



Welcome to the historic city of Loudon, Tennessee. This delightful riverfront village is brimming with history and hospitality. Here you can wander the picturesque streets, stop for ice cream, or indulge your appetite with a hearty dinner. Hot coffee and cool conversation, a gourmet lunch with a side of history, friendly residents, and gracious Southern charm are just a few of Loudon's amenities. With its feet firmly rooted in the past and its eyes steadfastly focused on the future, the town has much to offer.

In 1790, families began settling on the northern bank of the Tennessee River in what is present day Loudon, Tennessee. The Tunnells, Carmichaels, and Blairs were among those early settlers. At that time, this area was still part of North Carolina and it would be six years - June 1, 1796 - before Tennessee became the 16th state.

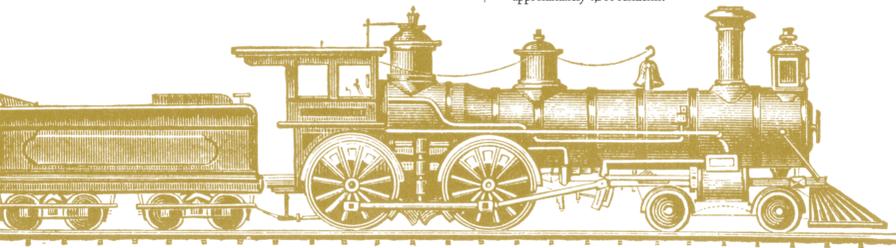
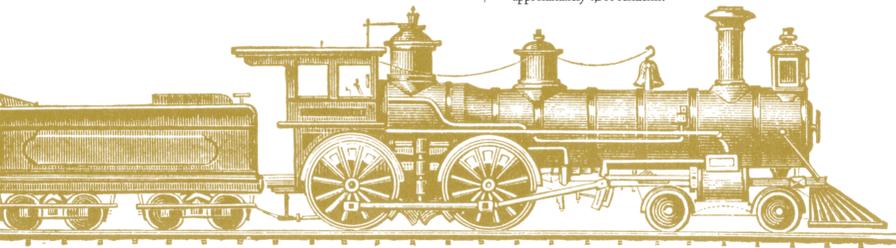
A steamboat called the Atlas made its way up river in 1828, but it wasn't until the mid 1830s that steamboats made regular stops in the area. By then, James, John and Wiley Blair had established a steamboat landing, store and several houses in the little settlement, which they dubbed Blair's Ferry.

Although members of the community did business together and intermarried, the settlement wasn't without its share of strife. In accordance with certain provisions laid out in the Hiwassee Purchase of 1819, a Cherokee chief named Pathkiller laid claim to the property on which James Blair had established his home and business. Blair was ordered off the land but filed suit in the Tennessee Supreme Court. A fifteen year battle ensued with Blair's heirs winning the lands back from the heirs of Pathkiller about 1834.

With the establishment of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad in 1848, this small community experienced rapid growth. In 1851, sensing an opportunity for profit, Wiley Blair laid out a town and dubbed it Blairsville. Unfortunately, he failed to sell any lots and the next year he was forced to sell the land to S. M. Johnson and Company. If he would have held out a little longer, he would have seen his property investment turn profitable as a railroad bridge was built across the Tennessee River in the years from 1852 to 1854. The bridge opened for traffic on March 17, 1855.

With both a railroad terminus and a steamboat port, Blair's Ferry prospered. It became a popular site for transferring merchandise and travelers from the river to the railroad. In 1858, the name of the town was changed to Loudon in honor of John Campbell, 4th Earl of Loudon, a Scottish nobleman and military leader who was sent to the United States during the colonial era.

Due to its quick economic growth and central location in the county, Loudon was chosen as the county seat. It currently has a population of approximately 4,500 residents.



1764 Cherokee Chief Pathkiller born

1780 John Hudson Carmichael born

1790 White settlers began to settle on the northern bank of the Tennessee River where Loudon bridge is today

1791 Margaret Gardenhire Carmichael born

1796 Tennessee admitted to the Union as the 16th State

1801 Roane County was created by an act of the Tennessee State Legislature. (Loudon County was originally part of Roane County)

1810 Carmichael Inn completed by John Hudson Carmichael

1817 James Blair and family begin controlling traffic across the Tennessee River. They dubbed the community Blair's Ferry, which would eventually become the town of Loudon

1819 Due to certain provisions in the Hiwassee Purchase, Cherokee Chief Pathkiller claimed land on which Blair's Ferry was established. James Blair files suit to regain ownership

November 6, 1826 James Blair dies

January 1827 Chief Pathkiller dies

1828 The Atlas was the first steamboat to sail up the Tennessee River

1829 Richard T. Wilson is born in Georgia

1832 James H. Carmichael born

1834 The Blair family wins the suit brought against them by Chief Pathkiller for property rights at Blair's Ferry

1835 By this time, steamboats are stopping regularly at Blair's Ferry

February 21, 1836 The Tennessee General Assembly grants permission to the Hiwassee Railroad Company to build a road from Blair's Ferry to the Georgia-Tennessee line

1840 John Hudson Carmichael dies

1848 The East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad is established

1851 Blair's Ferry renamed Blairsville

1852 The Orme-Wilson Storehouse was built

1852 The first newspaper in Loudon County, the Loudon Free Press, is published

December 23, 1852 R. T. Wilson married Loudon resident Melissa Clementine Johnston

1852-1854 The railroad bridge in Loudon is under construction

March 17, 1855 The Loudon railroad bridge is completed and ready for traffic

1860 R. T. Wilson family leaves Loudon

April 12, 1861 Civil War begins at 4:30 a.m. when the Confederates open fire on Ft. Sumter in Charleston Harbor

June 1861 Tennessee is the last state to secede from the Union

November 9, 1861 A group of Unionist East Tennessees choose to get drunk instead of burning the Loudon railroad bridge

November 10, 1861 The Sixteenth Alabama Infantry set up camp at both ends of the Loudon bridge for constant surveillance

June 19, 1863 Union Colonel William P. Sanders raids Lenoir Station, later known as Lenoir City, and strikes the railroad

September 6, 1863 After CSA General Simon Bolivar Buckner evacuates Knoxville and crosses over the Loudon bridge headed for Chattanooga, the Confederates burn the bridge

October 20, 1863 The Battle of Philadelphia is fought at Philadelphia, Tennessee

November 14-15, 1863 CSA General James Longstreet marches his troops through Loudon to cross the Tennessee River at Huff's Ferry

December 3, 1863 Confederate troops again burn the Loudon bridge to prevent it falling into enemy hands

December 4, 1863 Union General William Tecumseh Sherman's troops arrive in Loudon

March 1864 Union troops complete a temporary bridge at Loudon

November 1864 Permanent bridge completed to replace burned Loudon bridge

1865 The Mason Place was built in Loudon by Thomas Jefferson Mason, a riverboat captain and Union sympathizer

April 9, 1865 Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrenders to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Courthouse in Virginia signaling the end of the Civil War

July 24, 1866 Tennessee readmitted to the Union

June 2, 1870 Christiansa County is formed

July 7, 1870 Christiansa County renamed Loudon County

September 5, 1870 The first County Court was organized in the Baptist Church in Loudon

1871 Margaret Gardenhire Carmichael dies

September 1872 The Loudon County Courthouse is completed

November 24, 1863 Andy Taylor is hanged on the courthouse lawn for the murder of Hamilton County Sheriff W. T. Cale and Deputy J. J. Conway in Philadelphia, Tennessee. This is the last public hanging in Loudon County

August 3, 1896 Grace Graham Wilson, daughter of R. T. Wilson, marries Cornelius Vanderbilt III

1898 James H. Carmichael dies

1908 Melissa Clementine Johnston Wilson dies in New York City

1910 R. T. Wilson dies in New York City

April 14/15, 1912 Titanic sinks. John Jacob Astor IV perishes. His sister, Carrie Astor, is the wife of R.T. Wilson's son, Marshall Orme Wilson

1927 Loudon toll bridge is started

1947 The Loudon bridge comes a free road

1987 Carmichael Inn purchased by Loudon County Heritage Association and moved across the river to present site

1991 The Loudon County Museum at the Carmichael Inn opens

2006 Carmichael Inn re-opened as upscale restaurant

2006 Orme Wilson Building re-opened as Wharf Street Coffeehouse

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FROM "RECOLLECTIONS OF 60 YEARS AGO"; LOUDON COUNTY RECORD
- R. M. Edwards, Sept. 17, 1895

About the year 1830, the writer, then a boy about 6 or 7 years of age, rode behind old Aunt Sally Blair, to Blair's Ferry on the Tennessee River, now known as Loudon. Mrs. Blair had been on a visit to her daughter, the wife of John B. Edwards on Pond Creek and I was sent to ride the mare back home.

On approaching the river, I saw quite a number of Indians of all ages, and one old man was pointed out by Mrs. Blair as the celebrated Indian chief Pathkiller. He, with quite a numerous family, lived on the bank of the river to the left of the road leading down to the ferry in some little log cabins. Pathkiller,

it seems, had chosen not to go west when the Hiwassee purchase was made in 1819, but took a reservation of 640 acres of land instead and remained on it till about 1831. Many of the old citizens around and about Loudon will remember Pathkiller and his family as well as old Aunt Sally Blair who

has been dead nearly 80 years. She and her husband lived on a fine river farm about two miles above Loudon on which they raised a very respectable family consisting of 5 daughters to wit: Polly, Rachael, Franky, Jennie and Betsy, also 4 sons, John, James, Vincent and Hugh.

The first steamboat to pass up river by Loudon was the Atlas in 1828, which later began making regular stops at Blair's Ferry. The riverboat created a boom in industry along the riverfront. Industries were built close to the water and goods were easily shipped in and out. At that time, people lived near where they worked. These people had to eat too. In addition to private homes, boarding houses such

as the Carmichael Inn were built along the riverfront to accommodate residents, workers and travelers. Steamboats proved to be cheap, convenient mass transportation for the better part of a century. It was either take a boat or ride a stagecoach over dirt and mud roads. However, as railroads grew in popularity during the second half of the 1800's, riverboats declined in

popularity. There are few riverboats on the water today. Most are used for short excursion or leisure trips, but the impact of their 19th century heyday years helped propel cities like Loudon headlong into the 20th and 21st centuries.

"I stand in front of the Pathkiller house and look across the big river. I see the old Carmichael house that was for so many years a splendid wayside hostelry, where the weary traveler might always find rest, refreshment, and good cheer."

- R. M. Edwards, Sept. 17, 1895