

COLONEL JOHN TIPTON 1730 – 1813



It has become a joke around our office because I always got this particular Tipton's name wrong. I constantly called him "Jonathan Tipton." Ned, the County Archivist, would try to correct me, but the next time I mentioned him, I simply added "Colonel" to the name. At that point, Ned gave up. After studying the family tree for this article, I am happy to say, I now know the difference. It would have been simpler, though, if they'd just chosen different names!

Colonel John Tipton was born in Baltimore County, Maryland on August 15, 1730. His family had originated in England, before migrating to Jamaica and John considered himself to be English.

Tipton owned property on the Shenandoah River, and was a farmer. He married Mary Butler in 1751. The couple had nine sons, Samuel, Benjamin, Abraham, William, Isaac, Jacob, John, Thomas, and Jonathan. He had been loyal to the crown all his life, but that was about to change.

In 1774, John Tipton and four other men were elected to serve on a Committee of Safety and Correspondence for then Frederick County. The committee wrote and published the Woodstock Resolutions, which declared that Englishmen had the right to resist tyranny.

In 1776, John lost his wife Mary, who died in childbirth. She was likely buried on their family farm, near the Shenandoah River in Virginia.

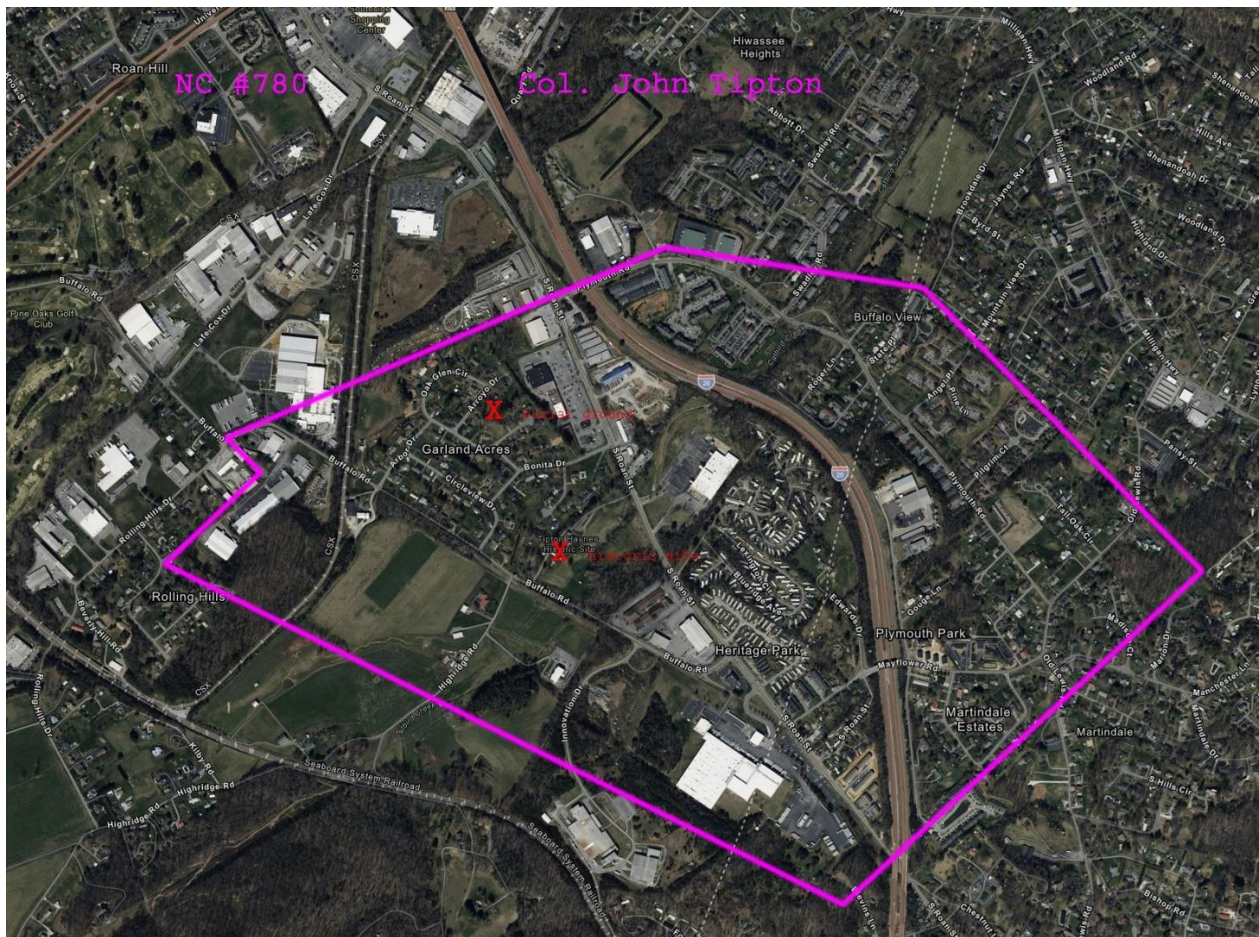
On April 23, 1776, Tipton was elected to represent Dunmore County at the Virginia Convention. It was at this time that Virginia declared their independence from Britain.

After Mary's death, he married Martha Denton Moore in July 1777. The family moved to Washington County, North Carolina in 1783, bringing some Tipton's children with him.

The settlers in this area were not pleased with the protection provided from the North Carolina government. These settlers were dealing with attacks by the neighboring Cherokees, who had not yet made peace with the newly-formed United States. In 1784,

the State of Franklin was carved out of East Tennessee. A constitution was drafted and leaders were elected, including John Sevier as the first governor. Not everyone thought this secession from North Carolina was the best solution, including Colonel John Tipton. The feud between the Franklinites, led by John Sevier, and the Tiptonites, led by John Tipton, culminated in a skirmish at the home of Tipton, on February 27, 1788. After only a few days of fighting, John Sevier and his men withdrew to Jonesboro, and the battle was over. Only three men were killed.

The Colonel was listed many times in the deeds, but we have focused on the land where the Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site is located, on South Roan Street, Johnson City, Tennessee. This 150-acre land grant is listed in Deed Book 1 (Land Grant 780, 10 Nov 1787, Deed Book 1, page 329).



The red X at the top of the plat marks the family cemetery. The lower red X marks the Tipton-Haynes State Historical Site.

The tax lists taken during the State of Franklin era, if there were any, have been lost. For that reason, the first instance that Colonel John Tipton is listed is in 1790. He is listed with 2013 acres of land and two black polls.

Persons Names	Acres of Land	White	Black
		Polls	Polls
Col. John Tipton	20/13	-	2
Adam Hawn	200	1-	-
Gasper McIntosh	100	1-	-

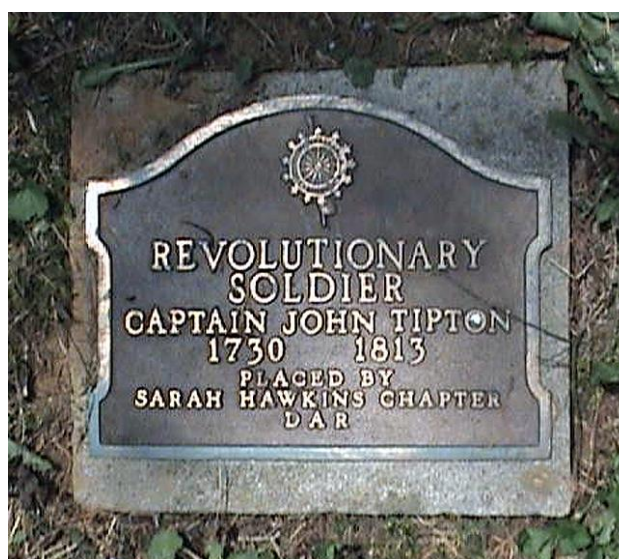
In 1796, when the State of Tennessee was created, Tipton was elected as a member of the first State Legislature. After four years in the Legislature, he retired.

Colonel John Tipton died in August 1813. He and his second wife, Martha are both buried in the family cemetery on the property.



The historical marker marks the cemetery and reads, "This cemetery contains the remains of Revolutionary War soldier and legislator John Tipton (1730 - 1813) and his second wife, Martha Denton Moore. Also buried here are newspaper publisher Lawson Gifford (1810- - 1879), his wife, Mary Tylor Haynes (1818 - 1904), and some of their descendants. The cemetery is part of Tipton-Haynes Historic Site.

Photo courtesy of Gordon Edwards, 2014.



Photos courtesy of Gordon Edwards, 2014.

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Information for this installment of the Early Northeast Tennessee Landowners' project was taken from the following sources:

1. Charles D. Tipton. *Tipton, The First Five American Generations*. Baltimore, Maryland: Gateway Press, Inc., 1998.
2. Various County records, Washington County, Tennessee, housed at the County Archives, 103 West Main Street. Jonesborough, Tennessee.