

Quarterly Newsletter
of the

**MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY
ASSOCIATION, INC.**
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EDITOR – Jarrelyn Lang
PUBLISHER – Joyce Arnold

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Dianne Middlebrooks

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MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY ASSOCIATION

2007-2009 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT – LEONARD MIDDLEBROOKS
VICE PRESIDENT – NEAL MIDDLEBROOK
SECRETARY/TREASURER – JOYCE ARNOLD

ANCESTOR TEAM LEADERS

Isaac, b. 1753 – LEONARD MIDDLEBROOKS
gambol@juno.com
and JEAN SHROYER
TXJean@aol.com

John, b. 1755 – BOB MIDDLEBROOKS
mid293@earthlink.net

Micajah, b. 1758 – SHARON BARTLETT
sharonbartlett@att.net
and MARY BAKER
mmbaker65@hotmail.com

Sims, b. 1762 – NEAL MIDDLEBROOK
susan.middlebrook1@verizon.net

Thomas, b. 1763 – JARRELYN LANG
thelangs@hotmail.com

Robert, b. 1766 – J.A. MIDDLEBROOKS
middle3jam@hotmail.com

Joseph, b. 1610 – LEONARD MIDDLEBROOKS
gambol@juno.com

Joseph, b. 1770 – DAVE CLARK
cdave@austinrr.com

Virginia Middlebrookses – LANA SHELTON
love4crochet@yahoo.com
and LEONARD MIDDLEBROOKS
gambol@juno.com

Unknown Ancestor – LEONARD MIDDLEBROOKS
gambol@juno.com

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LEONARD MIDDLEBROOKS, 2008-09
gambol@juno.com

NEAL MIDDLEBROOK, 2008-09
susan.middlebrook1@verizon.net

JOYCE ARNOLD, 2008-09
joycenjim@sbcglobal.net

BOB MIDDLEBROOKS, 2008-09
mid293@earthlink.net

JOAN MILLER, 2008-09
bmillmcg61@aol.com

J.A. MIDDLEBROOKS, 2009-10
middle3jam@hotmail.com

JEAN SHROYER, 2009-10
TXJean@aol.com

HENRY MIDDLEBROOKS, 2009-10
henrym@bga.com

ON-GOING PROJECTS

Cemetery Project – J.A. MIDDLEBROOKS
MFA Website – DAVE CLARK and
LEONARD MIDDLEBROOKS
DNA Project – BOB MIDDLEBROOKS and
DAVE CLARK
Family Repository – JEAN SHROYER
Family *Register* Update – LEONARD
MIDDLEBROOKS
Military *Register* Update – KERRY
MIDDLEBROOKS mbrooks@gci.net

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name be withheld, please notify
thelangs@hotmail.com.

Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc. was founded in 2001 for the purpose of assembling and preserving genealogical and historical material for future generations.

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Subscription is free to paid members of MFA. Articles for inclusion in the quarterly, or suggestions for topics, may be sent to Jarrelyn Lang, Editor, at thelangs@hotmail.com. All submissions are subject to editing.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Leonard Middlebrooks

Gulf Coast hurricane Gustav has slowed down our personal genealogy efforts. For our area, this hurricane was minor compared to Katrina, but it was enough to disrupt our normal lives momentarily. Toni and I would like to thank all of you who sent concerned emails.

This year's informal meeting format can only be described in one word: Wow. Attendance was up and the general impression was that the combination of increased family interaction and the decrease in formal presentations is the formula for future meetings. There were lots of photos taken, and as soon as all of the meeting text is organized, we will begin the process of preparing the meeting CD. I would like to thank Joyce for her organizational efforts for the Hillsboro meeting and all that contributed to its success.

One thing that was not immediately apparent during the meeting was that the state of Texas is more of a melting pot than I had originally envisioned. Without any real research, my impression was the state's population boomed after the War and that most of the newcomers were from Georgia and her nearby states. In looking at the Middlebrooks' Texas genealogies in the 1870s and 1880s, it is apparent that descendants of the CT, NC, and VA Middlebrooks made their homes in the Lone Star State.

Normally, the President presents a summary of the annual meeting in the September edition of the Newsletter. This year J.A. did the honors, and you will find his rendition of the meeting later in this issue. It's delightful to see the meeting happenings from another's viewpoint.

We are closing in on the publication of the 2009 *Register Update*. The consolidation of the known family information will be done this coming year, and the editing and publishing will occur in early 2010. As stated from the beginning, the publication will be electronic and any of the recipients may print a hard copy from the electronic version. For a first effort, I find that we have good data on certain parts of the family and that other areas are lacking. I'm sure that the data contributions will increase and even out as we head towards the next update in 2019. This will be our children's edition, and I'm sure that, with the growing interest in family history, the 2019 version will more complete.

Moving on to the subject of next year's meeting, Henry Middlebrook, a Thomas 1763 descendant, has stepped forward and volunteered to organize our 2009 meeting. Henry is from the Nacogdoches, Texas, area, and with the help of Neal and Charles Hicks have the ball rolling with a destination of Hope, Arkansas. This is home land for descendants of Nathaniel 1764, Sims 1762, and Thomas 1763, and I'm sure others as our research will uncover with time. A brief itinerary is elsewhere in this Newsletter issue.

My next comments are about our ongoing DNA project. Bob and Dave have done a great job of organizing the family DNA into distinct groups, which I'm sure will tie together in England. In the coming year we will see plans for both DNA and traditional paper research developing to validate this connection. This year has seen DNA information added from the lines of John 1610 Eng., Isaac 1753 VA, John 1754 VA, Nathaniel 1764 VA, Robert 1766 NC, and Thomas 1763 NC. Still needed are DNA testers for John 1755 NC, Micajah 1757 NC, and Joseph 1773 NC. If you are in one of these three lines and a direct male descendant, please contact Robert Middlebrooks for your DNA test kit.

Finally, I would like to encourage you to share your families' stories with our members. As we research, compile, and dig into their past, we come across many notable stories. Send them to Jarrelyn for publishing in the Newsletter; she will love to hear from you. Whether your stories are one paragraph or multi-pages, we would enjoy reading about your ancestors. They are more than just numbers on a tombstone; they lived their beliefs, they loved and married, and most reared families. They had failures and successes, and almost all bought and sold property. They left a track record of more than what is on a granite stone.

FAMILY SURPRISES

By J.A. Middlebrooks

A surprise meeting occurred several years ago when I was in the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, seated at a microfilm machine. The fellow seated next to me asked who I was researching, and I said, "Middlebrooks." The lady on the other side of the fellow then exclaimed, "You're kidding!" She was a descendant of Joseph (1770/73). A couple of years later, while looking at Middlebrooks on the internet, I found a young lady who graduated from one of the high schools in Mississippi and was also connected with this same Joseph line.

Perhaps my most unusual finding occurred while searching one of my mother's lines. I had a name and, although I had information on one fellow, for some reason I was uneasy with the previous data. Therefore, I decided to look again, to see if I could find out if the information I had previously was correct, or if I needed to find another person. One day I was at the Eudora Welty Library in Jackson, Mississippi, and I saw some old high school yearbooks. I selected one at random and pulled it from the stack. I opened the annual, and much to my surprise, the first page stated that that year's annual was dedicated to the fellow for whom I had been looking. That year (1917), he taught Latin and was head football coach. He became Principal of Central High School in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1922 and remained in that position until 1942. You never know when or when you will find that pot of gold you are seeking.

Another surprise occurred several years ago while I was in our pastor's office. He had a number of books in a box, which he was discarding. He asked if I wanted to look through them and find something of interest. After looking for a moment, I randomly picked up a small red book, opened the front cover, and found the name A.E. Middlebrooks (Rev. Acton Elijah Middlebrooks). Several years earlier, I had found a good bit of information about Rev. Acton, a descendant of John 1755.

MIDDLEBROOK(S) FAMILY ASSOCIATION MEETING JULY 2008

By J. A. Middlebrooks

This year's meeting was considered by many to be one of the best reunions we have held since our first one in 2002. A song sung by The Speer Family on their 70th Reunion CD sums up this reunion – "A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL." I think we had a larger number of Middlebrook(s) relatives, nearly fifty in all, to attend or visit the reunion than in any of the previous years.

We had quite a number of new attendees. Notices about the reunion were mailed to Middlebrooks(es) within a 100-mile radius of Hillsboro, Hill County, Texas. One of the attending families, Dale and his wife Ruby, who lived beyond this mail-out radius, was contacted by relatives who did receive the notice and were also in attendance. Their daughter Phyllis came with her parents and stated, "You cannot usually get Daddy away from the farm." They were so excited to find additional information about the Nathaniel 1764 ancestors and meet new relatives that they stated they were going to attend next year's meeting. Also, three members from California attended for the first time. Bobbie, Marilyn, and her daughter, Brooke, are part of the line who changed their name to *Middlebrooke*. Another party was Martha, who came with her nephew, Henry. Martha reported that her children would not bring her because they felt her health would not permit her to attend. I think she will really have special memories about attending the reunion.

Myrtle, who received the reunion notice, came with her nephew, Leonard, and his wife, Jacinta. They came with a bit of uncertainty, but once they met the others attending the meeting and were warmly received, they stayed for the remainder of the MFA reunion. These were the first of the African-American Middlebrookeses to attend a reunion, though we do have one African-American who is a paid member of our association. Myrtle, the senior member of the family, came seeking additional information regarding her Middlebrooks ancestors. Her nephew said he had been working on his family's genealogy off and on for six years but had learned more about the family at this meeting in part of one day than he had previously learned. In addition, they stated that they were interested in attending next year's meeting.

Part of the program was to visit Whitney, Hill County, Texas, where Dr. Francis Marion Middlebrook, grandson of Robert 1766, settled. Before our tour, Joan Miller gave a talk about her ancestor's early life and his moving to Texas. Our first stop in Whitney was to visit the cemetery where Dr. Francis and several of his descendants are buried.

Two recent members of his family passed away in May 2008. They were a grandson, Thomas Lawrence Middlebrook, Sr., who passed on May 19, and Thomas Sr.'s daughter, Sharron Booth, on May 20.

Another member of Robert's line, Elinor Middlebrooks, also passed on May 20 in Georgia. This had to be one of the saddest periods in recent history for our family, as I do not recall this many family members passing in such a short period of time. Elinor and her husband, Paul, had attended our 2004 reunion in Forsyth, GA.

Next we drove by Dr. Francis' old home-site, then toured where his descendants lived and worked. We visited the Whitney Museum where Sandra, one of Dr. Francis's descendants, talked about the Whitney area and the Middlebrooks who had lived there. She had a wonderful verbal description of the family grocery and dry goods store. Our last stop was to visit a restaurant where another Middlebrook family had run a general merchandise and grocery business several years before. This business was owned by the man who passed in May, and his wife, Frances, gave a short talk about their owning the two businesses. Needless to say, her talk contained quite a bit of emotion for her.

Among sites toured in Hillsboro were the Hill County Courthouse, 1881 MKT Depot, Hill County Cell Block Museum, and Texas Heritage Museum. The courthouse tour was conducted by the Mayor of Hillsboro. He went into great detail describing the construction and renovations of this beautiful structure. The Court area reminded several family members of the movie *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The depot was Hillsboro's original train station. It has been restored and is now used by the local Chamber of Commerce. We learned of Hillsboro's early history and then were taken to the town's local museum. The museum contained a collection of Willie Nelson's memorabilia, several American Indian collections, and items belonging to a number of Texans who had served in the Armed Forces.

Two papers were presented on Friday afternoon. One was an update on the Virginia Middlebrooks families. It detailed the work of Lana Shelton and Neal Middlebrook and updated the group with the current facts surrounding the life of our early Middlebrook(s) relatives. Those discussed were Thomas 1700, MD, the Sims family connection, the Nathaniel 1764 and John 1754 lines, both of Virginia. Note that the John 1754 of Virginia is a different person from the John 1755 of North Carolina.

The second paper was an explanation of DNA and its genealogy research use with our family. The current correlation of Middlebrook(s) testers was explained and a request for testers belonging to the Joseph 1773, Micajah 1757, John 1755, and Garland 1777 lines was given. Twelve members have previously participated in the DNA Project, and at least two additional members stated they would register for testing upon returning home.

During the more informal sessions at the motel, shorter ten-minute presentations were given by team leaders on their families' Texas migration. Families discussed were Sims 1762, Thomas 1763, Isaac 1753, Seaborn Sims 1807, Joseph 1770, and Robert 1766. These provided a break in the scheduled get-together times and provided added topics to discuss.

Several people stated they really enjoyed the additional socialization during this reunion. A new function was an auction of several items donated by various family members. Gary Don Middlebrooks served as our auctioneer.

RAILROADS FAR AND NEAR

Contributed by Dianne Middlebrooks

The earliest evidence of a railroad, called a Wagonway, was in Greece in the 6th century. The first horse-drawn Wagonways were also in ancient Greece. In 1550, Wagonways were used in Germany. Wagonways were the beginning of the modern railroad.

Railroads are very complex in engineering. Many requirements are needed before the two parallel steel rails are ready for trains to roll over them. First, engineers have to find flat ground among the trees and then see what is ahead. Embankments, land elevation, and whether bridges and culverts are necessary are only a few of the concerns to be addressed.

Trains were in use in other countries before the United States joined the ranks. The first railroad charter in North America was granted in 1815 to John Stevens. In 1830, Peter Cooper designed and built the first American-built steam locomotive, the *Tom Thumb*. George Pullman invented the Pullman Sleeping Car in 1857. Sleeper cars had been in use on American railroads in the 1830s; however, these early sleepers were not comfortable.

The Georgia Railroad Company was chartered December 21, 1833, by a group of citizens in Athens, Georgia. These citizens built a railroad from Athens to Augusta, Georgia, with construction beginning in Augusta in 1835. The 39-mile Athens branch was completed in December 1841 and was operated by horse-drawn cars until 1847.

Hundreds of railroad companies have operated in Georgia since the first train rolled along its tracks. West Point and Atlanta merged with Western Railroad of Alabama, which connected Atlanta and Montgomery, Alabama. In 1881, Georgia Railroad was leased to Central of Georgia for 99 years and assigned jointly to the Louisville & Nashville and the Central of Georgia railroads. In 1883, these two lessees acquired the Gainesville, Jefferson, & Southern Railroad and the Walton Railroad. More modern railroads include the Atlantic Coast Line, which merged with Seaboard Air Line Railroad to form Seaboard Coast Line. The last merger was in 1986, when the Seaboard System Railroad became CSX Transportation.

Railroads to the West were made possible with the 1878 treaty acquisition from Mexico; a block of western land would allow a transcontinental line to avoid crossing the (Indian) "territory."

When wealthy men realized that land could be available for a transcontinental railroad, they had big ideas. Sam Houston wanted a route from Galveston, Texas, to San Diego, California. Someone else wanted a route across Louisiana and Texas, and one person even suggested expanding to include a trade route with China. In 1853, Congress voted to pay for route surveys from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean.

There was strong support for a railroad in California, so much so that Abraham Lincoln pushed for private development there. The Central Pacific Railroad was born in June 1861; a year later, President Lincoln signed a bill creating the Pacific Railroad. This railroad received its first 100 tons of rails about the same time the Union Pacific broke ground at Omaha. By the spring of 1864, 18 miles of California track had been laid. Most of the work was done by Chinese laborers, who were eager and worked diligently.

The iron horses picked up mail from isolated homesteads, families who did not live near the railroad, for delivery to other towns. The settlers would put their mail inside a

leather satchel clipped to a pole near the train tracks. Someone inside the train would grab the satchel as the train slowed down going through town. I can remember back in the 1950s when the small town of Rex, Georgia, used the same method to send mail to Atlanta. Today, the buildings are still there and the train still comes through, but it never slows down.

The railroad spread in all directions – California, Colorado, South Dakota, Wyoming, Nebraska, Washington, Montana, and Utah. Along the way, settlers built depots with a waiting area for passengers and a place for incoming freight, and they put in telegraph poles and wire.

Today, of 236 countries, 143 have rail transport, and 90 of those have passenger service. There will not be an ending as long as railroad cars are running on two parallel steel rails.

Sources: Bellis, Mary, *The History of Railroad Innovations and Outline of Railroad History*, online

Baumgart, Don, *Golden Nuggets Brought Steel Rails to the West*, online

2008 JARRELL FAMILY REUNION

By Philip Jarrell Haynes

The 2008 Jarrell Family Reunion will be held Sunday, October 5 at the home of Philip and Amelia Haynes, next to Jarrell Plantation State Historic Site in Jones County, Georgia. A meal will be served at 1:00 P.M. At 2:00 P.M., we will gather at the Jarrell Plantation Visitors' Center for a presentation by Patricia Ackerman, "Growing up at Jarrell Plantation, 1912-1932," based on the book *A Letter to Trish*, by Patricia's mother, Beatrice Jarrell Bittaker. We'll also hear from Superintendent Marty Fleming about plans for Jarrell Plantation in 2008-09.

Please reserve your meal (\$10 per plate) by Tuesday, September 30, with Amelia Haynes, 715 Jarrell Plantation Rd., Juliette, GA 31046. You can also contact Amelia at 478-986-3972 or amelia@haynesmarketing.com. Please give the name of each person for whom you are making a reservation. The person contacting Amelia is responsible for the meal cost of each person for whom he/she makes a reservation. *Hope to see you all!*

Military Kinsmen and Cemetery Projects

Kerry Middlebrooks, a Robert descendant, is working on information related to Military connections, especially those Middlebrooks/es who fought in our nation's various wars. If you have information or questions related to this area, please contact Kerry – mbrooks@gci.net.

In addition, J.A. Middlebrooks, also a Robert descendant, is head of the Cemetery Project. If you have photos of any gravesites of our Middlebrook/e/s descendants, please send them to J.A. These can be either digital or prints. You can contact J.A. at middle3jam@hotmail.com.

MFA DNA

By Bob Middlebrooks

A new WorldFamiliesNet website is up and running, and, while it is different, it should provide everything offered before, and more. The following information is provided to assist in entering the website and getting to our Middlebrook/s Project page.

Project members do not need to log in to view any of the pages on the site. The URL you've always had will forward you to the project website, or you can use the following link to the homepage: <http://www.worldfamilies.net/surnames/middlebrooks/>.

When you log in, you can click on the button "Track Project!" on the home page. After you've done that, every time you log in, a link to our project site will appear in the left sidebar on every page of the www.worldfamilies.net website.

To search for a project, you can type the name of the project in the search box on the upper left side of the page. It will bring up a page with links to the project. Click one of those and it will take you to the project's website.

Project members can use the user name and password they created when they registered at the WorldFamilies forum. If you have no such password, click on "Request a new password" just below the log in button.

Anyone can register to log in to the website. Just click on "Create New Account," located just below the log in button. Once you are registered, you will be able to post on the forums or click the "Track Project!" button.

DNA Testing Sizzling Summer End Sale Extended through September 30

Because the response has been really great, Family Tree Maker will extend their promotional until September 30. The best buy is the 37-marker Y-DNA test for males; however, if you are also interested in your mtDNA test results (traces females' maternal ancestry), one of the combo packages may be right for you. The sale prices are:

Y-DNA12 orders include a FREE mtDNA test – normally \$189; promotion price of \$99

Y-DNA25 orders include a FREE mtDNA test – normally \$238; promotion price of \$148

Y-DNA37 orders, normally \$189; price reduced to \$119

Y-DNA37+mtDNAPlus orders, normally \$339; price reduced to \$189

Y-DNA67+mtDNAPlus orders, normally \$409; price reduced to \$288

mtDNAPlus orders, normally \$189; price reduced to \$149

These prices are good only for Middlebrook/s Family Association project members; you must order through the project manager, Bob Middlebrooks, mid293@earthlink.net, to take advantage of these prices. MFA particularly needs testers from the Garland 1774, John 1755, and Micajah 1757 groups.

TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES COMMISSION

Press Release

Submitted by Jean Shroyer

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) issued grants totaling \$95,000 to five TexShare member libraries for the digitalization of special and unique collections of photographs, newspapers, interviews, and other historical documents, making them more accessible to all.

TSLAC awarded the TexTreasures grants of up to \$25,000 to recipients for fiscal year 2009. Internet access will allow more people in Texas to examine and enjoy these collections that were previously available on-site only.

"The TexTreasures grant program focuses on making unique library collections accessible for Texas library constituents," said TexShare Program Coordinator Ann Mason. "Applicants propose projects designed to increase accessibility through a wide range of activities, such as organizing, cataloging, indexing, or digitizing local materials."

TSLAC received 28 TexTreasures grant proposals. The exciting projects that have been funded are:

1. "Houston Oral History Project" (\$17,474) – The Houston Public Library is partnering with Mayor Bill White to preserve and make video-recordings of significant Houstonians available on the web.
2. "Early Texas Newspapers: 1829-1861" (\$24,637) – The University of North Texas Libraries (Denton) and the Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin will partner to microfilm, digitize, and provide free public access to, the earliest Texas newspapers held by the Center for American History.
3. "The Wittliff Collections" (\$20,000) – The project creates an online exhibit accessing the primary source materials of researcher Dick J. Reavis, held by the Southwestern Writers Collection at the Wittliff Collections at Texas State University (San Marcos) about the siege of the Branch Davidians at Mount Carmel outside of Waco in 1993.
4. "Austin History Center Glass Plate Negatives" (\$12,889) – The Austin History Center, a division of the Austin Public Library, will digitize the complete Hubert Jones collection of 471 glass plate negatives containing subjects local to Austin and Texas.
5. "Tejano Voices Project" (\$20,000) – The University of Texas at Arlington Library will digitize and describe 60 of the 174 oral history interviews with notable Tejanos and Tejanas from across Texas, conducted in 1992-2003 by Dr. Jose Angel Gutierrez, Associate Professor of Political Science at UT Arlington.

The TexTreasures grants are a component of the TexShare Program of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. TexShare emphasizes the benefits of statewide library resource sharing so that Texans can acquire the widest possible range of information regardless of the type of library used. Other components of TexShare include online research databases, a library card that allows for statewide borrowing of materials, and a courier service that affords quick delivery between libraries.

TSLAC helps Texans find the information they seek. The people of Texas utilize TSLAC services and programs to effectively use information and materials that improve their lives, the lives of their families, and their communities. Since 1909, TSLAC has carried out a commitment of making information work for all Texans by providing history and genealogical services, federal and state government documents, electronic

research, and library services to Texans of all ages who are unable to read standard print material due to visual, physical, or reading disabilities.

For more information, go to <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us> or e-mail pio@tsl.state.tx.us. TSLAC Public Information Specialist Michael Avila can be reached at (512) 936-4274 or mavila@tsl.state.tx.us.

Evaluating the Reliability of Published Works and Documents (Association of Professional Genealogists Newsletter, February 2008)

Submitted by Neal Middlebrook

- ❖ Does the work or document make assertions without providing evidence?
- ❖ Are some of the sources cited while others are not?
- ❖ Does a spot-check of sources support the conclusions made?
- ❖ Are there numerous grammatical errors or misspellings?
- ❖ Does the author adequately explain and support his conclusions?
- ❖ Are some sections very well written and cited while others are not?
- ❖ Do the conclusions drawn support your current thinking or research?

Other news from APG:

For those who do family history research at the Louisiana State Archives, a new book promises to help navigate the numerous genealogy collections at that facility. The book, *A Guide to Genealogical Research at the Louisiana State Archives*, by Judy Riffel, was published in April 2008 by Le Comité des Archives.

An online review by Damon Veach gives us an insight into the book: "The introduction provides basic information, such as hours, procedures, fees, and computer access. The chapters that follow have to do with various record groups: Censuses and Census Substitutes; Vital Records; Colonial Records; Parish Civil Records; Land Records and Maps; Military and Pension Records; Immigration and Naturalization Records; Other Governmental Records; Newspapers; Ethnic Research; and Miscellaneous Records."

Mr. Veach adds, "With a few exceptions, the book deals with Louisiana records. This is because the Louisiana State Archives collects and houses primarily Louisiana research materials. Two of the five appendices, however, list genealogical periodicals from other states and countries, and one appendix provides a list of family newsletters."

The 164-page soft cover book can be ordered by writing to Le Comité, P.O. Box 1547, Baton Rouge, LA 70821. Cost for members of Le Comité is \$23; non-members pay \$33.

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According to a posting by *Wired* magazine on July 10, 2008, **Ancestry.com** holds more information than either YouTube or the Hubble Space Telescope.

Tennessee's "Sidesaddle Soldiers"

By Jarrelyn Lang

Frustrated because their gender held them back from enlisting to fight in the Confederate Army, a group of girls living in Rhea County, Tennessee, created an "army" of their own in 1862. Rhea (pronounced *Ray*) County, on the northern bank of the Tennessee River in eastern Tennessee, had already provided seven companies for the South. However, these ladies, most of whom had fathers and/or brothers serving the Confederacy, were not content merely to make occasional deliveries of food and clothing to relatives and sweethearts stationed in the area.

Sometime in the summer of 1862, the Rhea County Girls' Company was formed. Dubbed "sidesaddle soldiers," they became the only female cavalry company serving on either side during the Civil War. They could not possibly know it at the time, but most of these young ladies would one day be prisoners of war held by the Union Army.

Mary McDonald, oldest of the group, was elected captain. Caroline McDonald, probably Mary's sister-in-law, was named first lieutenant. Chosen second lieutenant was Anne Paine, and Rhoda Tennessee Thomison became the third lieutenant. Non-commissioned officers named were: Jane Keith, first sergeant; Rachel Howard, second sergeant; Sallie Mitchell, third sergeant; and Minerva Tucker, fourth sergeant. No corporals were elected, so the remaining eighteen members of the group had to be content to serve as privates. The next order of business was selecting an appropriate martial name, and thus they became the Rhea County Spartans. The average age of these ladies was 18; the oldest was 27.

Even after Union General Ambrose Burnside entered eastern Tennessee in the summer of 1863, the lady "soldiers" continued to hold their secret meetings, mainly to keep up their spirits and to exchange news of the war. It is highly likely, however, that they may have engaged in a bit of spying and information-gathering for the Confederate Army. Although the Spartans never had any official connection with either the Confederate Army or the state of Tennessee, at least one Union Army officer took them quite seriously.

Following a sound defeat at the Battle of Nashville in December 1864, Confederate General John Bell Hood resigned his command. Union troops gained control of Rhea County and remained there for the remainder of the war. The 6th Tennessee Mounted Patrol, Co. B (Federal) was the most active unit. Formed in October 1864 to serve for one year, the 6th was composed of some genuine Unionists, but its ranks were mostly filled with Confederate draft-dodgers and deserters. Its primary objective was to combat any bands of Confederate irregulars who were still operating in the Cumberland Mountains. Captain John P. Walker of Company B, a Rhea County native, decided that the Rhea County Spartans was just such an organization.

Walker, a 38-year-old farmer, eluded Confederate conscription until the Union forces gained an upper hand. Eager to join the Union victors and share in the spoils, he quickly acquired a reputation for harshness toward Southern sympathizers. One of his first acts was to order the mass arrest of the girls' company, to "teach the rebellious Southern ladies a lesson" ("All-Girl Rhea County Spartans," TheHistoryNet). Walker managed to persuade his commanding officer, Lt. Colonel George Gowin, to go along with this plan.

On April 5, 1865, Walker sent his men out to round up the girls. Being a Rhea County native, he knew who the Spartans were and where to find them.

Thirteen women were rounded up and forced to march to Walker's home. From there, they continued their march toward Bell's Landing on the Tennessee River. It was dark and rainy, but the exhausted women were forced to march in the mud while Walker and the other Union soldiers traveled on horseback. Once at the landing, the women were joined by three others. Several of the girls had eluded captivity, but sixteen of their number were not as fortunate.

Once at the river, they were put aboard the *USS Chattanooga*, a small steamboat built by the Union Army to engage in foraging expeditions along the Tennessee River, not designed for carrying passengers. All 16 prisoners were crowded into the crew's dining room, with armed guards at both doors. Once they reached Chattanooga, Walker marched his prisoners to the provost marshal's office. Captain Seth B. Moe, assistant adjutant of the Union Army's Department of the Etowah, was on duty. Not knowing how to handle the situation, Moe immediately sent for his commander, Major General James B. Steedman.

Steedman already viewed Walker's commanding officer, Gowin, with contempt, and viewing this spectacle very likely strengthened that feeling. Walker, instead of being congratulated on his victory as he expected, was sharply reprimanded by the general for taking up his time with such "foolishness" (*ibid*). Steedman then required the women to take the oath of allegiance to the Union, and they complied, thereby giving Walker no more excuses to harass them.

Steedman, in an effort to show the women that not all Yankees were barbarians, had Captain Moe escort them to the Central House Hotel. There they were allowed to clean up then treated to the finest meal the hotel could provide. After the meal, Moe escorted them back to the *Chattanooga* for their return trip home. The accommodations hadn't improved, but this time there were no armed guards. However, Walker managed a last gesture of revenge. Ordered by Steedman to escort the ladies to their homes, he instead simply walked away at the Rhea County landing, leaving them to fend for themselves.

The Spartans disbanded after their arrival back in Rhea County. The war would soon be over, and the ladies returned to their ante-bellum way of life.

General Steedman wrote to Major General George H. Thomas in Nashville, recommending that the 6th Tennessee Mounted Infantry "be turned over to the State authorities of Tennessee and replaced with good cavalry" (*ibid*). Union Colonel Lewis Merrill added his concerns: "The Sixth Tennessee and First Georgia (Union Regiments) are, in General Steedman's opinion, utterly worthless. My own observation of the first named confirms this opinion. They are simply cowardly thieves – useless, except to keep a community embroiled and encourage guerrillas by running whenever attacked" (*ibid*).

Captain Walker was discharged from the Union Army a short time later. He managed to use his experience to gain appointive offices during Reconstruction then faded into obscurity.

Sources: "All-Girl Rhea County Spartans." TheHistoryNet; MacLean, Maggie. "Civil War Women: All-Girl Rhea County Spartans." [civilwarwomen.blogspot](http://civilwarwomen.blogspot.com); "The All Girl Rhea County Spartans." home.att.net.

THE BOWDOIN CEMETERY

By J.A. Middlebrooks

The day prior to departing for this year's reunion, I was searching the internet for items related to our Robert Middlebrooks family and found a link to the Bowdoin Cemetery in Houston County, Texas. This Texas cemetery is where three of Robert's grandchildren are buried. These children are the second and third daughters, and one of two sons, of Thomas Middlebrooks and his wife, Mary Powell.

At last year's reunion, all I had on Thomas and Mary was from the 1850 census – five names. We also knew there were two Bowdoin brothers who married two Middlebrooks women. This past year, we confirmed that these were the two older daughters of Thomas and Mary.

We know that Thomas died before the 1837 spring writing of Robert's will where only Mary is mentioned. Mary is named again in the 1850 Jones County, Georgia, census with the three youngest children: James, born 1830; Robert, born 1832; and Louisa B., born 1834. The two older siblings, Sarah Ann, born 1827, and Martha, born 1829, had left home.

These two older sisters, Sara Ann 1827 and Martha 1829, married Bowdoin brothers, Sarah marrying Jephtha and Martha marrying James. Both of these two families moved to Alabama in the 1850s, and it is believed that this is where Martha's husband, James Travis, died. A recent source suggests that James may have died in Texas.

It is also believed that Sarah died in Alabama, where her husband married again. The youngest sister, Louisa, married a John Bowdoin in ca. 1853, who was a cousin of Jephtha and James. There is a further Middlebrooks-Bowdoin connection noted as Robert sold property to some of the Bowdoin family a number of years earlier.

After Martha's husband's death, she returned to middle Georgia and from there moved west to Houston County, Texas. Martha bought 500 acres near Porter Springs and eventually married a Griffin A. Bynum with whom she reportedly raised a family. Martha used a portion of her 500 acres as a gift and enticed her youngest sister, Louisa, to move to the Porter Springs location, along with her family. In addition to the two sisters, an unknown brother also moved to Texas.

Martha, her husband Griffin, Louisa and her husband, as well as one of their brothers, are buried in the Porter Springs area Bowdoin Cemetery. Which of the two brothers is not known, as his tombstone's first name and dates are not legible.

Wanting to locate and photograph this cemetery, my wife, Lanell, and I decided on a detour visit to the Porter Springs area near Crockett, Texas. Not knowing the cemetery location, our plan was to stop at a service station, library, store, or something and make inquiries. Porter

Springs turned out to be a very basic road crossing with only a few houses nearby.

After knocking on five doors and getting no answers, we had success at the sixth house. A 90+ year-old lady answered and told us to go on down the road until we came to the next road on the left, then go beyond the road and stop at the first house on the right. This was the old Bowdoin home, which she had visited as a child, and she remembered a cemetery being there.

When we drove up to the house, a lady was working by her mailbox, cleaning her yard. She was Maggie Thomasson and she and her husband, Lyle, were the family for whom we were searching. They showed us the grave for Griffin Bynum near their house and told us of other graves about a mile down the road. Maggie's mother was nee Bowdoin and after a sociable time, the husband and I left our wives enjoying the much cooler house and drove to the family cemetery. Upon arriving we found the cemetery almost inaccessible due to overgrowth. I was able to take a picture of Louisa's new tombstone, but the others were overgrowth-laden and I could not take a decent shot.

Once we returned to the house, the husband told his wife that the Bowdoin family desperately needed to get together for a cemetery cleanup. Hopefully, once this is done, they will be able to furnish us with the additional tombstone photos.

While the husband and I were cemetery-hopping, his wife gave my wife information regarding making contact with her mother and aunt, who could supply me with additional information about the Middlebrooks/Bowdoin family. As mentioned above, last year we had five names for our Thomas portion of Robert's line. In the past year, we found eight pages related to Louisa's portion of the family. Now, hopefully, we will be able to add to Martha's line and possibly the lines of one or both brothers, who seemingly had disappeared after the 1850 census.

After leaving the Thomasson's home, Lanell and I stopped at the Porter Springs Cemetery where we were able to photograph some of the Bowdoin family tombstones. Unfortunately, we were not able to find all of the tombstones due to rain developing.

At this time last year we had only the five names for this Thomas portion of Robert's line. Since then, we have found nearly 250 additional relations of this family and confirmed that two older daughters married the Bowdoin brothers, Jephtha and James. Hopefully, we will be able to add to Martha's line and possibly the lines of the two brothers.

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"The kind of ancestors we have is not as important as the kind of descendants our ancestors have."

-----Anonymous-----

THIS-AND-THAT

(Editor's note: This section is a place for your input. If you have a favorite genealogy-related website, book, location, insight, etc., send it to me at thelangs@hotmail.com for inclusion in a future quarterly. –JL)

Breast Cancer Awareness Month: October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. You can make an easy, free contribution that will help fund mammograms for women who can't afford them by going to thebreastcancersite.com and clicking on the pink rectangle. The site accepts only one click per computer per day, so if you have access to more than one computer, either at home or at work, click daily on each one. Please continue to click daily, even after October is past. (Don't wait until October – start today!) This is a way to help scores of women, and it costs you absolutely nothing except a few seconds of your time.

Picture of Saphronia Middlebrooks Requested: from Sunni Montgomery

I sent someone in your organization a picture of Saphronia Middlebrooks who died in Alabama. I have had a computer crash and would love to have a copy sent back to me, please. Saphronia is a descendant of Sims Middlebrooks and married Joshua Jones Flourmoy Lewis. If you have any information on the picture, please contact me at SunniMontgomery@aol.com.

Websites: from Jean Shroyer

<http://pilot.familysearch.org/> - Free Texas Death Certificates through 1976, online at LDS. You can search, print, and save. You get the actual microfilm image of the original death certificate. Drop down the page to Vital Records and click on Texas Deaths 1890-1976 to begin your search.

<http://search.labs.familysearch.org/recordsearch.start.html#p=0> - A great site to find census records, vital statistics, Czech church records, West Virginia birth and death certificates, Texas death certificates, and other items. I have used German records to locate my great grandmother and others in Germany. I have also found many Middlebrook/s death records and images.

www.footnote.com and www.gumshoogenealogy.com – Pictures, documents, gravestones, etc.

<http://www.columbustexas.net/library/history/newspaper%20archive.htm> – Online newspapers for Colorado County, Texas, newspapers. The *Weimar Mercury* has issues through 1960. You can browse the site or search by surname for articles.

Unclaimed Persons Search: from Neal Middlebrook

RootsTelevision has launched an effort to find families of deceased individuals who have been identified but remain unclaimed. If you are interested in joining the growing number of genealogists who are already helping to solve Unclaimed Persons cases, go to <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=24101365049> to see their latest cases and to learn how your research can help reunite families. Those who are new to Facebook will need to register.

OBITUARIES

Farris Lee Burnett Blackmon, 85, of Jemison, Alabama, died July 22, 2008. Born December 27, 1922, Farris was the daughter of Sam Dudley and Sims (1762) descendant Mettie Octeva Middlebrooks Burnett, who preceded her in death.

Farris was a Pattern Drawer for Siluria Cotton Mill for thirty years. She leaves three daughters, Peggy Ann Ellison, Willie Lee Pate, and Rena Mae Littleton. Other survivors include nine grandchildren and eighteen great-grandchildren.

Services were held July 24, 2008, at Jemison First Baptist Church. Interment was in Pine Hill Cemetery, in Jemison.

Middlebrooks Family Association sends our sympathies to Farris's family.

Lee Eugene Middlebrooks left this world behind on August 8, 2008, at the age of 92. Lee was born to Charles Eugene and Mary Louise Horton Middlebrooks on December 19, 1915, in Jack County, Texas.

During his seventeen years of door-to-door deliveries for Manor Baking Company in Dallas, Lee was called to serve in World War II. He served in Italy with the 3rd Platoon, K Co., 362nd Infantry, 91st Division. Lee was awarded a Bronze Star for bravery, but he rarely talked of his wartime experiences.

Later, Lee operated his own business, traveling around the Texas-Oklahoma area to sell various items to hardware and building-supply stores. He and his family moved to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, after his retirement in 1992.

Lee is survived by his wife, Eva Leona Foley Middlebrooks; sons Thomas Eugene, Robert Warren, and Marvin Lee; daughters Nannie Louise Graf, Glenda Kay Morrison, and Sheila Faye Middlebrooks. Lee was also the uncle of MFA member Jarrellyn Lang.

Services were held August 11, 2008, at the Shartel Church of God in Oklahoma City, where Lee was a longtime active member. Burial, with military honors, was held in Oklahoma City's Resthaven Memory Gardens.

MFA extends deepest sympathies to this Thomas (1763) descendant's family.

Nona Faye Middlebrooks, 86, passed away at the Autumn House in Idalou, Texas, on August 17, 2008. This Isaac (1753) descendant was born to Clyde Onan and Rose Ann Middlebrooks on September 16, 1921, in Farlie, Texas.

Faye taught school for thirty years, three years in Spur, Texas, and thirty-seven in Odessa, Texas. She was a member of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society International and the Odessa / Ector County Retired School Personnel Association. Faye also served as a volunteer at Medical Center Hospital in Odessa.

She was involved in the Belmont Baptist Church of Odessa, serving as church organist and pianist and also as youth sponsor for many years. Preceded in death by her parents, four brothers, and three sisters, Faye is survived by eight nieces and a host of grand-nieces and grand-nephews.

Graveside services were held August 20, 2008, at Sunset Memorial Gardens in Odessa. MFA wishes to extend our sympathies to the family of this Isaac (1753) descendant.

Kenneth Drew (Kenny) Middlebrooks, 49, died August 24, 2008, in Bonifay, Florida. He was the son of Joseph Middlebrooks and Jacquelin (Miller) Middlebrooks. Other survivors include two daughters, Kenya Merritt and Tori Lee Middlebrooks; a sister, Tammy Turnipseed; two brothers, Joey Middlebrooks and Bobby Middlebrooks; and two grandchildren.

Funeral services were August 27 at Carmel Assembly of God, and burial was in Bonifay Cemetery.

Our sincerest sympathies go out to this John (1755) descendant's family, and especially to Kenneth's aunt and uncle, MFA members A.E. and Sybil Middlebrooks.

Vanda Middlebrooks Vititow passed away peacefully August 28, 2008. Her funeral was held September 2 at St. Paul United Methodist Church of Hurst, Texas.

Vanda was born September 30, 1934, in Hunt County, Texas, and grew up in Hopkins County. She spent the last 44 years in Tarrant County, where she retired as a business owner. Her father, Isaac (1727) descendant William Louis Middlebrooks, preceded her in death.

Vanda is survived by her husband of 56 years, Bob Vititow; son Robert Vititow; daughters Sandi Kilgore, Shelli Cantrell, and Kelli Sluder; her mother, Inez Middlebrooks; and her sister Wanda McCain. Other survivors include eleven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

Middlebrooks Family Association sends our condolences to Vanda's family.

Fred Henry Middlebrooks, another Isaac (1753) descendant, passed from this life on November 27, 2007, at Hospice LaGrange in Roanoke, Alabama. Services were held November 29 at Quattlebaum Funeral Chapel of Roanoke. Burial followed in the Center Chapel Baptist Church Cemetery.

Fred was born January 29, 1923, to Walter Franklin and Lucy Henrietta Arnette Middlebrooks. He was a member of the El Bethel Baptist Church and had worked as a furniture upholsterer for Scheeige Manufacturing Company. He served in the United States Air Corps during World War II.

Preceded in death by his parents, Fred was survived by his wife, Josie Johnson Daniel Middlebrooks; one son, Thomas; four step-children, several nieces, and sixteen step-grandchildren.

According to Leonard Middlebrooks, MFA President, "This is the guy who submitted his genealogy on an IBM Selectric." MFA extends belated sympathies to all of Fred's family.

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Some genealogy gems

"Genealogy begins as an interest, becomes a hobby, continues as an avocation, takes over as an obsession, and in its last stages is an incurable disease." –Contributed by JoRetta Lewis

"God grant me the serenity to accept the ancestors I cannot find, the courage to find the ones I can, and the wisdom to document thoroughly." –Contributed by Joyce Arnold

First Notice Concerning the 2009 MFA Meeting

Mark your calendar and start spreading the news!

DATES: August 13-15, 2009

PLACE: Hope, Arkansas

MOTEL: Holiday Inn Express

I – 30 at N. Hervey St.

Hope, AR 71801

870-722-6262

Group rates of \$89.10, plus tax – available until July 13, 2009

TO DO: Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives

Historic Washington State Park

Hempstead County Library, in Hope

Cemetery Exploration in Hope, Hempstead and Nevada Counties

MEETING: BancorpSouth Farmhouse, 4 miles north of motel

A Genealogy Story

A little girl asked her mother, "How did the human race appear?"

The mother answered, "God made Adam and Eve and they had children, and so was all mankind made."

Two days later, the little girl asked her father the same question. The father answered, "Many years ago, there were monkeys from which the human race evolved."

The confused girl returned to her mother and said, "Mom, how is it possible that you told me the human race was created by God, and Dad said they developed from monkeys?"

The mother answered, "Well, dear, it's very simple. I told you about my side of the family, and your father told you about his." – Contributed by Jarrelyn Lang

*******REMEMBER TO VOTE NOVEMBER 4th!!*******