

Local Figures of the War of 1812

Commodore Joshua Barney

Commodore Joshua Barney was a Revolutionary War hero and a Maryland native. As the British blockade of the Chesapeake grew, Barney submitted a plan for the defense of the Chesapeake in 1813 to Secretary of the Navy, William Jones. The plan called for the development of a flotilla, comprised of shallow-draft barges, gun boats, and sloops with the intent of engaging and aggravating the British fleet. After the Battle of St. Leonard Creek, Barney moved the fleet up-river and was given the command to scuttle the flotilla so it would not fall into British control. Barney and his men then joined the U.S. Army for the Battle of Bladensburg and fought courageously against a superior British army.



John Stuart Skinner



John Stuart Skinner was the owner of the Point Farm (JPPM) property during the War of 1812. He was a farmer and journalist, and during the War, served as the Barney's Purser and was in charge of prisoner exchange. As Barney's men fought the British out of the Patuxent, Skinner made a Paul Revere-type ride to warn President Madison that the British was coming to Washington. Later in 1814, Skinner was placed in command of a prisoner exchange party. He escorted Francis Scott Key onto a British vessel where they watched the attack on Fort McHenry in Baltimore, which inspired Key to write the Star-Spangled Banner. Skinner arranged for its first publication in a local paper.

Charles Ball

Charles Ball was a native of Calvert County, born into slavery and later taken from his family and sold to a farmer in South Carolina. After being sold again to a plantation in Georgia, Ball escaped and made his way back to Maryland, documenting his incredible journey in a narrative that was later published in 1836. When he returned to Maryland, Ball joined the crew of the Flotilla and served as a seaman and a cook, participating in the Battle of St. Leonard Creek, as well as the Battle of Bladensburg and the Battle for Baltimore. Ball's *Slavery in the United States: A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Charles Ball, a Slave Man*, is the longest slave narrative known.

