

## **A Brief History of Jeremiah Henry Dupree – 1754-1838**

Prepared by James K Voyles

Son of Woodrow B Voyles and Leah Fern Peterson

Here is our relationship to Jeremiah Henry Dupree with the direct descendants listed first:

Jeremiah Henry Dupree & Eleanor Huff

Tabitha Dupree & John Tomlinson

Sarah K Tomlinson & James B McMurray

Sarah Knox McMurray & Lott Walter Malsby

Annie Lois Malsby & Early B Voyles

Woodrow B Voyles & Leah Fern Peterson

Annie & Early's Grandchildren – my generation

Jeremiah is my generation's 3<sup>rd</sup> great grandfather. The evidence for Jeremiah's connection to us is certain. His war history is mostly from his own memory as corroborated by written statements of others in support of his application for a Revolutionary War pension (which was denied as will be explained below). The Sons of the American Revolution has granted membership to distant relatives based upon the statements made by Jeremiah and others in support of his application. His history is further confirmed and enhanced by studying the records of other persons named in his statements as well as related local and war history. In fact, it could be fruitful to look at local newspapers and other local history sources for Greensville County, Virginia, and Twiggs and Houston Counties, Georgia. Some portions of the affidavits in support of his application for a pension are shaky and look like they are an attempt to bolster his case to obtain the benefit. But there is enough corroborating evidence that I am quite confident that Jeremiah did, in fact, serve as an Ensign in the Virginia Militia in the Revolutionary War.

Jeremiah was born in Brunswick County, Virginia on 16 November 1754. Brunswick County is on the southern border of Virginia abutting the North Carolina state line. His father was Lewis Dupree, Junior, and his grandfather was Lewis Dupree, as noted in the family tree on Family Search and Ancestry. I have not confirmed their dates nor the information regarding their spouses as of this writing. Jeremiah's mother appears to have been Hannah Reid. Both Lewis, Jr. and Hannah were purportedly born in Virginia. Jeremiah grew up in Brunswick County, from which Greensville County was later formed in 1780. Interstate 95 passes through Greensville County going south from Richmond to the North Carolina border.



According to his affidavit in support of his application for a pension, Jeremiah first volunteered for the Continental Army in the late summer or fall of 1777. He served as an Ensign in the Company commanded by Captain William Peterson. Ensign was the lowest or second lowest officer rank in the army and would be roughly equivalent to a modern Second Lieutenant. The affidavit says he proceeded with that Company to Portsmouth, Virginia, where Peterson's company joined the regiment commanded by Colonel Charles Harrison. To the best of his recollection, Jeremiah served in this expedition for six weeks.<sup>1</sup>

Charles Harrison (1742–1796) of Virginia served as Colonel of the 1st Continental Artillery Regiment from November 1776, to June 1783. Consequently, Jeremiah was in an Ensign in an artillery regiment. Harrison was commissioned on November 30, 1776 for the duration of the war.<sup>2</sup> In 1777, British war transports were "hovering" in Chesapeake Bay near Hampton Roads, and Congress assigned Harrison's artillery garrison duty in Portsmouth, where they could fire on enemy ships and intercept enemy landing parties, although I have seen no record that they did either.<sup>3</sup> The march was between 75 and 100 miles, depending on the starting point in Greensville County.

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<sup>1</sup> A six-week enlistment was completely plausible because another Brunswick County resident, Wooten Harris, volunteered in 1777, served under a different Captain, but joined the Regiment led by Colonel Harrison. During that enlistment, he marched to Portsmouth and was discharged. That period of service lasted about six weeks. Harris then joined a company led by Captain William Peterson within the same regiment and they marched through South Key in Suffolk to Portsmouth where he was again discharged after six weeks. Jeremiah likely served as part of one of these marches, probably the second given the name of the captain. Montgomery County Revolutionary War Pension Records, Illinois Genealogy Trails, <http://genealogytrails.com/ill/montgomery/pensions.html> ; William Peterson was recommended to be an officer from Brunswick County, Virginia effective March 25, 1777, Brunswick County, VA - Military and Civil Officers, Rev. War, Transcribed by Kathy Merrill for the USGenWeb Archives Special Collections Project <http://files.usgwarchives.net/va/brunswick/military/revwar/officers.txt> .

<sup>2</sup> Founders Online, From George Washington to Colonel Charles Harrison, 26 January 1777, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-08-02-0168> ; Full text of "Records of the revolutionary war:", [https://archive.org/stream/recordsofrevolut03saff/recordsofrevolut03saff\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/recordsofrevolut03saff/recordsofrevolut03saff_djvu.txt) ;

<sup>3</sup> Ward, Harry M., *For Virginia and for Independence: Twenty-Eight Revolutionary War Soldiers from the Old Dominion*, McFarland & Company, Inc., Jefferson, North Carolina, 2011.



Greensville County is around Emporia near I-95. Suffolk is by the red star. Portsmouth is near Norfolk.

After expiration of his first enlistment, Jeremiah returned home and married Eleanor Huff, born in 1760 in Brunswick County, Virginia. They had two children before Jeremiah reenlisted in 1780 in Greensville County.<sup>4</sup> He joined a company commanded by Captain Turner Bynum, where he once again served as an Ensign. He marched from his location in Greensville to Stoner's Mill and Chuckatuck (now in the City of Suffolk) and joined a regiment commanded by Colonel Edmund Wilkins. He served for five months of his six month enlistment and was furloughed home. His brother, Cordell Dupree served in his stead and finished the tour. Three days after returning home, the company was ordered to march to Guilford Courthouse in what is now Greensboro, North Carolina. Jeremiah volunteered in the place of Cordell and was again appointed to be an Ensign, this time under Captain William Watson and Lieutenant Peter Butts. Jeremiah recalled that this company was part of the Militia Regiment of Greensville County, Virginia and commanded by a Colonel Montford or Mumford. The editor of the pension application notes that it was possibly William Green Munford, who was in fact a Colonel in the Continental Army. The regiment proceeded to Guilford Courthouse where it joined the army under Major General Nathanael Greene. Jeremiah engaged in the battle of Guilford Courthouse on March 15, 1781.

<sup>4</sup> Both Gincy Riddle and Hardy Gregory filed affidavits supporting Jeremiah's pension application and they both identified Eleanor Huff as his wife. Riddle's affidavit places the marriage prior to Jeremiah's second enlistment, and that appears to be accurate.

According to oral accounts, Jeremiah, as the Ensign, was carrying the colors during the battle.<sup>5</sup> The colors were shot off the staff and Jeremiah fell wounded in the thigh but would not give up the staff. He was disabled for three months.<sup>6</sup>

The battle at Guilford Courthouse was pivotal to the eventual outcome of the war. As part of its southern campaign, the British had captured Savannah, Georgia in 1778 and Charleston, South Carolina in 1780. British Lieutenant General Charles Cornwallis wished to complete his domination of the South. Continental General Greene, on the other hand, successfully executed a strategy that resulted in Brigadier General Daniel Morgan defeating a British army led by Colonel Banastre Tarleton at Cowpens, South Carolina. You will recognize the battle of Cowpens as the one depicted in the movie "The Patriot," where Morgan successfully required the militia in front to fire two shots before falling back to the main line of Continentals, who held the line and successfully counter attacked, winning the field.

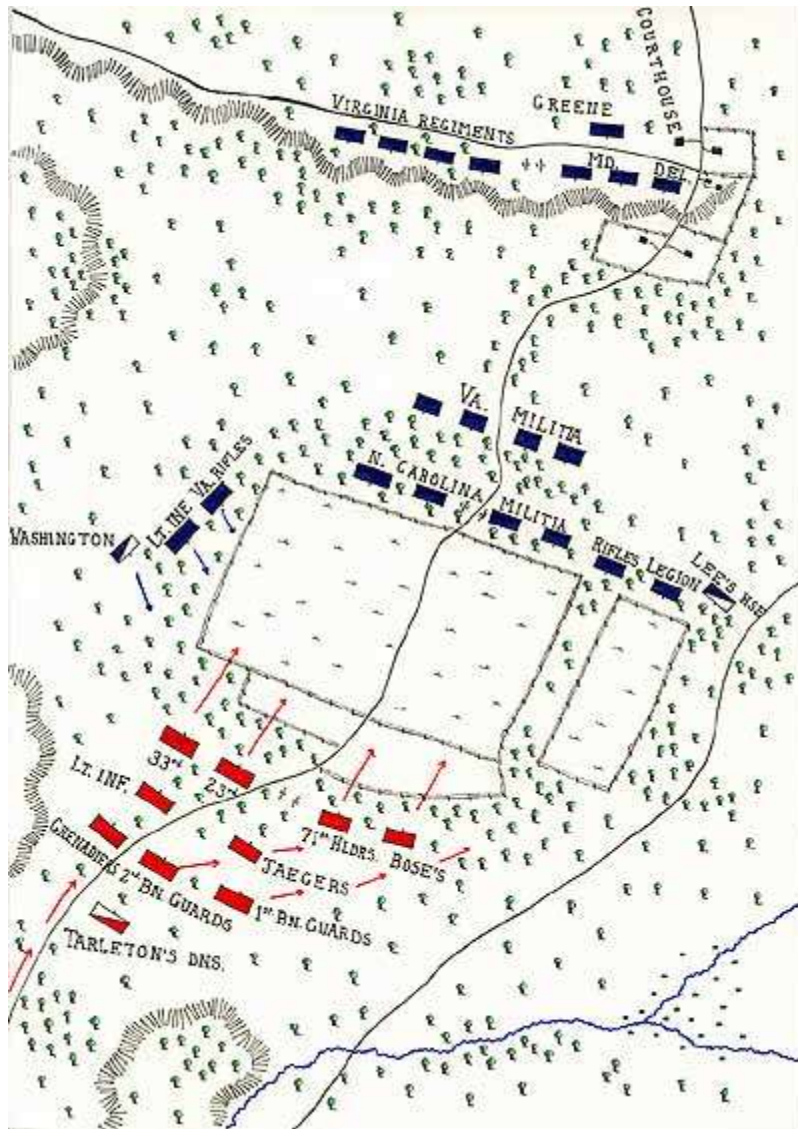
After the British defeat at Cowpens, Cornwallis pursued the Continental army into North Carolina. By March of 1781, Greene and his army of approximately 4400 men were encamped at Guilford Courthouse. Cornwallis defeated Greene with an army of only 1900 men. The battle is known as the fiercest of the Revolutionary War in the South. Greene attempted to use the same tactics that Morgan used at Cowpens but did not have similar success. Despite his inferior numbers, Cornwallis defeated Greene but only after losing about twenty-five percent of his army. In this weakened state, Cornwallis did not pursue Greene's army but instead abandoned his efforts to control the Carolinas and took his army to Virginia and eventually Yorktown.

As a member of the Virginia Militia, Jeremiah would have been located in the second line of militia as depicted in the map below.

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<sup>5</sup> The rank of Ensign had its historical roots as the officer that carried the emblem or banner of his unit. I could not confirm whether that was still the practice at the time of the Revolutionary War, but it is fitting that Jeremiah held the rank of Ensign and was bearing the colors when he was wounded.

<sup>6</sup> Jeremiah's affidavit is supported by the affidavit Hardy Gregory. Jeremiah was Gregory's god father. Gregory testified that he saw the wound in the front of Jeremiah's thigh many times. It was "as black as flesh could be," and Gregory saw Jeremiah on crutches when his wound was healing. Gregory also recalled hearing others call Jeremiah "Ensign" and that they recalled that Jeremiah relating the story as to how he was wounded. Gincy Riddle testified that he lived less than two miles away from the Dupree home and knew Jeremiah well. He said Jeremiah's father, upon learning of his son's wound, "walk[ed] the floor in distress on account of his son's situation and absence in the service." Riddle knew Jeremiah had come home, saw him confined at home, and saw the wound.



Guilford Courthouse Battle Map

Britishbattles.com, <http://www.britishbattles.com/battle-guilford.htm>

This website gives a good account of the order of battle and the role the Virginia Militia played as the second line of militia.

Upon recovering from the wound he sustained at Guilford Courthouse, Jeremiah again volunteered as an Ensign in a company led by Captain Turner Bynum. This time, the company marched to Yorktown, Virginia, which of course was the decisive siege of the Revolutionary War.

The siege of Yorktown lasted from September 28 to October 19, 1781. Jeremiah may not have been in Yorktown for the dramatic surrender, however, because he had been discharged on October 10 or 11





1819. They finally settled in Houston County, where they both died, Jeremiah on September 8, 1838 and Eleanor on February 8, 1843.

Jeremiah was a farmer, and may have been in a planter class, although not on a large plantation. In the Heads of Family Census of 1790 for Greensville County, Virginia, Jeremiah is listed as head of family with a household consisting of four whites and three blacks. He was a slave owner, as was his father, Lewis, who was the head of a household with eight whites and ten blacks. Additionally, Jeremiah's probate records from 1839, list his property, including some cotton, cattle, various farm implements, and five persons with a stated value. The humans are listed as:

- Nigro Girl [no name] \$400.00
- " Boy [name not clear] \$800.00
- " Man Daniel \$700.00
- " Jacob \$900.00
- [name not clear] Nigro Woman \$400.00

Their ownership of slaves is further confirmed in court records of the estate of Jeremiah's father. It appears there was a dispute over the ownership of one or more slaves. The court records are found in my Ancestry account.

Additional areas of research could include:

- Confirming the exact dates and spouses of Jeremiah's father and grandfather, and any additional details about their lives,
- Studying further local history in the areas where Jeremiah and his progenitors lived to see what we can learn about them specifically or their lives in general,
- The exact nature of the dispute regarding the slave or slaves in Lewis, Jr.'s estate,
- Provide definitive research on the children of Jeremiah and Eleanor, and
- Any other fun items that come up in the course of the research.

Did Jeremiah fight in the Revolutionary War?

According to the information contained within the pension application documents, the government denied Jeremiah's request for his Revolutionary War pension because there were no six month tours of duty in Virginia. Whoever wrote that note on the application documents noted that claim was denied incorrectly because there were three-month tours that were often extended to six. I checked collateral sources and I am sure that Jeremiah actually served and that his claim was wrongly denied. Here are the results of that search:

### *Captain Turner Bynum*

Note that in 1780, Jeremiah enlisted with Captain Turner Bynum. Bynum was associated with a North Carolina regiment although it appears he was actually from the portion of Brunswick County, Virginia that became Greenville County, which of course was Jeremiah's home county. The key document for Captain Bynum's Company is the Company Roll of April 7, 1781. The roll does not include Jeremiah Dupree but it does include a Cordell Dupree, presumably Jeremiah's brother mentioned above, as well as a William Dupree, who may have been related to Jeremiah and Cordell, but that fact has not been confirmed. Cordell is listed as a Sergeant and William as a private. The roll purports to be a North Carolina roll, but the transcribers confirm that it is from the Virginia militia raised in 1781 in Greenville County, Virginia.

See, Southern Campaign American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters, transcribed by Will Graves on 4/12/11 and supplemented by C. Leon Harris from transcriptions of applications of widows for pension benefits, <http://revwarapps.org/b73.pdf>

### *Virginia Officer Commissions*

A list of commissions in the Virginia Militia provide the best evidence that Jeremiah served, and had this document been readily available at the time, the pension that was denied may have been granted.

Greenville County Officers Recommended & Qualified for the Militia of Greenville co., Va, 1782-1815, William and Mary Quarterly Historical Magazine, Published 1920, by the College of William and Mary, transcribed by Andrea Stawski Pack, [http://genealogytrails.com/vir/greenville/mil\\_officers\\_1782\\_1815.html](http://genealogytrails.com/vir/greenville/mil_officers_1782_1815.html)

### Order Book I

The entry for April 26, 1781, some familiar names appear.

- Major Edmund Wilkins is recommended as a Field Officer, and
- Ensign Peter Butts and Ensign Jeremiah Dupree "are recommended to the Governor in Council as proper persons to command the Militia of this County."

The entry for August 22, 1782, identifies Captain Turner Bynum and others as "severally qualified to their respective Commissions, according to law."

The entry for June 22, 1786, Lieutenant Colonel Edmund Wilkins, Major Turner Bynum, and Ensign Peter Butts, and Lieutenant Jeremiah Dupree "are recommended to the Governor in Council as proper persons to command the respective Companies of Militia in this County, according to law."

On Feb. 22, 1787, Lieutenant Jeremiah Dupree took "took oaths to the Commonwealth and of office," and Lieutenant Edmund Wilkins took the oath of office.

On March 22, 1787, Ensign Peter Butts took the oath of office.

On June 28, 1787, Major Turner Bynum took the oath of office.



The 1787 entry was the last time Jeremiah's name appears in the order book. Bynum and Butts were with the militia for several additional years and received various promotions.

The point: This provides independent corroboration of Jeremiah's service as an Ensign in the Revolutionary war and that his pension was improperly denied. Additionally, it reveals that Jeremiah was promoted from ensign to lieutenant in the Virginia Militia in 1787, prior to his move to Georgia.

### *Bynum's Company*

With respect to whether the company led by Turner Bynum and including Jeremiah Dupree engaged in any action with the British during Jeremiah's tour of duty in 1780 to 1781, I found this in a google search but I have no idea as to its accuracy or reliability:

Captain Turner Bynum Militia/ Nc militia/.Revolutionary war

Replies: 1

NewRe: Captain Turner Bynum Militia/ Nc militia/.Revolutionary war

rwbaired (View posts)

Posted: 19 Jun 2007 8:00AM GMT

Classification: Query

I assume you are speaking of the Captain Turner Bynum of the Northampton County, NC militia? He actually lived over the border in Virginia. He was first commissioned a Captain in the militia of Brunswick County, Virginia on 24 July 1780. In 1781 he served briefly for a few months in Northampton County under his father-in-law, Jephtha Atherton. On 22 August 1782 he was commissioned as a captain in the Greensville County, Virginia. He subsequently appears on tax lists in Greenville for the duration of the war.

If you are asking about battles in 1781 in which the Northampton County militia may have been involved, the answer is none. If you are asking about whether Turner Bynum was involved in any battles, that's a bit more complicated, but it appears that, like most militiamen, he was not involved in any skirmishes of significance.

This would be consistent with the other information regarding the march to Portsmouth and primarily garrison-type duty in that period. The author, rwbaired, appears to be an experienced genealogist, but I do not know what his sources are. This is consistent with my previous thoughts about what occurred during this second tour of duty up until the time that Jeremiah returned home and then volunteered once again with the company led by Captain William Watson that proceeded to Guilford Courthouse, where he certainly saw action whether Bynum was there or not. Also, if Bynum truly went to Yorktown, he was there, along with Jeremiah, for much or all of the final siege.

Source: Ancestry.com message board: <http://boards.ancestry.com/surnames.bynum/537.1/mb.ashx>