled through the region for thousands of years, and Walker himself noted that he was not the first European to pass through the gap.

After studying medicine under his brother-in-law, Dr. George Gilmer, Thomas Walker established a medical practice in Fredericksburg, Virginia, where he became a well-known physician. In addition to his medical work, he operated a general store and was involved in import and export trade.

In 1741, he married Mildred Thornton Meriwether, who was born on March 19, 1721, in Louisa County, Virginia. She was the daughter of Colonel Francis Thornton and Alice Savage, and the widow of Nicholas Meriwether III. Together, Thomas Walker and Mildred had twelve children.



OUR AMERICAN  
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## LINEAGE *from* DR. THOMAS WALKER JR.

10. Dr. Thomas Walker, Jr.  
m. Mildred Meriwether
9. Mary Walker  
m. Col. Nicholas Lewis
8. Jane Walker Lewis  
m. Hudson Martin
7. Mary Walker Martin  
m. Thurston Dickinson
6. Francis Elizabeth Dickinson  
m. John Duggins
5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins  
m. James Henry Smith
4. Laura Ann Smith  
m. Peter Christen Jensen
3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen  
m. Wilhelm August Heineman
2. Peter Edward Heineman  
m. Doris Jean Crum
1. Peter Lea Heineman

### Their children included:

- Mildred Walker, born at Castle Hill, Albemarle County, Virginia
- **Mary ("Capt. Molly") Walker** (born 1742)
- Colonel John Walker (1743-1809), of Orange County, Virginia
- Susan Walker (born 1746)
- Dr. Thomas Walker Jr. (born 1748)
- Lucy Walker (born 1751)
- Elizabeth Walker (born 1753)
- Sarah Walker (born 1758)
- Martha Walker (born 1760)
- Reuben Walker (1762-1765)
- Francis Walker (1764-1806)
- Peachy Walker (born 1767)

Through his marriage, Thomas Walker acquired the 11,000-acre estate known as Castle Hill in Albemarle County, Virginia.

The original wooden residence at Castle Hill was completed in 1765 and oriented toward the mountains to the northwest. Dr. Walker lived there until his death on November 9, 1794. The estate then passed to his son, Francis Walker, who had previously managed it under power of attorney and remained its owner until his death in 1806. Later, Walker's granddaughter, Judith Rives (1802-1880), wife of Senator William C. Rives, resided at Castle Hill for the remainder of her life. Although the house has been expanded and renovated over time, the original structure still survives.

Walker continued to expand his landholdings throughout his life. In 1772, for example, he received an additional 226-acre grant in Albemarle County from Lord Dunmore.

Castle Hill also played a brief but notable role during the American Revolution. On June 4, 1781, British officer Banastre Tarleton stopped there during his campaign in Virginia. His stay was reportedly delayed by Mildred Walker, which allowed Jack Jouett of Louisa County time to ride ahead and warn Thomas Jefferson and members of the Virginia legislature. As a result, they were able to escape safely before Tarleton's arrival, making the delay a significant moment in protecting the colonial leadership.

In addition, Castle Hill frequently hosted Native American leaders traveling to Williamsburg. Walker used these visits to learn about their cultures, as well as to gather valuable knowledge about the western frontier, including wildlife and survival practices.



In 1749, Thomas Walker became the chief agent of the Loyal Land Company, which had been granted approximately 800,000 acres by the Virginia council. In the years that followed, he led an expedition to explore these western lands, keeping a detailed journal of the journey. His account is considered one of the earliest written records by a European in the region that would later become Kentucky.

During the French and Indian War, Walker served in 1755 as Commissary to the Virginia troops under George Washington. Although he was later accused of fraud in connection with this role, he was ultimately acquitted of all charges.

Walker also played an active role in Revolutionary-era governance. He served on Virginia's Committee of Safety, helping oversee military and civil affairs during the conflict. In 1777, he and his son, Colonel John Walker, were appointed to travel to Pittsburgh to meet with Native American leaders and secure their support for the American cause.

## The Walker Line (Virginia-Kentucky-Tennessee Boundary)

In the late 1700s, Virginia established the boundaries of its western lands, including what would later become Kentucky. In 1779-1780, Dr. Thomas Walker was appointed to survey and extend the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina westward. Working under difficult conditions—dense forests, mountains, and limited equipment—Walker and his team mapped a line that later became known as the *Walker Line*. However, the survey was not perfectly accurate and ran farther north than intended.

This error led to long-standing disputes. When Kentucky became a state in 1792 and Tennessee in 1796, both claimed the land between Walker's line and the intended boundary at latitude 36°30'. Kentucky argued that Walker's line deprived it of land, while Tennessee insisted the established line should stand, since settlers already lived there.

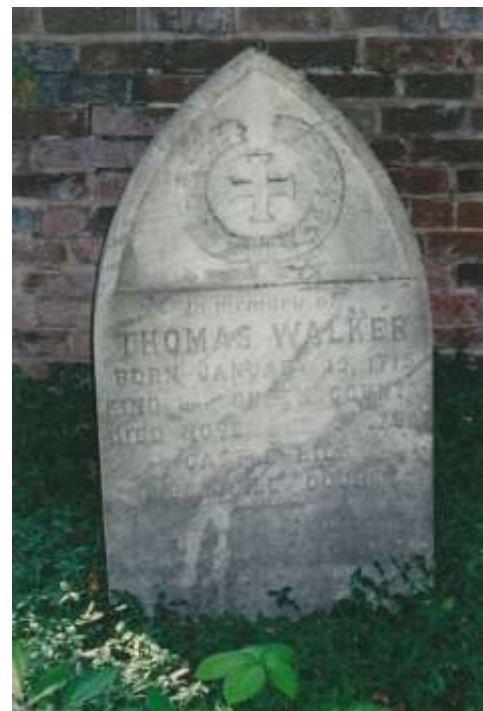
Numerous attempts were made to resolve the disagreement. Surveys and joint commissions in 1799, 1820, and 1821 tried to remeasure and redefine the boundary, but conflicting interests prevented a final agreement. Kentucky consistently pushed for the 36°30' line, while Tennessee refused to abandon Walker's boundary. As a result, the dispute dragged on for decades, particularly in areas west of the Cumberland River, where the original survey had been incomplete.

The issue was finally settled in 1859, when commissioners from both states conducted a comprehensive resurvey. They confirmed much of Walker's original line in the eastern section, while adopting the 36°30' latitude line in the western region. To mark the boundary clearly, surveyors placed stone markers along the route from the Mississippi River to the Cumberland Gap.

Although the process took nearly 80 years and involved repeated conflicts and negotiations, this final settlement established the boundary between Kentucky and Tennessee largely as it remains today.



Dr. Thomas Walker died on November 9, 1794, at Castle Hill in Albemarle County, Virginia, at the age of 79. His wife, Mildred, died earlier on November 16, 1778, at the age of 57. Both are buried on the Castle Hill estate, in a cemetery located in a wooded area near the base of the mountain and enclosed by a brick wall.



## Lieutenant Hudson Martin (1752-1830)

Hudson Martin was born on July 3, 1752. He began his military service during the American Revolution on March 11, 1776, when he enlisted as an ensign under Captain James Alexander. Within a few weeks, he was promoted to lieutenant on March 26, 1776.

In 1778, Martin served as a wagon master in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, but resigned later that year. He was then appointed by Governor Patrick Henry as paymaster for the Regiment of Guards, commanded by Colonel Francis Taylor, serving from January 1779 to August 1781. This unit was stationed in Albemarle County, Virginia, where it guarded prisoners captured after the British surrender at Saratoga in 1777. In 1781, Martin also served as a militia substitute for his brother William after being drafted in Fluvanna County, Virginia.

On December 2, 1778, Hudson Martin married Jane Walker Lewis, daughter of Colonel Nicholas Lewis and Mary Walker. The couple settled in central Virginia, living in Albemarle and Nelson Counties near Rockfish Gap. They had nine children:

- Nicholas Lewis Martin (1779-1787)
- Hudson Martin II (born 1781)
- John Massie Martin (1783-1851)
- Mary ("Molly") Walker Martin (born 1787)
- Jane Lewis Martin (born 1790)
- Nicholas Lewis Martin (born 1791)
- Henry Buck Martin (1794-1828)
- George Washington Martin (born 1796)
- Mildred Hornsley Martin (born 1801)

Hudson Martin died on November 28, 1830, at the age of 78. His will, dated June 23, 1828, was recorded in Nelson County, Virginia, with a copy held in the Pension Office in Washington, D.C. His estate included land, enslaved persons, and financial assets, indicating that he was a man of considerable means and standing in his community. The executors of his estate posted bonds totaling 20,000 pounds.

His wife, Jane, died on August 15, 1838, in Albemarle County, Virginia, at the age of 81.

*Hudson Martin*



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## LINEAGE *from* LT. HUDSON MARTIN

8. Hudson Martin  
m. Jane Walker Lewis
7. Mary Walker Martin  
m. Thurston Dickinson
6. Francis Elizabeth Dickinson  
m. John Duggins
5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins  
m. James Henry Smith
4. Laura Ann Smith  
m. Peter Christen Jensen
3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen  
m. Wilhelm August Heineman
2. Peter Edward Heineman  
m. Doris Jean Crum
1. Peter Lea Heineman

## Private William T. Duggins (1751-1827)

William T. Duggins was born on October 31, 1751, in Dublin, Ireland. After his father's death, he emigrated to Virginia in 1763 with his mother, Alice. They settled in Fredericksburg, where his mother later married Robert Wilkinson and had three additional children. William was apprenticed to a silversmith in Louisa County, Virginia.

He enlisted on January 20, 1777, in Captain William Vanse's Company of the 12th Virginia Regiment during the American Revolutionary War. Over the course of his service, he was transferred between several units, including those commanded by Colonel James Wood. His name last appears on a company muster roll dated December 9, 1779, at a camp near Morristown, New Jersey.

On December 16, 1787, William married Elizabeth Perkins, the daughter of William Perkins of South Carolina. Elizabeth was born in 1771. William was a member of the Episcopal Church and was described as a devoted Christian. Together, William and Elizabeth had fourteen children:

- Polly Duggins (born 1788)
- Jane Duggins (born 1790)
- Robert Duggins (1792-before 1872)
- William Duggins Jr. (born 1794)
- John D. Duggins (1796-1865)
- George Duggins (born 1798)
- Pouncy Duggins (born 1800)
- Jefferson Duggins (1802-before 1873)
- Washington Duggins (born 1804)
- James Madison Duggins (1806-1865)
- Lewis H. Duggins (1808-1875)
- Thomas Crutchfield Duggins (1810-1880)
- Fleming P. Duggins (born 1812)
- Franklin A. Duggins (born 1814)

William T. Duggins died on June 23, 1827, in Louisa County, Virginia, at the age of 75. His wife, Elizabeth, died earlier on December 17, 1823, at the age of 52.



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## LINEAGE *from* PVT. WILLIAM DUGGINS

7. William T. Duggins  
m. Elizabeth Perkins
6. John Duggins  
m. Frances E. Dickinson
5. Elizabeth Marshall Duggins  
m. James Henry Smith
4. Laura Ann Smith  
m. Peter Christen Jensen
3. Lucile Marguerite Jensen  
m. Wilhelm August Heineman
2. Peter Edward Heineman  
m. Doris Jean Crum
1. Peter Lea Heineman

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