

HENRY AUSTIN HARPER, CONTINENTAL SOLDIER  
PRIVATE CO "H" 10<sup>TH</sup> VIRGINIA

I have been reading Newt Gingrich's book VALLEY FORGE – and it inspired me to bring to attention the fact that we are directly descended from one of these brave men that fought for our freedom 233 years ago!

Henry Austin Harper was 25 years old when he was drafted on Feb 17, 1778 to serve 1 year in the Continental Army for this Revolutionary War. These newly formed states were challenged with supplying the military regiments for this war. By 1778 the 10<sup>th</sup> Virginia had already been re-organized several times---- They were sent to replace the troops leaving Valley Forge because their enlistment was up, or they were dying in the extreme conditions there. When Gen Washington had arrived at Valley Forge, PA on Dec 22, 1777 he found nothing there that was supposed to be there. No preparations, no supplies, no tools- just blizzard conditions – and he had 12, 000 men without food, shelter and in most cases even shoes or warm clothing. It was after being drafted in Feb 1778, that Henry Harper was sent to Valley Forge. His military cards show him sick by May and then in June, Gen Washington moved them out. Henry was at the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse on June 28, 1778 where temperatures were now recorded at 100 degrees! They moved on to White Plains, NY where the 10<sup>th</sup> Virginia was once again reorganized in September and made a part of the 6<sup>th</sup> Virginia. By October, Gen Washington made encampment for the second time during the war, at Middlebrook. This is where Henry Harper was until his discharge in Feb 1779.

Today the Middlebrook encampment is in the Washington Camp Ground near Bridgewater Township, NJ. It is on the National Register of Historic Places. Since 1889 a special 4<sup>th</sup> of July commemoration is held there. Tradition is that Camp Middlebrook is where the first official flag of the United States was flown in June 1777 after a law to adopt a national flag was passed by the Continental Congress on June 14, 1777.

Dates are not documented but Henry married Judith Landrum and they had 10 children. Henry never recovered from the war and had died by 1785. After that, most of this family moved to Wilkes County, GA. His oldest son, Edward was father to our Roderick Bibb Harper of Henry County, GA.

Henry Austin Harper was my 5<sup>th</sup> Great Grandfather  
We can certainly be proud of this family line.